

A publication for those who hate this world and actively seek its abolition,
for those prefer to fully live, with both love and hatred in our hearts.

Please share this with your friends, comrades, enemies, and
everyone inbetween!

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HATERSCAPE

*the irredeemable
university*

*seven reasons to hate
(election) season*

*on the poverty
of chicanx artists*

*this is the definition
of class hatred*

*powerlines and the
suspension of time*

and more!

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an anarchist journal from north texas

CONTRIBUTORS

Authors of Original Texts

g rowan mck (@gypsyym on ig) lives in virginia where they sew clothes, make zines, and hate on acoustic instruments. she does fake research on music and the geographies of neoliberal capitalism, always interested in how the spaces around us construct our lives, perpetuate ideologies, and how people navigate and weaponize spatial nightmares. as a strong proponent of the powers of autotune on the subconscious, you can find her listening to music with stray cats in “abandoned” locations.

Luci! is a psyop created to make communists look bad. [*editor's note: this is an obvious joke.*]

Tanze/Vatt is a fungus that grows in boreal forests

Authors of Re-Published Texts

El Chavo I promised more info about myself, but I lied.

Abolish the UC Skip class. Cause ruckus. | A fan for the flames. | inquiries: abolishtheUC (at) protonmail | disorientation.guide

Monsieur Dupont is the collective name of the authors responsible for *Nihilist Communism* and other works.

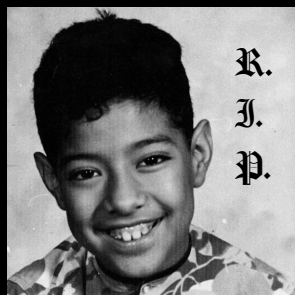
Assatta Shakur is a former member of the Black Liberation Army (BLA), a target of COINTELPRO, and a fugitive currently living in Cuba.

We Still Outside Collective is a group of Black friends in New York City

Noche is a pissed-off chicano prole with a keyboard in the Los Angeles Eastside. His personal blog is puraacracia.club

Círculo de Comunistas Esotéricos is a group of esoteric communists

We want to also thank *Fire to the Prisons* for inspiring this project!



The cover image (shown above) is from a march turned riot in downtown Dallas on July 18, 1973 following the police murder of 12 year-old Santos Rodriguez. The event hospitalized five Dallas PD officers. This pushed DPD to charge the police officer with murder and reform its hiring policies to reflect the city's demographics. No amount of Black or brown pigs, however, will erase the fact that the police exist to maintain white supremacy.

Revolutionaries are often the most surprised at the outbreak of revolution. We are not yet living in revolutionary times, but the current outbreak of Black-led rebellion and insurrection is only the natural outcome of centuries' domination. It has been part of the fabric of this society since the first slave rebellion in 1526 on the coast of what is known as Georgia. It is within this history in which we situate the upheavals and from which we wish to support and eventually see the end of.

Editor's Note

When starting this project, a couple months ago we felt frustrated with the political landscape. Consisting of mostly liberal activists or self-righteous party members, especially in DFW, it was bleak for us to say the least. To be quite honest, it is still bleak, but the spread of COVID-19 and its mismanagement are making the mask of the American dream slip away to reveal the decaying face of white supremacy that it is founded upon, thus making new openings for its destruction.

We are not progressives, there is no nation to we are trying to improve. We are not leftists, we do not seek to manage capital but to destroy it. We are Black, brown, proletarian, and anarchistic.

With rebellion comes possibilities, anger, hatred, life but also repression, hope, recuperation, death. We must be, we will be, prepared for both.

RIAH MILTON - DRAYA MCCARTY

TONY MCDADE - MERCI MACK

BRAYLA STONE - SHAKI PETERS

We want to take a moment to mourn the loss of our Black queer and trans siblings, whether it is from anti-queer violence, medical negligence, or this antagonistic world. We carry you in our hearts, we mourn, we heal, and we fight for you. **We will destroy this world that destroyed you.**

MONIKA DIAMOND - BREE BLACK

TATIANA HALL - REM'MIE FELLS

OLUWATOYIN SALAU - NINA POP

...AND ALL THOSE WHOSE NAMES WE
UNFORTUNATELY DO NOT KNOW

face of an emergency such as the one we are experiencing today if it is not through control and repression. This principle is basic because where the market has been unleashed as a second power of the first order in terms of managing society, it tends to act through the exponential deployment of the automatic subject so well known and which now reaches a point where, with all its power and arrogance, it decides more than ever on people's lives.

exist as such but only as a specific historical articulation. There is no essential humanity, but there is the possibility of transforming it, as history shows. There is nowhere to rescue the essence of “the human” again.

This reinventive possibility is what we call “communism”.

Circle of Esoteric Communists
Santiago, Chile, March 2020

It is not surprising, therefore, that the life of each and every one of us is worth less than the production that must be saved at all costs. The neoliberal state was not put in crisis by mass action or by a microorganism, but by itself by privileging its administrative role in market life. The guardian punched himself in the face, leaving himself out of the picture. But he will return strengthened and prepared to be another, to return to being himself.

The only way out of the health crisis is to question the limits and projections of the civilizing project in which we are developing and which manifests its crisis in a rampant way with thousands, and possibly millions, of deaths all over the planet from a specific episode. This humanity is condemned to death and to a pseudo-life, so it is necessary that a new type be gestated that learns and incorporates in the negative what modern-capitalist civilization gave it. It is not a matter of finding the true meaning of humanity because it does not





Lifted from *Anarchy Comics* which ran during the '80s. It seems like the more things change, the more they stay the same.

alienated, impoverished humanity
we have been touched by!

An entirely new poverty has fallen upon us as the enormous development of productive forces and technology encourages, and imagines, travel in time and space to remote parts of the universe. And the reverse of that poverty is the suffocating wealth of ideas that came about among the people - or rather that came about - as astrology and the wisdom of yoga, Christian Science and chiromancy, vegetarianism and Gnosticism, scholasticism and spiritism were revived. Since the material contradiction between real scarcity and artificial scarcity has not been resolved, the remaining solution is "spiritual enrichment", which makes this contradiction more tolerable.

This poverty can no longer be characterized from the point of view of material resources or from the point of view of income distribution, because the impoverishment of experience is of a qualitative order. The poverty of our experience is but a part of the great poverty that has taken on a new face, as exact and profiled as that of the beggars in the Middle Ages. What is the value of the goods of education if experience does not unite us to them? And where does it lead to simulate or overlap it, is something that the dreadful hybrid mesh of styles and worldviews of the last century has shown us so clearly that we should consider it honorable to confess our poverty.

Yes, let us confess it: the poverty of our experience is not only poor in private experiences, but in those of humanity in general. It is a kind of new barbarism.

