

EXHIBIT 14

Downturn As Opportunity: Transforming Recession Into Anarchy

By Lobsterbeard

A recession or even a depression does not mean the end of the economy as such, anymore than the death of a president means the end of presidency. The boom/bust cycle is integral to capitalism and that cycle will continue regardless of whether or not there are people calling for an end to capitalism. The only question for anarchists is how to best take advantage of this inevitability.

The U.S. economy is slowing down considerably right now. It is not yet a recession, which is defined as a decline in a country's GDP for two successive quarters. The economy is, in fact, still growing, it is just that its rate of growth is slowing, which is sometimes an indication that it will recede, but not always. The prices of key consumer goods (food, heating oil, gas) has risen, inflation appears to be on the rise (meaning the real value of the dollar has weakened, which it has to historic levels against certain foreign currencies), and the job market is tepid. The stock market has risen a great in the last few years, but now it looks shaky and there are fears of a "correction." All of these factors together indicate that the U.S. economy has hit a rough patch after years of rapid growth; whether or not it will begin to decline is a subject of debate, but it certainly seems more likely today than it did a year ago.

We must look for the ways to make the most of the opportunities created by these cycles of capitalism. This same approach applies to other activities. Take dumpster diving: of course dumpster divers "rely" on the system that produces waste, but their concern is how to best take advantage of an inevitable situation. Seeing the miserable reality we face, one in which eatable food is thrown away and faceless businessmen decide the fates of countless people, as a field of opportunity is, to my mind, the only strategically and psychologically viable option for us.

Concretely, this means that an economic downturn should be scoured for opportunities to create anarchy, build networks of solidarity, and put forth an analysis of the forces that are mutilating peoples' lives. To put it succinctly: direct action, mutual aid, and propaganda. Economic downturns create new material needs as capitalism becomes temporarily incapable of providing for segments of the population that were previously integrated into the system. So finding ways to meet those needs for ourselves and those around us outside of capitalism, with an eye towards expanding those relationships of mutual aid beyond the confines of temporary economic hardship, becomes the large-scale challenge for anarchists (I'd like to emphasize the word "ourselves" in that sentence because an economic downturn would not just affect other people in other places but would also create real hardships for many anarchists, even those at the extreme margins of the capitalist economy.) This challenge can be combined with some forms of direct action and propaganda. Take organized theft as an example. Theft can serve as a means of meeting material needs, it can target specific corporations for damage, and it can illustrate the absurdity of abundance in the face of unmet needs. That's just one example; direct action does not have to meet an immediate material need to be effective, nor do tactics for economic survivalism need to take the form of illegal direct action. The point is to respond to changing circumstances by applying our creativity and analysis to a situation created largely beyond our control.

Are the opportunities presented by economic downturn themselves different or just their effect? I'd say both. There is a point when differences in degree become differences in kind. Certainly organized theft is appropriate in both boom times and bust, but the meaning of the action changes with the context thus changing the action itself. Every action has multiple aspects, which I would reduce to intent, perception, and effect. The 'effect' of organized theft may remain similar (goods are stolen, although the exact effect of this can vary dramatically), but the 'intent' can change entirely (meeting the needs of others rather than ourselves, for example) and so can the perception, depending on the propaganda component of the action and other factors (most of which are

beyond the immediate control of the actors but no less worthy of attention). So in a way, yes the impact has changed more than the act itself, but the act itself and the reasons for it can be completely different.

It's important to remember that a recession, or any other historical event for that matter, has no inherent meaning. A recession could just as easily (and usually does) lead to a greater reliance on the system that produces it. The 'problem' is blamed variously on incompetent politicians, greedy bankers, or clueless bureaucrats, which leads to the assumption that with better people in charge, such problems would not occur. To veer into the theoretical, the contradictions in history do not create themselves; they are made by people and if we want them to become 'critical' (to borrow some language from Gramsci) we must make them so by our own actions.

