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Best of the Anarchist Tubes

The goal of anarchistnews.org is to provide a non-sectarian source for news about and of concern to anarchists. It is also to provide a location for community moderated discussion about such news.

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Corporate Media Targeted in Actions Across the US

The following is a communique that was sent out to all the local media in Carrboro and Chapel Hill, NC on the morning after election day. Hundreds of newspaper boxes had their covers changed and contents augmented with anarchist news and opinion, a small payback for the election media blitz and near media blackout that followed militant conflict at the conventions.

Over 20 similar actions happened across the country. We anticipate (and hope!) that other groups will post their own press releases and action reportbacks. This cross-country, coordinated action was set for the day after election day, on the biggest news day of the year. In addition to confronting the media itself, and providing counter-information to the public, this action seems to have served as a kind of "experiment" in what can be done with the networks leftover from the conventions. Judging simply by the unprecedented numbers of cities participating, it seems to have been a success. Once again, we would encourage other groups to post their own logic behind participating.

A Public Service Announcement

Early this morning, many thousands of corporate newspapers in over 20 cities across the United States, including Chapel Hill and Carrboro, were given more accurate front pages. That one wealthy politician will replace another is not news worthy. Capitalism has always won at the polls, and it always will. McCain and Obama's support for the financial bailout proved this, and ensured that any vote would be a vote for Wall St. The real stories worth telling are those of resistance and struggle, any instance where oppressed people attempt to realize dignity, autonomy, and equality in their daily lives. We are getting organized. We will continue

Everything has bias.
The bias of anarchistnews.org is to promote an anarchist culture by providing a source of news and commentary of interest to and about anarchists.
The goal is not to advocate for a particular anarchist practice but to serve a general anarchist need.

to ensure that the real stories get told.
Sincerely,
Unconventional Action
journalism department - NC

<http://anarchistnews.org/?q=node/5427>

Ski areas warned of threats

From The Steam Boat Pilot - By Melinda Dudley

Steamboat Springs — The National Ski Areas Association recently notified its members, including Steamboat Ski and Resort Corp., about potential acts of eco-terrorism during a three-week period ending Nov. 5.

The threat, made on an anarchist Web site and referencing an infamous case of arson at Vail, calls for "mischievous mayhem" and an effort to "Give Capitalism the Creeps."

The Steamboat Ski Area was alerted to the threat Wednesday, spokeswoman Loryn Kasten said. However, the Internet posting and associated flier don't mention any specific targets or even that ski areas are a focus.

"Anytime we receive a veiled threat or call to action, we take it seriously," said Special Agent Kathy Wright, public information officer for the FBI's Denver field office. "But we don't have any specific threats."

Kasten said the ski area will continue its standard security practices.

"We're keeping up with regular security measures, locking mountain gates at night, and security patrols," Kasten said. "We're asking our staff to just be aware of what's going on around them."

The Earth Liberation Front, a radical environmental group considered domestic terrorists by the FBI, claimed responsibility for seven fires that caused \$12 million

in damage at Vail in October 1998. Eleven people connected to ELF and the Animal Liberation Front were indicted in 2006 connection with the Vail incidents.

The Lakewood-based National Ski Areas Association, a trade association for ski area owners and operators, notified its members this week of calls for "International Earth Nights" made via fliers and by an anonymously authored posting on Infoshop News, a self-described anarchist Web site.

The flier, which references the Vail attack in 1998, calls for "autonomous action" between Oct. 18 and Nov. 5, stating "through the spirit of mischievous mayhem and a diversity of tactics, it is our intention to reclaim this season in an ongoing and continuous effort to 'Give Capitalism the Creeps.'" The flier further instructs to "Be creative, be safe, be smart, be effective, be dangerous" and "make this a Halloween to remember."

Wright declined to comment on where the fliers have been found or distributed.

http://www.steamboatpilot.com/news/2008/oct/31/ski_areas_warned_threats/

Northwest Anarchist People of Color Gathering

The weekend of Friday August 15th through August 17th marked the renewal of a specifically anarchist presence among people of color in the Northwest. The gathering took place in Portland, Oregon over a three-day period.

...

