

NO MORE CITY



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WINTER/SPRING 2020

a “vancouver” anarchist publication

Zines and books we liked:

- *Security Culture* - J Sakai
- **"Lines In Sand"**
<https://www.sproutdistro.com/catalog/zines/anti-oppression/lines-sand>
- **"Burn Down The American Plantation"**
<https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/revolutionary-abolitionist-movement-burn-down-the-american-plantation>
- **"Another Word For White Ally Is Coward"**
<https://itsgoingdown.org/another-word-for-white-ally-is-coward/>
<https://ruinsofcapital.noblogs.org/files/2015/08/whiteallyimp.pdf>
- **"Black and Racialized Anarchists on the May 31st Demonstration: 9 Recommendations for Moving Forward"**
<https://mtlcounterinfo.org/black-and-racialized-anarchists-on-the-may-31st-demonstration-9-recommendations-for-moving-forward/>
- **"Hamilton: Coronavirus Phone Line for Prisoners at the Barton Jail"**
<https://itsgoingdown.org/hamilton-coronavirus-phone-line-for-prisoners-at-the-barton-jail/>
- **"An Anarcho-Taoist Manifesto"** - anna prouty
(<http://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/anna-prouty-an-anarcho-taoist-manifesto>)
- *My Brilliant Friend* - Elena Ferrante
- *The Factory* - Hiroko Oyamada
- **"Animal Liberation and Social Revolution: a vegan perspective on anarchism or an anarchist perspective on veganism"**
<https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/brian-a-dominick-animal-liberation-and-social-revolution>

links from "Honest reflections on Wet'suwet'en"

<https://www.sproutdistro.com/catalog/zines/anti-oppression/accomplices-allies-abolishing-ally-industrial-complex>
<https://www.sproutdistro.com/catalog/zines/anti-oppression/who-is-oakland>
<https://ruinsofcapital.noblogs.org/files/2018/01/agency-v3.pdf>
<https://north-shore.info/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/reconciliation.pdf>
<https://north-shore.info/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/reconciliation-is-dead.pdf>

Submit your writing and art for our next issue!

We are looking for writing and art that pushes against the boundaries of capitalism, colonialism, cis-hetero-patriarchy, and specieism. We are looking for writing and art that is created with intensity—rage and tenderness. When we look to the skyline, all we see is grey clouds and grey pavement reflected in empty glass condos. We want to see the world that is possible, even when everyone tells us this is the way it must be.

We are looking for personal reflection essays, local news coverage, local arts and culture event coverage, communiqués, reportbacks, responses to previous articles published in *nomorecity*, poetry, and visual art. We want to publish writing and art about forces that affect your lives and the lives of people you know, based on first-hand experience. We want to hear about your reflections, retrospectives, projects, and on-the-ground reports about actions. The work should be real, relevant, and local to so-called vancouver.

We ask that your writing be connected to the subjects you write about either through personal experience or thoughtful research, so that communities don't feel like someone else outside their community is trying to speak on behalf of them, or to tell their stories without meaningful allyship.

We encourage you to read our privacy policy on our website before submitting, as well as our how-to on safely submitting your writing.

We appreciate every submission made to us, but there is no guarantee that your work will be published in an issue. If your work wasn't chosen, it was likely due to volume-capacity, and we encourage you to keep submitting.

Please email us submissions at nomorecity@riseup.net.

WHAT IS NO MORE CITY

We are an anarchist publication based out of so-called vancouver. We are settler cats who live in the city because that's where pals and projects are at. Meanwhile, we plug our ears through the constant car traffic and construction noise and breathe in asphalt fumes and car exhaust. We watch all of our favourite spaces disappear through gentrification and see fewer non-human animal friends every year. The city is life-support. The city is death.

We are domesticated animals turning scruffy and crusty as we rummage for trash and search for friends in a crumbling city. We are scrap yard sorters trying to survive and build things for ourselves. Along the way, we stumble upon proof of lives lived, proof that others resisted and desired in a similar manner as we do. We follow their traces—evidence of times and places where friends found each other and their intensities and passions intersected in waves. There is no “movement” and never was—only energies and desires flowing through bodies that came together.

We're tired of screaming into the void. Maybe someone out there wants to hear us. Maybe they need to hear us to know they aren't screaming by themselves. We want to put a dot on a map or a pinpoint of light in a constellation in our locale's patchwork anarchist discourse. We want to have a record that we were here, and we all hated this too!

Our work is conducted on the ancestral, unceded, and stolen lands of the Coast Salish peoples, including the Squamish, Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh, Katzie, Semiahmoo, Tsawwassen, Qayqayt, Kwantlen and Kwikwetlem peoples. We denounce the legitimacy of the brutal, genocidal canadian state. canada is fake.

A direct inspiration for this project, a vancouver-based anarchist publication called *Wreck*, likened their project to a message in a bottle: a one-way communication that has travelled through time. This was a gift for those of us searching for others who were profoundly unhappy with the prevailing state of affairs, the long-burning ruin and waste that frames and overwhelms our lives. The writings and news reports and spoken-word resonances of past actions left by other anarchists are like treasures to excavate. We have no guide to contextualize what we see or to show us the paved-over and blank spaces where wild things used to be. We hope to

leave behind helpful scraps for anyone in the “future.” This project is for anyone who is in the right place and time to receive it and know they’re not alone.

Our intention with this publication is to document a history that exists in the whispers between friends, in anonymous communiqués and midnight actions, and in bits of knowledge passed on through word-of-mouth or online archives. A history that is excluded from textbooks and corporate-media accounts of time and place. We have had to dig to find this knowledge, and want to lessen the amount of searching that future anarchists have to do. We hope that by adding to the historical anarchist continuity, we can strengthen the shared, intergenerational knowledge of our communities. Any picture of the past we put together will be flat and fragmented, void of the texture and energy of the Real Thing when it happened in a Now.

One day there will be no more city— whether through complete ecosystem collapse caused by colonial pipeline and hydro mega-projects, or because we were somehow able to create the spaces we can sustainably live and thrive in.

Disclaimer: We exist as a publication and an aspiring historical record of anarchist activity within this doomed city. We are here to celebrate accomplishments, critique failures, and mourn losses. We as a group exist to publish and lift up other people’s actions, not to directly engage. There are other awesome groups that are organizing actions on this territory, but we are not those folks. The writing we publish is not necessarily our own accounts, nor do all contributors views reflect our own.

ABOUT THIS ISSUE...

This issue will cover winter/spring 2020 events/reportbacks/reflections. We started collecting pieces for this issue in March when #shutdowncanada demos were in the middle of winding down, and then covid hit and everything halted and kept us inside for months. As we’re publishing, it is now July and covid restrictions are lifting, people are getting out and up to shit again, the Black Lives Matter movement has been reignited by the riots in minneapolis and demands for justice in the police murder of George Floyd and countless others. Our next issue will come out in late fall/early winter of 2020, covering this summer and upcoming fall.

Fuck every parent who made us homeless
Fuck every bully who gave us pain
Fuck every doctor who called us hopeless
Fuck every cop who put us in a cage
Fuck every abuser who fed us lies
Fuck every chaser who looked and craved
Fuck every terf who let us die
Fuck every pimp who made us a slave
We'll plant vegetables in the yards of the filthy rich
We'll beat every boss senseless and throw their bodies in a ditch
We'll give guns to the squatters all along the block
We'll burn every eviction notice and kill every cop
We'll descend on the landlords as a swarm as a storm
We'll slit the throats of every owner of every vacant home.
We'll find freedom in the sketches we draw of our cage
Because the only thing more beautiful than love is rage.
And we'll find peace on the blood-soaked feathers of a dove
Because the only thing more beautiful than rage is love.