There will be no shortage of those who profess that the Covid-19 pandemic was spread by international tourism. They are partly right in thinking so. The problem that stands out in this formulation is that tourism itself and the way it has developed in the last seventy years is a product of the systemic poverty in which we find ourselves. Why is tourism being developed? Mainly to escape from the daily life of the world. Nobody goes as a tourist to a world they know because everything is familiar to them. To be a tourist is to expose oneself in a mediated way to other worlds, looking for the experience of what is already known to be reinforced by checking that what one is looking for as a novelty is what was promised beforehand.

In this sense, tourism is the opposite of adventure, an experience anticipated and closed by the circulation of goods on a global scale. Where novelty is sought, there is only the same mercantile world from which one tries to escape, reinforcing the condition of a fractured individuality, crumbled but not liquidated, which can only express itself as a nihilism hostile to the world. The fact that many infected people have not isolated themselves from the rest of the population is a symptom of a generalized death drive and is in no

of frustration, despair, hope, love, and inspiration. Exhausted by the patronizing language of so-called allies, the tokenization of our identities and struggles, we've found refuge among comraderie and community.

For first gen and poor students of color in particular, the university conjures up feelings of cognitive dissonance. Commonly viewed as a site of refuge for those on the underside of capitalist society, the university banks (literally) on its myth of erudition and progress. Yet, once they arrive, students are forced to conform to the folly of professionalism. Our feelings of uneasiness and anxiety are dismissed as maladjustment, to be remedied by more acclamation and conformity. This is our sentipensar, our holistic way of thinking with feelings bestowed on us by our ancestors. It is our way of recognizing that something is wrong. So we are conflicted. Caught between the hopes and dreams of our community and the violent nature of the university that we encounter once we arrive.

As we build towards strong and viable alternatives, we will count on those on the inside, the saboteurs and subversives. Until we have our alternatives, we will rely on accomplices and guides in the undercommons, while we conspire and protect one another.

M: Abolition is a political tradition—rooted in the abolition of slavery, colonialism, patriarchy, and the nation state. Abolition is a

framework that asks us to radically reimagine institutions such as the UC, in light of this entity's complicity with genocide, slavery, and the military and prison industrial complexes. Resisting neoliberalism, dismantling capitalism and class struggle at large, transforms within this abolitionist framework. Thinking and moving deeper, and beyond, abolition asks us to make these intersectional, complex connections and to operate from a politic that makes oppressive systems obsolete by building radical and community-grounded alternatives. One example of this is the abolitionist work to close prisons and detention centers while also building restorative systems of community care and transformative justice in their place. For the UC, this would mean dismantling the increasingly privatized, corporatized, and militarized university—an institution that is itself already built on a foundational violence of settler colonialism, genocide, and slavery—while also breathing life into Other ways of knowing and educating our communities. We follow the path of our abolitionist ancestors such as Harriet Tubman, W.E.B. DuBois, and Frantz Fanon, as well as our (r)evolutionary elders and teachers such as Angela Davis, Ruthie Gilmore, and Dean Spade. Historical movements such as the Third World Liberation Front (TWLF) also guide this work, especially at the UC, as they envisioned and won a Third World College in 1969. As an ongoing struggle, we continue to be guided by the TWLF's principles of self-determination, solidarity, and building an

that have been taken throughout the globe, it is evident that if the current crisis of capitalism is of a level never seen before, the end of the world imagined form such apotheosized.

But it is not by chance that this desired end of the world is so apotheosized or that it is exclusively the product of the culture industry. In psychoanalytical terms, fantasies about the end of the world are projections of the individual's own collapse, due to a splitting of the self, the result of schizoid processes that find in the modern capitalist mode of production a breeding ground capable of projecting and introjecting both self-repressive and narcissistic overflow measures. The game of double positions, opposed and contradictory, around the same issue is the constitutive logic of our impoverished subjectivity.

Returning to the distance between cinematic representation and what we could call "everyday life", it is that there is a particular feature that is possible to detect in this distance between fiction and reality - in the case of the specific existence of the latter in a uniform and totalizing way - and that is that in the films there is an element that acts as a factor that is not weighted: the productivity of human labor with its contradictions on the material plane within the modern capitalist world.

In a world devoted to productiv-
ity, to the self-valorization of value

and to the devaluation of human labor, a health crisis is never exclusively of these characteristics because what is revealed is precisely the conditions and contradictions of the mode of production, its social administration, and the forms of socialization that result from it.

In this sense, the global circulation of the Covid-19 comes to express simultaneously the circulation of goods that precedes it. There is plenty of historical background: the bubonic plague from Asia to Europe, the flu and smallpox from the “Old World” to the “New World”, the Spanish flu at the beginning of the 20th century are the epidemiological corollary of the global expansion of capitalism. A microorganism is more lethal than a device, but this does not fall into a health issue but into the dimension of political economy and its forms of administration and management.

The qualitative leap of the modern era is to have transformed the concept of war from a military perspective to a socio-economic operation. "War is the continuation of politics by other means," noted Karl von Clausewitz in the 19th century, which is manifested in states of catastrophe such as the one we are currently experiencing. Furthermore, we must consider that a good part of this author's theoretical intervention took place when there was, in fact, a distinction between militias and civil society, a division that has simultaneously been pulverized to

THIS IS THE DEFINITION OF CLASS HATRED

Monsieur Dupont

This selection comes from the preamble of the book Nihilist Communism. The influence of the text can be felt throughout this publication and our (anti-)politics. We include it to help you understand our positions.

Death appears as the harsh victory of the law of our ancestors over the dimension of our becoming. It is a fact that, as productivity increases, each succeeding generation becomes smaller. The defeat of our fathers is revisited upon us as the limits of our world. Yes, structure is human, it is the monumentalisation of congealed sweat, sweat squeezed from old exploitation and represented as nature, the world we inhabit, the objective ground. We do not, in our busy insect-like comings and goings, make the immediate world in which we live, we do not make a contribution, on the contrary we are set in motion by it; a generation will pass before what we have done as an exploited class will seep through as an effect of objectivity. (Our wealth is laid down in heaven.) The structure of the world was built by the dead, they were paid in wages, and when the wages were spent and they were dead in the ground, what they had made continued to exist, these cities, roads and factories are their calcified bones.

They had nothing but their wages
to show for what they had done

and after their deaths what they did and who they were has been cancelled out. But what they made has continued into our present, their burial and decay is our present.

This is the definition of class hatred. We are no closer now to rest, to freedom, to communism than they were, their sacrifice has bought us nothing, what they did counted for nothing, we have inherited nothing, we work as they worked, we make as they made, we are paid as they were paid. We do not possess either our acts or the world that conditions us, just as they owned nothing of their lives.

Yes they produced value, they made the world in which we now live. The world that now weighs down upon us is constructed from the wealth they made, wealth that was taken from them as soon as they were paid their wage, taken and owned by someone else, owned and used to define the nature of ownership and the class domination that preserves it.