Saturday began with a report-back from the NE APOC gathering that happened just before the one in the Northwest, followed by lively discussions about the APOC of the past. APOC, as an idea, began over

the Internet on a listserv in 2001 by Ernesto Aguilar... In 2003, the first formal gathering of Anarchist People of Color at the national level occurred in Detroit, Michigan at Wayne State University.

Although some factionalism occurred at the conference (see illvox.org), a sense of purpose emerged from the conference in general. After hurricane Katrina in 2005, plans fell through for another national conference that was to be held in Houston, Texas. Resources could not be gathered to change the conference's venue in time. Thus, 2009 will mark the renewal of APOC at a national level. The gatherings that are taking place now in the Northeast, Northwest, and soon in the Southwest are precursors to this renewal.

In the past, APOC has not been associated with any sort of centralized group, but instead is a network made up of individuals and collectives. There are many different ideas concerning what APOC is, what it should be, and what it means to claim an APOC identity. In fact, the diversity of opinions present throughout APOC is one of the reasons why it is an important presence in left revolutionary movements today. At the recent Northwest gathering, participants articulated many of these points that make APOC essential and relevant. One of these ideas, and one that is particularly salient, was the fact that an APOC organization gives people of color working for social change a chance to come together and take back our communities. It gives us the impetus to create revolution in the here and now. In other words, coming together with other people of color who have similar experiences is incredibly empowering and gives us insight that we didn't have before that we can then use in our own communities.

Furthermore, an APOC presence allows people of color to reclaim our anti-authoritarian past and ideas from what has become a movement with a majority-white face. This reminds us, and the world, that people of color all over the place were living in anti-authoritarian societies long before Proudhon or Bakunin ever wrote it down and called it anarchism. Therefore, APOC is extremely important because it allows people of color to look back and take pride in our history that has been erased through colonialism, imperialism, and domination. It shows the world that anarchism is not just for and by white people. It is for all people.

Lastly, an APOC presence allows a place for people of color to find support outside of our mass movement work.

The left in the United States is composed primarily of white folks. Because of this, people of color involved in these movements face a lot of difficulties from flat-out racism to being marginalized and not understood by their comrades who have completely different experiences. APOC serves as a place for people with similar experiences in relation to race to come together and find much-needed support and guidance.

One issue that came up at the gathering that will need to be discussed and analyzed further both in the Northwest and at a national level is the term APOC itself. What does it mean? What does the "A" mean? How does this label make people of color feel? Some people prefer the terms "autonomous" or "anti-authoritarian" to "anarchist." The reasons for this are plenty and include issues of inclusivity and appearances. Many people of color in the U.S. today do not wish to be associated with what has become the stereotypical white North American anarchist movement that is less about community and more about creating a lifestyle out of anarchism. Because of these common notions of what anarchism is, many people of color feel that the term alienates us from the communities we come from. Furthermore, it was pointed out at the gathering that we shouldn't feel obligated to define ourselves by our relationships to racism, colonialism, and imperialism, because all people of color have different relationships to these histories. In other words, all people of color are not the same and we all have our own complex pasts and stories. However, what all people of color do have in common is the fact that we are not white in a society that elevates whiteness, maleness, heterosexuality, money, etc. above all else and defines everything in relation to these "norms." Because of this, there is common ground for us to work together around issues that affect people of color in particular such as immigration, access to healthcare, gentrification, sexual violence, gang presence, war in our communities, and the prison industrial complex.

The weekend ended with brainstorming about how our current work on issues as diverse as working with youth, poetry and spoken word, hip hop, Industrial Workers of the World, infoshops, homeless out-

reach, prison work, education, and student movements fits into an APOC identity in the Northwest. We brainstormed particular groups that are already working around issues that affect us as people of color in the region. We identified groups such as OLIN in Portland who do Zapatista solidarity work, Communities Against Rape and Abuse in Seattle who are an affiliate of INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence, Seattle Solidarity Network who are doing a lot of positive work against gentrification, and Olympia Industrial Workers of the World who are doing support work for day laborers in the area. At the conclusion of the weekend, we had developed a small community among APOCers in the Northwest, a plan to publish a periodical, some concrete ideas to be thinking about, and a date for the next gathering in December of 2008 in Olympia, WA.