Since I want to encourage everyone to take advantage of whatever unique opportunities are presented by recession, I offer the following broad questions to ask one's self during the planning of an action. What exactly is the outcome you desire? Does the action you're planning rely on local information (i.e. something that is known because of a unique position)? Will the context allow it to achieve its maximum impact? Are you making an effort to shape the perception of the action as much as is reasonably possible? If you answered 'no' to any of these question, tweak your plan and start from the top until you answer 'yes' to all of them. If you do that, by necessity, you will come up with a unique plan.

Lobsterbeard contributes to the Center for Strategic Anarchy, (<http://anarchiststrategy.blogspot.com>), a site of anarchist analysis of contemporary events.

SAN JOSE PEACE CENTER: FIFTY YEARS AGAINST WAR

By Susan Saxophone

On November 15, 2007, generations of peace activists met at the San Jose Public Library to commemorate fifty years of the San Jose Peace Center. Founding members Alice Cox, Barby Ulmer, and former director Kathy Lynch gave presentations about their involvement with the Peace Center.

The cold war, fallout from nuclear tests, and Mutually Assured Destruction gave little comfort to the pacifist George Collins. He started distributing flyers calling for nuclear disarmament in downtown San Jose. A group meeting at his house decided to make efforts to end war and educate the public by opening a peace center and starting publication of a newsletter, the Peace Times. The San Jose Peace Center opened its doors in 1957

The fifty years of the Peace Center saw rapid changes in San Jose and rural Santa Clara County. One man remembered riding his bike around downtown and being yelled at by yokels coming into town on the weekends from the surrounding farms and orchards looking for trouble. These days he rides his bike unaccosted by tan, muscle-bound hayseeds. The aerospace industries and electronics industries at the core of the military industrial complex planted themselves in Santa Clara County in the 1960's and orchards were bulldozed to make way for suburban tract housing. The Peace Center moved through many different rented offices as well before finding a permanent home.

Alice Cox, one of the founding members of the peace center, was first involved in protesting the hydrogen bomb detonations at the Nevada Test Site and the development of nuclear weapons at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. These tests spread radioactive fallout across the Southwest. She participated in the drive to collect children's teeth for radioactive isotope Strontium-90, proving mother's milk in the West had been affected by fallout from the tests. Many members remembered contributing their baby's teeth to the drive. The Peace Times published Dr. Spock's concerns about the effects of fallout on infants. Her husband Bill Cox opened a print shop in

San Jose and printed the Peace Times as well as the thousands of leaflets and posters for social causes.

As a young woman in Nuremburg, Germany, the importance of disobeying illegal orders was drilled into Lisa Kalvelage by the American Consul during her immigration interview. In the United States, she found herself in a country committing criminal acts of aggression. She committed her energies to the peace movement. With three other housewives she blockaded a forklift loaded with napalm bound for Vietnam on May 25th, 1966. During her trial for trespassing, Kalvelage argued that the Kellogg-Briand Act's ban on chemical weapons rendered the use of napalm illegal. Her statement against the war was immortalized in the Pete Seeger song "I am Lisa Kalvelage."

Many Peace Center members remembered participating at the die-in at San Jose State when Dow Chemical brought its recruiters to the university in the winter of 1967. Police panicked and rioted when the demonstrators tossed fake blood at the administration building, bashing heads and spilling the real blood of the crowd.

A spurt of reactionary terrorism in the South Bay struck at the Peace Center offices in 1969. A small pipe bomb smashed the window of their storefront on February 11 and exploded, doing little damage and causing no injuries.

The Peace Center served as a distribution point for over 15,000 flyers for the November 1969 Vietnam Moratorium demonstration in San Francisco. The activists distributed flyers at train stations, college campuses, and at factory gates, building a broad resistance to the war.

Founding Peace Center member Barby Ulmer trained with the Central Committee of Conscientious Objectors and converted the Peace Center into a draft counseling center as the war escalated in Vietnam. The hotlines provided many thousands of worried young men with information about resisting the draft.

