

deterministic theories of social evolution, the French in Vietnam not only drew boundaries around the tribes they dimly discerned and appointed chiefs through whom they intended to rule but placed the peoples so designated on a scale of social evolution. The Dutch accomplished much of the same administrative alchemy in Indonesia by identifying separate indigenous customary law (adat) traditions which they proceeded to codify and use as a basis for indirect rule through appointed chiefs (2).

Why would they appoint chiefs
to people that had none?

Peoples whose vernacular order was egalitarian lacked the institutional handles by which they could be governed. Those institutions would have to be provided, if necessary, by force (3).

The reasoning is simple. Hierarchical societies are easier to control, and hierarchies cannot defend themselves from more powerful hierarchies. Official from a state cannot easily communicate with members of a society in which decisions are made in open assemblies, or societies with chaotic rather than a unitary decision-making.

As an important aside, I would challenge the reader to accept chaotic organization as a superior form, even though we are usually only presented with a pejorative vision of chaos. In unitary decision-making, an entire polity must abide by a single decision, or there must be a clear hierarchy to govern and rank the decisions made at different levels, whether in a bureaucratic or federalistic system. All governments, from fascist dictatorships to direct formal democracies, share the principle of unitary decision-making and disseminate the assumptions on which such decision-making is based. Chaotic decision-making fosters the recognition that society can function

spontaneously as a decentralized network, permits conflict as a healthy force in our lives, encourages a multiplicity of decision-making spaces pervading all moments of life, well beyond the formal, masculine sphere of the congress or the dictat, and allows different, even conflicting, decision to be made at different points in the human network, while encouraging a collective consciousness so all decision-makers can maximize their intelligence and accordingly harmonize. Humans have an evolutionarily tested ability to utilize chaotic decision-making at a macro scale, and the only people who dispute this are those who wish to permanently infantilize their compatriots so as to control them by monopolizing decision-making in unitary structures (4).

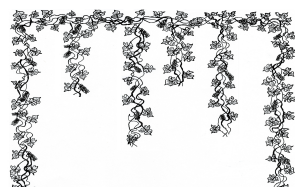
In fact, these two logics of communication, chaotic and unitary, are mutually exclusive. When a state communicates with another society, it is interested in transmitting orders or legislating agreements, not in contributing its perspective to the multitude. Furthermore, the population of a hierarchical society is already organized, in some form or another, in order to be ruled, whereas an egalitarian society is in fact organized, to varying extents, specifically so as not to be ruled. The forms of organization are not all – contrary to conventional anthropology – orders of complexity on an evolutionary scale; rather they are qualitatively different and mutually exclusive. They represent either the strategy of the rulers, or the strategies of those who refuse to be ruled.

There is however, a scale of intensity as regards the ability of a state to foist hierarchies on a traditionally stateless people. When an encroaching state has less direct power in a region it wishes to conquer, or the society it wishes to conquer has fewer institutional, authoritarian “handles” to make use of, the process is distinct, as is the resistance to this process. The British tried to appoint chiefs among the horizontal Chin of Southeast Asia, and to increase their prestige and authority,

the chiefs, subsidized by their powerful allies, threw lavish feasts, in accordance with the feasting culture prevalent in their society. In response, a new cult arose among the Chin that “repudiated community feasts while continuing the tradition of individual feasts that served to increase personal, not chiefly, status.” (5).

In the end it is a matter of common sense. A society needs to be accustomed to having leaders for a foreign power to effectively be able to appoint puppet rulers. Those societies that already have traditional forms of hierarchy, though these might not be enough to qualify them for statehood, are more easily forced into a statist logic. If a stateless people has no local, traditional forms of hierarchy that can be exploited by a colonizing state, or if the local leadership – the potential chiefs – cleave to the popular values of anti-authoritarianism and autonomy, a colonizing state has very few possibilities to expand its control. It can neither attempt a policy of genocide through extermination or resettlement, or accept the autonomy of the stateless society, at most demanding tribute, a sort of blackmail by which the stateless people produces trade goods to buy reprieve from punitive military actions.

1. Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed*, 211-12.
2. *Ibid.*, 258.
3. *Ibid*
4. For a further elaboration of this view as it pertains to differing strategies in a social movement (direct democracy vs. anarchy), see Anonymous, "Fire Extinguishers and Fire Starters: Anarchist Interventions in the #SpanishRevolution," *Crimethinc.*, June 2011, <http://crimethinc.com/texts/recentfeatures/barc.php>. As it pertains to social theory, see Marianne Maeckelbergh, *The Will of Many: How the Alterglobalisation Movement is Changing the Face of Democracy* (London: Pluto Press, 2009)
5. Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed*, 212.



“Say No to Drugs”
(A Poem for Marcus Peters David)
by J.”g.”J.

Martin Luther Tubman freed the buses,
but still Elijah McDade got kilt.
If Mike Ferguson pulled his pants up
(or was it bootstraps?)
he'd still be alive today. . .
Maybe one of the Sayhernames
shoul'da goneta college,
then she wouldnta got shot.
All we need is more entrepreneurs
to garnish the Eric Garners.
How else we gonna stop
(three plus eight plus one equals) 12
from murderin' us, and brutalizin' us?
Huey didn't rape enough,
or politician enough like Bobby Seale
or Republican enough like Eldridge Cleaver.
Iron-fisting He-Man Big-Dick-Energy Authority
is the only true path to freedom, Right?
(or were it Left?)

If only we tailored Breonna to be a home-owner
we could vote back every hashtag
from the debt, I mean death, I mean grave. . .
See Obeezy's voodoo priestly for more former Afrikans
bought again, I mean born again,
as Blackskindid Europeans, just following
400 year old orders. . .
If only they were more Beyonce's
I guess every transpersxn of color,
would live past 30. . .
but only if Jay-Z cums first!
Don't you care that one in three shotcallers
Is a survivor of toxic femininity?
I pray to Patreon Saints that every
Badazz and Boosie 12 year old boy
gets "checked out", and cured
of abusive-ass, ain't-shit traditions. . .
***This message has been brought to you by Instagram
Democrat Party, COINTELPRO and the 381 Movement
Say no to drugs!



“No Sir, I won’t” (tentatively)
by J.”g.”J.

The bastard son
of Shango and Zeus
or was it Yakub?
Let's call the manbaby Bezos, who
with coltan and currency
(the post-modern invisible magics)
brings Satanic power to your couch.
Alas, he's too classy. . .
Turn on Netflix, plan(et Zyklon) B,
for Bhagavan Tiger Rapist,
Bikram going full-Biden
and working not as hard as
R-Kelly has to, in a white man's world,
to Bundy-size his ego, at the expense
of the too-weak to not turn-off their hearts
and doubtful (friends with?)
benefits - - the altar of latter-day slavery. . .
I wonder if Jesus Koreshed some
JonBenets in the ass
Pontificating all over the faces of
Oprah, Hillary and other ethnic-cleansing
"Feminine" hygiene products?
But back to the streaming pile of Gospel
Peep-Show-Booths-cum-Uber-market-table
the fuel of petty, would-be
god-like prowess.
Singing of him not afflicted by pesky moral
asses still shit, stinking and paunching,
maybe even going bald.
Subject to torsion, hernias,
Gums receding and what-big-teeth-you-hav
even bankruptcy, if not presidency. . .
Some god, but, hey
it beats compassion.
Weinstein and dine me,
Manson, from beyond the grave.
I know you can still fuck,
or at least Facetime.



*The following is a transcript of a talk delivered in Seattle on July 20, 2020, originally published by Ill Will Editions. For a link to the video, visit illwilleditions.com. It is lightly-edited by the orignal author for readability. ****

How It Might Should Be Done
By Idris Robinson

I want to begin with a shout-out to what happened here last night, and to the working class of the city of Seattle, to the rebels of the city of Seattle: I really liked what I saw, that’s why I’m here, you know, to feel that vibe. I would also like to send my solidarity to comrades in Greece. It was they who allowed me to experience insurrection for the first time in 2008. The lessons I’ve learned and the experiences I had there have been so valuable this time around, even though we are in a much different social context. Moreover, a comrade was recently killed at the hands of the police there. To the fallen comrade, Vasillis Maggos, I want to say: rest in power.

My title demands a little bit of explanation. It is a reference to Chernyshevsky [1], and to the novel he wrote from inside a Czarist prison. Lenin borrowed the title for his 1902 pamphlet, What Is to Be Done? [2], which provides answers to what he calls “the burning questions of our movement”: what does it mean to constitute a vanguard party? how do we spread consciousness from this vanguard party to the working class? how do we move beyond strikes to a full-on revolutionary political struggle?, etc. Later, in 2001, a text entitled “How It Is to Be Done” appeared in the journal of the French collective Tiqqun. [3] Rather than stating what our goals or objectives should be, Tiqqun sought to shift our focus to the means and the techniques

of struggle. Instead of thinking about ends, they thought about the means that we should employ. My aim here is far less ambitious. As for the grammatical construction, “might should”, from the southern dialect—I tried to Blackify the title a little bit. But it’s also serious, because these are in fact tentative theses and proposals: I’m perfectly okay with being completely wrong about every single thing I put forward today, just so long as it creates a further deeper discussion on strategy. What I really want to do is open up this discussion, and I want to leave it, for people to engage with it as they want to, and to push it further. At the same time, I want the dialogue to be honest. There’s a kind of prevailing posture of cynicism, nihilism, and democratic moralism that holds back insurrection. And I think now is the time: we are experiencing an uprising on a scale that many of us have never lived through. Even if we compare present events to Greece, this thing has gone much further. There are far more martyrs in this struggle than there ever were in the Greek uprising. The time has arrived for strategic thought and reflection.

It’s of course weird to find myself saying this in America, the most anti-counter revolutionary place on the globe. But we must reorient ourselves, and take these questions seriously. The stakes have been raised to the next level, they’re extremely high now. It’s time for us to think seriously about them.

1. A militant nationwide uprising did in fact occur. The progressive wing of the counter-insurgency seeks the denial and disarticulation of this event.

The obvious is not always so obvious.