We too must work, and the value we produce leaks away from us, from each only a trickle but in all a sea of it and that, for the next generation, will thicken into wealth for others to own and as a congealed structure it will be used as a vantage point for the bourgeoisie to direct new enterprises in new and different directions but demanding always the same work.

The class war begins in the dese-

To paraphrase James Baldwin's still apt observation, we black people are more aware of the inner workings of our pale-face antagonists than they are of themselves. Consequently, the diagnosis of woke whiteness's psychological condition is quite simple: this James Earl Jones, Carl Winslow, or Rafiki from the *Lion King* voice, which bellows off the walls of their skull, is a defense mechanism against their inability to completely repress their own white superiority complex. What's also abundantly clear is that the only way to fully work through this hang up is to gain even a small percent of the courage of a black

adolescent and overcome their white guilt with a fist, a stone, and a Molotov cocktail.

– We Still Outside
Collective

June 4, 2020

P.S. Fuck 12!



ON THE BLACK LEADERSHIP
AND OTHER WHITE MYTHS
We Still Outside Collective

We republish this essay from Ill Will Editions. "Ill Will received this communiqué from some black friends in New York. We have republished it exactly as received. -IWE"

What they call, “the black leadership,” does not exist. Let’s be serious: what they are talking about is nothing more than a figment of the white liberal imagination. That is, if these so-called black leaders even exist at all, then they can only be found shucking and jiving a “woke” white person’s head.

Isn't interesting how progressive whites seem to have a direct line of communication with black leaders, while everyone else in the street fails to suffer from the same delusional schizophrenia? What's all the more odd is that the voices that they hear from these magical negroes always manage say the same things: "Everyone should peacefully protest on the sidewalk, because unmediated black rage makes others uncomfortable." "Don't strike back at that cop even if he wants to kill you and everyone you love." "I know the manager follows black kids from aisle to aisle, but still, his store shouldn't be looted." In other words, the message relayed from the sounds on repeat in a white liberal's head is to end the black revolt and conduct civil disobedience in a man-

ner that is appropriate for Karen and Ethan, not Jamal and Keisha.

It is worthwhile to note that black people, themselves, never refer to any mythical black leadership. This is because we know, full and well, that all of our leaders, since Martin and Malcolm, have been killed. Even our potential leaders, like Trayvon and Tamir, are gunned down before they can share with us their vision. What's more, if they are not brutally murdered, then they are locked away forever with Sundiata, Mutulu, and Mumia. That is, we know that if you speak with truth and move against oppression, then the only way to avoid the pig's bullet or penitentiary, the modern-day cracker's whip or plantation, is to go on the run like Assata Olugbala Shakur! In fact, any black person that says otherwise should be exposed for what he or she is: a poverty-pimp!

After half of century without a figurehead in the front, the black youth has shown the whole country that they are more than capable of setting their own path and directing their own initiatives. They have demonstrated to us a dynamism that can never be reduced to a homogenous mass following any one authoritative voice. Paradoxically, it is the entire spectrum of the black revolt in the streets that can be identified as leaderless "leaders," since they have shown everyone else what it means to free yourself.

creation of our ancestors: millions of people going to their graves as failures, forever denied the experience of a full human existence, their being was simply cancelled out. The violence of the bourgeoisie's appropriation of the world of

work becomes the structure that dominates our existence. As our parents die, we can say truly that their lives were for nothing, that the black earth that is thrown down onto them blacks out our sky.



THE MOST AMERICAN
PRESIDENT
Luci!

Luci!

On Saturday, June 21, president Donald Trump held one of his beloved rallies in Tulsa, Oklahoma, the first in many months. This rally served to prepare his re-election campaign and to boost morale for both his wavering supporters - and for himself. The rally, which was expected to attract more than one million, suffered from poor turnout.

Trump returned to the White House after spending just 3 hours in Tulsa. As he walked across the White House lawn, a reporter captured a picture of him. The picture displayed a Donald Trump that I had never seen before. His posture was hunched. His gaze was turned downwards. His eyebrows were furrowed as he frowned. His suit was unbuttoned to reveal his red tie hanging limply around his neck. He carried his signature red hat crumpled in his left hand.

It is a renaissance painting.



It is the most expressive and emotive picture of Trump ever taken. It reveals what a broken and distraught man lies behind the typical smug aura of the real estate mogul turned politician. In a way, it's humanizing, and it demonstrates something about the average Trump voter, and, by extension, what it means to be American.

Trump ran on a platform of American mythology. “Make America great again” is the assertion that the United States was once great, that the legend of American prosperity and happiness was once a reality, that it is no longer, and the promise that we can return. The era we are attempting to make a return to is a moving target. No one has a concrete idea. And that’s okay. It’s not meant to be concrete; it’s mythology.

This platform resonated with a very specific demographic. Trump had many different types of voters, but his most reliable and his most fervent were white suburbanites. For this demographic, the myth of America is very much alive, even if it isn't achievable. These white suburbanites, some of which are affluent, many of which downwardly-mobile, hold the values of the United States as gospel: meritocracy, individualism, and above all, material wealth and the happiness it supposedly entails.

These are values upon which America was founded. However, for many people living in the United States, these values were

ans by ripping off their homeland, then call ourselves pioneers. They call us bandits, but it is not we who are robbing Africa, Asia, and Latin America of their natural resources and freedom while the people who live there are sick and starving. The rulers of this country and their flunkies have committed some of the most brutal, vicious crimes in history. They are the bandits. They are the murderers. And they should be treated as such. These maniacs are not fit to judge me, Clark, or any other Black person on trial in amerikkka. Black people should and, inevitably, must determine our destinies.

Every revolution in history has been accomplished by actions, although words are necessary. We must create shields that protect us and spears that penetrate our enemies. Black people must learn how to struggle by struggling. We must learn by our mistakes.

I want to apologize to you, my Black brothers and sisters, for being on the new jersey turnpike. I should have known better. The turnpike is a checkpoint where Black people are stopped, searched, harassed, and assaulted. Revolutionaries must never be in too much of a hurry or make careless decisions. He who runs when the sun is sleeping will stumble many times.

Every time a Black Freedom Fighter is murdered or captured, the pigs try to create the impression that they have quashed the movement, destroyed our forces, and put down

the Black Revolution. The pigs also try to give the impression that five or ten guerrillas are responsible for every revolutionary action carried out in amerika. That is nonsense. That is absurd. Black revolutionaries do not drop from the moon. We are created by our conditions. Shaped by our oppression. We are being manufactured in droves in the ghetto streets, places like attica, san quentin, bedford hills, leavenworth, and sing sing. They are turning out thousands of us. Many jobless Black veterans and welfare mothers are joining our ranks. Brothers and sisters from all walks of life, who are tired of suffering passively, make up the BLA.