<http://anarchistnews.org/?q=node/5286>

Greek Arsonists Attack Police Offices

Authorities in Greece say the central Athens offices of a rural police division have been damaged in an arson attack. Police say about 20 assailants hurled petrol bombs, rocks and paint, damaging the entrance of the building. They said no one was hurt and no arrests were made. Anarchist groups in Athens frequently carry out arson attacks, typically targeting police stations, international companies and foreign embassy vehicles to voice protest on a variety of issues including the imprisonment of other anarchist arson suspects. But Monday's strike occurred during working hours, whereas most other attacks have taken place overnight.

<http://anarchistnews.org/q=node/5283>

Digitize This Book: Disrupting the Anarchist Bookfair

From *The L Magazine* - By Adam Klasfeld

The New York City tabloids wouldn't know what to make of the Anarchist Bookfair, which happened this past spring. If the Post attended, its reporters would probably have been disappointed that there was no sign of bicycle bombers. The Daily News would have been shocked that nobody plotted mass destruction for the next political convention. These anarchists were mostly interested in reading books, attending lectures, and sometimes networking with activists involved in nonviolent dissent. Unfortunately, everybody knows that harmony and civic involvement make bland newspaper copy.

But there was still hope for hell-raising because a group called The Bad Egg Collective planned to stage a protest. They argued that the event betrayed the ideals of anarchism because the vendors sold their books for profit; the lectures created a hierarchy between the speaker and the spectator; and the format encouraged consumption over creativity. In short, the Anarchist Bookfair was insufficiently anarchic. To express his dissent, the leader of this group planned to bring a photocopier and pass out flyers. This was something that I could scoop the tabloids on: anarchist in-fighting.

I entered the main hall where over forty vendors were proudly hawking subversive literature, but the protest was nowhere in sight. Eventually, I found it on a corner, where there was a strange handmade wooden structure with a red cardboard sign that had "COPY BOOKS HERE!" badly stenciled in black magic marker. It looked like a lemonade stand from a left-wing Peanuts comic strip, but the contraption was more sophisticated than it appeared. The wood was hand-cut with a rotary saw, and it held a digital camera pointed at a pane of glass that enclosed a book. The copier worked by photographing the pages one by one and sending the images to a laptop computer.

Its inventor Andrew Cady estimated that he only paid about \$15 for the materials. He bought the wood, glass, and hinges at Home Depot, and he already owned the electronic equipment. His friend Steve, who was standing next to him, managed to program the software that made it function while stoned the morning of the event. It took about a week to conceptualize and build the machine, and it stood before the room as a work of shabby ingenuity.

(Andrew later told me that an inventor from

Japan made one out of LEGO bricks. You have to admire Japanese craftsmanship.)

In any event, one man was so impressed with Andrew's invention that he handed them his business card to shoot ideas off each other about spreading the technology. I never expected the protest to have such a warm reception. For hours, the two of them had taken books they wanted to read from vendors and digitized them onto CD-ROMs, and not once did anyone try to stop them. Instead, they got free books and a potential business opportunity.

Something had to be done. I thought that maybe the vendors never noticed the books being taken, and I offered to ask each vendor to photocopy one of their books to see how they responded. My first stop was the stand of the publishing house Seven Stories Press, where I picked up the collection of repressed journalism *Censored 2008*.

"Excuse me. Do you mind if I photocopy this book at that table at the corner?" I asked an attractive twenty-something who was manning the booth.

"Sure," she replied, as if I just asked her to borrow a pen. "We don't mind if it's you guys doing it."

I later found out that Seven Stories Press has four separate offices across three countries. Its New York branch is located in Tribeca, one of New York's most expensive neighborhoods. I was beginning to see Andy's point about anarchist-industrial-complex. Keeping up radical bona-fides can be a matter of sound business policy. In any event, I loved this particular journalism anthology, and I owned it on disc after about five minutes of photographing the pages. I thanked her when I gave it back, and she thanked me for returning it. She might have thought I would pull an Abbie Hoffman.