We all saw it. We all saw what happened after the murder of George

Floyd. What occurred was an extremely violent and destructive rebellion. It was a phenomenon the likes of which we have not seen in America in 40 or 50 years. Very few of us have experienced anything of this magnitude: a precinct was immediately torched in Minneapolis, after which entire cities went up in flames—New York, Atlanta, Oakland, Seattle. Comparisons were quickly made with the riots after Martin Luther King’s assassination. However, I think that we’ve gone further in this case, that 2020 went harder than 1968, and we’re not even done yet.

Despite all of this, the reformers have had the audacity to claim that all of this never actually happened. They are trying to make the burning cop cars disappear, to extinguish from memory the police stations on fire, as if it didn’t happen. Again and again, I hear the same script: someone comes on the news, a political activist gives a talk, and we hear them say something like, “the protests were peaceful and non-violent, they stayed within the bounds of law and order.” No: cops being shot at in St. Louis is not within the bounds of law and order. They’re doing their best to make the event disappear. One has to to wonder what planet they are on that a torched police station appears within the bounds of civility.

This delusion is something that we need to think about. Ultimately, it’s more than a delusion. It unites veritably all the progressive liberals who chatter on about what’s been going on over the past summer. From the Biden democrats to virtually all of the mainstream media not affiliated with Fox News, to the Black Lives Matter! people, the agenda pushed by all these groups is the claim that the insurrection did not take place. I even read a recent study by some sort of consulting firm that sought to prove through quantitative means that there was a very civil nature to the protests. [4]

The fact is, whatever data or graphs they draw up, nothing will erase the

Scotty. We pushed them back out onto the pavement--when I say ”we” I’m honestly not being fair, because I didn’t do much of it myself. We had them scattered and running. Most of them.

Dwight was out there, waving a pistol in one hand and swinging a wooden-stock rifle like a club in the other. A viking with a shotgun stood beside him.

I think the same fashy little shit killed them both, maybe in the same three round burst.

I tagged the fashy in his belly, and his friends helped him get away and the remaining Nazis ran. He survived his wound. Why do we have so much information about the war? Does it do me any good to know who I killed who and I didn’t?

And Dwight?

Dwight lay alone on the concrete. Face down. There wasn’t much blood, but he was dead.

Two ravens sat atop him, one on each shoulder. I’ve never seen a raven in Asheville in my life. Not before, not since. There were two of them. As big as people say those things are.

They barked, and they sounded like dogs. One was loud, like it was right where it was. The other one was distant, echoing. Then they flew away, directly up and towards the sun and I tried to watch to see where they went but you can’t look directly at the sun like that. I looked back down, and Dwight was gone. Okay so his body was still there but there was something about him that was gone and I don’t know how to tell you what it was.

That was that. We won. Sort of. They didn’t storm the library, which I guess means we won, but sometimes I think I’d burn every single book in that place if it would bring back Laura or Dwight or any of the rest of my friends. The war was over, at that point, even if we didn’t know it yet. So what did they die for? I guess for symbols. Maybe symbols matter that much, I don’t know.

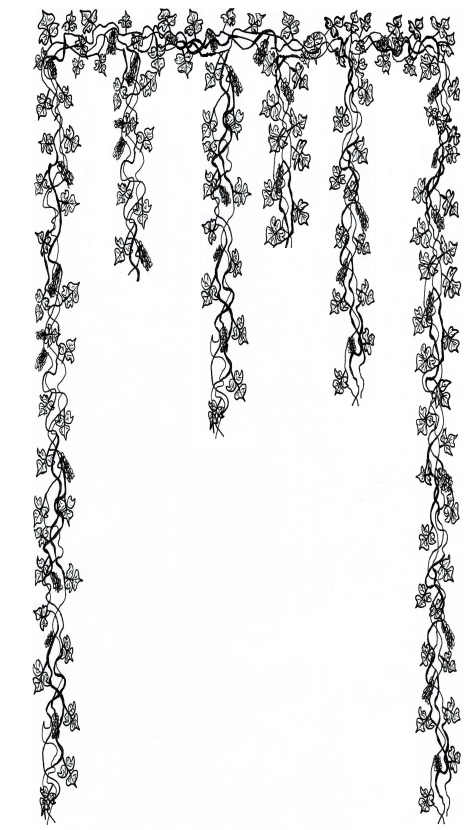
I deserted after that. Half the survivors of the Battle of Asheville died

less than a week later up in Pittsburgh, and I suppose I’d be dead if I’d gone and it probably makes me a coward that I didn’t. It’s not that I was afraid of dying. It was that I was afraid of dying in battle.

Because I believe in Odin now. It’s hard not to believe in a god without venerating him. I don’t want to go to Valhalla. I don’t want to fight ever again, let alone every night. I don’t want to serve with the Einherjar at the twilight of the gods sometime in the 25th century. If I don’t want to do that, then I don’t want to die in battle.

Dwight, though, I expect he’s happy. I expect he dies every day with a smile on his lips and mead in his belly.

He won’t have to fight alongside the monsters of the human race, either. Because as I learned in Asheville, Nazis don’t go to Valhalla.



The following is an excerpt from the first chapter, “Take Me to Your Leader: The Politics of Alien Invasion”, of the book Worshipping Power: An Anarchist View of Early State Formation by Peter Gelderloos. We recommend checking this book out in its entirety, which can be found at AKPress.com or many a radical bookstore.

Take Me to Your Leader: The Politics of Alien Invasion
By Peter Gelderloos

It is now a commonplace that colonizing states appoint leaders to horizontal societies they are trying to absorb through trade or warfare. This is not particular to one stage or type of state formation, but state formation as a constant activity. British colonizers bestowed titles on local intermediaries from Africa to Central Asia. US and Canadian occupiers set up tribal governments. Bourgeois states used repression and subsidies to encourage hierarchical organization in the labor unions of the workers’ movement. The media appoint spokespeople to heterogeneous rebellions.

Writing about Southeast Asia, James C. Scott explains the process:

Every state with ambitions to control parts of Zomia – Han administrators in Yunnan Guizhou, the Thai court in Ayutthaya, the Burmese court in Ava, Shan chiefs (Shabwa), the British colonial state, and independent national governments – has sought to discover, or, failing that, to create chiefdoms with which they could deal. The British in Burma, Leach noted, everywhere preferred autocratic “tribal” regimes in compact geographical concentrations with which they could negotiate; conversely, they had a distaste for anarchic, egalitarian peoples who had no discernable spokesman (1).

Nor was this a British phenomenon.

Armed with ethnographers and

That’s when Laura got shot, right in the head, because we missed a spot when we bulletproofed the facade. She’s dead. She had natural read hair but she always dyed it redder, and her favorite show was Buffy the Vampire Slayer, and she liked to drink water out of long-stemmed glasses. She was... I think she was 37. Way past drafting age. She volunteered. It was her first engagement. She was only there because she loved books.

Had plenty of time to avoid looking at her corpse, while she was in there with us dead.

Dwight was another one of my friends in the unit, one of my favorite people hands down. Total weirdo, and he was all obsessed with that viking shit and the dark ages in general. Both his parents had come over from Sweden, though his dad was originally from Nigeria. Dwight had one degree in medieval studies and another in African history and I can’t tell you how many times during basic he’d run down the details of this or that ancient battle, whether in Europe or Africa. If there were guns involved, he didn’t care about it. But if there were swords and armor, or spears and shields, he was all in.

He started talking to the vikings first thing. He was the first person to believe them--to really believe them--and his faith was contagious. While we were pinned down, he asked them everything. Mostly, they were quiet, even taciturn. But there was one thing they were very insistent on, that I overheard them talking about.

”Nazis don’t go to Valhalla.”

”But why not?” Dwight asked.

”It takes two things to go to Valhalla,” the spokesperson said. ”You have to die in battle, and you have to venerate Odin.”

”A bunch of those fuckers are Odinists,” he said.

”No they aren’t. They’re nationalists, fascists, racial separatists, they’re all kinds of things, but they don’t venerate Odin, whatever they think.”

”What do you mean?”

”They only know one half of Odin. They know the masculine side,

the heterosexual side. The Christian side. They worship a bastardization of our god, a bastardization first created by a nationalist Christian eight hundred years ago that’s only gotten further afield since. Our Odin practices women’s magic, the magic of the... the sexually penetrated. We also worship female gods of war and male gods of the hearth and gods who change gender when they’re bored. Nazis don’t understand that, any of it. In life, we raided sometimes. Traded other times. We also did all sorts of things that won’t fit your modern sensibilities. Things that, were I alive, you might kill me for. But we’re not Nazis and people who worship a Christian version of our god most certainly do not go to Valhalla.”

It was as if the man had used up every word allotted to him for the day, because I don’t believe a one of them spoke again before the battle began in earnest.

How long was that?

Another hour, maybe? The sun was still right overhead when the White Army rushed us.

It was a bullshit move, rushing us. One part overconfidence and one part desperation, if you can imagine that. They knew they were losing the war, at that point, but they had us more than two-to-one, and we all know the KKKommanders don’t give two shits about the lives of their men.

That’s when I put a bullet in man’s leg. While he was in the street, running. It was a good shot. He was running, and I led the target and everything. I’d been aiming for center body mass, but still. At least a hundred yards against a moving target. I was proud of that shot at the time, on a technical level, even if I’m not sure I’m proud of it anymore now that I know the man’s name.

We expected the charge. What we didn’t expect was the ordinance that knocked the reinforced front door off its hinges, but that happened, and almost all the fighting happened right there on the first floor, among the empty shelves. The whole thing felt like it lasted a half an hour. I’ve looked it

up since. Front the time of the first blast to the time the last shot was fired, we’re talking about three minutes and twelve seconds.

We thought they were going to pour in through the door after they blew it the fuck off, so James got in there with our one functioning automatic and he took at least ten of the fash down with him before someone got him in the neck.

It was a faint, and they blew a hole in the side of the building while that was going on and that’s where they got in. Close-quarters combat is a whole different beast. A worse one, maybe. Maybe a better one. I go back and forth about that, sometimes, instead of sleeping. I think about the pros and cons of various types of absolute horror. Is it better to see your death coming, or get picked off without knowing it?

I would have thought the vikings would expend themselves right off. I mean... vikings. They were starting to sober up by that point, but still, they’d been drinking. And they were already dead. And they were doomed to die. But they were smarter than that, never risked themselves unnecessarily.

Your next assumption, of a comrade you know is doomed, is that they’d sacrifice themselves to save others. None of that, either. They knew they were the best trained soldiers on the field, and that in order for us to win, they had to be in the fight as long as they could. They were smart like that. Assholes like that.

