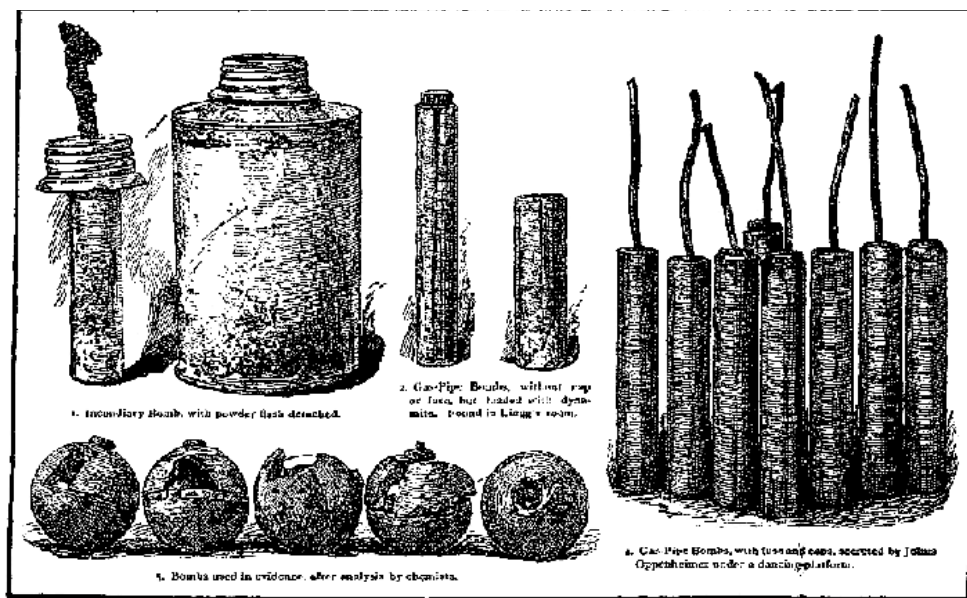


As we see fireworks at various demonstrations proliferate, it seems important to begin discussing the etiquette of their use so as not to drive people away from those demonstrations for fear of their safety.

In order to avoid hitting anyone you don't mean to hit, try to stand *no closer* than at the edge of the crowd, while explicitly aiming away from them.

When firing bottle rockets, the more effective method (especially for those that have never handled them) is from an actual bottle. This puts distance between the fiery discharge from the fuse/rocket and your hand, and also prevents you from holding on so tight that it never takes off or changes its trajectory in a dangerous way. Alternatively, you can hold both your hands in a way that mimics a cup and saucer, or simply hold the rocket so loosely that it is resting on your hand and you are not actually gripping it at all – for the last method, I recommend practicing away from people, but also keep in mind that this method has singed/burned long hair and garments.



ANARCHIST AMMUNITION - I. FROM PHOTOGRAPHS.

When you do intend to do damage, or even if you don't, keep in mind that if you throw firecrackers under a car, there is a risk that it could ignite the gas tank (often found under the car) and blow up. Many gas tanks today are made of plastic, by the way. Typically, there is assumed to be a 30-foot blast radius for an average car, so you would also want to make sure that all comrades are *at least* that far away, or not deploy the explosives in that way at all.

The legality of fireworks use varies over time and from state to state, but given the punitive retribution that police seek against any who oppose them, one should be especially careful in deploying fireworks in front of them. It is now legal for Pennsylvania residents to purchase fireworks within the state, as it has been for folks from outside the state for some time, but use within the city is still highly restricted (technically, you're not allowed to deploy anything bigger than a sparkler). We need only look back to 2011 to see an instance where an anarchist was charged with attempted murder after a firework went off near some police at the end of a demonstration in Denver, Colorado – a state that tends to have looser regulations around explosives and firearms.

Let it be known that it tends to be safer (and technically recommended by manufacturers) to discharge fireworks from a sturdy position on the ground, rather than from your hands. ★

ANATHEMA



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HATE CRIMES AT SCI PHOENIX

In July, 2,637 inmates and 175 truckloads of property were moved from Graterford Prison to the Pennsylvania prison system's latest and most expensive facility, the \$400 million State Correctional Institution Phoenix in Montgomery County. Prison officials and employees took advantage of the move to further traumatize inmates and commit hate crimes against the prisoners.

Prisoners who were moved to Phoenix were essentially forced to go through the whole incarceration process a second time. Many now cannot locate their friends and comrades inside. The new prison *(continued page 8)*

WE ALL LIVE DOWNSTREAM PT. 2

Since we wrote about the contamination of Philadelphia-area rivers last month, the energy infrastructure and militarism keeping this exploitative civilization afloat have only caused more significant (and likely permanent) damage to local and global ecosystems.