There is, and always will be, until every Black man, woman, and child is free, a Black Liberation Army. The main function of the Black Liberation Army at this time is to create good examples, to struggle for Black freedom, and to prepare for the future. We must defend ourselves and let no one disrespect us. We must gain our liberation by any means necessary.

**It is our duty to fight for our
freedom.**

It is our duty to win.

We must love each other and support each other.

We have nothing to lose but our chains.

nine hostages murdered at attica. They call us murderers, but we did not murder and wound over thirty unarmed Black students at Jackson State—or Southern State, either.

They call us murderers, but we did not murder Martin Luther King, Jr., Emmett Till, Medgar Evers, Malcolm X, George Jackson, Nat Turner, James Chaney, and countless others. We did not murder, by shooting in the back, sixteen-year-old Rita Lloyd, eleven-year-old Rickie Boddien, or ten-year-old Clifford Glover. They call us murderers, but we do not control or enforce a system of racism and oppression that systematically murders Black and Third World people. Although Black people supposedly comprise about fifteen percent of the total amerikkkan population, at least sixty percent of murder victims are Black. For every pig that is killed in the so-called line of duty, there are at least fifty Black people murdered by the police.

Black life expectancy is much lower than white and they do their best to kill us before we are even born. We are burned alive in fire-trap tenements. Our brothers and sisters OD daily from heroin and methadone. Our babies die from lead poisoning. Millions of Black people have died as a result of indecent medical care. This is murder. But they have got the gall to call us murderers.

They call us kidnappers, yet Brother Clark Squires (who is accused, along with me, of murdering a new

jersey state trooper) was kidnapped on April 2, 1969, from our Black community and held on one million dollars' ransom in the New York Panther 21 conspiracy case. He was acquitted on May 13, 1971, along with all the others, of 156 counts of conspiracy by a jury that took less than two hours to deliberate. Brother Squires was innocent. Yet he was kidnapped from his community and family. Over two years of his life was stolen, but they call us kidnappers. We did not kidnap the thousands of Brothers and Sisters held captive in amerikkka's concentration camps. Ninety percent of the prison population in this country are Black and Third World people who can afford neither bail nor lawyers.

They call us thieves and bandits. They say we steal. But it was not we who stole millions of Black people from the continent of Africa. We were robbed of our language, of our Gods, of our culture, of our human dignity, of our labor, and of our lives. They call us thieves, yet it is not we who rip off billions of dollars every year through tax evasions, illegal price fixing, embezzlement, consumer fraud, bribes, kickbacks, and swindles. They call us bandits, yet every time most Black people pick up our paychecks we are being robbed. Every time we walk into a store in our neighborhood we are being held up. And every time we pay our rent the landlord sticks a gun into our ribs.

They call us thieves, but we did not rob and murder millions of Indi-

not as heavily internalized. Among black, native, and other people of color, support for the philosophies of Americanism is limited, as the country was built to exclude them from the prosperity it created. As the country shifted to assimilate these groups by giving them rights previously only enjoyed by white Americans, the foundational ideals were diffused into their communities, but never fully adopted.

White Americans, the people for whom America was created, the people with more generational wealth than any other racial group in the United States, the people who still hold supermajorities of federal political positions and corporate CEO seats, also believe more firmly in American values than anyone else. America remains a country built for their own benefit. It is made up of others whom they have tried to assimilate, but it remains for the white American.

To be an American in the twenty-first century is to be a white person of the professional or capital owning class. For all others, the United States was never built to accommodate.

This creates a problem when the United States cannot deliver on the promises made to its constituents. The belief in the values of America creates a sort of cognitive dissonance. Many of these suburbanites are unhappy, as either they do not have the wealth their hard work was meant to create or do not have the happiness their wealth

was meant to create. As economic crises and opioids destroy what's left of the so-called middle class, this feeling intensifies.

Donald Trump is the embodiment of the American dream, both of its material success and of its profound lack of fulfillment. In journalist Michael D'Antonio's interviews for his 2014 book 'The Truth About Trump', the billionaire states that his favorite song is Peggy Lee's "Is That All There Is?" He explains that he finds the lyrics relatable in his own life.

"It's a great song because I've had these tremendous successes and then I'm off to the next one. Because, it's like, 'Oh, is that all there is?'"

He went from rich to richer, living in opulence and luxury most cannot imagine, and yet he seems perpetually unsatisfied. He went from being an ultra-wealthy elite to becoming the most famous man in the world in the office of the president, but only expressed joy at proving his detractors wrong rather than being proud of his accomplishment for its own sake. His affinity for petty arguments and name-calling does not exude the energy of someone who is confident, but rather of someone who is deeply insecure. Trump identifies and shares many of the same anxieties as his voters, and this endears himself to them. The American dream has failed him in much the same way it has failed his supporters.



landscape indignantly cried “this is not us. This is not who we are.” They held the idea that the election of Donald Trump was an aberration, a break from tradition. Un-American. I posit a counter-argument: this is who we have always been.

We each grasp at the loose threads hoping to find our happiness and watch helplessly as the country unravels. What could be more American than that?

After the 2016 presidential election, liberals across the media



Here is her quote where she questions the logic of the word “post” itself:

"Although the post- is commonly associated with a mode of anticipation that evokes a different future path, the temporal logic embedded in the rhetoric of post-socialism is paradoxically hyphenated and reverts back to socialism. The anticipation is built upon a mode of regression, where the future is conceptualized through indeterminable relations with a former system that is neither alive nor dead. Rather than describing a new era to come, the post- conjoins a suspended future with a reimagined past. The result is a new mode of temporality characterized as a perpetually extended present that renders the traditional categories of past, present, and future obsolete" (pages 14-15).

Apologies to my old teachers for the extremely long block quote that they would probably tell me to cut up or paraphrase. But let's pick apart what Huang is saying here regarding the structures of time, while relating it specifically to the spatiality of powerlines.

I would like to remind you all of some recurring themes from the past few months you may be aware of. For example, the idea that “2020 is the end of the world.” Or “Trump is making America descend into fascism – here’s an outline of why that is!” Or “coronavi-

rus is the end.” Or “they’re taking people away in vans this is where it all starts.” To go back to a classic, Desert, these all mirror the way in which the ecological crisis has been talked about: “this generation is the one to deal with the crisis of the planet,” or “this is the beginning of the end.” Within all of these statements, we see a continuing logic of postponing the future – it is always the “beginning of the end.” Events currently happening around people are constantly conceptualized through referencing an “imagined past,” much as Huang talked about. “Trump’s fascism” is outlined through referencing the historical development of fascism in other locations – which, while being a useful approach to an extent, simply reimagines America’s past and reifies dominantly accepted logics of time.