I stationed myself in the back. I fancy myself more a sniper than the assault sort, so I watched the whole thing go down. I also only hit three targets out of a hundred and seventeen bullets I fired, but that’s another story.

I watched us win. We took casualties of fifty percent--half of those were KIA--but we defeated a force twice our strength. I watched the Einherjar bayonet men and shoot them and I saw one of the viking women break a man’s face apart with her fists. Soon after, a bullet found her heart and she collapsed with a smile on her lips. She disappeared. Like, literally, she phased out of existence, beam me up

fact that police cars were on fire in dozens of American cities. So why do liberals feel the need to jump through such incredible hoops in order to erase this insurrection or this uprising? Why is it that the most violent wings of law and order—e.g., Attorney General William Barr—are today the only audible voices willing to acknowledge that the uprising occurred? We need to think this through.

What is at issue is more than just a momentary lapse of sanity: it is a strategy of denial, a counter-insurgent strategy of reform par excellence.

Unconsciously, liberals do recognize that an insurrection occurred. They can’t ignore the shattered glass that occurred in the streets of Seattle yesterday. But what they want is to downplay the significance of these events that mean so much to us, and that we are continually trying to push forward. They want to reassert and reaffirm them, but in a different direction. Ultimately, what they want is to block the possibilities that the revolt has opened up, to dissuade us from going further in this uprising. As with all democratic liberal reformists, what they’re trying to do is exploit the outburst in order to make it so that things change, but only just a little—which is to say, not at all.

There’s a moral component to this as well, a deep ethical problem. This wing of the counter insurgency is just one more way that those in line with the system have found to manage and to exploit Black death. It must be recalled (and I will return to this below) that there are scores of young Black children who lost their lives in the uprising, and that activists, ‘woke’ journalists, progressive politicians of all stripes, and even so-called BLM activists are profiting off their death. This is a continuous narrative in American society, and it will not stop now unless we do something about it.

By denying the event, they seek to

obscure the revolutionary truth that was ushered in through the streets. They want to extinguish the present that we brought about. They want to sap our energy while they propose superficial palliative adjustments to preserve the system. The history of America is the history of attempts to reform race relations. If they haven’t gotten it right by now, they never will.

Whatever they do, whatever slight changes they make, there will always remain an insatiable drive to brutalize and kill Black people. Anyone who profits off this change is complicit in that murder. If you block the revolutionary trajectory of the rebellion, you have blood on your hands. Anyone who remains complicit with the system is the enemy, tout court.

By contrast, the Right has adopted the opposite approach to the event. Besides us revolutionaries, they are the only voices today that acknowledge that the rebellion occurred. There’s an illuminating honesty to what William Barr says. Think of it this way: before he can forcefully smash and eventually suppress an insurrection, he must first acknowledge that one did, in fact, occur. In this way, there’s an honesty to Trump’s words. Trump and his entire Fox News crowd, all those who are calling for law and order, have no choice but to acknowledge the existence of the uprising, precisely because they want to crush it. Just today, Trump declared on the news that he intends to send federal stormtroopers not only to Portland but to New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago. [5] To justify such a choice, he must acknowledge that the uprising did in fact happen. These are the two sides into which our opponents may be divided, the Janus face of the State we confront today.

What is more, the rebellion shows the liberals what it means to defund the police halfway, instead of abolishing

and outright destroying them. If anyone thinks it suffices to undertake a series of small measures and quick fixes, or that they can re[form] and preserve the police as a force while simply shrinking it—well, the result is what is happening right now in Portland. Let that be an example to liberals. On the other hand, those who recognize that a change really did occur, and who now seek to stomp it out are typically more aligned with fascist trajectories and politics, since they are typically the same people who feel the need to dream up and defend a sort of immutable, eternal, and transcendental idea of law, order, and white supremacy. Whatever deviates from the ideal, this fascist side of order will seek to annihilate. For this reason, it is compelled to refuse those same reforms that the liberals attempt to push through. For instance, this is why Trump is so upset about changing the names of military bases. The issue itself doesn’t actually matter, but the sort of power he represents cannot stand such changes, and seeks instead to crush and flatten the event itself in its tracks.

There’s only one way to deal with this fascist wing of the state: they operate with violence, and we return with violence that’s more powerful. However, as concerns the other, more reformist side that aims to deny the event in order to incorporate it into their own objectives, we need to be a little bit sharper in how we handle them. We need to be deceptive, like Machiavelli’s fox. Honesty isn’t their mode of operating. They have always sought to deny what lies right before our eyes. Deception and subversion is how we are going to have to play them: we need to deceive them twice over.

When it comes to these two sides of state, I do not wish to claim that either one is any more nefarious than the other, but simply that these are the two sides that we have to contend with, and ultimately to defeat.

2. While spearheaded by a Black avant-garde, this largely multi-ethnic rebellion managed to spontaneously overcome codified racial divisions. The containment of the revolt aims at reinstating these rigid lines of separation and policing their boundaries.

To begin with, it must be said that former African slaves and their ancestors have been the avant-garde of everything in this country. There’s no culture in America, in this American wasteland, without us. There’s no classical music; there’s jazz, and that was invented by us. And besides that, America has nothing to offer the world and it never has.

However, I used the term avant-garde in a more specific sense. There were no leaders. We were not leaders of the revolt. We were the avant-garde who spearheaded it, we set it off, we initiated it. What ensued was a wildly multi-ethnic uprising, and the reformists will do everything in their power to make it so that this truth is erased. If you were out on the streets, you know you saw people of all different kinds. Different bodies, different shapes, different genders, manifested themselves in the streets together.

There’s a lot of talk about how to end racism, especially within corporate and academic circles. We saw how to end racism in the streets the first weeks after George Floyd was murdered.

It was only after the uprising began to slow down and exhaust itself that the gravediggers and vampires of the revolution began to reinstate racial lines and impose a new order on the uprising. The most subtle version of this comes from the activists themselves. Our worst enemies are always closest to us. You’ve all been in these marches, these ridiculous marches, where it’s, “white people to the front, black people to the center”—this is just another way of reimposing these lines in a more

sophisticated way. What we should be aiming for is what we saw in the first days, when these very boundaries began to dissolve.

The most devastating example of how the racial lines and boundaries are reimposed comes from the example of Rayshard Brooks’ long-time partner, Natalie White, who offers the most blatant example of this racial policing seen so far. White was called out by so-called “woke” Twitter activists for her involvement in the protests in Atlanta over her dead partner. Eventually, they implicated her in the burning of the Wendy’s where Rayshard was killed. It is up to us to never reinforce these sort of bourgeois constructs of guilt or innocence. Whether she had a hand in the destruction or not, I don’t judge her either way. That is not up to us, we stand in solidarity no matter what. But I do hold accountable, I do place blame on the wanna be do-gooders, these “woke” Twitter activists who implicated her in what occurred. I lay the blame solely on those activists, and Rayshard Brooks lays the blame on them from the grave.

Order neatly defines collections of people — these are the prerogatives of prison guards, of the police. We should remember the example of John Brown, who was often criticized by his so-called allies and friends for relating to Black people in a way that they deemed unacceptable. If you saw the way John Brown related to Black people in his time, you might think he was being criticized for relating to Black people as human beings. Every time we cross over those racial boundaries and meet each other as human beings, this is when we will be criticized, especially by the most advanced parts of the counter-insurgency. John Brown was heavily criticized for his advocacy of militant

tactics, and Frederick Douglass was among his most vocal critics of his advocacy for insurrection. Douglass would come around later, but history would prove Brown right: the only way to abolish slavery is through violent insurrection. History has now redeemed him to some extent. But what I want us to think about is this: if John Brown was alive today, what would he be like? How would he behave? John Brown would be in jail alongside Natalie White for crossing over those boundaries.

3. By avoiding the morbid libidinal core of white supremacy, identity politics, intersectionality, and social privilege discourse comprise the most sophisticated sector of this police apparatus.

We’ve all come in contact with it at some point, particularly if we have been involved in politics for some time. We all know that identity politics, this talk about “white privilege” and what people call “intersectionality”—all it does is reinforce the racial lines that we’re trying to overcome. If it ever had any use or goal, the uprising has superseded it at this point. Let me work through these ideas one by one.

Privilege: I think we all know, or we can all admit, or we should admit, that privilege has become a purely psychological concept. There’s a long history to the notion of white privilege. It dates back to W.E.B. Du Bois, to Theodore Allen, to Noel Ignatiev, to Harry Haywood. For each of these authors, what was in question was a theoretical construct whose aim was to incite white workers to strike alongside Black workers. Somehow in the twists and turns that are American politics, the notion became psychological, a way to make white people feel good about their guilt. If you look at, for instance, Peggy McIntosh’s definitive text on white privilege, she talks about the privilege of being able to chew with

mean, I know now, but I sure as shit didn’t know then.

”We?” I asked. ”What?” I was due back out front because I was a sentry doing the rounds and this sure needed reporting, but what the hell was I going to tell people?

”Who are we fighting? Where are we?”

”You’re in Asheville,” I said. ”Who are you?”

”Ah, the American conflict,” the man said. Behind him, others nodded. Their movements were sloppy, dreamlike. They were drunk, I later realized. One of them had dried blood running down from her lip and onto her not-insubstantial belly.

”You’re fighting the nationalists,” the first one said. ”We’re here to help you.”

”Who are you?” I asked. This third time, he actually answered.

”My name is Belgr. We are the dead. We are the Einherjar, from Valhalla. Every day, we are sent to a battle to fight and we die.”

The others, behind him, nodded. Definitely drunk.

Now, I know there were good folks on our side who were into European paganism, but you have to understand that a lot more of the fash were into that shit than anyone else. If they hadn’t been naked and drunk, I might have mistaken them for the enemy and shot them.

”Valhalla,” I said, reciting the tiny bit I knew, ”that’s where vikings go if they die in battle. Feast every day and fight every night in Odin’s hall. Until the end of the world, when you fight and die also but like, a wolf eats the sun or something.”

”Close enough,” Belgr said. ”I mean, Odin only gets half the battle dead. And viking isn’t a good name for us. But sure.”

”And you’re here because...” ”We are to take arms alongside you, fight your enemies, and die today.”

”Am I going to die today too?” ”Only the seers and the gods know that.”