On the morning of September 10, during heavy rains brought on by Tropical Storm Gordon, Energy Transfer Partners' new Revolution pipeline carrying methane gas through Western Pennsylvania was hit by a landslide and exploded. It had been in operation for one week. Environmental groups around the region called into question *(continued page 8)*

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WHAT IS DIRECT ACTION?

There seems to be some confusion recently as to what the term direct action means. Its use among radicals has stretched the definition to the point of meaninglessness. The way it's thrown around, one would think it simply means militant or intense, a more aggressive form of begging. This distortion of the term has led many to believe that some actions are direct actions when they aren't, and vice versa.

Direct action means the unmediated (aka direct) use of power (aka action) to address a problem. *(continued on page 3)*

WHAT WENT DOWN

September 3 - Noise demo outside the Federal Detention Center in solidarity with the prison strike. "The isolation of the prison was broken temporarily, news of the strike was communicated, the police were not able to control the rowdy energy of the crowd, and rebellion and freedom were celebrated with a festive enthusiasm."

Late August/Early September - Banks, Comcast trucks, and a prison guard's car are attacked in solidarity with the strike. "autonomous attack forces us to face our own individual creativity and initiative."

September - Keystone State Skinheads and Keystone United members doxxed all month by Philly Antifa.

September - Several video advertisement screens at bus stops and subway entrances around Center City made nonoperational through smashing.

September 17 - "some philly anarchists" dropped an anti-prison banner from a parking garage, visible from SCI Chester prison in solidarity with the prison strike. "we gotta figure out more creative ways to communicate with people inside while escalating on the outside."

September 18 - Reanna -- a trans woman accused of burning a thin blue line pro-police flag at Pride -- has all charges against her dropped.

September 24 - "Concerned Citizens" hang a banner reading "End Prison Labor Shut Down Berks" near Harrisburg, PA. "Fire to the Prisons. Set the Captives Free."

September 25 - Bank robbed inside ACME grocery store at 2100 Cottman Ave.



Direct Action continued...

What does unmediated mean? It means cutting out the middle man, not appealing to authority, negotiating, convincing, or asking. Here's an example: A group of friends is hungry. To solve this need with direct action, they can grow, gather, hunt, or steal some food and eat it. This is direct action because they don't seek out the help or permission of anyone in charge. If they marched through the street with signs about how hungry they are, that's a protest. If they pressure politicians or capitalists to give them food, that's lobbying: they are appealing to the authorities to reach their goal instead of doing it themselves.

Some people might want to abolish the police, so they march through the street making speeches demanding the end of policing and blocking traffic, and some of them get arrested after some shoving with the cops. This sounds like a militant protest, but it's not direct action. If the same people began taking apart police infrastructure, or disrupting police work, or ignoring police orders, that would be direct action. What makes the second direct action and not the first is that the second example involves

EXCERPT FROM: NORTHERN LEAGUE PREMISES ATTACKED (Treviso, Italy)

August 12, 2018 via 325.nostate.net

In the early hours Northern League premises were attacked in Treviso with a device. We claim the placing of the device against politician, cops and their lackeys. We don't want to be accomplices of all this, we'll oppose the State's indiscriminate violence with indiscriminate violence against those responsible for all this. The almost total pacification in Italy, where the masses are busy in making war between the poor, one of our goals is that of opposing resignation, impotence and stillness. The State and capital use all forms of technology and violence to divert attention from the real problems of the exploited, the main one being the hatred between the most vulnerable and dispossessed, between borders, genders, skin colors.

Needless to say, no authoritarian insignificant politicians' faction would ever be able to fulfill our desires. You're talking about 'green-yellow' government, leftist and right wing, we want the state to be destroyed. You're promising wage increases, reduced taxes, jobs, we want the elimination of money, goods and work. You're fighting for better government conditions but we only want to have fun over the ruins in flames of your cities. You do politics, we do social war.

Things are difficult, there's an existential abyss between us and there's no space for dialogue. So to us all this makes clear where to strike! To strike racism and exploitation in particular. To strike the state, capital and those responsible. Direct action makes clear why and how to us.

For Anarchist, rebel, internationalist solidarity!
For a world without borders or authority!

With this action we welcome the call launched by the comrades of the 'Santiago Maldonado cell', who proposed to increase attacks on the peace of domination's representatives and accomplices.