Love letter to Rage - Organ

I've always thought
That love is such a boring word
For such an interesting thing
So when I'm with you
I'll try to keep you interested enough to love me
But I'm afraid all I feel like talking about is how you make me feel
And that shit's boring
So I'll try to love you quietly.
But rage?
That shit's loud
So let's channel our anger into something that makes us proud
You see as anarchists we say love and rage
As if they're not the same
But the way I learned to confide in you
Was by fighting fascists alongside of you
My love for you is my rage against our masters
So let's rise up and learn to love each other faster.
Let's start a riot and march through the streets
Let's commit a million sins between a million bedsheets
Arrestees go to prison, hey they've got people for sale!
But tonight I'm gonna love you like a Molotov cocktail.
Come over for dinner and let's eat the rich
I know you've got work but don't worry about your shift
Don't bother coming in, your boss isn't gonna call
Because tonight I'm gonna love you like a cannibal.
Let's spar with each other and learn self defence
Let's hold hands and make out in the face of harassment
I'll hold you and kiss you while we're under attack
Because tonight I'm gonna love you like a queer that bashes back.

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Shut down Canada - Organ

Pack some black clothes and a change of shoes
Grab some extra water and some extra food too
Running scenarios through my head
Burning pictures in my eyelids of the feds
Leave your phone at home
That shit's a liability
Kid gloves are off comrades
Time to try our abilities
I hold your hand through a glove
I kiss your face through a mask
Write your cellphone on my wrist
Don't know if I'll come back
Banners get dropped
Traffic gets blocked
Build the barricades
Down the railway
My heart starts beating in my chest like a drum
Cops roll up with their pretty little guns
Don't they know we're here to just have a little fun?
Everybody tighten up it's time to fuckin run!
So grab my hand
Let's take a stand
Start a social war on stolen land!
Decolonization means attack
Reconciliation means fire to the frack
Yet another blockade set up on the tracks
Throw an injunction onto the stack
Rest assured pigs
We are going to come back

Storyteller Wrestling Match – Vegan Friendly

They will sing
praises to that which
they continue to kill
long after it is very,
very dead.

The issue: Narrative control,
one of many storytellers, one
of so, so many, still battling for food sovereignty
even though they took away all your gardens,
still battling for social decentralization
even though they made you an instagram influencer.
The ongoing rejection of containment.

The room has flooded with light.
There is nothing here that isn't a delightful rejection of the hell on offer.

Not slaves.
Not good people.
Not really measurable.

The clanky fucking machines keep clanking.
It's all kinda fucking like "what the fuck" everywhere ya go.

The religious mysteries were long abandoned. Something else is knocking
on the door now. The door is made of glass. They don't open their eyes.
Collectively.

Moss.
The softening of everything. There are still
birds. There is music in the distance. The sounds
to of moving water over rocks, across deadfall.
There is some splashing.

This is the only light left.
And it can get very bright.

Maybe even bright (Of course, we'll
have to figure out better ways through these
conflicts) enough.

Indigenous sovereignty
Working class poverty
We survive scarcity
With endless solidarity
Workers respect the picket line
In defence of unist'ot'en traplines
No consent no motherfucking pipeline
Are you bastards going to get it this time??
With big enough numbers there's nothing we can't achieve
Hearts beat together for hereditary chiefs
This isn't up for the counsel to decide
Fuck your Indian act apartheid!
We stand with the Tyendinega
Together with treaty one
Sovereign power in Gitxsan
You ask when will we be done?
When armed colonizers stop enforcing European law
And take their filthy hands off Wet'suwet'en yintah!
Fuck the RCMP
Down with prime ministry
Abolish queen of England's law

Shut down Canada!



“The fuck, yo??”

Evade. Distract. Make colorful and enrich.

They can never be trusted.

They can’t make loud sounds. No one opens their eyes.
The room is slowly filling with lights.

The slaves are already drenched in morning.
Tending to the machines that have entirely dominated their conception of existence.
Some hold signs to direct the machines. Some put gasoline into the tanks.
And so on.

And so on. It’s a mystical domination. An alliance of a language that has betrayed the speakers with a devotion to suffering and the maintenance of total deception at every moment. The activated heteronomy of the era is tragic not because of all the death, but because of all the horribly sad revelations that have come to insist on themselves as truth, as truths, as truthful. The normativity of shitty, sad and stupid.

Hearts are not allowed to reach for one another.
Hearts are not allowed to communicate.
Nothing is believable anyway.

The machines grind about outside.
They consent to their own logic.
And require regular maintenance.

There is basically consensus among the population that the whole event has become a farce but that has not eliminated a continuous push to increase the acceptable levels of violence required to maintain it. More than half the human population of the planet has become floating signifiers on tally sheets now. The characteristics of self/identity/community used as boxes to validate increases in budgetary access or as defence for further constraints.

We can interpret it any way we like?

I knew you were a piece of shit the moment I met you.

Can't even name the world around us - Vegan Friendly

He woke up there, curled into a ball on a cold floor. With a heart pounding in a very actual sense. All the adventurous options seemed to be evasive and even the slim focus, the intellectual rigor, was starting to lose appeal. Over and over the same sets of invitations towards actions that contained really very little interest to him were repeating.

The great forgetting, the psychological self-protection in the face of species extinction has become basically savage. Social fabrics, capital, historical underpinnings all revealed as false are taking their toll. The wish for one type of violence, or just for a sense of security has turned into a dynamic multi-layer battle of absolute thuggery in manners both principled and not.

And all the deep and truthful and evocative statements have lost hold for some reason. There was always reason to dissociate. And we mastered it. We split into infinite creatures. We peeled out of the walls of a drug-induced dream, complete with writhing and screaming we knew nothing about, and meandered through the streets of a town in a far-flung geography. I loved that you knew the plants, the local terrain better than me. I loved that I could stop thinking about it all. Ever so briefly.

Every joke failed, the invitation to enact hobosexuality, or the darker mysteries of the web they wove just sort of came off as tone-deaf and boring. He was glad about that. That the articulation could fail so completely.

Uttering threats and sort of pathetically attacking queer people is sort of a strange way to spend a Wednesday night, homie, and I am pretty sure you will live to regret it.

To contextualize, we are on lands we never should've entered.

We didn't enter. We were thrust out onto.

No wonder the general anxiety cranks up so thoroughly, though, we literally can't name the world around us. The fixation and the death squad and the martial systems of containment and threat. What's the cost on that?

38 "I wish I was the boss," says the class traitor.

February onward... - SobJob

February was full of efforts to land defend. We were out on the streets, setting up tents to block ports and train tracks, taking shifts, spending nights there, bringing each other food, water, coffee... It was a time full of connection and solidarity. People got together to fight against a common enemy. Settler colonial capital. The pipeline. The Wet'suwet'en did not consent to the construction of the pipeline, so we weren't gonna sit around doing nothing.

Towards the end of March, COVID-19 hit like a meteor. In order to flatten the curve and prevent more deaths, we stopped gathering to sabotage transportation of goods, to cause economic damage... As a consequence of the pandemic, a lot of people lost their jobs and had to figure out how to navigate isolation. And of course, the government decides to take advantage of the situation to keep constructing the pipeline, putting workers and Indigenous communities lives' at risk.