The next table was run by an anarchist collective called "A New World in Our Hearts" that runs direct action campaigns like urban gardening and food aid throughout Brooklyn. It had a book about Mumia called *Dead Blossoms* that got me intrigued, and they also had no problem with my asking to copy it. Still, it was one thing not to pay an international publishing house for a book and another to do the same thing with a charitable activist collective. I offered them a donation when I returned it.

At Autonomedia's table, I picked up the book *The Art of Free Cooperation*, which appealed to my sense of irony. Again, the vendor had no problem when I asked to digitize the book, and she added, "We're anti-copyright. It would be ridiculous of us to refuse you." Everyone so far smiled as I calmly explained that I wanted to take the goods they were selling.

Of the vendors, only the saleswoman at AK Press looked even mildly annoyed by my request, but she grudgingly let me take the book *Introduction to Anarchism*. It was a small soft-cover that was difficult not to bend while photocopying, and I tried my best not to damage it under the glass. "Don't worry," urged Steve from behind the machine. "It's already dead." I figured that I was probably too polite to be a proper anarchist, and I brought the book back in more or less the same condition in which I found it.

Concerned that this anarchist melee was not turning out according to plan, I decided to take matters into my own hands. "Photocopy your books here!" I belted out like a sideshow barker across the room, hoping that would cause more of a stir. Nobody took offense or even responded, except for one girl who was interested in the offer.

"Was that obnoxious?" I asked Andrew.

"Yes, it was."

"I guess that's part of the role of the journalist - to be obnoxious," I rationalized.

"That's an unhappy way of looking at your profession," Andrew philosophized.

Maybe he was right. I decided to take it easy for the rest of the demonstration. I looked for more free books at Red Emma's Bookstore, which was visiting from Baltimore, but by then, the line for the machine had gotten too long. I decided to quit while I was ahead, and I helped Andrew pass out fliers agitating against profit-making from radical literature.

"Isn't this crossing the line of my journalistic objectivity?" I worried. "Don't worry," he said. "It's gonzo."

To celebrate their work, his friend planned to buy falafels, and they got an extra one for me. I came into the event hoping to cover revolution, but I was happy settling for CD-ROM books, new story ideas, and dinner.

As I was about to leave, one young woman looked appalled about the stand. "Won't that machine bend the covers?" she complained, and the organizers of the protest shrugged. She explained that it bothered her because she worked at the radical Lower East Side bookstore Bluestockings.

"That's where we're going next," Andrew said defiantly.

She looked upset and angry before she quietly walked away. That was about as heated as the protest got.

some internet comments:

#1...The majority of the books for sale at that event should not even exist. There is no reason to promote their being read; moreover, they function to hide what should be visible. For the most part, no more than 5 copies of any particular book were available.

Any book that might sell is put up for sale, and as many different books as possible; to get the most sales possible, standard retail practices are employed. Yet if any particular book were worth printing at all, and showing before a public, then it would be worthy of more copies than that. 500 copies of one book is better than 1 copy each of 500 books...

#2: As a sometime tabler at anarchist bookfairs i have to say that the comment -- about how if people believed in what they were doing then they'd have 500 copies of one book rather than 3 copies each of many books -- really seems idiotic to me. I table with lots of books not just because people will have some things that i carry and not others, but because ideas exist in relationship to each other. the selection of books/pamphlets and magazines (etc) that i table with says something about me/my project and who i'm interested in engaging with (and the terms within which i'd like to engage). There is no one book that says everything. Gawd, the very concept boggles the mind.

The frustration in some of the comments is understandable - mostly because the digitize project seems smug and purist, along exactly the lines that newcomers and neophytes frequently are. On the other hand, the point about anarchist bookfairs (and other events) becoming more consumer-oriented experiences is completely valid. I just wish that we could have more interesting conversations about what to do about that.

#3: It was much more the reporter, than "the project," setting the effort up as "rebellers within the rebellious." The reporter, for instance, was the only person who ever called it a "protest."

The point about 500 copies of one book is not "idiotic." Just look at how major propaganda efforts work. 500 million copies of 150 words is power. 150 copies of 500 million words is not. All major propaganda efforts aim at the former, much more than the latter. Do you get it now?

The bookfair tablers surely "believe in what they're doing"--but what they're doing is providing an alternative choice for consumers. What they are doing is NOT fighting the infowar; it is NOT a genuine, focused effort to influence minds. Its focus is elsewhere.