We welcome any Anarchist individuality and cell which continues to spread the flame through action, here and now!

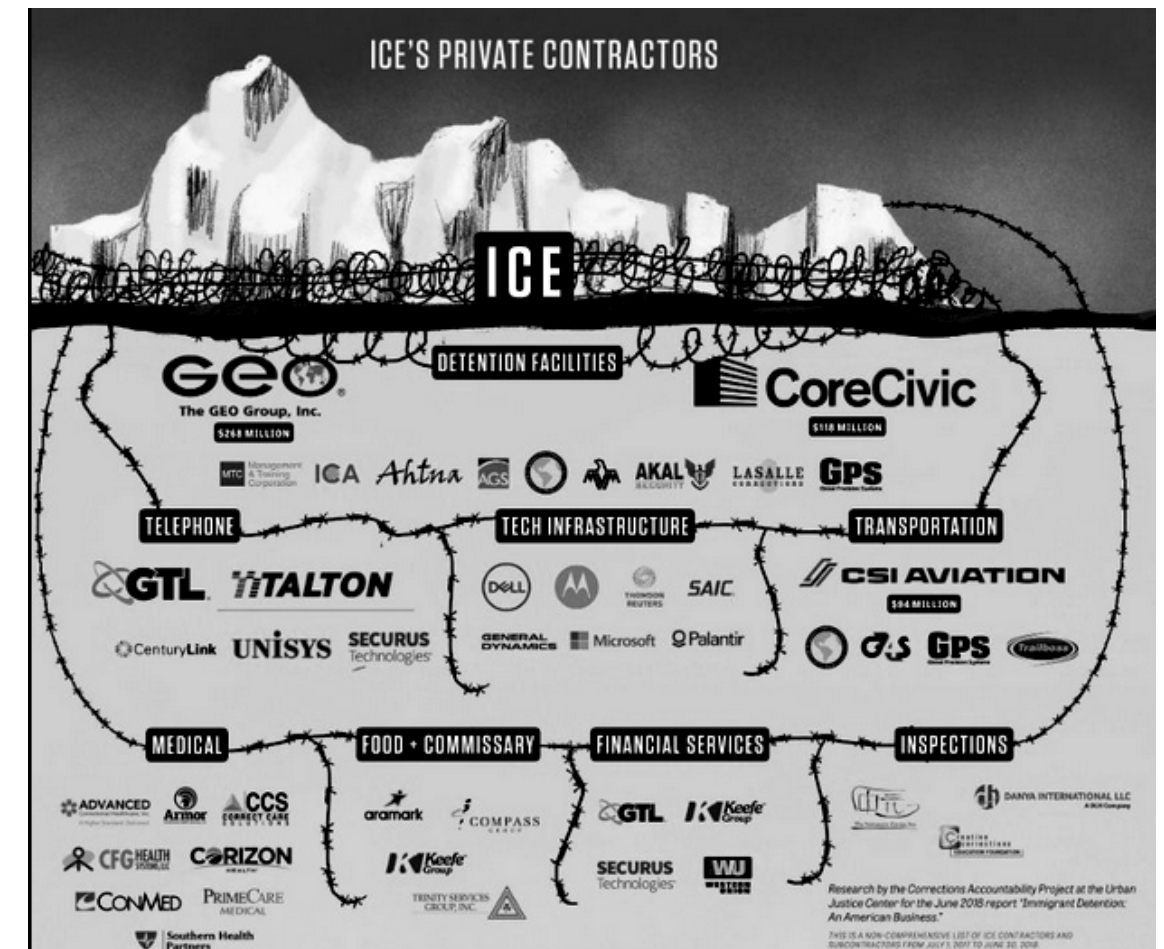
"Today it's us who take anarchist's torch in our hands, tomorrow it will be someone else. As long as it doesn't get extinguished!"[1]

Solidarity with all prisoners, Tamara Sol, Juan Aliste, Juan Flores, Freddy, Marcelo, J.Gan, Marius Mason, Meyer-falk, Dinos Yatzoglou, Lisa Dorfer, CCF and Revolutionary Struggle members.

To anarchists in Florence, Turin, Naples, Cagliari, Chile, Russia, Germany, Poland, of operation Scripta Manent. And to all the rebels locked up in jails all over the world!

Haris Hatzimihelakis cell/Black International (1881-2018)

[1] Santiago Maldonado Cell/FAI-FRI's claim of an explosive attack on carabinieri barracks (07/12/2017) ★



examination: imagination

Look at all the world around you,
ask yourself how this makes you feel.

you say you wanna help
but do you just wanna be apart of something?