In order to keep consumers consuming, keep business going, keep profits reaching the ruling class, the federal government decided to give \$2000 a month to workers who had made at least \$5000 in the 12 months prior to the request and had lost their job, or had their shifts significantly reduced due to COVID-19. So what does that mean to people who quit their jobs, but are currently struggling to find a new one? What does that mean to people on disability who receive significantly less (\$1200)? What does that mean to all the unemployed and houseless folks? What does it mean to all the people who struggle navigating the tedious and anxiety provoking bureaucratic processes? What does it mean to people who hadn't quite been able to make \$5000 dollars the past year?

They really try to make it as difficult as possible for people to access this money. But they need to keep a significant part of the working class satisfied enough to not start riots and rebel. They need our complacency in order to function. They need us more than we need them. In fact, we'd be so much better off without them.

We're needed to keep creating profits for the rich, but it comes at such a great expense. It comes at the expense of maintaining settler colonialism, which is devastating the land that provides us with so much. Our socio-economic framework puts us in a place where we're exploited by those above us. They're taking advantage of this crisis for themselves.

Greedy, evil fuckers. And fuck the bootlickers too.

Things are different right now and are going to be different. The landscape of our lives is shifting. This isn't the last global pandemic we will see. We're undergoing the 6th mass extinction. Forest fires are becoming more common. Most of us rely on our parents and can't get the jobs that we want, or even any stable jobs. Our futures are grim.

It's difficult to gather and discuss safely in our communal spaces with our comrades. We rely on the internet now, which creates a higher chance of what we communicate being read back to us at court... We have to start thinking of new ways of organizing and rebelling against those who make our lives miserable. We can't rely on the state and its institutions to support us. The privileges that we received from this system was always at the expense of someone else. Things were never okay. But at some point, the way we know the world will no longer be and we're going to need each other to be resilient to the different harms that this change will bring. There won't always be business as usual to feed, clothe and house us (for those of us who get fed, clothed and housed by business as usual...).

We should develop as many skills as we can to survive. And not only to survive, but to live. Seek jouissance. To liberate ourselves from not only the pandemic that is Covid-19, but the pandemic of the colonial, imperialist, capitalist system that we have been infected with.

I don't know what those skills that you want to develop are, but I hope when whatever goes down, that those skills will help you and that you'll be okay. Whatever that means to you.

covid is and why the towns were completely empty.

Another person who called was calling on behalf of their daughter who had seen the number and asked her parents to call. Apparently their daughter was only getting access to one collect/paid phone call a week, while the other person who called said that they were getting free access multiple times a day. Their daughter said she was not allowed outside at all, not allowed anything in her room other than what was already there (bed, sink, toilet), was feeling nauseous and not getting proper access to medical attention, and all the food was being delivered cold which worsened their nausea. On top of it all, their daughter was pregnant and nonviolent. Why the fuck is she still there?

In the states there were lots of campaigns to release non-violent prisoners, people with less than a certain amount of time left on their sentence, and people over a certain age/with high-risk illnesses that make them vulnerable to covid. This was successful some places. Even more successful when prisoners and migrant prisoners started striking and demanded their release. Even more successful when people took their lives in their own hands and started rioting inside the prisons. There have been mass liberations in many places from the states to Italy to Brazil.

Covid compounded the pre-existing violence that prisons force on people. Overcrowding is more unsafe than ever, lack of ability to contact the outside is worse than ever, feeling isolated more than ever. Our goal is to continue going out there for noise demos and bringing the banner to advertise the number. We hope to establish a relationship with folks so that when the second wave of covid likely comes around, they can call us right away about how things are going. I suppose the goal is to hear about how inside conditions change but also just hopefully make people feel like they haven't been completely forgotten about?

If anyone wants to set up the same project for other prisons in the area it is completely welcomed, we just only have the capacity for receiving calls from one prison and attending to one phone.

Fire to the Prisons

see if we get any calls even though the location of the demo was kind of far from any cells. We also got the number sent in with a bunch of legal numbers by local prisoner justice advocates, but this could easily have been removed by a screw.

We took the banner out and held it along the rocks that essentially make the boundary of their "yard"-- not the prisoners yard which is fucking fenced but the parking lot yard for visitors and screws. Someone encouraged us that we should at least try taking it further into the yard because it would be more visible, but immediately a screw came out and told us to get off their property, even though it was an area that anyone could be in as long as you aren't doing anything they don't want you to do. So we retreated to the line of rocks and screamed and whistled and banged a coffee can full of rocks around.

Later that day we received our first call from someone inside. They had seen our banner and wanted to know about why we wanted prisoners to call us. We said we were a group of individuals who want to support prisoners, and who want to learn about how covid is affecting prisons. We tried to sound as lib as possible so that people could be allowed to call us.

The only thing outside folks knew for sure about what was happening inside prisons was that all visits were suspended even if they were taking place through glass screens already, and that likely mail wasn't getting in or out. That would mean prisoners only had the ability to make/receive calls, depending on if they had the money of course. The first person who called said that every prisoner was doing mandatory isolation for fourteen days. This was well over a month since covid hit the lower mainland, so prisoners were clearly remembered last. The person said they were in day eighteen of the isolation period, and they didn't know why other than extra precaution. But they had received two covid swab tests and tested negative each time. They seemed to think that the prison was taking proper precautions regarding screws wearing gloves and masks, disinfecting cells, and getting tested-- but how the fuck is putting someone in a two-week isolation with no access to go outside or human contact considered "healthy precautions." It just shows how fucked up prisons are if that's the best they can do for people's health. We asked the person if they had anything else they wanted to share, and they said: "It's just scary y'know? We're reading about what's happening at Mission and it's scary." At the mission federal prison there was an outbreak of around 130 cases of covid, and people there were supposedly getting released and not even knowing what



by
Union Glitch

What is a "successful" action? And how might turtle-island activists benefit from "being water."

- River

When the RCMP raided Wet'suwet'en territory at the beginning of February, the response from land defenders and their allies in so-called vancouver was immediate. There were already solidarity actions taking place in the weeks before the raid-- including short blockades of the port and railways. We were aware of the talks between Wet'suwet'en hereditary chiefs and Coastal Gaslink happening days before the raid and heard how CGL refused to listen to their requests. We were prepared for an immediate response. After the RCMP invaded unceded Unist'ot'en territory, arrested and removed matriarchs and land-defenders during a ceremony for ancestors, and police tore down red dresses that symbolize missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2-spirit folks, reconciliation was declared dead.

First, the Clark and Hastings entrance to the port of vancouver was blocked, then Heatley, then McGill. These blockades were held overnight and lasted for three days. A day after the vancouver ports were blocked, a blockade at the only entrance to the delta port arose. Soon, injunctions were filed and the blockades were dismantled. Around 50-folks were arrested two of the vancouver ports. These arrests succeeded in their only function- getting mainstream media attention. Which may be some folks' goal but not others. I heard there was a lot of pressure put on blockaders to stay and get arrested in solidarity. But I think it's important for us to all ask ourselves what our intentions are, as well as our goals. If our intention is to simply show solidarity every-now-and-then when the movement arises publicly, and then return to our "normal" lives, then yes, perhaps getting arrested does fulfill that. It is the same with mainstream media attention. But if our goals and intentions are to work continuously on these actions, and we don't see the value of mainstream recognition, then getting arrested is the last thing you would want to happen. If all the folks who were arrested chose to leave and rest for a bit, they could come back another day of action without having bail conditions, red zones, finger prints in the system, months of court dates, and possible prison time. If folks instead begin to question the value of symbolic arrests, then there will likely be more people being able to act on a continuous basis and who have more capacity.