In the 1980s Peace Center activists worked in solidarity with Nicaraguan Sandinistas, El Salvador, and South Africa's African National Congress. Kathy Lynch, director of the peace center from 1980 to 1986, found time to raise her kids in between the consensus meetings dragging on into the night, the non-violent demonstrations, and the day-to-day work of keeping the center open. She organized trips to Nicaragua to witness the destruction caused by the

covertly funded contras and the progressive policies of the democratically elected Sandinistas.

The growing tide of the worldwide anti-nuclear movement swept across California in the early 1980's. Many members reminisced about arrests at the Lockheed plant and Lawrence Livermore Labs. Lynch recalled the effort to stop construction of the Diablo Canyon nuclear power reactor. 20,000 people assembled at the construction site of the reactor and 1,960 people were arrested on the grounds in 1981, the largest anti-nuclear demonstration in the U.S. Lynch was a part of the affinity group San Jose Medflies that landed a small boat on the coast and hiked for two days to get to the construction site..

In 1984 the embarrassed Los Angeles District attorney returned a stolen copy of the Peace Center's membership lists, a mild reminder of the constant threat of harassment and surveillance. How the L.A.P.D. obtained the membership list was never explained.

In June 1986 the Peace Center purchased a dilapidated former frat house with a leaky roof, finally finding a permanent home after thirty years. Members pitched in to renovate the structure and struggled to pay off the mortgage. While Reagan waged covert wars in Afghanistan and Nicaragua, Richard Ramirez battled the Rambo worshipping political climate with a wave of bilingual counter-recruiting presentations at local high schools. Peace Center members burned their mortgage at a party in 1991.

The Peace Center recognizes the need for social change to permanently end war. The Peace Center served as a meeting space and incubator to many organizations, including the San Jose Green Party, Big Mountain Support Group, the urban youth magazine DEBUG, and the Impeachment Center. Many of the women involved in the peace center are members of the Women's International League of Peace and Freedom. South Bay Mobilization currently organizes protests against the Iraq war and meets at the Peace Center.

Peace Center members opposed U.S. involvement in the 1991 Gulf war and protested the sanctions depriving Iraqis of food and medicine. In 2001 Peace Center members met to begin opposition to the War On Terror as the bombs fell. The invasions of Afghanistan, Iraq, the unlawful detentions at Guantanamo, and the looming threat of invading Iran

demanded renewed energy. Many demonstrators have been appearing at weekly vigils held at the corner of Second and San Carlos since the invasion of Afghanistan in 2001. A 2007 article in the New York Times revealed the Boeing subsidiary Jeppesen was booking flights for the CIA's kidnappings of suspected terrorists. Protests have targeted this company acting as the travel agent for torture flights.

Alice Cox deplored the persistence of the problems that motivated her protest: nuclear proliferation, wars of aggression, and social inequality. Although the anti-war movement left a definite mark on American culture, military buildup and war planning continues in much the same vein as in 1957. Alice Cox died on her way to a Peace Fair in December 2007.

San Jose Peace Center, 48 South 7th St., San Jose, CA. (408) 297-2299
www.sanjosepeace.org

People's Park

By Sonnie Day

The latest threat to People's Park -- as ever a testament to the struggle to reclaim land and the dream of sharing it in common -- comes in the form of proposals for plans to "re-design" it. To preserve the legacy of the People's Park, we need to be pro-active in the process the University is undertaking. That is why you are called upon to attend neighborhood meetings, planning meetings, and upcoming events at People's Park.

In a recent Orwellian twist, design architects hired by UC Berkeley have published a report that declared that People's Park was under-utilized and lacked diversity.

In fact People's Park has more users per area than probably any other Berkeley park and is arguably one of the more diverse places on Earth. What "lack of diversity" meant in their report was that some well-off, white, "nice" people don't feel comfortable using the Park.