I’d been calling myself a witch half my life, but honestly that was mostly because I liked tarot and

astrology and pentagrams and shit. I’ve never been someone who took the supernatural all that seriously. But nothing in the world made sense like it used to. Fascists had just been driven out of DC, Cascadia had not only seceded but was in a civil war of its own now, Mexico was gone and replaced by self-governing states of almost every stripe in the political rainbow, China had backed white supremacists and other nationalist types in an American civil war, and anti-government leftists were fighting alongside weirdos like me in the damn US Army. I can’t say those things are as weird as naked dead don’t-call-us-vikings talking to me on the street, but somehow all of that was just comparably bizarre.

”Come, let us arm ourselves and fight together, you and I,” Belgr said.

So that’s how I met the Northern Host. Most people don’t believe me, assume it was just some drunk wingnuts, maybe some irregulars I’d never met before. But I saw what I saw and I believe it. The rest of us who survived, they saw it too.

How did it go?

Pardon?

The battle. How did it go?

We got the Einhenjar into irregulars garb and armed them. There were plenty of guns at that point, in that forgotten hellhole of a front. Bullets, not so much, but plenty of guns. They were all comfortable with firearms, though one fellow grouched about what he wouldn’t do for an axe and shield and another said what we had was fine but monofilament web guns were better than any combat shotgun.

To hear them tell it--oh, fuck it, why am I pretending like I don’t believe them? I believe them with every bit of my soul, and damn what people think of me for it. The Northern Host fights every night, and every night they are in a different time and place. Most battles in human history were in the past, they said, which sounds

optimistic doesn’t it, but they said they’ve fought in every century up to the 24th. Nothing happens after the 24th century. Ragnarok, most likely. The end of the world, wolves eating the sun and the moon, all of that.

They stood guard with me out front. Around midday, we got hit with an EMP. We knew that was coming, it didn’t screw us up much. We had a hardened phone in the basement, and all our weapons operated just as well in dumb mode as smart mode. Including our own EMPs. The White Army showed up, maybe a hundred men. All men. That’s their whole schtick. They came in on motorcycles and ATVs and horses. More schtick. Look how fucking folksy they are. We hit them with EMPs anyway, level the field, and took out the ATVs. The bikes were retrofitted no-electric and a horse... you can’t EMP a horse. I don’t know if there was a skirmish in that war that didn’t start with both sides ritually knocking the other one back to basically the 20th century. I think the tactical EMP is the reason there’s anything left of this country.

We took a few potshots while they were still at range, but we didn’t have the ammo to waste on anything else. Don’t think we did any damage. They took up position further up the hill, in the ruins of the old Basilica.

Then we waited. We should have mined the church. That old thing was blown half to shit already, it wouldn’t have made the world any worse if we’d either leveled it or hidden explosives throughout. But, you know, ethical war or whatever. Don’t mine churches. The other side leveled every mosque, synagogue, and ”heretic” church they got their hands on, not to mention libraries and universities and even the goddammed Statue of Liberty because they hate immigrants, but we were supposed to fighting ”ethical war.” Those two words don’t got nothing to do with one another and everyone knows it.

So they holed up in the Basilica and we pulled back into the library and we had one of those good old fashioned standoffs where people slowly die from sniper fire and everything is awful.

The Northern Host

by Margaret Killjoy

For all its lingering horror and misery, the wake of a war is rich terrain for a folklorist like myself--more people report more supernatural experiences during times of war than times of peace. Some of my peers have argued the stress and shock of battle leaves our brains more susceptible to mass delusion. Others claim that the veil between worlds remains thin when so many are passing from life to death.

The second American civil war has been no exception.

Most famously, of course, soldiers from each of the three armies present at the Fifteen Day Siege of St. Louis reported a wailing man who walked among the wounded, healing some and ending the lives of others. On the Cascadian front, Rebel forces spoke of black bears who in effect stood sentry for their guerrilla positions. During the White Army's occupation of Washington, D.C., civilians and soldiers alike reported apparitions pouring out from the Pentagon crater every new moon.

Of all the various myths and legends to spring up in the wake of the recent conflict however, I find myself most strongly drawn to the stories of the Northern Host. Never have I heard a myth recounted in such detail by such a wide variety of people.

My favorite telling comes from Pvt. Sarah Daher and the battle of Asheville. This interview was recorded in the spring of 2035 and lightly edited for clarity with permission of the subject. Note that the subject refers to the White Army by pejoratives throughout--these have been left intact for the historical record.

#

Could you introduce yourself and tell me what you saw?

My name is Sarah Daher. I'm thirty-one years old. I live in Asheville in the Appalachian region of the United States of America on stolen Cherokee land. My US military rank was Private.

They made us all privates when they incorporated the irregulars into the Army, but I only served in the Union to fight the White Army. A year later, and I'm one of those crazy radicals who doesn't think the Reconfiguration goes far enough.

I'd never fired a gun in my life before the irregulars and I hope I'll never fire another one again. By temperament, I'm neither a lover nor a fighter. I'm just your average transgirl who likes cats and hates Nazis.

I fought in three engagements: in Weaverville, Leicester, and Asheville. I think I killed two people. One of them, I know I killed him. I saw him bleed out and I saw him taken away in a black bag. The other person was a man I shot in the thigh during the battle of Asheville. I didn't know you can die from a bullet in the thigh, but I've spent a lot of time looking at casualty records and someone who fit that man's general description died in that battle from a bullet to the thigh.

Does that bother you?

Yes? No? I don't know. I don't lose sleep over it. But I think about it a lot. I looked at the dox on both of them. The first guy was a true believer, a real blood and soil type. It doesn't bother me that I mingled those two things for him. The second man though, I'm not so sure. He signed up because his son signed up. I don't have any kids myself, but I could see myself doing that. His son survived the war.

Have you been in contact with his son?

No, fuck that guy. That kid is a fucking Nazi and I don't know how he talked his way out of the tribunals.

Can you tell me what you saw at the Battle of Asheville?

This was during the Fash's spring offensive last year. You know, Hitler's birthday, April 20th. By that point the White Army was pretty much done, but they weren't about to go down without doing some major symbolic damage.

So there were about forty of us, all irregulars, with our own commanders. No Army oversight. Morale was down, we felt pretty abandoned. Common sentiment in the South. I was on the street out in front of the library walking rounds. Downtown was half rubble at that point. Only the library was standing, because symbols matter and all that bullshit, so that's where we were making a stand.

Neither side had artillery really by that point. The brass had just commandeered even our RPGs for the "real" fight. Air support wasn't coming, not for them and not for us. Really, the Battle of Asheville was like nothing, to the rest of the world, and we knew it.

So I was doing rounds, thinking about my shit luck, thinking maybe I was gonna die and how so many people had died that what's another dead girl to add to the pile. I was thinking about how at least this dead girl was going to die surrounded by or in defense of books. Then I heard dogs, from around the side of the building. One barked loud and near, the other sort of distant and echoey.

I went to check it out, turned the corner, and there was this naked guy. He was pale as hell, tall, tattooed and scarred and like I said he was as naked as the sun. I stared at him. He stared at me. I got so distracted trying to figure him out that it took me a moment to realize there were nine others behind him, or maybe they weren't there at first, I don't know. Most of them were men, mostly of the tall Norse-looking variety, but there was a Middle Eastern man and a three women, including one who by my read was latinx.

No dogs anywhere that I could see.

The man closest to me, he asked me something in some language I didn't know. I just kind of stared. He asked me another question, in another language.

"What?" I asked. "Who are you?"

"Who are we fighting?" he asked. His accent was thick, and I couldn't place it for the life of me. I

your mouth closed. I don't give a fuck about chewing with my mouth closed. [6]

As for intersectionality: I did a talk at Red May so I won't go into this too deeply here, but as John Clegg and I tried to show, the presuppositions that intersectionality holds are becoming empirically false. [7] What the data is beginning to show is that, for instance, there are more Black women prison guards than there are those going into prison. This doesn't discredit the struggle and plight of Black women, but as a construct, intersectionality is showing its limits. In fact, there are more white women being incarcerated today than Black women, oddly enough. As for Black men, we all know they just sit in jail and stay in jail.

Whatever intersectionality once wanted to do is no longer feasible or viable as a guide for us. In my talk with Red May, I suggest that we get back to the roots of Black feminism. We need categories that understand the Black feminist struggle beyond the oppression that the system inflicts upon them. I cited Toni Cade Bambara's book called *The Black Woman* (1970), in her excellent preface, she refuses to define what a "Black woman" is. She does not say that a Black woman is the intersection of two oppressions; she does not say that Black women are in the margins of two different systems of hierarchy. What she argues, rather, is that Black women are an open possibility to be further understood through their revolutionary activity. In place of intersectionality as a discourse of systemic oppression, what we need to do is to bring back the idea of Black feminism as a discourse of struggle.

Finally, by opening up this definition of what Black women are and who they are, what Toni Cade Bambara was

saying that Black women cannot be tied down by any static identity imposed upon them. Of course they are something more. And if we look at the history of Black folks in this country, we're always something more than what has been hoisted upon us.

Identity politics, intersectionality, and social privilege discourse: all are modalities of the police.

What's more, and above all, is that each of these discourses ignore the morbid and terrifying libidinal politics that undergirds race in this country. It took someone as courageous as James Baldwin to say this, and everyone is still afraid to repeat it. If you read his phenomenal short story, "Going to Meet the Man," [8] you can see the dynamics of racism in this country acutely. To briefly summarize the story: it starts in the bedroom of a white heterosexual couple. The white man is struggling with impotence. How does he get over his impotence? He remembers back to a time as a child where he was brought to a lynching. At that lynching the corpse was not only mutilated, it was sexually mutilated, and he was given the genitalia. Once he remembers being handed the genitalia, he is able to become erect.

This is deep stuff. No one likes talking about it. But this is the core of racism that we need to reach. What's more, I think no one wants to touch this part of the race problem because we are all implicated in it. It is obvious that white liberals get off on videos of Black murder. It is even more obvious that there are Black liberals who are more than happy to sell these videos of Black death for their own careerist goals. So long as we fail to take into account these libidinal drives within racism, we will not be able to explain how and why Ahmaud Arbery was killed. It had nothing to do with the police. It had to do with what is driving American society as such.