Prison Solidarity with Alouette - Anon

I don't no how else to start this other than "Prisons are death sentences." Now even more so. A group of pals saw on north shore info that there was a prison solidarity project starting at Barton jail. A phone line for prisoners to call and talk about how covid-19 was affecting the prisons, and the action/lack there of. The pals followed the detailed write up on how to set up a prison phone line and adapted it for the system in the west coast.

It was relatively easier to set up the phone line than for the Barton solidarity project. In so-called ontario, apparently collect calls can only be set up with landlines and specific service providers, but here in so-called bc it can be set up through a company called 'my phone account' with any phone provider and phone. So we bought a 7-11 phone, sim card, and minutes with cash. Security wise, the project is not that high-risk, but we figured that it is good to practice anonymity for everything. Both for experience in future projects, and because why would you want your name on a prison support project. Anyways, once we had the phone we added the number to my phone account and added funds for collect calls. Funds have to be added to a single prison at a time, so we chose Alouette womyn's prison because for all the projects we had seen like this, it was only support for men's prisons. (fuck all prisons for enforcing this gender binary bullshit and sending trans and non-binary people into gender violence and mind-fuckery)

Then we made a huge-ass banner to take out there with the number on it. The area around the prison was scouted, and the general consensus was that taking the banner to the most visible spots was probably considered trespassing. Alouette is completely surrounded by forests. We saw people taking their kids, dogs, and bikes out in the area, but it was probably the kind of thing where being around the prison was only legal until you do something the cops don't like. A bunch of anarchists trying to support prisoners probably falls into that category.

So things were kind of in limbo for a while, until we heard of some prison solidarity noise demos going out to support Alouette and another nearby prison as well. We decided we might as well join in because 1. making noise is fun 2. being a part of the bigger demo would keep us safer and provide legal witnesses if necessary and 3. we might as well try and

Rusty Fingertips - Organ

I sketch the
bars of my prison as if
that might tell me
why I'm here or
how to get out.

I inscribe on the wall
(cracking fresh blood

under my fingernail)

a new revelation of
who they put in this cage.

A single tally mark.
That's me.

I look through the bars and notice
A pair of eyes looking at
Me.

Someone else locked up.
I never noticed.

They show me
their sketch of the bars
Looks like mine.

We begin passing notes
Tearing
Overwriting
Our sketchbooks.

"How long have you been in here?"
"I don't know."

"When did you find the bars?"
"Not too long ago."

"Know how to get out?"
"No. Do you?"

"Together."
"Together."

Together.

After these port blockades were shut down, people began new daily actions. One day it was blockading the intersection of cambie and broadway, another it was railway tracks. There were multiple rail blockades on kwik-witlem and kwantlen territories as well, lasting a day or night each. At one blockade, the pigs showed up immediately, so the folks dissembled and traveled over to another rail line and were able to hold that one overnight because the pigs were still over at the old location and didn't have enough resources.

These blockades and confrontations brings me to "being water." To explain the concept, here is an excerpt from "Summer in Smoke: Reports From the World's Biggest Black Bloc":

"There is no "just" democratic society that Hong Kongers can call upon to save them. To truly end this cycle of violence would mean abolishing the police force itself, and by proxy, capitalism. For a western audience it is worth elaborating the "be water" strategy, which developed in response to the failures of the Umbrella Movement. With its permanent occupations, pacifist discourse, and political leaders, the lessons from this movement created a culture where tactics that do not work are quickly abandoned. The strategy is simple: disrupt and desert. People are still organizing long term in their neighborhoods or coordinating the maintenance and defense of Lennon Walls (message boards spread throughout the city) for example, but the emphasis is on spontaneity, unpredictability, and adaptation...

We've talked about 'Flash Mobbing the Doghouse' from August 5 until today, but when the fuck have we actually flash mobbed? Every time it becomes a standoff, waiting for the dogs to surround us, does everybody understand that we've already fucked the dogs over the moment they put on shields and gear. Once we lure the dogs out, we should know to scatter immediately, they have to hold the road for 3-4 hours before they can reenter the doghouse, and then have to de-gear, write reports, that's what's fucking meant by fucking over dogs: mental torture! Once it becomes a standoff, once someone gets arrested, they will bring him into the doghouse to work off their anger; fucking over dogs is about keeping them pent-up without release[...] Being without organization or leadership is our greatest strength. All we need is to 'genuinely Be Water', not be impulsive, scatter immediately once the dogs gear up, that is the highest level of fucking over dogs.

... Lure them into attack, then leave them behind. This is the simple physics used to block the economy and tie up police resources."

If we think about why people choose to be symbolically arrested, to gather over 100 thousand people at climate march and do literally nothing like last Fall, or to write letters, make calls, and gather signatures for useless petitions-- its because the majority of settlers in so-called bc believe that there is a government that will listen to them. It's the same line of thought that makes people think that voting for a new MP or prime minister will somehow make the genocidal colonial government a better genocidal colonial government. But we need to act as if there is no one listening to us. Because there isn't. There is no appealing to the capitalist colonial state. If we can accept that no one in this government is here to listen to us or save us from poverty, environmental destruction, and violence, then we can truly take on the strategy of being water.

People need to be thinking of ways to distract, disrupt, and then fucking bounce. Blockades of railways and ports may be useful to screw over the economy for a couple days, but so is nightly sabotage-- with the benefit of not getting into a confrontation with pigs that will surely end in some kind of violence or surveillance. Not to mention how well this could work with the limited amount of police resources there actually is here.

I think the "be water" strategy is especially important during covid-19. Things aren't going to change for a while now. Anarchists were doing a ton of great midnight actions during the solidarity movement, especially on railways. This could be a unique opportunity for liberals to get over their marches. Lots of them are asking how to protest during covid, might I suggest doing something useful for once?

Sources:

<http://unistoten.camp/reconciliationisdead/>
<http://chuangcn.org/2019/z12/summer-in-smoke/>

In that moment, we caught it -just a speck. It's not allowed in our society, it's not to be found at a march. It's jouissance. The simplest joy of doing, the purest feeling of attack.

We are instigating a game of capture the flag across this so-called Canada, and you are informally invited to play. There will be no victors, there's no need for keeping score, the goal is simply total destroy.

This is a game that must be played autonomously. You must take it on yourself to organize it with only those you trust. This will be fun, but there are serious stakes at play here. So no liberals allowed!

This is not a game for cops, nor bootlickers alike. This is not a game for the faint of heart. This is a game for anarchists, for criminals, for those unafraid to break the law. This game is itself an act of defiance, a crime punishable by fines and for the most daring, even jail time. So don't get caught.

The rules are pretty easy, they're whatever you want them to be. But to get you going, we'll offer some guidelines:

Get into teams! The enemy is the state, but between us, why not have some healthy rivalry? Let's let the fires of competition spur us to acts of courage!

Burn baby, burn. We'll likely keep our first flag as a war trophy, but from here on out they're kindling. I mean, why else would we want this shit? Maybe we'll make a video or two, wouldn't we all appreciate seeing something heartwarming?

Most importantly, stay safe. It's all fun in games until someone's in handcuffs. So no peer pressure comrades: consent means nothing if people can't call it off at any moment.