The present moment is ever suspended, much like the lines between the transmission towers that cut across Virginia's mountains. The future has a definable feature, either dystopian or hopeful, but the wreckage or the rebuilding is pushed to the future in many common perceptions. The idea of "this is where the end begins" is constantly strengthened, to no real tangible effect. To believe that this present moment is "the beginning of the end" is to disregard the fact that it can only be viewed as such if you accept the start of this current world as the "beginning point" of significant history. "THIS is where

including 11 on or near reservations.¹

This may sound like a coordinated attack on the part of the Trump administration to restrict voting access. Except the article, entitled *Post Offices Vital to Reservation Communities*, was published in 2011, during Obama's first term in office, and is one of hundreds of similar articles from its time. The Obama Administration also made attempts to gut the postal service, so it's a little bit bizarre for liberals to use this as a reason to vote blue. More than that, it comes across as callous towards those impacted by post office closings and mail box removals in both 2011 and 2020. It's too bad that your life or livelihood might suffer—what's worse is that *my* team might lose.

This type of thinking can be seen elsewhere. What was once considered “extreme” weather is now the norm. In August, a massive derecho—a large line of storms—swept through Iowa, causing widespread destruction that included flooding, power outages, and crop damage. In the following week, too many liberals took to social media to lament how this would impact Iowa voters’ ability to go to the polls. Something similar happened as the west coast burned, as if Trump caused the wildfires that have been intensifying for similar reasons. Frenzied liberals again implored everyone to vote—but voting doesn’t put out fires. And

1 Cook, Andrea. "Post Offices Vital To Reservation Communities". *Rapid City Journal*, 2011.

it's worth noting that the west coast is all blue. More importantly, Indigenous people and environmentalists have pointed out again and again that wildfires are intensified by settler governments banning of traditional controlled burns, which leads to a buildup of detritus that, once inevitably ignited, grows out of control. This will, like ecological collapse, happen regardless of political leadership as long as the land remains under colonial occupation.

Of course it's possible to be concerned over how these events are affecting people and also about voting, if the latter is what you care about. But to jump first to how any decision or crisis will impact your candidate and last to how actual humans are faring—and how voting will have any real impact on any of this? It feels asinine. Both parties invest heavily in fossil fuels. The democrats dropped ending fossil fuel dependence from their platform as usual, choosing to continue subsidizing dirty energy.²

2 Irfan, Umar. “Democrats Have Made A Puzzling Decision To Drop Their Demand To End Fossil Fuel Subsidies”. *Vox*, 2020.

As of September 2020, the Democrats have wavered on whether or not to include eliminating fossil fuel subsidies as part of their platform. This kind of indecision is part of the problem of electoral politics, rather than an argument in favor of public opinion changing the tide. Also, the time to end fossil fuel subsidies—a bare-minimum approach—was decades ago. As stated, we do not have time for the spineless inaction and meaningless talk provided by this party. The catastrophic collapses predicted—again—decades ago are already falling into place. This includes the “natural disasters” mentioned in the first part of this essay; it should

The Paris Agreement was an infamous failure.³ And the severity of storms like the recent Iowa derecho is directly linked to climate change. Something that both parties—all political parties, considering that even the Greens' plans tend to be vague since they won't win anyway—refuse to address in any real, material capacity. It's a game, and it's a game of worthless platitudes and empty promises that the politicians will renege or dither on once in office.

Electoral obsession is the game of treating people like pawns and then yelling at those very same people for being upset at this treatment. It's big talk about "marginalized folk" and accusations of privilege that are more often than not thrown right back in the faces of marginalized folks. In fact, if you *are* from any marginalized demographic and have expressed a disdain for political theater, there's a high likelihood that some liberal has insinuated that you *actually* don't know what's best for yourself

be noted how both parties utterly failed in directing resources to preparation and aid, as is the supposed purpose of politics. The Green New Deal would have done very little in terms of addressing climate change, and the fact that the Democrats so aggressively sabotage their slightly leftward and overall more popular membership should also serve as an indictment against reformism.

3 Leahy, Stephen. "Most Countries Aren't Hitting 2030 Climate Goals, and Everyone Will Pay The Price". *nationalgeographic.com*, 2020; Allan, Jill. "Dangerous Incrementalism Of The Paris Agreement." *Global Environmental Politics*. Vol. 19 No 1. MIT Press. 2019; Splash, Clive. "This Changes Nothing: The Paris Agreement To Ignore Reality". *Taylor & Francis*, 2016.

if you abstain from voting. There's an assumption that if you're against voting then you either haven't thought it through or are too privileged to care.

2/ REPRESENTATION IS REPRESSION

An accusation often thrown by the pro-voters at anyone who immediately doesn't put all their oppression cards on the table is one of "privilege." One darkly funny side effect of this tendency crops up occasionally: the person making the accusation will be more privileged than whoever they're whining at (the idea that privilege is a game of points to be added up is a gross oversimplification that I'm not trying to imply here). White liberals calling certain anti-electoral Black people "privileged" for not voting is a bizarre cognitive leap, but it happens, especially on the internet. But this is all anecdotal, so let's pretend that everyone who doesn't vote does so because they're too privileged to care or be harmed in any significant way. Here are two of the roads we can take here:

First, why should they? If someone doesn't vote out of privilege, then wouldn't you want them to abstain anyway?

Because, second, why would they have any motivation to vote in your favor—provided you're all concerned with human rights and equality and whatever other Enlightenment buzzwords you think have meaningful value? Those

powerlines&thesuspensionof time:
reflections on temporal perceptions

G. ROWAN MCK

Driving on the interstate through the mountains of rural Virginia, I always end up looking at the powerlines that cut their way across the landscape – paths clear cut through the trees, making way for the progression of the long suspended overhead lines, funneling energy into the variety of places where the settler presence has been condensed. I search for them, mentally cataloguing their variety of shapes. The powerline, as a physical structure, might attract the attention of many “different” types of people – from “environmental activists,” architects, and engineers, to “spatial theorists” and “anti-civ” anarchists. Its presence is uncanny. Its structure automatically prompts interrogation. The electric buzz you hear overhead as you stand beneath the suspended lines, amongst the plants that commonly grow in “wasteland” clear cut areas, is unsettling and intriguing. It is my hope for this article to interrogate these feelings of unease and to complicate some commonly accepted understandings of time and its spatial manifestations. This article is not in any way the most well researched argument you will encounter, however I hope to illuminate some of my own reflections on the broader world, through the structure of the powerline, in the hopes that whoever reads this may find it useful.

The current state of the world – a state of extraction and exploitation maintained through state-sanctioned violence and a variety of subconscious, internalized tactics and beliefs – relies upon physical infrastructure to continue its existence (like how the powerline provides the transmission of energy for the continuance of this world’s activities that are fundamentally high-energy consumption). However this very “practical” and easily traceable “maintenance of existence” that happens in the physical landscape also involves maintaining the existence of the ways in which we move through the world, the ways that we conceive of the world, space, and time, and the maintenance of restrictions placed upon imagining what is possible.

