

A Periodical  
of Frustration  
#12 / Spring 2015

# FIT9

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**IT'S NOT ABOUT  
ANYTHING**

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**IT'S ABOUT  
EVERYTHING**

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**“WE MUST ABANDON ALL  
MODELS & STUDY OUR  
POSSIBILITIES.” -E.A POE**





# DISCONTENT

## **What is the point?**

This is for the world's exploited and dominated groups or classes. It is for the uncomfortable, the miserable, the disempowered, or the lost. It is also for the uncontrollable, empowered, fed up, and criminalized. It is a reminder for those living in conflict every day with the social order that reigns upon the earth, that they are not alone.

We are a revolutionary publication that hopes to report on struggles that will otherwise be mentioned inappropriately or not at all. We report on struggles that stem from a frustration with different forms of domination, and intend to achieve freedom from them, without compromise.

We are against all forms of domination; especially the existence of the state (government) and economy (capitalism). Institutions that help mobilize or expand the current systems of domination, like patriarchy or industrialism, are also institutions we oppose. We also avidly oppose social dividers like sexism, racism, or classism, and believe that they are a result of the current systems of domination, and can be most easily exposed of from our humanity through a struggle against the totality of control and exploitation today. We also place a deep importance in defending the natural environment and its other non-human habitats that this current society is intent on exploiting and destroying.

Our priority is to confront and expose that which exists today that we oppose. This opposition must be most easily understood as a perspective motivated by a broad and radical idea of desired freedom. A freedom that is only foreseen as possible in the ruin of what it is we are fighting against.

We very much envy bank robbers. We hope that every party we attend will turn into a riot if the police shut it down. When police are shot it is always revenge. When somebody kills or wounds somebody who raped them; such blood arouses us. When the rich suffer the poor are revived. When the banks are in crisis, we are all a little closer to being rich. "In a world which really is topsyturvy, the true is in a moment of the false."

We hope that this magazine will act as another voice helping to foster discontent and frustration to all forms of domination today. As we said in our last issue: "this is why we exist. This is why we continue to come out with a new magazine every few months. But we hope to not be around forever, because like all revolutionary literature, we will only continue to exist until the current conditions we are frustrated with, cease to.

*-From Issue #11 / Spring 2011*

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*"We wish we could provide some coherent politics, a concrete identity, or a precise program; but we are not looking to make decisions, only to realize frustrations and unify different tensions as a result of them. We need to act on our desires now, worry about where it takes us later." -FTTP #9*



## It's Been a While: An Attempt at Explaining our Hiatus and Return

**"Don't ask for the formula for opening up worlds to you in some syllable like a bent dry branch. Today, we can only tell you what we are not, what we don't want." -E. Montale**

It's been a few years since the last one of these. The unfortunate reality has been that this publication has itself become a victim of repression. We stress the term victim, because due to the continued finger poking of the state's most vile law enforcement goons, we have shut our mouths in fear. While of course this project is not formally an illegal project, and we are sure that we are not among the priorities of the state's enemies, we are very aware that we are without a doubt taken into consideration by those in law enforcement.

Even as we sit here and write this, we struggle with an incredibly frustrating anxiety. Thoughts play over and over again in our minds about coming in close encounters with the men and woman who make up the structural framework of state control. We probably share some of the same fears that the editors of 'Charlie Hedbo' face. But we can never expect the sympathy of the mainstream because we are not worried about ISIS and Al-Qaeda inspired youth attacking us, but of the American version of such fascist-fanatics. Whether it's the typical buzzcut white men of the FBI or JTTF, or steroid ridden goons of local law enforcement across the country, once an encounter is made, we are aware that they already know of our hatred for them due to the words we print. We are also aware of the obvious power disadvantage we have — socially, politically and, most of all, financially. It's also well known at this point that if they can't arrest us for a crime, they will seek other methods of intimidation. While obviously long prison sentences with politically driven punishments such as solitary confinement and harsh visitor regulation give the most joy to the state, the state is very aware of other methods if those are not possible. Sabotaging our jobs, grand juries (which carry prison time for not talking), threatening friends and family members with the sole intention of upending our communities, restricting travel, and border detention are but a few more examples of effective

techniques of repression by the state, where little to no evidence is needed to institute punishment.

The sensitive specifics related to the state attempting to repress this periodical is not something we wish to print, but they have deliberately assaulted this project for years, solely based on an issue with our content. Through publishing a new issue, we hope to grasp our feelings of rage and contempt for the state, while alleviating the anxieties they want us to feel. The thought of their Wounded Warrior charity BBQs (The one political cause every cop can get behind. We think they just like the logo.) or Trayvon Martin dart boards (See Pg. 22 regarding the Dade County Police Training Targets) remind us of the brutally gross nature of their mindless culture, and the need for us to continue being vocal despite their inherent interest in silencing us. We know who they protect. We understand their lack of humanity. The hatred we return to these thugs doesn't come from some fanatical/delusional notion of patriotism as it does for these sociopathic cowards in blue (or suit). Our hatred for them is out of a knowledge and perspective that grows out of deep-seated experiences in our every day lives. We see what they do. We see who they protect, and who they spit on under the veil of "safety." We witness who is comfortable in this society, and who can't get any sleep because uniformed robots aren't concerned about sirens waking up any children in the neighborhood. They have, and always will act in defense of a system that betrays humanity, and we, this project, will forever claim the opposing side. The lapse in time was both due to the stress of frequent acts of intimidation

by the state as well as the finances that come with a printed propaganda project such as this. We are not specialized guerrilla warriors secretly out there in the night doing clandestine actions. We are just frustrated individuals that found a niche in this ever-weakening society that helped us to feel like we were creating a voice, both for ourselves, the contributors, and those discussed in this publication. We found strength, and to be blunt, a certain existential fulfillment through this project that drove us to endure the financial, social, and emotional requirements to keep going with it.

When things first started to get creepy it seemed as if every few months new stories of police intimidation of comrades would taunt our efforts with anxiety.

Then it got worse. Both informants that choke different radical circles (whether they intended to be or not) and actual agents of the state sabotaged this project. And unfortunately up until we recently felt too angry to remain quiet, they have been victorious since our last issue in 2011. And again, they know who they are, and

what they did, and again we know that they hate us, and have read all the reasons we hate them throughout the years. Today though, we don't feel any different. We have grown in different ways, and obviously had life changing experiences here and there, but we will never find joy through the choices this society grants us. Many other publications would whine and cry about freedom of speech or the press if they had to deal with the hardships we did, but we won't. We are not press, we are a periodical display of discontent that no paper that can afford a tag of legitimacy would ever dare resemble. We also

would never succumb to an ideology that somehow sees being granted certain freedoms (free speech?! Scoff!) and not others, to be freedom (or something to strive for).

Right now, the world's civilizations are clashing. And the civilizations of the world are simultaneously clashing with the earth. *Vice News* and *Al Jazeera* have made discussions of the prison-industrial-complex or climate change everyday bar talk. You can see twitter and facebook posts about drinking water running out, police murderers, or genocide in some far off country more than ever before; yet authors shy away from the prescription that something drastic must be done against the system and culture that are to blame. While some call for reforms and some simply "expose the modern condition," there is still an underlying faith that this system will repair itself, and redeem itself of all wrongs. Counter to such narratives, we offer a space for discussion that presumes one solution: insurrection against the state and capitalism.

We hope this new issue helps continue the tradition of unifying different struggles and social tensions by reporting on them. We hope some will be inspired, and some will be angered (when not both at the same time). We hope these pages do not go to waste, and help to contribute to a dialogue that will push for real change that will allow us discontents to freely breathe.

Sending love and solidarity with all those who have supported us over the years. Sending disgust and contempt to those in and out of law enforcement that have sabotaged us over the years. -FTTP

# Why Riot?

**“Getting out of control is the point, which is precisely why the riot is the foundation from which any future worth the name must be built.”**



Two years ago in Seattle, on May 1st, 2012, roughly four to five hundred people engaged in the largest riot the city had seen in more than a decade. Hundreds of thousands of dollars of property were destroyed, a minor state of emergency was declared, and the next day's headlines were filled with horror stories of crazy, “out-of-town” anarchists run amok. This event, occurring on the tail end of the Occupy movement, also quickly became the post-facto excuse for extensive federal, state and municipal investigation, surveillance and ongoing repression of political dissent. Several anarchists in the Pacific Northwest were put in prison without charge in the fall of that year, only to be released months later, still with no charges filed. Houses were raided in search of anarchist literature and black hoodies. Up to a year later, people were still being followed. I was one of the five people originally charged for crimes on May Day 2012. I've since pled guilty to slightly lesser charges, in order to avoid going to trial on two felonies. I pled in the fall of 2013 and completed the bulk of the sentence in the winter, spending three months in King County's Work-Education Release (WER) Unit. Technically an “alternative to confinement,” living in WER effectively means that you are imprisoned at all times that you are not allowed out for work, school or treatment (for mental health or drug offenses). This puts me in a unique position. Since I am one of the few people who has pled guilty to certain crimes from May 1st, 2012, including Riot, I do not necessarily face the same risks in talking about—and defending—the riot as a tactic or the impulses behind it. This by no means makes what I say below an exhaustive or fully representative account of why others may have engaged in that same riot. They mostly got away—a good thing in and of itself, though federal charges may still be pending for one window that was smashed in an empty courthouse. But this also means that they cannot speak of or defend their participation without risking repression. To be clear: I'm not speaking on behalf of any groups who wound up engaged in the riot that occurred on May Day 2012. To my knowledge, the riot was by no means planned ahead of time, and the anti-capitalist march that the riot grew out of, technically an Occupy Seattle event, was itself planned in public meetings. I'm not even speaking on behalf of this specific riot, but instead on behalf of rioting as such, in the abstract. The question “Why Riot?” is not simply: why did you engage in this riot, but, instead, why riot at all? And the perspective given here is that of a rioter. So I'm writing here for simple reasons: to defend the riot as a general tactic and to explain why one might engage in a riot. By this I mean to defend and explain

not just the window breaking, not just “non-injurious violence,” and certainly not just the media spectacle it generates, but the riot itself—that dangerous, ugly word that sounds so basically criminal and which often takes (as in London in 2011) a form so fundamentally unpalatable for civil society that it can only be understood as purely irrational, without any logic, and without possible defense. I aim, nonetheless, to defend and explain the riot, because we live in a new era of riots. Riots have been increasing in absolute number globally for the past thirty years. They are our immediate future, and this future will spare Seattle no less than Athens or London, Guangzhou or Cairo.

## Who am I?

I am a member of the poorest generation since those who came of age during the Great Depression. Born to the “end of history,” we watched the ecstatic growth of the Clinton years morph seamlessly into the New Normal of Bush and Obama. We have no hope of doing better than our parents did, by almost any measure. We have inherited an economy in secular stagnation, a ruined environment on the verge of collapse, a political system created by and for the wealthy, skyrocketing inequality, and an emotionally devastating, hyperatomized culture of pyrrhic consumption. The most recent economic collapse has hit us the hardest. According to a study by the Pew Research Center, the median net worth of people under 35 fell 55 percent between 2005 and 2009, while those over 65 lost only a fraction as much, around 6 percent. The result is that if you calculate debt alongside income, wealth inequality is today increasingly generational. Those over 65 hold a median net worth of \$170,494, an increase from 1984 of 42 percent. Meanwhile, the median net worth of those under 35 has fallen 68 percent over the same period, leaving young people today with a median worth of only \$3,662. Despite cultural narratives of laziness and entitlement, this differential is not due to lack of effort or education (my generation is the most educated, as well, and works some of the longest hours for the least pay). The same Pew Study notes that older white Americans have simply been the beneficiaries of good timing. They were raised in an era of cheap housing and education, massive state welfare and unprecedented economic ascent following the creative destruction of two world wars and a depression—wars and crises that they themselves didn't have to live through. And the jobs that older Americans hold are not being passed down to us, though their debt is. When they retire, the few remaining secure, living wage and often unionized positions will be eliminated, their components dispersed into three or

four different unskilled functions performed by part-time service workers. The entirety of the job growth that has come since the “recovery” began has been in low-wage, temporary or highly precarious jobs, which exist alongside a permanently heightened unemployment rate.

In the long term, this means that, after having been roundly robbed in almost every respect by our parents' generation, our own future holds nothing more than the hope that we might be employed in two or three separate part-time, no-promotion positions in the few growth sectors, such as healthcare, where we can have the privilege of being paid minimum wage to wipe the asses of the generation that robbed us. It is no coincidence, then, that every time we hear a fucking baby boomer explain how we're so entitled, and how they worked summers to pay for college, we contemplate whether or not disemboweling them and selling their organs on the booming black market might be the only way to pay back our student loans.

## Where did I come from?

Meanwhile, this economic overhaul has led not only to a global reordering of where things are made, and by whom, but also to a spatial concentration of economic activity in the US. Those metropolitan regions that were capable of becoming network hubs for global logistics systems fared best, with their amalgamation of hi-tech industries and producer services. These became the urban palaces, with concentrations of “cultural capital” and redesigned downtown cores (lightly cleansed of “undesirable” populations) built to appeal to tourists and foreign dignitaries. Beyond this, large swaths of the country were simply abandoned as wastelands, where resource extraction was either hyper-mechanized or too expensive, agricultural goods were produced under heavy government subsidy, and small urban centers were forced to compete for the most undesirable jobs in industrial farming, food processing, waste management, warehousing or the growing private prison industry. In many areas, the informal economy expanded enormously—consistent with global trends, most visible in the worldwide growth of slums.

I am from one of these wastelands where the majority of work is informal, the majority of formal industries are dirty or miserable, and where rates of poverty, unemployment, chronic disease, illiteracy, and mental illness are often two to three times the national average. Raised in a trailer several miles off a reservation in one of the poorest counties on the west coast, all of the structural shifts mentioned above were for me not academic abstractions,

but living reality. I come from that part of America—the majority of it—where weed is the biggest cash crop, where kids eat Special K like it's cereal, and where the only “revitalization” we've ever seen is when the abandoned factory down the street was converted into a meth lab. And I was, due mostly to dumb luck, one of the few who was able to earn enough to pay the exit fee. Upon arrival in Seattle, despite having a degree I was fed into the lowest tiers of the labor market. Rather than being some “out-of-town” suburban youth using Seattle as a “playground,” as commentators would claim of the rioters, I was, in fact, one of the multitude of invisible workers that the city depended on—whether hauling goods to and from the port, working in the south county warehouses, cleaning downtown's sprawling office towers, or, as in my case, working behind the kitchen door. At the time of the riot, I was working for ten cents more than minimum wage in a wholesale kitchen in South Seattle, where we produced tens of thousands of pre-packaged sandwiches and salads for consumption in upscale city cafés and office buildings. It is not an exaggeration to say that my full-time work schedule (for the duration of Occupy Seattle, which I attended every day after morning shifts at work) amounted to me feeding hundreds of thousands of Seattleites over the several months that Occupy was a present force in the city. It's likely, then, that those hysteric KIRO-TV commentators claiming that I was part of some “outsider” gang come from the heart of chaos (or Portland, maybe?) to fuck up Seattle have themselves regularly eaten the food that I was paid poverty wages to make. Despite the language of post-industrial, guilt-free success common to many wealthy Seattleites' image of themselves, the fact is that Seattle, like any other global city, relies on what is called a dual labor market. Higher tiers of skilled labor, cultural production, finance and producer services exist atop a secondary tier of less skilled, minimally compensated work in high-turnover jobs with little chance of promotion. This creates a fundamental spatial problem within capitalism: despite the outsourcing of the dirtiest, most dangerous jobs in manufacturing and resource extraction, the rich can never entirely get away from the poor. The extension of surveillance, incarceration and deportation, the militarization of the police, and the softer counter-insurgency of philanthropy foundations, social justice NGOs, conservative unions and various other poverty pimps are all methods to manage different dimensions of this problem. The riot is what happens when all these mediations fail. And in an era of crisis and austerity, such mediation becomes more and more difficult to maintain. So in all the media's talk of “outsiders,” “anarchists” and other terms meant

to make the rioting subject opaque to those not immediately engaged in the riot, the one fact that was consistently distorted was the simplest: the thieves in the palace were, in fact, the servants. I, the terrifying, irrational rioter, am you.

### **Why don't I engage in more productive forms of protest?**

The other common theme was, of course, the morality play between the “good protestor” and the “bad protestor.” The rioters somehow “infiltrated” the march. They distracted from the “real” issues. They turned “normal” people away from the day’s events, ultimately hurting attempts at reform that were already underway. There is in this an implicit assumption that there exist “better” forms of protest, and that we rioters do not also do these things. This produces a few small ironies, as when the local alt-weekly, *The Stranger*, contrasted the negotiated arrest of fast food protestors, who showed their courage by standing their ground and “demanding arrest,” with the May Day rioters, who did nothing but “hide behind bandanas while hurling rocks.” The irony here was that I was myself one of those rioters and one of those fast food workers—having been involved in the fast food campaign from its inauguration, leading a walkout at my workplace in the first strike, planning segments of the intermediate actions (including the wage theft protest, though my pending riot case prevented me from being arrested there), and then briefly taking a paid position with Working Washington for two weeks leading up to the second strike. Beyond the irony, though, there is the troublesome presumption that this highly negotiated, thoroughly controlled and largely non-threatening activism is somehow more productive in the long term. When I did engage in the fast food strikes, I did so initially as a fast food worker, and the short-term goal there was to build power among food workers in the city. Despite this, no amount of organizing for (often much-needed) reforms can get over the basic problems of reform itself, which is today equivalent to trying to take a step uphill during an avalanche—you may well complete that step, but the ground itself is moving the opposite direction. What would have been easily achievable, relatively minor reforms in the boom era of fifty or sixty years ago, such as raising the minimum wage to match inflation, enforcing laws against wage theft, and coming up with an equitable tax system, today require herculean effort and mass mobilization, even when ninety percent of the original demand is usually sacrificed simply to show “good faith” at the negotiating table.

### **Why don't I like capitalism?**

There is plenty more to talk about here—which you can explore if you please. But the basic problem, cut to the size of a tweet, is that the economy is the name for a hostage situation in which the vast majority of the population is made dependent on a small minority through implicit threat of violence. If we challenge the system’s capacity to infinitely accumulate more at a compounding rate, it goes into crisis—this is basic definition of crisis: when profitable growth slows, stops, or, god forbid, reverses. Whenever this accumulation is challenged, whether by contingent factors such as poor location, or intentional ones, such as a resistant populace, those who hold the power (the wealthy) will start killing hostages. This is precisely what has been happening over the last fifty years of economic restructuring. Any regions that show significant resistance to the lowering of wages, the dismantling of social services, the export or mechanization of jobs, or the privatization of public property can easily be sacrificed. The American landscape, circa 2014, is littered with just such dead hostages: Detroit and Flint, MI, Camden, NJ, Athens, OH, Jackson, MS, the mining

towns of West Virginia or northern Nevada. The handful of cities (such as New York and Seattle) that were able to escape this fate today pride themselves on being such good hostages. The only reason they were able to survive this rigged game of neoliberal roulette was because of a mixture of sheer geographic luck (often as port cities or pre-existing financial centers) and their absolute openness to do whatever the rich wanted. Public goods were sold off at bargain basement prices, downtown cores were redesigned according to the whims of a few large interests in retail, finance and real estate, and tax money, paired with future tax exemptions, was simply handed out as bribes to big players like Nordstrom and Boeing. If we then zoom out to the global scale, it is abundantly obvious that the currently existing economic system—which we call capitalism—is a failed one. If it ever had any grudging utility in raising general livelihoods after its mass sacrifices in war and colonization, that time has unequivocally passed. Aside from the numerous examples cited above, there are a few especially appalling illustrations. Slavery is growing worldwide at a rate higher than at any other time in recent history. Mechanization is set to push massive swaths of workers out of the production process entirely, even while the gains of this increase in productivity are themselves concentrated almost exclusively in the hands of the wealthy. The central role of finance and speculation in the global economy has resulted in massive spikes in global food prices, causing famines and food riots, as well as a situation in which the majority of grain in the world, to take one example, is controlled by just four companies.

Meanwhile, the bulk of the globe’s basic goods production is increasingly concentrated—both in the producer services of high-GDP metropolises like London, New York and Tokyo and in the “world’s factory” of South and Southeast Asia. The production of these goods is not only dominated by vast, low-wage retailers like Wal-Mart and Amazon, but also increasingly dictated by massive contract manufacturers like Foxconn or Yue Yuen, which concentrate their production in factory cities where the lives of migrant workers are surveilled and managed in a quasi-military fashion. The concentration of the production process coincides with the concentration of the wealth generated by that process. Even within the old “first world,” poverty and unemployment have been on the rise since long before the most recent crisis. Greece and Spain are only the most visible signs of this trend. In the US, especially, the trend splits along racial lines. Cities and schools are resegregating, though the patterns of segregation are more complex than the redlining of the Jim Crow era. One dimension of this resegregation has been the growth of the US prison system into one of the largest the world has ever seen. Even if calculated as a percentage of population, rather than absolute number, the US today imprisons roughly the same fraction of its population as the USSR did at the height of the gulag system—and our prison population is still on the rise. Curable diseases are returning en masse, while new viruses are being developed at record rates in the evolutionary pressure-cooker of industrial agriculture. Each economic crisis is larger than the one preceding it, and these crises are not just “business cycles.” Or, more accurately: the so-called business cycle is simply a sine wave oscillating around a trajectory of absolute decline. And this decline, like the last major ones in the global economic system, will only be reversible through an unimaginably massive bout of creative destruction.

## ***Our future's already been looted. It's time to loot back.***

In the face of a collapsing environment, a hyper-volatile economic system and skyrocketing global inequality, it is simply utopian to believe that the present system can be perpetuated indefinitely without great violence. Opposition to capitalism has become an eminently practical endeavor.

### **But... Why riot?**

Despite all of this, the riot itself may still seem an enigma. On the surface, riots appear to produce little in terms of concrete results and, when you add up the numbers, often do less actual economic damage to large business interests than, for example, blockading the port. They produce a certain spectacle, but so does Jay-Z. In one sense, there is often a practical side to many riots, which can be far better at winning demands than negotiated attempts at reform. Despite the fact that reform itself is designed to treat symptoms rather than the disease, it’s also evident that riots are a useful tool even in reform efforts. Riots, accompanying illegal blockades, occupations and wildcat strikes, have proliferated in China’s Pearl River Delta over the past several years, and the result has been that workers there have seen an unprecedented rise in manufacturing wages, which more than doubled between 2004 and 2009. Some scholars have called the phenomenon “collective bargaining by riot.” Similarly, more and more historical work has been emerging showing that riots and other forms of armed organizing were very much the meat of movements like the civil rights struggle in the US, despite the common perception that these things were somehow “non-violent.” It is, in fact, difficult to find any example of a successful,

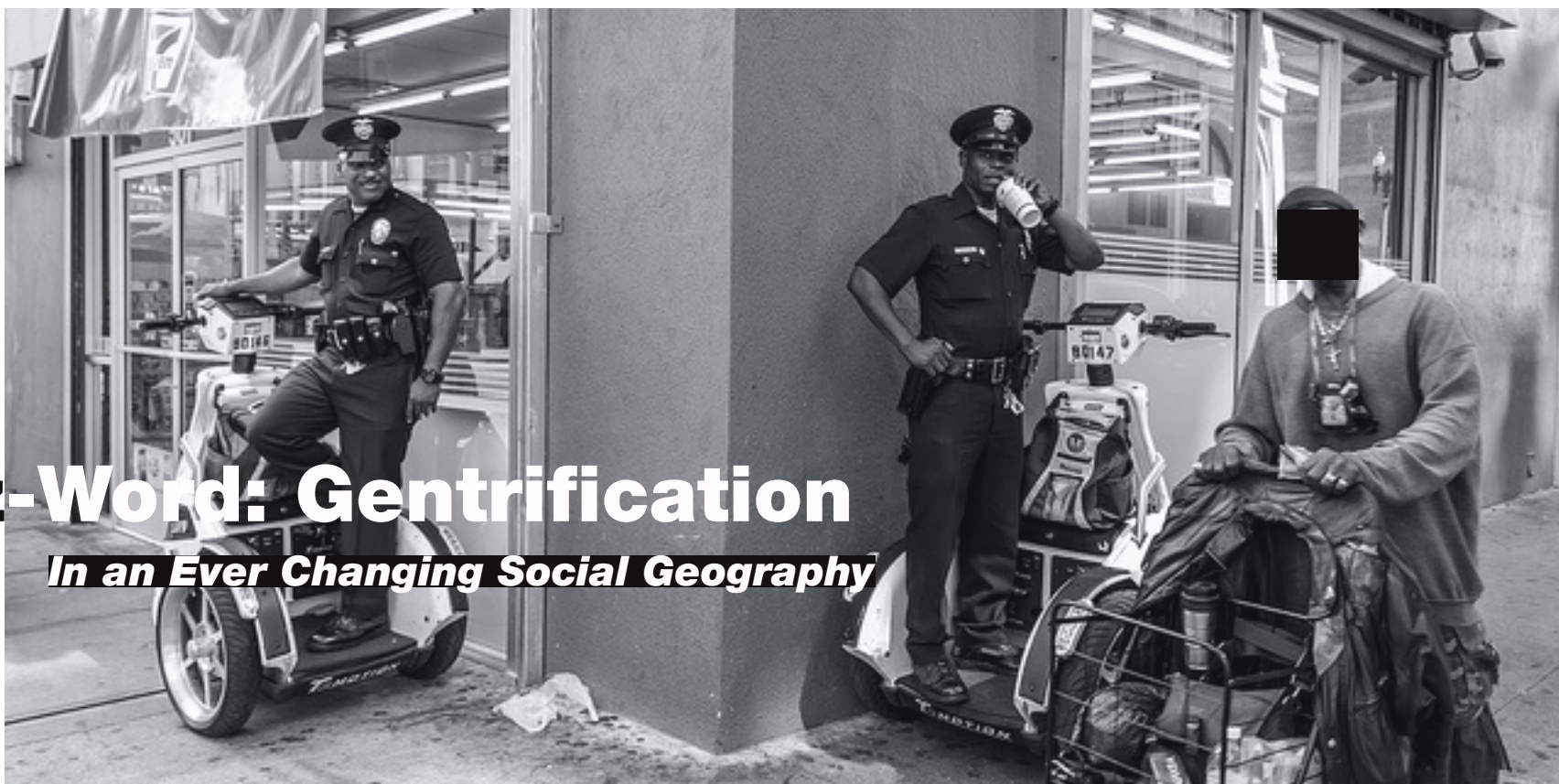
significant sequence of reforms that did not utilize the riot at one point or another. As Paul Gilje, the pre-eminent historian of the US riot, has argued: “Riots have been important mechanisms for change,” and, in fact, “the United States of America was born amid a wave of rioting.” The tactic, then, should by no means be seen as in and of itself exceptional. And it’s also not a sufficient tactic unto itself. The function of the riot is less about a religious or petulant obsession with the act of breaking shit and also not entirely about winning any given demand. This was apparent in examples like Occupy, which had no coherent, agreed-upon demands, aside from a general rejection of those in power. This demandlessness was a feature not only of Occupy, however, but of nearly every one of the mass movements that began in 2011, starting with the Arab Spring. In each instance, the only thing that was agreed upon was that the system was fundamentally fucked, and it was this aspect alone that transformed the riots from mere attempts at reform into truly historical procedures. My generation was not only born into the ecstatic “end of history” of the 1990s, but is also the global generation—of slumdwelling youth and “graduates with no future”—who are inducing the first pangs of history’s rebirth. And this rebirth has taken the figure of the hooded rioter, as has been evidenced by the increasingly frequent transformation of mass riots into occupations of public squares, which themselves evolved into new forms of rioting and, ultimately, the first major insurrection of the 21st century—which took place in Egypt and has since been largely crushed by the Supreme Council of Armed Forces. The riot is most important, then, not in its traditional ability to win demands that progressives can only drool over, but instead when it takes on a demandless character. This absence of demands in the riot and occupation implies two things: First, it implies a rejection of existing mediations. We do not intend to vote for fundamentally corrupt political parties or play the rigged game

of activism. Though it may be important in particular instances to fight for and win certain demands, such as the demand for \$15 an hour, these reforms in and of themselves contribute nothing to the ultimate goal of winning a better world. They can contribute to this project only in very particular contexts, and only when superseded by forms adequate to that true project, as when the growing spate of strikes in Egypt in the years leading up to 2011 was suddenly superseded by a mass insurrection. Second, it implies the question of power. The riot affirms our power in a profoundly direct way. By “our” power I mean, first, the power of those who have been and are continually fucked-over by the world as it presently is, though these groups by no means all experience this in the same way and to the same degree—the low-wage service workers, the prisoners, the migrant laborers, the indebted, unemployed graduates, the suicidal paper-pushers, the migrant workers on the assembly line, the child slaves of Nestle cocoa plantations, my childhood friends who never got out of the trailer or off the rez. But I also mean the power of our generation: the millennials, a label that already implies the apocalyptic ambiance of our era. Or, more colloquially: Generation Fucked, because, well, obviously. The question of power, though, isn’t simply a question of the devolution of power to the majority of people, though this is the ultimate goal. At the immediate level it is a struggle over power between shrinking fractions of the population dedicated to maintaining the complete shit-show that is the status quo, and growing fractions of the population dedicated to destroying that shit-show as thoroughly as humanly possible, while in the process collectively constructing a system in which poverty becomes impossible, no one is illegal, power itself is not concentrated in the hands of a minority of the population, our metabolism with the natural world bears less and less resemblance to the metabolism of a meth-head scouring the medicine cabinet, and the collective material wealth and accumulated intelligence of the human species is made freely accessible to all members of that species, rather than being reserved as party-swig for half-naked Russian oligarchs. Pretending that power does not exist directly serves those who presently hold it. And the riot overturns such pretense by exerting our own power against theirs. It is a mechanism whereby we both scare the rich and attract people to a project that goes far beyond the reform of a collapsing world. In this particular instance, it has worked. Many of the fast food workers with whom I organized in the year following the riot understood its portent perfectly well. By May Day 2013, the riot had taken on a life of its own. The riot, then, is not a hindrance to “real” struggle or a well-intentioned accident where people’s “understandable” anger gets “out of control.” Getting out of control is the point, which is precisely why the riot is the foundation from which any future worth the name must be built. And we will be the ones to build it.

Our generation: the millennials, generation fucked, or, as we’ve taken to calling it: Generation Zero. Zero because we’ve got nothing left except debt—but also nothing to lose. And zero because, like the riot, it all starts here. In the end, then, you can lose the economics, you can lose the spectacle and the moralizing and the god-awful appeals to cute and fuzzy “social/racial/environmental justice.” Throw all of this in the alembic of the riot, and it boils down to the simplest of propositions: *Our future's already been looted. It's time to loot back.*

# Buzz-Word: Gentrification

## In an Ever Changing Social Geography



Through a large part of the 20th century, the suburbs were where the American dream of comfort and privilege was most visible — a safe haven from the urban poor for middle-to-upper class (notably) white people. These new communities lay beyond the noise, overcrowding, and pollution of the inner city, yet were equipped with easy access to the cultural and industrial resources of the urban core. Such became the appeal of suburban life for those who flocked into the suburbs, often taking advantage of home loans offered to the working class as a means of achieving social peace after the post war strike wave receded. But in the post-Great Depression 20th Century, a social geography of economic, educational, and racial segregation inscribed itself along the sprawling urban and suburban fault lines. White flight into the suburbs split America not only along lines of class, but also race.

Now in the 21st century, suburban America is losing its appeal. Inner cities are again becoming the home for the wealthy; the “suburbanites” of a dying era. If you walk through any major city, you can see condo after condo being developed, while communities of color, the poor, and working-class former residents are all displaced — often into the newly abandoned suburbs. Condos have thus become the visual symbol for what many people call gentrification. Gentrification, simply put, is a systematic effort by the State (through institutions such as policing, zoning policies, and the giving of tax breaks to various businesses) and capitalism to re-appropriate and “develop” neighborhoods that were once affordable. I want to explore the logic and politics of this capitalist social maneuver as someone living in a city that is notorious for its gentrifying efforts, as well as someone who is repulsed by it. My hope is that this article helps to articulate the process of gentrification and I aim to expose the authoritarian social order that it inherently serves.

### Beyond our Hatred of Yuppies

It's important to view the rapid pace of people moving to big cities across the world as a result of a post-modern global capitalism. Jobs once provided by American agriculture and industry have disappeared from home soil, due to outsourcing of labor and production costs abroad and increasing automation. Major cities such as Stockton, Fresno, and Detroit that don't have “recession proof industries” such as finance and computer technology, are declaring bankruptcy. Thus, as fracking employees pay Manhattan prices to live in a trailer in oil-rich North Dakota, the employment opportunities of individuals coming to cities like New York City and San Francisco

(both with huge and prospering financial and tech sectors) have a perceived worth that can rationalize the price tag of a brand new condo. The stage is set for a new dawn of urban gentrification.

In San Francisco, a recently constructed bridge with a whopping 6 billion dollar price tag was quickly thrown together despite major design flaws; all to ferry the estimated 2.1 million people that are expected to move into the area by 2040. With this growth and profit in mind, developers are building with no holds-barred as landlords evict thousands and rents across the bay area continue to sky-rocket. Following the construction of this bridge, I was visiting San Francisco and found that the median market rate price of a house was now 1 million dollars. At the same time, many of my friends face eviction (if they haven't already been evicted).

On the other side of the United States, in Manhattan, a city inside a city, the borough is expected to grow by at least 1 million residents before 2030, on top of an estimated 1.6 million current residents as of 2013. One can only assume that this will mean the elimination of countless public housing units (“The Projects”), the conversion of these units to condos, the displacement of thousands of current residents, and continued “new experiments” in real estate development. Examples of this future to come already haunt Manhattan's intimidating skyline. In 2014, the 96th floor of the brand new 432 Park Avenue residential tower will be the highest apartment in the Western hemisphere. This apartment sold for \$95 million dollars (with estimated monthly maintenance fees of \$60,000) shortly after it was made available for purchase. As Manhattan sets the ground to perpetuate itself as a dense fortress for the wealthy, we will see it at the forefront of grossly ambitious developments such as this one. Five other midtown luxury condo towers, ranging between 900 and 1400 square feet, are expected to be finished in the next few years. The 96th floor apartment will lose its status as the highest apartment in the Western World shortly after a similar residential tower standing at 1,423 square feet is finished at 225 West 57th Street. These buildings are also expected to have a real estate value averaging between \$7,000 and \$11,500 dollars a square foot.

