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Fall/Winter 2021
A "vancouver" Anarchist Publication

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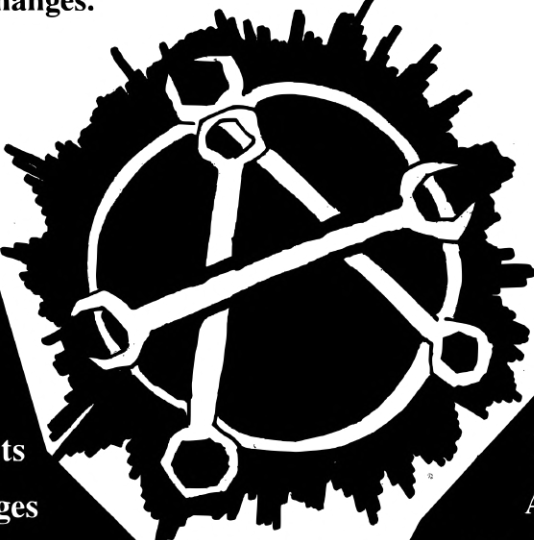
Im an anarchist not a mechanic - I dont know everything but have some skills and tools that may be able to help you with your car.

I have experience doing basic maintenance and many bigger jobs.

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- Exhaust systems
- ABS sensors
- Windshield wiper motors
- And more!

Contact:

DIYmechanics@protonmail.com



Things We Like

Some things collective members are into right now.

Books

The Hole - Hiroko Ayomada
 Writings from a Greek Prison - Tasos Theofilou
 Discipline & Punish - Michel Foucault
 We Have Been Harmonized - Kai Strittmatter
 A Burst of Light - Audre Lorde
 Hold Me Tight - Sue Johnson (super cis-het-norm examples in this book, but past that, really good theory)
 In the Realm of Hungry Ghosts - Gabor Mate
 When the Body Says No - Gabor Mate
 Nature's Broken Clocks - Paul Huebener
 Spell of the Sensuous - David Abrams
 Life Everlasting: The Animal Way of Death - Bernd Heinrich
 Without A Glimmer of Remorse - Pino Caucci
 Desert- Anonymous
 Baedan A Journal of Queer Nihilism - Anonymous

Zines

On Subcultures
 The Anarchist Tension - Alfredo Bonanno
 Night Forest Journal
 Mutual Aid, Trauma, and Resiliency - Jane Addams Collective
 Black Seed A Journal of Indigenous Anarchy

Films

Okja, Snow Peircer
 The Killing Floor (1985)
 Princess Mononoke
 Porco Rosso
 Hunger
 Nine to Five
 Knives Out
 Blindspotting

Music

Julie Ruin -Kathleen Hanna Solo Album
 Boss Hog - Sam
 Wesley Willis - Rock n Roll McDonalds
 Jello Biafra and the Guantanamo School Of Medicine - Tea Party Revenge Porn
 Moses Sumney - Aromanticism
 Chain and the Gang - Devitalize
 Storm of Sedition - Decivilize
 The Rebel Spell - Last Run
 Diane - Coffee

Websites

north-shore.info
 mtlcounterinfo.org
 itsgoingdown.org
 theanarchistlibrary.org
 sub.media



What is no more city?

We are an anarchist publication based out of so-called vancouver. We are are a collective of 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. 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.

We were inspired by finding past writings about the city across periods of time, from more recent publications like Wreck, to old riot grrrl zines like Cockroach and HAG. Finding these was a gift. The writings and news reports and spoken-word resonances left by other anarchists and radicals are like treasures to excavate. Without their writing, we would 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.” 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 intention with this publication is to document a history that exists in the whispers between friends, in anonymous communiques 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, inter-generational 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 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. TLDR: We don't believe in anything we say and nor do we do any of it.

Territorial Acknowledgement: 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.



About this issue

This issue's submissions span from summer of 2020, when NMC #1 dropped, to January 2021. These pieces vary widely in terms of topic but were all made against a backdrop of social isolation that has been amplified by our fear of one another, fear for our own health and the health of vulnerable friends and family. For anarchists in this already-fragmented "scene," the lack of community events and the closure/restriction of social spaces mean our lives intersect even less. Life in common has been severely diminished, with significant portions of it transplanted into online conference rooms and social media. In any case, how many of us are too tense, anxious, bored, aimless, scattered, and depressed to do much these days? Isolation makes us miserable, and being miserable makes it harder to connect with others. No one knows how long covid and its attendant social control measures will bear on our everyday lives. We'd like to imagine how we can cut through alienation and start conversations on how.

Assorted line drawing artwork throughout this issue is by Yank Crime.



Submit your work

We are looking for writing and art that pushes against the boundaries of capitalism, colonialism, cis-hetero-patriarchy, and speciesism. We are looking for work that is created with intensity or tenderness. We welcome any anarchist and anti-authoritarian writing that you may want to share. The writing doesn't need to reflect the ideas and opinions of us as a collective, nor what has been published previously - we want the biggest scope of ideas as possible, even when they differ from our own!

We are looking for personal reflection essays, local news coverage, local arts and culture event coverage, book or zine reviews, communiques, poetry, short fiction, and visual art. We want to publish writing and art about forces that effect 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 and the greater BC area.

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 engagement.

We encourage you to include images with your submission, a title for the piece and a name or pseudonym you want the work to be under.

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.

Please email us submissions at nomorecity@riseup.net and check out our website at nomore.city



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-Posthuman Propagandust



Direct Action News

in so-called British Columbia

This is a brief overview of some actions that caught our attention - submit links to news you would like to see included in future columns!

In September, the cable of the Sea-to-Sky Gondola near Squamish was deliberately cut in the middle of the night for the second year in a row, sending dozens of cars crashing into the mountain and causing between \$5 million and \$10 million in damage. The gondola's general manager Kirby Brown summed things up nicely: "To me, this is somebody sabotaging our business." No shit, Sherlock.



An ongoing blockade against old-growth logging on Pacheedaht territory has been a thorn in the side of industry for five months now. A communicate from the same area stated that at least some of the blockaders are "happy to obstruct old growth logging, but we'd just as soon have done the same thing to prevent 2nd or 3rd growth forests from being clearcut", and "invite others to expand the struggle against logging in Tree Farm License 46 along insurrectionary lines".

This winter an anonymous communique reported that "in a remote location somewhere between prince george and prince rupert, we took some bolts and cut the guy wires on a high transmission power line pylon. The line in question runs directly from fort saint john to kitimat, effectively distributing power from the site C dam to the LNG canada facility when they are both finished... With the next great windstorm will come the crashing down of this monolithic representation of everything we aim to destroy."



Pigs in Mission report that one night in October, a person held prisoner at the Mission Institution escaped. They are still at large.



Earlier this year, it was reported that "a piece of heavy equipment on a Trans Mountain Expansion Project (TMX) site near Merritt BC was the target of an act of vandalism and theft one day and the subject of a suspicious blaze another...



2.

I want to tear off the glitter
and sequins that coat the fabric
of these well made masquerades.

Spit prison when I hear the word "correctional;"
Yell murder when I hear the word "cull."

The documents stated your K9 "unit"
made "contact" with my friend's body,
when I saw the mauling with my own eyes
and know what to really call it.

Behind each word,
another face awaits to be unmasked,
in a masochistic game
of hide-and-seek.