What is it that you *really* want?

We need to find ways to be the most direct and explicit about our desires.

Living out our ideals *every* moment
Its all an experiment

trying and going for it

protecting each other as we pass through

“Joy
is an increase in ones capacity to affect and be affected.”
Sadness
is a fear of change,
of breaking, loosing attachment
and going into the unknown..

We can no longer cling to pasts of comfort,

we are literal beams of light
walking through darkness

nothing is impossible there are only obstacles.

Can you imagine

a totally different world?

people beginning to take apart the police themselves. In the first example, the protesters don't actually abolish the police themselves; instead they stir things up, and demand that someone else abolish the police.

The flashiness, illegality, or intensity of an action is not what makes it a direct action. What makes something a direct action is the unmediated and self-organized nature of an act. This is why when workers take over a workplace with the intention of running it themselves, it's considered a direct action, but if workers take over a workplace to influence policy, it is an extreme form of lobbying. The same can be said of property destruction: if someone smashes a bank window to pressure the bankers to stop investing in the military, it's aggressive protest; if the same window is smashed with the intention of causing damage or interrupting business at the bank, then it's direct action.

When the terms used by rebels and activists have unclear and confused definitions and usages, it becomes more difficult to communicate, let alone share analyses and discuss goals and intentions. Calling protests direct action has the potential to limit the imagination; after all, if someone thinks yelling and holding signs is the most direct way to participate in struggle they foreclose on all the possibilities to take responsibility for literally changing the situation or environment that oppresses and exploits them. When there is a clear understanding of what direct action means it will be harder to throw the term around to make something seem tough or militant, and easier to honestly look at the tactics being used in the struggle and decide for oneself if they seem effective (regardless of whether they are or aren't direct actions). ★

“ALWAYS ESCALATE!”

Sometimes there are excellent reasons behind the outwardly inscrutable actions of anarchists,

which often appear unstrategic only because we're trained to see a coordinated and growing pattern of attacks on society's infrastructure as random acts of petty vandalism. Sometimes, though, these reasons are harder to discern, seemingly resulting more from underdeveloped planning and an uninterrogated desire to escalate regardless of context.

We often hear calls to escalate, but what exactly does that mean? Technically, escalation just means an intensification, and usually refers to the tactics of a specific action. It is obviously crucial in many situations, such as when trying to effectively destroy one particular target, or to set new precedents for what can be done through direct action regardless of the setting.

The urge to always escalate at a demonstration, though, seems to speak to a different anarchist desire — to contribute to the intensification of an entire struggle or social movement. Many of us, for varying reasons, tend to approach particular actions with an instinct to encourage intensity and conflict with our enemies, but ironically this sometimes ends up undermining a more longterm desire to keep broader conflictual struggles going. While actions like demonstrations are unpredictable, we can still do our best to create the conditions in which people can be empowered rather than discouraged by attending an action planned by others.

We can probably all agree that we'd like to see anarchist struggles deepen, to develop new skills, to show our force against our enemies, and that we want to support each other in doing so. But the seemingly indefatigable desire of many anarchists to always escalate is not always compatible with the purpose of an action, its context, or the objectives mentioned above. For example, for various reasons, the anti-Blue Lives Matter demo in August failed to encounter, let alone stop, the Blue Lives Matter march through Center City. Instead of disbanding once it was clear that the demo had not accomplished its intentions, it stuck around and at some point tried to break through a police

line (instead of walking around it), and ultimately upwards of 11 people were arrested. At the Labor Day noise demo outside the federal prison downtown, which was intended to show solidarity with prisoners inside as part of the prison strike, once police arrived, protesters blocked the street (which prisoners inside probably couldn't see). When ordered to disperse, they marched until they came back to the original demo spot, where eventually police arrested 2 people.

This is not to say that it's anyone's fault for getting arrested, or that people weren't aware of the risks they were taking in those situations, or that arrests are a marker of failure of an action — they are not. But to be able to advertise in the media that police arrested people (i.e. successfully punished them for stepping out of line and rebelling) makes our enemies look much stronger than they otherwise would. Conversely, we look much stronger when we get away with it.