The symantics of the debate on People's Park are carefully couched in political correctness, seldom with words that might evoke "class", "race" or "gentrification". Instead it is worded as issues of "comfort" and "safety". The plain truth is that the Park has become a sanctuary for people who are increasingly marginalized. Skyrocketing rents, closed psychiatric wards and spinning times have left many homeless and unwelcome in other parts of the city. In the face of all this, the Park has provided a remarkable service -- giving tangible, physical support and more subtly providing a scattered, yet real web of community for those most in need.

Unfortunately this means one is likely to find folks talking to themselves, partying, or hustling a few bucks in People's Park. This understandably makes people who are used to more predictable and controlled environments uncomfortable.

Meanwhile, the population of both the City of Berkeley and the University of California students has been getting richer and whiter. "Compassion burnout" is evident in recent Berkeley anti-homeless legislation and a San Francisco Chronicle columnist spewing homeless hate on the front page. So here we are, the soul of Berkeley and People's Park teetering in history.

A member at the last People's Park Advisory Board actually passed a proposal for a design "competition". People's Park is about cooperation not competition.

People's Park has always championed the banner of "user-development", the idea that those who use the park collectively decide and improve it. The concept of paid contract workers implementing a design by "experts" that was commissioned by bureaucrats, is an affront to this unique vision.

The Park was created in a glorious burst of volunteers tilling, planting, cooking, and building. In much the spirit of the Brazil's Landless Workers' Movement, People's Park has been a 39 year experiment in tending gardens, feeding one another, building and keeping up tables and benches, the free clothes box, the free-speech stage and providing community. People who complain about the Park just don't seem to get it that the way to change it is to bring a blanket, a frisbee, a book, or some friends and lend a bit of themselves to all that is People's Park.

If you care about the Park, please come out in support of it now. We are planning a "Quest for Common Ground" process to vision the park in the spirit of cooperation. There will be visioning activities on Sunday Mar 30 (April 6 raindate) and on the Anniversary, Sunday April 27, in the Park.

There have also been great ideas lately of activities for the Park including Tai Chi classes, art shows, movie nights, tea parties, theater, beer-fest, etc. Organize an activity! Come to the Park, enjoy it, share music, food, conversation, sun, chess, frisbee, gardening. People's Park is yours, believe in the dream of sharing.

Check the www.peoplespark.org for updates. Please get involved in these processes soon to add our generation's contribution to this unique legacy.

KNOW YOUR ENEMY

"The earth is not dying, it is being killed, and those who are killing it have names and addresses" - Utah Phillips

Who are the corporations and individuals fueling endless war and ecological collapse? The ones who sat and planned to invade Iraq, roadless forests and New Orleans? Many groups are already organizing blockades, street protests, and stockholder meetings targeting these institutions of violence — conducting research to expose their deeds. Why not try an even more dangerous maneuver: talk to and try to understand the people working and living at the point of production and the people who surround them? Below is just a tiny fraction of the corporations and institutions that make up the machine. Are some based in your town? What can you do to expose their activities to public scrutiny? Better yet, can you make your own list of companies in your area?

PRIVATE MILITARY CONTRACTORS

Private military contractors, more frankly called mercenaries, provide personnel, security, logistics, and supplies for twenty-first century Western militaries lacking in public support. There are over 100,000 contractors in Iraq who play a substantial role in strategy, tactics, and policy.

BLACKWATER USA-P.O. Box 1029/MOYOCK, NC 27958/252.435.2488, 7,000 acres of land. Erik Prince, Owner. Gary Jackson, President. World's largest private army, founded in 1997.

DYNCORP 1401 McKinney, Suite 2400/Houston, TX 77010/888.669.3920. President and CEO: Herbert Lanese. Dyncorp Mercenaries have been employed in Bolivia, Bosnia, Somalia, Angola, Haiti, Colombia, Kosovo and Kuwait.

MILITARY PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES INCORPORATED 1201 E Abingdon Dr Ste 425/Alexandria, VA 22314 – Alexandria, VA. Owner: Carl E. Vuono, president. Operating in Iraq and militarizing civilian police.