To talk about time and its spatial manifestations in the way that I want to, I will include an excerpt from Erin Huang's 2020 book *Urban Horror: Neoliberal Post-Socialism and the Limits of Visibility*. In this book, Huang interrogates the temporal logics that show up in cinema in a "post-socialist" world, and also highlights the logic of linear development that both socialism and capitalism have operated under in their tangible historical realities. She also discusses how if we look closely, the current "age" of neoliberal capitalism did not emerge strictly from capitalism, but from the historical geopolitical relationship between capitalism and socialism.

to buy the voters, they simply buy the 'servants' after they have been elected to 'serve.' The idea that the poor man's vote amounts to anything is the veriest delusion. The ballot is only the paper veil that hides the tricks."

Your vote doesn't matter.

3/CITIZENSHIP IS AN INSULT

Citizenship, like representation, like progress, is also predicated on assimilation and coercion. It's a "Join, or Die" system. Why clamor for recognition from the state? For services like healthcare and infrastructure? Why is a state even necessary in instances like this? Infrastructure projects are put in place in service to colonial interests and/or in service to capital; see the railroad and highway systems as examples. Even free healthcare under capitalism is only in place to ensure a more productive proletariat.

It's insulting to tell someone privileged with citizenship that they must vote for the good of the noncitizen who cannot vote. The ICE concentration camps will not be voted away. The citizen cannot exist without the noncitizen—the exploiter cannot exist without the exploited. This means that suffering on a grand scale will happen as long as the empire is in place. Even if the U.S. could be voted into a functional social democracy or welfare state, this all comes at the expense of someone. Do the lives of the poor in Afghanistan, Iran, Palestine, Yemen, Nigeria,

Pakistan, and all the other places the U.S. destabilizes and reigns terror upon not matter as long as you can share in the spoils of war? You cannot harbor a desire for a piece of the wealth with no regard for where that wealth comes from. Participation in this system legitimizes this. But this is the part of the argument that electoralists are often calling moralistic and theoretical—and if Not America exists only in the realm of theoretical, then sure. It's pure theory. A lot of arguments center themselves on how electoralism doesn't help, but in many ways it's an active disservice to the communities that liberals and leftists always wanna pretend to care so much about.

4/ PROGRESS IS A MYTH

In *The Ballot Humbug*, Parsons also said: "We know there never was a law passed that ever prevented one single crime from being committed." Likewise, there isn't a single social issue or societal ill or injustice or policy of depravity that has been voted into oblivion. Maybe the earliest progressives and communists who ran for office in vain can be forgiven, a little; there wasn't yet a precedent for progressives in office, or failing to be placed in office. It should, however, be noted that many of their contemporaries were already offering criticisms of the electoral system. The idea that everything will naturally "get better" if we can put the right people in power as today's progressives seem to think isn't supported by any historical evidence.

grand inversion of bourgeois politics: now the people are in power. A formulation I disagree with, which I'll get to later.)

Anti-politics is the active negation and consequent abolition of politics.

But what is politics? With the development of ancient Greek democracy, the polis (where the term politics emerges from) denoted a body of citizens who have a direct say in local governance. Politics is that which concerns the polis. And what is citizenship? Adherence to and recognition by the State. A dividing of the population.

But not all citizens under the current racial regime of Capital are equals.

In Black Marxism, Robinson shows this is by historical design. Black people have been held outside the realm of the State's formal equality since the inception of capitalism and continue to be so even after the supposed end of chattel slavery.

I stand against anti-blackness and the marker of race, which always also means standing against policing. The State is the wing of direct anti-black domination and the police its foot soldiers. Thus I am against the State even in its democratic forms.

Politics is that which is used to mediate between contentious bodies. A perpetuation of antagonistic contradictions, rarely their resolution:

to form a social peace to ensure the perpetuation of the current racial regime of Capital. To keep the money flowing.

The perfection of politics can be found in democracy: class-collaboration at its finest. As the writers of *Dixie Be Damned* put it, “White supremacy’s greatest ally in this country has been democracy, not fascism.” But the anti-blackness of the racial regime of Capital is more than just a formalized White supremacy.

To be an anarchist then is to not only be against the State but also against politics.

Because as *@nkoyenkoyenkoye* puts it,

"Politics is police."

The police as protectors of the political order physically embody the law: the bureaucratic wing of the State. The formalization of dominance.

The latest wave of Black revolt and the riots it has sparked have had an explicit target: the police and their power deployed to protect property against Black life. But some bristle at this target.

I recall back in 2014 a white communist asking in a reading group, “when will people rise up against indirect domination and not just direct domination?” Which is Euro-Marxist speech for, “why are Black people fighting the police and



ANTI-POLITICS AND THE POLICE

Politics itself is the policing of freedom & unfreedom. Freedom, as we are taught in American schools, is not freedom itself.

It is a doctored variation sold to us. It helps maintain the assumption that the perpetuation of American politics is itself tied to perpetuation of freedom. ("Vote or don't complain!")

Nothing could be further from the truth.

This is why those of us with an anti-political position say we are for anarchy: freedom is a word with too much American patriotic baggage.

For the purposes of this piece, I will refer to the condition of territorial statelessness (which is akin to freedom) as anarchy.

But then what is anti-politics? Is it the inversion of politics? (Many radicals see radical politics as a

Slavery didn't end. They work on plantations in the South, fight fires in California, and work in factories New York. The slaves of today may be given air conditioning and \$3 an hour for their more strenuous labor (minimum wage for prisoners is eighty-six cents)—is that progress?⁵ It's no coincidence that that the U.S. prison population is heavily racialized—most statistics put the percentage of Black inmates at around 40%, even though Black Americans make up less than 15% of the total U.S. population.⁶ Louisiana State Penitentiary is built on the site of a former plantation, a majority of its population is Black, and many of them get assigned to till the same plot of soil worked by slaves less than two centuries ago.⁷ Is this kind of progress significant enough to warrant a continuation of this system, so that maybe, in an alternate universe where climate change doesn't kill us all by then, *maybe* our great grandchildren can live to see the day where prisoners are paid \$8 an hour? The evils of the American empire don't wither away under electoral or legislative pressure—concessions granted have always taken protests (usually less-than-peaceful), riots, and, in the case of “officially” ending chat-

5 Sawyer, Wendy. “How Much Do
Incarcerated People Earn In Each State?”.
prisonpolicy.org, 2017.

6 “BOP Statistics: Inmate Race” Federal Bureau of Prisons. *bop.gov*. 2020.

7 “Angola State Prison: A Short History |
Voices Behind Bars: National Public Radio
And Angola State Prison”. *Columbia University*. ccnmtl.columbia.edu

tel slavery, a whole civil war. And even then they had to put a provision in the 13th amendment—that infamous line: *except as punishment for a crime*.