4. The insurgency cannot be confined within any well-circumscribed sociological

category. By necessarily exceeding all classification, it is an excluded remnant detaching itself from all that binds together the American wasteland. Consequently, this combatant formation can only be defined in terms of its movement and its development, as that which emerged during the first weeks of the revolt and which will dissolve itself upon the full completion of the revolutionary project.

As I said earlier, every conceivable kind of person participated in the revolt. This can be confirmed by anyone who participated in the revolt itself. There is no category that can sum up all of who was there. The best we can say is that what we saw was the inclusively-excluded, or the part of America that has no part in it, and that wants nothing to do with this place. Such a formation can only be grasped by how it is moving, outside and against the current state of things, that can only be traced by way of its trajectory: against the state and capital, against American society. What is now up to us is to deepen and strengthen this spontaneous organization, so that we come up with something together that is even more terrible, even more powerful, than what we saw last night. Something that splits American society in half.

5. The so-called the Black leadership, therefore, cannot and does not exist. It is a chimera to be found exclusively in the white liberal imagination.

You hear it everywhere. I've heard it from every city, every friend who texted me. If I called a friend and said, "Hey, what happened in NOLA?", or "What happened in Chicago?" If there were riots, if people got busy, there was no mention of a Black leadership. If things stopped, if things were stultified, all we heard about was a Black leadership.

The thing is, I have never in my life actually seen a Black leader. Why? Because they don't exist. If there are

Black leaders, they’re dead like Martin and Malcolm. If you’re worth your salt, you will be killed. If there are Black leaders, they are in jail with Mumia and with Sundiata. If there are Black leaders, they are on the run with Assata.

There is only one category of people who speak of Black leaders, and we know them as white liberals. The Black leadership is nothing other than a figment and hallucination that exists solely in the imagination of the white liberal’s mind. The odd thing about it is that somehow white liberals have more contact with Black leaders than I have ever come across in my entire life. It is as if a channel extends from the Black leadership directly into their head.

There have been reasons proposed as to why the classical formation of Black leadership no longer exists. One argument, which can be derived from many of the new sociological studies (there was a big report about this in the New York Times as well), asserts that to develop a firm hegemonic leadership of the sort we saw in the past typically requires a substantial middle class. But if you look at the data from the past 40 years, the Black middle class has been under constant threat. Hopefully it stays like that, honestly. But it is very hard to define what exactly the Black middle class is. If you do say there is this well-defined group, and if you’re able to circumscribe this well-defined group, they typically exist within the white community. Just to speak a little bit more personally from my experience in New York, I am hard pressed to think of ever meeting a Black middle-class person growing up, or of ever even hearing their rhetoric and their nonsense. But it’s not really a thing anymore.

Why does the white liberal need to hallucinate and invent a Black leadership for him or herself?

Ultimately, it is because whitey loves property. Property enjoys a special prestige in American life, it has a special kind of sanctity. We always get these calls for the Black leadership from white liberals whenever the windows start to crack. There is a very important reason that property has this particular kind of sanctity in America, as many historians are starting to confirm and argue. [9] For most of its history, the most important property in America was human property, shackled and chained. We need to weaponize this argument, and say that whenever property is protected, it is protected for white supremacist ends. If property is truly the pursuit of happiness, in that trifold of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, the existence of that happiness and property is premised upon the negation of Black life and the negation of Black liberty. So the protection of property is something that we need to attack explicitly.

6. The current crisis derives from a contradiction that proceeds from the two Janus-faced sides of post-Cold War American governance: an inconsistency between the demands of the sovereign imperial State and globalized biopolitical security. As a result, the metropolitan center has begun to experience the sort of chaos and the instability that it has classically sewn within the colonial periphery.

This dynamic captures the situation that we are living in today, and which we have been experiencing acutely over the past few months.

On the one side, we have state sovereignty, the classical notion of the state. Following Schmitt, but most importantly following Agamben, the paradoxical foundation of the state proves to be important to the way it operates. In order to define the state, the state must employ extra-legal and extra-judicial measures in order to found itself. Every time the state founds itself, it must go outside the law that it seeks to create. What has

occurred classically, and we have a lot of historical examples of this in America, is that whenever there’s a crisis, the state imposes some sort of state of exception in order to create the order that it needs to reassert itself.

As we saw, for example, in the American Civil War, in the two Red Scares, and most recently in the War on Terror, the executive branch of the government has continually mobilized itself beyond its formal legal parameters and confines.

We see this today especially with Trump. Trump is using and abusing his executive powers, but it is better to say that he is using them in the way that they were set out to be used. What was originally the province of the legislative branch has now been taken over by Trump himself.

This component of the U.S. asserting itself has also shown itself in its foreign wars. We need to keep in mind, and I will come back to this, that—and for some reason this fact has been downplayed in the past 20 or 30 years—America is the one imperial power in the globe, and it serves itself aggressively around the world. After the collapse of the [Soviet Union] and the Cold War, we have seen the United States become the police officer, or the storm trooper, of the entire Earth. This is one side of governance.

It is important to contrast this with another form of governance, which is typically called biopolitical discipline, or biopolitical security. The latter differs from the enforcement of the law carried out by the classic state. Rather, it names the management of lives. If the state kills, biopolitics is concerned with the protection of those lives—for its own ends, of course.

The most recent regime of biopolitical control is what is known as “security”. What “security” does is it allows an event to happen, so as to then manage that event. These events are varied. They can be something like pandemics, like the COVID-19 pandemic we’re

people with firearms. The crowd soon found its stride, and when we approached the streets lined with local racist businesses begging to be reminded how we feel about them, “Queen” and her crew (who had been tailing us, despite being uninvited and unwanted) began, in twos, to run ahead and stand sentry to protect the businesses. Small tagging was met with cries of “peaceful protest” from the interlopers, to which a witty autonomist responded “if you don’t like something, don’t do it.” When a huge, racist bar that is a longtime haven of televised MMA fights, AXE body spray, button-ups, aggro bouncers, overpriced drinks, rape culture and a hxstory of genuine anti-Black attitudes and practices was happened upon, the redecoration began. “Queen” and her crew attempted to physically restrained folks who were smashing windows, and a Black persxn in the autonomous march shouted “you defending a racist business? Fuck [name of bar]!” When other marchers came to the defense of the redecorators, one of “Queen’s” crew (which includes a white womxn who is always wearing a SIEGE mask) fired a “warning shot” from a gun that sounded like a .45. The shot was fired, at a 20 degree angle, in the midst of a crowded march, around several inhabited apartments. Many of us dispersed at this point, and as linked twitter feeds can attest, those that attempted to continue the march had their phalanx broken up from within by the armed, argumentative goons (a police tactic that I’ve been trained to watch out for, but, you know, these folk aren’t cops, right?). People regrouped at the location we departed from, and had a conversation around autonomy and tactics. I don’t know that a discussion of autonomy and tactics has happened in this context yet, in the present wave of protests, and I think this a good thing.

I bring this all up to let off some steam and hammer home the importance of political education. Some of the youth in these streets don’t even remember OCCUPY!, and the advent of BLM, Trump’s election, Unite the

Right and now BLM 2.0 / the George Floyd Rebellion has seen more people in the street than ever before. This is dubiously awesome, but definitely means that it is not just us out there who know what an “FTP” march means (meant?) in terms of attire and behavior. Some of us out here don’t know how undercovers, informants and genuine provocateurs have been used against us for generations. Sadly, questioning the status quo, the community, the family, authority itself is often a privilege, and some folk may never have had the space to explore even the ideas of “no one in charge”. The aforementioned “381 Movement” (which holds court in MDP Circle, has overlapping membership with “Queen’s” crew, is youth-based, all Black and has constantly changing politics and messaging) has literally erected a false dichotomy between those that are trying to get Black folks to vote, own homes, etc. and those that are “doing nothing.” While their tired reformist playbook of ineffective tactics from the civil rights era - - they are called “381” because MLK Jr. and them marched for 381 days to desegregate the bus system - - appeals to low-key white supremacists that love it when Black people passively accept traumatic brain injuries, broken teeth, dog bites, bloody arrests, jail stints and straight-up lynchings without so much as lifting a finger in their own defense, and while it neutralizes ANY potentially effective resistance, I don’t necessarily think these local Negroes forged in the former capital of the confederacy are intending to do the pig’s work - - they simply haven’t been encouraged to take certain risks, question certain hallowed traditions (no matter how many times they have failed us) or look for answers outside the system and its propaganda disguised by outdated textbooks...

We need to be bold in spreading movement hxstory - - OUR movement hxstory. Whether the Christian church, Marxism, Non-Profit liberalism or reactionary, Blexit-esque NEO-liberalism, most Black activists in US-occupied territory are influenced by cracker ideology (who else but Yakub

has the time, access and arrogance to put pen to paper instead of food on the table?). At least formalized anarchist, autonomist and anti-authoritarian thought leads to greater joy and “freedom” in practice... and “Days of War, Nights of Love” and “Anarkata” can exist side-by-side, without conflict...

We need to not shy away FROM conflict, as it brings contradictions to the surface, and brings out the best in us (as well as the worst, but the latter goes without saying). It clarifies what we think, who we are and who our enemies are (one does not grow and change without discomfort and challenge).

Finally, we need to accept that we can’t be in bed with everybody. We are going to make enemies. Those enemies, working for the state or their own fragile egos, will malign, discredit and attack us. Anarchists have always been “the bad guy,” and in a culture where the cowboy and the cop are the hero, why not be the villain?

Let’s begin to aggressively educate our new potential comrades on affinity group structure, on horizontalist organizing, on autonomous direct actions and on ideas, successes and failures of our movement elders and ancestors so that mistakes don’t get repeated and the confused don’t get preyed on by any unscrupulous all too eager to take advantage of the hive-mind’s desire to identify and follow a leader (especially one that looks, sounds and acts like every other “leader” we’ve been told to fear and obey).



opportunistic authoritarians at autonomous / leaderless actions. The provincial and corporate media ate it up and exploited the intentionally vague style of the "traditional" FTP march flyers for the actions that were shared on social media and signal threads. The truth, however, is that after Mike Dunn and the BLM 757 leader megaphoned it up and marched folk several blocks for a photo op, they disappeared... leaving the crowd to do what it does best when at its best.