While New York City and San Francisco have ever-increasing populations due to finance, tech, and service industry (to serve the former) jobs, other former manufacturing hubs have turned into near ghost towns, and centers of unemployment and despair. For instance, Detroit has lost 25 percent of

its population since 2000 and over 60 percent of its population since the 1950s (the peak period for employment in America's auto industry). This is part of a shift in the American economy as well as an attempt to reign in the working-class in the United States: to make the American worker get by and proportionately live on what workers in other countries make; to roll back the gains made by the working-class in the 19th century. Detroit is thus a prime target, as a former powerhouse of union labor and manufacturing jobs. What has happened in Detroit is not an isolated incident, though, as large portions of its population have moved to the suburbs due to the city's declining services and the breaking down of its infrastructure. Currently, one in seven Detroit residents faces eviction due to tax foreclosure by the end of 2015. This ongoing crisis is also coupled with a push to gentrify downtown Detroit for the sake of generating massive profits for developers and investors. As a 2013 Salon.com article reads:

*The city is in a financial death spiral: so overtaxed and unlivable that most people who can afford to get out are moving to the suburbs, further reducing the tax base and requiring more cuts. Detroit is no longer a city, in the sense of a self-supporting entity: It's the lower-class district of a metropolitan area, abandoned to its dwindling devices. Demographers estimate the population will bottom out at a half-million, but a Detroit News poll found that 40 percent of Detroiters expect to leave in the next five years.*

But while poor and working people, especially people of color— currently the wealth gap between whites and blacks and Latino families is wider than ever, are either stuck in deteriorating cities or pushed out, many “ambitious” mobile young people are flocking to urban centers to find work in booming financial and tech sectors. The ability to relocate to a city where opportunities are available to you is a privileged practice. Recognizing this reality can also help to explain the typically impoverished circumstances of populations that have no choice but to stay in a city like Detroit or Fresno (deemed blighted economic wastelands by capital). It also explains the financial expectations that property owners and developers see in this population shift. In turn, these new residents will pay high rents, will buy expensive coffee and goods, and in turn the police apparatus will welcome and protect them. The architecture of the condo — the aesthetic of contemporary gentrification — tells this story. The condo model was born out of post-WWII Europe exigencies; the need for mass housing and smaller spaces to adapt to the bombed out

parts of Europe. It could be said that these buildings are being built to re-populate the war torn streets of the modern urban ghettos with a different culture of wealth. Compensating for the lack of classical luxury (that had more space for experimentation), the new aesthetic of the urban rich must be minimal and homogenous (so there is an easier mandate on the aesthetic of high class), but isolated to areas deemed approved for the wealthy (proximity to financial centers and a loyal, well-armed police force is indispensable to high condo market rates). This aesthetic has been so associated with the urban wealthy that city governments in San Francisco or Seattle are building housing projects in a similar design to help keep up real-estate rates in extremely poor neighborhoods.

Interestingly enough, in many urban centers, there are often two different kinds of entrances into condo buildings (which in turn contain some amount of usually mandated “low-income” housing). Thus, one entrance for the poor and another for the rich, which keeps the classes (and often races) separate. In a city like Oakland, this also means that renters in “affordable” or “low-income” housing often are located on the bottom of the building and lack access to facilities such as the communal gym, and thus never have to rub elbows with their more wealthy neighbors who lord above them in their condos, with views overlooking the city. Modern design does not hide the everyday class war within racist America; it displays it front and center.

Meanwhile, a rootless generation of wealth occupies city space without connection to the neighborhoods it infests. In the age of techno-capital, connection to local community becomes dispensable.

### Selling the Neighborhood by its “Planned Future”

We live in a society where it is easy for people living in a dense environment to wake up, get on the subway, go to work, then go back home again without ever speaking to anyone they live near (simultaneously being in touch with people the whole time through Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and consuming food via online shops like GrubHub, FreshDirect, and Seamless). You can witness this sort of cultural bubble start to rise with the beginning efforts of gentrification. Affluent Americans produce for themselves a bubble world in geographic locales, which once seemed like permanently violent and criminalized ghettos. This sort of ability by new tenants to exist inside a bubble of social distinction from their immediate surroundings provokes serious social tensions based on race and class between gentrifiers

and the residents threatened with economic exile. A culture both inaccessible and alienating to the original neighborhood is imposed. Even groceries become unaffordable. Eventually, the original residents are entirely priced out by a culture of gentrification.

But this also means that entire development schemes often rest on the success or failure of the bubble itself. If a condo development really wants to sell itself, it also has to sell the neighborhood it is in. This includes access to things like grocery stores and upscale cafés. If these institutions are scared off, then often these projects will be harder to get off the ground. For instance, several years ago in the Phoenix area of Arizona, anarchists successfully stopped a planned yuppie development project by disrupting a push by Whole Foods to develop in a certain area. By stopping the Whole Foods development, they in turn stopped the condos.

### The Police & Broken Windows

A police offensive always accompanies gentrification. A “safe” neighborhood does not mean a neighborhood where people are assured that they will eat, their kids will be safe, and they will have a place to sleep. In the abstract reality imposed by the logic of gentrification, a “safe” neighborhood means an area that is reserved for the lives of the socially included and comfortable: the wealthy and the professional class.

Since the 1990s, New York City has been setting a precedent for prospering cities around the world to expand the profits of local real estate markets, while protecting the comforts of the political and financial elite. The notorious New York Police Department (NYPD) has been a driving force in this informally appointed position of leadership in modern urban planning and policing. In understanding this precedent, I want to focus on the “broken windows” theory made most popular by the NYPD in the early 1990s and which continues today. This theory has helped to eliminate communities through the formal criminalization of poverty and Blackness. Room is made for the wealthy in the ruins of their exile. Although the theory does not explicitly tie itself to gentrification, the approach and results of this style of policing have typically made it possible to completely re-appropriate neighborhoods from ghettos into high-end real estate.

The broken windows theory was originally the name of an article in a 1982 issue of *The Atlantic* magazine. The “broken windows” reference itself stems from this specific comment by the author:

*Consider a building with a few broken windows. If the windows are not repaired, the tendency is for vandals to break a few more windows. Eventually, they may even break into the building, and if it's unoccupied, perhaps become squatters or light fires inside.*

Broken windows theory was based around a desire by the State to police every aspect of daily life and stop small crimes from happening. This desire did not come out of a vacuum, but grew in the wake of large scale riots, uprisings, and insurrections in urban centers in the 1960s and 70s. By preventing low level crimes, (and more importantly policing and managing the people who commit them), elites hoped to prevent the building up of large scale disorder and rebellion from the poor and especially communities of color. This was coupled with a push towards “community policing,” or the imbedding of police forces in the communities that they occupy and police.

In New York City, the infamous “stop and frisk” tactic is a better-known method of this approach to urban policing. This tactic

allowed police to detain and search “suspicious” looking individuals or groups without reasonable grounds, in hopes of finding drugs or weapons that would lead to arrest (Nearly 9 out of 10 people “stopped and frisked” were Black or Latino). This of course led to a feeling of fear among New York's new generation of urban poverty — being in public meant risking arrest. Poor and targeted residents are made uncomfortable where they live. Tenants harassed by police see the appeal in selling their leases (a landlord loophole in getting rent stabilized tenants out by literally paying them to forfeit their leases), or rationalize picking up and leaving entirely. It's this kind of aggressive policing of everyday life that lead the police to harass and murder Eric Garner.

The theory and article itself became better known when it was republished as a supportive piece behind the notion of “quality of life policing.” It reached the ears of the powerful in the early 1990s, when class divisions were reaching a tipping point in New York City. The crime that defined New York City in the 1980s was beginning to bother the wealthy. A collaborative effort between the conservative minds of New York City mayor Rudy Giuliani and his appointed police commissioner Bill Bratton began to formally claim this theory as a new guideline for modern policing and the urban order to come.

Homelessness, low-level violations and poverty became the NYPD targets du jour, with minor marijuana arrests driving police quotas under the ill-conceived War on Drugs. Criminalizing “unwanted” elements in a city also laid the groundwork for massive displacement. Poor and minority communities were violently reified as a criminal element that has failed societal obligations, as opposed to a social class that exists due to the social order failing them. For the police, ticketing, arresting, harassing and marginalizing everyday people became daily business. This is something that has played itself out across major urban cities and helped fuel the hatred shown to police agencies in the rebellions after Michael Brown was murdered in Ferguson, Missouri.

Today, the early 1990s legacy of Bratton and Giuliani live on in New York City — Bratton is oh-so-liberal Mayor De Blasio's top cop. Developers and property owners are demanding more police presence to pave a path for wealthier residents to feel more comfortable moving to neighborhoods still in financial and social transition, such as Bedford-Stuyvesant or Flatbush in Brooklyn (home of murdered youth: Kimani Gray). But with the increased comfort expected to be provided by the police to those who can afford the

Brooklyn real estate market, there can be an expected increase in everyday stress among communities that cannot afford new rent hikes and so forth set in store by the police.

Bratton (also creator of the CompStat system that the New York City police department uses to create statistics and arrest records to help provide direction for police in targeting “unsafe” neighborhoods) has spread his legacy beyond New York's streets. He has been an advisor to the Oakland Police Department in the wake of Occupy, stood by London police in the wake of the Mark Duggan riots, and also built ties with Israeli occupation forces putting down the indigenous Palestinians. And with crime statistics falling (conventionally speaking) in the two largest American metropolitan areas, Bill and Rudy are seen as visionaries for using police in the process of reserving new safe spaces for the wealthy in big cities. All the while the issue of what gets deemed “criminal” goes unaddressed in problematic stats stories. Bratton and Giuliani have both traveled from city to city, in America, and across the world (Los Angeles, Oakland, San Francisco, Seattle, Amsterdam, Salt Lake City, and Rio de Janeiro have all claimed to incorporate these methods into their police practices after being consulted by Bratton or Giuliani) spreading the gospel of “quality of life policing” to police departments and political elites, eventually syndicating NYPD tactics across cities where real estate development is looming.

When this theory of policing was proposed, the authors and followers probably could have never imagined the leaps and bounds of surveillance and technology that have come about since the 1980s. With this approach reaching new technical means to further invade the everyday lives of the criminalized, we can expect to see a generation growing up feeling more claustrophobic than ever before; a generation that will never be allowed to feel at home.

### A Post-Gentrification Generation

*“It is necessary to see, then, that the murderous gangbanging phenomenon which is presently halted has not been, as the bourgeois press would have it, the result of the breakdown of ‘family values’ and the loss of the restraining influence of the middle class as they left for the suburbs ; rather it resulted from: 1) the economics of capitalist restructuring (the replacing of traditional industries with drugs) and 2) the active destruction of political forms of self-organization by state repression. The solution to the problem is the sort shown in the rebellion. The solution to inter-proletarian violence is proletarian violence!”*

-Aufheben #1 1992

On the LA rebellion over Rodney King.

The suburb of Ferguson, Missouri exploded in riots, protests, and looting after police killed the unarmed Black teenager, Michael Brown. What was unique about Brown's death (because Black kids shot by American police is not unique) was that it provoked a real uprising by residents in response, and eventually spread out across the country and even into other countries.

Ferguson was a one-time middle class white suburb that later came to house the increasing population of poor Black families exiled from the developing St. Louis inner city. St. Louis is the 16th fastest growing city in the United States. In the early 1990s, Ferguson was 73.8 percent white. As of 2010 Ferguson had become 70 percent Black. Notably, the 53-officer police department has only three Black cops. This racial transition also meant a complete change of Ferguson's GDP. As of now, 25 percent of the Ferguson population falls under the 2012 poverty line (\$23,492 annual income), and 44 percent fall below half that level. It's no coincidence in a white supremacist culture such as America that poor Black families will be forced into conditions of poverty no matter the social terrain. In the same light, it is no coincidence that police efforts were refocused on the newly impoverished suburbs of St. Louis, a city that in 2000 was only 28.1 percent white, and by 2010 was 49.2 percent white. If you grew up in the inner city ghetto, then were moved to the suburbs, one might assume that new opportunities would be on offer. This is not the case. In fact the de-gentrification of the American suburbs exposes the fact that the fate of poor, Black, or excluded communities is at the complete mercy of municipal economic interests. Understanding society as a place that has appointed you a member of the American ghetto can only encourage a strong feeling of helplessness. You can never really call a place home at this point, because there is a system in place that will always remind you that nothing can ever really be yours. This helplessness is not isolated to Ferguson— social eruptions such as those in the St. Louis suburb will undoubtedly continue to pop up in the headlines as exiled urban populations continue to be forced into the de-gentrifying suburbs.

Unlike in America, the suburban locales in and around Paris have, for some years, been the home of the French lower classes. Parisians enjoy scoffing at the outsiders who cannot afford the privilege of existing and thriving in their ‘beautiful’ European metropolis. In Paris, being poor, homeless, Roma, Black, Arab, or an undocumented immigrant of any kind means you will most likely find a place to live in the suburbs of the big city.







This sort of socio-geographic exclusion in Paris, stretching out from the wealthy center to the surrounding suburbs has led to some of the most dramatic riots contemporary Europe has seen. In 2005, for example, France declared a state of emergency when youth across the suburbs of Paris began burning cars, fighting police, and destroying government buildings. This followed a grim incident, in which a group of young boys being chased by police tried to evade interrogation by hiding inside the walls of an electrical substation, eventually being electrocuted to death. The youth came together in solidarity with the boys who died, they knew the fear the boys who died felt when they ran from the police (as do the youth in Ferguson, coming out for Mike Brown). Through these riots and smaller daily examples of unrest, the young and rightfully angry forcefully tried to manifest their idea of political power. The Paris riots reached far greater heights of violence and destruction than Ferguson — militarized US police armies will have that effect on unrest — but they both shared very similar frustrations and enemies. Also having more of a history of conflict with the ruling central city, there were more models for rioting for French youth. This will come to the US in time if discontent youth in Ferguson and beyond refuse to listen to state anointed community leaders trying to quell and disempower the unrest.

There is no room for comfort in this system for the excluded (Black, Latino, immigrant, poor). Gentrification is a process that doesn't tire of reminding us of this. We cannot fight back and defend our livelihood via alleged rights for tenants or legal defenses. Community leaders and municipal housing groups will never act in the interest of those affected by gentrification. This was made very clear in Ferguson and Paris alike.

The wealthy will continue to win in the process of claiming what is theirs, because the system of rights and legality is completely under their control and in their service.

We must establish a “We” and a “Them” in the fight against gentrification. We must be prepared to contribute to the

tensions that will arise with the proactive re-shuffling of America's social plateau, because no matter what community leaders or politicians say, these are never incidents in isolation, nor is this process something that will ever benefit the poor. Whether it's over a farm in South Central Los Angeles; Gezi Park in Istanbul; the murder of a Black teenager; or in housing slums in Rio, Brazil or Phnom Penh, Cambodia, in the process of re-structuring the fortress of the world's wealthy, a re-occurring suffering and discontent will be ignited. We can also assume, based on the typical shape of gentrification efforts, that the most equally hated targets of community unrest will be the police and real estate developers. Inevitably, one would have to conclude that the biggest enemies of those struggling against gentrification are the state and capitalism.

As the years pass, we will see the liquidation of cultures and communities across major cities. As mentioned before, the estimated population growth in major cities is immense. We can expect the loss of cultures and histories that have defined inner cities for decades. Most likely, the bland suburbs will be re-inscribed as the bland inner city. We all know that the rich are typically boring, self-important, and douche. The estimated population growth of cities like New York City and San Francisco only means a similar displacement of residents to make room. It also means that we can expect new cultures to arise from wasteland cities such as Detroit or de-gentrified suburbs such as Ferguson. These places will continue to generate rage, and this rage is likely to erupt more and more often.

*Gentrification is not based in a new logic; it comes from a capitalist mentality that asserts that the land we all stand on belongs to the few who own us all. It's important that revolutionaries contribute to the dialogue in neighborhoods being undone by gentrification. And with the shifting of US social geography, opponents of this system must wake up to the changing terrain of the perennial attacks on the poor by the rich.*



# UPDATES ON REPRESSION

*In the past we have dedicated pages and pages of this publication to updates on political prisoners around the world. At this point in history though we are concerned with printing information that is most likely to change. This issue's 'repression' section will focus a lot on confirmed releases of prisoners in the states (alone) in the last year. We are proud to include an original article below by the NYC Anarchist Black Cross that will help to update us on that specifically. There are links included here as well that are frequently updated regarding political prisoner statuses and overall repression to explore in learning about what some face now and some may face in the future.*

*In permanent and revolutionary solidarity with imprisoned comrades everywhere, and all enemies of the social order that imprisons the earth and all who inhabit it!*

## COMRADES RELEASED & COMRADES CAPTURED: 2014 U.S. Political Prisoner Update From NYC Anarchist Black Cross

As it's been a while since this magazine has been published, we're limiting our focus to the last year or so. In that year, the trend that's emerged is comrades being released from prison. Some of these folks have been convicted and sentenced within the last five years, while others were imprisoned for decades. All told, in the United States alone, we've seen 19 political prisoners come home in 2014. What that means, beyond the obvious elation of welcoming them back to their homes and communities, is the urgent need for folks committed to the work of providing support to amplify the importance of post-release support.

Over the past few months, NYC ABC, along with a former political prisoner and folks from Bloomington ABC have facilitated a couple of strategic discussions around post-release support. The goal of the discussions is to develop a guide for this specific aspect of prisoner support that will also be of use to a wide range of prisoners and those supporting them. For now, we'll catch you up on who has been recently released.

Our year started off strong with the release of radical attorney Lynne Stewart. Lynne was freed after a successful campaign for compassionate release. Lynne served over four years before being released.

A couple of weeks after Lynne's release, CeCe McDonald finished 19 months of her 41 month sentence and was released. The remainder of her sentence will be served under supervised release. CeCe was attacked by a bigot with a swastika tattoo on his chest, most likely due to being an African-American transwoman. In defending herself, she stabbed her attacker, who later died. As there is no justice in the courts, CeCe was convicted and immediately sent to a men's prison where she served the entirety of her time inside.

Later in January, we saw the release of grand jury resister Jerry Koch. Jerry served over eight months without being charged with a crime, because he was unwilling to cooperate with a grand jury in New York City. The focus of the grand jury seems to have been on actions taken by the “Bicycle Bomber,” but really what matters is that in New York City, as in the Pacific

Northwest, anarchists resisted grand juries and the cops were unable to break them.

In February, John Tucker, of the Tinley Park Five, was released. As John later wrote, “Your letters, donations, and noisy solidarity were things of beauty to eyes forced to view the despair of a broken system day after day and eyes that could not help but watch as any glimmer of hope faded from so many youths as they were dehumanized by the tortuous conditions in which they were forced to dwell.”

A few weeks into February, Earth Liberation Front prisoner Steve Murphy was released. Steve's release came after almost five years in prison for an attempted ELF arson on a town house construction site in Pasadena in 2006.

By the end of February, Cuban 5 prisoner Ruben Campa was released after completing a sentence of over fifteen years in federal prison.

In March, after having served over 44 years in prison, Marshall Eddie Conway was released. Eddie's release came as the result of a 2012 Maryland Court of Appeals decision that was applied retroactively to his case. Despite our ideas of breaking comrades out or helping if they escape, more often than not, we see them released due to public pressure campaigns and the ability of radical attorneys to find ways to exploit court findings in our favor.

In June, Cody Sutherlin was freed. Cody is the third of the Tinley Park Five to be released, having served over two years. The Tinley Park Five are anti-fascists from Indiana who were arrested after a group of almost twenty folks smashed up a gathering of white supremacists in Tinley Park, Illinois. In his words, “With so many wonderful people, faces old and new, doing so many amazing things, it's impossible for my thanks to have a beginning or an end. The thanks that I have for all of you is so deep and infinite that it can't be measured or explained.”

Also in June, after forty years in prison, Black liberation prisoner Sekou Kambui was granted parole in the state of Alabama. This was the first parole attempt in which Sekou had a committed support campaign behind the effort.

One month later, in July, Richard Morano was released from a Canadian prison. Richard was one of five individuals from the United States pursued by Canadian police across international borders years after the 2010 Toronto G20 protests.

Also in July, Cecily McMillan was released after serving about two months on Rikers Island. Cecily was an Occupy Wall Street activist convicted of assaulting a cop, though the reality is that she was sexually assaulted and arrested to cover up the groping she endured.

Finally, near the end of July, Dylan Sutherlin was released after serving over two years in prison as part of the Tinley Park Five. A couple of months later, the last of the Five, Dylan's brother Jason was released, having served the longest prison sentence of the Tinley Park Five.

In September, 2010 Toronto G20 extradited Joel Bitar was dropped off near the United States border, having met the requirements making him eligible for parole

an entire month earlier. Joel served about half of a 19 month sentence for, among other things, smashing up a cop car with a hammer\*.

In November, NATO 3 prisoner Brian Church was released after serving two and a half of a five year sentence. The NATO 3 were convicted of possession of an incendiary device with the intent to commit arson and possession of an incendiary device with the knowledge that another intended to commit arson in the run up to the 2012 NATO gathering in Chicago, Illinois.

Later in November, former Black Panther and Black Liberation Army soldier Sekou Odinga was freed. Sekou served thirty-three years after being convicted of the liberation of Assata Shakur and the attempted murder of six cops (for defending himself against a raid that left one of his comrades dead at the hands of those same cops). Sekou's freedom came as a result of a public campaign and the work of radical attorneys.

In December, the remaining Cuban 5 prisoners— Gerardo Hernandez, Ramon Labaniño, and Antonio Guerrero were released.

Reviewing the nineteen comrades released in 2014, how they secured their freedom runs the gamut— time served to compassionate release to public agitation. Understanding that each prisoner has unique needs and that strategies for freedom vary from one to the next is essential for making sure we prepare in ways that are most effective and use any and all tactics and strategies at our disposal.

While the overall trend was positive, we also lost several comrades to prison.

The case against Tyler Lang and Kevin Olliff, which seemed resolved at the state level, has now been taken on by the FBI. Tyler and Kevin have been charged under the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act (AETA) for allegedly released fox in the American Midwest. Currently, Tyler is free on bail, while Kevin, having completed his state sentence, has been remanded into Federal custody pending trial. Check supportkevinandtyler.com to stay up to date on that case.

In August, Luke O'Donovan accepted a non-cooperating plea agreement in lieu of the decades in prison he faced if convicted— a conviction for defending himself against a vicious queer-bashing in late 2013 that left several folks, including Luke himself, stabbed. Luke is currently serving a two year prison sentence that will be followed by eight years of supervised release in exile— he will be banned from being in any county in Georgia, save for the one in which he serves his supervised release. Visit letlukego.wordpress.com for updates and ways to help.

In September, Eric King was arrested for allegedly attacking a government building in Kansas City, Missouri. As of this writing, Eric is still pre-trial. Practically speaking, that means, if you choose to write him, do not mention his case, anarchist politics, or anything that you wouldn't want to see transcribed and used against him at trial. Visit supportericking.wordpress.com for more information and updates about Eric's case.

We've chosen not to list addresses, as they quickly change and mail does not necessarily follow prisoners. For current addresses, go to nycabc.wordpress.com/guide or visit the support sites of the respective comrades.

*\*While Joel has been released, the other American anarchist extradited for similar crimes, Kevin Chianella is still serving the remainder of his 24 month sentence for his actions during the Toronto 2010 G20.*

*You can write to Kevin at:  
Beaver Creek Medium Institution, 200  
Beaver Creek Drive, Post Office Box  
1240, Gravenhurst, Ontario,  
PIP1W9, Canada.*

*You can find updates on Kevin at:  
notorontog20extradition.wordpress.com*

### **NYC ABC NOTES THE FOLLOWING OCCURRED SHORTLY AFTER THEIR ORIGINAL ARTICLE WAS CONTRIBUTED**

In Mid-January 2015, Tsutomu Shiro-saki was released from a federal prison in Indiana, into the waiting clutches of ICE, who will send him to Japan to begin another prison sentence. This comes after nearly twenty years in prison for a mortar attack on a U.S. embassy in Jakarta.

One day prior to Shiro-saki's release, Puerto Rican independence prisoner and member of Los Macheteros, Norberto González Claudio, was released. Norberto helped plan the single largest armored truck expropriation in U.S. history, grabbing over \$7,000,000 to fund revolutionary projects in furtherance of self-determination for Puerto Rican people under the colonial yoke of the United States.

Also in January, Phil Africa of the MOVE group in Philadelphia died after decades in prison. An article by Ramona Africa of MOVE regarding his death is included below. For more information on MOVE or Phil Africa you can visit: onamove.com

On Saturday, January 10th 2015 Phil Africa, revolutionary, John Africa's First Minister of Defense, and beloved brother, husband and father, passed away under suspicious circumstances at the State Correctional Institution at Dallas, PA. On Sunday, January 4th Phil Africa wasn't feeling well and went to the prison infirmary. Though he wasn't feeling well, other inmates saw Phil Africa walking, stretching and doing jumping jacks. Hearing that Phil was in the infirmary MOVE members drove up to visit him and were denied a visit by the prison. While they were visiting with Delbert Africa, Phil was secretly transported to Wilkes Barre General Hospital where he was held in total isolation, incommunicado for five days.

Prison officials at SCI-Dallas wouldn't communicate about Phil's condition. They told MOVE that Phil was at Wilkes Barre General hospital but the hospital denied he was there and this back and forth lie went on for days almost the entire time Phil was being held. The hospital and the prison behaved very suspiciously denying Phil the ability to call family members or his wife of 44 years, Janine Africa, stating that she was not a blood relative. The hospital and prison received hundreds of phone calls in support of Phil from around the world. When they finally submitted to pressure and allowed Phil to call Janine on Thursday, January 8th he was heavily drugged, incoherent and couldn't even hold the phone to talk to her.

On Friday, January 9th Phil was sent back to the prison infirmary and placed in hospice care upon arrival. On Saturday, January 10th Ramona and Carlos Africa were granted permission to visit Phil in the prison infirmary. When they reached him he was incoherent and couldn't talk or move his head to look at them. An hour after they left Delbert called with the news that Phil passed away.

Inmates in the infirmary and others in the prison were shocked when they heard the news. They had witnessed his vigorous health for decades in the prisons, had just seen him stretching and doing jumping jacks six days earlier. This rapid decline all occurred while he was being literally held incommunicado from his MOVE family at Wilkes Barre General Hospital or Dallas prison or wherever these conspirators were holding him with murderous intent.

The fact that Phil was isolated for the six days before he passed, The prison even refused to acknowledge that he was in the hospital is beyond suspicious.

This is another example of how the system hates MOVE and will do anything to stop MOVE. You can look at the example of August 8th, 1978 when the MOVE 9 were illegally imprisoned, and May 13th, 1985 when the government dropped a bomb and intentionally murdered 11 MOVE members to see this point clearly. When Merle Africa died in prison on March 13th, 1998 the conditions were very similar. She had been one way in the prison, but within hours of being forced to go to an outside hospital she was dead.

Phil made a deep impression on people all around the world. He was constantly writing, often dozens of letters a day, encouraging solidarity and strength, and warmly advising hundreds of people. Phil worked hard to learn to paint and created countless paintings which he sent to supporters for free to draw attention to issues, get ruffled off for the struggle, and bring people together. Phil took his commitment and work as a revolutionary very seriously, but was often smiling, laughing, and giving people hugs and encouragement. He was a warm father figure to many in the prison where he taught inmates how to box, to think, and how to get stronger. Despite having two of his children murdered by the system and being separated by prison, Phil was a father figure to many. He was separated from his wife Janine for over 36 of the 44 years they were married, but he worked hard to stay connected with her even though they were so callously isolated by the system.

It's this system's intention for MOVE people to die in prison. The MOVE 9 never should have been imprisoned at all, and according to their sentence they should have been paroled over six years ago. The death of Merle and Phil Africa rests directly at the feet of this government! Phil will never be forgotten and this is not the end he is dearly missed but his strong example should inspire everyone to fight harder for the freedom of the MOVE 9 and all political prisoners. This latest government treachery will be the fuel needed to motivate people to step up the pace for this revolution.

Long live Phil Africa!  
Long live Merle Africa!  
Free the MOVE9!  
Long Live John Africa!

For More Info Or How You Can Help  
Contact Ramona Africa:  
OnaMoveLLJA@gmail.com

Following this contribution by the NYC Anarchist Black Cross, Eric McDavid was released from prison on January 8th, 2015. This has been some of the best news we've had the delight to print in this publication for years, as Eric has been a frequent focus of our prisoner support section since the beginning of this publication 8 years ago.

The following is a statement from the website greenisthenewred.com regarding Eric's release.

An eco-anarchist who was sentenced to 19 years in prison as an "eco-terrorist" was released from prison today following a court ruling where the government acknowledged withholding evidence during his trial. Eric McDavid was convicted on conspiracy charges in 2007 related to what the government called a plot to blow up the Nimbus Dam. This "conspiracy," though, was the creation of a paid government informant named "Anna" who traveled the country with the group of eco-anarchists, encouraged them to plot illegal activity, supplied them with food and housing and even provided, with the FBI's direction, bomb-making recipes.

"Anna" began working with the FBI after writing a community-college paper on infiltrating protest groups.

"Today we corrected one of the most egregious injustices I have ever encountered in my legal career, if you consider being released after nine years of wrongful incarceration justice," one of Mr. McDavid's lawyers, Ben Rosenfeld,

That statement from Mr. Rosenfeld is no exaggeration. During McDavid's trial, the court heard recordings of "Anna" berating McDavid and his two codefendants — who were pressured to turn against McDavid in exchange for a reduced sentence — that they were not taking action. The entire operation was terminated after it was repeatedly demonstrated that McDavid and the others were never going to blow up any dam.

Still, the FBI trumpeted McDavid's case as a victory in the War on Terrorism. And revealed in his outlandish sentence of 19 years.

Prosecutors in court documents actually stated that "McDavid's homegrown brand of eco-terrorism is just as dangerous and insidious as international terrorism."

What prompted this final round of court proceedings were documents released through the Freedom of Information Act. In turns out that letters between McDavid and "Anna" were given to the FBI's behavioral analysis unit for review. The FBI wanted "Anna" to undergo a polygraph exam to evaluate her outlandish claims. These documents, which clearly cast doubt on everything this woman said in court, were never turned over to the defense. The polygraph never took place.

McDavid's release is a victory, and should be celebrated. But it is also a reminder of how the FBI's obsession with "eco-terrorists" — who have never injured anyone — and the relentless drive to proclaim victories in the War on Terrorism, have robbed McDavid and his family of years of his life.

The brutal reality is that there will be more cases like this, and the FBI's rogue operation will continue, until there is a full-scale government inquiry into how "terrorism" resources are being used to persecute political dissidents. Without a massive change in oversight and accountability, the FBI will be allowed to continue sabotaging the lives of those who dare to resist.

### **STATEMENT FROM ERIC SHORTLY AFTER HIS RELEASE:**

*i cannot begin this without an overflowing-gushing heartfelt thanks for the amazing support, aid, and solidarity provided by so many people from so many places - seeing me through these past 9 years to bring me home...*

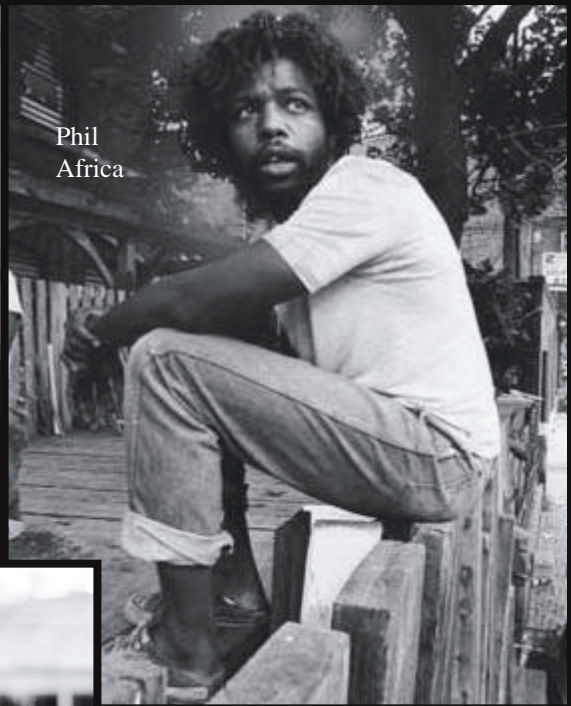
*tears of release and joy will continue to wet my cheeks - i don't wipe them away... the folks at Sacramento Prisoner Support have never wavered in going above and*



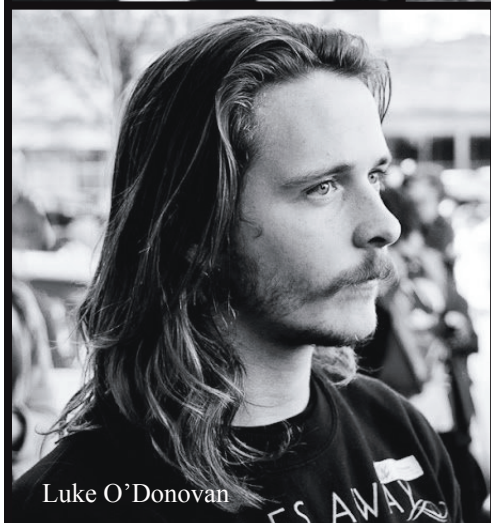
Eric McDavid



Jerry Koch



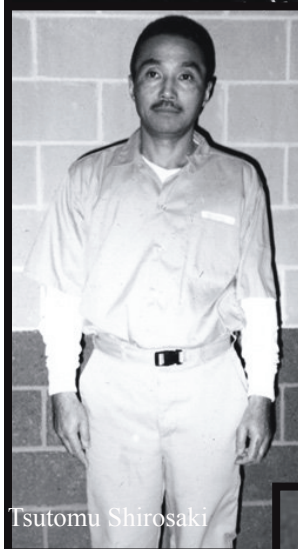
Phil Africa



Luke O'Donovan



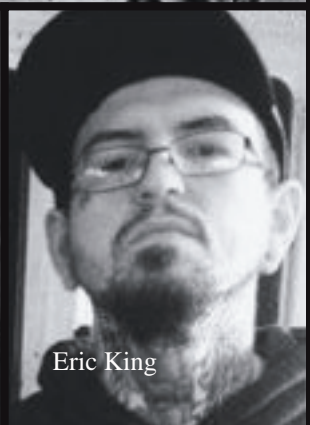
Lynne Stewart



Tsutomu Shiroasaki



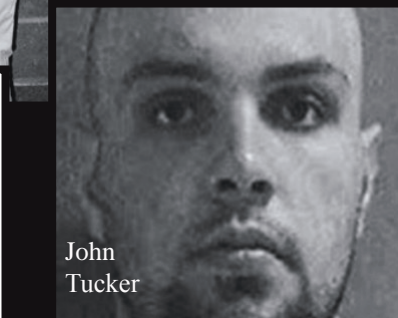
CeCe McDonald



Eric King



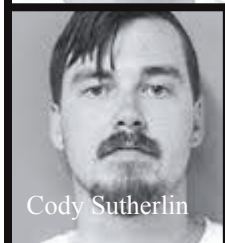
Dylan Sutherlin



John Tucker



Steve Murphy



Cody Sutherlin



The Nato 3



Eddie Conway



Sekou Kambui - 1961



Tyler Lang & Kevin Olliff



beyond while enduring all the pressures that come from moving contrary to what the FBI had considered a closed case - i love you all so dearly. to my habeas attorneys, mark and ben, your work on this process certainly hasn't changed my view of the legal system - but it has proven to me that humyns can actually survive the bar with their strong and beautiful hearts intact, still connected, and persevering as a guiding force in their lives = 'thank you' will never be enough, i love you both... surviving these last 9 years has brought me to a new understanding of patience and how it can be passionate, thereby sustaining the need for a longer view; one that will continue to help me as i move into aiding those still held behind razor wire fences, concrete, and steel... so many others have cases as ridiculous as my own - some much worse, and have been in for decades; a number i met personally and others i dream of meeting upon their release. thank you all so much for all of your love and support as i begin to move into this next phase of my life. i'll be in touch again soon. for now i hope to focus on spending time with my loved ones and reconnecting with the community that i love and have missed for so long.

too much love.  
find UR joy

We would like to add that Eric McDavid was one of three individuals who were arrested as a result of "Anna," a vile sociopath. Unlike his former codefendants, Eric's extreme sentence was a direct result of his refusal to cooperate with the state. His two other codefendants have already served their short sentences years ago, at Eric's expense. Their names are not important though, as, like all snitches who think it's possible to start a new life after cooperating, they have chosen in their shameful decision to be completely abandoned by the anarchist community they insincerely claimed to be part of at the time of their arrests. That said, Eric is not only a courageous figure for those actively defending the earth or resisting the social order of today, but a victory for those resisting state repression everywhere. You can donate to Eric at the website below. There is also an address that he can receive letters or gifts at listed below. He absolutely deserves both.