This may seem counter intuitive considering suffrage was one of the “rights” allegedly fought for by activists of the past. But that argument—that “people fought for y/our right to vote so you should show y/our gratitude by voting”—flattens “activists” of the past into one single-minded Movement. That’s not how anything ever works. Anarchists like Emma Goldman and Lucy Parsons criticized their contemporaneous women’s suffrage movement. Parsons referred to electoralism as a “modern delusion” in 1905; Goldman, in her 1911 essay *Woman Suffrage*, called it “fetich worship.” In the essay, Goldman points out some of contradictions that were clear even at the time:

The poor, stupid, free American citizen! Free to starve, free to tramp the highways of this great country, he enjoys universal suffrage, and, by that right, he has forged chains about his limbs. The reward that he receives is stringent labor laws prohibiting the right of boycott, of picketing, in fact, of everything, except the right to be robbed of the fruits of his labor.

Following that, *Woman Suffrage* also acts as an early criticism of the empty representation-based politics so prevalent in today's progressive circles:

[...]Yet all these disastrous results of the twentieth-century fetich have taught woman nothing. But, then, woman will purify politics, we are assured.

Needless to say, I am not opposed to woman suffrage on the conventional ground that she is not equal to it. I see neither physical, psychological, nor mental reasons why woman should not have the equal right to vote with man. [...] Since woman's greatest misfortune has been that she was looked upon as either angel or devil, her true salvation lies in being placed on earth; namely, in being considered human, and therefore subject to all human follies and mistakes. Are we, then, to believe that two errors will make a right? Are we to assume that the poison already inherent in politics will be decreased, if women were to enter the political arena?

Ideas of representation within the current status quo go hand-in-hand with ideas about “progress,” because we’re told that an increase in representation is a positive side effect of this progress. But this is based on assimilationist ideas—representation is the reward for assimilation, and assimilation is predicated on subjugation. The “minorities” must always compromise—you must not seem too threatening to the establishment to be rewarded with representation. You must be the right kind of Black, “hardworking” if you’re disabled, an unwaveringly patriotic immigrant, a white-picket-fence

gay, a trans person who “tries.” Progress as assimilation is not a forward march; it’s cyclical, a dog chasing its own tail. It’s based on compromise after compromise until you’ve been chewed up, re-digested and shat out enough times to be acceptable. In *Voting is Not Harm Reduction*, the author or authors discuss the ties between assimilation and the “Native vote”:

In 1887, U.S. Congress passed the General Allotment Act, more commonly known as the Dawes Act, which was designed to expedite colonial invasion, facilitate resource extraction, and to further assimilate Indigenous Peoples into the colonial social order. The Dawes Act marked a shift from a military strategy to an economic and political one where reservations were separated into individual lots, with only male “heads of households” to receive 160 acres with any remaining lands put up for sale to white invaders who flocked in droves to inherit their “Manifest Destiny.” Indigenous Peoples who accepted allotments could receive U.S. citizenship, and although this was the first congressional act to provide the status, it came at the expense of sacrificing Indigenous People’s cultural and political identities in many ways, particularly by further fracturing the integrity of Indigenous matriarchal societies. Under the Dawes Act, Indigenous lands were reduced from 138 million to 52 million acres. In 1890, the overall Indig-

vide people with resources now when we might get a shot at more later? But the “more” might never come. And we don’t have time to wait. Climate collapse does not loom over us—it’s already begun. We must eschew Politics in favor of ourselves if we want to survive. The state knows that it’s not needed—watch how mutual aid projects are targeted by authorities as soon as they begin to build something real. You may be inclined to argue that voting is stifled, so does it not also pose a threat to the establishment? Not really. Within the establishment, there’s a push and pull between assimilation and direct genocide. As Indigenous Action Media put it:

Historic acts of voter suppression appear to contradict the strategy of assimilation, after all, if white settler politicians desired so much for Indigenous Peoples to become citizens, why then would they actively disenfranchise them at the same time? This is the underlying contradiction of colonialism in the U.S. that has been articulated as the “Indian Problem,” or more bluntly, the question of annihilation or assimilation?

Overinvestment in Politics is learned helplessness. “We need better leadership.” Sigh and go to doing nothing. Instead, think about where the resources allotted by politicians come from, and realize that these resources are provided by *people*, not lines on paper. We can do better—and it starts with divestment from politics.

Further Reading:

This essay was meant to be a succinct and basic summary on some anti-electoral stances. Two of the essays mentioned here are from *Anarchism and Other Essays* by Emma Goldman (very easily found as a .pdf or audiobook; individual essays are hosted on both Marxists.org and the [Anarchist Library \(theanarchistlibrary.org\)](http://theanarchistlibrary.org)), a good introduction to anarchism to the unacquainted. All of the following should be available online:

- Anarchists Do Not Vote, They Fight! Black Phoenix Anarchist Union
 - Do Anarchists Vote In State Elections? ziq
 - The Ballot Humbug Lucy Parsons
 - The Ballot or The Bullet? Lorenzo Kom'boa Ervin
 - The Party's Over CrimethInc
 - Voting Is Not Harm
- Reduction, which can be found on Indigenous Action Media's website (www.indigenousection.org)

apt conclusion to be drawn from it would lead towards an approach of mutual aid instead of diverting resources that could provide direct aid to those in need to campaigning. Would you not rather distribute food than campaign stickers?

7/ WE CAN DO BETTER, AND
MORE

But can't we do both?

They say to vote to make it better in the “short term;” but the “short term” is also the “long term” if anyone ever points out that we could be making things better in the here and now instead of dumping all the effort and resources into campaigning. The meanings of short term and long term are constantly shifting in their meanings. Voting is a necessary evil because it “helps” people in the short term by providing them with social services once Your Candidate is in office. But we need to donate to campaigns and put all this money into campaigning costs and advertising and shit like that instead of giving the money and resources directly to the people who need them because we gotta think about the “long term.” The goalposts are always changing here.

You're asking people to gamble
with their lives.

The gamble is this: throw your current resources into a campaign hoping for a bigger return—a return that will always include compromise—ally yourself with dirty money if you want to win, beget-

ting even more compromise, and if Your Candidate wins, then you might get some services or infrastructure or what you asked for. You might also get nothing because the candidate gets bought out by those with capital. If Your Candidate does not get elected, all that time and money has been thrown away completely and you, again, get nothing. Less than nothing--all the money put into paying campaigners and advertising is lost, and that's money and time that could have directly fed and clothed families, gotten people housed, filled in potholes, or worked towards whatever else it is you wanted fixed. Why is it such blasphemy to point out that the winning move might just be to avoid the game altogether? Your Candidate needs you, but you need them less than you think.