The following night saw immediate arrests, with the meet-up location being instantly swarmed by riot pigs, resulting in 17 arrests (largely of known, local journalists who were not even in the park, which "closes at dusk" and thereby justifies the brutalization and detention of anyone in its vicinity the moment the sky changes from blue to darker-blue).

The third night, Monday night, the night responsible for this article, saw us meeting up on the steps of the church directly adjacent to the park from which the marches of the prior two nights took off. There was a strange LACK of police in the vicinity (save maybe one undercover circling in a Black unmarked vehicle), especially given the heavy-handed response of the prior night. As folks began showing up, a frequent associate of the MDP Circle security crew claimed that we were waiting for a march from said circle to

make it to our meet-up before taking the streets. Okay, strength in numbers, right? MDP Circle was only a few blocks from our meet-up point anyway... about 30 minutes later, there is neither hide nor hair of a "march" from MDP. When this is brought to the now very drunken associate's attention, he gets on the phone to see what is up with the MDP folk. Within 5 or so minutes, the armed "BLM" security crew (led by "Queen," pictured holding hands with Mike Dunn:

<https://twitter.com/notmynypd/status/1288260011488149506/photo/1>) shows up and begins commanding from on high that this march is about "Love" and "Unity" (their code for "Law" and "Order"... "Love and Unity" has been used to compel us to "take a knee" before the pigs by bullhorn bros whenever anything rowdy begins... we can thank the local sketchy bootlickers with "the 381 Movement" here for that, but that's another story). The recently arrived squad of Black armed goons decree that there will be NO destruction of property, that this is a "peaceful protest" and other, all-too-familiar, gruffly delivered stipulations. From the crowd, a light-skinned Black anarchist asked, calmly, who decided that this was a peaceful protest, and the response was "so when are you leaving?" from one of the goon squad. It quickly degenerated from there, as further questions about why this crew



has the authority to demand anything were met with screaming on the part of the goons. When the goons said that this action "had to be a police set-up, since no grassroots organization took credit for the flyer" that brought us all there, and, therefore "someone had to step up and lead," the goons were briefly schooled on what protest autonomy means. When leaderless marching was promoted, a man with the goons began screaming about how "everyone here agrees that that is stupid," to much boo-ing from the crowd. "Queen" began screaming and chest-beating about being "the leader," this being "her city," about "real Richmond recognize real" and other semi-coherent appeals to defer to her because "[she] IS 'Black Lives Matter'". When asked who elected "Queen" "the leader" a largely wordless, massive and very armed man replied only with "the people." When it became apparent that no real communication around tactics or politics was possible, those of us that value autonomy left on our march...

It was awkward and small, but it was a march in which people were not being commanded by any self-appointed protest bosses, nor was anyone being wrangled by aggressive

going through today; these could be famines, or disasters like Katrina; and they could also be insurrections like the one we are hopefully fomenting right now. What the state does in these instances is to make a statistical calculation and try to find acceptable terms within which it can allow events such as pandemics to occur, while keeping them within neatly circumscribed boundaries.

In addition to the paradox of the state that we see in the state of exception, there is also a strange biopolitical paradox of preparedness that we are experiencing right now. The paradox typically goes like this: after a disasters—say, a pandemic or a famine—there is a drive within the security apparatus to begin preparing for the next disaster to come. After SARS in the 2000s, there was a big push to be prepared for the next coming pandemic. This over-preparedness then is put on the back burner when it comes to light that the next disease is not going to appear when we expect it to appear. The famed medical anthropologist Andrew Lakoff drew attention to this paradox, which we have seen again recently. There has been preparedness for pandemics, but the preparedness was then put on the back burner, so that when the COVID-19 pandemic came we were still not ready for it. We are dealing at once with two different types of paradox here: one that must venture outside of itself in order to found itself, and the other a cycle of preparedness that consistently generates unpreparedness.

There is the legal side and the statistical side of the state, the nation state in its classic form and this more global operation of security. I would like to argue that these two directives are colliding with each other and forming some sort of crisis.

Legal means to an ends have been in a constant state of crisis: Trump just can't do anything right. Whatever he does seems to backfire, and it does not seem to always be the worst thing.

Trump and his own deluded mind has become an agent of anarchy. [10] Now of course he doesn't think he is—it is up to us, when this chaos reigns, to utilize this for our own ends. What I'm saying is that we need to inhabit this chaos that the state is inflicting upon itself.

Unlike liberals and reformists, we are not here to reaffirm and reassert law and order. We are not here to transform America into one big safe space. We are here to make the chaos and the disorder more terrible than it has ever been.

We must do what revolutionaries have always done: we must make the contradiction intolerable.

7. As the rebel-slaves did with the periodic outbreaks of yellow fever in Haiti, there is a hidden partisan knowledge to be uncovered surrounding the novel coronavirus pandemic that also can be exploited and weaponized against established power.

In the Imaginary Party's best book, entitled To Our Friends [11], the authors mention a pamphlet issued by the CDC in 2012 on the subject of disaster preparedness. [12] It is a part American Tiqqunists tend not to mention. In order to make disaster preparedness pertinent and hip to the youngsters, the CDC invokes the example of preparing for a zombie apocalypse. Their basic argument was that if people can prepare for a zombie apocalypse, they will be able to prepare for a natural disaster such as a flood, a storm, a pandemic, or even an insurrection.

The Invisible Committee argue in their book that this fear of zombies has a long and racialized history, linked in no uncertain terms to the fear of the Black proletariat. And the other side of this fear that doesn't want to be mentioned, that refuses to be mentioned or is repressed, resides in the paranoia of the white middle class over its own

worthlessness.

If we look back over the history of zombies, the figure of the zombie appeared within the voodoo utilized during the Haitian Revolution. There was a person by the name of Jean Zombi who ended up taking the name because he participated in the massacre of slave owners. What I think is particularly instructive for our purposes today is that the Haitian insurgents were perfectly aware that they could use the yellow fever pandemic against their former masters and against the army, whether this be Napoleon's army, or the party of order more generally. The insurgents waited until the yellow fever outbreak took hold. They knew that their former slave masters' army would be devoured by the pandemic, and they also knew that they had built up an immunity to that pandemic. So they waited until the army had been decimated by yellow fever, and then they launched their guerilla attacks.

What I am arguing for here is something very similar. We all know that Black people and brown people were disproportionately affected by the COVID pandemic. This is a medical problem. But it is much more than a mere medical-scientific problem, it is a political problem. We must reject the sort of sanitized liberal politics of safety that is afraid of the pandemic, that is largely a sanitary discourse around masks, distancing, etc. I know this is a political issue now. But, on the flip side, I'm not defending right-wing conspiracy theorist ideas that the pandemic does not exist, or that it is just a flu, etc.. What I'm proposing here is that we develop a kind of partisan knowledge—our own knowledge about the pandemic—to exploit the pandemic for our own good, and to use the knowledge of the pandemic as a weapon against our enemies.



8. The insurrection will involve precise coordination from within the constellation of riots: the paradoxical organization of disorder beyond any measure of control. Accordingly, the problem of insurrection has equal parts social and technical dimensions.

What I am advocating is a paradoxical ordering of disorder, an Organized Konfusion (for those who remember the rap group). To do this, we must read up on tactics: we must look into what exactly was smashed; what exactly was looted; and how and why the occupations were effective or ineffective. We need to think strategically about the chaos that we inflict in the streets.

What is more, we also need to anticipate new forms of tactics, struggles and strategies that will emerge, so as to intensify these struggles and tactics. We can anticipate that occupations and rent strikes are going to occur in the near future due to the looming threat of eviction that is occurring in all of our heavily gentrified cities. But I think we need to go beyond these defensive struggles and to be more creative and to initiate tactics that go on the offensive. In fact, what I am advocating here is employing the whole arsenal of proletarian strategies and tactics—from riots, to strikes, to blockades.

But we need to be creative in our tactics and strategies. As we have seen in the recent Twitter hacks, these are just as important. What’s important is that we be creative in how we deploy these strategies and tactics.

What is the modern equivalent of the telephone exchange in Barcelona that was so savagely fought over during the May Days in 1937? What is the modern equivalent of the St. Petersburg rail line that the insurgent workers fought so hard over in revolutionary Russia? We have a unique problem, in that we live in a huge country. We need to figure out creative ways to break this

distance and utilize it for our own ends, i.e., as pure means.

9. Materialize the ever-present specter of a second, more balkanized, civil war by fragmenting the fragments of a crumbling empire.

At least since Trump was elected and took office, the archetype of civil war has been looming over this country. There are historical reasons for this. Since American Civil War was for some the most traumatic experience this country has ever collectively undergone, and for others the most liberating, it stands as a figure that is continually recalled within the collective imaginary. But, I think there are also structural reasons. The fundamental operation of the state works by warding off the ubiquitous threat of civil war. The State as such can be thought of as that which blocks and inhibits civil war. What is unique about this country is our singular emancipatory tradition, which is itself bound up with our understanding of civil war.

I would otherwise here cite Kenneth Rexroth’s excellent autobiography, where he explains that the radical abolitionists who took part in the Civil War gave birth to children who became the first era of the American socialist, anarchist, and communist labor movement. [13] But I think the best example comes from Du Bois’s classic book, Black Reconstruction. [14] It was the proletarian general strike of the ex-slaves that truly put the final nail in the coffin of slavery. It is precisely this lineage of an emancipatory, liberatory, but nonetheless violent, civil war that needs to be updated for its second coming. Another important precedent is Harry Haywood’s “Black-Belt” thesis. As a member of the central committee of the Communist Party USA, Haywood argued that revolution in the United States of America would involve an independent Black state in

the South. I think this is no longer feasible, but I think what he was grasping at, and was trying to deal with, was the problem of revolution in a country that is simply massive.

The revolution here presents a problem of sheer scale for us. This is, I think, why Haywood argued for the breaking apart of America. We have no historical precedent for a revolution in such a large, industrialized, and modern state, so we have a unique problem to grapple with.

I do not know exactly what this looks like. What is certain is that this country is already beginning to break and fracture, and it is up to us to break and fracture it further, into so many pieces that it can never be put back together again.

Revolution, here more than anywhere else, will involve the messy task of division. Here too, we have a unique problem, for we must avoid the rather aggressive, ugly, and dangerous nationalism that occurred in other cases of civil war that we have seen over the past forty years. I am not advocating another series of Yugoslav wars, nor am I advocating what has occurred in Syria. Nonetheless, we must harness civil war as an emancipatory liberatory power. The fundamental goal is to break apart America into a constellation of federated communes.