**Donate Via PayPal at:**  
supporteric.org/howtohelp.  
htm#Fundraising

**You can write Eric or send him a care package at:**  
Eric McDavid c/o SPS  
Post Office Box 163126  
Sacramento, California 95816

**LINKS**

*In addition to the NYC ABC website listed before, these links are very helpful anti-repression and prisoner support websites that can be visited to find out the most up-to-date information on different political prisoners, cases, and overall state repression.*

**Denver Anarchist Black Cross**  
denverabc.wordpress.com/  
prisoners-dabc-supports

**Bay Area Anti-Repression Committee**  
antirepressionbayarea.com

**ABC Berlin**  
www.abc-berlin.net

**Please also learn about and support brothers Jason (convicted anti-fascist serving 41 months) and Jeremy Hammond (hacker serving 10 years)**  
Jeremy: freejeremy.net  
Jason: freejeremy.net/jasonhammond

# JUST ONE MORE SANTA MARTHA PRISON FOR WOMEN

-Amélie Trudeau

A new prisoner arrived in my cell on Wednesday, three days ago now, after spending a month in Ingresso (1). We are four now, in a cell with five beds (One bed is empty). Ingresso is where you go when you first arrive in prison. In the days that follow your arrival, your fingerprints are taken and you have to fill out lots of paperwork. Then, it's meetings with "professionals" who assess your character in order to classify you and finally, you are assigned to a permanent cell with other people who correspond to your profile assessment. You have to meet a psychologist, a criminologist, a social worker, an addiction specialist, a technician, the person in charge of cultural activities and sports, and the person in charge of spiritual and religious activities. All together, their reports make up your profile and classification.

I start to chat with the new arrival and she tells me her story, a story that in her own words denounces the context of the prison in Santa Martha (2). A friend wrote me a letter asking that I write something for FTTP telling what I wanted of my experience here. I wasn't sure what to write, and I didn't want to write another "anarchist propaganda" text filled with concepts. It's at this time that the new arrival started to tell me her story:

B. arrived in Santa Martha on October 18th, imprisoned for passing marijuana into the men's prisons. She arrived here four and a half months pregnant. On October 21st, a Tuesday, she was transported to "Juzgado Oriente" (3). This is a common occurrence at the beginning of a trial; they can send us to court up to three times a week. Going to the Juzgado means that you are told at 2 AM that you need to be ready by 5:30 AM to get stuffed into a barred prison-bus guarded by cops with machine guns at the front. The Juzgado itself is inside the prison for men, where many co-accused are imprisoned.

On this particular morning, B. was transported in one of these buses with 17 other women. In these bus-cages, there are about 40 seats. After spending the whole day at the court, the women were stuffed back in the bus to return to Santa Martha around 7:30 PM, but this time, there were 80 on the bus. The guards decided to fill just one bus with all the women from court, and also from the convivencia (4). Throughout all this, B. decided to stay standing in the bus and to try to maintain her balance. There was also another pregnant woman on board with her. Together, they told the guards with machine guns:

"We are two pregnant women, it seems to us that there are a lot of people on this bus."

**STRONG AND UNCOMPROMISING SOLIDARITY WITH POLITICAL PRISONERS IS INDISPENSABLE TO EVERY REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE**



And the guards responded: "That's not our problem, it's the administration that makes the decisions." The return trip takes about 40 minutes, and all of the women are hyper-stuffed in this bus that bounces every 15 seconds over bumps and holes in the pavement. Finally B. arrives back at Santa Martha just before the cells get locked for the night, around 8 PM. By pure coincidence, the authorities put B. in a cell by herself – meanwhile, there are cells with up to 20 people for only three beds.

The prison is pretty old and the metal doors of the cell lock with a chain and padlock. In the hallways, there are no cameras.

8 PM comes and goes. The cell door is closed and locked. B. starts to feel ill and notices a reddish liquid coming from between her legs. Around 9:30, she alerts the people in the cell across from her about what's going on. They advise her to lie down and rest while they start to call out for the guards. B. is on the second floor and the guards are all on the first floor in the control booth. One after another, all the other women on the second floor start to yell out. After 20 minutes, a guard finally comes upstairs. B. is losing a lot of fluid. When the guard learns of the situation, he goes back downstairs to call a doctor. He comes back five minutes later only to announce that there is no doctor in the medical centre of the prison; there are only nurses. He tells B. that the only way she can get to the medical centre is by walking there. She goes down two flights of stairs and walks the 400 meters to the medical centre all on her own. All along the route, she is losing fluid. Finally, when she arrives, the nurse performs an ultrasound to check the health of the fetus and decides to send B. to the Bosque de Tlawac (5) hospital.

She arrived at the hospital around midnight. The placenta did not contain any more amniotic fluid and the baby was dead. The doctor induced contractions and the baby was still-born around 6 AM on the October 22nd. The doctor told B. that if she had arrived only a little bit earlier, he would have been able to save the baby. B. did not get to see her family. The body of the baby was given to B.'s husband, the baby's father, later that day and was buried the next day by the family. As for B., the guards returned her to Santa Martha that night, the 22nd, around 7:30.

On her arrival, the director of the prison, panicked by what had happened, asked to meet with B. She said she was unaware B. had been pregnant, despite B. stating so to the prison doctor upon her arrival and that her pregnancy was recorded in all her official documents. The director wanted B. to say that if she had a miscarriage, it was because of what she had been told in court that day, even though she only had to go to court to sign some simple papers. The director added that, given her crime, the miscarriage must be B.'s fault due to drug use, even though B. didn't consume drugs at all during her pregnancy.

Next, it was the criminologists' and the psychologists' turn to make the events all her fault. One after another, the authorities disavowed any responsibility for the situation, all the way up to the human rights lawyers of D.F. (6)

This is just one story among many others. Here, they put us in a cage and treat us like CATTLE. One more death is seemingly unimportant. All of this happened 30 days ago now, and my companion is telling me this story, one among all the others that make up our daily existence. This type of story is SILENCED and everything continues like nothing ever happened.

2000 women shut into a hole with cockroaches, bedbugs, and trash. Meanwhile, the prison director and her bosses play sympathetic figures in the media with their leftist discourse, because they organize soccer tournaments and movie screenings "for us."

Let's be done with domination, imprisonment, and domestication. Dignity and freedom to all.

*Those responsible for our imprisonment deserve nothing less than a bomb in their well-feathered nests.*

-Amélie Trudeau

1. Ingreso - From Spanish: "Entrance"
2. Centro Femenil de Reinsercion Social Santa Martha, D.F. Mexico.
3. Juzgado Oriente - From Spanish: "Western Court"
4. Once a week, women from Santa Martha can go visit their husband, partner, or members of their family in the men's prisons. They leave around 8 AM and return around 7 PM.
5. Bosque de Tlawac (sic) - Bosque de Tlahuac
6. D.F. - Distrito Federal - Capital city region of Mexico/Mexico City

## ON THE 5E3

*Solidarity with Carlos, Amélie, and Fallon / Solidarity with the 5E3*

**The following is an excerpt from the 5E3 support publication that can be viewed in entirety here:**  
[325.nostate.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/letters-5e.pdf](http://325.nostate.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/letters-5e.pdf)

On the night of January 5th, 2014 Carlos – a comrade from Mexico, and Amélie and Fallon – two comrades from Canada, were arrested in relation to a Molotov attack on the Ministry of Communication and Transportation and a Nissan dealership in Mexico City. They were arrested at a time of intense crackdown by the Mexican state on anarchists; from attacks on demonstrations, torture of arrested comrades – including the torture and deportation of Gustavo Rodriguez, and barring the entry of Alfredo Bonanno. The state is now attempting to spin a nar-

rative of foreigners coming in and causing disruption, thus ignoring and even erasing the rich history of anarchist struggle against the state in Mexico. Over the past few years in Mexico City, an insurrectionary anarchist struggle has intensified. Bombings of banks and churches, among other institutions of domination, have taken place frequently, and solidarity with insurrectionary anarchists in Mexico and worldwide has been central to these actions. We must recognize that the repression and penalization that comrades are facing now occurs in this context. Regardless of the guilt or innocence of these specific comrades, we want to express solidarity, complicity, and a strong desire to see attacks on the state and capital continue and spread. In reality, the Canadians causing disruption in Mexico are the mining companies and military technologies; the same ones that exploit unceded Indigenous land in Canada and elsewhere around the world. Given that capitalist exploitation and misery knows no borders, the struggle against capitalism and the state apparatus must not stop at national borders. Our strength lies in our capacity to recognize the commonalities of our struggles so that they may spread, and to act in solidarity so that the struggles of our incarcerated comrades may continue.

We write this statement to express our deep solidarity with and love for our friends and comrades – Carlos, Amélie and Fallon. Although we are writing from a different context, it is critical that our solidarity is also with the struggle in which this action occurred. Our friends and comrades facing these charges are experiencing the intensity of repression. Our solidarity must meet that intensity with respect for where they stand, admiration for their strength, and a continuation of the struggle in Canada, Mexico, and globally.

Love and freedom to the 5e three,  
 For freedom and anarchy,  
 -Friends in struggle

### Write to the 5E3

#### Carlos López Marín

Reclusorio Preventivo Oriente  
 Calle Reforma #50, Col.  
 San Lorenzo Tezonco  
 Delegación Iztapalapa, C.P. 09800,  
 Ciudad de México, D.F.  
 México

#### Fallon Rouiller

Centro Femenil de Reinserción Social  
 Santa Martha Acatitla  
 Calzada Ermita, Iztapalapa No 4037, Colonia Santa Martha Acatitla  
 Delegación Iztapalapa, C.P. 09560,  
 Ciudad de México, D.F.  
 México

#### Amélie Trudeau

Centro Femenil de Reinserción Social  
 Santa Martha Acatitla  
 Calzada Ermita, Iztapalapa No 4037, Colonia Santa Martha Acatitla  
 Delegación Iztapalapa, C.P. 09560,  
 Ciudad de México, D.F.  
 México

The 5E3 are Amélie Trudeau Pelletier, Fallon Poisson Rouiller and Carlos López. They are called the 5e3 because they were arrested on January (Enero) 5th and they are 3 individuals. After being indefinitely held without charge under "anti-terrorism" laws by the Mexican state for many months they were finally sentenced based on two separate charges, two separate times. First, on October 31st, 2014, they were given a sentence of 7 years and 6 months. Shortly after they were sentenced to an additional 2 years, 7 months, and 15 days, as well as a 108 thousand pesos in restitution. The sentences will run parallel with each other.

Carlos, Amélie, and Fallon have taken a completely uncooperative response to the state assaulting their lives. They continue to remain active inside prison, and their beautiful hearts have inspired actions in their name that have reached far beyond their prison walls. In recognition of their courage and strength, we have listed a few solidarity actions with the 3 below. Their fighting spirits are contagious, and impossible to fully contain amidst our borderless solidarity.

### SOLIDARITY ACTIONS WITH THE 5E3.

#### January 17th, 2014, USA

Police cars were attacked in Bloomington, IN in solidarity with the 5E3.

#### January 31st, 2014, USA

Locks are glued at a yuppie supermarket in Bloomington, IN in solidarity with the 5E3 and Indiana state prisoners protesting prison conditions on hunger strike.

#### February 11th, 2014, USA

Anarchists march on the Mexican consulate in Seattle, WA.

#### April 12th, 2014, USA

ATMs were destroyed in Seattle, WA in solidarity with the 5E3 and prisoners on hunger strike across WA.

#### May 22nd, 2014, Quebec, CA

In a small suburb of Montreal, over 60 school buses were attacked in solidarity with the 5E3 and against the educational system that looks to condition us all into accepting capital and the state.

#### July 18th, 2014, USA

Twenty-three vehicles were attacked at a Nissan dealership in Olympia, WA, in solidarity with the 5E3. The solidarity action resulted in \$100,000 in damage.

#### Mid-August 2014, USA

Equipment on a construction site for a new McDonalds in Portland, OR was sabotaged by pouring bleach in all the fuel tanks on the site. The action was claimed in solidarity with the 5E3.

#### October 1st, 2014, Quebec, CA

A railroad telecom was burned and three residential development panels vandalized in response to an eviction of Native resisters in Gatineau and in solidarity with the 5E3, somewhere in southern Quebec, Canada.

#### November 10th, 2014, USA

The Mexican consulate in Tucson, AZ was attacked with paint bombs. Graffiti outside the consulate claimed the action in solidarity with the 5E3 via the message: "VENGEANCE FOR LOS NORMALISTAS AND THE 5E3."

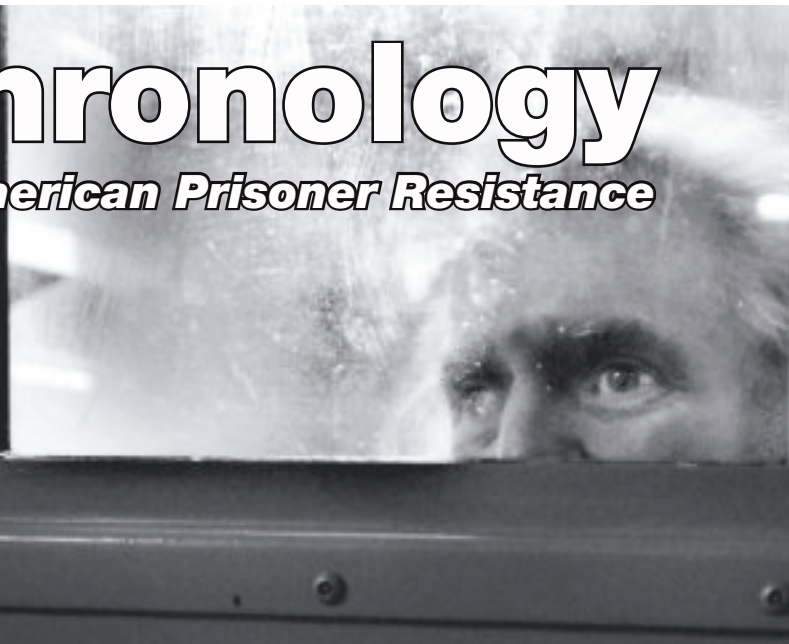


**"The most important thing right now is to build a force stronger than prisons."**

-Fallon Poisson Rouiller

# A Chronology

## Of North American Prisoner Resistance



### From Spring 2011 / Issue 11:

Naturally, the proliferation of the prison has been met with significant resistance from those most affected by it. This may be best understood as a simple conflict of interests: the interests of prisoners against the interests of the prison itself, which does everything necessary to maintain their confinement.

Riots, escapes, inmate fights, staff assaults, refusal of orders, and disturbances of all kinds are some ways in which the tension of this conflict is manifested. Each time the prison cannot proceed with routine operations it loses control of itself; each time the prison loses control, its inhabitants are able to act outside of its constraints, in accordance with their own interests.

All actions which impede prison's aim of social control can be considered tangible resistance.

With only media reports as our sources, it is impossible to document every single case. While reading this list it is important to keep in mind that the inmate is always living in resistance to prison, regardless of whether or not a newspaper article is published about it. The actions reported here are only to serve as examples of those who - even up against the grandeur of the prison and its near-insurmountable walls - manage to act out despite the dismal reality of the situation.

### From Winter / Spring 2015

Due to a lapse of time since our last issue, this 'prisoner resistance' section will be longer than it has been in the past. Although, due to space, we will only be able to focus on 2013 & 2014. We apologize if we have missed anything. We also apologize that we are only reporting on prisoner disruptions and resistance taking place in the United States.

It is also important to note that we do not properly research the legal backgrounds of any individual or group that has committed any of the disruptions mentioned here. It is not possible for us, and defeats the point. While some may be in for crimes we do not condone, or political affiliations we may take issue with, we have printed this section as a tradition in this publication. There is an entire world behind bars as we write this. A sort of desperation is felt by millions incarcerated, every second. It must be appreciated and recognized in understanding the indispensable fight that we must endure until all prisons are eliminated, and the system that requires them to function is revealed for what it really is. This isn't for entertainment, it's to expose the violent suffering and desperation millions feel every day and to show the inevitable reaction all humans feel when they are overwhelmed with constraint.

### The Chronology:

*"A cage is an unnatural environment... You can't put a man or animal in one and expect him to act natural. And it's only instinct to want out."* - Edward R. Jones, a man who escaped from prison 14 times and authored *Hacksaw* about his experiences.

**8 November 2013** - Rutledge, Tennessee, United States - Three prisoners escaped the Grainger County Jail.

**10 November 2013** - Newport, Tennessee, United States - A Cocke County Jail Annex corrections officer was spat on four times and struck in the face.

**18 November 2013** - Represa, California, United States - A California State Prison Sacramento corrections officer was slashed multiple times in the neck.

**23 November 2013** - Leavittsburg, Ohio, United States - A prisoner at Trumbull Correctional Institute took a corrections officer hostage with a homemade knife.

**27 November 2013** - Anchorage, Alaska, United States - A prisoner became disruptive with medical staffers and punched a corrections officer in the face at Anchorage Correctional Center.

**5 December 2013** - Madison, Wisconsin, United States - A Dane County Deputy fractured their shoulder while trying to move a prisoner to another cell.

**7 December 2013** - Albuquerque, New Mexico, United States - A Bernalillo County Metropolitan Detention Center officer was punched in the back of the head 20 times.

**11 December 2013** - San Jose, California, United States - Approximately two dozen Santa Clara County Jail prisoners began a hunger strike to expand visiting hours. The strike one week and ended with no concessions by the prison administration.

**16 December 2013** - Merced, California, United States - A prisoner at the John Latorraca Correctional Facility climbed out through the ceiling of their cell and escaped.

**17 December 2013** - Corcoran, California, United States - A staff psychologist at the Substance Abuse Treatment Facility and State Prison lost consciousness after being punched in the face by a prisoner.

**18 December 2013** - Tallahassee, Florida, United States - A Leon County prisoner asked a corrections officer if they were carrying a taser and struck them in the face and head several times when they responded "no."

**21 December 2013** - Lexington, Oklahoma, United States - A case manager at the Joseph Harp Correctional Center was attacked by a prisoner and suffered a broken nose.

**25 December 2013** - Fort Wayne, Indiana, United States - An Allen County Jail CO was hit head with a food tray and then punched in the head more than a dozen times, kicked twice, and had a second food tray thrown at their head.

**28 December 2013** - Detroit, Michigan, United States - A Detroit Reentry Center prisoner leaped from a van carrying five other prisoners and a corrections officer and escaped.

**29 December 2013** - Blythe, California, United States - Four Riverside County Jail COs were hospitalized after an assault by four prisoners.

**30 December 2013** - Little Rock, Arkansas, United States - A prisoner at the Pulaski County Regional Detention Center set their padded cell on fire.

**3 January 2014** - Fayetteville, Tennessee, United States - A prisoner in a lockdown cell set a fire which temporarily closed the Lincoln County Jail.

**10 January 2014** - Whitehall, Wisconsin, United States - A prisoner escaped from the Trempealeau County Health Care Center by jumping out the second story window and stealing a vehicle parked running outside a gas station. Unfortunately, they were taken into custody after a low-speed chase.

**12 January 2014** - Beatrice, Nebraska, United States - A Gage County Jail corrections officer was injured in a struggle with a prisoner who refused to enter their cell.

**15 January 2014** - Franklin, Indiana, United States - A Johnson County prisoner bolted out of the Johnson County Courthouse's basement door. Unfortunately, the prisoner, who told a sheriff's deputy, "Good luck catching me" before taking off, was apprehended shortly afterwards.

**16 January 2014** - Carson City, Nevada, United States - The Nevada Supreme Court was evacuated after a letter containing a suspicious powder labeled as anthrax was opened. It was determined the letter was sent from a prisoner housed at High Desert State Prison or Southern Nevada Correctional Center, both of which are located in Indian Springs.

**16 January 2014** - Napanoch, New York, United States - Three Gouverneur Correctional Facility officers were injured while escorting a prisoner to a special housing unit.

**17 January 2014** - Freeport, Illinois, United States - A Stephenson County Jail prisoner escaped from the Stephenson County Courthouse by holding onto the underside of a transport van.

**18 January 2014** - Albion, New York, United States - A corrections officer at the Orleans Correctional Facility sustained back injuries and a laceration on their arm when a prisoner rushed onto a podium in the dorm and attacked them.

**20 January 2014** - Cooperstown, New York, United States - An Otsego County Correctional Facility officer was "intentionally punched" by a prisoner.

**23 January 2014** - Attica, New York, United States - A corrections officer was stabbed with a pen multiple times at Attica Correctional Facility.

**29 January 2014** - Pryor Creek, Oklahoma, United States - Two prisoners removed a metal grate covering a window and broke out of Mayes County Jail.

**31 January 2014** - Bellevue, Washington, United States - A shackled prisoner being transported from King County Jail jumped into a waiting car and escaped the Bellevue District Court.

**1 February 2014** - Trenton, New Jersey, United States - A prisoner beat and choked a corrections officer at New Jersey State Prison.

**2 February 2014** - Ionia, Michigan, United States - A prisoner escaped the Ionia Correctional Facility.

**3 February 2014** - Clallam Bay, Washington, United States - A Clallam Bay Corrections Center CO was repeatedly stabbed in the face, head, neck, hands and torso.

**5 February 2014** - Alden, New York, United States - Two Gowanda Correctional Facility COs were assaulted by several prisoners.

**6 February 2014** - Lindsay, Ontario, Canada - Prisoners at the Central East Correctional Centre set fires, tore down lights and damaged the ceiling as they tried to breach a section of the building.

**8 February 2014** - Attica, New York, United States - Five corrections officers were injured trying to restrain a Wyoming Correctional Facility prisoner.

**10 February 2014** - Fairfield, California, United States - A prisoner at Solano County Jail blasted three corrections officers with a fire extinguisher in an unsuccessful escape attempt.

**14 February 2014** - Indiana, Pennsylvania, United States - A corrections officer was punched and kicked following a verbal exchange with a prisoner at SCI Pine Grove.

**18 February 2014** - Dahlonega, Georgia, United States - Two prisoners removed a toilet, broke through an interior cell wall, entered a mechanical area, damaged a window and exited the Lumpkin County Detention Center.

**18 February 2014** - Parkersburg, West Virginia, United States - Six prisoners attacked Lorrie Yeager Jr. Juvenile Center correctional officers using tables, chairs and throwing other items. The six prisoners were locked in a dayroom where they broke windows, a large flat screen television, duct work and sprinkler heads. The group then broke into and destroyed property in three offices and an adjoining laundry room.

**19 February 2014** - Machiasport, Maine, United States - A prisoner escaped the Downeast Correctional Facility.

**24 February 2014** - Paris, Arkansas, United States - A prisoner escaped the Logan County Jail for the second time.

**25 February 2014** - Milwaukee, Wisconsin, United States - A Milwaukee County Jail prisoner crossed a red line into the corrections officers' work area, which is off-limits to prisoners, and injured three officers.

**25 February 2014** - Covington, Louisiana, United States - A prisoner failed to return to the North Shore Workforce Facility at the end of their shift.

**27 February 2014** - Auburn, New York, United States - Two Auburn Correctional Facility officers were assaulted during a frisk search.

**1 March 2014** - Urania, Louisiana, United States - Three prisoners escaped the LaSalle Correctional Facility in a stolen truck.

**3 March 2014** - Bellefonte, Pennsylvania, United States - A SCI Benner prisoner lit a fire in their cell and attacked the officer who tried to put it out.

**3 March 2014** - Williamsburg, Virginia, United States - A Virginia Peninsula Regional Jail prisoner threw unknown liquid on a corrections officer and then punched them in the groin.

**4 March 2014** - La Junta, Colorado, United States - Four Otero County Jail prisoners rushed a corrections officer as they opened a cell door and managed to escape.

**6 March 2014** - Buckeye, Arizona, United States - A corrections officer was struck several times by a prisoner with a small, weighted bag at the Eagle Point Unit of the Lewis Complex.

**9 March 2014** - Parker, Arizona, United States - A prisoner escaped the Colorado River Indian Tribe Adult Detention Facility.

**10 March 2014** - Rikers Island, New York, United States - Four Rikers Island prisoners broke down cinderblock walls, crawled through the holes and assaulted an officer with bricks in an unsuccessful escape attempt.

**10 March 2014** - Moorhead, Minnesota, United States - A Clay County Jail corrections officer was knocked unconscious and suffered fractures to their left eye socket and cheekbone.

**10 March 2014** - Albany, New York, United States - A hospitalized prisoner from Coxsackie Correctional Facility punched a corrections officer in the face after being verbally abusive to clergy and staff at Albany Medical Center.

**11 March 2014** - Mankato, Minnesota, United States - For the second time in two days, a Blue Earth County Jail prisoner stood on the toilet of their cell and used a pencil to damage the fire sprinkler.

**12 March 2014** - Shelbyville, Kentucky, United States - A Spencer County Jail prisoner being transported slipped out of their restraints, choked and disarmed the jailer who was driving, and tried to shoot both the jailer and a truck driver who stopped to help.

**12 March 2014** - Lexington, Oklahoma, United States - A prisoner briefly held a Lexington Assessment and Reception Center staff member hostage, but unfortunately they were released without incident.

**13 March 2014** - Leonardtown, Maryland, United States - A St. Mary's County Detention Center officer was bit on the arm.

**19 March 2014** - Edwardsville, Illinois, United States - A Madison County Criminal Justice Center officer was assaulted.

**23 March 2014** - Marcy, New York, United States - Two Central New York Psychiatric Center correction officers were assaulted by a prisoner with an aluminum walker.

**25 March 2014** - Saint Paul, Minnesota, United States - A prisoner at the Ramsey County Law Enforcement Center refused to return to their cell and attacked a corrections officer.

**26 March 2014** - Fishkill, New York, United States - A Downstate Correctional Facility prisoner assaulted two corrections officers.

**28 March 2014** - Moncks Corner, South Carolina, United States - Two Berkeley County Detention Center officers were injured while trying to move a prisoner to a new cell.

**30 March 2014** - New Orleans, Louisiana, United States - Two sheriff's deputies were injured in a scuffle with a prisoner at Orleans Parish Prison who refused orders to return to their cell.

**30 March 2014** - Tucson, Arizona, United States - A prisoner walked away from the Federal Correctional Complex Satellite Camp.

**31 March 2014** - Hillsborough, North Carolina, United States - An Orange Correctional Center prisoner walked away from an outside work assignment.

**2 April 2014** - Iowa Park, Texas, United States - Two corrections officers were repeatedly stabbed by multiple prisoners at the Allred Unit.

**4 April 2014** - Coxsackie, New York, United States - Four correctional officers were injured during a prisoner assault at Coxsackie Correctional Facility.

**11 April 2014** - Douglasville, Georgia, United States - A Douglas County Jail prisoner grabbed a can of pepper spray that an officer dropped and sprayed four officers who were attempting to break up a fight.

**11 April 2014** - Sunbury, Pennsylvania, United States - A prisoner assaulted three corrections officers at Northumberland County Prison.

**14 April 2014** - Indianapolis, Indiana, United States - A Marion County Jail corrections officer was hit in the face with a bowl of hot ramen noodles.

**16 April 2014** - East Elmhurst, New York, United States - A Rikers Island prisoner broke the jaw and nose of a staff worker at the George R. Vierno Center.

**17 April 2014** - Dallas, Pennsylvania, United States - a prisoner crafted a weapon from a toothbrush and razor and slashed a SCI-Dallas corrections officer across the face.

**18 April 2014** - Greenville, Illinois, United States - a prisoner escaped the Bond County Jail through a vent in the ceiling.

**19 April 2014** - Elko, Nevada, United States - An Elko County Jail prisoner tore out the table attached to their cell wall and assaulted a corrections officer trying to subdue them.

**20 April 2014** - Lorain, Ohio, United States - A Lorain City Jail officer was assaulted as they tried to put a prisoner in a restraint chair.

**21 April 2014** - Shepherdsville, Kentucky, United States - The Bullitt County Courthouse was evacuated when a Bullitt County Jail prisoner called in a bomb threat.

**21 April 2014** - Salt Lake City, Utah, United States - A Salt Lake County Jail prisoner assaulted a correctional officer after the officer ended their phone call.

**22 April 2014** - Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, Canada - Five prisoners breached a locked door at Saskatchewan Penitentiary and attacked two correctional officers. A warning shot was fired to end the fight, but in the process a correctional officer was hit in the face with shrapnel and suffered injuries.

**22 April 2014** - Stigler, Oklahoma, United States - a prisoner entered a plumbing section of the Haskell County Jail and used a rope they made to break free.

**22 April 2014** - Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, Canada - Five prisoners breached a locked door at Saskatchewan Penitentiary and attacked two correctional officers. A warning shot was fired to end the fight, but in the process a correctional officer was hit in the face with shrapnel and suffered injuries.

**22 April 2014** - Stigler, Oklahoma, United States - a prisoner entered a plumbing section of the Haskell County Jail and used a rope they made to break free.

**23 April 2014** - Warren, Ohio, United States - Three Trumbull County Jail prisoners assaulted and handcuffed a corrections officer. The prisoners covered the door of the room with sheets and tied them to the table so that should anyone try to enter, the sheets would tighten. Unfortunately, the officer was released uninjured after five hours.

**24 April 2014** - Tulsa, Oklahoma, United States - A Tulsa County Jail corrections officer suffered a fractured skull after being beaten by a prisoner with a broom handle.

**27 April 2014** - Laurel, Mississippi, United States - A Jones County Adult Detention Center prisoner stabbed two corrections officers.

**28 April 2014** - New Castle, Indiana, United States - Two prisoners used a stolen kitchen knife to pry open the metal siding on a wall near the roof and escape.

**29 April 2014** - Fort Edward, New York, United States - A local lawyer was knocked unconscious after they were assaulted by a prisoner in Washington County Jail during a meeting for a parole violation hearing.

**30 April 2014** - Portland, Oregon, United States - A Columbia River Correctional Institute prisoner escaped.

**3 May 2014** - Henrietta, Missouri, United States - a prisoner escaped through the ceiling of the Ray County Jail.

**5 May 2014** - Madras, Oregon, United States - For the second time in a week, a prisoner escaped the Deer Ridge Correctional Institution.

**9 May 2014** - Folsom, California, United States - Two California State Prison-Sacramento correctional officers were assaulted.

**11 May 2014** - Phoenix, Arizona, United States - A Lower Buckeye Jail officer had their nose broken.

**13 May 2014** - Fort Madison, Iowa, United States - Four Iowa State Penitentiary corrections officers were assaulted by a prisoner.

**9 May 2014** - Fort Wayne, Indiana, United States - Two Allen County Jail corrections officers were assaulted.

**23 May 2014** - Seward, Alaska, United States - A Spring Creek Correctional Center officer was punched in the face by a prisoner who "became agitated."

**24 May 2014** - Salinas, California, United States - 14 prisoners attacked four Monterey County Jail deputies who were attempting to move them from the pod.

**26 May 2014** - Madisonville, Kentucky, United States - A Webster County Jail prisoner escaped while being transported to Baptist Health Madisonville for treatment.

**29 May 2014** - St Albans, Vermont, United States - For the second time in a week, a prisoner at the Northwest State Correctional Facility assaulted a corrections officer who requested they take down an object covering their cell door window.

**30 May 2014** - Licking, Missouri, United States - Two South Central Correctional Center officers were assaulted.

**31 May 2014** - Anchorage, Alaska, United States - An Anchorage Correctional Center officer was assaulted.

**2 June 2014** - Nashville, Tennessee, United States - a prisoner at the Tennessee Prison for Women climbed a fence to escape but was captured before they could leave the prison grounds.

**3 June 2014** - St John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada - Twelve prisoners at Her Majesty's Penitentiary in St. John's destroyed furniture and refused to return to their cells.

**7 June 2014** - Quebec City, Quebec, Canada - Three prisoners escaped the Orsainville Detention Centre by way of helicopter.

**10 June 2014** - Adrian, Michigan, United States - A prisoner broke the lock on a cell door and escaped from the Lenawee County Courthouse.

**13 June 2014** - Henderson, Tennessee, United States - Two Chester County Jail corrections officers were assaulted.

**15 June 2014** - Honolulu, Hawaii, United States - A prisoner escaped the Oahu Community Correctional Center by climbing through an opening in the ceiling, jumping 8' from the roof and walking through an open gate.

**15 June 2014** - Watertown, New York, United States - A Watertown Correctional Facility officer was pushed down the stairs.

**18 June 2014** - Oskaloosa, Iowa, United States - A Mahaska County Jail prisoner assaulted a corrections officer with a fire extinguisher in an unsuccessful escape attempt.

**19 June 2014** - Comstock, New York, United States - A Great Meadow Correctional Facility corrections officer was repeatedly stabbed by a prisoner with an 8" piece of brass.

**19 June 2014** - Lambertville, New Jersey, United States - A Mercer County Jail corrections officer was slapped by a prisoner who refused to return to lockdown.

**20 June 2014** - Chino, California, United States - Three corrections officers were assaulted by a prisoner at the California Institution for Men.

**21 June 2014** - Pine Bluff, Arkansas, United States - A prisoner escaped the Pine Bluff Unit with a shotgun.

**22 June 2014** - Alcorn County, Mississippi - Two prisoners attacked a Alcorn County Regional Correctional Facility corrections officer and used their keys to escape.

**25 June 2014** - Chandler, Oklahoma, United States - 28 prisoners staged a riot at the Lincoln County Jail.

**27 June 2014** - Vienna, Illinois, United States - A Shawnee Correctional Center CO was assaulted and suffered a broken jaw.

**28 June 2014** - Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, United States - a prisoner escaped the Luzerne County Correctional Facility.

**28 June 2014** - Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, United States - a prisoner escaped the Luzerne County Correctional Facility.

**30 June 2014** - Chehalis, Washington, United States - Three Green Hill School corrections officers were assaulted by a prisoner.

**1 July 2014** - Canton, Texas, United States - prisoners at the Van Zandt County Detention Center figured out a way to compromise the locking systems used throughout the facility. More than 120 prisoners had to be moved while the locks were replaced.

**2 July 2014** - Portales, New Mexico, United States - A Roosevelt County Detention Center prisoner on work detail attacked a corrections officer with a pick axe and escaped with a patrol car.

**6 July 2014** - Amite City, Louisiana, United States - a prisoner dug an 8" hole in their jail cell's cinderblock wall and escaped the Tangipahoa Parish Jail.

**6 July 2014** - Stormville, New York, United States - Four Green Haven Correctional Facility corrections officers were assaulted by a prisoner.