DEFENSE CONTRACTORS AND INVESTORS

The defense contractors provide the industrial backbone and financial capital that gives military industrial complex its power.

BECHTEL 50 Beale St/San Francisco, CA 94105/415-768-1234. San Francisco, CA. Riley P. Bechtel, CEO. Construction company involved in Iraq, oil and power plant operation, privatization of water resources, Los Alamos Laboratories and Lawrence Livermore Lab.

CARLYLE GROUP 1001 Pennsylvania Ave Nw/Washington, DC 20004/202-347-2626. Louis V. Gerstner, Jr., Chairman. Huge investment group with major defense and power investments, political clout, and Dunkin Donuts.

HALLIBURTON/KBR 1401 McKinney, Suite 2400/Houston, TX 77010/888-669-3920. DAVID LESAR, Chairman, President and C.E.O. With the Single-source Iraq war contract Halliburton was awarded, this petroleum and construction company is making billions.

ITT CORP. 4 West Red Oak Lane/White Plains, NY 10604/914-641-2000. Steven R. Loranger, Chairman, President and CEO. Involved in arms manufacture and export, and sponsored 1973 coup in Chile.

OIL COMPANIES

The anti-war movement has marched behind the banner No Blood for Oil since the Gulf War. As oil resources diminish the strategic value of petroleum will only increase, and the major oil companies will continue to drive foreign policy.

BP – St James's Square/London, SW1Y 4PD/United Kingdom/Phone: 44 20 7496 4000. Tony Hayward, CEO. Former colonial British Plunderer, the sun never sets on B.P.'s oil extraction operations.

CHEVRON 6001 Bollinger Canyon Road/San Ramon, CA 94583/United States. Phone: 925-842-1000. CEO & Chairman David O'Reilley. "Iraq possesses huge reserves of oil and gas — reserves I'd love Chevron to have access to." – 1998 quote from CEO Kenneth Derr.

EXXONMOBIL- 5959 Las Colinas Boulevard/Irving, TX 75039-2298/United States Phone: 972-444-1000. Rex Tillerson, CEO. Heavily funds global warming denial, supported Indonesian military in East Timor.

ROYAL DUTCH SHELL Carel van Bylandtlaan 30/The Hague, 2596 HR/Netherlands Phone: 31 70 377 1365. Jeroen van der Veer, CEO. Another former colonial monopoly, Royal Dutch Shell was directly involved in the 1995 execution of Nigerian activist Ken Saro-Wiwa and extracts the world's oil reserves for profit at an alarming rate.

EDUCATION & RESEARCH

HERITAGE FOUNDATION 214 Massachusetts Ave NE/Washington DC 20002/202.546.4400. Edwin Fuelner, Jr., President. Think tank supported the Reagan Doctrine by funding Contras and anti-communist rebels in Angola and arguing for U.S. dominance in foreign policy.

PROJECT FOR NEW AMERICAN CENTURY William Kristol, Chairman. Non-profit educational organization committed to the proposition that American leadership is good for the world.

RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

CHRISTIAN COALITION 499 S Capitol St Sw/Washington, DC 20003/ USA /Phone: (202) 479-6900. Pat Robertson, president. In 2003, Robertson called the Iraq War "a righteous cause out of the Bible." Opposes abortion, gay rights, provides mass support pew by pew for the neoconservative elements of Republican Party.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EVANGELICALS 499 S Capitol St Sw/Washington, DC 20003/ USA /Phone: (202) 479-6900. Leith Anderson, President. Evangelical group that is backbone of Christian Right movement that leads to militarism and death, hard at work building a loyal Christian faction in U.S. military.

ECO-DESTROYERS

MONSANTO /800 North Lindbergh Boulevard/St. Lois, MO 63167/314-694-1000 Monsanto, formerly Dow Chemical, makers of Agent Orange, continue to pump out chemicals and endanger the food supply.