I,
I only say what I mean.
And when I say I am going to destroy you
.....





Dissolving Lines

-Firebrat

1.
anthropomorphizing objects, personifying animals,
it's all the same. no such thing as inanimate.

the icebergs glacial density,
hidden, waiting,
how intimate.

let's take a bath, I say, i need a bath to fall asleep

i used to write out the alphabet in full every year,
choose a new way to draw letters.
my handwriting, without control, now turning
into my mothers.

there is a delicate balance
between image and philosophy, a fine line
separating you and me.

no, we didn't expect this
friendship to last forever.

we're anti-work and desperate
for a shared meal

i need a breath, I say, let's take a breath to get us there



The blaze resulted in a total loss of the truck. The same commercial vehicle was targeted in an act of mischief and a theft of fuel earlier in the weekend."



This November, somewhere along the Coastal GasLink pipeline route through northern BC, a communiuqe reported that "Dozens of trees were felled on the road, barricades erected, barbed wire strung throughout, and a ditch was dug through the road... a tree was fell onto the drill... survey flags were being pulled, works sites trashed, and a hunter's blind or tree sit is being occupied in the project's right of way (ROW)... heavy machinery was used to dig up the road and destroy a bridge."



At least five bears across so-called British Columbia are reported to have attacked humans this year in what could be understood as an attempt to do their part to slow the death march of industrial civilization.



On Moving To The City and Discovering Every Anarchist You Like Hates The City

-Corvus

Got out of East Jesus Nowhere, where you can't get birth control and nothing is open after 9PM. When the city is so close and yet so far, when you hear tales of 24-hour diners, clinics explicitly providing queer sexual health, and enough people that /some/ of them will /have/ to think the way you do, who wouldn't fall in love? What a joy to have access to resources (well-dressed secular counselors who already know what a packer is, multiple late night corner stores, venues for BDSM events, and most exciting, frequent buses!), to slowly meet like-minded people, to put a name to the ideas I thought I'd invented on my own. Did you know that in the city, the schools have a gender and sexuality curriculum? Did you know that Status of Women Canada has an office on Hastings? It's closed now, it was defunded. At least there's a sorority at SFU for female business students.

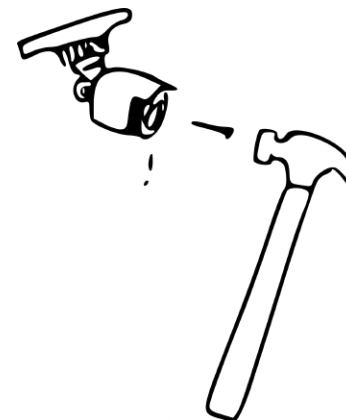
When I was in elementary school, we watched a cow give birth to a calf. I held my stomach till the afterbirth came out, then I got dizzy and had to sit down. A miracle of life, a taste of dealienated reality, and a lot of blood and goo. I'm being dramatic, but the city is the same. There are multilingual exhortations to stay home and avoid transit because of COVID-19 (I mostly see them on my way to work) and posters on the skytrain implying I'll regret an abortion if I get one. It turns out the pretty glass and steel towers are full of empty condos or rich tech bros. Transit cops check fares on a 6:55AM bus to ensure the workers won't get uppity and ride for free like it's April 2020. It didn't take me long to realize that the city is a centrifuge that shifts most of us down.



Footnotes:

- [1]<https://bcblackout.wordpress.com/2020/08/10/breaking-blockade-to-protect-fairy-creek-headwaters> [2]<https://treesit.blogspot.com>
- [3]<https://earthfirstjournal.news/2020/08/17/breaking-2nd-fairy-creek-blockade-established> [4]<https://spatial.ca/patchworks>
- [5]<https://www.fairycreekblockade.com>
- [6]<https://www.nanaimobulletin.com/news/protesters-blockade-log-sort-operation-at-nanaimos-duke-point> [7]<https://kolektiva.social/@fairy/105506680066627261>
- [8]<https://globalnews.ca/news/6556647/western-forest-products-strike-over>
- [9]<https://postimg.cc/SXvNgkJ2>
- [10]<https://oceanwolvescaycuse.com>
- [11]<https://victoriaanarchistbookfair.ca/index.php/2020/09/20/vabf-dy-6-blockader-suzanne-on-the-no-roads-into-fairy-creek-series-of-actions>
- [12]<https://pugetsoundanarchists.org/autonomous-action-against-logging-on-so-called-vancouver-island>
- [13]<https://www.counterpunch.org/2006/12/06/collaboration-and-compromise-in-the-great-bear-rainforest>
- [14]<https://twitter.com/bryanadams/status/1329339534086205442>
- [15]<https://archive.is/HW3c4>

Due to space restrictions in the print edition of NMC we have decided to not include a “for more information” section included with this article. The article and associated links are hosted in full on our website.





largely impedes on Pacheedaht Territory)[9] while the Ocean Wolves of Caycuse have stated their intention to disrupt old growth logging in neighbouring Ditidaht Territory [10].

Anarchists have contributed in various ways [11], including autonomously felling trees and locking gates to block active logging roads [12]. The loudest voices in the movement are largely liberal and reformist, and therefore vulnerable to recuperation by politicians and BC's highly collaborationist and parasitic environmental NGOs [13]. Some ENGOS have predictably tried to piggyback on the success of the blockades for their own fundraising and campaigns, which divert people away from grassroots action. Nevertheless, the blockades and other actions have so far remained grassroots and autonomous, even while receiving celebrity endorsements [14] and bolstering demands to end old growth logging by the Union of BC Indian Chiefs [15]. The utter and abject failure of ENGOS to have any material effect on the liquidation of forests in so-called BC is a major reason why these blockades have attracted so much support.

Anyone familiar with the history – and present state of – resistance to logging in so-called BC knows that the spectre of the "war in the woods" (c. roughly 1985-2005) flaring up again haunts the colonial state, with tension in the air at times as thick as smoke from wildfires that are increasingly common even in these coastal rainforests, which are some of the wettest places on earth.

While an estimated 500 people have visited or participated in the blockades at some point over the last 5 months, the Fairy Creek and Eden Grove blockades are currently requesting visitors by invitation only, due to harsh COVID-19 restrictions recently enacted by the provincial government. Affinity groups can take action elsewhere in TFL 46 or against Teal Jones at any of its operations on Turtle Island, including its headquarters in Kwantlen Territory (North Surrey).



I don't know what to do with this knowledge. In so many ways, the city is the safe haven that I needed. However, I'm learning about its history, the way we live here, and the amount of alienation that shapes every job I can find. I realize that I've traded some forms of soul-crushing bullshit (sometimes literal!) for others. I think I'll always tend toward places with dense (if YVR can be called dense) populations, but now that I've made it out here, I have a far greater appreciation for what I left behind. I feel the nonsensical nature of work in my bones because I've worked jobs that started in agriculture and production - then moved to marketing those products on sales floors in the city.

It turns out that the parks and plazas are lit up, patrolled, and groomed so no living things can take shelter there. What I once saw as a city lovingly caring for itself turns out to be neighbourhood business associations tidying their territory for 'development'. At least in the semi-rural you can fuck in your car in the woods, or someone's basement. Here, the woods are full of searchlights and all basements contain a reclusive roommate. But I'm here, and I'm still half in love.