10. The fulfillment of the revolutionary project is ultimately an inescapable ethical obligation that each of us have to the dead and the exploited.

At the risk of sounding naive, I sincerely believe that the riots that we have all witnessed, and hopefully participated in, this summer have opened the window to insurrection and even a full-blown revolution. It is possible that I may be miscalculating

humxn being hashtagged by terrorist police have had to contend ever since...

So, the statues. We brought MANY of them down by our own damn selves, the state brought down several preemptively to save face, and to throw us a bone (as if it would make up for the constant use of internationally illegal abortifacient chemicals on humxn beings on the daily, or make up for the murder of local martyr Marcus David Peters, who was murdered by pigs while making snow angels, naked, during a mental health crisis; or make up for anything we suffer under a system that elevates property over people since my ancestors were brought here as chattel during the Maafa). The statue that remains on Monument Ave is the 60ft tall Robert E. Lee statue, the only one that is technically state (opposed to city) property. A racist judge that has called Black people “parasites” imposed an indefinite injunction on the statue’s removal, which governor-pig Northam - - who promised in obvious bad faith to remove said statue while folk were still burning shit down - - is somehow helpless to defy... I wish a klan-ass judge could pass an injunction on pigs killing our people, but anyhow... The 2nd night of actual resistance, the leaderless amoeba of anger that was the crowd “took” the space, which came to be dubbed “Marcus David Peters Circle”... Pictures abound of how it has been redecorated, and it is now largely a launch pad for marches and basically became an Occupy-style park, with medic tents, Food Not Bombs set-ups (complete with sketchy oogle-ness that accompanies FnB spaces), projections of speeches and performances on the side of said statue that depict and honor Black excellence and resistance. The statue-park also now features an omnipresent, largely drunken and drugged-up squad of seeming ex-military / undercover cop / street soldier Black folk - - led ostensibly by Black wimmin - - who are armed to the teeth with long-guns, side-arms, blades, radios and body armor. They are the epitome of reactionary, responding with aggression and intimations of violence if merely questioned about the



directives they bark. They constantly feed misinformation, manufacturing crises that never materialize (“there are 30 klan members in 5 pick-up trucks headed here RIGHT NOW!!!”) to foment fear / confusion and justify an extremely authoritarian approach to “crowd control.” The men of the crew frequently “beef” as the late-night draws on and liquor runs dry, sometimes pulling weapons on each other. They have made Black transwimmin uncomfortable and feel unwelcome. They have threatened problematic wimmin who visit the space with violence, calling them “B**ches” and other gender-based slurs, their tipsy hands never too far from their ARs...

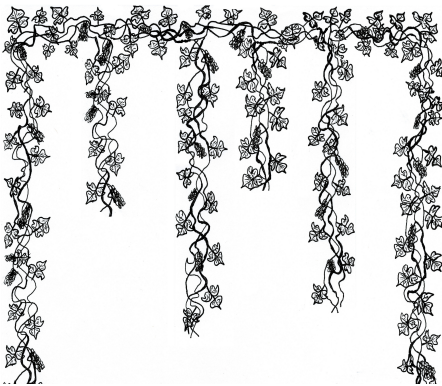
This brings me to the reason I even began this rant in the first place (as a queer Black anarchist who feels very isolated in this movement, you can’t blame me for taking up space when I get the chance). Those first two nights found the streets full of Boog Boys, with whom I often, honestly, have more tactical affinity than the “African American,” police-worshiping shills of the Democrat party and the non-profitteer adrienne marie brown acolytes that talk a good game while magic-tricking “abolition” into “defunding” and “revolution” into “living your best life.” Still, it is surreal to nearly come to blows with someone who will legit shatter the windshield of a moving cop car with an expertly

tossed brick over the said someone’s violent attacks on Black “looters” for “stealing” during “the [if-only-annual] Purge.” Whether the Boogs are crypto-fash accelerationists in celebration or denial of their white supremacy and anti-Blackness, their collusion with the US occupation of unceded Native land and embrace of its constitution inked in the blood of the enslaved makes them reactionary and NOT revolutionary, however effective they may be at direct engagement with / assassination of police (that they lionize Vicki Weaver but NOT Korryn Gaines is alone telling of their race AND gender politics)...

These “Boogaloo Bois” have a local representative in Mike Dunn, a 19 year old former corrections pig (who was discharged from the military prematurely for a heart condition OR being a Nazi - - the verdict has yet to come back conclusive) that organized the Boog-themed July 4th 2A rally here. He is seen in several videos at that rally “in solidarity” with the local “BLM” folks (a.k.a the drunken militia from Marcus David Peters Circle, who exhibit misogyny, queer/transphobia, white supremacist apologism and authoritarian tendencies similar to “BLM 757” - - one Black man from the 757 area code in VA also widely vilified for problematic, pig-like behavior). BLM 757 AND Mike Dunn “led” the recent “Solidarity with Portland” J25 action... that is to say they commandeered it, as will most

were all piled into the back of my little truck. As they saw us finally approaching, one yelled “You can’t move this truck if we’re all in it! And I’d sure as shit like to see you try!” It was a really beautiful moment for me, seeing that these motherfuckers truly had my back. It’s seemingly a small, trivial gesture to some, but without knowing me or waiting for some ‘approval’ to do so, they acted. Understanding the risks and completely of their own volition, they stood up (or sat down) to directly subvert tow truck man’s plan.

I’d lived in Asheville for some years by this point and plenty of us here have thrown down together before, but this was the first time I truly saw a spontaneous, organic springing into action that embodied our ideals as anarchists. Anarchy to me lies in how we live. It’s not something we solely theorize about, or reserve for the big calls to action or other cities’ uprisings to embody. Anarchy is how we interact with the world around us, a constant sowing of the world without through action and activity.



*The Boog Queen, Violent Peace
Police and the Apparent
Incomprehensibility of
Autonomy...*
By An APOC in RVA.

I hope to keep this recounting of an RVA movement tragedy brief. Many of us ”veteran activists” are familiar with COINTELPRO (and if you are reading this and are NOT familiar with it, ”The Greatest Threat” by former Political Prisoner and Black Panther Party veteran Marshall ”Eddie” Conway is a great paperback resource; for the ”TL;DR” crowd, there is google and the wiki). Before J. Edgar Hoover became a Hitler to New Afrikans, there was Sun Tzu’s ”Divine Manipulation of the Threads” (see ”On the Use of Spies,” the final chapter of ”The Art of War”). Fascists are lazy, and if a tactic works, they will continue to use it until it no longer achieves their goals (e.g., promising the oppressed about 5% to 15% of what they ask for, and then watching the reformists and the abolitionists within said oppressed fight it out amongst themselves over whether to accept the ”deal” has been working since British gub’ment defanged the IRA). That said, what has worked to undermine movements since I can remember is being employed today in Richmond, VA, and I wanted to make this known...

So, the first two nights of the George Floyd Rebellion here were excellent, from an insurrectionist standpoint (though not without criticism - - the

vandalism of a Black-owned dentistry that has been serving poor New Afrikan children for 30 years was heart-breakingly fucked-up). Otherwise, though, the epic immolation of a GRTC bus, the redecoration of / liberation of goods from Wholefoods / CVS / ABC Stores / Banks / Check Cashing Places / various other businesses both corporate and local, and the great conflagration at the United Daughters of the Confederacy Building (housing HISTorical Confederate documents, memorabilia and the org responsible for erecting the monuments that made Richmond #1 in this illegitimate country for shitty Confederate monuments) were exhilarating moments of anarchy - - all the more savory because inherently unsustainable. People get tired, and many who engaged those first two nights in such ”violent” acts did so not because economic sabotage and undermining the illusion of state control are tactically advantageous (which they are!), but because they were pissed-off. Many of us could riot in our sleep, because it is an effective, preferred direct action and serves as ”propaganda of the deed” (shout out to the Galleanists, Os Cangaceiros and the Autonomes), but the average Joe doesn’t share such analysis and needs the immediacy of egregious Black and Brown genocide to be virtually, virally depicted to get them smashy-smashy juices flowing. That said, the pigs here cracked down the third night (seemingly as part of a National containment strategy) with a curfew and show of force in the form of brutal mass arrests from which even people merely filming out of their apartment windows and observing from their porches were not safe. 233+ folks were arrested that third night, and a 30 minutes-before-curfew teargassing of the ”peaceful protesters” on the fourth night effectively cut the teeth out the uprising, and left a vacuum to be filled by the worst liberal opportunists, plucky careerist would-be politicians, conservative pearl-clutching Civil Rights fetishists, Post-Occupy hippie-burners and other parasitic movement caricatures, with which those of us serious about revenge for every Black

the potentialities that have emerged. Still, it is entirely impossible for anyone to have participated in the current uprising without having the fundamental core of their being unalterably changed. As for myself, and I know for many of you, we feel the revolution deeply within our souls, and it changes our very outlook, the approach to how we live our lives. All the pervasive cynicism, all the rational self-interest, all the nihilism, all that is constitutive of the typical American citizen is slowly being worn away by the insurrection and the uprising.

What this shows us is that the revolution is truly beyond us, truly beyond each and every one of us here. It surpasses all the boundaries thrown up by American individualism. It forces us to finally look beyond ourselves and recognize that America has wreaked havoc as an imperial power around the globe for a century.

And the fight is not only for the living, but also for the dead. We owe the revolution to the millions of slaves who never knew a second of freedom. What the long list of martyrs who have fallen during this uprising deserve from us is nothing other than the completion of the revolution.

Pasolini wrote an essay about a trip to America. What really took him was one of the phrases that no one says anymore but was a big part of the Civil Rights movement: ”we need to throw our entire bodies into the struggle.” [15]

The dead of the struggle scream out for vengeance, and we must avenge their deaths. As Benjamin famously put it, ”not even the dead will be safe from the enemy if he is victorious”. [16] Tonight is the night to begin to settle accounts once and for all, to end their victorious reign upon the globe, and to allow the dead to finally rest.