INTERNATIONAL PAPER/ 6400 Poplar Avenue/Memphis, TN 38197. John Faraci, CEO> Mindlessly pulping forests in the Southeast.

MEDIA COMPANIES

TIME-WARNER - Time Warner Inc./One Time Warner Center/New York, NY 10019 Phone: 212-484-8000. Richard D. Parsons, Chairman And C.E.O. CNN must bear responsibility for media that uncritically incorporates U.S. propaganda.

NEWS CORPORATION – 1211 Avenue of the Americas/ New York/New York
10036 New York, NY. Rupert Murdoch, CEO and Chairman. Infamous for taking
a strong stance in support of jingoism at the expense of journalism.

Don't dream it — be it

There is no easy road map to get from the troubled world we inhabit now to a sustainable, non-oppressive future because there are so many possible routes and no clearly defined destination — we seek freedom rather than a new prison.

Sometimes it seems like a lot of people aren't on a road, but are instead content to stay where they are — accepting the established order, hierarchy, and short term environmental practices. Part of building a new world is figuring out — personally and socially — how to get beyond the hopelessness that causes people to accept the status quo. It is *hard* to imagine a different world and even harder to see a way to get there. The most basic form of activism — underlying the concrete things people do like cooking Food Not Bombs or going to protests — is fighting the sense of hopelessness and apathy that makes an uprising and the construction of new structures impossible.

Imagining a different world is crucial to getting beyond despair and an acceptance of the existing order, because in thinking about how a different society would look, things start seeming less permanent and pre-determined. We need to figure out why so many folks assume that centralized control by the few over the many, permanent poverty and inequality, structural violence and war, intolerance, ugly, soulless cities, and environmental destruction for every human function are “normal”.

The current social order assumes everyone will behave selfishly, but our lives tells us that people are generous. A different world of freedom, cooperation, free time for play, and sustainability floats in our minds — community gardens, childcare collectives, free schools, cooperative communities, collective workplaces. Imagining new structures and forms of organization is a crucial activity for all of us who struggle for change.

But just imagining a different world is clearly not enough. A lot of people *talk* a good game about how they *wish* things could be, or what they will do *after the revolution* — which begs the question: why the gap between our ideas and our daily lived practice?

Daily living forces everyone to make constant decisions: to decide whether you'll compromise and conform with “the way things are” or do your best to live what's in your heart and your imagination. Those individual daily decisions eventually add up to your lifetime. Each decision seems minor — each compromise and conformity can get rationalized as “necessary” “realistic” or “inevitable.” But if you imagine a different world — a world with cooperation, sharing, equitable distribution of resources and sustainable environmental choices — why do you think that some moment in the future will be the right moment to start living according to your vision?

What are you waiting for? If you think about it, there never will be a moment when it is more “convenient,” “acceptable” or “appropriate” to begin living a different way. It will always be deviant, an extra bother and an isolated act in a world that goes on in the old ways.

No matter where you are economically, the capitalist / industrial system requires participation, whether to “get ahead” or just to survive. Learning to live according to human values instead of economic imperatives means figuring out how to reduce your dependence on the capitalist infrastructure while increasing your social and physical well-being. This includes redefining property, transportation, food, entertainment, and family relationships — really *all* relationships. Each of us must escape from whatever imprisons us. While everyone's obstacles and options are different — economic class and many other demographic factors influence the roads of resistance people take — everyone has opportunities to envision a different existence and figure out ways to live that existence.

In finally living according to your vision instead of always living a compromise, you instantly have shifted to a new world: beyond an unrealized dream and into a new way of living that changes the only life you can ultimately determine — your own.

WILL YOU GO DOWN ON ME?

Good sex, in our opinion, is an act of mutual aid. Every person, regardless of gender, is responsible for contributing to the well-being and pleasure of their partners and themselves. We must explore and know our own desires and learn to speak them. We must hear and respond to the desires of our partners (even if that means accepting refusal gracefully). This means finding the words to express how we like to be touched, spoken to, tied up, and cuddled. Fucking is any raunchy act, and all of it requires consent. Getting explicit permission, however vulnerable and scary it may seem, is a great turn-on. What better than knowing your partner really likes it when you touch them that way, talk in that voice, or use that prop? What is better than knowing you can ask for anything, and it will at least be considered respectfully? There is no way that we or our relationships can grow if we don't find safe spaces in which to explore.