Anarchism feat. COVID-19

-Infernal Myrtle

Many anarchists have spoken of an eventual ‘rupture’, ‘collapse’, or other particular moment during the slow crumbling of civilization as potentially having a silver lining, alongside the widespread suffering that will no doubt also ensue [1]. It is hypothesized, or hoped, that such a dramatic change in the conditions of our lives would open up new opportunities for living life on our own terms (which I will assume here is a desire most anarchists share), which could lead to positive and/or liberatory experiences for at least some folks during ‘collapse’.

I would argue that COVID-19 has been the most significant disruption to existence as we know it in my lifetime, and according to my mother, in hers too [2]. Why, then, was this moment of rupture not heralded as the opportunity we’ve all been waiting for to do things differently?

I wish to live my life on my own terms, or terms mutually agreed upon by my community, and to minimize if not abolish my dependence upon the infrastructures (read: cages) offered to me by the state and capitalism. COVID-19 has provided an excellent opportunity for me to examine the ways in which my life is controlled by external forces that are not of my choosing, and I have been both alarmed and depressed at being slapped in the face by the lack of autonomy and resilience that I’ve built into my own life.

In theory, if we had built an up autonomous and resilient anarchist community, we could retain agency over our own lives despite the existence of the coronavirus and the governmental measures imposed in its wake [3]. Acquiring food, water, shelter, medicine, and fulfilling social and spiritual needs are tasks I firmly believe that some friends and I could do largely independently with a little bit (or, sure, a lot) of scheming and skill-building behind us. In fact, these are exactly the kinds of things I’d like to be working on every day when I wake up. I can’t help but want to bang my head against a wall right now as I ask myself, Why haven’t I been working towards that? Have I been trying? If so, why hasn’t it been working? If not, what the hell else was I doing?



welcomed the current blockades, and shared his desire to see a memorial to victims of the genocidal smallpox epidemic, and a hunting cabin built on site as part of Fairy Creek’s long term protection. Tla-o-qui-aht elder Joe Martin (veteran of the first logging blockade in so-called British Columbia, on so-called Meares Island in the mid-1980s) has also visited the blockades with members of his family to show support.

Grassroots land defenders observing the area in July 2020 discovered the imminent blasting of new roads into Fairy Creek. Fed up with seeing the equivalent of 32 soccer fields of ancient forest logged every day, on an island with only 1%-3% of low-elevation, high-biodiversity rainforests remaining, an informal collective of people from across the island established a blockade where the road building contractor (Stone Pacific) was about to crest a ridge into the west side of the Fairy Creek watershed. One week later, a second blockade was established defending the eastern approaches to Fairy Creek, and contiguous remnants of ancient forest [3].

In the weeks and months since then, with intel that corporations like Teal Jones use advanced analytics software [4] to re-route around such obstructions to continue extracting profits from the landbase, pop-up blockades have successfully disrupted road building and old growth logging at other nearby hotspots and chokepoints, such as Edinburgh Mountain, Bugaboo Creek, Camper Creek, and Eden Grove. As of this writing, the Eden Grove blockade has remained continuously occupied since mid-December [5].

Solidarity actions have broadened the frontlines from the wilder west side of the island to the more industrialized east side, where the Rainforest Flying Squad and Extinction Rebellion have blocked old growth log trucks on the Trans Canada Highway, as well as at the ports in Nanaimo and Ladysmith, resulting in the only blockade-related arrests to date [6]. A video report of one such action was removed from the CHEK News (corporate media) website a couple hours after it was broadcast and posted [7]. Some participants in this growing movement have experienced police harassment near their homes prior to such actions, and trucks loaded with old growth logs were seen being escorted by police cruisers from felling areas on the west side of the island, to east side ports on at least one occasion.

Some of these actions have targeted Western Forest Products (WFP) in addition to Teal Jones. WFP holds the majority of Tree Farm Licenses (TFLs) on Vancouver Island, devastating the land with clearcuts while devastating its workers, who went on strike for 8 months from July 2019 to February 2020 [8]. Teal Jones has stated its intention to completely destroy the remaining old growth forest in TFL 46 (which



Five Months of Direct Action Disrupt Old Growth Logging on so-called Vancouver Island

-Some anarchist fairies



January 10, 2021, Unceded Pacheedaht Territory:

The San Juan River, flowing into the Pacific Ocean on the southwest coast of Vancouver Island, feels different than most island rivers. This majestic coastal river ecosystem is of a scale one is more accustomed to seeing on the mainland. The meandering braids of the broad estuarine area it shares with the smaller Gordon River, sometimes cloaked in mist that hides the mountains of the surrounding valleys, are home to everything from salmon and steelhead to giant green sturgeon. The area around the watershed is also home to the biggest trees still standing in so-called Canada, such as the Cheewhat Cedar, the San Juan Spruce and the Red Creek Fir.

Since August 10, 2020, grassroots blockades have continuously defended the headwaters of Ada'itsx (Fairy Creek) – the last unlogged tributary of the San Juan – from being clearcut by Teal Jones Group and its contractors [1]. This is the longest sustained direct action of its kind in this region since the infamous Bear Mountain treesit in Langford (2007-2008)[2].

Resistance to logging in Pacheedaht Territory goes back decades. The coming summer will mark 30 years since the "Hot Summer" of 1991, when Indigenous warriors like Harriet Nahanee and settler anarchists began a successful defence of ancient forests in Kax:iks (aka The Walbran). Pacheedaht elder Bill Jones has



I hope, for your sake, that whoever reads this hasn't been feeling quite as bleak about the present as I have. However, I'd like to challenge us as a community, as anarchists, or as a group of loosely connected sentient beings, to ask ourselves some of these questions. I'd like to challenge us to see living during COVID-19 as an opportunity for change, not a stretch of dead time to simply make it through until we get back to normal (when did normal become the stuff of our dreams?). And I'd be particularly interested in continuing this conversation with those who want to begin identifying the steps we can take to build a world where our social lives, our well-being, our projects, and our abilities to meet our needs can't be taken away from us.

I'm not necessarily advocating for a dropout-style or lifestylist project. I believe that a self-reliant anarchist community would be in a much stronger position to engage in resistance projects, and to extend solidarity to others they identified with in the struggle against domination, than an anarchist community whose members are dependent upon the same society we wish to see destroyed.

As unrealistic as this dream may seem in this moment, I know I am surrounded by passionate, creative, and inspiring folks who would like to see some of the things I have mentioned here come into existence. Let's try to use the darkness we find ourselves in now to illuminate the chains that bind us to the current system. Let's conspire to break those chains and to build new ways of relating to our own lives, to one another, and to the things that sustain us.



[1] Desert by anonymous presents a great argument to this effect.

[2] My mom is 65 years old (I think).

[3] I'm not arguing for or against the government's, or anyone's for that matter, responses to the virus. Personally, as an anarchist, I would ideally like to have the freedom to choose my own response to the virus, or to decide together upon an appropriate response with the folks who are important in my life. But I would encourage those who echo the government's rhetoric and invoke the spectre of the 'public good' to ask themselves who this public really is and what good they've ever done for us.