Notes

[1]

https://archive.org/details/cu3192409696103
6
[2]
https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1901/witbd/
[3] https://voidnetwork.gr/2012/07/18/how-is-it-to-be-done-by-tiqqun/
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https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2020/06/10/george-floyd-black-lives-matter-police-protests-widespread-peaceful/5325737002/ &
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[5]
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2020_deployment_of_federal_forces_in_the_United_States

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https://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/mcintosh.pdf

[7] https://youtu.be/MHMeYtYHiKM

[8]
https://www.cristorey.net/uploaded/Academics/2019-2020/Summer_Reading/James_Baldwin_Going_To_Meet_the_Man.pdf

[9] https://jacobinmag.com/2019/08/how-slavery-shaped-american-capitalism &
https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/enterprise-and-society/article/slavery/EAF172288A7718B082A074603D149A48

[10] See, Marten Bjork, ”Phase two – the reproduction of this life.”

https://www.tillfallighet.org/tillfallighetsskrivande/phase-two-the-reproduction-of-this-life

[11]
https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/the-invisible-committe-to-our-friends

[12]
https://www.cdc.gov/cpr/zombie/index.htm

[13]
http://www.bopsecrets.org/rexroth/autobio/

index.htm

[14] http://www.webdubois.org/wdb-BlackReconst.html

[15] Pasolini, In Danger: A Pasolini Anthology.

[16]
https://www.sfu.ca/~andrewf/CONCEPT2.html



HOROSCOPES

Leo – Everyone knows you’re the best, but that means so do the cops. . . . Outfit changes are essential and don’t forget to tie back that mane.

Scorpio – Scorps, You’re probably already thinking this, but when choosing a tool for tonight, the more phallic the better.

Libra – I know a part of you wants to shout down the fascists at the rally, but remember! Debates are for dafishes, & you’re no water sign.

Aquarius – Aqua, you don’t only blow minds with the depth of your emotional intelligence, you also blow back tear gas with a leaf blower. You are the literal second wind we need. Thank you

Cancer – for tonight, think less pinchy crustacean and more bitey fish. . . If it helps I can put it in a song for you! “Oooooooooohh, (construe la) barricada!”

Gemini – Listen hun, not only does eyebrow enhancement counteract facial recognition, it will also hel pyou dodge your ex. If she shows. Xx

Sagittarius – Remote monitoring got you down? Give yourself permission to be the social butterfly inside. Find a new way to flutter, Sag.

Pisces – That feeling in your stomach. . . Tight? Queasy? Squeezy? You’re right that some shits probably about to go down. But you might also just be hungry. Let’s get you a snack.

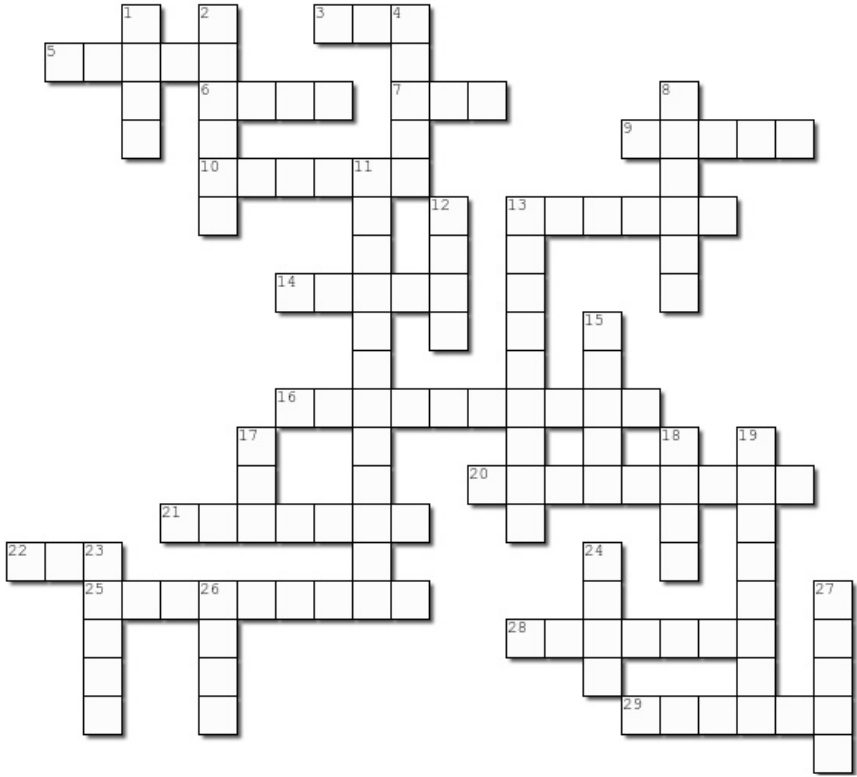
Aries – WEAR A HELMET!

Capricorn – It’s amazing what a nice big O can do for the mind and body, Cappy. Before you hit the streets, you should get off between the sheets. A good O game brings the Best (A) game.

Virgo – Virgy Virg, you know the 5 P’s well, “Prior Planning Prevents Pisspot Performance”. It’s true, but sometimes you’ve gotta get off your phone, take off that organizer hat – switch it out for a bump cap – and get out there.

1. PARALISIS PERMANENTE -
AUTOSUFICIENCIA
2. FOUR IETHERS -
SERPENTWITHFEET
3. SHORT END OF THE STICK -
GORILLA BISCUITS
4. VINCE STAPLES -
NORF NORF
5. CHANGE THE WORLD WITH MY HOCKEY STICK -
THE VANDALS

WITS
RIPPERS
6. TT THE ARTIST -
THUG IT OUT
7. BORSTAL BREAKOUT -
SHAM 66
8. EVERYBODY RISE -
BUSTA RHYMIES
9. PETEY PABLO -
RAISE UP
10. JOHN MAUS -
COP KILLER
11. DICK DALE -
NITRO
12. FUCK 12



Across

- 3. pre-DHS gov. agency with ICE functions
- 5. WV mountain, site of the largest labor uprising in history
- 6. Labor union for inside wiremen
- 7. Stirner obsession
- 9. without it, Emma Goldman says nahh
- 10. revolutionary constructive criticism session
- 13. Former BPP and BLA member, prolific anarchist writer, speaker, and activist from Plainfield, NJ
- 14. Beehive design locale
- 16. Antagonistic green and black zinester
- 20. Chilean protest pup Negro _____
- 21. Flat Earther term for those who believe the earth is round
- 22. Major Co. behind Mariner East and Dakota Access Pipelines.
- 25. Pitt crust band translating to 'extermination' or 'eradication'
- 28. petty swindler
- 29. The Vergara _____ brothers, honored each March 29th in Chile

Down

- 1. Critical _____
- 2. Antifa™ mascot
- 4. Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) enemy
- 8. Black and indigenous communities of guerilla rebellion and autonomy from chattel slavery
- 11. Nickname and later pen name for Bartolomeo Vanzetti
- 12. Musicians Sima and Reed
- 13. Classification of the Eastern Hellbender
- 15. Former president of the Philadelphia Association of Black Journalists, and Live From Death Row author
- 17. _____ Crime
- 18. Annual conference holders for police collaboration (abbr)
- 19. Street Firestorm Books was originally located on
- 23. Where the 1st Bonnot Gang robbery took place
- 24. eat hot _____ and lie
- 26. Radical
- 27. Mexican anarchist who passed at Leavenworth Penitentiary in 1922

Hellbender

Issue #1

A periodical of anarchist ideas, stories, art and fun.

Anarchy in Asheville
by Picco

For this first issue of this publication, I’d like to share a lil’ story with yall about the most welcoming experience I’ve ever had into a radical community, and it happened right here in so-called Asheville. The day after the fascist Turkish regime, lead by Erdogan, was beginning it’s invasion of the cantons of Rojava in late 2019, Asheville was having a mini punk crawl between shows at different venues all night. A couple of us decided last minute to table the show to spread word about what was going down, ways to engage in solidarity with our comrades overseas, and share in conversation with any who wanted to on the subject, between sets.

Between bands, while everyone was fucking around and socializing, a recently made friend came up to the table and said, “Do either of you have a pickup truck parked across the street in the gas station parking lot? They’re about to tow it.” To which, I jumped and started moving through the crowd to get to my truck and keep that motherfucker with all 4 wheels on the pavement. As we came around the corner of the building, I could see across the street where the tow truck backed up to the grill of my pickup, and the tow truck driver just getting down on hand and knee to set the hooks around Gertie’s (my pickup) frame.

After moving quickly across the street, the following brief conversation was thoroughly typical. I said, “I’ll move it! Hey, this is my truck- I’ll move it, I’ll move it” and made my way to the driver’s door. Tow Truck Man ignoring me, continued to set the chains. It wasn’t until I opened the door and hopped in the driver’s seat (and he’d finished with the chains) that he responded and said, “Nope, it’s already hooked up. You can’t move it. Gotta take it.” There were a few people from the show

I’d just started to notice, hanging around Gertie before I’d got there, already in the midst of talking at the tow truck man with no response. At this point, some people in this small gathered crowd responded to tow truck man, “Fuck that! Picco, drive your truck right off that motherfucker! Shit, I’ll do it for ya.” Tow truck man didn’t like that. I was able to pull tow truck man away from the much appreciated antagonisms of the crowd to try and sweet talk my way out of the situation. As we separated from the dimly lit distant corner of the parking lot, a few more show goers were coming across the street joining the others by Gertie.

We spoke by the front of the gas station, with my back to Gertie and the yellow tow truck lights shining off of tow truck man’s round sweaty face. This conversation was also typical. Tow truck man gave the bit about how once it’s hooked up a machine knows and he isn’t allowed to put it down. Not without a fee. There’s nothing tow truck man can do, and so on. After about 20 minutes or so, I was able to talk him down to 1/3 of the fee he pushed hard for, and took that as the best-case, unavoidable L I’d have to take this time. As I fished the cash out of pocket, the buddy who originally tipped me off about the situation came over and checked in, “Picco, you good? This fucking guy giving you a hard time?” I let them know I got to a comfortable enough deal and we’d settled up on it so Gertie was staying. One long furtive glare at tow truck man from the buddy, and then a respectful nod for my decision.

Tow truck man, the buddy and myself all turned to make our ways back over to Gertie and the crowd in the corner of the old gas station parking lot. As I looked over I saw that the dozen-plus queerdos and punks (of whom I’d only met 2-3 before) who’d made their way over to Gertie earlier – and who I’d expected to have left by now as the situation died down –