More than that, we are stronger — getting arrested takes time and money away from our struggles, which already have very little resources. Getting arrested is also a difficult, if not traumatizing, experience, which often makes it hard for individuals to rejoin a struggle afterwards or stay in it for the longterm. The number of arrests that have happened in demo situations recently, beginning with the Occupy ICE blockades in June, is not sustainable. There's no reason, except ego and a desire to see ourselves as martyrs in the media (a nonviolent "strategy" whose effectiveness in contributing to radical rather than reformist struggle has been historically disproven over and over again) to stop something by putting our bodies on the line, as opposed to other obstacles. We also don't need to keep demonstrations going until police finally put a stop to them by arresting some of us. It's an often overlooked, but crucial element of organizing a demo to figure out when to end it. Ideally this would be planned in advance, with exit routes and spots to unmask; if things don't go as planned, which

they often don't, it's important to be ready to call it when we don't have the necessary force to accomplish anything more in that situation.

That is to say, if an action or demonstration is to be escalatory, ideally it should be carefully planned so that the participants generally have an exciting experience getting away with something, instead of one in which their safety does not seem to have been taken into account by organizers. One technique that we've observed some anarchists in Philly using is putting the estimated level of escalation or risk on the flyer for a demonstration — this shows respect for participants' safety by giving them information they can use to make a decision about whether to attend.

Given the seemingly infinite resources of Philly's police to surround and crush demonstrations that are either public or that they eventually stumble upon, escalating may simply need to happen when the police are not around. At the very least, we know we stand a better chance of escaping the cops' clutches so long as we keep moving, rather than acting out while milling about one area. This might not look like the mass struggle some of us picture ourselves in, but there are many ways to broaden and deepen struggles outside of large demonstrations. ★

AGAINST THE CULT OF VISIBILITY

Numerous times this summer, some comrades attempted to discredit anarchists on the grounds that they had never seen said anarchists before. The implications (often explicit) of this were that the anarchists in question were unworthy of support, trust, or being viewed as legitimate organizers. This matching up of visibility with activity is flawed, not only in that it plays into the logic of the spectacle (in which our lives are mediated through images), but also in its assumption that all revolutionary and insurrectionary activity can and should be visible to all comrades (or at least to those

horrorshow of a civilization are now about 60% of the material that makes up our clothes worldwide.

Meanwhile, the World Economic Forum reported that the oceans are on track to contain more plastic than fish (by weight) by 2050. The use of plastics has increased twentyfold in the past half-century and is expected to double again in the next 20 years. The global plastics market is projected to be worth over \$634 billion by 2020.

The United Nations Secretary-General suggested in a speech in mid-September that nothing of substance has been done about the "direct existential threat" that is climate change. He noted that the world has about two years to affect a change of course and avoid the disastrous consequences of runaway climate change, which is already making extreme weather more likely and causing devastating harm to specific regions.

A U.S. naval base in Washington state discovered this past month that its bathrooms had been flushing directly into the Puget Sound for the past two years, spilling an estimated 450,000 gallons of sewage waste. Last year, a naval station in Virginia Beach spilled an estimated 94,000 gallons of jet fuel into a nearby waterway less than a mile from the Atlantic Ocean. Discussions of climate change rarely acknowledge that the U.S. Department of Defense is both the nation's and the world's largest polluter. The military produces more hazardous waste than the five largest U.S. chemical companies combined, and has left a horrific environmental legacy throughout the world in the form of depleted uranium, oil, jet fuel, pesticides, defoliants like Agent Orange, and lead.

Flood waters resulting from Hurricane Florence breached defenses at Duke Energy's plant near Wilmington, North Carolina in late September, likely sending toxic coal ash — containing mercury, lead, arsenic, and other toxic metals — into the Cape Fear River. Florence is estimated to have killed more farm animals and caused more spills from sewage treatment plants, hog waste lagoons, and coal ash ponds in the Carolinas than previous hurricanes — and these storms are expected to continue to intensify and become even

more frequent due to the effects of climate change.

Meanwhile, numbers of flying insects plunged by three quarters over the past 25 years, according to a 2017 study. Scientists behind the study noted, "We appear to be making vast tracts of land inhospitable to most forms of life, and are currently on course for ecological Armageddon." Earlier last year, an adviser to the UK government had warned that regulators have falsely assumed that it is safe to use pesticides at industrial scales across landscapes and that the "effects of dosing whole landscapes with chemicals have been largely ignored".

Relatedly, last year the UN warned that generating three centimeters of top soil takes 1,000 years, and if current rates of degradation continue all of the world's top soil could be gone within 60 years. The causes of soil destruction include chemical-heavy farming techniques, deforestation (which increases erosion), and global warming. Because soils play a key role in absorbing carbon and filtering water, soil destruction creates a vicious cycle in which less carbon is stored, the world gets hotter, and the land is further degraded. Environmentalists have reported that "we are losing 30 soccer fields of soil every minute, mostly due to intensive farming." ★



Hate Crimes continued from front page...

is also divided into west and east sections; people separated into these two sectors will likely never see each other again.