Reflections on "Nine Theses On Insurgency"

-Anonono

By Institute For The Study of Insurgent Warfare
 "Insurgencies: A Journal of Insurgent Strategy"
 (2014)

In writing this article, the following is my starting point: industrial expansion is not our salvation. It has created and will only propagate more grotesque, abject hellscapes on earth. Large-scale revolution is stuff of fantasy. We are not free but only live on leashes of varying length, which may be reeled in at any time for any reason. We may never be free in our lifetimes. Honest, unmediated, non-coercive and reciprocal relationships (with other creatures, with land) are still worth working toward/fighting for. Taking initiative is extremely important, as living unintentionally means losing yourself in the default, monocultured lifeways set for us to follow. I relate to nihilism (in part) as a rejection of programs, moral systems, and social forms that define what we are unless we actively negate it, and not as a justification for passivity.

Deciding to try articulating where I stand came from obtaining the first issue of *Insurgencies* by the Institute For The Study of Insurgent Warfare, a journal that presumes an urgent need to thoroughly understand one's conditions and strategize carefully since we are in the midst of totalizing social war. I wanted to write about the 1st of the 4 articles, "Nine Theses on Insurgency," because it prompted me to revisit some questions that I'd long neglected regarding anarchist organizing in the local context: why is there so little insurrectionary, anarchist-initiated activity in Vancouver, why do anarchists keep bothering with liberal organizing, what the hell am I even doing, and what's worth doing at all?

The article is literally 9 theses sequentially built upon one another. Theses 1-3 describe how anarchists are stuck acting within the dominant "activist" paradigm. Theses 4-9 discuss how anarchists are to move out of activism and into an opposing framework called "insurgency," in order to actually get shit done. I don't intend to summarize the article's entirety. There are insights and questions that I think are worth engaging with in the context of the source text. I only mean to introduce some of the article's ideas and share reflections.





Funhouse Mirrors

-Anonymous

We've found ourselves in a rotting, collapsing carnival. And how? Some say we've always been here, others say they wandered towards the brightest light from the darkness outside the fence. Almost all pretend it's still alluring. Fun.

A particular group have become obsessed with the high striker. After the first few swings we realized the trick and moved on but others stayed hopeful. They theorize, scheme, and train, convinced that some day they can hit the bell. Nobody ever has. The game is rigged. But even if it weren't, the rubber stopper removed, the bell would not ring. It's so rusted that each time they swing the mallet the bell disintegrates slightly, currently resembling a spider web- it likely won't last much longer. I wonder if the players will notice when it finally disintegrates.

There are others who buzz around, watching the grid of incandescent bulbs blink and blink and blink but still seem excited by the patterns. They observe their bodies in the funhouse mirrors, swelling their stomachs, and flailing their limbs in an attempt to even out the reflection. They talk about the weight of the life-sized cardboard cut-outs of people with faces that someone once recognized, but we see them rock in the breeze.

We too sit facing the facade. But we've grown sick of the games, the empty calories of cotton candy and popcorn, and bored with the thrills but we remain planted here, watching. Are we different than those who buzz around? If we were we would likely wander off into the darkness.



I'll first address "activism" and how anarchists relate to it. "Nine Theses" locates activism's failure in how it engages conflict on symbolic terrain: enemies are disembodied and conceptual (e.g.:capitalism, transphobia, colonialism), what passes for a "win" changes nothing in material reality, and activists forgo pragmatism in pursuit of the moral highroad or ideological consistency. From what I've observed, prominent political organizing in vancouver in the last year-and-a-half seems to fit this bill. Most anarchists I know dismiss these actions as symbolic and ineffectual, but many still show up and participate. For context, I'm referring to mass-oriented, "non-violent" events coalescing around movements such as Climate Strike, Extinction Rebellion, anti-pipeline Indigenous solidarity, and Black Lives Matter. These events have taken the form of marches, demonstrations, sit-ins, speeches, performances, occupations, and blockades. I've attended some extremely grim and stagnant get-togethers where there was no room for participation as anything but a spectator and an additional body in a crowd, or perhaps an "arrestable." Still, people spoke of those events as successful if they generated a large turnout, if a lot of people offered themselves up for completely avoidable arrests, or if somehow the event "sent a message" or "raised awareness."

A question: does ambivalently jumping onto other people's projects actually get you anything you want? Is it a matter of inertia, obligation, or FOMO? If there's a goal at the end of the day, does this help? If there's no goal, is this even joyful?

I will grant that people got rowdy and inventive at the blockades I went to, and a lot of fun direct action happened during and in between mass liberal affairs. However, it had always bothered me that even the subversive "good stuff" had extremely unclear targets and objectives, and the framework of "activism" in "9 Theses" helped clarify some apprehensions. "Activism" targets a symbolic enemy (an execrable something/someone categorized as "enemy" in an ontological sense) with attack that stands as a symbol (e.g.: vandalism as a demand, graffiti as a sign of contempt). By this standard, breaking a window, spraypainting the anarchy-A, or gluing an ATM can be ineffectual and symbolic, ie "activist," if you're up against an ethereal concept-as-enemy, like "the state" or "industrial civilization."

Another question: if you partake in smashing, grabbing, defacing, etc., is there something you obtain that you want or need, here and now? Good for you if those actions and the attendant thrill are ends in themselves. I wish you luck in never facing (state-imposed) consequences for your actions. If not, is it about changing how the world fundamentally operates? Are you using symbols to argue with or persuade others? Is there a tenable relationship between your action and the



intended effect? Is that change far off in the future, contingent on lots of other things happening that are outside of your control?

I'll now turn to the article's proposed escape path from activist hell -- "insurgency": a mode of planning and acting that exclusively concerns the immediate, material, local, and specific. Moving into insurgency means choosing objectives in relation to the immediate, material terrain. If you care about seeing your objectives through, they can't be so lofty and shapeless as "smashing fascism" or "destroying white supremacy." Insurgency also involves a shift in how we identify enemies and relate to them. Enemies must be entities/actors in specific times and spaces, and they only exist with respect to specific objectives. That is, an enemy is anyone/anything that gets in the way of your objective. There's a difference between smashing a random security camera in defiance of "surveillance capitalism" and smashing a particular camera because you want to do something off the record nearby. Nothing/no one you call "enemy" is essentially, and in every situation, something/someone that must be destroyed. You only need to maneuver such that it cannot impede you and is therefore no longer your enemy.

For myself, thinking through the implications of applying the framework of insurgency has been revelatory. But the point of talking about "Nine Theses" isn't to convince anyone to accept all its definitions and imperatives. I have zero interest in prescribing a program, imposing uniformity of belief, or discouraging others from acting how they like. Insurgency is a tool, like activism as defined in the text, that one may reach for out of many. Which is useful depends on what you want to do. Above all, I read "Nine Theses" as an invitation to be more discerning and deliberate when picking your battles, to narrow your focus onto things you can directly observe and effect. I wrote this article because I want to talk about selecting targets and means within sight, within reach of our own hands, to get things that are meaningful here and now. I think clarifying intentions and objectives is important, as is taking seriously the potential consequences. Among anarchists are people who, in pursuit of a tolerable way of living, engage in high stakes actions that put lives on the line. I want to know why I'm acting and what I want from it if I or people I love may end up wasting away in a box as a result. For this, I want to prioritize understanding the terrain we really fight on and thinking through how to accomplish concrete goals.



As anarchists in a presently primarily non-combative clash, we think actions like this (small scale, easy to pull off, public) are some of the most fruitful. They can change the political and physical landscape, raising the spirits of those who love to see more radical action. They can be easily adopted by other people and hopefully inspire people to take unmediated and unmanageable direct action. They help us develop our own skills, both personally and in acting as a group, and develop our confidence to act directly.