**7 July 2014** - Racine, Wisconsin, United States - A Racine County Jail corrections officer was punched in the head.

**10 July 2014** - Belmont, New York, United States - An Allegany County Jail destroyed a fire sprinkler head, filling the area of the jail with several hundred gallons of water.

**11 July 2014** - New Orleans, Louisiana, United States - a prisoner at the Orleans Parish Conchetta Jail pulled a improvised knife from a bible and stabbed three corrections officers.

**11 July 2014** - Aurora, Illinois, United States - A corrections officer fractured two ribs when they were kicked in the chest by a prisoner at the Aurora Police Department.

**12 July 2014** - Camp Verde, Arizona, United States - a prisoner escaped the Camp Verde Jail by hoisting themselves atop a basketball hoop, grabbing onto an overhead security fence and pulling it apart.

**13 July 2014** - Gowanda, New York, United States - Three corrections officers were injured at the Gowanda Correctional Facility.

**15 July 2014** - Mason City, Iowa, United States - a prisoner being treated at the Mercy Medical Center North Iowa injured a corrections officer in an unsuccessful escape attempt.

**16 July 2014** - Purvis, Mississippi, United States - A Lamar County prisoner escaped from road detail by stealing a sheriff's passenger van.

**17 July 2014** - Vienna, Illinois, United States - A Shawnee Correctional Center officer was assaulted and suffered a mild concussion.

**20 July 2014** - Bend, Oregon, United States - a prisoner scaled a fence to escape from a work crew.

**24 July 2014** - Meridian, Mississippi, United States - Three East Mississippi Correctional Facility corrections officers were assaulted by two prisoners as they were moving another prisoner to solitary confinement.

**25 July 2014** - Vienna, Illinois, United States - A corrections officer was head butted and suffered a concussion at the Shawnee Correctional Center. This was the third assault on staff in less than a month.

**27 July 2014** - Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, Canada - Four prisoners at the Prince Albert Youth Residence broke windows and damaged walls after barricaded themselves in a room.

**29 July 2014** - Meridan, Mississippi, United States - a prisoner stabbed four prison employees at the East Mississippi Correctional Facility.

**30 July 2014** - Brighton, Colorado, United States - An Adams County Jail corrections officer was assaulted by three prisoners in an unsuccessful escape attempt.

**1 August 2014** - Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania, United States - a prisoner hopped the fence of the Luzerne County Correctional Facility.

**3 August 2014** - Wichita, Kansas, United States - A Sedgwick County prisoner punched a deputy several times in the face.

**6 August 2014** - Missoula, Montana, United States - A Missoula County Jail Officer was attacked and hospitalized.

**8 August 2014** - Waynesburg, Pennsylvania, United States - The unit manager of SCI-Greene was repeatedly struck in the head with a sock tied to a lock by a prisoner yelling "I fucking told you I was going to get you."

**9 August 2014** - Salem, Oregon, United States - A Mill Creek Correctional Facility prisoner walked out of the prison.

**17 August 2014** - Grants, New Mexico, United States - Approximately 60 prisoners at the Cibola County Detention Center participated in a riot that caused \$75,000 in damages. For 45 minutes prisoners destroyed porcelain toilets and sinks, air ducts, bunks, windows, microwaves, television sets, and security cameras. The prisoners defended themselves with plumbing fixtures they ripped out of the walls and improvised maces made of railings from bunks and shards of porcelain strapped to the ends with cloth.

**22 August 2014** - Florence, Arizona, United States - Thirteen prisoners refused to enter their cells at the Florence Correctional Center and for 30 minutes smashed televisions, microwaves and other equipment.

**23 August 2014** - West Union, Iowa, United States - a prisoner being treated at the Palmer Lutheran Health Center grabbed a corrections officer's gun and shot him with it before killing himself.

**25 August 2014** - Little Rock, Arkansas, United States - a prisoner escaped from custody while being transported to the Pulaski County Courthouse.

**27 August 2014** - Atlanta, Georgia, United States - An Atlanta City Detention Center corrections officer trying to retrieve a cell phone was attacked by more than a dozen prisoners.

**1 September 2014** - Nashville, Tennessee, United States - 32 prisoners crawled through a weak spot in the fence of the Woodland Hills Youth Development Center.

**3 September 2014** - Marcy, New York, United States - Twelve corrections officers Central New York Psychiatric Center were injured when they were attacked by six prisoners.

**5 September 2014** - Saginaw, Michigan, United States - A lone Saginaw County Jail prisoner injured three corrections officers.

**8 September 2014** - Woodburn, Oregon, United States - Three prisoners at MacLaren Youth Correctional Facility barricaded themselves in a living unit and used a pair of scissors and the metal leg of a bunk bed as weapons to fend off staff workers.

**9 September 2014** - Grants Falls, Montana, United States - Two prisoners held at the Cascade County Detention Center damaged multiple cell doors causing approximately \$4,000 in damages.

**11 September 2014** - Williamstown, Kentucky, United States - Two prisoners escaped from the Grant County Detention Center by climbing through a pipe channel and walking out the maintenance door.

**12 September 2014** - Salem, Oregon, United States - Two police agencies responded to an incident at Hillcrest Youth Correctional Facility when prisoners broke a door and several windows, threatened staff and refused orders to stop.

**18 September 2014** - Minneapolis, Minnesota, United States - a prisoner fought off deputies and fled the Hennepin County Courthouse.

**19 September 2014** - Madera, California, United States - Five prisoners escaped from the Madera County Jail.

**20 September 2014** - New Lebanon, Ohio, United States - Four prisoners assaulted a staff member in the gymnasium before running into the main hallway, where they attempted to break the security glass in an attempt to escape the Center for Adolescent Services detention facility.

**22 September 2014** - Okmulgee, Oklahoma, United States - prisoners at the Okmulgee County Jail broke glass and sprinkler heads, started a fire with electrical wires and barricaded units in a riot that ultimately caused \$10,000 in damages.

**24 September 2014** - Vandalia, Illinois, United States - a prisoner escaped the Vandalia Correctional Center.

**29 September 2014** - Tyrone, Pennsylvania, United States - A Loysville Youth Development Center staff member was "rendered unconscious" by a punch from a prisoner.

**1 October 2014** - Bay City, Michigan, United States - A Bay County Jail CO was repeatedly slapped by a prisoner.

**2 October 2014** - Elyria, Ohio, United States - a prisoner at the Lorain County Jail ignored requests to return to their cell and instead broke the guard's nose.

**5 October 2014** - Golden, Colorado, United States - a prisoner slipped through a section of metal mesh fencing in the outdoor recreation area of the Jefferson County Jail in the facility's first ever escape.

**15 October 2014** - Bordentown, New Jersey, United States - A Juvenile Medium Security officer was hospitalized for facial injuries after they were sucker punched by a prisoner.

**15 October 2014** - Rikers Island, New York, United States - 4 corrections officers were injured in three separate prisoner attacks. The evening culminated in "melee" after General Population prisoners refused to lock into their cells for the night.

**17 October 2014** - Freeland, Michigan, United States - a prisoner at the Saginaw Correctional Facility assaulted a prison correction officer shortly after a shift change. The CO was struck five times in the head with a padlock in a sock resulting in a fractured skull. Additionally, they received multiple stab wounds resulting in a collapsed lung.

**22 October 2014** - Indiana, Pennsylvania, United States - A person in custody at the Indiana County Jail "became angry and destroyed a fire suppression/sprinkler system" and waved the sprinkler head around "in an attempt to taunt and injure the correctional officers."

**23 October 2014** - Huntsville, Texas, United States - a prisoner at the Texas Department of Criminal Justice Prison was indicted for mailing a death threat to a federal judge.

**28 October 2014** - Rome, Georgia, United States - a prisoner at the Floyd County Jail is charged with Felony Interference of Government Property after they intentionally flooded one of the cellblocks.

**3 November 2014** - Washington, DC, United States - A prisoner escaped from the Psychiatric Institute of Washington.

**5 November 2014** - Bakersfield, California, United States - A Lerdo Detention Facility prisoner escaped in an ambulance from a medical facility they were receiving treatment at. Unfortunately, they were caught shortly afterwards.

**8 November 2014** - Tacoma, Washington, United States - A Pierce County Jail prisoner escaped from the kitchen area as trash was being taken out.

**11 November 2014** - Monroe, Washington, United States - A corrections officer was assaulted in the dayroom of the Monroe Correctional Complex.

**16 November 2014** - Chillicothe, Ohio, United States - a prisoner at the Law Enforcement Complex tried to use a disposable lighter to burn through a plexiglass window.

**16 November 2014** - Hoffman, North Carolina, United States - Two prisoners escaped from the Morrison Correctional Unit.

**17 November 2014** - Abilene, Texas, United States - A corrections officer at the Robertson Prison Unit suffered a broken nose and several lacerations to their face when they were assaulted transporting a prisoner from one area of the unit to another.

**18 November 2014** - Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, United States - Three corrections officers were stabbed at the Philadelphia Industrial Correctional Center.

# Ferguson & Beyond

## INTRODUCTION

The name of the town Ferguson, Missouri has taken on a meaning of its own. We can say “Ferguson” in a bar, and be understood that we’re talking about Mike Brown, Eric Garner, and the wave of protests across the United States. While Al-Jazeera, post-Occupy media, or the Guardian like to talk about murders by the police as something new, we have been covering instances of tragedy conducted by the police and disorderly reactions to them since the dawn of this publication.

Since last summer, for the first time in our publication’s history, we feel overwhelmed with excitement by the amount of anti-police tension that has been sparked in the mainstream since our last issue came out in 2011. Dialogue among excluded folks, poor communities, and those overall of a more liberatory view or precarious existence is becoming increasingly insurrectionary in nature. Ironically, we are overwhelmed by the task at hand for us to try and cover all that has happened, because it is happening now, and is an ever-changing, news-breaking phenomenon.

Part of why we’re motivated to publish another issue is due to this recent explosion of unrest against the police, and the clear need to make an accessible insurrectionary voice present during these times, through this publication. However, there is

so much to discuss, and so much happening, that we have decided to create a #Ferguson section as opposed to a single all inclusive article.

More is bound to happen as we compile this section of coverage on “Ferguson” after we decide to go to print, which makes our decision of when to go to print ever more complicated. But when we say #Ferguson we refer to a subject that has generalized dialogue regarding the police and the everyday struggle one part of this society must face due to them. When we first started to put together this issue, we looked to comrades from the American Midwest to shine a light on what happened, assuming “Ferguson” was an isolated event. Since then it has been generalized across the country, and remnants of the sentiment sparked last summer in the small Missouri suburb are actively happening across different cities in different ways.

In this section we have included a few articles about Ferguson specifically — when it first erupted, that are very time sensitive, but help to provide origins to the subject of the city’s eruption.

We also thought it was important to include a time-line of actions and unrest that happened across the country in the most concise way possible. This is with the intention of exposing the interconnectedness and power of our rage

against the police and system they protect. In this section, there are also a few articles that actively engage fringe conversations to which we think many have been too frightened to contribute.

With an existing awareness of police repression and murder, this section also includes updates regarding some of those murdered by police that we have discussed in our prior issues’ *Against Justice, Against Peace* articles— namely, checking to see if any of those cops were indicted. We also address a few instances of police murder and repression that have happened since our last issue to remind all of our readers that Mike Brown and Eric Garner are not unique cases.

As a printed periodical, it is almost impossible to compete with the pace of information on the Internet. However, we hope this compilation of content we’ve titled *Ferguson & Beyond* is appreciated enough to be in print.

We also apologize for anything that we have missed, specifically when it comes to news of unrest or others abused and murdered by police.

**“BURN  
THIS  
MOTHER  
FUCKER  
DOWN”**

-Louis Head

Words of Mike Brown’s stepfather the night of the grand jury verdict dismissing charges against Darren Wilson.





# IDENTIFYING ENEMIES

**Regarding Ferguson & Its Original Eruption / Contributed November 20th, 2014**

*Author's note: I do not live in Missouri, but I used to. And I was not on the streets of Ferguson as the clashes erupted, but I have seen those streets inside a level of relative calm. The anarchists and other combatants on the ground in those weeks occupy a place very close to my heart, but I do not write this from the experience of a participant. I can only gather information from a distance in an attempt to add to the growing analyses of this scenario. In doing so, it should be understood that I am not speaking for or representing anyone, especially those with a more intimate understanding of the scenes listed below.*

## INTRODUCTION:

On August 9th Ferguson, Missouri Police Officer Darren Wilson shot and killed 18 year old Michael Brown. Brown's body was left, uncovered, in the middle of the street in a pool of his own blood for over 4 hours.

Almost immediately, those close to Brown and others from the neighborhood began to gather. Images and information flooded social media sites and the crowd swelled. Videos of grieving and irate residents brought more people out of their homes and into the street. State media and politicians arrived with the police quickly following. Local police followed by state police and eventually national guard were deployed in a perplexing display of aggression and militarism. Instead of shocking the grief stricken and enraged population of Ferguson, Missouri to return to their homes, the inverse response sparked what became the largest anti-police uprising in a generation.

Nearly two weeks of rioting and demonstrations followed the actions of the police that night. Volleys of tear gas and formations of riot cops pushed against ad-hoc groups forming in the streets. These groups pushed back with rocks, bottles and live ammunition. Anti-police rioters looted stores and attempted to burn down their own neighborhood in a move that confused and shocked the national audiences watching on the nightly news. Crowds demanded 'justice for Mike Brown' and a public release of the killer cop's identity. Night after night, residents and those wishing to show their solidarity and support defied overwhelming police numbers. They ignored dispersal orders and defied curfews, stole each other back when snatch squads moved in, washed the pepper spray from each others eyes. In a cascade of seemingly foolish maneuvers police agencies escalated their forces, vastly underestimating the vehemence of the crowd. Each night it returned, claiming more space and effectively repelling police from entering their neighborhood. The burned out QuikTrip gas station became a place to converge, celebrate previous night's gains, and plan for the future.

Amidst the chaos of tear gas and flash bang grenades people wishing to gain personal and political footholds positioned themselves as leaders. Men with megaphones began to direct and heighten the pre-existing divides between those in the streets, capitalizing on the fissures to prop themselves up. St. Louis City Aldermen, local celebrities, religious and secular groupings of statist militant left organizations, church groups, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) all began to vie for social control. This battle often strengthened the police and military's ability to

make small gains in the street as well as to help maintain their control of the narrative being fed to the rest of the country. Caught in the middle of this melee were people, residents of Ferguson, STL and beyond, nonpolitical combatants, anarchists, and anyone who had reached their breaking point of police violence and poverty.

## RACISM:

The complicated nature of any scenario involving the interplay of state violence, structural racism and politics is obvious. The way that race has been historically constructed in Missouri and the racism that has been built into every facet of life there is no exception. An attempt to tackle those ideas in their entirety here would be foolish. Racism does not fit into a stratified field of quantity, 'more racist' and 'less racist' become absurd concepts when placed next to one another inside of any lived experience. However, an attempt can be made to identify the overt ways in which racism is used as a tool to subjugate others. For example, the liberal cities dotting the northwest are no less racist then their deep south counterparts, but the ways in which racism and racist policies enter into people's actions are more obvious in the latter than the former. One would be remiss to call Missouri more racist than other states in the Midwest or the country, but the apparent nature that racism plays into the daily lives of those who reside there can not be overlooked.

Ferguson is a town of 21,000 residents. The population is 67 percent Black. The mayor is white. The city council of six has one Black representative, and the 53-member police force contains three Black officers. A blip on the map of small towns

ringing the city of St Louis, it's nestled between three immovable objects; decaying and often forgotten hamlets, the opulence and wealth of white flight era suburbs and the Mississippi river. Not a part of "the south" but intimately touched by both its racism and civil war-to-segregation era politics, Missouri finds itself in a severely unique set of political and economic scenarios. All of which led to the explosion just witnessed, and the ones yet to come.

The politics of poverty in places like Missouri have not been born over night. Generations of families have grown and lived under its repressive networks. Therefore, it's difficult to discern the specific reasons why a population of people, or a part of the population decides to make a combined and concerted effort toward rebellion against the police and policies of policing around them. The tipping points are immeasurable. Charts and graphs and analytic data are incapable of relaying what it meant to see Mike Brown's body or the deaths of hundreds of others killed by police bullets in that state. Data about the make up of the city and its racist history do not convey the fear or anger associated with routine traffic stops, daily harassment, state violence, and abject poverty. The experiences of peoples' revolt against these realities defy ability to catalog participants as either protagonists or bystanders. Retroactively, the ways in which power was created and moved can be spoken about in an effort to better understand the failings and shortfalls.

The killing of Mike Brown was the spark, but his death itself was indicative of the relationship that a white police force, backed by a white power structure, has on a ma-

majority Black population. In this, and many other scenarios, a sentiment of the uprising being a Black movement and first and foremost for Black people became a device used by political figureheads speaking for large groupings of people they denoted as homogenous communities. These individuals did all that they could to maintain their status as leaders in the movement. The wants and desires of the groups they professed to be representing meant nothing to them if they did not fit in line with their own political agenda.

### RECUPERATION:

Forces on the streets of Ferguson can broadly be broken down into two opposing groups — those wishing to manage or control the climate and actions of the crowd and those attempting to participate in and sustain antagonisms. These groups were not static, with people finding themselves on either side of the dividing line for a variety of reasons and at various times. While the Left pushed an agenda of identity-based unity and cohesion amongst a broad community, radicals outside the conflict pushed the imagery and aesthetic of a union of rioters; a unity amongst all participants transcending issues of race and class to fight a common enemy unhindered by interpersonal conflict. While these two basic narratives are often presented, both are almost always decidedly false. This fact became very clear on the streets of Ferguson. While there was a great deal of cooperation on the streets, tensions were high amongst participants. Fueled by both their own rage and goaded by would be managers with megaphones, the crowd at times turned on itself.

Those with the megaphones were political opportunists from all over the country. They congealed into an amalgamation of “peace police” made up of community organizers, church leaders, the Nation of Islam, New Black Panther Party and local city politicians. Leaders in these organizations helped create the mystique of the “outside agitator white anarchist,” a scapegoat to be blamed for the violence against police and property that did not fit into the programs being called for by these organizations. This dynamic was latched onto by both the press and police forces, creating confrontational atmospheres on social media and at times in the streets themselves. But, as many participants can attest, the strategy gained little traction as the rioting continued and faces became familiar, as tactics were shared and people showed direct and material solidarity for one another in those running street battles. The texts appearing locally from anarchists spoke with a candor and humility often missing from the larger milieu about these types of conflicts. The posturing and vanguardism often associated with political bodies interacting with this kind of broader anger were absent from the descriptions of the nightly events. Those recounting their experiences attempted to find ways to mitigate and negate the dichotomous divides being pushed by those seeking power.

The notion itself that white anarchists were the ones engaging in the most riotous behavior, or were the sole instigators of violence directly plays into the hands of a broad racist narrative of the inability of communities of color to be able to self-organize. The clashes themselves were chaotic, but a sense of linear adaptability to the circumstances became clear. The tactics built on themselves night after night. To attribute all of that planning and self-organization to the handful of white people, and the even fewer anarchists in the crowd is a disingenuous step made by organizations like the NoI and NBPP in attempts to create distractions from the fact that their political party

lines had no sway in the moment and that as organizations they themselves were irrelevant.

Another group to push the outside agitator line for their own gain were local St. Louis politicians, most notably alderman Antonio French. French positioned himself as both a leader and mouth piece of people that never asked to be led. He created a persona of a “man of the people” for himself, by tweeting from and at some points participating in the demonstrations. But French and other self-professed leaders changed their rhetoric as quickly as they could when the uncontrollable nature of the crowd became apparent. French in particular, along with local rapper Tef Poe, became two of the loudest voices screaming about the concept of the outside agitator. They vilified those attacking the police, and called for wide scale snitching on and confrontations with those deemed to be engaging in that violence. When arrest records from previous nights debunked the idea that the violent nature of the crowd originated outside of it, they quickly changed their tunes, switching their attacks towards anyone— people from local neighborhoods and beyond, interested in violence as a tactic. Their public rhetoric, that was

Ferguson under different political banners were large at the beginning. Since then they have synthesized themselves down into a few smaller organizations. They have names like HealSTL and advocate programs for justice that are only mildly interested in addressing anything on a systemic level. Mostly, they stick to a deeply set narrative of the ways in which change happens and who is in a legitimate position to help create those narratives. They distance themselves from people outside of a structure with discernible goals and any acts of violence done by demonstrators. Some are clearly positioning themselves for political gain, others must have entered the situation with a genuine desire to stop the killing of young Black men by the police, which as an aim can not be refuted. The combinations of people both intentionally and unintentionally creating the concentrated power of those positions massed a force that swept through West Florissant and beyond. That force is largely to blame for not only a momentary end to anti-police violence, but a strengthening of the police forces responsible for the deaths of Mike Brown and countless others.



### POLICE:

easily adopted and interchangeable with the police narratives, eventually began to focus on what they called the “canfield boys.” Described in the media as mindless thugs with little to no intention, so-called Canfield Boys are, in reality, a group of people willing to post up on Canfield Drive and attempt to keep the police out of their neighborhoods.

It was imperative for those wishing to maintain control to decry the rioting and violence. There are no leaders in chaos, therefore unless French was going to start picking up bricks or throwing back tear gas canisters, his message quickly became irrelevant to other people in the street. The only way to maintain a certain amount of authority, whether it be real or imagined, was to try and contain the street demonstrations.

Obviously, police, and city officials directing them, have very similar agendas. The riot is exponentially more dangerous to their power than organized political opposition, because it is so hard to subsume, so nearly impossible to bring under their wing. The number of people that arrived in Fer-

It took the police nearly two weeks, a lot of tear gas, and untold violence to regain control— a control that remains tenuous. Police actions on the streets during those days have been criticized from every angle, but a common theme amongst those decrying the police is just how vastly under prepared and ill trained to do crowd control on that scale they were. Other critiques focus on the nature of the Ferguson police force and its lack of proportional representation of the surrounding populations. Both of these critiques have gained some of the largest national traction since the original shooting.

A few exemplary responses come from the Chief of the St. Louis County Police Department, Jon Belmar. Since the original unrest he has hired a social media coordinator in an effort to “explain his department’s use of certain tactics in real time as things unfold.” In calling for vague ideas of accountability, the Left has gotten a description of why the police will be shooting people with tear gas and rubber

bullets in the future, not any indication that this or other police operations will cease. The police have been given an opportunity to explain their actions and attempt to gain political favor by seeming to adhere to the needs of a community. The adoption of this same spin-doctor ideology is what has brought the idea of personalized officer surveillance in the form of “body-cams” to the forefront of the conversation. Having a strangle hold on both the general media, and more recently social media, along with suggesting new forms of technology to mitigate social unrest are not new or particularly startling concepts. They work very well inside of the framework being created. What has been staggering is the rapid response of police departments to these calls from community groups. Almost immediately, smaller police forces all over Missouri have started to outfit their officers with body-cams. This new surveillance technology is being heralded as a breakthrough in accountability, allowing officers to be watched at all times and making it impossible for situations like Ferguson to arise. Now, everything will be caught on camera, leaving a population of people perpetually under an authoritative gaze. While it is easy to see where misguided liberals are finding solace in that fact, it is clear to those intent on destabilizing and attacking power structures that more cameras on the street are never a good thing. Almost all of the proposed ideas that could bring about less state violence on Black bodies can easily be subsumed back into the State.

Regardless of how many eyes are pointed towards a police force, the shots will not stop firing. Young Black men will still make up the majority of those on the receiving end of that violence, and they will still find themselves disproportionately represented in prisons and on parole rosters. It is not the imperative of a power structure such as the US justice system to rework itself into a non-racist body. Power does not destabilize itself, instead, it will continue to keep large sectors of the population subjugated in an attempt to maintain the social peace necessary for capital to flow. All the while touting heightened surveillance and more community involvement in exonerating killer cops as “justice.” It will respond to the calls for accountability with methods of diverting the responsibilities that are associated with such a call back onto those same communities it has originally targeted. This simply creates another layer of future antagonisms where it will be imperative to attack the civilian review boards as they become the ones justifying police killings. The structures all around us have decided that young Black men do not fit into their idea of “citizen,” that violence against them is justified on all levels. A shuffling of these structures is never going to bring about anything like the realization of the desires expressed in the streets of Ferguson or the years of conflicts before.

To be against proposals for the reform of policing in America is as unpopular as the riot itself. The violence of the riot is misunderstood as random and the aims are deemed as unrealistic. This is where anarchists often find themselves positioned, on the margins of the most widely held opinions. A place both difficult to move from, but integral for the continuation of antagonisms with the structures that keep everyone subjugated. In the current scenario, as it is still unfolding, anarchists from around the country have missed many opportunities to react and respond to recuperation in Ferguson and similar processes in cities around the country.

## ANARCHISTS:

The fires and Molotovs, rocks being hurled and profanities shouted, the t-shirts over faces and crowds refusing to run – this set of images are widely used in contemporary anarchist discourse. “Fuck the police” is a common slogan and the litany of rap songs with similar messages can be heard on almost every dance party mix. Amongst those of this particular milieu, there is an undeniable fetishization of violence, particularly anti-police violence. In the last few months, an opportunity to turn that fetishization into action was largely unrealized. The skepticism at the possible size and scope of this uprising was understandable in the beginning. No one knew it would last so long. But as the days of street fighting kept coming, there was still a palpable silence from a broader anarchist scene.

In some places across the country, anarchists did respond to the events as they unfolded. Oakland and North Carolina both held demos, a small number of attacks happened around the country, and immediately solidarity funds and posters and pamphlets were created. But the scale was skewed. In the past, when other anarchists have found themselves in trouble, the response has been immediate and then sustained. May Day 2010, the North West Grand Jury, and attacks on the Oakland commune are a few scenarios that come to mind. The effectiveness of these solidarity campaigns is difficult to discern, as cause and effect is a murky relationship at best. The question better to be asked in this current scenario is why did this moment, this eruption, seem to pass across the screens of so many but so little materialize from it?

It has been posited that anarchists across the country found themselves at a loss of ways to engage in a conflict that was so decidedly not anarchist. Both the larger and more interpersonal politics involved in the clashes in Ferguson were and continue to be messy. At a distance it was not always clear who was engaging and why. The lack of sustained dialogue inside well-traveled anarchist channels of discourse made the general discomfort with engaging in the more confusing aspects of race and class distinctly palpable. It's a lot easier to sing along to a Lil Boosie song with your friends than to try and contradict a hostile recuperative force around racism and police violence. But if anarchists hope to help sustain these moments, and move them into a larger social rupture in the future, then that kind of engagement is exactly what is needed.

Without attempting to create specific ideas of what could have happened, or what should have, there are a few ideas worth mentioning. Many of the groups in Ferguson holding peace rallies and decrying the violence have counterparts in places outside of the city itself. They were and are able to gain ground on a social and political level by their practically unchallenged positions. There was a sentiment that there could not and was not any other narrative outside of the one they crafted. Every peace rally and candlelit vigil outside of Missouri itself was an opportunity to confront that narrative. Confrontation itself can be terrifying, and being on the political margin of a racially charged scenario can seem too intense to interject into. It is imperative for anarchists, and anyone wishing to see these kinds of rebellions generalize and grow in capacity, to be able to identify enemies on all fronts.

Not through the lens of state and its structures, but in terms of who is positioning themselves to manage and control the actions of others inside of the conflict. This also means a constant internal critique of anarchist's own actions and their own ability to stray into a vanguardist or leadership role.

There is a danger in only taking anarchist intervention to a certain level. Half attempts easily become training grounds for the State to more effectively repress those attempting rebellion in the future. As the question of whether Darren Wilson will be indicted looms in the air (UPDATE: unsurprisingly, he was not), officers are spending thousands of hours in training to deal with the next wave of unrest. Police will be better equipped on the ground and in the media spin that accompanies their moves. Already the stage is being set for actions by protestors to be deemed even less logical or reasonable as civilian police review boards are being established and precincts are beginning to integrate more representational structures.

## CLOSING:

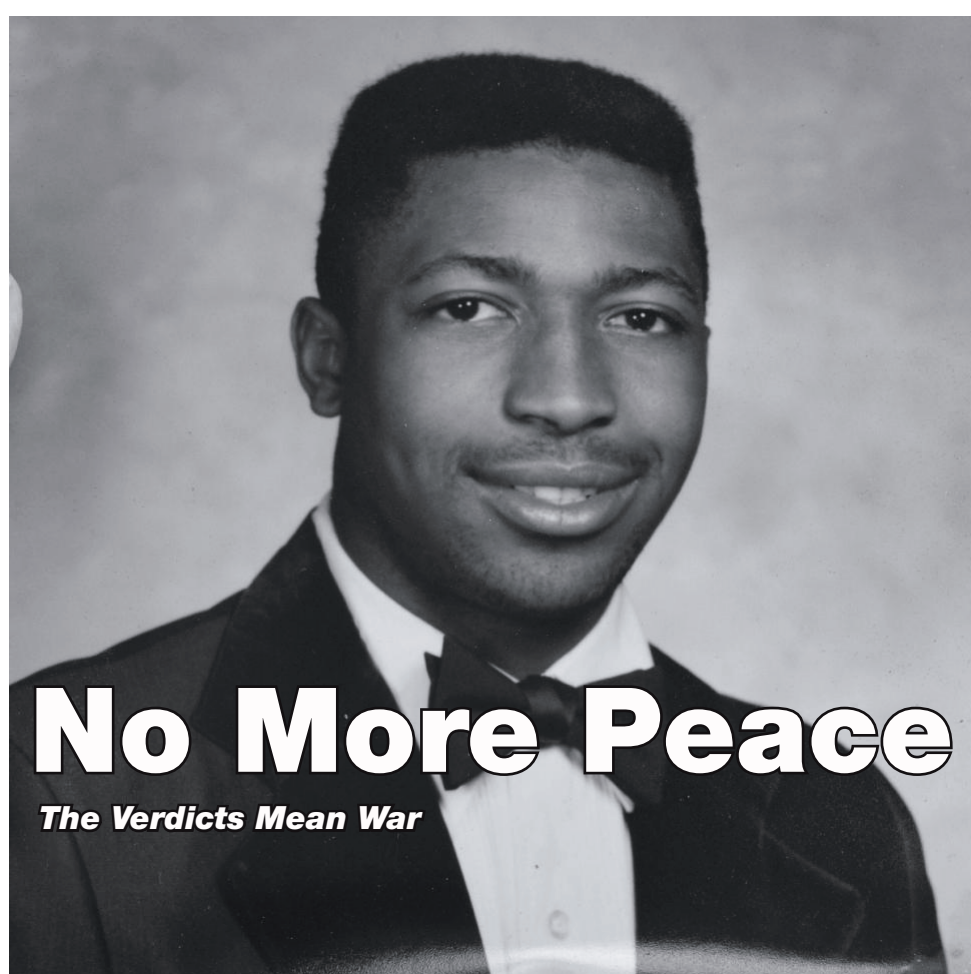
Inside the hush that followed the initial explosion, a certain amount of space was opened up. Active combatants, regardless of identity or affiliation had room to experiment and grow. However, acting in tandem was an identity-based Left seeking to manage all forms of protest and the narrative of the struggle. The specific experiences of anarchists locally allowed them an opportunity to confront as far as they were able such recuperation when it surfaced. Unfortunately, strategies went either unrealized or ignored by most anarchists struggling to formulate their own responses in other places. There is no end to what can now be called “Ferguson,” but a great deal of the current general quiet can be attributed to the footholds the Left has gained there, as well as a general failing of anarchists to recognize and utilize their skills in perpetuating the uprising.

This was an insurgency, a moment that continues to defy attempts to return it to the point before the flash. Even as West Florissant began to quiet, it was clear that both Ferguson and the nature of responses to police killings would never be the same. This manifestation of anti-police fervor and the taking back of space from larger power structures was built on the experiences of those in other similar moments. People looted stores while wearing RIP Trayvon Martin shirts, and the echoes of the uprisings in Oakland, Arizona, and NYC could be felt in the momentum and language of the crowd. As those instances spilled into this one, a new reality became cemented, that there could be no return to “before,” that regardless of cooptation and repression the experiences of those that dared to stand up against a brutal police force and pseudo military occupation can not be taken from them.

The affinity that people found in their actions as well as their hatred can not be fractured by the attempts made by a recuperative Left intent on highlighting the divides of identity seen in the streets.

**Please Go to this Website  
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Arrested in Ferguson:**

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MORE/mikebrown](https://secure.piryx.com/donate/mS25KFCe/MORE/mikebrown)



It's hard to write about Eric Garner or Mike Brown. It's hard for me to write about them because nothing about either case is surprising or new for me. I have written about multiple similar instances of police repression towards specifically poor and Black people. In fact, it has almost been a feature of this publication. What is unique in these two cases is nothing more than the media attention that has been given to it, and the surprising will of certain communities and movements to respond to it. Sean Bell and Rodney King are the first two names that come to mind when I hear people talking about Michael Brown or Eric Garner this week. Then I think about DJ Henry or Aiyana Jones. Aiyana specifically died under even more harsh circumstances when it comes to media shock and awe, that being that she was a 7 year old girl and was shot and killed by an overzealous officer putting on a show for a reality television crew, while apparently having the wrong address for their planned home invasion in Detroit. The officer was eventually indicted on misdemeanor charges of reckless use of a firearm, but due to two mistrials in the last 4 years he is still chilling outside of jail.

I am an anarchist, but have the distinct experience in my life of knowing many people who would not identify as anarchist, and at the same time may not be aware of the daily misery many face in society. I can't help but feel so annoyed with the display of shock by these people around me. They're “acting” as if no one was ever troubled by the police before Trayvon Martin and after MLK. Typically the only apolitical people I encounter in my daily life that are not surprised by this are Black people. That is because Black people have been delegated as a race that is to predominantly define the face of poverty, both in the United States, and globally. Of course there are exceptions, like Barack Obama or Jay-Z, but for hundreds of years, the majority of the world's global population that is Black has been deemed: the unlucky ones.

The same shocked people I refer to resemble a larger population of general stupidity. I refuse to call these people ignorant, but I will hold them accountable as choosing to live a stupid existence. These are the people that come to protests and explain that anything other than peaceful resistance to the state would further demean the memories of Mike Brown or Eric Garner. These are the people that beg for folks to wait for a federal intervention in both instances. These are the people who claim to have sympathies for those struggling in society, but refuse to negate their positions of comfort before condoning a legitimate assault against the system that

sanctioned both recent headline murders. These are the people that look to brutalize the dead horse of peaceful protest seen in movies about the 1960s (that ignore everything else that produced ‘change’). These people are typically white, middle or upper class, or in some sort of fancy school (or all of the above). I am starting to have a very impatient disdain for these people I am forced to be around, as concern for police conduct and those effected by it, has become trendy.