Almost everyone who underwent the move is missing property. One inmate had cheese poured into a box that contained the legal documents for his case, which is still active. One older man had his dentures taken, leaving him unable to eat. Multiple prisoners found swastikas and other racial slurs and graphic images drawn on their photos of loved ones.

Conditions inside Phoenix are reportedly worse. The prison's layout is designed to control and restrict community among prisoners, with people isolated from each other in pods instead of in cells running along the same hallway. Administrators have limited inmates' access to water and implemented more restrictive telephone policies than anywhere else in the state. This has been so bad that prisoners apparently had planned a boycott of the exploitative commissary and telephone services starting September 2, "to temporarily suspend the financial enrichment of the system until such time as the administration addresses our issues."

The prison system statewide declared a lockdown starting Aug. 29. The Department of Corrections said the lockdown was necessary as a result of a reported outbreak in staff illnesses in central and western Pennsylvania prison, apparently connected to a substance similar to K2. However, the DOC's incident log shows that the "incidents" were only connected to substances in around 5 out of 60 reported cases. Of the 60 incidents, in none of them have any substance been found actually in the bodies of the staff, meaning that they may not have actually been exposed to anything.

After alleging these illnesses, the DOC implemented new "safety protocols" that have nothing to do with the incidents. Prisoners are no longer allowed to receive direct mail, even though when pressed the DOC could only identify two incidents in which mail had been "compromised" to admit

drugs into the prison. The new policy has not only led to significant self-censorship on the part of prisoners in letters, but also has forced many attorneys to stop corresponding with their clients on the inside, since the new protocols allow too much space for interference in legal matters.

Officials have also banned book donations, which seems to be part of their strategy to increase censorship as well as surveillance. Drone detection will be expanded to all prisons statewide, and monitoring while inmates are in the yard will increase. ★

Downstream continued from front page...

safety of pipelines and natural gas infrastructure, especially Shell's proposed Falcon Ethane Pipeline – a 97-mile pipeline that would cross through 22 different counties in Pennsylvania, Ohio and West Virginia. The oil behemoth hopes to secure permits and begin construction in late 2018.

Sunoco Pipeline LP (owned by ETP) had another accident on its 12-inch Point Breeze [Philadelphia] to Montello pipeline back in June, according to new data released by a federal agency. The pipeline spilled 33,500 gallons of gasoline along Darby Creek in Tinicum Township, near Philadelphia's airport. The agency classified it as a significant but "not serious" spill. The spill is one of four known accidents on this same pipeline. This is also the pipeline that Sunoco recently announced will be temporarily repurposed to carry highly volatile natural gas as part of the Mariner East 2 pipeline, so that Sunoco can make the pipeline operational as soon as possible while construction remains halted on parts of the original route in Chester County, PA.

A study revealed that washing our clothes releases an alarming number of tiny fibers from synthetic fabrics into waterways, poisoning aquatic animals, oceans, and our food supply. Each cycle of a washing machine potentially releases more than 700,000 microscopic plastic fibers. Polyester, nylon, acrylic, and other cheap artificial fibers developed by the fantastic scientific apparatus of this

doing the discrediting). To say judgmentally to someone, "I've never seen you before," reveals only the accuser's ignorance; it cannot possibly say anything real about the activities or ideas of the anarchist in question.

A large portion of these comments about anarchists' visibility occurred during the more heated conflicts between comrades during Occupy ICE. Other instances of the same have occurred since then, and this author remembers times before the summer when similar discourses were deployed against anarchists.

The Spectacle is a Situationist idea that people's relations to each other have become mediated by images. This means people are no longer used to direct and authentic relations. In the context of political struggles, it can manifest as taking selfies at a demo or building credibility as a known organizer by discussing and documenting all your political activities on social media.

It's not surprising that comrades who do not question relating to political struggles through the Spectacle assume that if their personal relation to someone (an anarchist stranger, for example) does not revolve around postures and images of struggle (or more likely, activism), then that person is "doing nothing." Many anarchists who refuse to play along with spectacular society will not seem very active to those they do not organize with, not because they are inactive, but because they do not indoctrinate themselves into a cult of visibility. It is important to remember that directly lived experiences do not always, or often, fit neatly into well-circulated, consumable images.