We hope that this report back was exciting and useful to read. We'd love to see more actions like this. Let's build our capacities and create networks of trust. Fuck the VPD, fuck the RCMP.





Greenway Reportback

-Insurrbon

As a result of the George Floyd Uprising and the relentless, inspiring work of so many communities and people across Turtle Island (particularly Black, Indigenous, and Queer communities), the calls to defund and abolish the police has been taken up by more and more people. On these occupied, uncaded Indigenous territories (so-called "Vancouver"), these calls have primarily taken the forms of rallies, marches, blockades, petitions, and motions before City Hall to defund the police and ban street checks.

In an effort to contribute to the struggle, both taking into account the current intensity of the clash (where non-violent and electoral tactics are seemingly the only ones available) while also trying to increase the intensity, we did a little "urban renewal" of the Arbutus Greenway through wheat pasting posters and graffiti.

The Greenway was chosen for several reasons: high foot traffic during the day, almost completely abandoned at night, hidden from the road throughout most of it, almost no cops due to the bougieness of the neighborhoods it goes through, and many tantalizing canvases for graffiti and posters.



While we were out, the only passerby were a handful of bikes (and a friendly cat that kept us company throughout part of our adventure). It was incredibly easy to pull off, and our crew kept each other safe. This easiness was thanks to the above factors; if we had chosen a more heavily patrolled or populated area, or one with more cameras, more caution would definitely be necessary. We are building our capacities to cover such areas by starting with safer places like the Greenway, and look forward to pushing ourselves further.

Unfortunately, possibly due to the surfaces being wet from the earlier rain, the next day many of the posters were easily torn down (especially those on wooden poles), and angry chuds scribbled over some posters with marker. Thankfully all the graffiti is still clearly visible. In the future, we'll have to be more flexible in either our medium (focusing on graffiti rather than posters; stencils seem much more appropriate given Vancouver's rainy weather) or location (choosing an area with people less hostile to the messaging).



My invitation to you is to ask yourself questions about your motivations and what you'd like to do. I've never known what I wanted, so I dove into a lot of projects others started despite not particularly caring about the outcome. That comes from not really knowing myself and what's important to me. What if we all knew ourselves very well? If we don't want to end up swept along in whatever initiatives the loudest voices bring to the table, we owe it to ourselves to be critical and proactive in rooting out assumptions, to be grounded in our own values and desires (as fluid as they are), to know when it's time to withdraw because there's nothing we want or need in the situation.

At times when a lot of actions were happening in vancouver, could anarchists have benefited from sitting still with questions like "why are we doing this, what do we actually want, and does this achieve our goals?" Is there interest and space for this line of questioning in the future?

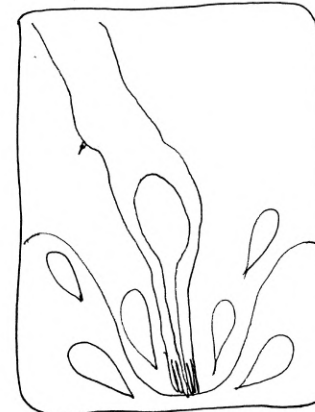
[1] Nine Theses On Insurgency is available in zine format:

<https://opaqueeditions.files.wordpress.com/2016/04/insurgencyoe.pdf>

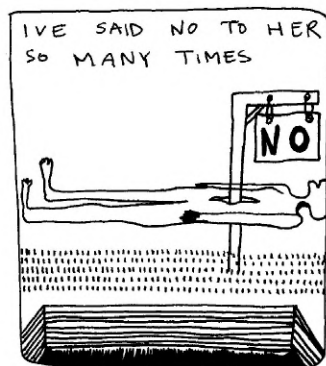




MORE THAN OTHERS?



-Rowan Doucette



-Philomena



Breaking The Spell A Black Bloc in Vancouver?

-Anonymous

Early last February a 30-person black bloc erected barricades on the railroad tracks that feed the vancouver port. The blocking of a portion of Canadas largest commercial port was a response to the impending raid on Wetsuweten territories. Until that point only a handful of actions had taken place "in typical reactionary format, the solidarity of the vast majority of activists would not start until a raid had already occurred. This was the first time in recent years we have seen a black bloc fuck shit up in a city where social peace is king.

Two arrests and recently concluded criminal prosecutions for alleged involvement in the action made this report back a little late. A decision was made to withhold report backs so as not to incriminate those allegedly involved. However, in the wake of Shut Down Canada and with more anti-state struggles to come we feel such a report back is still valuable. The report is going to provide an overview of the demo and some tactical considerations for those seeking to open up confrontational demos" particularly in the vancouver context.

Questions of where we choose to put our energy, how to measure success, how we chose to fight, for what reasons, and at what scales we see fighting to be worthwhile have been emerging and we welcome their continued exploration. This article is not going to engage in this line of inquiry but we would be happy to see others do so in the context of vancouver. In this text we are going to focus on the material ways the black bloc moved through space and what we can learn from these movements.

We would like to point out to the reader that throughout the article we were tempted to preface dozens of sentences with an "anarchists in vancouver" or with a "in the vancouver context." In an effort to not bludgeon you over the head with this, we opted for this disclaimer: this article is written by anarchists in vancouver and does not seek to speak for anarchists anywhere else or the milieu more broadly. These reflections come from a few people who occupy particular positions within the anarchist scene, not omnipresent all-knowing ones. We dont know all the anarchists in the greater area of vancouver nor do we pretend to think we could - consider it one story among many.



fears is different than feeding and encouraging them. Acknowledging pain, fear, trauma and working on healing is how we become resilient people who can create resilient communities.

There will be times when the fear never goes away, that you always get a fear response in your body when your fear is triggered. But I don't think the goal of the journey is to not have fears, or to not listen to your fears. The goal is to be resilient in spite of your fears, living with your fears and learning from them. Fear isn't something to be denied because fear can teach so much.

An Image

A frozen lake. There is a thick layer of ice on it. Someone is hovering over the ice with a spade in hand. They jab and jab trying to crack it but cannot reach the other side. Another person walks onto the ice and sits down. They sit with the ice until spring comes and the weather warms, and slowly the ice melts. They can swim in the water, they are finally on the other side and the water is mixed with the water that used to be ice. The two waters become one. Getting through a fear may take time. It might not happen when you want it to. But if you are able to sit with it long enough, if you can be gentle and curious, it might just let you through.





After that, I started to think about the present. If those people I thought following us really were cops, I couldn't change that. If it was true, then it had already happened and I couldn't change that. At that point, once I accepted that, the fear changed a bit. I thought, well, if I can't change what has happened, then whether they were cops or not doesn't really matter. And further, if they were cops, then I am still confident and sure of my choices. I would still make the same choice to go hiking. And once I was sure of that, then too, whether or not they were cops didn't matter. This was me exploring the fear, questioning it and what kind of power it really had over me. In a way, it is about surrendering to the fear and saying "OK, you got me, but what now? Now that I'm scared and we are where we are, there's not much I can do, no changing what has brought me here." The only way forward is the future, the what next, the what now. Surrendering to the fear is a bit of a relief, because it allows acceptance.