If you have never spoken during sex, or asked permission, or blurted out your desires, feel free to start small. Most people hear compliments well, and appreciate encouraging suggestions. However, it's equally important to discover the boundaries of your comfort (often situational) and speak them as well. Starting off with a "this feels so good" or "I love it when you..." or "I'd like you to spend the night if you're interested" is fantastically brave. If you're not there, work on moaning—just get yourself vocal. Steady yourself for disappointment (and delight), and enjoy the benefits of good communication. You may find out a lover has fantasies they didn't share or they may entrust you with a story of trauma that is a gift to know and share the burden of. Often, people's boundaries are related to past experience, and creating a safer "right now" can help some people open up closed doors. Reading your partners' nonverbal cues is equally important, as is verbally checking for consent about each different act in which you may engage. There is no implicit consent to touch someone's genitals because you have kissed them, or to have intercourse because you've had oral sex. I once met a couple who'd been together for three years and had never said a word in bed. He didn't know that she'd never come and she didn't know how to ask for what she wanted! If your partner tenses up or cries or is unresponsive, it's really important to stop, check in, and support what they need. Remember, all of us have triggers, and not everyone is capable of communicating when they are reliving trauma. Don't restrain your partner unless it's part of consensual play, and check in before you lock the door (this can be a subtle act of power). Be honest about any risk factors you bring, such as Sexually Transmitted Infections, whether you have unprotected sex with other people, and if you have allergies to glycerin or spermicide (in lube) or latex. Details make all the difference.

It's also important that we take care of our community and help out our friends. Sometimes people are too hurt, distracted or intoxicated to be concerned with their well-being. At the very least, we should directly check in with them about what they want and expect, and possibly act to get them to a place of lower risk. It's also important to confront people (in a supportive way) who act aggressively, because they may not understand that what they are doing is possibly assault. Rapists in prison admit to an average of 11 acts of assault before they are caught. They are either okay with what they are doing, or don't believe there's anything wrong with it. The reality is, it's a habitual behavior. Better to find out and help before it's a problem situation. Putting people in prison or exiling them from scenes will not stop sexual assault. We need to find ways to address the behavior without destroying the person.

While being so direct about sex is outside of most norms, it transforms sexual experiences. When we are sure that we agree with our partners about expectation and desire, there is no fear to distract us—only pleasure and humor. The most important part of speaking our desires is realizing they are ours to fulfill—not our partners'. It's much less pressure to offer someone a choice ("Would you like to come home with me or would you rather hang out here?") than a request ("Would you come home with me tonight?"). Too often it's easier to say yes than to explain "Yes, I want to come home with you but I'm nervous because I haven't been with anyone since..." If we allow for slow and comfortable intimacy, we are likely to experience it more fully and joyfully.

So, if you are often the initiator of your sexual experiences, experiment with patience and let someone else take the lead. Even if it means being alone more often, you may find you enjoy yourself more when you have partners. If you are less likely to initiate sex, think of ways you could safely ask for intimacy. Having the support of friends could make it easier to approach that really great someone.

It's our responsibility to create new sexual expectations based on good communication that not only reduce the likelihood of sexual assault, but affirm that sex is normal and necessary. This begins with teaching children healthy ideas about their bodies and believing people when they share stories of sexual assault. Consider it turning on the lights. There are endless ways for us to end our internal oppression and explore healthy, better sex.

**Book Review:
"Dangerous
Woman: The
Graphic
Biography of
Emma
Goldman"
By Sharon
Rudahl
Review by
James Generic**

Emma Goldman is one of the big American anarchists, as well as one of the earliest to contribute to free speech, birth control, and labor movements. She was an amazing public speaker, something that is lost in this day of television and radio, and writing still ranks among the classics of anarchist thought.