Now best of luck!

We're off to clean up the neighbourhood, maybe we'll leave some street art on the way...



by
Union Glitch

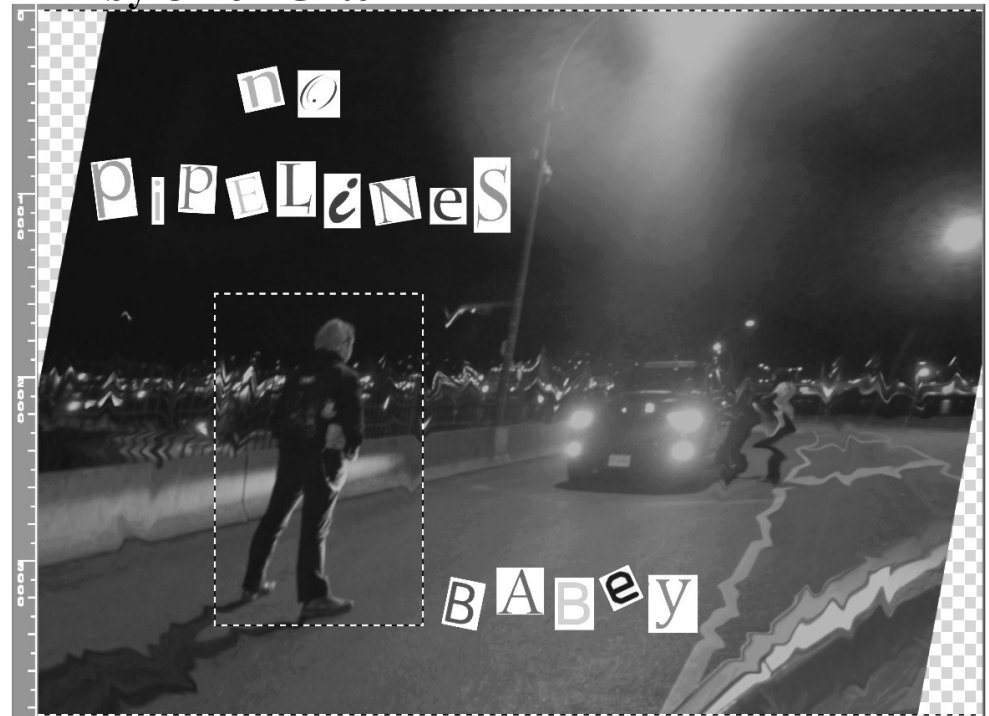
Capture the Flag - anonymous

My friends and I stomp through the night. We're running high off one of our many crime sprees and spot an opportunity. A flag, one of our great nations flags, hangs low enough for the tallest of us to grab it. The game begins.

Eyes lock on the target, shoulders tense, and they're off. They sprint, then leap, then rip the fucker down. Pedestrians stare, jaws dropped in amazement. 'Did they really do that?' They must wonder, 'Isn't that illegal?' But the culprits are already gone, laughing maniacally in the night.



by Union Glitch





our expectations and acting alone or in small groups due to the smaller community here – which due to a complicated array of forces struggles to survive let alone muster the time for additional hostility towards the existent.

To Chew and Digest?

This article in many ways attempts to chew more than it can handle. The current physical and political landscape is defined by colonization, racism, patriarchy, etc and we should always recognize that. Simultaneously, engagement is often done on the terms of abstraction, guilt, responsibility, identity politics and non-profitsm – frameworks and process which at best make it difficult for us to relate to one another and more realistically make the challenge of solidarity and carving out a space for action insurmountable. Focusing on real relationships and being honest about our intentions seems to be the tangible and humble steps to move forward.

While we craft a space to know one another and act from we will each be faced with difficult questions, tensions between solidarity and autonomy have been ever present in the history of anarchies. In early 1900's Europe, we saw large anarchist syndicalists movements fight in the factories, and on the margins individualist anarchists struck out in solidarity. The killings and bombings carried out by the individualist were celebrated by some workers and scorned by others. Both then and now its clear that our desires and actions will be incommunicable to many. The ability to act from a space of discomfort, to meet our accomplices and be comfortable on the margins is surely valuable. In some circles we will be hated, but others will offer fertile space to craft relationships and solidarity. Lets celebrate both!

not be able to demand such relationships when it works for us or is convenient for a specific struggle. If this is impossible we may have to critically think for ourselves in the moment, juggling our own desires and--if we are so inclined-- others. But by saying we will only listen, that we will only follow the leadership of others – in this case Indigenous peoples, or in the context of recent BLM events Black people – we are simply avoiding being honest with ourselves and others about our desires. This will inevitably close doors, inhibit our own autonomy, and be left hiding behind justifications for our own inaction. For those reading these arguments in bad faith, I'd like to explicitly say I am not calling to hijack others demos but to honestly engage with those you seek to “ally” yourself with and open up new and experimental spaces for conflict. If this cannot be done in the presence of new found friends, act autonomously and continue to nurture those relationships as they may bear many fruits, one of which may be action in the future.

For those who advance the politics of safety arguing that conflictual action, autonomous or otherwise endangers The Other: I would encourage you to reflect on the underpinnings of this victimizing logic. You will find that this politic strips away autonomy, projecting powerlessness on black, indigenous, women, queer and any other “vulnerable” communities, defining them as only able to participate in “safe” action and in need of protection, incapable of acting for themselves. Furthermore this logic does not squarely understand the reality of the everyday violence vulnerable people face. Conflictual action for these communities or their accomplices will undoubtedly result in violent repression. Simultaneously, it's painfully clear that inaction will also end in violence. Within communities who bear the burden of capitalism, racism, colonization and hetero-sexist patriarchy we will meet those who for a wide variety of reasons will chose inaction. Simultaneously you will meet those who attempt to break with the existent. As anarchists we should conspire with the latter. While we should do our best to not actively endanger the former, we must remember that violence is inescapably all around us and not let ourselves be incapacitated.

In vancouver, we saw a handful of indigenous organizers in the city monopolize legitimacy--actions they organized were seen as the designated way to participate. Even many of our comrades had a hard time imagining acting outside of the predetermined terrain of struggle. Inspiration to do so came in forms of small sparks of autonomous railway sabotage out east, which was reproduced here. We should not deny that it is difficult to act autonomously and in the vancouver context it will often mean lowering

“Animal Decline” is a Euphemism for Murder - River

I can't be the only one noticing the sickness and death of animals, finding dead bumble bees on the sidewalks. On clear days, the empty blues skies scare me instead of calm me. I read a quote somewhere that just fifty years ago the ocean used to be so full of fish you could see them jumping around. I've only been alive for twenty-three years and I can see what has been lost since I was a kid. When I went for a family trip to Salt Spring Island two years ago--where I used to live when I was five and six years old--I could see the difference. When we walked along the ocean, I tried to show my brother the abundance of bright purple and orange starfish that clung to the rocks. I was only able to show him a few purple starfish, who looked skinny and pale compared to my memory. I tried to show my brother the stingless jellyfish I used to cup in my hands while out in the water—I didn't know they were stingless at the time, I just thought they must be dead, so I would collect as many as I could and played with them. But the water was empty. My mom's friend, who lived there, later told me they all disappeared about ten years ago.