Ferguson blew up after the Mike Brown verdict. Despite having a fully equipped police force, national guard, and heavy FBI presence, people in Ferguson proudly represented their community. Anyone truly exploited or dominated in this society I'm sure will gladly demonstrate a voice of respect or understanding for the masked youth that fired bullets at the pigs, attacked their cars, and burnt down businesses that sucked the little bit of money that was in Ferguson out. The fact that there was even a dialogue by the police or federal government with the public about this murder of Mike Brown meant that the only thing that helped to get such concern or attention was the original violence against the police displayed by Ferguson residents when the murder first happened. But they calmed down in August, waited for an indictment, and got the message. When the failure to indict was read, they were told that the system does not care about them, the system does not serve their interests, and the system is willing to go as far as needed to keep them down. Ferguson, being a determined and self-respecting Black community, responded to this message with a desperate and beautiful attempt at achieving revenge. They again did this before three of the harshest domestic state forces. Basically, they held it the fuck down (#integrity).

Following the failure to indict in Ferguson, there were demonstrations across the country. NYC had its bridges, highways, and tunnels periodically blocked over the week following the announcement. The Bay Area exploded in unrest; San Francisco, Oakland, and Berkeley represented with looting, highway blockades, street fires, and battles with police. Seattle, Los Angeles, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Boston, and dozens of other cities also reacted. Yet it just seemed like the Trayvon protests on a colder day. Then, just a few days later, the Eric Garner announcement came out. In this case, there is a fully documented (via video footage) police murder, really no questions to be asked. And again, we are all told that Black people are inferior, and need to bear the brunt of poverty and repression that is indispensable to capitalism functioning. So again you have



the standard political groups demonstrating their frustration, the array of newly politicized facebook accounts posting about Eric Garner as if they are changing the world, and another wave of protests across the country. Now it is the day after the Eric Garner verdict, and nothing is different. Another Black man is probably being targeted by police, another civil forfeiture is going down as I write this, another house is being raided by S.W.A.T., and another person is rotting in solitary. All I can wait for is for those who demean communities with their so called "calls for peace" to finally wake up to the stupidity of their so called "strategies." Until Ferguson, and the fires that spread the night of the announcement, are generalized across the country, and the world, this is simply a containable situation for the state.

A new perspective must forcefully be put into the minds of the uninformed, yet allegedly sympathetic, voices discussing the two announcements this week — that is that riot, looting, and violence by struggling communities are acts of legitimate self-defense.

There is no debate to be had here. You either want to eliminate the system that sanctions these types of killings or you don't. This means you advocate for every type of resistance to the state or you don't. The fact that Ferguson was in shambles the next morning, and the rest of this country was not, simply implies that Ferguson meant it more. Other than simply being out armed by the state, there is never an excuse to advocate this self-depleting approach of unconditional "peace" and "compliance" when it comes to resisting the state. This perspective is of the included voices in this society.

I personally had a chance to go to the Eric Garner protests in NYC shortly after the verdict. My favorite part of the NYC demonstrations was when it went through the Avenue D projects, and I heard an older man screaming at the march, "it's time we pick up the gun." I do not think it is possible to bring about change solely through specialized armed guerrilla cells or general militancy, but I certainly think that people

can not follow in the footsteps of Gandhi or MLK (even though the Federal government clearly wants you to). Especially considering both individuals would have had no effect without the thousands of angry and violent actions accompanying both of them throughout both of their political lives (Which MLK verbally recognized).

How can we not recognize these failures to indict as a statement of war and a blatantly polarized society? How can we not unconditionally support a violent voice in Ferguson after a man in Tennessee gets the funding to put up a billboard saying #pantstupdontloot (that did happen)? How can we not realize that the powerful and wealthy support George Zimmerman and Darren Wilson? Which is why both exceeded the funding for Trayvon Martin or Mike Brown by the thousands. And most of all, how can anyone even begin to compare the violence by an unarmed community demanding to be seen or heard vs. the institutionalized violence of police in the United States?

Anarchists should be teaming up with youth that are refusing to listen to Al Sharpton, ANSWER, celebrities, or the New Black Panthers. Anarchists should be helping to defend people from arrest, and helping to cause more damage to the state and this country's general normalcy. They should be out there shutting up those who degrade the beautiful gestures of violence by wilding youth in Ferguson.

Instead of writing in elaborate detail the reaction in each city to the announcement, with help of comrades in NYC and the Bay, we will report on the actions that we feel avenge Eric Garner or Mike Brown.

More will most likely happen around this case by this time this goes to print. But we are sure that our coverage of Ferguson will be seen as bias in all the ways we are proud to report on it. We are proud to make our stance very clear here, and prepared to spit in the face of any individual looking to contradict us.

*Until every Darren Wilson is hung with the guts of every Daniel Pantaleo.*



## A Timeline of Anti-Police Resistance

*"After all, as someone once observed, one doesn't judge the proletariat by what this or that proletarian thinks but by what it is necessary impelled to do by its historical situation."* -Aufheben #1 1992, On the LA rebellion over Rodney King.

**November 24:** A grand jury in Ferguson refuses to indict officer Darren Wilson for the shooting of Michael Brown. Rioters in Ferguson burn several police cars and businesses while many more are looted. Thousands meet in downtown Oakland, CA and proceed to block the 580 highway for hours. Then the crowd marches back downtown to the police station, where clashes erupt on Broadway. Participants erect burning barricades and loot several corporate stores, including a Starbucks and Smart and Final grocery store, ending with dozens of arrests. In New York, thousands march to Times Square where NYPD commissioner Bratton is attacked with paint. Afterwards, multiple major bridges connecting different boroughs of NYC are blockaded. Protests also take place in many cities across the country.

**November 25:** In Ferguson, clashes continue but are less intense than the previous night as thousands more National Guard members were deployed. A small crowd takes over highway 880 in Oakland, followed by the 580 later in the night, and nearly 100 are arrested. The remaining crowd creates massive burning barricades across Telegraph to hold back police. A series of corporate stores are looted and gentrifying businesses are smashed. Another mass arrest occurs near Emeryville (Oakland) at the end of the night. In New York City, several major arteries are blocked by demonstrations, including bridges, tunnels and highways. Many more protests take place in over a hundred cities, and several highways are blocked spontaneously from Los Angeles to Atlanta.

**November 26:** Small protests continue in Ferguson despite West Florissant Ave being completely shut down. A destructive march plays cat and mouse with Oakland police in downtown and West Oakland for hours before being dispersed by police. Multiple businesses in downtown are damaged and many people are arrested. A National Guard armory is vandalized in Durham, NC.

**November 28:** Several malls across the state of Missouri were disrupted by protests. A coordinated civil disobedience action at the West Oakland BART station shuts down all service in and out of San Francisco for over two hours. That night, in San Francisco, nearly 1000 protesters lay siege to the shopping district of Union Square during Black Friday, clashing with police and damaging fancy stores. They march into the Mission district, where stores are looted and banks are smashed. The night ends in a mass arrest of the dwindling crowd. In Seattle, marchers roamed through downtown for hours, after shutting down businesses in Westlake.

**November 29:** In Seattle, a destructive march outmaneuvers police for hours before dispersing with zero arrests. In Long Beach, CA, tires are slashed on police vehicles.

**December 1:** Roving blockades shut down several key arteries in Washington DC during post-Thanksgiving rush hour. Another march takes the streets of downtown Seattle, but new police tactics are able to keep it pacified.

**December 3:** A New York grand jury fails to indict any officers in the choking death of Eric Garner. Traffic in Manhattan is completely paralyzed while several major bridges are shut down, as well as multiple highways. In the Crown Heights neighborhood of New York, an unmarked police car is torched. Crowds block Market Street in San Francisco. In Oakland, a march weaves through downtown; riot police prevent it from reaching OPD headquarters. Instead, participants march through the wealthy Piedmont neighborhood. More demonstrations take place in other cities.

**December 4:** Blockades continue as thousands continue to take to the streets in New York City. Another march weaves through Downtown Oakland, eventually heading east towards the Fruitvale district, where a police car is trashed followed by a showdown with Oakland police and a mass arrest. Protests across the country continue in response to the New York grand jury decision.

**December 5:** Hundreds march through downtown Oakland, holding a noise demo in front of the jail to support those arrested during the revolt. The crowd moves on to take over the 880 freeway before being pushed off by police. Next, the march surrounds the West Oakland BART station and destroys the gates protecting the riot police inside. The station is shut down for an hour before the march moves back downtown, where property destruction, clashes with police, and arrests occur. Large protests shut down highways in several cities such as Durham and Pittsburgh.

**December 6:** A march originating near UC Berkeley (CA) campus eventually clashes with Berkeley police near their headquarters and proceeds to loot multiple stores, including a Trader Joe's and Radio Shack. The crowds grow as many students take to the streets. In response, police departments from across the region pour into central Berkeley, firing dozens of rounds of tear gas and physically attacking demonstrators and bystanders, inflicting serious injuries. In Atlanta, several marches take place and block highways before an attempted occupation at Woodruff Park. Meanwhile demonstrators in Seattle attacked police with rocks during a march through downtown.

**December 7:** On Sunday night, another march starts in Berkeley and moves into North Oakland, clashing with police,

destroying multiple California Highway Patrol (CHP) cruisers, and taking over Highway 24. CHP officers use tear gas and rubber bullets to push back the crowd. People respond with rocks and fireworks, then march back into downtown Berkeley, destroying bank façades and ATMs. Rioters then attack cell phone and electronics stores, culminating with the looting of Whole Foods. The night ends with hundreds of people gathering around bonfires in the middle of Telegraph, popping bottles of expropriated Prosecco. Police are afraid to engage the crowd, but some participants are snatched in targeted arrests.

**December 8:** The third march from Berkeley is by far the largest. Over 2000 people take over Interstate 80, stopping all traffic for two hours, while another segment of the demonstration blocks the train tracks parallel to the freeway. The crowd attempts to march on the Bay Bridge but is pushed back into Emeryville where over 250 people are mass arrested.

**December 9:** The fourth march from Berkeley sets out once again down Telegraph Avenue into Oakland and shuts down another section of Highway 24 and the MacArthur BART station. Increasingly violent clashes ensue with CHP officers in full riot gear, who open fire with rubber bullets and beanbag rounds, causing numerous injuries and ultimately pushing the crowd off the freeway. The march then looped through downtown Oakland and made its way into Emeryville, where a Pak'n'Save grocery store was looted along with a CVS pharmacy and a 7-Eleven. The night ended with another round of arrests, scattering the crowd.

**December 10:** Hundreds of Berkeley High School students stage a walkout and rally at city hall. A smaller fifth march from Berkeley makes its way into Oakland where a T-Mobile store is looted and other corporate stores are attacked. People point out and attack undercover CHP officers in the crowd, who pull guns on the crowd as they make an arrest. Students at UNC School of Medicine and Duke University stage die-ins and a march later blocks another highway in Durham, NC.

**December 12:** People in Los Angeles hold the first of several weekly "FTP Friday" marches with nearly a hundred people marching through Hollywood.

**December 13:** Thousands march across the country as part of the nationwide "Millions March" protest against white supremacy. In New York, a splinter march breaks through police lines and trashes a squad car. In Oakland, another march departs after nightfall and temporarily blocks the Webster Tunnel and carries out several attacks on downtown businesses before being split up by police.

**December 15:** Oakland protesters blockade the Police Administration Building in downtown for over four hours by locking themselves to the doors. Later that day, students from several high schools stage a walkout and rallied at Fruitvale BART station in East Oakland, where Oscar Grant was murdered in 2009. In Ann Arbor, MI, several hundred marched and disrupted a City Council meeting.

**December 18:** Thousands march in Sao Paulo, Brazil against white supremacy and in support of Ferguson. In Philadelphia, anti-police slogans are tagged throughout the city including, "Cop Lives Don't Matter."

**December 19:** In Oakland, a sign on the 580 freeway that memorialized the four officers killed by Lovelle Mixon is torn down and vandalized.

**December 20:** Someone paints "NYPD Kills" on the Manhattan Bridge in NYC, and later that afternoon two NYPD officers are fatally shot in Brooklyn.

**December 22:** A banner reading "Oakland - Ferguson - NYC / No Love For The Police," is dropped at a Oakland Raiders game.

**December 23:** Antonio Martin is shot and killed in Berkeley, MO. Several hundred gather spontaneously and clashes break out at the scene, with fireworks being thrown at police. Police vehicles are vandalized and a nearby QT is looted.

**December 23:** Protests begin as charges are not brought against police for the murder of Dontre Hamilton in Milwaukee.

**December 25:** In Oakland, another FTP march departs from 14th & Broadway, during which several stores are attacked, a Bev-Mo is looted, and the Jack London Square Christmas tree is trashed. In Durham, NC an officer is approached by two people and shot at, escaping with only minor injuries.

**December 31:** In Ferguson, people briefly occupy the police department before being removed by the police.

**December 31:** Annual New Year's Eve noise demos draws thousands of people all over the world to ring in the new year with those behind bars.

**January 1:** Hundreds gather at Fruitvale BART for a vigil to remember Oscar Grant III, murdered by BART police 6 years earlier.

**January 5:** Two NYPD officers are shot at in the Bronx.

**January 6:** Several cars belonging to NYPD officers have their lug nuts loosened or removed, which could cause major accidents if unnoticed.

**January 8:** Several anti-police slogans are painted throughout downtown Olympia, WA.

**January 9:** About a dozen people staged a counter-demonstration at a pro-police rally in Olympia.

**January 10:** A commuter train on its way to a New England Patriots football game is blocked by demonstrators in Boston, MA.

**January 15:** Protesters blockade both sides of the I-93 in Boston during morning rush hour.

**January 16:** Protesters shut down several BART stations in downtown San Francisco early morning. In Oakland, the weekly auction of foreclosed properties on the courthouse steps was disrupted.

**January 17:** In North Oakland, people block off Telegraph Ave to hold a guerrilla film screening of footage from the Civil Rights Movement in 1960's.

**January 18:** About a hundred people march through the streets of Oakland against the police. Multiple people are arrested, and eventually arrive at Fruitvale Station which is subsequently closed.

**January 19:** Early Monday morning, several dozen demonstrate in front of Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf's house in the Upper Diamond District. Later that day, large protests take place all over the country, including Oakland, Atlanta and Philadelphia. A large march in St. Paul, MN disrupted traffic on the I-94 freeway as well as the city's light-rail system. During peak traffic, Stanford students blockaded the San Mateo Bridge in the Bay Area.

## ON NYC

By Members of the Trayvon Martin Organizing Committee  
01/27/15

Successive non-indictments for the pig murderers of Michael Brown in Ferguson MO and Eric Garner in NYC brought about an unprecedented wave of organic class activity in NYC aimed at the disruption of vehicular traffic, public transportation, and commerce. No matter who called these marches -- whether the dinosaur Marxist-Leninist parties, non-profits, ultra-leftists, or anarchists -- the marches were characterized by spontaneous class activity and anonymous unaffiliated proletarians taking initiative; often splitting apart, flowing into other marches, and otherwise blocking multiple hubs of transportation and commerce simultaneously (West Side Highway, FDR expressway, Holland Tunnel, Manhattan Bridge, shopping in Herald Square, and so forth).

While there have been five major days of mobilization -- day of and day after protests for the two non-indictments, and the recuperative Millions March -- the present upsurge has been equally characterized by a number of small actions called by a panoply of small groupings and individuals. Typically these have taken the form of "die-ins" in busy commercial settings like high-end retail stores on "Black Friday", attempts to blockade foot traffic in places like Grand Central Station, and most spectacularly, attempts to disrupt the Christmas tree lighting at Rockefeller Center, and the Thanksgiving Day Parade. These small activities have been overshadowed by the big marches, but as the movement enters a downswing, they are becoming the primary figure of the moment, and their regularization will provide the coherence and consistency necessary to generate organic militants and advance independent class activity between upsurges. What groupings emerge from these practices remains to be seen, and particular attention should be paid to the tension within large reformist groupings and coalitions, between the militancy of the young people engaged by this struggle, and the disciplinary parameters of the reformist structures.

While this upsurge has been characterized by mass illegality (taking the streets, refusing police orders to disperse, blocking traffic and taking major infrastructure), the content is highly contradictory and unstable. The reformist core of the movement has congealed around the banner of "Black Lives Matter", a constellation of non-profits and social media savvy protesters operating in the reasonably traditional framework of "civil disobedience" actions aimed at calling attention to a social ill. (The slogan is a work of genius -- one can comfortably disagree with "stop the war", or "legalize gay marriage", but "black lives matter"?) However the mass activity of the class has pushed against these bounds at every juncture. Groups of unaffiliated proletarians, often joining the marches spontaneously, have taken the streets while the march leaders stay on the sidewalks, split marches to strategically outflank the police, and have pushed against the movement's self-appointed leadership wherever it seeks to inscribe itself. (For a more in-depth extrapolation of this and other dynamics of the present upsurge, consult "The Old Mole Breaks Concrete" on unityandstruggle.org.)

The Millions March brought these contradictions to the fore. A group of non-profits and other recuperative political forces commandeered an open ended call for mobilization, and set up the first permitted march (and as of writing, the last mass march) of the entire upsurge. It was ordained to be lead by the families of victims of police violence (which some "anar-

chists" fell for, and used to argue against a breakaway march), and tightly disciplined to prevent infrastructure blockage. It was a massive demonstration, bringing forth tens of thousands, but at the cost of the positive class content of the previous demonstrations, and the reinscription of the movement into a legalistic framework. However this was not the only activity that day. A small breakaway march snaked through Murray Hill, breaking the windows of a police cruiser and watering the pavement with social democratic tears. More importantly, the planned conclusion of the march, where the crowd was told to disperse, became the jump-off for more mass snake marches, blocking infrastructure and winding toward the Pink Houses in East New York, where a pig murdered the unarmed Akai Gurley in the stairway the month before. (This case, still pending, will likely serve as the occasion for the next mass opening.) This break from the set plan of the day brought the contradictions into sharp relief: the self-appointed leaders of the movement are its right wing, and the everyday unaffiliated people taking the streets are to the left. While the later rely on the former to call convergences, sometimes to lead marches, and otherwise facilitate openings in the everyday life of the city, the former becomes a fetter to the activity of the latter, which must supersede it.

An insignificant footnote to the Millions March became the major story of the day, thanks to the growing tension between the NYPD, its white supremacist union the PBA, and the liberal mayor Bill De Blasio who has mandated a tolerant police approach to these marches. (This tension -- culminating with the police slowdown -- is worth investigating in detail but can't be examined here due to issues of scope. But suffice it to say when we speak of "the state" we are not speaking of a monolithic entity, but a complex constellation of contradictory class forces with tectonic points of friction that can either serve or hinder revolutionary strategy.) As the march bound for the Pink Houses crossed the Brooklyn bridge, small band of protesters clashed with two police lieutenants on the pedestrian deck. Allegedly these pigs were attempting to arrest a protester for throwing garbage cans onto the traffic deck below, where a line of piggies were tailing the march. A group of protesters allegedly interfered with this arrest, and in the ensuing donnybrook one of the pigs supposedly got his nose broken. The arrestee got away, as did the alleged assailants, though the former was arrested after leaving his identification behind and a bag allegedly containing multiple hammers.

This very minor victory for the class in action was used by the NYPD, through its newspaper voicebox the New York Post, and its reactionary union, to pressure the mayor to take a harder stance with the protests. After a snitch posted a video of the dust-up to Youtube, the NYPD banded about pictures of alleged assailants, gracing the front page of the Post, and accompanied by a \$24k reward (the reward for information about a cop killing being \$12k, and the murder of a civilian being \$2k). Despite this appeal to the movement to snitch, the suspects were not apprehended by the police, but several turned themselves in as the pressure mounted. Their various legal cases are ongoing, and their details and subsequent implications for the movement remain to be seen\*.

**\*A legal fund has been set up for those facing repression in this case:**  
cantouchthisnyc.wordpress.com  
*At present it is unclear whether the repression will extend beyond the suspects and their immediate comrades.*  
**Please Also Visit:**  
trayvonoc.wordpress.com



# Fringe Talk

*On the Death of Two NYPD Cops killed by Ismaaiyl Brinsley*

**“Black or white, they’re all midnight blue to me.”**

Seems like now more than ever is the time to be contributing to a revolutionary dialogue against the police. Contempt for the police has become a unifying force for those discontent in today's society. It exposes the comfortable and uncomfortable, the included and excluded, and a polarized society capable of bursting into war at almost any moment. Ismaaiyl Brinsley, the crazy man who lost all hope in life and killed two cops in Bed-Stuy, Brooklyn, was a whole new level of escalation in this unrecognized war. I was in NYC at the time of the shooting. I remember that afternoon specifically because it seemed like the cops were playing a cat and mouse game with one another. They were acting very unusual. I made a joke about it at Duane Reade (pharmacy) and the woman working mentioned that she heard a cop was shot. It was honestly hard not to smile a little bit, especially during these times where all you hear about is cops getting away with murder. First thing I did was run home and blast KRS-ONE while desperately looking for local reports. About thirty minutes later it had become breaking news. The media was hard to read without being bombarded with the delusional and opportunistic rants of the NYPD's union representative, Patrick Lynch (fascist), or the counter-arguments of career-activist Al Sharpton.

In being interested in voices that matter, I wanted to hear the response of local residents who lived near the corner where the two police were killed. I thought to talk to a friend of mine who lived in the projects next to the shooting (to give context to readers not familiar with where those two police were shot, the area is like a warzone of project housing and checkpoint style police set ups. This has been the case for years, but more so recently in light of new gentrification efforts in the neighborhood.) who was working just a few hundred feet away at the time. He is relatively apolitical, but like everyone in Brooklyn that grew up here either of color or poor, he isn't too fond of the police. When I asked him how he felt (he obviously knowing that I wasn't losing any sleep over the news) he mentioned that he was only relieved that it was someone not from the projects, because if it was, he knew that he, his friends, and family would feel the following harsh heat (assuming police would lock

the ghetto down). He was also happy that whoever did it killed himself, or was identified and concluded as the perpetrator by the police because he didn't want to deal with a NYPD manhunt. No sign of sympathy though, none. In fact, he didn't fail to mention that he wasn't surprised by it and it was bound to happen eventually. Every person I spoke to after that who lived in that neighborhood had either the same concerns or demeanor. A few of the younger people I spoke to seemed happy about the deaths, as if someone was avenging their experiences of torment with the police. The only people who really seemed phased by it in the neighborhood that day and going forward, were the police themselves (although some folks were confused as to why neither of the cops were white).

Immediately after you could tell the social divides that the action caused. Facebook and twitter were blown up by folks either praising the action or demonizing all Black people as "animals" and "thugs" (The 2000's new word for "n!\$\*er"). I myself, like many others familiar with the complete lack of security posed by the Internet, was too scared to use social media to express my understanding as to why someone would ever do something like this (Not to mention there were multiple local arrests of people for praising the action on social media in NYC). But in private, I certainly did my best to challenge anyone who dare try to use this shooting to demean the resistance to the police that has been growing in NYC and around the country since Ferguson erupted, and Eric Garner's murder reinforced the tension. Anyone who seemed to have a problem with the shooting of the two NYPD cops all seemed to have one thing in common: the assumption that Black and poor people should just accept police abuse as something excusable. They all sounded like the CNN reporters who with straight faces compare one Israeli life lost to a thousand Palestinians'. I have to admit that as someone very familiar with how the NYPD operates, that I was mad shook at a backlash, and concerned about what was to come next for daily life in NYC by this blue band of armed douche-bags.

One conversation comes to mind. Shortly after the shooting I held a dinner party at my home with an old friend in town and their current partner. Generally speaking, my old friend is not too fond of the po-

lice, so I assume discussing the subject of the two dead cops would not turn into a debate. To my surprise my friend's new partner wasn't too hyped on my perspective regarding the deaths. They told me that "this ruined everything, and now no one will be heard!" I said, "this ruined what?" They said, "this changes everything, now no one is going to care about all of these protests that seemed like they were really changing things." I stopped for a second to calm down out of politeness to my friend and simply asked, "who is it that will no longer care about poor and communities of color being systematically brutalized because someone shot two police?" I knew in their head they were thinking about the government, the police, or the middle and upper classes who have been recently forced to listen to struggling communities, but to no surprise they just got very defensive, stating, "My friend is a cop and police are people, too, and now they are just going to use this to be worse." The conversation made things a little awkward, so since I don't get to see my friend very much, and for the sake of having a pleasant meal, I simply joked, and said, "maybe Ismaaiyl should have just waited for a grand jury verdict" and immediately changed the conversation.

The point is that while these two police were clearly just in the wrong place at the wrong time, they were in uniform, and part of the state sanctioned gang in blue that chooses to wage war on particular facets of society. They chose to join this gang that has been at war with poor and marginalized people in this society as part of its inherent role, and one of those who have been taunted by their gang for years of his life finally had enough. Like enough to "make pigs fly."

Since the shooting, the police have chosen the most absurd of reactions to take. Their terrifyingly gross 'benevolent' association leader Patrick Lynch (would not let my children anywhere near this creep) has used the shootings as a way to somehow demonize pretty much anyone who has ever challenged the police. This man claimed that the mayor of NYC literally had "blood on his hands" for expressing concern over his bi-racial son's experience with the NYPD, amidst a city paralyzed with anti-police protests. He even convinced police to turn their back on the mayor at every chance, including the funerals

of both of the killed cops (which I even thought was a bit weird and crass). Lynch has made it clear that the police are to use this as an opportunity to re-assert themselves as a "wartime" police force, which apparently means they formally act in their own interest at all times. Ironically, the police have also chosen to conduct a sort of passive strike, resorting to pre-90's policing. This meaning "arresting only when necessary" and prioritizing violent crimes (pre-NYPD commissioner Bill Bratton's "quality of life" policing program). What is even more ironic is that since the shooting, as of January 2015, traffic and low-level crime summonses have dropped by 94%. Overall arrests have dropped 66%. Even parking violations are down 94%. And amongst these facts, the city seems more calm and less stressful. That being said, I am surprised that with all the funding the NYPD has (from poor people that they ticket and the 2 billion a year in state funding they receive) that someone wouldn't point out that this "virtual work stoppage" may appear as a breath of fresh air by many, and even worse for the police, as a message that shooting them may lead to more freedom for some.

*This article is dedicated to those who are still serving life sentences for participating in acts of radical self-defense.*

**Joe-Joe Bowen**

*"I ain't no angel. I'll do my time.*

*All we want is to be recognized as what we are, human beings."*

Joe-Joe Bowen was active outside of prison in the 1970's as a member of the Black Liberation Army based out of Philadelphia. He originally was sentenced to 10-20 years for the death of a cop. Following his incarceration in 1973 he killed the warden of his prison in response to intense abuse. He was sentenced inside prison to two life sentences. He is also known for taking over the prison in 1981 to protest harsh abuse and in pursuit of a better funded educational system behind bars. To this day he remains active inside of jail.

**Write to Joe-Joe:**

*Joseph Bowen #AM4272  
SCI Coal Township  
1 Kelley Drive  
Coal Township, Pennsylvania  
17866-1020*

# Forget Hope

**There is a war in the streets.**

It's frustrating to us that some people act as if there is something new in the murders of Mike Brown or Eric Garner. Nothing is new, the only thing that has changed is the media spectacle that surrounds them. In this publication, we have dedicated prior pages to recognizing some of those who have fallen victim to the hands of the police in the past. Two cases that come to mind are Aiyana Jones and DJ Henry. Since our last issue, the hope that has helped those concerned regarding these deaths remain patient is a deceiving one that waits for federal "intervention" by the "justice" department. This is a very false hope. At some point, the federal government may interject one or two times in local affairs to prevent the development of more unrest, like we saw in the 1960s. But amidst everything in Ferguson and across the country, it appears that these days the state really does not even concern itself with the notion of a popular uprising in response to the behavior of its everyday enforcers. To prove a point to our readers who are just realizing how horrible this system is, we are providing updates on the cases of Aiyana Jones and DJ Henry, as well as a short list of teenagers killed by the police between August and November 2014. Our point with this is to push a perspective that loses all hope in this system ever healing itself. We want people to realize that racism and authoritarianism are as inherent to this system as the slave ships and colonizers that lay at its foundation.

## DJ Henry / Four Years Later

DJ Henry played football for Pace University in New York. After a homecoming game on October 16th, 2010, he and several friends went to a local bar to celebrate. DJ was the designated driver. When the bar closed, he went to get the car. While idling in a fire lane, he was told by a police officer to move on, according to witnesses. He immediately listened and tried to move. His compliance resulted in his death. Police allege that earlier that day, Henry tried to run over Aaron Hess, the same cop who would later leap on the hood of Henry's car, fire through the windshield, and kill him.

"Since then we've learned that almost every part of that account is false," said attorney Michael Sussman, who represents the Henry family in a wrongful-death civil lawsuit that's currently stalled in federal court in New York. "Police chief [Louis] Alagno, from the Mt. Pleasant Police agency, spoke publicly and made it appear that DJ Henry was driving his vehicle at a high rate of speed toward two officers who therefore fired at his car, and him, presumably, and shot him to death." Sussman says depositions taken in the federal civil law suit contradict the police's story.

"DJ Henry was going at no more than 7 to 10 miles per hour and probably closer to 7 miles per hour," he said. "He had attempted to brake when he saw Mr. Hess in the roadway, and rather than evade the vehicle, with a weapon drawn, he jumped on the hood of the vehicle and immediately began shooting."

Shots indeed were fired with bullets coming from the guns of two different police officers: Hess and an officer named Ronald Beckley.

"Mr. Beckley has given sworn testimony that he was shooting at Mr. Hess, whom he viewed as quote "an aggressor," not at Mr. Henry, and was in fact attempting to kill Mr.

Hess because he viewed him as aggressing against a civilian," Sussman said. "At the time he was shooting, he, Mr. Beckley, did not know that Mr. Hess was a police officer."

But Beckley's account was never made public by former police chief Louis Alagno. Four years after the killing of DJ Henry, his family is concerned that the Westchester County District Attorney's Office only revealed to a grand jury what they wanted it to hear. "Ronald Beckley told his superiors that night what he did," Dan Henry said. "And has maintained that truth from that point forward, indicating that he was only attempting to protect DJ from what he thought was the only threat being presented. That was Aaron Hess shooting at DJ and DJ's passengers. That was known that evening but was suppressed."

Lawyer Brian Sokoloff represents Hess in the civil suit. "What I can tell you is there is forensic evidence and we have a process in this country in which acts are determined by admissible evidence put before juries," Sokoloff said. "I do not intend to litigate this case or to discuss the evidence in media because it's not fair to everybody." This comment is quite typical of attorneys defending individuals blatantly guilty.

A grand jury cleared Hess of any wrongdoing. But the lawyer for the Henrys says jurors might have come to a different conclusion, if they knew what we know today as a result of depositions in the civil case.

What has been the U.S. Department of Justice's role in all of this? Sussman says the family met with 12 officials for the New York U.S. Attorney's Office and with the official who is coordinating the Justice's inquiry into the police shooting of Brown in Ferguson, Missouri.

U.S. Representative Joseph Kennedy, at a Saturday-night gala in DJ's honor, pointed out that he was among the signers of a letter from the Massachusetts delegation in recent months to Attorney General Eric Holder asking him to take a closer look at the DJ Henry case.

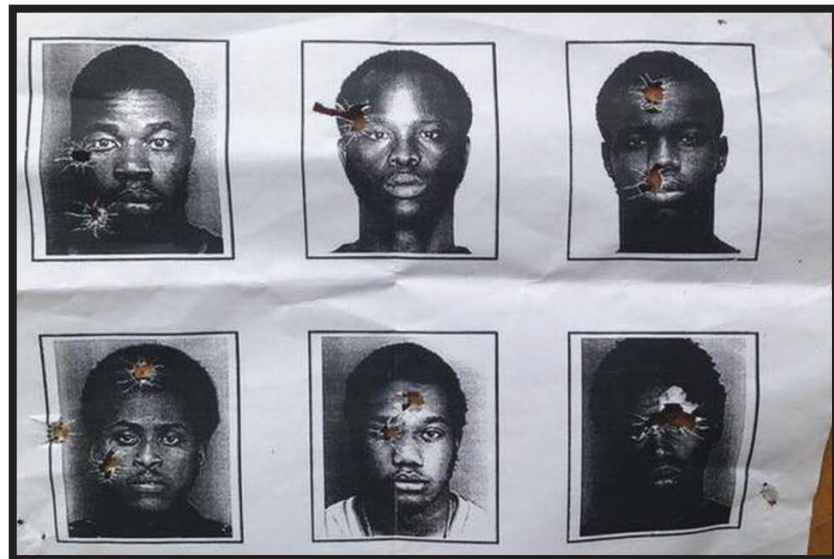
Since the death of Henry, Alagno, in federal depositions, admitted that he did not tell the truth about Beckley's role. Four years since the killing of DJ Henry, Hess has retired from the Mt. Pleasant Police Department, and is now working at a fitness center.

"His life will never be the same again," Sokoloff said. "This incident took away from him what he loved most in the world — being a police officer."

It is important to add that DJ's father was a police officer in the Boston police department; which is why this case was even recognized by the media. It's also important to add that DJ was Black.

## Aiyana Jones

The last attempt at a manslaughter charge against a Detroit cop will be dismissed as of mid-October 2014. Detroit Police Officer Joseph Weekley has been on trial for involuntary manslaughter in the death of Aiyana Stanley-Jones, 7, who was killed during a police raid in 2010. Wayne County Circuit Court Judge Cynthia Gray Hathaway granted a motion filed by Weekley's attorney to dismiss the felony charge. The trial was halted while the Michigan Court of Appeals reviewed an emergency appeal of the judge's ruling. But the court denied the appeal.



**\*The image above is an actual target used at the North Miami Beach police training facility. After the target was made public, North Miami Beach police chief J. Scott Dennis claimed that no dept. policies were violated. FTTP agrees with his statement.**

Presiding Judge Michael Talbot issued the order, saying that the appeals court was not able to review the decision because the trial court had granted the defense's motion to drop the manslaughter charge orally and in a written order before there was an appellate review.

"Although I find that the trial court erred in form and substance in granting defendant's motion for directed verdict, we are barred from reviewing that decision," Talbot wrote.

The prosecution has filed an emergency motion for reconsideration with the appeals court.

Roland Lawrence, chairman of the Justice for Aiyana Committee, issued a statement following the court's decision.

"Surely, the death of a baby by a well-trained police force must be deemed unacceptable in a civilized society," Lawrence said.

Steve Fishman, Weekley's attorney, said in court that the prosecution had not presented evidence that could lead a jury to find his client guilty of involuntary manslaughter.

"There is absolutely no evidence, none, that's in the least bit credible, that Officer Weekley knowingly created a danger or, more importantly, intended to cause injury," Fishman said.

A little after midnight on May 16, 2010, a special police team conducting a raid in search of a murder suspect entered the Stanley-Jones home on Detroit's east side. Weekley was first through the door. As a crew filmed for a reality show about murder investigations, another officer is said to have thrown a flash-bang grenade. Shortly after, Weekley shot 7-year-old Aiyana, who was sleeping on the couch in the front room at the time.

The girl's grandmother, Mertilla Jones, was on the couch with her. Weekley blames Aiyana's grandmother for Aiyana's death, claiming that she struck him, leading him to shoot her granddaughter. Following the killing, she was arrested on the spot while Aiyana was also rushed away from the scene, but not immediately given medical attention. The footage of the raid, because of being owned by television station A&E, also was not available to the public for at least 3 years after the shooting.

The prosecution sought to show that Weekley was acting improperly and in violation of training by keeping his finger on the trigger of his submachine gun.