Being sure of myself and my choices is the same kind of inner confidence that allows me to be sure and confident in my feelings. Two confidences that can only come from the inside and allow me to move through fear. And being sure of myself is the only thing I really can be in control of.

Allowing Fear

Whether people experience a single incident of trauma at the hands of the cops like myself, or if they experience it every day, or if they fear what has yet to come, only time can heal those wounds. And it doesn't help when the cops re-open those wounds constantly. Sometimes the wounds may never heal and the fear will always be present. To me, healing is about moving from a state of pain and disempowerment to a place of empowerment and resiliency.

I get to choose the pace of my own healing, of moving through my fears. I get to choose how I want to heal. I get to decide how long that process takes and I don't need anyone pushing me forward. You would never push a kid who is afraid of the water into a lake and force them to get over a fear. (Although I have seen parents to this and god what a way to traumatize a kid).

In my experience, when someone is trying to push against fear or deny peoples fears, they are not doing so out of malice but because they also dream of having resilient communities where we can act without fear holding us back. But I don't think that the tactic of denying or criticizing fear is a compassionate or effective one. Fear and trauma need to be accepted and validated in our communities, especially when we engage in situations that cause fear so often. Again, validating



Overview of the demo

It seems important to position this event with the chronology of Shut Down Canada. This event occurred a few days before the raid on Wetsuweten territories, so action/blockades were not yet wide spread, in vancouver especially but also at a national level. To our memory no trains had been halted, nighttime sabotage had not yet flourished, pockets of resistance were beginning to swell, but this was in many ways the beginning. The demo was supposed to occur in conjunction with three others which were going to block the ports vehicle traffic; however, snowfalls early the previous evening meant many did not show up and only one other action occurred. This meant that what was supposed to be a full shut down of east vancouver's port, all three truck entrances and the rail lines, ended up being one entrance and the rail line. This meant that police resources were not as divided as we had expected, though it is also possible that 4 demos would not have spread thin police resources.

Copper rods placed along the railroad line sent electrical signals to CN's operations signalling a non-existent train was on the tracks. This meant that railway crossing arms in the area were dropped, and both vehicles and freight traffic along the street was blocked. Participants held this intersection for roughly an hour, and with no visible police presence barricades were erected on the tracks using nearby garbage. An effort was made to use banners to obscure action from the watchful eyes of the CN security parked a kilometre away. With the first barricades up, participants moved up the tracks leaving garbage, construction materials, fencing and anything else nearby obstructing the tracks. Garbage barricades littered what was likely more than one kilometre of tracks and the bloc dispersed.

After the group moved further up the railway from the original location, a police car was spotted arriving at the location they had been holding. The knowledge of the police car's arrival did not spread throughout the whole group- some saw it, some didn't. At that moment the main body of the demo exited the tracks, while a smaller contingent broke off, staying on the tracks, and were subsequently surrounded by pigs. Two people were arrested, with one person sustaining severe injuries, and a total of 12 stitches to their testicles due to a police dog attack. Both arrested were charged with mischief over 5k and disguise with intent, which to our knowledge are the harshest charges anyone living in BC received as a result of actions during Shut Down Canada. We will explore the mistakes made which lead to these arrests in the tactical considerations subsection below.



Tactical considerations

Two people faced serious charges and while we cannot speak with certainty we would argue this could have been avoided. In an effort to build collective memory, and share lessons to avoid this in the future we feel it's worthwhile to reflect on some of the mistakes which were made during the demo. The majority of these mistakes stem from inexperience and a lack of planning beforehand. While less planning could leave additional space for fluidity, we feel inclined to say that due to a lack of experience in confrontational demo settings this was not the case.

The demo was called last minute, building on a previous action in the weeks prior. A clear route or plan was only partially predetermined. The demo escalated considerably when barricades were erected because the bloc saw an opportunity to do so. It's possible that a few participants may have had intentions to do so beforehand, but because of a lack of clearly defined affinity groups and frameworks for different groups to communicate with one another, this was not clear and some people didn't consider the tactics required for constructing barricades- it became a heat of the moment decision for those who didn't know. Other anarchists have addressed this lack-of-shared-information by organizing a demo through a spokescouncil framework, where one representative of every affinity group is tasked with communicating the groups desires and relaying information. This method works to maintain some anonymity between participants while opening up channels for communication between groups, ensuring all ideas are heard. Such a structure may have meant that the route, action plan and necessary roles were clearly understood.

A communication structure (formal or not) could have led to a clearer plan. This was evident when for a long time the bloc simply occupied space, with no clear next step being decided upon quickly. While the occupation of space is a worthwhile endeavour, movement is necessary to evade capture. Roughly 30 people made up the bloc which means it had the advantages of being small and quick; it did not however have the ability or experience necessary to defend itself in one position. As such the whole demo could have been much more effective and safe if it had assembled on the tracks just long enough to build barricades, effectively shutting them down, and continued moving, as opposed to waiting what may have been up to an hour before escalating. In retrospect, we can say that this was time the police used to assemble and prepare a response. We have seen how anarchists in, say for example Montreal, have employed hit-and-run tactics: erecting flaming barricades and then



Our brains are just trying to protect us) That's why I get so hurt and anxious when a partner doesn't text me back or cancels plans, because it upsets my biggest fear of being alone/without a partner.

In this example, the practice of sitting with a fear was identifying the big fear behind the small ones, and figuring out why my fears manifest the way they do. And the practice of exploring the fear was me actually questioning the fear and it's hold over me- "Well, even if I am alone I have all these other support systems; I can rely on myself to be happy and take care of myself on my own..." Exploring the fear doesn't mean that I am not afraid of being alone anymore or that I want to be alone, it just means that I am building my own self-confidence enough to actually believe in myself and believe in my ability to take care of myself, which makes the fear less scary as well. I should note that getting to this point of sitting with fear and exploring fear took me years of therapy and practice. Not only that, I actually did have to learn how to take care of myself and make myself happy, I had to build a support network and community outside of a partner, and had to learn to rely on myself.

For how this example connects with anarchist related fears- Recently I got really scared and afraid that there were cops following me on a hiking trip. The fear took over my whole body-adrenaline, heart and mind racing. It was all I could think about. I told my friends what I thought. I could tell they didn't agree that there were cops following us, some people tried to provide "reason" and "logic" - "The cops don't have the resources to do that stuff," "The cops wouldn't come this far out of the city," "The cops don't care about us going hiking." Thankfully, some other friends just let me talk and share my fears, and acknowledging them as real fears without feeding into them. Cause remember, the fear is real whether or not the threat causing the fear is.

We were out in the mountains so there was nowhere to go to escape my fear-like focusing on something else or going somewhere else. I had the opportunity to sit in my fear and explore it. I went to the creek and threw rocks. I ran around to get through the physical shakiness. I went back to the creek and started throwing the rocks really hard and let my fear transform a bit into anger. Okay, really turning into anger. I smashed rocks with other rocks (sorry rocks it was not your fault.) I started thinking about how much I hate that the cops and legal system were able to create such an awful fear inside me. They did this to me, it was not my fault for being scared. This was me sitting in the fear.



I didn't mean to but I hear that you are hurt." Of course, you can't really control and ensure that everyone is compassionate in their responses. But that kind of compassion can always be inside you and you can learn to be there to support yourself.