In April, when I went to visit a friend in so called Victoria, we walked along the shore and jumped between rocks. We found lots of sea anemones in little pockets of the rocks and we stuck our fingers inside them to feel them grab onto us and poison us through their tentacles. It was one of those rare times I feel like a kid again, playful and focused only on the present moment. Usually, as an “adult” I just feel playful like that when I'm playing around or joking with a partner after sex. But the sea anemones looked sick. Their usually bright purples and pinks were pale, their green looked yellowish—like a family member in a hospital bed. This is compared to my last time on the island, around two years ago.

I feel compelled to ask—is no one else paying attention? Sure, scientists are constantly tracking the rapid death and “decline” of non-human animals. It's happening at a faster rate than ever expected and soon there will be an ecosystem collapse so big that many animals will die because their food sources have also died. Although, I'm inclined to say murdered.

I feel sadness and grief every time I notice the sickness or death of an animal. I feel it when I hear about pesticides being sprayed in Unist'ot'en to clear a path for the pipeline. I feel it in every wildfire and oil spill. And

that is just as a settler. I can't imagine how much more painful this is for the indigenous peoples whose land and sacred earth is being destroyed.

Theorists theorize that people aren't responding to the climate crisis with any rapid force because it feels "far away" from our lives and "abstract." But is that really true? Can't we see it when we return to a favourite place and see it has been clear-cut to make way for a condo or highway. Or in the absence and death of non-human animals around us? Or through our friends and family who are displaced through constant wild-fires, floods, and hurricanes that grow more destructive every year? People who say the climate-crisis is abstract are clearly not the indigenous peoples world-wide who have lost their ability to hunt, fish, and gather off the land. Anyone who says this crisis is abstract is just trying to exonerate humans and let us off the hook for not paying attention to our destruction—or do tourists only fly jets to tropical waters where the corals haven't bleached yet?

I know we have been taught to be this disconnected from the land. To treat it as a resource or product. Or to think we have no control over our lives. But no matter who gets the blame, we are all accountable. It is our responsibility to pay attention to the livelihoods and needs of non-human animals in the same way we take care of our friends and family. We would never let them die alone without trying everything we could to help them.

That hummingbird who flies by your window doesn't need another sugar-feeder, but honey-suckle all around. That chickadee who visits doesn't need some seeds in a feeder, but space for nests and a kinnikkinnik bush full of berries. Deer don't need you to appreciate them by renting a cabin in the summer for your vacation, but for you to protect them by supporting indigenous land defenders and anti-pipeline and anti-megaproject efforts. Animals need sustainable food-sources and habitats. Let's take a hammer to the concrete and let the wild back in everywhere!

sion, being pushed to the margins and at times acting alone. "Our" views as anarchists being a fallacy in itself - if we recognize the multitude of anarchies or anarchic desires which overlap and conflict with one another – are not popular. While there is certainly fruitful space to develop relationship with indigenous peoples who have every reason to hate the state and capital and a rich history of practices of mutual aid and direct action, very real structural barriers and personal allegiances to state and capital will make it impossible for many of us to conspire together. To imagine otherwise requires us to evoke and impose a sort of noble savage caricature onto Indigenous peoples. We would be foolish to believe that all people Indigenous or otherwise share our desire to break with the existent. We should seek out, celebrate, and nurture the relationships we have with indigenous rebels and settlers alike. They will always be special and rare.

This does not mean that we should forget to engage in the difficult work to eradicate colonial, patriarchal, racist and classist dynamics in our spaces in an effort to make them less shitty and more accessible. But let's not fool ourselves: we will still be on the margins surrounded by liberals, NGO's, reactionaries and another slew of false critiques.

We should not look to "The Indigenous" for legitimacy or guidance

After the raid on Wet'suwet'en territories in the height of Shut down Canada, we saw indigenous organizers in Vancouver call off actions, this was done with the justification that Wet'suwet'en leadership up north requested it. People reached out to confirm this and hours later statements were made on Gidimt'en social media accounts that action was still encouraged. This happened several times.

Regardless of the details I would caution us getting caught up in the question of whether the request to stop was "legitimate." For a request to be "legitimate" we are presuming the presence of a single leader/leadership capable of representing a diverse group of people, something as anarchists we should be against. We would be naive to not recognize that through Shut Down Canada some Wet'suwet'en peoples thought the actions went too far. Simultaneously we would be naive if we didn't recognize that some community members thought the actions didn't go far enough – whom should we listen to?

Maybe we shouldn't be listening and instead engaging in honest dialogue. This will take time, relationships and some listening... We will

the political sphere, Aragorn! and others traced its emergence (and death they argue) to pan-native activism of the 90's. See *The Fight for Turtle Island* for critical discussions of the ways "Indigenous" was produced and organized struggle.

This winter the media and state obsessed over finding indigenous peoples who supported pipeline development and, guess what, they found many band councils, Wet'suwet'en community members and other indigenous peoples along the pipeline route in support. Even among the Wet'suwet'en peoples who oppose pipeline development, very real tensions exist between more liberal elements and those more interested in a direct action approach. It will be impossible to reconcile the varied perspectives of "The Indigenous," nor should we be brazen enough to think we could be the ones to do so. In this case I am putting "The Indigenous" in brackets to highlight the ways this is an imagined category, one at least partially produced by outsiders looking in, employing a colonial logic to make a diverse group of people legible and thus governable by state and capital. We do not see anarchists, activists or liberals flocking to support the sovereignty of indigenous people who are in favour of pipeline development, so let's be real: to argue we support "The Indigneous" in abstract is a monumental task none of us are likely ready to- or should attempt to-embark on. Put it another way, if "The Indigneous" wanted pipeline development-- Would we support those desires?

The logic that produces non-indigenous anarchists as simply "allies" or "supporters" should be discarded, and instead we should focus on developing real relationships - affinities with those indigenous comrades who's liberation is caught up in our own. Relationships are the foundational building block for action and through them we can open doors for authentic solidarity. To engage in relationships we must be honest about our own desires and politics. If not, we will find ourselves manipulating others to fulfill our own desires. As quoted by Lila Watson, a Murri woman from so called "australia," "If you have come here to help me you are wasting your time, but if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together." "Working together" will always be fraught as the landscape on which we work is intimately shaped by the history and everyday practice of colonial violence. Action on stolen land will always be complicated, but honesty must be central if we wish to engage in a way that minimizes the reproduction of colonial dynamics.

Book Review - Noname

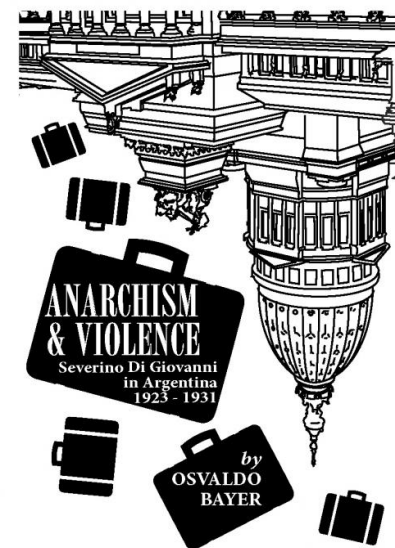
Anarchism & Violence: Severino Di Giovanni in Argentina

By Osvaldo Bayer
Elephant Editions
Ardent Press
2012

Italian anarchist Severino Di Giovanni orchestrated a campaign of expropriations, attack and propaganda for nearly ten years in Argentina until his eventual capture and execution. These actions were as controversial then as they would be today. This text is the story of daring illegalist feats, armed struggle, revolutionary solidarity and the conflicts that emerged in the anarchist scene at the time.