"He could have avoided injury if he had followed his training," Assistant Wayne County Prosecutor Robert Moran said in court Friday. "He didn't, and as a result of him not following his training and not following the mandates of

ordinary care, someone was killed." --That "someone" he callously refers to is Aiyana. Weekley still faces the misdemeanor charge of 'careless discharge of a firearm causing death'. -- He was first tried for involuntary manslaughter in 2013, when a hung jury caused a mistrial. Most likely his trial will remain in constant bureaucracy, or be permanently forgotten.

## Since Mike Brown: A Few of the Youth Under Attack / Beyond the Headlines

- August / Sergio Ramos  
18 years old / Dallas, Texas
- August 14th / Diana Showman  
19 years old / San Jose, California
- August 24th / Roshad McIntosh  
19 years old / Chicago, Illinois
- Sept. 21st / Cameron Tillman  
14 years old / Terrebonne, Louisiana
- Sept. 26th / Dillon McGee  
18 years old / Jackson, Tennessee
- Late September / Levi Weaver  
18 years old / Cedartown, Georgia
- September / Karen Cifuentes  
19 years old / Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
- October 8th / VonDerrit Myers Jr.  
18 year old / Shaw, Missouri
- October 20th / Laquan McDonald  
17 years old / Chicago, Illinois
- October 27th / Jeffrey Holden  
18 years old / Kansas City, Kansas
- October 2014 / Qusean Whitten  
18 years old / Columbus, Ohio
- October 2014 / Miguel Benton  
19 years old / Decatur, Georgia
- Nov. 21st / Carey Smith-Viramontes  
18 years old / Long Beach, California
- Nov 22nd / Tamir Rice  
12 years old / Cleveland, Ohio

*No officer has faced any legal repercussions for any of these deaths as of January 2015. Six of these murders were of Black teenagers. There is no justice, just us.*

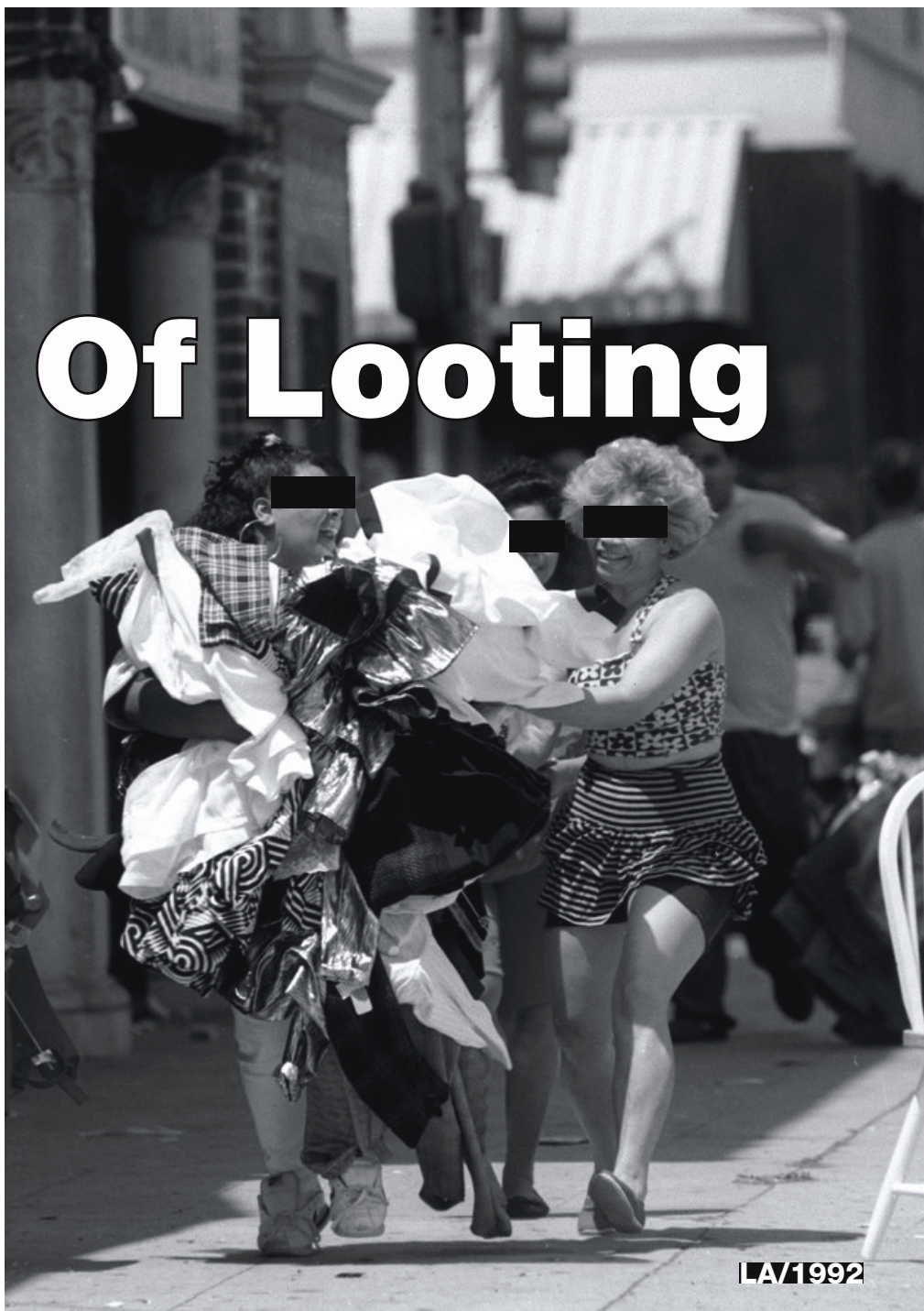
**"Seriously, WTF would body cameras have done for Eric Garner? If anything they would have provided worse footage of the murder. That is not a solution to shit"**

# In Defense Of Looting

**The direct appropriation of wealth (pejoratively labelled "looting") breaks the circuit of capital Work-Wage-Consumption, and such a struggle is just as unacceptable to capital as a strike. However it is also true that, for a large section of the L.A. working class, rebellion at the level of production is impossible. From the constant awareness of a "good life" out of reach - commodities they cannot have - to the contradiction of the simplest commodity, the use-values they need are all stamped with a price tag; they experience the contradictions of capital not at the level of alienated production but at the level of alienated consumption, not at the level of labor but at the level of the commodity.**

-Aufheben #1 1992

On the LA rebellion over Rodney King



As protests in Ferguson continued unabated one week after the police killing of Michael Brown, Jr., zones of Twitter and the left media predominantly sympathetic to the protesters began angrily criticizing looters. Some claimed that white protesters were the ones doing all of the looting and property destruction, while others worried about the stereotypical and damaging media representation that would emerge. It also seems that there were as many protesters (if not more) in the streets of Ferguson working to prevent looting as there were people going about it. While I think there are better tactics, I understand that they acted out of care for the struggle, and I want to honor all the brave and inspiring actions they've taken over the last weeks.

Some politicians on the ground in Ferguson, like alderman Antonio French and members of the New Black Panther Party, block looting specifically in order to maintain leadership for themselves and dampen resistance, but there are many more who do so out of a commitment to advancing the ethical and politically advantageous position. It is in solidarity with these latter protesters—along with those who loot—and against politicians and de-escalators everywhere that I offer this critique, as a way of invigorating discussion amongst those engaged in anti-state struggle, in Ferguson and anywhere else the police violently perpetuate white supremacy and settler colonialism. In other words, anywhere in America.

The dominant media is itself a tool of white supremacy: it repeats what the police deliver nearly verbatim and uncritically, even when the police story changes upwards of nine times, as it has thus far in the Brown killing. The media use phrases like "officer-involved shooting" and will switch to passive voice when a black man is shot by a white vigilante or a police officer ("shots were fired"). Journalists claim

that "you have to hear both sides" in order to privilege the obfuscating reports of the state over the clear voices and testimony of an entire community, members of which witnessed the police murder a teenager in cold blood. The media are more respectful to white serial killers and mass murderers than to unarmed black victims of murder.

And yet, many of the people who perform this critique day-in, day-out can get jammed up by media perceptions of protesters. They want to correct the media's assertion that protesters were all looters for good reason: the idea of black people looting a store is one of the most racially charged images in the white imaginary. When protesters proclaim that "not all protesters were looters, in fact, most of the looters weren't part of the protest!" or words to that effect, they are trying to fight a horrifically racist history of black people depicted in American culture as robbers and thieves: Precisely the image that the Ferguson police tried to evoke to assassinate Michael Brown's character and justify his killing post facto. It is a completely righteous and understandable position.

However, in trying to correct this media image—in making a strong division between Good Protesters and Bad Rioters, or between ethical non-violence practitioners and supposedly violent looters—the narrative of the criminalization of black youth is reproduced. This time it delineates certain kinds of black youth—those who loot versus those who protest. The effect of this discourse is hardening a permanent category of criminality on black subjects who produce a supposed crime within the context of a protest. It reproduces racist and white supremacist ideologies (including the tactic of divide-and-conquer), deeming some unworthy of our solidarity and protection, marking them, subtly, as legitimate targets of police violence. These days, the police, whose public-facing racism is much more manicured, if not less virulent,

argue that "outside agitators" engage in rioting and looting. Meanwhile, police will consistently praise "non-violent" demonstrators, and claim that they want to keep those demonstrators safe.

In working to correct the white-supremacist media narrative we can end up reproducing police tactics of isolating the individuals who attack property at protests. Despite the fact that if it were not for those individuals the media might pay no attention at all. If protesters hadn't looted and burnt down that QuikTrip on the second day of protests, would Ferguson be a point of worldwide attention? It's impossible to know, but all the non-violent protests against police killings across the country that go unreported seem to indicate the answer is no. It was the looting of a Duane Reade after a vigil that brought widespread attention to the murder of Kimani Gray in New York City. The media's own warped procedure instructs that riots and looting are more effective at attracting attention to a cause.

But of course, the goal is not merely the attention of dominant media. Nor is the goal a certain kind of media attention: no matter how peaceful and well-behaved a protest is, the dominant media will always push the police talking points and the white-supremacist agenda. The goal is justice. Here, we have to briefly grapple with the legacy of social justice being won in America: namely that of non-violence and the civil rights movement. And that means correcting a more pervasive and totalizing media and historical narrative about the civil rights movement: that it was non-violent, that it claimed significant wins because it was non-violent, and that it overcame racial injustice altogether.

In the 400 years of barbaric, white supremacist, colonial and genocidal history known as the United States, the civil rights movement stands out as a bright, beautiful,

all-too-brief moment of hope and struggle. We still live in the shadow of the leaders, theory, and images that emerged from those years, and any struggle in America that overlooks the work (both philosophical and organizational) produced in those decades does so at its own peril. However, why is it drilled into our heads, from grade school onward, in every single venue, by presidents, professors and police chiefs alike, that the civil rights movement was victorious because it was non-violent? Surely we should be suspicious of any narrative that the entire white establishment agrees is of the utmost importance.

The civil rights movement was not purely non-violent. Some of its bravest, most inspiring activists worked within the framework of disciplined non-violence. Many of its bravest, most inspiring activists did not. It took months of largely non-violent campaigning in Birmingham, Alabama to force JFK to give his speech calling for a civil rights act. But in the month before he did so, the campaign in Birmingham had become decidedly not-non-violent\*: protesters had started fighting back against the police and Eugene "Bull" Conner, throwing rocks, and breaking windows. Robert Kennedy, afraid that the increasingly riotous atmosphere in Birmingham would spread across Alabama and the South, convinced John to deliver the famous speech and begin moving towards civil rights legislation.

This would have been impossible without the previous months of courageous and tireless non-violent activism. But it is also the emergent threat of rioting that forced JFK's hand. Both Malcolm X and MLK had armed bodyguards. Throughout the civil rights era, massive non-violent civil disobedience campaigns were matched with massive riots. The most famous of these was the Watts rebellion of 1965 but they occurred in dozens of cities across the country. To argue that the movement achieved what it did in spite of rather than



as a result of the mixture of not-non-violent and non-violent action is spurious at best. And, lest we forget, Martin Luther King Jr., the man who embodied the respectable non-violent voice that the white power structure claims they would listen to today, was murdered by that same white power structure anyway.

Though the Civil Rights movement won many battles, it lost the war. Mass incarceration, the fact that black wealth and black-white inequality are at the same place they were at the start of the civil rights movement, that many US cities are more segregated now than they were in the sixties: no matter what “colorblind” liberals would say, racial justice has not been won, white supremacy has not been overturned, racism is not over. In fact, anti-black racism remains the foundational organizing principle of this country. That is because this country is built on the right to property, and there is no property, no wealth in the USA without the exploitation, appropriation, murder, and enslavement of black people.

As Raven Rakia puts it, “In America, property is racial. It always has been.” Indeed, the idea of blackness was invented simultaneously with American conceptions of property: via slavery. In the early days of colonial America, chattel slavery was much less common than indentured servitude—though the difference between the two was not always significant—and there were Irish, French, German and English immigrants among these populations. But while there had always been and continued to be some black freedmen, over the course of the 17th century light-skinned European people stopped being indentured servants and slaves. This is partially because production exploded in the colonies much faster than a working population could form to do the work—either from reproduction or voluntary immigration—and so the cost of hired labor went through the roof. Even a very poor and desperate European became much more expensive than an African bought from the increasingly rationalized transatlantic slave trade.

The distinction between white and black was thus eventually forged as a way of distinguishing between who could be enslaved and who could not. The earliest working definition of blackness may well have been “those who could be property”. Someone who organized a mob to violently free slaves, then, would surely be considered a looter (had the word come into common usage by then, John Brown and Nat Turner would have been slandered

with it). This is not to draw some absurd ethical equivalence between freeing a slave and grabbing a flat screen in a riot. The point, rather, is that for most of America’s history, one of the most righteous anti-white supremacist tactics available was looting. The specter of slaves freeing themselves could be seen as American history’s first image of black looters.

On Twitter, a tongue-in-cheek political hashtag sprang up, #suspectedlooters, which was filled with images of colonial Europeans, slave owners, cowboys and white cultural appropriators. Similarly, many have pointed out that, had Africa not been looted, there wouldn’t even be any black people in America. These are powerful correctives to arguments around looting, and the rhetorical point—that when people of color loot a store, they are taking back a miniscule proportion of what has been historically stolen from them, from their ancestral history and language to the basic safety of their children on the street today—is absolutely essential. But purely for the purposes of this argument—because I agree wholeheartedly with the political project of these campaigns—I want to claim that what white settlers and slave traders did wasn’t mere looting. It was genocide, theft, and barbarism of the lowest order. But part of how slavery and colonialism functioned was to introduce new territories and categories to the purview of ownership, of property. Not only did they steal the land from native peoples, but they also produced a system under which the land itself could be stolen, owned by legal fiat through force of arms. Not only did they take away Africans’ lives, history, culture, and freedom, but they also transformed people into property and labor-power into a saleable commodity. Chattel slavery is the most barbaric and violent form of work coercion—but as the last 150 years has shown, you can dominate an entire people through law, violence, and wages pretty well.

Recently an Instagram video circulated of a Ferguson protester discussing the looting and burning of the QuikTrip convenience store. He retorts the all too common accusation thrown at rioters: “People wanna say we destroying our own neighborhoods. We don’t own nothing out here!” This is the crux of the matter, and could be said of most majority black neighborhoods in America, which have much higher concentrations of chain stores and fast food restaurants than non-black neighborhoods. The average per capita income in Ferguson, MO is less than \$21,000, and that number almost certainly gets lower if

you remove the 35% white population of Ferguson from the equation. How could the average Ferguson resident really say it’s “our QuikTrip”? Indeed, although you might hang out in it, how can a chain convenience store or corporate restaurant earnestly be part of anyone’s neighborhood? The same white liberals who inveigh against corporations for destroying local communities are aghast when rioters take their critique to its actual material conclusion.

The mystifying ideological claim that looting is violent and non-political is one that has been carefully produced by the ruling class because it is precisely the violent maintenance of property which is both the basis and end of their power. Looting is extremely dangerous to the rich (and most white people) because it reveals, with an immediacy that has to be moralized away, that the idea of private property is just that: an idea, a tenuous and contingent structure of consent, backed up by the lethal force of the state. When rioters take territory and loot, they are revealing precisely how, in a space without cops, property relations can be destroyed and things can be had for free.

On a less abstract level there is a practical and tactical benefit to looting. Whenever people worry about looting, there is an implicit sense that the looter must necessarily be acting selfishly, “opportunistically,” and in excess. But why is it bad to grab an opportunity to improve well-being, to make life better, easier, or more comfortable? Or, as Hannah Black put it on Twitter: “Cops exist so people can’t loot ie have nice things for free so idk why it’s so confusing that people loot when they protest against cops” [sic]. Only if you believe that having nice things for free is amoral, if you believe, in short, that the current (white-supremacist, settler-colonialist) regime of property is just, can you believe that looting is amoral in itself.

White people deploy the idea of looting in a way that implies people of color are greedy and lazy, but it is just the opposite: looting is a hard-won and dangerous act with potentially terrible consequences, and looters are only stealing from the rich owners’ profit margins. Those owners, meanwhile, especially if they own a chain like QuikTrip, steal forty hours every week from thousands of employees who in return get the privilege of not dying for another seven days.

And the further assumption that the looter isn’t sharing her loot is just as racist and ideological. We know that poor commu-

nities and communities of color practice more mutual aid and support than do wealthy white communities—partially because they have to. The person looting might be someone who has to hustle everyday to get by, someone who, by grabbing something of value, can afford to spend the rest of the week “non-violently” protesting. They might be feeding their family, or older people in their community who barely survive on Social Security and can’t work (or loot) themselves. They might just be expropriating what they would otherwise buy—liquor, for example—but it still represents a material way that riots and protests help the community: by providing a way for people to solve some of the immediate problems of poverty and by creating a space for people to freely reproduce their lives rather than doing so through wage labor.

Modern American police forces evolved out of fugitive slave patrols, working to literally keep property from escaping its owners. The history of the police in America is the history of black people being violently prevented from threatening white people’s property rights. When, in the midst of an anti-police protest movement, people loot, they aren’t acting non-politically, they aren’t distracting from the issue of police violence and domination, nor are they fanning the flames of an always-already racist media discourse. Instead, they are getting straight to the heart of the problem of the police, property, and white supremacy.

*Solidarity with all Ferguson rebels!*

*-August 21st, 2014*

\*I use the rather clunky phrase not-non-violent purposely. For some non-violence ideologues breaking windows, lighting trash on fire or even building barricades in the street is “violent”. I once watched a group of black teens chanting “Fuck the Police” get shouted at for “being violent” by a white protester. Though there are more forms of violence than just literal physical blows to a human body, I don’t believe a conception of “violence” which encompasses both throwing trash in the street and the murder of Michael Brown is remotely helpful. Frustratingly, in protest situations violence tends to be defined as “whatever the nearest cop or non-violence practitioner says it is.” Calling breaking a window “violent” reproduces this useless definition and places the whole argument within the rhetorical structure of non-violence ideology. Not-non-violent, then, becomes the more useful term.

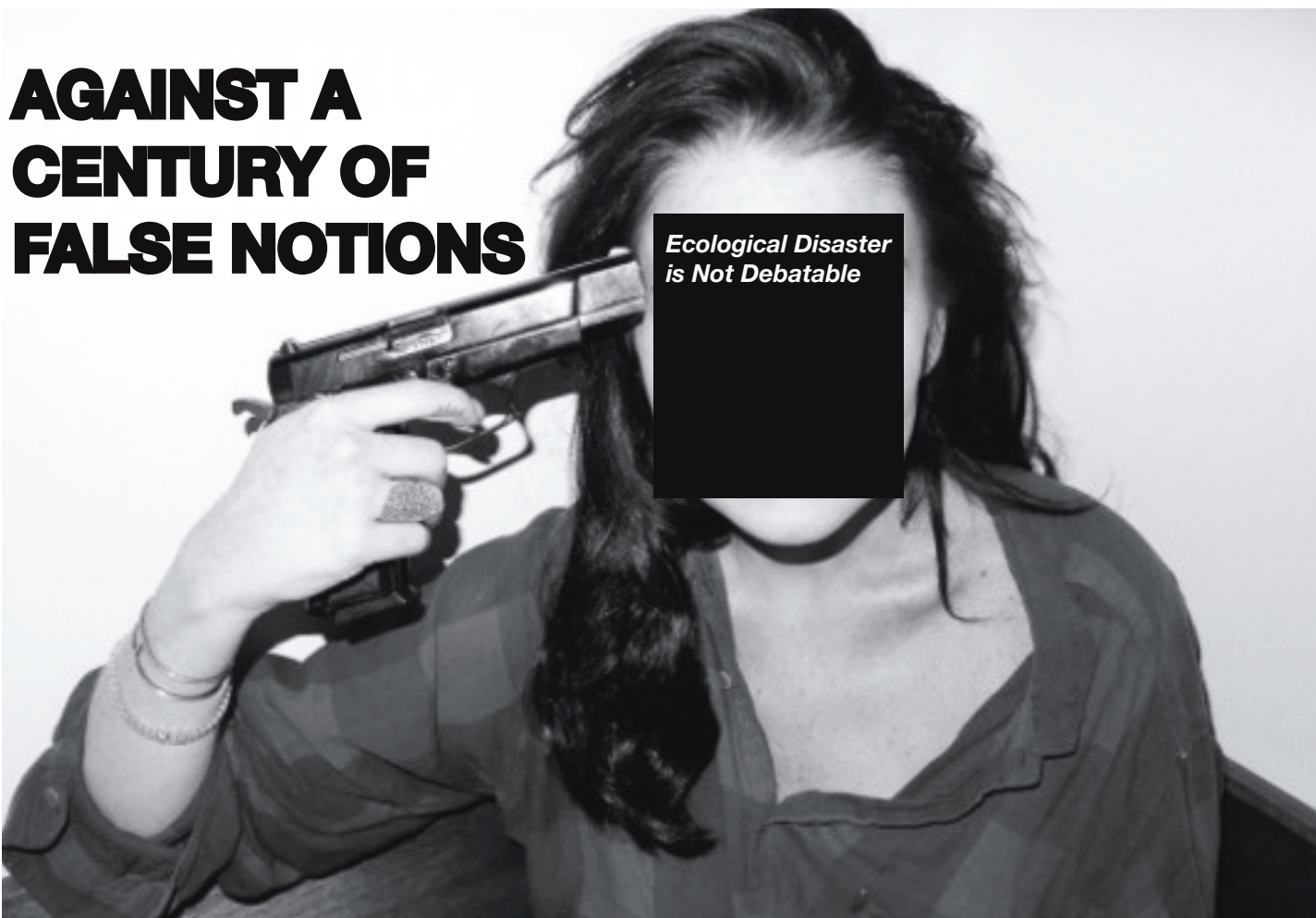


Oakland/2011

**“A lot of people feel that in order to come together we have to sacrifice the neighborhood.”**

-Will M., a former gang member interviewed by the *Kpvt pcvqpcnJ gtcif* *Vtkwpg* regarding the LA riots in 1992.

# AGAINST A CENTURY OF FALSE NOTIONS



**“This is the principal law of our age. We may quote here Jacques Soustelle’s well known remark of May, 1960, in reference to the atomic bomb. It expresses the deep feeling of us all: ‘Since it was possible, it was necessary.’ Really a master phrase for all technical evolution.”**

-Jacques Ellul/Technological Society/1964

I’ve been reading about climate change since I was in 6th grade. I remember the first time I read about it was for a school assignment. We were supposed to go home and pick an article from the New York Times and summarize it for the class. I always hated school, and rarely properly did an assignment. Avoiding more punishment by my parents and school, I went home, opened the paper, and blindly picked the first article I saw. This was 1997, and the article I chose was about global warming and the melting polar ice caps in Antarctica, and was in the opinion section at the time. I was such a lazy student and found everything related to school to be boring, so I half-assed a 3 paragraph article about how I thought global warming was good because summer was way nicer than winter. I always think about this when I see how mainstream the concerns about it have gotten, but it’s nothing new.

It seems that those who have come before us have royally fucked us. And it appears that those in power intend to continue trying to fuck our generation and whatever generations follow ours unless those in power are stopped. Realities regarding our natural environment and notions of an impending doomsday type of scenario have belatedly been given validity by mainstream science and even the ruling elite. Regardless of this, the same notion of immortality that laid a foundation for the industrial grandiosity and excess of the elites throughout the 20th century (including the roughest war on nature waged against the earth in the history of time) is still continuing to play itself out.

It’s not just the stereotypical environmentalist or liberal college student criticizing the current ecological crisis, but actors, politicians, and the overall mainstream have finally accepted the reality that industrial civilization is not as immortal as once assumed. It’s yesterday’s news at this point that humanity in the last 150 years has been able to cause more damage to the natural world than in the ten thousand years before it. Even the right-wing think tanks are looking more and more embar-

assed when seriously questioned about their denial of climate change (among other things) and humanity’s contribution to it. But while more and more validity is being given to the concern of climate change or our abusive relationship with the natural environment in general, stories regarding rising sea levels and dwindling drinking water are still recognized as a topic for debate within the logic of Western politics; much like gay marriage or abortion. While one would think our hyper-informed post-modern humanity would take a less patient response to something as dire as not having safe drinking water or losing entire coastal cities, we are tragically stuck in a logic that our industrial capitalist society (that created these issues in the first place) is capable of solving them. This is a logic fabricated by the idiotic generations that have pummeled our habitat and looted our future. This is not a logic to be debated - it is a logic to be negated.

We live in a society where natural resources are approached as infinite commodities, able to be produced based on the demand of the capitalist market. An incredible example would be our relationship with water, specifically our drinking water. No one can deny the indispensable relationship humans have with drinking water. Realizing this, I wonder how so many seem unconcerned when it’s pointed out that our drinking water is used more for energy production and industrial agriculture than it is for drinking. In fact, there are concerns that even the world’s developed nations will experience rampant shortages in fresh water supplies by 2040 due to human behavior. This is the same society whose population continues to grow at obscene numbers. The logic is that water is a commodity, and it is to be used as a commodity. It will be used by those who can afford it, to the extent of which they can spend, despite the reality that is a limited resource. If you are super wealthy you can literally go in your bathroom, turn your water on, and let it flow forever (Or until you run out of money). Around 280 billion gallons of water are used in the United States alone each year for fracking and coal production. In 2012, according to the American Meat Institute, the American meat industry processed 92.9 billion pounds of meat. It’s estimated that one pound of meat requires 2,400 gallons of water, that can only lead me to assume that in 2012 alone 223 trillion gallons of water were used for meat production— in the United States alone. While humans can live for months without food, the typical human being can only

survive for up to three days without water. Based on combined statistics I would assume that at least 876,000,000,000 gallons of water would be required to keep the United States alive each year (300,000,000 x 8 glasses a day x 365 days a year). Multiply that number by 7,000,000,000 and you have an estimate on the required drinking water to support the global population today. But in this society, under the logic of capitalism, resources such as water are perceived as infinite, no matter how big of an industrial shit is taken on the earth, or how large the demand is posed by our irresponsibly growing population. Clearly this is ridiculous, and proven wrong by the rampant malnourishment around the world. It’s already clear that we are in crisis, and have been in crisis. A fifth of the world population today lives in water scarce environments, and another 1.6 billion of the current human population face economic water shortage where there isn’t the infrastructure to produce the water needed for an existing population from available rivers and aquifers. Yet modern societies continue to pollute the water, sabotage the natural process of clean water being steadily produced by the planet itself, and direct water resources towards energy production as opposed to keeping people alive. After all this, companies like Nestle (Poland Spring & Life Water) or Coca-Cola (Aquafina) start to bottle up what’s left, and sell it back to us. If we take a moment to seriously look at this, of course we can only scoff in disbelief, but this is totally appropriate logic for industrial capitalism. There is nothing to be surprised about here, this is a perfect manifestation of capitalism playing itself out. And while half of the world is thirsty, there is most likely a pool being built somewhere in America right now, further reinforcing a sense of stability for the populations of the world that are protected by capitalism.

Climate change is a more complicated subject than drinking water, but we are treating it like a smoker; puffing away even though it is killing us. Whether it’s the Philippines (Tacloban), Japan, Hurricane Sandy, or Hurricane Katrina, there are already signs of scenarios to come. But like a smoker waiting for cancer to come in the morning, it’s clear that until the skies turn black and huge Western populations are killed off, those in power will both continue to ravage our habitat on an industrial scale, and we will continue to allow a debate over their behavior, as opposed to forming an active resistance that

threatens everything that validates their dangerous power. It’s still a topic of conversation instead of a situation in need of immediate action because the ones in power that people are told to ask to deal with reversing our influence on it found their positions in society through the system of capital that is responsible for creating this mess. It’s simple: changing the course of production would hinder growth and profits. That’s it, there is no other reason that debate should even be a consideration. It’s frequently mentioned that sea levels are rising, and will inevitably continue to. Demanding that people in power solve this issue would be like asking someone beating you to wear gloves. Without eliminating them and their technical means to pollute, rampage, and systematically kill the natural environment you are left with the same situation as before.

Those in power come from a history of power that is both sociopathic and unrelentingly authoritarian. No amount of evidence of crisis will shift the attitude of those included in the luxuries that industrial capitalism brings to some. Miami, for example, is expected to experience an increase in tidal floods in the next 15 years from 15 annually to 240. At the same time, more and more development along the city’s coastline is being constructed, with ocean side property at some of its highest prices in history. Whether all this will be submerged under water in 15 or 20 years is somehow exempt from consideration. But for those who can determine construction efforts or live in one of these luxury developments, there is an assumption that the state and capitalism will protect them, and the ever apparent complications of the very near future are not nearly as valuable as the quick bucks that can be made now. While I try to stay away from any moral debating, this is purely irresponsible. Not only is this irresponsible, but it is delusional, as is the behavior of those of us today who stupidly adopted the logic of our parents and the generations throughout the 20th century that said shitting where we eat is ok.

Concern over the natural world has fallen into the cultural trap that surrounds American politics, and while this should be the most unifying situation in our history as a humanity; both idiotic sides on the matter seem to treat it as another headline or political opportunity. As the typical Koch-brothers-vile-white-men continue to pull the mysterious corporate strings that perpetuate the destruction of our natural world, their so-called liberal antithesis provides a voice for the “earth” that helps to merely prolong the argument. This happens by refusing to recognize ecological devastation as a technical necessity for industrial capitalism to continue to grow, and believing it is something that can be dealt with without destroying industrial capitalism, and the state which helps to enforce it.

In the 1960s you had a situation where the United States government was in a very unusual situation. They were forced to make concessions to the public in response to an alarming amount of general unrest. They enacted a raft of anti-discrimination laws and ended (formal) segregation in schools. This led to a calming in the streets of America, but we all know the reality for Black and brown children in this country today. It still generally means you are poor, you are more likely to end up in prison, (in actuality schools are more segregated than ever), and you will more likely have a stressful life. The system saw a disruption, rearranged itself to quell the disruption, and continued onward as the same system, simply more efficient. Like those in power in the 1960s, the order of today is scrambling to quell concerns with talk of green solutions neutralizing the existing destruction. It’s important that we

do not allow these forces to trick us into showing patience or being passive. NASA and other government agencies around the world have already made it very clear that we cannot completely avoid all future consequences from global warming and climate change. They do however suggest that we change our behavior in a way that will procrastinate the worst-case scenarios made popular by Hollywood apocalypse movies such as the *Day After Tomorrow* or *Snow Piercer* (helping to view ideas of industrial collapse and ecological disaster as fantasies). While they continue to point out that this is a direct result of human behavior, they propose that we change only the process of how we exist in a global capitalist world, not the issue of there being a global capitalist world which has an inherent logic to constantly exploit and dominate everything in its assumed infinite path of growth. NASA being a government agency can be expected to minimize radical notions of change as a solution for the issues the earth face, but in reaction to their facts I think there can no longer be any patience for debate or consideration for politics as we understand them in the United States. There has to be an immediate attack on the totality of society, because it is a society that will be forced into a state of demise by those who control it, before there is a real transition in the way that society relates to nature.

As this system continues to push us to the brink, opponents of climate change must begin to tap into existing tensions. Concession cannot be an option in an instance of scarcity—only the elimination of the system that is making it so some can live in luxury and excess, and some can't live at all. People are over the solar-panel green capitalist utopia promoted by the mainstream as our only hope and alternative (especially since most of us can not afford it), so we must be a voice pushing for an uprising that will destroy the means of eco-devastation as we know it, additionally providing a sustainable alternative that is accessible to all (unlike organic food or electric cars that the liberal elite claim as solutions). These are drastic words. Of course I realize that China for example is out there shadowing America's stupidity, but I know that the only solution would be to eliminate the system that created these issues, and that can only be done by advocating a perspective that is totalistic in its critique of the world today, and pushes for resistance that is not negotiable with industrial capitalism. We are not fighting for future generations at this point, we are fighting for our lives. We are that future generation that concerned groups have discussed in the past. We have inherited the earth from the abusive tenant that was the 20th century. We must direct our rage and frustration over this against the industrialists and capitalists before us that have calculated this mess (and the current generation of them today). In doing so, our contempt must be directed at the techniques and systems that allowed them to do so much damage. I do not believe that dialogue is possible with this system, and I am confident in saying that there is plenty of evidence to sup-

port my position. The terrifying impacts of coal on communities in West Virginia is an incredible example of how worthless dialogue is with this system. Across the country, the horror stories caused by fracking on struggling communities across the country are movie worthy (Netflix can affirm this); and still it's a prospering industry. I still see plenty of BPs (British Petroleum) across the country, and they literally destroyed like a whole chunk of the earth, for just 7 billion dollars (2010 Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill) There should be absolutely no consideration for those tolerant of such a society that condones these atrocities. Not only for anyone selfish, spineless, or stupid enough to deny these circumstances and their severity, but also to the reservations of those who claim to oppose the forces behind climate change and eco-devastation, but propose absolutely no revolutionary approach to stopping its continuance or eliminating the system responsible.

Acting against those who have engaged in institutional violence against the natural world must begin to act without compromise or patience. There must be a project that aims to completely destroy the system in place that has put our collective destiny at the hands of a few vile people. That system would be capitalism and its enforcer: the state. Those in control would gladly sacrifice billions of people in exchange for fulfilling their hollow desire for luxury and superiority. And by would, I mean they have, they are, and they will continue to do so. That is why I am writing this article. Both to address the reality we face on the earth, the system and society responsible for producing it, and the type of resistance movement that must be formed to avoid falling down the cliff that we are being blindly pushed off of.