And so you may think that, well, we can focus on both local projects and campaigning. But so much gets shoved to the side when election season comes in favor of getting people out and voting. It's like a sick sporting event. (To be honest I'm afraid of DSA's current mutual aid projects in a way—will these projects be abandoned as soon as the next Bernie comes along and they feel the need to devote all the energy they could be giving to actual people to another doomed campaign instead? How many times does this have to happen before hop off the hamster wheel?) Notice how in these conversations too how the “short term” is always shifting. Why pro-

enous population was reduced to about 250,000 from tens of millions at the time of initial European invasion. In contrast, the colonizer's U.S. population had increased to 62,622,250 the same year.

$$[\dots]$$

U.S. citizenship was imposed to destroy Indigenous sovereignty and facilitate mass-scale land theft. To this day, the “Native vote” is bound to assimilationist conditions that serve colonial interests.

Genocide, like slavery, is ongoing and bipartisan. The Standing Rock protests happened under the Obama administration, which was also able to stymie “progressive” movements like Occupy and then for a time Black Lives Matter. Electoralism does not propel us gradually towards a freer state of being. You cannot tweak the system or adjust the course to some idyllic perfect democracy because the system is functioning as intended; why would wealthy white racists of the eighteenth century care to conceptualize a system that could be used to put them on the same level as even poor whites, let alone the slaves that many of them “owned”?

5/ VOTING IS NOT DIRECT ACTION

This is going to be brief, since the answer to this claim is: no. No, it's not.

“Direct action” means different things in different circles. The

IWW, Industrial Workers of the World, used the term for gilded age strikes. Anarchists, communists, leftists, activists, et al. will talk about “propaganda of the deed,” sabotage, varying levels of violence and nonviolence, terrorism. And it can be nebulous at times, especially when the more useful conversation revolves around “What works?” rather than semantics. But one thing is clear for sure: voting is not direct action.

In *Direct Action: An Ethnography*, David Graeber gives insight into some difference between direct action and civil disobedience, both terms often abused by liberals:

Typically, one practicing civil disobedience is also willing to accept the legal consequences of his actions. Direct action takes matters a step further. The direct actionist does not just refuse to pay taxes to support a militarized school system, she combines with others to try to create a new school system that operates on different principles. She proceeds as she would if the state did not exist and leaves it to the state's representatives to decide whether to try to send armed men to stop her.

Direct action is about asserting yourself. That can mean making demands via strike; it can mean throwing Molotovs. The former may be demanding better working conditions; the latter may be trying to set a building on fire. There is a goal in mind to *directly* achieve. Electoralism is indirect by

nature. There are no demands to voting—just, again, vague promises. Direct action doesn't necessitate demands, but if the end goal is getting a candidate elected and nothing more (than vague promises) then what's the point in calling it direct action? There's no direction and there's no action. Calling voting "direct action" doesn't make sense. That's like saying voting is "mutual aid" because some social services may or may not be allotted to your area by the candidate you voted for. Voting is begging for scraps—that's an antithesis to direct action. Graeber often defines "direct action" as some iteration of how it "means insisting on acting as if one is already free." Emma Goldman discusses direct action in *Anarchism: What It Really Stands For* (1910):

Even were the workers able to have their own representatives, for which our good Socialist politicians are clamoring, what chances are there for their honesty and good faith? One has but to bear in mind the process of politics to realize that its path of good intentions is full of pitfalls: wire-pulling, intriguing, flattering, lying, cheating; in fact, chicanery of every description, whereby the political aspirant can achieve success. [...] Time and time again the people were foolish enough to trust, believe, and support with their last farthing aspiring politicians, only to find themselves betrayed and cheated. [...]

The political superstition is still holding sway over the hearts and minds of the masses, but the true lovers of liberty will have no more to do with it. Instead, they believe with Stirner that man has as much liberty as he is willing to take. Anarchism therefore stands for direct action, the open defiance of, and resistance to, all laws and restrictions, economic, social, and moral. But defiance and resistance are illegal. Therein lies the salvation of man. Everything illegal necessitates integrity, self-reliance, and courage.

If you're into lobbying and politics and electoralism, if descriptions and depictions of actual direct action make you angry or scared because people are being inconvenienced or hurt or even killed or property is being damaged, then you need to stop playing radical dress-up and stop using "direct action" as an excuse for your electoral fetish or go call your senator or something you approve of.

6/ VOTING IS NOT HARM REDUCTION

Voting is not harm reduction. For electoralists making the “voting is harm reduction” argument, this seems like a case of, “I saw this term and assumed that I knew what it meant.” In the essay *Voting Isn't Harm Reduction, An Indigenous Perspective*, published on Indigenous Action's website, the author or authors actually spend less time discussing the issue of harm reduction, instead using this myth to transition into a discussion on

how voting has and continues to be a tool of colonialism via the coerced assimilation of Indigenous peoples in the “United States” (although this is true elsewhere too). Still, in the beginning of the essay they point this out:

We don't dismiss the reality that, on the scale of U.S. settler colonial violence, even the slightest degree of harm can mean life or death for those most vulnerable. What we assert here is that the entire notion of "voting as harm reduction" obscures and perpetuates settler-colonial violence, there is nothing "less harmful" about it, and there are more effective ways to intervene in its violences.

[...] [V]oting can never be a survival strategy under colonial rule. It's a strategy of defeat and victimhood that protracts the suffering and historical harm induced by ongoing settler colonialism. And while the harm reduction sentiment may be sincere, even hard won marginal reforms gained through popular support can be just as easily reversed by the stroke of a politician's pen. If voting is the democratic participation in our own oppression, voting as harm reduction is a politics that keeps us at the mercy of our oppressors.

“Harm reduction” was actually a term coined by—and subsequently stolen from—drug abuse advocates. Harm reduction is about not punishing addicts for their addictions, and allowing people to en-

gage with substances on their own terms rather than taking a prohibitionist or carceral approach. It's about acknowledging that some folks may not desire to live a "sober" lifestyle, allowing them to seek help on their own terms if they desire it. It neither glorifies nor shames substance use. Giving intravenous drug users clean syringes to cut down on disease transmission and giving naloxone to opioid users to prevent death from overdose are harm reduction initiatives.

Consider how this applies to voting. Does it?

Would it be helpful to conceptualize participation in Politics as an addiction? Probably not. You might be able to make a case for that sort of thinking, but I won't; personally I think Goldman's description of it being akin to a fetish (in the anthropological sense) is more apt. But what would harm reduction look like in this case? Would it look like coercing people into voting and participating in politics, or—following the spirit of the harm reduction coinage—would “harm reduction” in politics not mean attempting to minimize political participation—meaning, minimize reliance on system that stands against the proletariat, against any real climate action, against any real change? Is replicating these patterns of coercion “harm reduction,” even if you want to filter harm reduction through a political lens? This framing is flawed, but it seems like a more