Journalist Osvaldo Bayer reconstructs Severino's life in Argentina during the 1920's along with a general overview of the country's politics and anarchies within it. As one of Sacco and Vanzenetti's most vocal supporters, examining Severino's life also gives us insight into a time where anarchism existed and struggled on a more public stage. To engage with the project of "history" is no doubt a fraught one. At times, Bayer falls into traps of progressivism and places Severino within a bourgeois field of meaning, presenting him as a hopeless romantic or overly focused on "terroristic" violence. Alfredo Bonanno & Jean Weir preface the book with a critical reflection on the piece addressing the previously mentioned concerns, concluding that the text must be used with care.

The text provides us space to reflect on conflicts between and within anarchies today, tensions which reach far beyond the temporal and spatial boundaries of Severino's life. These conflicts are perhaps most legible in the tensions between social and antisocial anarchies. The time before and after Di Giovanni's activities is occupied by anarchists who discard morality and take up the methods of expropriation, constant conflict and armed struggle. On the other hand there are the more socially inclined anarchies which prefer propaganda, education and prioritizing making them-



selves legible to potential sympathizers. In 1920's Argentina, the latter is represented by the anarchist daily *La Protesta* which made a habit of slandering Severino, attempting to strip him, his comrades, and his family of support.

While these orientations are undoubtedly deeply in conflict they are in reality rarely mutually exclusive – the text in some ways smashes and reinforces this distinction. Severino is painted both as an antisocial terrorist and someone deeply committed to spreading anarchist ideals through his fortnightly anarchist paper *Culmine* - a project funded through donations and a significant dose of armed robbery. With a nuanced analysis we may assume that Severino, like many insurrectionist or nihilist comrades today, simultaneously occupied contradictory positions. Severino discarded morality in moments of attack, yet still engaged in positive projects such as *Culmine* and struggled over his representation in anarchist medias.

In conclusion, this text provides a wealth of exciting stories of class warfare in 1920's Argentina. It will appeal to those criminally-minded and interested in the present day tensions and histories of illegality, individualism and anti-social anarchies. As outlined by Serafinski's *Blessed is the Flame*, history is written by the victors, and the narratives offered to us by society serve only to reinforce power. Even the corpses of those killed in the fires of social war are wielded by the enemy, as we have seen in the production of anarchists as "criminals," "terrorists," and "bomb throwers" to justify the untold violence of incarceration and criminalization of anarchists. With this in mind, we should reread history against the grain, weaponizing it against the existing order. Engaging with this text is one way to ensure that the illegalist anarchies of Severino Di Giovanni's continue to haunt the living.



Honest Engagement Reflections on the Wet'suwet'en struggle - Noname

In the winter of 2020 Wet'suwet'en resistance sparked blockades, occupations, demos and night time attack across so called "canada." We witnessed a new level of confrontation with thousands participating in demos which shut down railways and ports. Among anarchists we saw a significant insurrectionary push- widespread communication and attack - leaving a trail of smoldering railway boxes and confrontational demos. As spring passed, momentum has slowed. Lack of continued agitation on Wet'suwet'en territories, burnout, and Covid-19 have dimmed the fires. This is an opportunity to sharpen our daggers and reflect on the ways we engage with Indigenous land defence struggles. Thinking about our engagement with the larger Wet'suwet'en social movement may produce topical insights regarding our relationship with the current wave of anti-police/ Black Lives Matter struggles.

As anarchists we find ourselves in the shadows. We are surrounded by enemies both physically and conceptually. This article seeks to present a series of questions more than answers. Its an intervention - a call for us to reflect, seize life with both hands, cast aside conceptual foes, and leave behind the politics of allyship, sacrifice, and struggle for an imagined Other. This article is the product of settlers engaging in Indigenous land defence struggles and the discussions that emerged. It stands on the shoulders of critical writing that came before it. Some notable short works include "Accomplices Not Allies," "Who is Oakland," "Reconciliation is Dead," "Autonomously and with Conviction," and "Agency Against pipelines."

There is no capital I Indigenous leadership

The call to support Indigenous sovereignty is built on insidious logic which operates to homogenize indigenous peoples into a single unified bloc and obscures our own political commitments, relationships and affinities. There is no capital I Indigenous leadership. Indigenous communities are - just like every other community – made up of diverse individuals with different desires. Any attempt to represent this imagined whole will necessarily erase the individuals who make it up. The all-encompassing category of Indigenous is relatively new, and while it is necessary in some ways to understand the similarities shared between indigenous peoples, it homogenizes peoples with very different life ways, opinions, and desires. Within

Perhaps the most annoying encounter was with the beach patrol cop. He had his little sand buggy, which came out from underground parking and sat for a while doing nothing much. He got one of us alone before I headed over to witness (regrettably I didn't think fast enough to either retort or tell him to fuck off), and he began a rather insincere line of questioning:

"Just wondering what your little demonstration here accomplishes."

"What's your ideal world like?."

If you're in a situation where a cop appears to approach with intellectual curiosity and you got it in you to spit fire, by all means. But I say this because I was grappling with the impulse to do so within myself -- don't put it on yourself to change anyone's fundamental worldview or represent anything beyond what's on your mind in the moment. You don't need to say shit to the police for a "movement," for any organization, for any ideology. There's no need to make an impression as an individual either! It's very rarely a person-to-person interaction. You're interfacing through roles: police officer versus "protester." And the police are interested in collecting information and disempowering hostile actors. Beach patrol did not step out of his role when speaking to us, demanding immediate and pat answers to extremely loaded questions but refusing to divulge his own ideas as a human being. My friend who was being accosted smelled the bullshit and cut off the interaction. I followed.

It was a small group at first. Folks trickled in and left at different times. The blank posters got made into signs by newcomers. Several bikers zoomed by with raised fists. Quite a few passersby whooped and gestured in support. One person approached on foot to talk about how his experiences with police have traumatized him, and he appreciated what we were doing. The only pedestrian I saw who gave us stink-eye had the bearing of a gym-bro cop himself. In all, I found it to be a pleasant afternoon. A clement day with friends and bread! Hopefully, we gave a gentle push in the right direction to some cops who've been sitting on the fence about quitting.



Off the hook

-Vegan Friendly

I mean there is nothing that has to be done. But if we are to take it all at face value, the fuckers have stacked their dark energies up so thick it's hard to bother trying to fight a way through. They picked you in order to be cruel. Your beauty deserved to live. And it didn't. But you did. It's punishingly simple.

I found that guidance. I remember what we're up to here. You're off the hook. You really are.

Living on the Edge of Oblivion - Oort McLeod

“Our eviction date is the beginning of September?”

“No, the end.”

“Oh, whew. I didn’t think we had that long.”

It was a simple miscommunication, but when I saw my roommates packing on the last day of August I knew I was in trouble. I had scheduled all my interviews for prospective rooms for the month after our renovation.

Lisa, our landlord, was using the loophole that allows no-fault evictions if she or a close family member plans to move into the unit after us. This was, of course, bogus, but because we had stuck to our guns by having her pay for pest control—as is her responsibility according to By-Law No. 5462 § 4.1(12)—she was pushing us out.

Her temper was the shortest of any landlord I’ve ever had. Any phone call escalated to the point where she was screaming, no matter how calm and reasonable I was on the other end. When we informed her of the infestation, Lisa tried to haggle with us.

“Well, how about I pay half?”

“It’s not our responsibility, though.”

“But it’s not my fault! I’m being generous here.”