I practice this the most when I'm visiting my family to be honest. My mom hurts my feelings a lot and is very defensive when I tell her she does. Even though I really wish she could be more considerate and compassionate to me, I'm starting to realize that I can't really change her. Which blows. I wish I had a mom who didn't gaslight me, but I do. And because I still have a relationship with her, because I still go visit her, I need to give myself the compassion and understanding she won't give to me. If she hurts my feelings and won't acknowledge it, I don't have to get upset with her and hate her, I don't have to let her upset me and get into a fight. I can get past it because I know and understand my feelings and validate the pain I feel. I respect my feelings even if she won't. This, too, comes from an internal place. The compassion and respect I give myself and my feelings will always be there, and so when other people don't respect my feelings, I in turn can be more compassionate to them about the way they reacted and why.

Sitting in Your Fears

Another thing I practice a lot in therapy is sitting in my fears. After you practice the compassion and acknowledge of them, you explore them. I'll give another example, although shit now y'all know a lot about my relationship fears, oops. Another fear I have is when someone doesn't text me back. And it's not just that of course, but what it represents, that a person isn't available for me, not present for me, and ultimately that I am alone. The fears about not being responded to are only the manifestations of my bigger fear. Once I'm able to realize that my smaller anxieties are only hiding the big fear, and I reach the big fear, I practice sitting with it and exploring it. Addressing the big fear helps the small fears feel less scary.

Sitting with a fear can just be realizing the big fear behind all the small fears, realizing it's importance, acknowledging what it holds over me. It can also be exploring it, thinking about all the ways I am not alone, or even being able to say, even if I am alone, I can still support myself and build an amazing life for myself in so many other ways. Being able to sit with and explore the big fear lets you get less caught up on the small anxieties. The small anxieties are only your brain trying to distract you from feeling the big fear, to shield you from what causes you the most pain. (Which makes sense because why would you want to feel the painful stuff?



scattering in what we assume was 15-30 minutes, leaving no time for the police to prepare a response. If we find ourselves in small groups which have the benefit of agility, this is a clear tactical edge we may want to take advantage of.

As the demo moved forward along the railroad tracks, the bloc was lucky to find a hole in the fence to disperse through; until that moment the bloc was stuck along the tracks in what was effectively a corridor that would have been easy for the police to kettle. It's possible that some folks knew that a hole in the fence existed and thanks to quick communication were able to convey this to the group, but it was a long time ago and memory fades. The bloc also had no scouts operating ahead of it at this point so while it may have known about the hole it was quite lucky to find its exit route not blocked by police. Having a clearer predetermined route, with backup options, which some folks familiarized themselves with before the demo would have been worthwhile.

Finally the instance where two individuals were arrested occurred when a smaller group decided to stay on the tracks longer. This was obviously a mistake made in the heat of a moment with adrenaline pumping. It should go without saying that the strength of a tactic like the black bloc is its collective power; separated from the bloc, individuals are vulnerable. One way to mitigate such mistakes would be for participants in their affinity groups to make commitments to stay together, and if a friend is getting carried away or left behind to have previously agreed upon ways for addressing this. This is not to say the responsibility is strictly collective - it is simultaneously and most importantly on individuals themselves. It could be valuable for us all to reflect on how we relate to risk, stress and pressure. Knowing if we can get carried away or don't know when to stop, and recognizing these patterns within ourselves can better arm us for responding to dangerous situations.

Overall most of these mistakes could be defined broadly as a lack of logistical thinking. Let us consider a few more of these mistakes. Perhaps most importantly no post-action support was organized. With two people arrested and one in the hospital from injuries, friends scrambled to provide jail support - more work could have been done before the demo to prepare for potential consequences. Having someone on the outside capable of checking in with people to make sure they made it home safe, and on call in case anything went wrong is critical. Secondly, during some portions of the demo quick-thinking folks broke out to scout the area for a police buildup. This was great, but they were not able to identify the police buildup or if they did, they did not communicate it clearly to the bloc. Pre-planning a scouting route, identifying areas police could assemble, having



radios/communications equipment and bicycles could have made this important role much more effective. It also seems that the VPD relied heavily on plain clothes cops for surveillance, something a scout may have had a hard time noticing. Banners and equipment such as smoke canisters could have been used to better obstruct police surveillance. It's also important to note that after the demo began moving up the tracks, and the single police car arrived on the scene the plainclothes cops were already in place and surrounding the area of tracks the group was heading towards - effectively herding them in the direction of capture, which may have occurred if not for the hole in the fence the group escaped through.

Finally, two of the three demos that were coordinated to happen simultaneously fell through. As we mentioned previously these may have tied up police resources, or maybe they would have made no difference. It's easy to assume simultaneous demos could have created an atmosphere of chaos but very difficult to know. Should the bloc have had a backup plan knowing the space of conflict they were about to open was going to be more hostile? Should have it adapted its approach? While the bloc discussed things directly before the action, the lack of predetermined backup plans made it difficult to propose alternatives and respond to rapid changes on the ground.

Breaking the spell

While the demo had many shortcomings, it opened up a space for conflict and provided a learning opportunity for many of its participants. Simply put, the demo broke the spell, and marks a considerable shift within anarchist milieus recent trajectories. It was the first time in years that a small bloc fucked some shit up in a public way. While a confrontational imagination and practice exists here, they are in many ways dimmed. When it shines it manifests as smaller groups or individuals engaging in attack.

Many in the milieu were not around for the confrontational actions leading up to and the years after the Olympics which mark a particularly insurrectionary phase of anarchist organizing in the city. Some folks who were around share stories of past fires, but the intersecting factors of urban alienation, gentrification and a lack of social spaces means these fires are not easily passed on. To be clear this is not to say we should aspire to rebuild past fires, for not only is this impossible but temporary breaks with the existent lie beyond such moments.



when they ask for it; I can't force anyone into that place of internal growth.

Being Compassionate with Yourself

In therapy, no therapist has ever said or would ever say to me "Well, just don't be anxious or fearful." When I share my fears, no therapist would ever say, "Well, your fears are unreasonable or illogical because of x y z." In therapy, we are taught to acknowledge our fears and anxieties and to validate them, which doesn't mean feeding into them. Validating a fear is about validating the natural response from your body and mind. In emotional situations, people react emotionally. Humans are emotional. Fear is an emotion.

In my own life this shows up a lot. Sometimes I'm not able to share my fears with people, and I end up lashing out. Multiple times I have been angry or passive aggressive with friends for cancelling a camping trips. It's not actually because I'm mad at my friend or they did something wrong, but that for years I have never been able to go on camping trips with friends and was always left out because I was the only one who had to work and didn't have money for time off. It's because that I always associated camping with this having a strong friend group and community, something I never had as a loner. It's because my ex partner was going camping with their friends and if they get to be happy and do all these fun things then why can't I? All of this was my natural emotional reaction. And from there, the work is to not for myself or anyone else to say that I am wrong for thinking any of those things, that I'm wrong for having these fears. Rather, I need to acknowledge and validate all my fears. Those all are upsetting things. I need to be compassionate to myself. My fears won't be calmed if I or anyone else tells me my fears are baseless or need to be changed. You can't change or work against fear, you can only move through it, which is a process that starts with validation and compassion.