*Our resistance in defense of nature must match the violent assault by industrial capitalism against it!*

**Support Those Imprisoned  
For Defending the Earth**

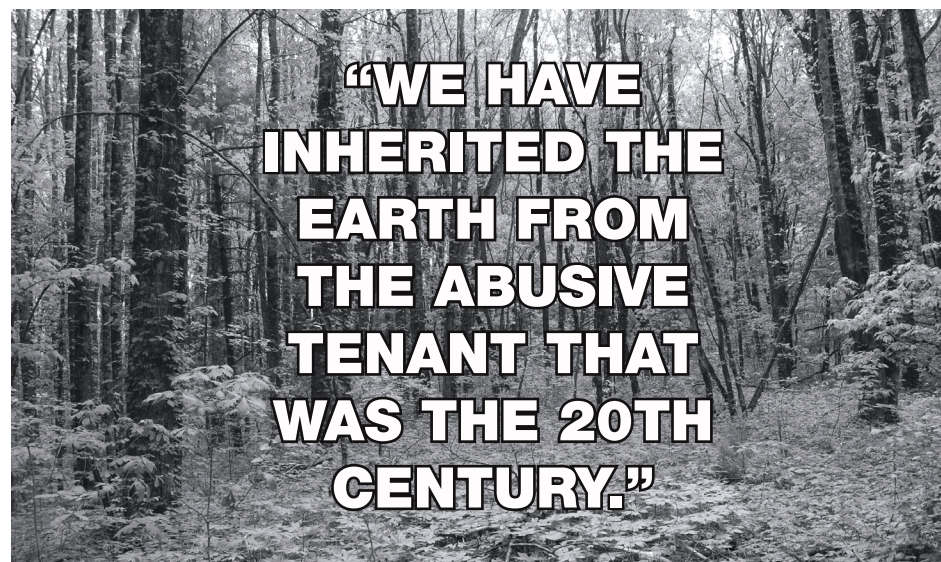
[earthfirstjournal.org/eco-prisoner-list](http://earthfirstjournal.org/eco-prisoner-list)

**Support & Learn from Those  
Struggling to Preserve a  
Harmonious Relationship  
With the Earth**

[survivalinternational.org](http://survivalinternational.org)

**"It will doubtless be pointed out, by way of refutation, that production techniques were developed during the ascendancy of liberalism, which furnished a favorable climate for their development and understood perfectly how to use them. But this is no counter-argument. The simple fact is that liberalism permitted the development of its executioner, exactly as in a healthy tissue a constituent cell may proliferate and give rise to a fatal cancer."**

-Jacques Ellul/*Technological Society*/1964



*The following is an interview with Gord Hill (Kwakwaka'wakw nation), who frequently writes under the pseudonym Zig-Zag. He is also the author of The 500 Years of Resistance Comic Book, The Anti-Capitalist Resistance Comic Book (both published by Arsenal Pulp Press), and 500 Years of Indigenous Resistance (published by PM Press).*

**Fire to the Prisons (FtP):** In 2014 there has been a flurry of activity in Native communities who are engaged in blockades of roads against timber sales, mining projects, against missing and murdered aboriginal women, occupations of hydro dams, against trophy hunting, and also large blockades against oil pipelines. Can you tell us more about these campaigns and actions and the context in which they are happening? What drives these struggles?

**Zig Zag (ZZ):** Native peoples in Canada have been carrying out blockades and other actions since the 1970s, in the modern era as it were. In the last few years, beginning perhaps in the early 2000s, there has been an increase in these activities of protest and resistance for various reasons; I don't think there's one particular reason. Each campaign or struggle has its own history and characteristics; events that make them grow or decline. Having said that I would also add that there seems to be an overall increase in political consciousness and activity over the last decade, and I think this is occurring on a global level so that when Native peoples in Canada see events such as the "Arab Spring" or Occupy, or the Toronto G20 [riots], there's a sense that protesting is something that's more "acceptable" or common, or perhaps even productive. But as I mentioned, each struggle also has its own dynamics that drive it.

In regards to the missing and murdered women, this has been a campaign that began in the late 1990s and in particular the high number of women that began disappearing from Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, when there were somewhere around 70 missing women dating back to the 1970s, and mostly through the '80s and '90s. By the late '90s, Native women's groups in Vancouver began organizing, including an annual memorial march on February 14th. Since that time, other towns and cities have also begun organizing similar rallies and marches to draw attention to this issue. So that's how this campaign has increased, and more recently, over the last two years, some communities have also carried out temporary blockades of highways and trains.

The anti-pipeline struggle is another example of a campaign that has emerged over the last few years, as a result of increased Tar Sands production and Canada's goal of becoming a major petro-state for the Asian and US markets. All this requires pipelines to transport the oil and gas, originally envisioned as passing through central British Columbia (BC) from Alberta, to coastal

ports and then on tanker ships. These proposals for several major pipelines have given rise to an unprecedented mobilization of Natives in central BC and along the coast in opposition to both major pipeline projects and oil tanker traffic. Even government-imposed band councils have voiced their opposition to some of these (while making agreements for others). And this anti-pipeline, anti-oil tanker movement is informed by various factors, including the Exxon Valdez oil spill in southern Alaska and northern BC that resulted in extensive environmental damages that persist to this day, the 2005 sinking of the Queen of the North ferry in an area similar to the route proposed for oil tanker traffic, the 2011 Gulf of Mexico BP oil spill which horrified people around the world and across BC, as well as ongoing and frequent reports of new oil pipeline ruptures and tanker spills.

Protests and blockades against logging have been somewhat common since at least the 1970s, and in fact occur less frequently now due to a decline in the forestry industry overall, although some communities such as Grassy Narrows in Ontario are still fighting to stop clear cut logging.

In regards to mining projects, some of the more recently proposed mining projects have been in central and northern BC, areas which have only been opened up to large scale exploration and industrial activity since the 1970s and '80s. Some new mining projects, as well as oil and gas development, is the result of new technologies that make it economically worthwhile to build roads and other infrastructure, so in these areas as well Native peoples are mobilizing to defend vital parts of their territories, such as the Tahltan in north BC who have resisted various mining and gas projects for the last 7-8 years. More recently, there was a major disaster in BC at the Mount Polley mine, when its tailings pond ruptured sending large amounts of contaminated water into a river and forest system. Operated by Imperial Metals, Mt. Polley is located in Secwepemc territory, who are already opposing other mining projects. Now, other communities facing similar mining projects, including those operated by Imperial Metals, are more determined to stop new mining projects.

Overall, you can see an increase in industrial development in more northern regions across Canada, as well as an increase in Indigenous resistance against these projects. I also wouldn't discount the effect of social media and people being able to not only gain counter-information, but also the ability to produce their own communications when, for example, a small isolated community carries out a blockade. In the 1980s, it would've taken longer for information to get out unless the corporate media was covering it.

**FtP:** There is a long history of indigenous resistance in what is called Canada dating back to European invasion. In the last several decades, there has been large

scale armed defense of land occupations. Can you tell us about this history and how it informs current struggles?

**ZZ:** The first Native armed actions in Canada occurred in 1974, following the siege at Wounded Knee in 1973. These were at Cache Creek, BC, and Anicinabe Park in Ontario. Without doubt, the most significant armed standoff occurred in 1990 involving the Mohawk communities of Kanasatake and Kahnawake, both of which are near Montreal, Quebec. This standoff emerged over a conflict about the municipality of Oka's decision to expand a nine hole golf course and to build a condominium project into an area known as the Pines, which contained a Mohawk graveyard, lacrosse field, as well as the last patch of trees left in the area. Many non-Native Oka residents also opposed these projects. Over the course of about a year the Mohawks and citizens organized protests and petitions, and in the spring of 1990 began blockading a small dirt road. On July 11, the Surete du Quebec (Quebec provincial police) attempted to raid the blockade and dismantle it, but their heavily armed tactical unit was met with armed resistance by warriors. After a brief fire fight one cop was killed, and the rest of the police retreated, abandoning their vehicles which were then used to expand the blockade to include nearby highways and roads. At the same time Mohawks in Kahnawake blockaded the Mercier Bridge, a major commuter link from the suburbs to downtown Montreal. This set in motion a 77 day armed standoff. By August, the Canadian military deployed a mechanized brigade of about 5,000 soldiers.

The standoff at Oka generated widespread solidarity across the country, with Natives occupying government buildings and blockading highways and trains. Some sabotage also occurred, with railway bridges and electrical transmission towers brought down. The golf course was never expanded, and the condos were never built. Oka had a tremendous effect on Indigenous struggles in Canada and set the tone for resistance actions through the decade and to this day. The imagery of masked and camouflaged warriors has been emulated across the country at numerous protests and blockades, without the AK-47s.

In 1995 there was another armed standoff in south central BC at a place called Gustafsen Lake located in Secwepemc territory, who called the lake Ts'Peten. This standoff occurred after a US rancher sought to evict a Sundance camp which was located on Crown land. After his cowboys had threatened an elder and his family, warriors traveled to the camp to offer protection, and the New Democratic Party, a social democratic party then in power as the provincial government, authorized a major police operation involving over 450 heavily armed police from the RCMP. They acquired armored personnel vehicles from the Canadian military, flew surveillance planes over the camp, and on September 11th ambushed a vehicle used by the defenders by detonating an explosive charge which blew up the front end of the truck and then rammed it with an APC. This initiated an hours long fire fight, during which police fired over 77,000 rounds of ammunition, killing a dog and wounding one defender. This standoff lasted about a month, and ended after the defenders laid down their arms. One elder, Wolverine, received the longest jail sentence of 8 years.

While these acts of armed resistance are historical events which had profound impacts on Indigenous people's struggles in Canada, they are not very common. While the Mohawks have both the resources and personnel with military experience to engage in these types of actions, most communities do not. Most communities are

more capable of carrying out low-level acts of resistance, including blockades, which are far more common than armed actions. I think the recent example of the Mi'kmaq anti-fracking struggle in New Brunswick is a good example of this, and one that more communities could engage in. Another recent example would be the resistance at Six Nations, where hundreds of people from the community engaged in blockades as well as acts of sabotage to stop the construction of a condo project.

**FtTP:** In a recent interview with the Canadian anarchist Franklin Lopez, they talked about how the success of road blockades has driven many people to continue and expand the tactic. Can you attest to this success?

**ZZ:** Indigenous peoples in Canada have been using the blockade tactic since the 1970s, and in the '80s the government-funded band councils also began using blockades during negotiations with government or industry as political leverage/public relations types of activities. But certainly many grassroots movements continue to use the blockade because they are effective in disrupting industrial activity and creating political pressure on the state. In addition, many highways, roads, and railways are located near reserves or cut right through reserves, so they are easily accessible.

**FtTP:** In an interview you did regarding the Idle No More movement, you talk about the class dynamics of the leadership structure and the limit of reformist aims. Can you tell us more?

**ZZ:** The official organizers of INM came from middle-class professions: lawyers and academics, so this class position determined their overall methods which were entirely focused on legal-political reforms. They worked closely with another middle-class element which were Indian Act band councilors and chiefs. They came out strongly against any radical actions such as blockades and attempted to impose control over the movement, in particular their pacifist beliefs. In fact, it was the first time a major mobilization like this imposed pacifist methods on Native peoples. The main goal of this movement was to stop the federal government from passing an omnibus budget bill that was going to change many federal laws, including ones providing some level of environmental protection for land and water. The bill passed in mid-December, however, and despite a few more weeks of large rallies the movement was unable to sustain itself.

One aspect of their legalistic-pacifist approach was a strict limit on the types of actions people could carry out, so they were really limited to "flash mob" round dances in shopping malls and city streets, which ultimately have little impact. Thankfully this movement, while it did indeed mobilize thousands of Natives out to rallies, did not last long. We can compare the tactics of INM to those used during the Quebec student strike of 2012, which included not only ongoing rallies but also occupations and militant street protests that cost the Quebec government millions of dollars in property damage and lost revenue. The strike led to the cancellation of the student tuition increase as well as a change in the provincial government. Or you can look at the Six Nations land reclamation, which cost the state tens of millions of dollars in property damage, compensation, paying

for policing operations, and lost business. That condo project has never been built.

**FtTP:** In a recent talk you did on anarchism and indigenous resistance, you discuss ways in which the two struggles work together and support each other. Can you tell us more?

**ZZ:** Well I think I mostly talked about the similarities between anarchist and Indigenous struggles and how there were more possibilities for solidarity as a result of this, and in particular the general absence of a centralized State system, the emphasis on decentralized and autonomous forms of self-organization, and the need for anti-colonial and anti-capitalist analysis in both movements. This can be compared to other forms of organization used by groups such as political parties or unions, as well as NGOs, all of which typically have bureaucratic or even hierarchical structures. These types of groups often align themselves with the Indian Act band councils, which are often in conflict with genuine grassroots movements.

**FtTP:** In the same talk, you relate the black bloc to Warrior Societies. How do you think anarchists could popularize more confrontational tactics to be seen in a more positive light, and not as 'outside agitators' or people who bring upon repression to social struggles?

**ZZ:** I think one of the big problems the Left or "progressive movements" have in North America is a real lack of fighting spirit or combativeness. They are so controlled and dominated by professional organizers

## **“LIBERATION IS THE TASK IMPOSED UPON US BY OUR CONQUEST & COLONIZATION.”**

*-Chtnweizu, Vj g'Y gw'c'pf 'j g'Tgw'qhWu*

who pursue strictly legal-political forms of struggle; that people who want to engage in more radical and militant actions are marginalized and isolated, which makes them vulnerable to State repression. Every successful resistance movement in history has used a diversity of tactics, including militant actions. When a movement wants to raise the level of militancy I think one of the most important steps is to build a culture of resistance, and to begin to "normalize" acts of resistance. At the same time, movements also have to go through learning phases. A lot of people who get involved at first think purely in terms of legal-political reforms, petitions to State officials, peaceful rallies, etc. This is "normalized" by the bureaucrats who run most of the social justice, NGO-type groups, as well as corporate media and entertainment. Only by participating in struggles and learning first-hand the futility of using strictly legal-political means will people become radicalized and begin using more militant tactics.

**FtTP:** In one of your latest publications, "Smash Pacifism: A Critical Analysis of Gandhi and King," you argue that in the US, pacifist movements are largely headed by middle-class leadership. You also argue that riots had a much larger effect on policy changes than non-violent pleas for reform. Can you tell us more?

**ZZ:** Well the "official" leadership of the Black civil rights movement were certainly middle class, they were Baptist preachers, lawyers, and other professionals who, because of their greater resources and "legitimacy," were able to exert significant influence and control over the movement, as occurs in virtually every social movement in North America. In regards to the riots, the official history of the civil rights movements showcases the peaceful rallies

and arrests as being what made significant change, when in reality it was a diversity of tactics including armed resistance as well as mass urban revolts, which inflicted hundreds of millions of dollars in damages to property. It was this economic disruption, and the threat of even greater unrest, that prompted the federal government to enact civil rights legislation and to also begin dumping millions and millions of dollars into poor communities and organizations as part of the "war on poverty," which led to the institutionalization of the non-governmental organization industry. But I don't think it's as simple as saying the riots did more than the civil rights protests, because they all contributed to overall rebelliousness of the Black population. Some of the main proponents of militant Black Power came out of the "nonviolent" groups, such as Stokely Carmichael, for example.

**FtTP:** As we speak, from droughts to diseases and disasters brought on by climate change, things continue to get worse as capitalist civilization pushes us closer to the brink. Some small towns are without water, and fracking pollutes watersheds and threatens people's lives. What advice would you give militants and radicals working within this context?

**ZZ:** Along with anti-capitalist and anti-colonial analyses I also advocate a dual strategy of survival and resistance. Resistance is necessary to defend land and people to ensure our survival into the future, while at the same time we must consider the overall situation and the increasing possibility of substantial systemic failures arising from various intertwining sources, including economic and ecological crises. If we were to simply focus on survival we would prepare, learn skills, secure land, etc, but vast areas of land could be contaminated in the meantime that would severely erode people's ability to survive in the long term. I think that by organizing a broader resistance we can also build stronger networks that will also assist in long term survival.

**FtTP:** Throughout your art work and writings, you often discuss how drugs and alcohol are used against Native peoples and aid in their subjugation. From trailer parks where meth is produced to ghettos filled with CIA funded crack-cocaine, we see similar realities elsewhere. Do you have any advice to others working for radical change in these situations?

**ZZ:** The subject of drug and alcohol addiction is something I touch on, but I wouldn't describe it as "often." It's a social reality that oppressed populations suffer from higher levels of social dysfunction, with drugs and alcohol being common. From my experience in working with communities it's best to not take a judgmental attitude or you'll just alienate large sectors of the population. You have to know people's strengths and weaknesses, and if they have drug and/or alcohol addictions then that needs to be considered when planning actions or campaigns, knowing that some people will not be reliable for some types of work, or can't be trusted with handling money, etc. But these people can change, and I know when communities are actually engaged in resistance and large numbers of people participate, the levels of drug and alcohol abuse decline because people are working together, feeling solidarity and purpose for a common good.

**FtTP:** What can people expect from you in the future? What projects are you working on that you are excited about?

**ZZ:** I am presently maintaining the site: **WarriorPublications.wordpress.com** where I post news relating to Indigenous people's struggles, primarily in Canada.

# 4 Years Later

An Interview on the Middle East



Picture: Members of Syrian Kurdish People's Defence Units (YPG) celebrating their victory in Kobani, Syria, on January 2015, after defeating Muslim-Fascist group ISIS.

**FtTP:** In 2011, there seemed to be a glimmer of liberatory possibility unfolding in the uprisings of the Arab Spring. In light of the growth of ISIS, as well as the current state of affairs in Egypt and Libya, do you think there has been a drastic transition in the Middle East towards more authoritarian military conflict? If so, why?

**Tom Nomad (TN):** To understand how to approach this question it is important to understand the fundamental separation between insurgency and the separate process of capture that occurs in the process of attempting to end insurgency. Often these two processes are conjoined in a single process within the modernist thinking around the concept of insurgency; that insurgency is for something and attempts to create something directly. If we pay close attention to historical moments, such as the American and French Revolutions, as well as events in Russia or Spain, we can clearly see the separation of these processes. In these instances insurgency operates as a process of degrading the infrastructure of State operational capacity; this is a process that is fundamentally centered not on taking and holding space, but on logistical degradation and strategic maneuver. But, at a point, after the logistics of State operations has collapsed there is a second process, the process of some faction attempting to end the insurgency, often through repression, and create a different state logistics.

That is what we have witnessed during not only the recent uprisings in the Middle East and northern Africa, but also in Ukraine, although this was a much accelerated process. It is within this dynamic of the unleashing of political possibility through conflict, and the attempt to capture that possibility, eliminate outside possibilities and decelerate conflict that we can read these events. If we take a look at ISIS we can clearly see this. Their strategic movements across space are typified by a series of stages. First, they tend to move into empty space, and do this well. Sometimes this occurs by launching attacks into other areas, usually small scale single operations that will concentrate opposing forces away from their line of movement, which they then exploit. From that point they will begin a process of repressing possible opposing factions within these areas through extreme methods that are usually public; this begins the process of the mobilization of a repressive operation. Often, this has occurred in areas in which a regime has already been driven out, or is specifically weak, as in what occurred within Iraq. What is not clearly acknowledged about ISIS is that they tend to

move into these sparsely defended or weak areas, and have had a significant amount of trouble fighting concentrated opposing forces, as in Kobani. However, what is also clear about ISIS is that their policing apparatus is not evenly spaced across the areas that they claim to control, rather, this is a process of entrenchment, often behind lines, and often in areas that are far from lines of direct confrontation, in which they are attempting to end insurgency.

So, on the one hand, many of the conflicts that have arisen as a result of the uprisings in the Middle East and northern Africa have begun to resemble power struggles, but we should not read this as a logical outcome. Rather than competition over the direction of an insurgency, what we have begun to see is a competition over who gets to end the insurgency, and this is clear in Libya and parts of Syria. But, within the very trajectory of insurgency there is necessarily possibility generated through conflict, and this cannot be seen as the same process as the attempt to capture and eliminate this possibility.

**FtTP:** What role has the West played in the Middle East since the Arab spring, as well as helping to fund the repression of struggles such as student revolt in Egypt or proletarian youth in Bahrain?

**TN:** This is a complex question that involves a lot of discussion to actually begin to sufficiently discuss, but I will attempt to give an overview. For those that want to read a good, and lengthy, discussion of this dynamic I recommend Vijay Prishad's book *Arab Spring, Libyan Winter*. [While] there are a series of problems with the analysis of the implications of Western involvement on the actual dynamics of the on the ground insurgent forces in Libya...the over-arching narrative is very informative.

To begin to understand Western involvement, and the contradictions of Western involvement within the conflicts in the Middle East and northern Africa we have to first discuss the policy goals of Western, and by Western I mean NATO, government in the region, and this adds to the complications. Much Western involvement has been centered on the attempt to influence the direction of economic projects and access to resources within the Middle East and northern Africa. We could see this dynamic play out in Libya, in which NATO forces gave air support to units of the Libyan insurgency aligned with the National Transitional Council, a well-connected and sympathetic collection of defected regime officials, former international economists and former

regime military personnel. It was clear within this dynamic that NATO countries were attempting to use NTC support on the ground to shape the post-Gaddafi Libya, which not only occupies a strategic place in northern Africa, but is also home to a series of shipping ports and large reserves of both oil and natural gas. In this instance these concerns drove NATO to support the insurgency.

This is a different role than the one played within the conflict in Bahrain, in which NATO nations supported the repression against Bahraini activists and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) intervention in Bahrain. There were a series of considerations that drove this approach, I will discuss three specifically. First, the US Navy Fifth Fleet is based out of Bahrain. Not only is this the primary base for all US Navy operations in the Persian Gulf, it is also seen as a central deterrent mechanism to Iranian naval expansion. Second, GCC nations are not only primary oil exporters and major business influences within NATO economies, but they also form a pro-Western power bloc within the Middle East. The repression in Bahrain came directly on the heels of GCC air and special forces assistance in Libya, in which Quatari special forces played a central role in arming and training commando units within the Libyan insurgency before launching the operation in Tripoli that was essential in the displacement of the Gaddafi regime; this is detailed in a report by Reuters titled "The Secret Plan to Take Tripoli." As Prishad details in his book, this intervention was part of a deal between NATO and the GCC, to encourage the uprising in Libya, while turning a blind eye to GCC intervention in Bahrain. The third consideration, and this has caused the most confusion, has been the attempt to then use this power bloc to contest the expansion of the Iranian sphere of influence in the region, which includes the Iraqi State, under Maliki and his successor, the Assad regime in Syria and Hezbollah, all of which have been reduced to playing the role of Iranian clients in the past 10 years.

This attempt to counter Iranian influence in the region is being balanced against an attempt to maintain regional geopolitical stability and achieve a deal over Iranian nuclear research. This has created a series of complications in Syria, as well as contradictions in the NATO approach to ISIS. On the one hand the Iranian State funds the Assad regime, is their primary economic support structure, trained their intelligence operatives and informal militias, funds their outside support from Hezbollah and Iraqi Shia militia forces

## Note:

The following is an interview with Tom Nomad regarding the current state of the Middle East today since the 2011 'Arab Spring'. Tom is a midwest-based anarchist who authored *The Master's Tools: Warfare and Insurgent Possibility* and a member of the Institute for the Study of Insurgent Warfare, which recently published the first issue of *Insurgencies: A Journal on Insurgent Strategy*. Tom talks about anarchist approaches towards ethics and strategic choices, the Insurrectionalist turn in North America and the growing focus among many of a study of *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency for the purpose of reframing our struggle against State, Capital and other enemies*.

This interview was conducted in November 2014. Like the last three years in the Middle East, the political situation continues to change every day. For example, since this interview was conducted, the YPG officially claimed victory over ISIS in Kobani, Syria and seventy-three Bahraini revolutionaries have had their citizenship revoked by the state. This interview provides a great deal of information and insight into the situation in the Middle East, but it is time sensitive, and we apologize if things have changed, or were not mentioned that should have been.

Another interesting interview can be found here: [crimethinc.com/texts/r/Kobani/](http://crimethinc.com/texts/r/Kobani/)

and even intervenes directly in combat situations. This has caused the US specifically to be placed in a situation in which they are attempting to aid in the elimination of the Assad regime, largely to prevent spillover in the conflict, while also attempting to not anger the Iranian state. At the same time Iranian and American military advisers are both operational in Iraq in the fight against ISIS. This is all occurring within a context in which ISIS now controls most of the major oil fields in Syria, sells oil to the Syrian regime, and until recently had an informal alliance with the Syrian regime in order to concentrate their forces against Syrian rebel and Kurdish groups. So, on the one hand it is clear that NATO forces have been arming a very small number of Syrian rebel forces, though not to a significant degree, as well as training certain units, through training camps in Jordan, while at the same time not doing enough to swing the balance of the conflict, as in Libya, in order to not end the possibility of a negotiation on Iranian nuclear research.

None of this says anything about Egypt, which has very different dynamics. At the beginning of the uprising, by all accounts, the involvement of Western governments was limited. But, as Mubarak fell, and the uprising was repressed by the Muslim Brotherhood, there were indications of Western support for literally any force that could end the uprising. Massive development loans were signed with the transitional government and then the Brotherhood government in Egypt. Then after the Brotherhood regime, which was increasingly generating resistance, fell to a coup, Western governments largely stayed silent. It is not clear what role Western governments had in the coup, except to support it from afar, but there has been a series of attempts to legitimize the regime since that point. It is important to keep in mind that there are two considerations involved in this situation that are driving Western policy. The first is the Suez Canal, which lies at the center of a conflict between the Egyptian State, various workers organizations and a militant jihadi movement in the Sinai. Second, the majority of smuggling into the Gaza Strip happens literally under the border with Egypt, and it was this smuggling infrastructure that was the excuse for the recent Israeli invasion of Gaza.

**FtTP:** Why has jihad (religious motivated resistance to oppression) become so popular to some Arab youth, when concerns over employment, State repression, or a more free society were a considerable motivation to rebel in 2011?

**TN:** This is a potentially impossible question to really answer, but there are a series of things that we have to keep in mind. Western, specifically American, media discourse around this phenomenon tends to focus on the rise of jihadi organizations in isolation of the other dynamics that surround this rise, and tends to over-emphasize the perception of the size and strength of these organizations, and there is good reason for this. If we go back to the 1990s, when bin Laden is in the Sudan, a shift occurs, one that was foreshadowed by a series of disagreements within jihadi circles around the war in Afghanistan against the Soviets, and this is documented in detail in Stephen Coll's book *Ghost Wars*. This disagreement did not focus so much around tactics, it focused on the projection of image, and the use of media, at that time cassette tapes and video, to project an image of jihad. In the intervening 20 years successful jihadi organizations, the ones that can attract resources and recruits, tend to be the ones that carry out the most spectacular attacks, coupled with the ability to expand access to this spectacle. This was the case with jihadi organizations before the rise of ISIS, and is more the case now. This media tactic is usually coupled with outside intervention from foreign fighters and large amounts of funding. Again, even before the rise of ISIS this was the case, with local resistance groups in Libya and Syria often being poorly funded and obtaining most of their equipment through re-appropriation, and comprised almost entirely of fighters local to the region within which they were operating.

Early in the Syrian revolution, after ISIS intervened in Syria in force in 2012, they were known primarily for carrying out big attacks, but not attacks that had much strategic purpose or importance. They have since morphed into an organization that is excellent at the projection of imagery, the use of social media, as well as military operations. This has amplified the perception of the size of ISIS, which is in actuality around 30,000 troops, as well as their influence, even though most of the space under their control is isolated desert. This shift has begun interplay with a series of other dynamics, convenience, and economic desperation. As ISIS began its drive through Iraq, which came at the end of the repression of a social movement against the Maliki regime in Anbar Province, they began to both align themselves with other resistance organizations, specifically organizations that trace their roots to the Baath Party, as well as eliminate oppositional forces through assassination. They used resources that they obtained through involvement in Syria to fuel this rise. As they moved through Iraq earlier in 2014 they were able to further displace opposition, drive the forces that had often set the stage for this rise underground and obtain large amounts of monetary and military resources. So, in many places within the ISIS area of operations the conditions that drove these initial uprisings had not changed, both Assad and Maliki remained in power, with Maliki being replaced by one of his allies, and ISIS became the only force in the area that one could join up with. This dynamic is often seen in Syria as well, where fighters, regardless of the unit they end up with, often join up with the first unit that rolls through their area after they decide that they are going to join the fight. So, while ISIS began its life as a dedicated force of a few thousand largely foreign fighters and veterans of the war in Syria and the Iraqi insurgency, many of these initial fighters have been killed or incapacitated and they are left with a much larger, less dedicated, less experienced and well trained force.

We cannot also under-emphasize the role of economic desperation and the failure of prior uprisings in this equation either. One thing is clear about ISIS, they pay, and they pay well. We can see the influence of the role of money in the rise of ISIS in the rapid growth in combat strength after the taking of Mosul in Iraq. During the taking of the city, ISIS fighters were met with little resistance, other allied units had been launching attacks on Iraqi forces, which were numerically strong but under equipped and led by political appointees (this is discussed at length in the report that ISIW wrote about ISIS), and upon the arrival of ISIS on the outskirts of the city most of the military forces, around 30,000, abandoned their posts and left their equipment behind. ISIS then set about robbing every bank in the city, including the Central Bank branch, and removing as much military gear as they could. This netted them somewhere around \$2 billion US dollars worth of cash and enough equipment for around 10,000 fighters. After this point ISIS began paying fighters a very high wage, and were willing to take in any able-bodied male that was capable of fighting. This recruitment drive locally in Iraq and Syria was bolstered by the rapid increase in the number of foreign fighters that flooded into the area, largely from areas where resistance movements had occurred and failed, places like Afghanistan,



Morocco and Egypt. Unlike other jihadi groups in the region, ISIS does not draw a significant amount of foreign funding compared to coalitions like the Islamic Front in Syria, a moderate Islamist coalition, but it does specifically target its operations at resource rich and poorly defended targets, like oil fields, or cities like Mosul, in order to maximize the resource windfall and continue this growth.

So, to begin to analyze whether there has been a political shift in the region, which seems to be over-emphasized, this has to be counter-balanced against these dynamics: exclusivity, financial resources, and the amplification of the image of size through the use of media and the prevailing political dynamics in the region. These factors can go a long way toward explaining a process in which, as resources are increasingly obtained and oppositional forces are increasingly eliminated, ISIS seems to continue to gain momentum, as other more moderate jihadi organizations and secular groups seem to be waning. It is not even clear whether we can see this as a shift in the motivations for fighting, as both economic desperation and political repression are still playing a role and the dynamics released by repression and unemployment have been channeled in a different direc-

tion due to a series of important factors.

**FtTP:** What is happening in the area of the world known as Kurdistan? Many have heard for some time that the PKK (Kurdish Worker's Party) is now influenced by anarchism. What do you make of this?

**TN:** Often Kurdistan, a region that stretches through areas of northern and eastern Syria, south central and eastern Turkey, and northern Iraq, is thought of as a single region, but this is only partially the case. This region is a region that has been formed, to a significant degree, around the political dynamics of the various states that Kurdish populations find themselves in. For example, in Kurdish Iraq, politicians are very much a part of the prevailing post-US State structure, and serve as a very powerful parliamentary and executive bloc, which is led by a series of often feuding centrist and nationalist political parties, aligned around two primary blocs of politicians. This is a dynamic that has existed around the formation of the peshmerga, or units of armed Kurds that were formed to fight against the Hussein regime. This series of political parties and fighting units are highly formalized, and their influence extends into the regions in northwestern Syria. This bloc is in direct conflict with the PKK, or the Kurdish Workers Party, which rose to prominence in an urban and

Turkish and American States consider the PKK, along with the YPG/YPJ, terrorist organizations, but they are allowing other Kurdish armed organizations, which they directly support, to enter into Kobani through Turkish territory. This underscores the tension between these different regions within what is often called Kurdistan.

This is further complicated by the often complex relationships that different fighting units have with different elements of the prevailing state in Syria, Turkey and Iraq. As I mentioned, the peshmerga and affiliated political groups in Iraq work with the state, carry out joint operations with the military and are recipients of American arms; [meaning] they are fighting with American arms in support of an Iranian client state against ISIS. This alliance with the State carried over into northeast Syria, where peshmerga aligned forces and Syrian regime troops existed in a state of non-confrontational stand-off, in which Syrian troops did not attempt to impose control and the peshmerga aligned forces worked to keep rebel groups and ISIS out of the area. In north-central Syria, pushing into northeast Syria, and into Turkey, areas in which the PKK and YPG/YPJ forces operate, the Syrian regime has been pushed out of the area, attacks and logistics are often staged over the border, and the relationship with non-Kurdish Syrian rebel groups fluctuates depending on which group it is, what coalition they are a part of and so on. In the case of Kobani, some secular units of the Free Syrian Army have been sending troops and supplies into the city to help the YPG/YPJ fight off ISIS. We also have a situation in northeast Syria in which PKK and peshmerga aligned forces have come into contact, often keeping their distance and maintaining influence in different towns, and sometimes coordinating to fight a common enemy.

In many ways the concept of Kurdistan is impossible to politically conceive of in a singular way. Even though all of the Kurdish identified organizations involved grew out of a nationalist struggle, they have taken very different directions based in the wider political conditions. Not only does this complicate the discussion of Kurdistan, but it also complicates the discussion of US military strategy, which is directly opposed to helping PKK/YPG/YPJ forces, but arming peshmerga forces to fight in PKK dominated areas, and launching air-strikes against ISIS in support of PKK aligned forces in Kobani, and even infrequently air-dropping them supplies.

As far as the discussion of the PKK and an embrace of anarchism, the situation does not seem to be as simple as it is often made out to be. We have to remember that the PKK comes from a Leninist formation, and spent years developing a cult of personality around Ocalan. From all indications it seems that Ocalan has undergone a shift in his political thinking since being incarcerated in Turkey, and that is significant. This has led to some changes on the ground, largely through the structure of the Kurdish Democratic Union Party, that is the PKK affiliate in Syria and has been organizing assemblies in towns under their control. However, there are two primary complications within this move. First, the Kurdish Democratic Union Party, to a certain extent the PKK in Turkey, and [in] the refugee camps they run in extreme northern Iraq, [people] have been moving into a process of decentralizing political power [in] assemblies, eliminating the tax structure, and organizing cooperatives to take on much of the material production and maintenance work. [This is] a process akin to the [one carried out by the] CNT in areas they were strong in during

the Spanish Revolution. [However], they are still a coalition partner in the Kurdish Supreme Committee, the governing body for Kurdish regions in Syria, in which they share power with the Kurdish National Council, a nationalist party tied to Iraqi Kurdish politicians. Second, there is a certain inertia within the PKK that maintains a Leninist structure in certain areas, under certain commanders and so on. This is a result of the legacy of Leninism and the cult of personality around Ocalan, which many PKK fighters and their commanders grew up [with, and are] very much embedded within. So, it remains to be seen whether the PKK can or will overcome the legacy of Leninism and the tendency to govern due to the shift in thinking that Ocalan has seemingly undergone.

**FtP:** What is the extent of the Rojava revolution? In what ways have people taken control over their own lives? Is there a division between the organizations which seek to represent people and those who are self-organizing in their own neighborhoods?

**TN:** As I mentioned above, it is really a question of where you are. This dynamic has to be thought of in relation to two other dynamics, the impossibility of a form of political perfection or the constant development of political dynamics, and the dynamics of insurgency. During the uprising in Syria, and to a lesser extent during the collapse of the Iraqi State, political autonomy is something that has arisen out of necessity. As the logistics of the State collapse, as the logistics of policing become less able to project force into areas, (either as a result of area denial or as a result of attrition), the functions of the State dissolve and political possibilities emerge as apparent. This is not just a dynamic that occurred in Syrian regions of Kurdistan, but is a dynamic that has occurred in many towns and cities across the Middle East and northern Africa during this process of upheaval, with specific concentrations in Libya and Syria, where the State is unable to operate in large areas.