The notion that all anarchists' activities can or should be visible reveals a very limited view of struggle, one that is misguided, entitled, and dangerous. By taking for granted the logic of the Spectacle, all the invisible activity undertaken by comrades is non-existent. All conversations that go unrecorded, clandestine attacks, correspondence with prisoners,

care work among comrades, unclaimed acts of sabotage, research, anonymous writing, reproductive labor, behind-the-scenes planning, propaganda and outreach — these are all important contributions to struggle. These kinds of activities do not usually have as an objective to make themselves known to other comrades. Yet the attitude many comrades take seems to imply an expectation that all activity be known to them. Maybe these comrades are used to understanding struggle as a small social scene where word gets around whenever anyone does anything? Maybe they have internalized the meritocracy pounded into everyone by capital and the state, and feel entitled to proof that someone (an anarchist stranger, for example) is deserving of recognition? Maybe they do not understand that some activity is never meant to be visible because it is criminalized and its authors count on the safety of anonymity to remain free? Whatever the case may be, these comrades' (lack of) vision and imagination reduces struggle to what they can see.

A holistic approach to struggle takes into account that not all anarchists' activity is known to everyone. This is not meant to be a call for comrades to stop criticizing anarchists (a loss for all involved), to begin crediting all anarchists (a security risk), or even to take anarchists seriously (an impossibility). This is an appeal to a more vigorous and considered practice of criticism, one that does not rely on the ignorance of the critic, but instead aims at the practices and ideas of anarchists. ★