If someone else tries to invalidate your fears or your pain, or doesn't understand them, well, that is a really shitty experience. One time I shared to a friend that I was feeling anxious and depressed and they, maybe because they didn't know how to help, said that it was all in my head and I'm just making it up. That really fucking hurt. Lot's of time with my mom I will tell her that something she said hurt my feelings, and she will just brush it off and say "Well, I didn't mean it like that" and not acknowledge how I am hurt. That also really fucking hurts. Even if my friend had no way to help, she could have said something more validating, like "I'm sorry you feel that way, I don't really understand depression, but what you're feeling is real." Or my mom, even if she didn't mean to hurt my feelings could say, "I'm sorry,



mechanisms. I think this word, coping, is an important one. Same with saying "living with anxiety" vs "having anxiety." We are people living and coping with our fear and anxiety, rather than allowing our anxiety to define us.

Actually, for a long time, I did deny the existence of anxiety and depression because I never addressed it. And the longer I didn't address it, the worse my episodes would be and the more debilitating my panic attacks were. I remember one time during one of my last really awful panic attacks, I came out of my room like a sad mouse and knocked on my roommate's door and started sobbing. "How do you be happy?" I asked. We sat on her bed and she told me that she went jogging, she did yoga, she went hiking, she meditated, she ate very healthy. I rarely did any of these things back then. Who would have thought that watching TV, not exercising, and eating unhealthy would be bad for your mental health?

Over the years, and learning other people's coping mechanisms, as well as finding out my own and some from my therapist (as well as so much needed therapy sessions with her), I have been able to work through my episodes of anxiety and depressions and help prevent future ones. I eat well, I go running, I dance, I meditate, I do yoga, I write, I read mental health books, I go to therapy. During periods when my anxiety and depression is worse, it is really hard to do these things, to even leave my bed, but I know that doing them is the only thing that will help in the long run. Medications are the right choice for some people, and I'm not saying they don't work, but I do think they aren't the only solution and perhaps they shouldn't be the first solution. Physical activity, especially running, is actually proven to cure anxiety and depression just as much as medication but doctors don't prescribe that first.

What's important to me in this example is the fact that I finally asked my friend for help, and not only did I ask, but I started to do the work for my mental health. I had anxiety for years before getting to that point, and people had suggested solutions and coping mechanisms to me before and I never listened and never took them up. I had to get to that place on my own. I'm not saying "on my own" to mean "being left alone;" certainly, people should not be left without help when they are in pain, but to get to a place where I could take action and make different choices required an internal growth and an internal shift. I have lots of friends who have mental health struggles that I share my own coping mechanisms with and sometimes they listen and make their own changes, and sometimes they don't. Whether they do or don't take my suggestions and change their actions is based on where they are at in their own journey. I can't do anything more than be here for them and help them



Simultaneous sparks from the past can help us ignite our imagination. Opportunities to develop affinity and share stories could prove fruitful for developing stronger relationships among anarchists in the city, something that would certainly stoke the flames. Opening up spaces for socialization can look like many different things - a dinner party, a walk in the park, and perhaps what seems most difficult nowadays a social event. With covid continuing to affect all aspects of life and winter approaching, this is more difficult than ever. The closing of almost all indoor social spaces and the city's lack of self-managed anarchist social space will make developing our relationships and meeting our social needs this winter more difficult than ever. For now we will flock to each other's home, the alleys and the woods. Some doors will close and perhaps others will open. Moving forward it seems that setting one's gaze on finding a semi-permanent indoor social space would be a fruitful way to combat the alienation that defines urban existence and improving many of our lives. A self-managed anarchist indoor social space where we could collectively determine how we would relate to one another would be something this city has not seen for years. Likely this would increase our capacity to fuck shit up but most of all this would probably just make life in the rotting city that much more bearable.

We hope this report back was interesting. Our hearts will always be with all those who, despite overwhelming odds, launch themselves into conflict with the existent, whatever that looks like. Those who got away into the night and especially those who didn't. We will speak for ourselves when we say that we are likely delusional, maybe running on no hope, false hopes, mythologies and baggage, exhaust fumes, anger, hate, joy and dare I say love. Let us meet and breathe life into one another, into new and existing projects, into joyful moments of realizing our hostilities. Let us meet with daggers drawn.





High as fuck on Murder and Idolatry

-Peter Jordanson

And our pace far exceeded that which was necessary. It was just how we liked living. We learned how to brew ancient combinations of plants that had long ago been, apparently, forbidden by the sky daddy. We dipped into the great mothers underwear drawer and ran the streets with her massive panties on our heads. Left them in a pile by the pool. We wounded the trees and used their blood to soften our flesh, staunch our bleeding. We stared into the relentless dark that forced itself onto the nearly dead ocean. We honed our sense of smell. The combinations of lavender and ylang ylang. Cinnamon and feet. That same perfume on every dancer. Identical intoxications, the same two chemicals everywhere, every time. We dismantled our own boring obsession with our own lust. We taught each other how to pet deer, we slowed each other down. We never held back. We knew which way was which and where we wanted to go. We learned how to idolize knowledge and wisdom.

One of the sweeter results of the brain damage we gave each other learning how to fight was the sensitivity we developed to the stories of horror. Healing was the hot topic but, really, what everyone wanted was to kill their rapist. In fact, we understood very clearly that we were going to have to take revenge. Things were turning to gold from deep inside. Which was, to put it mildly, a process. But in the end we were highly conductive. We slept less. We abandoned the object status that was imposed upon us. We sought to de-alienate our efforts toward survival. We stopped being shy about it. We shamed those who held our innocence against us. We cut out their fucking hearts out and ate them actually. We were like otters. Grinning on our backs in the swells, blood flowing down our chins and pooling in the fur on our chests as we bobbed gently, cute as fuck, in the glorious sun. Incapable of regret.



Fostering a More Compassionate Response to Fear within Anarchist Communities

-Firebrat

Since my first arrest, I've experienced more fear and anxiety than ever before. Right after the arrest I had PTSD symptoms (forgetfulness, loss of concentration, flashbacks) and barely slept at all for months. Now, I freeze in fear every time I see a cop, every time I see a cop dog, when I'm too close to my red zone, every time I do something really mild like dumpster dive. Things that used to not cause me any fear now make me a panicky mess for the whole rest of the day and I get really "paranoid" about cops following me, even when I'm far away from the city. Generally, my friends have been really supportive about my fears and don't try to push me, but I've also experienced some people criticizing my fears with their "logic" about how the cops aren't watching me, how the cops don't have the capacity to follow people out of the city, how I'm letting the state "win" because there is nothing to fear. I hear this all the time when it doesn't involve me either, people criticizing activists or anarchists for being "paranoid" and thinking that every new person in their community is a cop, or that they are being followed. But in my experience you can't reason with fear. Not when fear fills the body with adrenaline, and it feels like electricity is in your veins, and you can't breathe. No, "reason" and "logic" only try to work against fear, and fear is much stronger. I've found that the only thing that works for myself is to move through fear. And I think that we all need to consider how moving through a fear, rather than denying it, is a more compassionate response that will better create the resilient communities we want to have.

(I'm putting the word "paranoid" in quotation marks because the word itself is based on invalidating and denying people's fears.)

Living with Anxiety

Since I was a teenager, I've lived with really awful anxiety, panic attacks, and depression. It hasn't been constant, but it happens enough each year that I would call it chronic. For a long time it was all I felt; for a long time I never had any friends who went through the same things. Slowly, though, I met people who also experienced really bad anxiety and depression, who each had their own coping