#4 the reporter doesn't account for the tone of this response, which seems condescending and simplistic. i'm sticking with my "idiotic" comment. you're telling us that we should be competing with (taking the tactics of) major propaganda efforts at the same time that you're complaining that bookfairs are one more consumer scene. which is it? do you support abandoning market relationships or not? and there are always multiple foci.

i said i agree about the consumer/consumption issue - but that i don't like the attitude of the people involved in this project (as displayed on this thread and on other online forums with the participants), and that that attitude does not help to have conversations that move people away from consumerism.

your post responding to this, if anything, demonstrates my point.

#5: I don't mean to sound condescending but you really have missed the point. A genuine effort to publicize an idea (etc.) does not look like a bookstore.

<http://anarchistnews.org/?q=node/5255>

Venezuela: National Security = Personal Insecurity

This Editorial from *El Libertario* (#54, September-October 2008, Venezuela) examines – from the current Venezuelan perspective – how authoritarian power builds its own security upon the destruction of collective security.

Civil insecurity is a problem that has certainly been inherited by the so-called Bolivarian government, the product of, among other things, an immense social debt with large sectors of the population, getting worse to the point of being considered the mayor problem experienced everyday by the people of Venezuela.

The reasons for the government's incompetence are many: the traditional emphasis on repressive policies, the lack of a structural transformation that significantly ameliorates poverty, police corruption, impunity for the crimes committed by the powerful - whether the traditional oligarchy or the growing bourgeoisie – and a criminal penal system to punish the poor. The ambiguous institutional response has its origin in the state's use of personal insecurity as a tool for social control. The permanent threat of violation of personal integrity, certain or improbable, has destroyed the invisible links that form the social communitarian fabric and have relegated individuals to their private spheres, abandoning the public space, that marketplace where the transformation of reality implies agreement and solidarity with people different than us.

The perpetual coercion created by the sensation of insecurity changes comradeship to mistrust, separating the city's inhabitants into their private reserves, making easier their control and manipulation. Therefore the relationship between people and politics, formerly exercised face to face in public spaces, becomes a spectacle, in our case via television images and a simulated participation, harmless and empty of content. This kind of politics based on media spectacle and summit agreements behind closed doors has been advanced by both sides of the struggle

in our country. This polarization, earnestly built and maintained, has allowed the few to continue deciding for and oppressing the majority, locked up in their homes and afraid to come out to demand, defend and conquer their rights. As long as the police and criminals of all sorts – among them the professional politicians – continue ruling the streets, it will be much harder for regular people to combat misery and inequality. The resulting self-imposed curfew validates the notion that in order to control the minds it is also necessary to control the bodies. Because all this the "managers" of chavism and of the opposition can afford to shed their pretenses – their false interest in the people's plight – and show their true thirst for power, dedicating a whole year exclusively to their electoral campaigns.

In contrast between the government's tolerance for a certain level of violence and its use as a tool to hinder free association, the Venezuelan government has increased its policies of concentration of power and preservation of its own security. The growing purchase of weapons, the legalization of para-state militias, the creation of military regions and operational theaters are initiatives to maintain and secure the internal order against any popular discontent. In the same vein we have the delegation of police activities to communal councils and social networks, surveillance and snitch activities we must strongly reject and condemn. Thus the Bolivarian government reinforces the global trend: the more state security the less personal security.

A first step to reverse the problem of insecurity is to understand it in all its complexity in order to act consequently. As all rigorous investigations on the subject demonstrate, the principal culture medium is one of the most unfair distributions of wealth in the continent. Because of this our country has one of the largest levels of violence in the region, a situation that spreads like cancer to all areas of life and that, far from diminishing, as a real and integral transformation of society would entail, gets worse day by day. But it is never too late to start. Defeating fear and mistrust, we must come out in public to the streets and plazas of our cities, to see in others our own suffering. Distanced from labels and divisions imposed from above, we will start to act together again, by means of the organizations we will freely create out of our demands and against all those institutions that limit our self-realization and our just, whole and dignified lives in common.

<http://anarchistnews.org/?q=node/5262>