“But legally ...”—I motioned toward the printout of the by-law.

“Oh, so you want to do this legally, do you?”

My dad helped me load up all my belongings into a storage unit, and we stayed in a motel that night before he headed back south. The next day I spent my rent money on some camping supplies and the biggest hiking backpack I could find. During my shift at the café, I came to Jesse, our homeless regular, for advice.

“I’m homeless. I bought a tent. How do I do this?”

Jesse gave me solid tips on where I could camp in the city without being hassled, where to shower, what to look out for to stay safe. He didn’t steer me wrong. The next morning I awoke on Kitsilano Beach at high tide, with the water lapping less than a metre from my tent. I survived the month of September camping and couch surfing and moved into my next home with the security of a two-year lease.

Except me and my new roommates didn’t last a year. The housing market was red-hot, and our landlord, whose day job was as a lawyer, wanted to sell, but knew he could get a better price with a staging company than with us and the Bohemian furnishings of my roommate Vi and her teenage son. So he threw money at us to get out of the lease early. I wanted

how few places we can act unseen and how much hurt they could deliver if they so choose?

Anyway, it was when we turned the corner and claimed two small concrete islands by the sidewalk that uniformed officers began engaging with us and surveilling us in such a way that we knew we were being surveilled. Groups of 3-5 cops would gather and chat several meters away. A couple of officers were parked across the street under the sun for hours, just sitting. A few stories up, cops were looking down through office windows. I made sure to tilt my signs so they could see. Several cops passing on foot sneered and took photos on their smart phones. We were all wearing masks for protection against covid.

For the most part, the cops going in and out of underground parking generally ignored us. One proclaimed "Jesus loves you" and drove off without waiting for a reply. Another offered his opinion on 3 signs next to each other - "Those two, I like. That one, I don't." It's still a mystery exactly which ones he liked and didn't, as there were several of us clustered together.

It happened twice that day that I saw -- where a cop parked their vehicle nearby, popped the trunk, and unpacked a large firearm within view. They inspected it and turned it over deliberately as if it were some kind of routine check and not an obvious flex of *what they could do to us if they weren't so damn lawful*.

Only a few attempted to speak to any of us directly. One asked how long we'd be "protesting." They didn't hear the retort "until you get different jobs." Good Cops came around to tell us where we could and couldn't stand with our signs, painfully exerting themselves as they qualified that it was for our safety only. We might get hit by a car and it'd be our fault, you know? Water came pelting down from above a couple times, apparently coming from the patio space on top of the parking entrance. It got our bags wet but also amply splashed the police vehicles adjacent. Occifer Friendly investigated and reported back to us that it was a malfunctioning garden sprinkler of sorts, and he talked to someone to make it to stop. I remember that desperate look in his eye, searching for approval. Grasping for that spark of recognition in us that "maybe... they're not all bastards." I felt a little sad for him.

Gently Suggesting that Cops Quit Their Jobs

- anonymous

A few of us showed up to the front entrance of the police station by cambie street. We came bearing messages of hope for a different, better future for the unfortunately-employed souls inside.

Some of the signs read:

QUIT YOUR JOB

FIGHT FIRES NOT THE POOR

NOT ALL EX-COPS ARE BASTARDS

YOU CAN CHOOSE NOT TO BE A BASTARD

This excursion originated from the initiative of a comrade whose ideas have a subtlety and directness I admire. That morning we used some posterboard we found to make our signs. For the people who'd show up later, we brought some blank posters and thick markers.

It was a bright, clear-skied day. The sun wasn't too harsh and there was a good amount of breeze and shade. It was a nice day to stand around holding signs. Despite pandemic measures, there was a fair amount of foot traffic, plus lots of cars on the road. But we didn't want to be seen by just anyone. We had a message for the cops, to let them know some people still believed in them! There wasn't much of a reaction from the few people walking in and out of the building. We couldn't see inside the building well. By chance, some guy with a huge banner calling out a few specific police officers chose the same day to set up on the steps shortly after we arrived.

From there, we moved around the corner to a side street with a few designated VPD parking spots and an underground parking entrance. We figured we'd catch a lot of officers coming and going. And we did! The most prominent signage was a placard with the ICBC logo, which was not at all indicative of the predominant users of the parking lot. Non-stop, the entire time we were there, several dozen police vehicles rolled in and out. It was a surprisingly large amount! Where were they going? Where did they come from? And what were they doing out there? Were they all Protecting and Serving in a tangible way -- forcefully moving human bodies whose mere existence threatened smooth economic exchange? Or were they just parading their potential for violence -- flaunting their ubiquity, letting us know

to fight it, but Vi had signed the lease and was intimidated by the landlord's thinly veiled threats.

"Remember, I'm a lawyer ..."

Fuck it, I thought. Three houses in less than three years? I knew how to survive rent-free for one month, how long could I make it last? Within a month I took a night watch position, which gave me a secure place to keep watch with my eyes closed. I had my whole life lined up along the Drive: My mail came to the UPS Store, since Canada Post boxes are reserved for the housed. (You can pick up your mail by general delivery, but you have to go downtown and wait in long lines, as I learned during my previous unhoused stint.) The community centre has showers that are clean and free to use. Banners had a salad bar and didn't mind if I stayed for three or four hours using their wifi. I always tipped generously. And I could change clothes at my storage unit, which was just a couple of blocks from a laundromat.

Having 700 extra dollars every month allowed me to work less and donate some of that to the organization I volunteered with. As inconvenient as it was, it took almost three years to justify the expense of paying rent again. But eventually I had found my mental health failing and needed to try something different. My friends had started a collective house and it seemed like just what I needed.

No sooner had I said yes when a notice of redevelopment was hammered into the ground in front of the house.

The year leading up to our demoviction was the most intense and emotional time of my life, for reasons beyond the scope of this memoir that I will save for my therapist if I can ever afford one. But the crescendo of anxiety around housing instability took a considerable toll on my well-being. My roommates were amazing and I love them all so much, but I was the weakest link and despite my best intentions I invited chaos into the household. When we looked for a new home collectively, my only red line was that I didn't want to move into another tear-down situation. But everyone had their own needs—geographical, pet-inclusive, access to transit—and it just wasn't possible to meet these needs and have stable housing at the same time. Not moving with the rest of them was a source of betrayal in their eyes (they told me so) but I had made clear from the start my priority was stability—a concept by now so abstract and unattainable that it might as well be enlightenment.

The last room was so small that I had hardly unpacked anyway. I hadn't used my computer in almost five years because it had been in storage the entire time since my previous eviction. I started having fantasies of having an office separate from my living space. I could go houseless

again and not have to put everything in storage this time.

And then I found it. Five cubicles of a drab grey above a mechanic. Lots of space for creative work, more than I needed. Fantasy got the best of me and I signed the lease. No kitchen, no shower, but I'd been there before. One cubicle became my fort, a sleeping bag and Christmas lights cleverly concealed under a "workspace." During the day I could invite people to use the space for their own creative endeavours. How could I not have thought of this before?

And for a while it was perfect. Maybe too hot in the summer. Maybe too much noise pollution and exhaust from the garage downstairs, but all in all not the worst, as long as I kept up the ruse that I was running a small business.

In my defense, nobody could have seen it coming, but come it did. The Covid-19 pandemic shut down everything. Gone is the community centre with the showers. Gone are my regular haunts for cheap eats. And gone is the regular human contact of people using the office that gives me a sense of purpose.

Fuck, now what?



by
Union Glitch