This is not a question of the stated meta-politics of insurgent groups, this is a by-product of the dynamics of conflict unleashed within direct confrontation with the logistics of policing, unleashed within the degradation of the logistical capacity of the State to project force across space. The question at this point, as I mentioned, becomes one of the dynamics of capture; whether there is an attempt, a successful attempt, to end conflict and destroy political possibility, to form the State anew.

What seems to have taken hold in areas of Syrian Kurdistan is an embracing of this political possibility: a realignment of political dynamics around the immediacy of everyday life, and the imperatives of armed struggle. From reports coming out of the region there is definitely a process in which people have seized direct control over aspects of their lives in the midst of conflict, and that this is a developing process. This seems to be a process, and again I am going off reports from the region, which is occurring in different areas in different ways and to different degrees. What is important about this process is not whether it is a political solution, there is no such thing, and to declare some solu-

tion is to begin this process of capture. Rather, it is a dynamic, one that is in constant flux, and one that is not embracing a given form; it is, in this case, from what can be seen within the US from a distance, a process of embracing possibility.

This has become complicated, however, by the traditional mechanisms of representation. It is important to keep in mind that all attempts at representation, as Schmitt discusses, necessarily implies the imposition of some form of political engagement and a removal of that engagement from the immediacy of everyday life. So, the problem here is not so much the parties, although there are problems here that I will discuss later, but that there are representatives, or those claiming to represent (something which in itself is philosophically impossible), at all.

In Syria, the so-called representatives have been locked into this governing structure, negotiated by Massoud Barzani, the President of Iraqi Kurdistan and important player in Iraqi politics, which functions, to the degree possible, as a governing structure, and is formed from a partnership between the Kurdish Democratic Union Party, affiliated with the PKK, and the Kurdish National Council, a party aligned with the Iraqi nationalist parties, and one that has declining influence in relation to the rise of the PKK aligned groups in Syria. This complicates

der restriction on fighters, and the YPJ formed as an attempt among female fighters to have more control over fighting units comprised of primarily women. The fighting units also elect commanders directly from among the fighters. These structures are both clearly outgrowths of developments within the PKK. Iraqi peshmerga fighters, by contrast, fight within a rigid command structure, often led by political appointees, and are all men.

At the beginning of the conflict in Syria the YPG/YPJ units maintained a directly defensive stance, in that their primary goal was to assert control over Kurdish areas and prevent the dynamics of the wider Syrian revolution from spilling over into Kurdish regions. This stance led to a complicated relationship with both Syrian insurgents and regime troops, specifically in northeastern Syria; areas where the Kurdish National Council is much stronger. However, as the fighting has stretched on, the Kurdish National Council has seemingly lost a lot of influence, while Kurdish Democratic Union Party influence has grown. This has led to a series of important shifts.

Firstly, YPG/YPJ units are not only comprised of Kurds anymore. Rather, a series of fighters have defected from other units of the Syrian insurgency and have joined the YPG/YPJ. The focus of the organization is also not directly defensive and

from Mount Sinjar in order to prevent a massacre of Yazidi peoples, a group of Kurdish religious minorities theologically tied to Zoroastrianism. This came after the Iraqi peshmerga abandoned the town to defend more central areas closer to the core of Iraqi Kurdistan. After rescuing hundreds of people on Mount Sinjar the YPG/YPJ and PKK set up refugee camps to house many of the displaced. This operation coupled with the defense of Kobani, have significantly shifted the political dynamics on the ground, and this has contributed to increasing shifts in the structure and politics of the YPG/YPJ.

**FtP:** Is it fair to call ISIS a fascist group? Is the growth of ISIS similar to the growth of right-wing groups in say, the Ukraine or elsewhere?

**TN:** I would like to leave the discussion of political typification alone for the time being; there are many definitions of the term "fascist," all of which would likely be applicable here. Rather, I would like to focus on the second part of this question, the rise of the right-wing in Europe and how this relates to Ukraine and ISIS.

In approaching this question, we have to draw a distinction between the process of the rise of parliamentary right wing parties in Europe and the rise of Right Sector in Ukraine or ISIS in Iraq and Syria. In the case of right-wing parties in Europe as a whole there is a disturbing trend in which they are winning mass support at a time of economic crisis, and that is a dynamic that has been seen in Europe not infrequently over the past 100 years or so. However, this is very different than what is occurring with ISIS or with Right Sector in a very important way.

As I mentioned before, the concept that ISIS has mass support is false by all indications. Rather ISIS is a force that is capable of paying fighters, in a situation

of profound political alienation, in a space devoid of much internal resistance, and even then, their strength is often over-emphasized. As we have seen time and time again, ISIS is effective as a mobile force that is capable of utilizing effective strategies of target selection and situational alliance to gain an advantage in localized areas. However, when they have to engage with concentrated opposing forces their weaknesses become apparent; their fighters, the ones still alive, are not specifically experienced, they are not specifically effective, and they have yet to take a fully defended urban area in the face of significant resistance. What ISIS is excellent at doing is maintaining local advantages through effective strategies and then projecting this to the world, expanding the image of their effectiveness far beyond what it actually is at any given point.

The same can be said for Right Sector. They were able to achieve notoriety far beyond their size and actual political influence would otherwise generate due to the dynamics of specific events and their effective use of social media. During the movement in Kiev, Right Sector was able to seize control over the defense forces, drive events through effective uses of confrontation, and use a cold strategic outlook to maintain inertia, specifically after it seemed as if the movement was collaps-



the move toward direct and immediate control that is occurring within primarily Syrian Kurdistan. In Iraqi Kurdistan there have been moves in this direction, but they seem to be much more limited, confined to areas of PKK influence and with only minor in-roads into areas controlled by the traditional Kurdish nationalist parties.

**FtP:** Break it down for us. What is the YPG (People's Protection Units) and the YPJ (Women's Protection Units)? The YPJ in particular have captured the attention of people throughout the world as a fierce band of women fighters. Are they simply an arm of the PKK, something else, or both?

**TN:** The YPG/YPJ are technically a joint military operation formed by the fighting units of the parties within the Kurdish Supreme Council. As such, technically, they are comprised of fighters from both the Kurdish Democratic Union Party, which is affiliated with the PKK, and the Kurdish National Council, which is affiliated with the Iraqi Kurdish Nationalist parties. Now, with that said, there has been significant development within this formation which reflects a rising influence among PKK affiliated fighters.

At the point of inception the units were comprised of anyone of Kurdish descent that wanted to sign up; there was no gen-

nationalistic anymore, with YPG/YPJ units working to protect other communities in northern Syria. They are also taking a directly oppositional stance against the regime, specifically in areas under influence of the PKK; as some Syrian regime outposts remain in extreme northeastern Syria. Second, the YPG/YPJ units have, for the most part, come to eclipse the Kurdish Supreme Council in importance, and have seemingly taken on a sense of autonomy, often organizing their own offensives and initiatives. This has not only led to some interesting military developments on the ground, but also a process in which more leftist units of the Free Syrian Army have been aligning themselves with the YPG/YPJ in the fight against ISIS.

More and more the YPG/YPJ has become aligned with the PKK, and this is both a result of rising PKK influence, and falling Kurdish National Council influence, as well as combat conditions on the ground. As ISIS has expanded into areas in Syria and Iraq much of the nationalist forces within the Kurdish resistance have become concentrated within Iraq, attempting to prevent ISIS incursions into cities like Erbil, the Iraqi Kurdish capital. At the same time YPG/YPJ forces along with the PKK have not only been fighting ISIS in Syria, but have also made incursions into Iraq, specifically to drive ISIS forces away

ing a couple of weeks before the fall of the regime. But, when it came time for parliamentary elections they got less than 1% of the vote. We see similar strategies in the US being tried by groups like the Revolutionary Communist Party, which will organize a generally popular front-esque sort of demonstration, fill the stage with their speakers, dominate contacts with the press and attempt to create a situation that results in arrests which they can take credit for, even if people outside of their organization take the fall.

This is an interesting strategy on some levels, but it fails in the attempt to turn this contextual participation into actual seizures of power, unless one is in a position to attempt to eliminate all resistance in an area, which ISIS is attempting but Right Sector was not in a position to do. The other phenomena that has been occurring in Syria and Iraq has been that when an organization that is seen as an outside group that does not have much actual support on the ground seizes power, they [find that they] can hold this for a period of time. [But soon the] shock of the seizure dulls, the fear of repression wears off, and resistance begins to rise. This is beginning to occur inside ISIS controlled areas as we speak.

**FtP:** How has the resistance against ISIS been successful? What have they done to hold them off?

**TN:** The resistance against ISIS has been successful, thus far, largely due to both tenacity and the wider strategic conditions around ISIS operations. ISIS has become caught in a process which there seems little way out of. They began this process of massive expansion at a point in which they were a fraction of the size that they currently are, but at a time in which the force quality that they had was much higher. To a large extent their expansion was the result of a series of dynamics. First, they are able to move quickly, and with localized command structures. In other words, commanders, earlier in the development of ISIS would travel with their forces, often fighting along-side them. This allowed ISIS to move on areas that were lightly defended or poorly defended, gather resources, leave behind a skeleton crew, and then move on to the next area of confrontation. Those that had been tracking certain commanders through Youtube videos often note that some commanders would engage in two different confrontations in a single day, often hundreds of miles apart from one another.

This spread out ISIS forces and kept them mobile, a dynamic that was beginning to pose difficulties for their ultimate political goal, which is to run a functional State, to a certain degree. However, as they obtained resources they were able to expand forces, making it much easier to hold on to space, to police space, but at the cost of mobility. This was coupled with a compression effect, in which forces oppositional to ISIS had compressed in space. This meant that ISIS was no longer fighting dispersed and/or poorly motivated fighters; they were increasingly running into larger and larger concentrations of oppositional forces, resulting in the need to launch sustained large scale frontal attacks. This not only further contributed to their general loss of mobility, (they had to maintain supply lines all of a sudden), but this also meant that they were covering less space, even though they had more forces numerically, as forces concentrate they are less able to project across space.

This is the dynamic that we have been seeing play out over the past few months. Even though ISIS is still able to take Syrian regime airbases in isolated areas in eastern Syria, these operations are taking more time, consuming more resources than

they are obtaining after the capture, and resulting in large numbers of casualties, all of which have an attrition effect. This attempt to concentrate forces for large scale assaults has also been complicated by US airstrikes, which can easily strike a convoy from 30,000 feet, as well as the rise of anti-ISIS guerrilla organizations that have been ambushing convoys and assassinating ISIS commanders in eastern Syria and western Iraq.

Back to Kobani, currently there are a series of directions that ISIS forces are being pulled. At the beginning of the assault on Kobani a large portion of mobile ISIS forces were thrown at the city, which is not only the capital of that Kurdish canton, but also a major commercial trading hub and a significant border checkpoint. As they began to be bogged down in the center of the city they had to pull forces from other areas in eastern Syria. The Syrian regime took advantage of this and attacked ISIS forces in Deir ez Zor and around the gas fields in eastern Syria. At the same time ISIS had to pull forces from areas of western Iraq to defend these gas fields, which required forces from other areas of Iraq to be thinned out.

As time has gone on, it seems as if ISIS is maintaining a siege around Kobani, but with fewer and fewer forces; other resources are more important. This is coupled with the tenacity of the YPG/YPJ and Free Syrian Army forces in Kobani, as well as the impact of US airstrikes in the area, which have tapered off in the past two weeks or so. This indicates something important about



ISIS; their organizational style depends on obtaining resources on a consistent basis, and maintaining a growth rate concurrent to the space that they are attempting to occupy; neither of these attempts are likely to succeed in a fight that requires them to deal with well-organized forces like the YPG/YPJ fighting in urban areas, where armor is not specifically useful, where movement becomes difficult, and in which knowledge of the terrain is paramount. These factors have combined to give YPG/YPJ forces a dramatic advantage in Kobani, and have allowed them to turn the tide of the fighting.

**FtP:** If Kobani and other areas of Kurdistan and the Rojava revolution was destroyed and ISIS was to take hold, what would the result be? How would this impact the Middle East and future struggles for freedom and autonomy?  
*\*Note: As this goes into print, Kobani has declared victory against ISIS as cited in the picture at the beginning of this interview. The following speculation can provide insight on the importance of their defense recently, and going into the future.*

**TN:** This seems like an unlikely possibility; ISIS is logistically stretched currently, dealing with a dynamic that requires them to concentrate force but being unable to do so, and caught in large scale confrontations on a series of fronts currently. However, if this were to occur the first thing that would

likely happen would be large scale executions and the mass displacement of people. It is often forgotten that for as much as ISIS tends to be strategically adept their strategy is often driven by passions and perceived political imperatives, and one of these is a modified concept of ethnic cleansing.

If Kobani is taken, for example, the effects could be profound. On an immediate level, outside of the genocide and ethnic cleansing that would almost certainly occur, this would free up hundreds of ISIS troops for other assignments. There is not much significant resistance left in northern Syria, with both rebel forces and regime forces locked into fighting in Aleppo. It could be that ISIS redirects forces into Iraq to hold space against a building Iraqi military offensive north and west of Baghdad. It could be that they redirect these forces into the deserts of eastern Syria to take the remaining regime bases, oil fields and gas fields to attempt to starve the Syrian regime out. If this were to occur additional stress would be placed on Iran to support the Syrian regime with oil and gas shipments, and they are already stretched to the breaking point as well. They could deploy forces into northern Syria in an attempt to surround and take Aleppo or send these forces into central Syria to take either Homs or Hama. They could also deploy these forces in dispersed units to attempt to launch attacks in cities in Syria and Lebanon to draw oppositional forces away from the line of confrontation and create space for additional expansion.

Any of these scenarios are possible, and it is for this reason that the fighting around

Kobani is so strategically important, it is tying down large numbers of ISIS forces and keeping them locked in a situation that they are unlikely to be victorious in, and this is opening up a series of lines of attack. In the near future we may even see ISIS break off the fighting to free these forces up for other deployments, but that would be a potentially fatal admission of defeat.

If ISIS is successful, the momentum that they would gain from taking Kobani is unable to be measured. They are already drawing fighters from all over the Middle East, Asia and Africa, as well as from Europe, Australia, Canada, the US, and this would likely increase to a certain degree. However, taking Kobani, for as much as it would likely change the situation, and may even spark a Turkish intervention into Syria to secure their southern border, is unlikely to be the death of movements for autonomy in the region. In the areas in northern Syria these communities have already had to deal with military occupations, bombing from the air, massacres perpetuated by the Syrian regime and years of deprivation. The question is not even so much whether ISIS can take Kobani, which they are unlikely to do, but if they were able to, and this is a relevant question for the Syrian regime as well, how do they plan to control a largely hostile population of people, which may have

been displaced, but are not gone forever.

**FtP:** Throughout history, anarchists and other rebels have championed those who have turned the guns of those who support autonomy and direct action; from the Bolsheviks to Castro and beyond. How can we support resistance in the Middle East without falling into the trap of supporting the newest groups of politicians and butchers?

**TN:** To avoid this we have to be very clear to draw a distinction that is not often drawn: between those that we have some form of similarity in objective, those we can use in furtherance of an objective (those that we can form immediate alliance with even if their immediate objectives are different) and those that we are in open conflict with. This means breaking with the mentality of activism and movements, breaking from the injunction to work with others, break away from the focus on numerical quantity, and begin to be more grounded about our objectives and strategic capacities.

This means that we have to draw a line between those that we work with and those that we work parallel with, and in what ways we work with those we work with. On a series of levels this is a relevant question. Most anarchists have either experienced or heard stories of liberals and communists handing anarchists over to the police, many of us have had confrontations with the self-appointed peace police or with some self-righteous meeting facilitator or well meaning do-gooder. This is not a question of doing good things, it is a question of doing effective things. On this level the lines can be very clear, even if they may shift as conditions change.

But above and beyond all of this we have to move beyond positionism; this tendency among anarchists to have to articulate the correct political line, often based on thin and removed understandings of events. At the point that we become locked in this dynamic not only is there a tendency to place capacity in actions that are unlikely to have much impact, and are often more militant ways of complaining loudly, but we distract from our focus on immediate dynamics and developing an understanding of immediate dynamics, and fall back into issue-based activism. It is also on this level that we fall prey to the "popular front;" to this tendency to support the least of bad options, and it is from this place that these tragedies tend to occur, of course when mixed with a clear sense of naivety. Now, this is not to say that we should not engage in these sorts of initiatives, cynically, but that the focus of this intervention still needs to remain on strategic outcomes; we may even get a lot out of engaging in a social movement, but that cannot be thought of as an injunction, a moral imperative.

The question here is not what groups we should support, but what support means for us, what we get out of it, how that propels our strategic trajectory forward. If it does not contribute to our strategic ends, whatever these may be at any given moment, then intervention is not the relevant framework to think through this question, and without intervention support becomes nothing but a discursive statement. But, if the calculation is that intervention is strategically important then by all means intervene, but at that point the question shifts from a question of why one is intervening to how one intervenes, and that is a question of material effectiveness, one that we have to engage on that level.



# A Blast from the Recent Past

An Interview Regarding the  
2012 Quebec Student Uprising



In February 2012, as the Occupy movement tapered off, a strike broke out against austerity measures in the Québécois higher education system. Prevented from occupying buildings as it had in 2005, the student movement shifted to a strategy of economic disruption: blockading businesses, interrupting conferences and tourist events, and spreading chaos in the streets. At its peak, the resulting unrest surpassed any protest movement in North America for a generation.

The following is an interview with Steve Duhamel aka “Waldo”. A frustrated ex-student, and Quebec-er.

**FtTP:** What was the context for the massive upheavals, mobilizations, and riots that broke out in Montreal in 2012? What took place before these events that helped propel them forward?

**Waldo:** The original context was an always rising tension between students and the government around the tuition hike issue and a general conception of what public education should be. Kind of boring, but it gets better. We all knew about 2 years in advance that this tuition hike was planned, and in the previous years/months, there were different actions and demonstrations to warn the government that this one will not pass. This government, who had been in power for 9 years, didn’t care much about these protests and arrogantly decided to go forward. They knew that no “political” opposition (as in the official and classical politics) could defeat them, whatever they did, and that they had all the legitimacy to repress any form of “street politics” that wouldn’t recognize their authority.

To get a more general overview of the context, let’s say that what people call society was also becoming more polarized than ever, since both political parties running Québec have a neo-liberal right-wing program and have been alternatively doing some shitty reforms for the past 30 years in order to save their damned economic growth. While the opposition (PQ) was getting its popularity from being the defenders of the French-speakers against the Anglo-Saxon cultural hegemony, they kinda lost all of that slight legitimacy since they’ve been doing the same shit as the federalists from the governing PLQ. This mostly means that social movements progressively took a distance from the Québécois Party (PQ) which itself was born out of (the recuperation of) popular unrests in the 1960’s. This contributed for a long time to prevent any social upheaval, and helped justify a lot of what some folks call “class collaboration” between bosses and the poor. But now, the PQ has a hard time convincing the Québécois folks that the State can really work for them. The last time a tuition hike led to a general student strike was in 1996, while PQist Pauline Marois (the one that was elected in the aftermath of the 2012 movement) was minister of education. Who could believe in her when she came back to oppose Charest?

While PQ usually masks its agenda behind a thin social-democrat veneer, the very “liberal” PLQ openly shits on the poor and doesn’t bother with fake public consultations to sell the province to promoters, mining industries, fracking business, and so on. The Liberal Party of premier Charest came back to power in 2003, and as soon as 2005, a large student strike fought against its plan to cut a huge part of the student

scholarship programs (that were set to be replaced by loans, i.e. always more debts). The 2005 strike was really inspiring in its forms of actions, and its spirit was still very present to a lot of the 2012 strikers (way more than what happened in California in 2009, for instance; to a smaller degree, some people were inspired by what was happening then in Chile). Upon entering the movement, large parts of the students already had a mistrust of the reformist federations and even of the more militant ones like ASSÉ. Many people also knew that the strength of the strike came from the uncontrollable multiplication of all kinds of economic and institutional disruptions. And not from the ultra-democratic idea of unity that would decide for any meaningful action and discourse of the movement. That leads to your second question.

**FtTP:** What was the relationship between more insurrectionary anarchist/autonomous groups and the student federations?

**Waldo:** There wasn’t a single attitude amongst the anarchists in relation to the federations. Where all of them agreed to critique even the ASSÉ (the more militant federation that calls for free education and some kind of self-management) on its reformist demands, a lot of anarchists, even insurrectionary etc, thought it was cool that ASSÉ existed, or at least the CLASSE (which was a coalition of ASSÉ and different independent local unions) because it made it easier to organize a large scale mobilization, to create the event, that could afterward be overwhelmed. On one hand, some anarchists really think the direct-democracy model of the federation’s union-based assemblies is valid and should only be carried further, that the problem is mostly the lack of consciousness or radical [perspective] of its members, and they think it’s all about radicalizing these spaces, criticizing their discourse on non-violence; a lot of these folks kind of wish there wasn’t a contradiction between the black bloc and the federations. Some others also dream of direct democracy but think we cannot hope anything from the federations except betrayal, and therefore we should build our own spaces and assemblies and organize/coordinate outside of the “Rand-formula” type mandatory unions we’re stuck with.

Attempts to create such parallel assemblies mostly failed, in 2012, except for a small period between late May and June, when people had these big neighborhood assemblies born out of the massive pots-and-pan marches against the “special law.” On the other hand, other anarchist tendencies don’t believe at all in the unions as the basis for the future anarchist society and all of these radical democratic mythologies. While some are more into a nihilistic perspective of the confrontation, against

any form of schooling and any possible demands, others think it has never been a question of being for or against the unions, that we should just never believe in it, never think any kind of solution can come from there, or from school in general. It’s rather a question of how to deal with it, how to see the potentiality of it, beyond any moralism or radical purity; how can we compose with the federations, if they are to be there anyway. In any case, federations are to be considered as something alien, that we cannot identify with, but upon which we can intervene, we can meet, make use of, in a way or another.

**FtTP:** Before large scale street demonstrations began, students occupied buildings. How did these actions pave the way for things to come? Were these initial occupations influenced by student occupations in the US or elsewhere?

**Waldo:** In fact, I wouldn’t say that 2012 was highlighted by any occupations, not being the street itself. Some actions involved blockades of schools or public buildings, disruption of financial centers and such, but from what I know, none of the actual schools in strike were really occupied. On the first day of the strike, people did take over the famous CEGEP du Vieux-Montréal (a pre-university college downtown) whose occupations were once considered the stronghold of the student movement in the previous student strikes. But this time, hundreds of fully-equipped robocops came right away to remind the youth that revolution was no picnic and kicked their asses out of there. About 45 people were jailed and legally banned from the protests for months. The others were dispersed with concussion grenades and pepper-spray. The college was then locked out for the next six months of the strike.

This doesn’t mean people didn’t want to occupy, or that it wasn’t part of our mythology, but the facts are that people didn’t even use many university spaces in the daytime to meet and organize. While in 2005 a lot of people would organize sleep-ins on different campuses, and cook tons of food to sustain the occupation and make it possible for people to stand together on the frontline, the 2012 strike mostly happened in the street, with people moving all the time, endlessly marching until burning themselves out— when they wouldn’t burn anything else. Yes, occupation of the street, but I would add: mobile occupation, in two different ways. 1.) There were very few attempts to take outdoor public space and keep it, and it was never aimed to last more than a couple hours (I heard about an “occupy” camp outside U.de M., but it didn’t work out). 2.) Outside of that, we could say that it really was the students themselves that were occupied, busy as they were with

facebook and twitter and all that shit all the time. No doubt, the strike was really “occupied” by all these new “communication” devices, livestream and everything...

**FtTP:** Anarchists and insurrectionary autonomists promoted their ideas through publications and saw many students join in their ranks during the yearly March 15th protests against police brutality. Can you talk about how insurrectionary anti-authoritarian ideas were spread, and took on new currency during this time of struggle? For instance, anarchists and insurrectionists have talked a lot about how the use of masks spread through the long process of militants doing it during demos/riots, and also explained why they were doing it in conversations and flyers.

**Waldo:** I’d say that, as opposed to previous movements, this strike was amazingly rich with radical literature, specifically in the couple months leading to it, but then almost nothing consistent was really produced during the movement. It was as if every political tendency, anarchist circle or whatever (often born out of the 2005 movement), had their own publication ready before the strike in order to set things clear, to share what they had learned from the past struggles and go forward with a couple propositions.

Once the strike was launched, very few texts were circulating outside worthless opinions on the internet. Still, from what I recall, at one point (after a demo where some excited douche bags had beaten the shit out of a couple of black clad kids) we saw at least half a dozen different flyers criticizing the authoritarian pacifist ideology that undermined solidarity amongst demonstrators. As for the masks, more than any literature, I’d say it’s the practice itself of wearing them, and the cops practice of systematically filming protesters, that led to widespread use of masks. The same for the March 15th demo, I think it got bigger that year because of the context, where a lot of people were experiencing daily repression by angry cops and a guy lost an eye like 3 days before the demo. Even the mayor advertised for the demo on TV, telling people not to go!

**FtTP:** What led to the student movement spilling out in the wider social terrain?

**Waldo:** To make it short, I’d say that first, there was already popular support of the students, that was made visible by the widespread use of the “red square” pin by millions of people and also by the 500,000 people marches like the one on March 26th, where the majority wasn’t even student, and showed the growing unpopularity of the Charest government. People literally had enough, and students were seen as the

only sector of society that could massively mobilize, since all workplace unions and work laws make it almost impossible to build a real massive and coordinated union-based general strike.

A lot of people that weren't students didn't want to get too into the movement since they thought it wasn't theirs, so they remained in a solidarity position, but what made a clear difference was the insolent and arrogant attitude of prime minister Charest, his constant provocations and specifically the declaration of a "special law," in the night between the 17th and 18th of May, that made demonstrations illegal and added expensive fines for any acts of striking, blockading, occupation and so on. This law also locked out students from their schools until the end of summer to allow businesses to hire summer jobbers, and incidentally produce a demobilizing effect, since there was no more university to block. Maybe worst of all, the law came with the announcement of anticipated elections in the first week of September. The first weeks following the declaration of the dirty law saw an unprecedented social reaction: daily demonstrations in different towns and neighborhoods, with thousands of people defying the State; you would see your unknown neighbors smiling at you, chanting along the common motto: "The special law, we don't give a damn!"

But then, after I'd say the week of the Grand Prix, (around June 10th), people slowly started to take a break, go on vacation to rest until, we all thought, the real war was to begin. The government forced schools to reopen around August 13th, starting with the CEGEPs, but even with all the motivation of the most determined strikers, a lot of assemblies finally and sadly voted with a slight majority against the continuation of the strike. Many students either got scared to lose their semester, and others thought it was pointless to remain on strike while there was going to be an election soon which meant there was no government to deal with yet. That fucked us real bad. A lot of leftists started to say we should spend our energies mobilizing for the elections, so that Charest would be kicked out. That was also a big reason why popular support got weaker; a lot of people thought we should vote and drop our bricks and stones.

Then, what we saw was no surprise. PQ got elected – with only a minority of the assembly - that silly Marois became premier and she did proclaim the abrogation of the special law and temporarily canceled the tuition hike. But that was just bullshit, it took a couple weeks before she said we would have to negotiate some kind of tuition hike sometime soon and she didn't revoke all the municipal laws that were declared during the movement— e.g. making it criminal to wear masks and to march without permission from the cops. The most ridiculous part of this history is that Marois, who survived an assassination attempt by an Anglo redneck freak gone mad the night she got elected, didn't politically survive the reactionary populist move she made the year after, aimed at imposing her "chart of values," supposedly to protect the Québécois "secular" culture against foreign influences. So multi-culturalist PLQ came back to power less than a year and a half after the end of the strike that our funny syndicalist friends claimed was victorious!

**FtTP:** During Occupy in the US, we largely saw that when the state attacked, the movement often quickly folded. Whereas in Montreal, we



saw people go on the offensive. Was this because people found that they could win street battles? As in the famous scenes of people making the pigs turn tail and flee?

**Waldo:** Québécois or Montrealers aren't more courageous, or even more anarchist than anywhere else. The end of the movement has proven that. Only, there is the specificity of the situation: an overly and counter-productively arrogant government in front of a massive and determined movement that leaves a lot of autonomy to its base, all of that in a relatively tight-knit society where anything echoes really fast. This might be an explanation as to why the Anglo campuses weren't as mobilized, even if they were, more than ever before. People were pumped by Charest and the cops, who underestimated the determination of the students and their popular support (politics is often a gamble). This easily led to an escalation, were people saw they were strong and felt it was OK to kick a few cops asses.

**FtTP:** Can you talk about how resistance to Plan Nord brought anarchist, student, and indigenous struggles together? Can you explain what Plan Nord is and why people were interested in destroying it?

**Waldo:** Plan Nord is just the name for a new phase of in-your-face colonization of the North-Eastern part of the continent, that is claimed by the colonial states of Québec and Canada. It's hard to tell how seriously the average students marching against Charest took Plan Nord, or how many of those same students stormed the Plan Nord convention because of anti-colonial and ecologist convictions or whatever. Of course, there is an official sympathy amongst the movement toward these struggles, but I think the disruption of the congress and the riot that occurred was made possible because everybody knew it would make Charest angry, since Plan Nord was like his "little thing" he was so proud of, and that every decent person thinks it's robbery. I still think that it's in these kind of social upheavals that struggles that appear to be different show how much they are related, and impact one another. It's still because of the strike they were involved in that many people got interested in native



peoples' struggles, and specifically in the fight against Plan Nord.

**FtTP:** When the government outlawed protests of more than 50 people, the movement grew and more people joined. Community popular assemblies sprung up. Can you talk about these gatherings? How widespread were they?

**Waldo:** I've talked about that earlier, but let's say these assemblies were spontaneously created in at least a dozen neighborhoods of Montreal, and for about a month, they would meet around once a week, in a park or a community space, and, depending on the neighborhood, there were between 30 and 300 people. This number slowly went down as the summer came, and also, we must admit, as they got formalized and semi-institutionalized. What was interesting is how much different the organizational issue differed from one neighborhood to another. I mean, some were super obsessed with structures and sophisticated mechanisms that are supposed to help prevent domination and oppressive patterns in groups, others were more relaxed, but weren't necessarily more effective, some would focus more on community issues while some remained in a position of solidarity with the student movement.

But yeah, too little too late, I suppose. I think it would have been really different if these assemblies would have started earlier in the movement, and more than everything (and more realistically), if the strike had continued in September. It would have totally changed the quality of the movement. I mean, it could have opened a place where the union assemblies wouldn't be the main space to discuss and organize the struggle, and it could have spread more easily to non-student issues and places. The elections really killed all these potentialities.

**FtTP:** In an interview with Submedia, one anarchist participant talked about the use of projectiles in creating/defending space from the police, and the ability that physical attack gave people in expanding the conflictual nature of the strike. Can you speak to this?

**Waldo:** I don't know what to say about that. Is it the expansion of the conflict that makes it possible to attack, or the opposite? Is it going both ways? The ability to attack didn't always mean ability to get away with it. A lot of people got badly wounded with nothing much to show for it. There has been a lot of talking amongst anarchists in the last 15 years about "diversity of tactics," but very few people thought about diversity of strategies, leaving this problem to union bosses, Leninists and social-democrats. And to the police, and the capitalists. Let's say there is a confrontation. What is the space that we create, that we defend, while doing what we do? It's not always quite clear. I'm totally not against all kinds of direct action, but I think sometimes there is a dangerous belief that direct action is good in itself, while it can often make us weaker. Black bloc was once a tactic, nowadays it often looks like an ideology, an identity. We should never denounce comrades who engage in this type of action and we should be ready, as much as we can, to protect them against cops and violent pacifists, but I think "attacking" can never become a strategy in itself; can never replace the need for a strategy. This said, the question should never be whether we attack or not, but rather how do we do it, when and where. What makes it possible to attack in a way that gives us more strength instead of isolating us? These are serious questions.

We should not neglect the anxiety that direct actions create amongst the activists themselves and their friends, when it's done without thinking, because it's seen as the radical good. It's not just attacking that makes people able and willing to attack, that expands the conflictuality of a movement, it's the strength that we build through all kinds of links, shared experiences, shared spaces and materials, tools and stories, and languages, shared love and thrust, etc. All kinds of things also come into play when it's time to fight, which constitutes our strength, and that we cannot put at risk for a matter of purity or for a romantic belief in the power of action. An action is not good because it's against the right enemy nor because it has good intentions: it's only good when it makes us stronger. To the moralism of pathological pacifists, we should not impose another kind of moralism.

**FtTP:** What does the future hold for those in Montreal? Will we see continued unrest at the universities and beyond?

**Waldo:** Everything is possible. The tuition hike is showing up again and the federations are already mobilized. The experience of 2012 is still fresh and a lot of people don't want to lose what has been learned and built. The repressive machine is better prepared, and more determined than ever, it's hard to say if people are too. There is already some organizing being done outside the unions, and the electoral threat should not be part of the play this time. It's hard to tell if there will be as much popular support, but there are apparently more chances that we will see different unions from the public sector go on strike in the next months (even the cops are currently protesting against the Québec government). I still think we should not hope for anything and just do what we have to do. Things always happen anyway, it's just a matter of staying ready.

#### **More on the 2012 Student Strike:**

[www.crimethinc.com/texts/recent/features/montreal1.php](http://www.crimethinc.com/texts/recent/features/montreal1.php)

#### **In French:**

[faire-greve.blogspot.ca/](http://faire-greve.blogspot.ca/)

# Links

research / wake up / find each other



## Interesting Websites:

**325**

[325.nostate.net](http://325.nostate.net)

**Contra Info  
(English Version)**

[en.contrainfo.espiv.net](http://en.contrainfo.espiv.net)

**LibCom**

[libcom.org](http://libcom.org)

**The Torch:  
Anti-Fascist Network**  
[torchantifa.org](http://torchantifa.org)

## Intercontinental Cry:

[intercontinentalcry.org](http://intercontinentalcry.org)

**Fireworks**

[fireworksbayarea.com](http://fireworksbayarea.com)

**Crimethinc**

[crimethinc.com](http://crimethinc.com)

**Anti-State STL**

[antistatestl.wordpress.com](http://antistatestl.wordpress.com)

**Prole:  
For the Angry Wage Worker**  
[prole.info](http://prole.info)

## The Anarchist Library

[theanarchistlibrary.org](http://theanarchistlibrary.org)

**News for Anarchists in the  
Pacific North West**

[pugetsoundanarchists.org](http://pugetsoundanarchists.org)

**War on Society**

[waronsociety.noblogs.org](http://waronsociety.noblogs.org)

**Little Black Cart**

[littleblackcart.com](http://littleblackcart.com)

**The Base / Brooklyn**

[thebasebk.org](http://thebasebk.org)

## Interesting Books:

**At Daggers Drawn**

Anonymous

**Anything Can Happen**

Fredy Perlman

**Society of the Spectacle**

Guy Debord

**The Technological Society**

Jacques Ellul

**Guns, Germs, & Steel**

Jared Diamond

**Against the Logic  
of Submission**

Wolfgang Ivers  
Wolfi Lanstreicher



**“NOT ONLY DO WE DESIRE TO  
CHANGE OUR LIVES IMMEDIATELY,  
IT IS THE CRITERION BY WHICH WE  
ARE SEEKING OUR ACCOMPLICES.”**



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**PICK A SIDE &  
ACT IT OUT**

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