illustration by Sarah Mirk

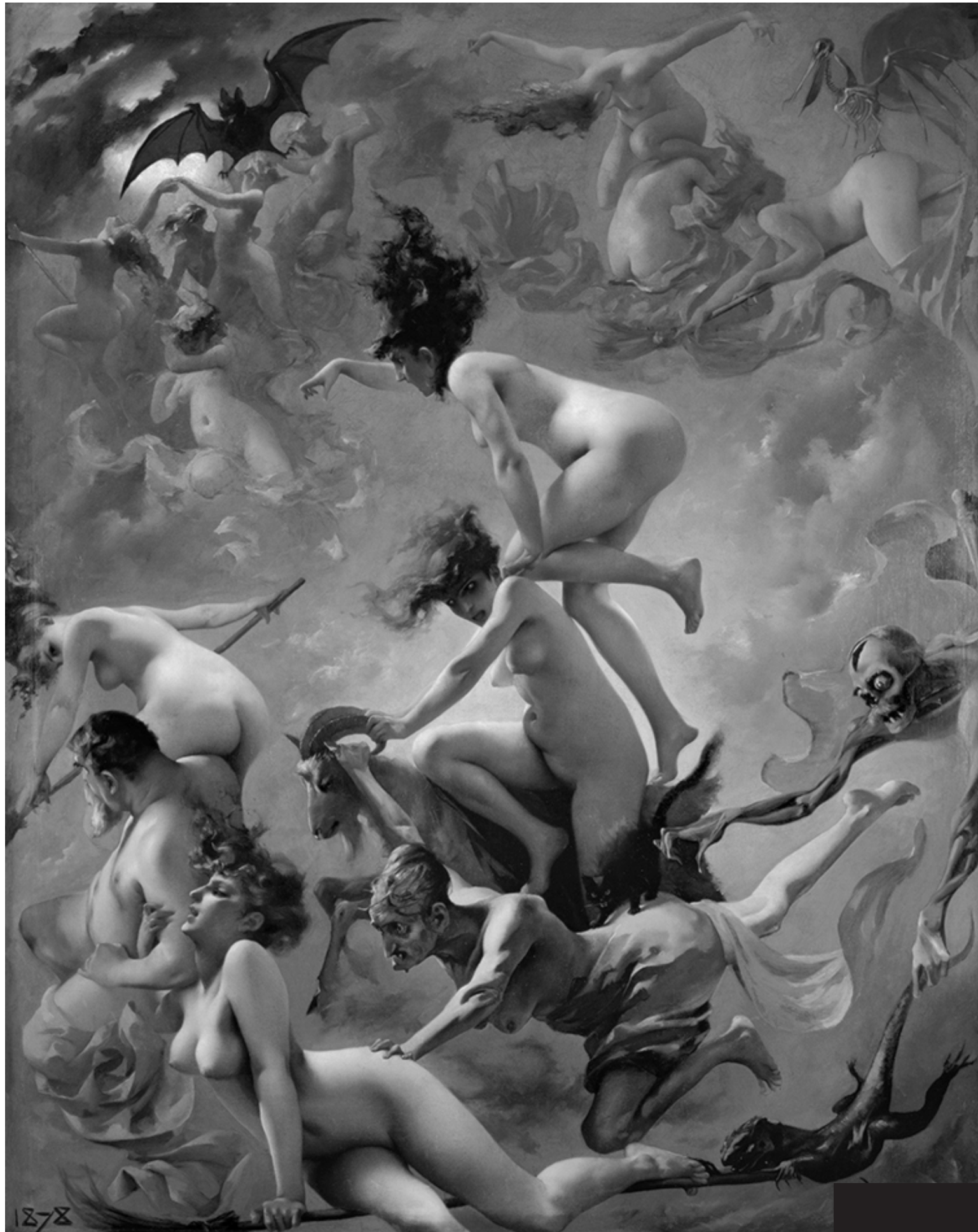
LIFE'S A WITCH AND THEN YOU FLY

Many of the origins of anti-blackness, misogyny, homophobia, and ultimately modern civilization, come from the Christian campaign to denigrate the old religious symbols and practices that they sought to replace – from indigenous spiritualities to competing monotheisms persecuted throughout Europe (such as Judaism, Islam, and even heretical Christian sects). Those that continued these practices, along with healers providing medicinal services (especially gynecological), were labeled witches – a high crime. The greatest of these transgressions to the church was, as Arthur Evans put it, “that they experienced the highest manifestation of the divine in the free practice of sexuality.”

“The repulsion that non-procreative sexuality was beginning to inspire is well captured by the myth of the old witch flying on her broom, which, like the animals she also rode upon (goats, mares, dogs), was the projection of an extended penis, symbol of an unbridled lust. This imagery betrays a new sexual discipline that denied the ‘old and ugly’ woman, no longer fertile, the right to a sexual life. In the creation of this stereotype the demonologists conformed to the moral sensibility of their time...” – Sylvia Federici, beginning to explain the subjugation of women’s sexuality through witch-hunts, in order to serve men, procreation, and ultimately “capitalist rationalization.”

“In rifling the closet of the ladie, they found a pipe of oyntment, wherewith she greased a staffe, upon which she ambled and galloped through thick and thin.” - 1324 investigation of suspected witch

That association of the flying broomstick with witches (possibly first expressed by a suspected male witch while being tortured in 1453) may have originated from the use of hallucinogenic plants that, too poisonous to be ingested, were sometimes applied with the help of the broomstick to mucus membranes – such as those between the practitioners’ legs. The hallucinogens are noted, as recently as 1966, as having the capability to make the user feel as though they were flying. Deadly nightshade, wolfsbane, henbane, and hemlock could be gathered in broom-like bundles (called whisks) and boiled whole in oil – both releasing



the active ingredients from the whisk and thus soaking the handle with the concoction. These potent ingredients, now a salve, were saved in order amply apply to the item of one’s choice, straddled and then writhed upon to repeat the experience again and again.

“But the vulgar believe, and the witches confess, that on certain days or nights they anoint a staff and ride on it to the appointed place or anoint themselves under the arms and in other hairy places.” – 15th Century

Halloween’s origins, with which the witch is now irrevocably associated, are a site of rebellion derived from Celtic lore surrounding their pagan New Year, and later labeled a witches’ Sabbat. The so-called confessions of witches to consorting with “the devil” were often produced by torture, and some suggest an additional political agenda to criminalize “an actual nocturnal gathering of thousands where peasants plotted popular revolts against ruling social enclosures.” Bradley Stoot’s essay on The Devil’s Night notes that the abundance of food and wine during these fall festivals made it more difficult to control their participants, hence the advocacy for “careful adherence to ritual and propitiation” to maintain the precarious order despite the mischievous atmosphere. The modern manifestation as such is sometimes expressed the night before, from the stealing of gates (Gate Night in upstate New York) to the burning of buildings (Devil’s Night in Detroit) – seemingly those things that enclose spaces to keep out or otherwise suppress wild natures.

Like the witchy Petroleuse women of the Paris Commune later, much of the individual supernatural experiences may have been exaggerations, hallucinations or lies meant to condemn participants in the “gay counterculture,” to borrow part of Arthur Evans’ title, and were largely only admitted under torture. Still, there are a great deal of desirable elements in the mythology we’ve been left with. So in the words of Antoine Rose, the Witch of Savoy who escaped confinement in 1477 and was said to have smeared ointment on an 18-inch stick and put it between her legs while crying out, ‘Go, in the name of the Devil, go!’” ★