"Dangerous Woman: A Graphic Biography of Emma Goldman" can be best described as a graphic novel version of "Living My Life", and it's a real treat. The artist, Sharon Rudahl, does a great job capturing Goldman's turbulent and unique life, growing from a fiery Jewish peasant girl fleeing Russia to an active Anarchist speaker and organizer hated by the government, the patron-saint of the American Anarchist movement, though small at the time of her death. She spares no detail, especially the parts about Emma's sex life and her many partners over the years.

One of my favorite scenes in the book is when she has been sent by her mentor, Johann Most, on a speaking tour "Against the 8 Hour Day" (it was too little and was too reformist and not revolutionary enough.) She encounters an older man in the Chicago stop of the tour who tells her that while he understands why young people would be impatient with small demands, but "I won't live to see the revolution. Will I never have a little time for reading or to walk openly in the park?" After this

encounter, Emma vowed never to let doctrine or ideology get in the way of a good fight that brought real change to real people's lives. That's a lesson that a lot of radicals then and now could learn and take to heart.

Today, the closest we in the United States have to an Emma Goldman is academics in ivory towers, as loud voices of state and corporate power rule. It's hard to imagine a story like hers again where someone from such a humble beginning devotes her entire life, to the point where she refused to correct health problems like infertility, to the cause of fighting the existing order, and becoming such an international figure as she did. Maybe a new Emma Goldman of the internet or TV or music like hiphop will arise to become an inspiration to people's movements everywhere, like Subcommader Marcos in Chiapas has, or elsewhere. It's hard to say. Either way, check out Emma's life in graphic novel comic form, because she's a real life superhero in a way that Superman never could be.

KERMIT'S BRAIN — hopefully less scattered, ending still needs work

Race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, class and ability: some of the loaded breaking points that shape identity and experience. These categories have always loomed large in my political life and are rarely navigated comfortably, even within radical communities.

I first became politicized in a radical way in college having conversations about privilege and oppression that seemed to quantify human suffering into categories of identity and analyze how the actions of dominant groups and systems prevented any sort of broad based social justice. I gained a lot of knowledge about how privilege and oppression manifest in the world and in my own life but I really didn't know what to do with that knowledge.

As a result I tried to be constantly vigilant, agonizing over every social interaction in my life and berating myself for not accepting the burden of my privilege fully enough. The result was that it was harder for me to relax enough to have genuine connections with people and I had no way of gaining social self-confidence without feeling like I was being an oppressive white man. On the flip side any sort of existential crisis I was having was legitimate only if it could be understood as coming from my experience being queer or fat or left-handed.

I am not talking here about being uncomfortable acknowledging how the current allocation of wealth, power, and privilege has been built on a history of domination and abuse. I am talking about the way that people in radical and activist communities often take in this information without having a model for how to live with it sustainably. One of the worst things about this society is the way that it divides and alienates people from themselves and each other. Adhering to a type of identity politics that denies the validity of experience outside the frame of identity serves, in a

weird way, to reinforce the profundity of this alienation; training people to respect and maintain the very boundaries that divide and dehumanize people when they could be trying to transcend them.

After I left school, and moved out west, I was exposed to radical people who were critical of 'identity politics' for many reasons that I felt were valid. At some point I remember stepping back from worrying incessantly about how my actions either subverted privilege or reinforced oppression. I tried instead to connect myself to my own desire and use that as the basis for building affinity with others.

It is easy to find fault with the way that many conversations about identity and power play out. It is much more difficult to acknowledge that the issues addressed by those flawed conversations remain. Learning to say 'the framing of this debate is flawed and I choose not to engage with it' is one thing, but if that stops one from ever framing a debate, then heavy and important things remain uncommunicated and the process of engaging with life honestly is stifled. Being constantly aware of the way that you are affected by privilege and oppression can get in the way of having organic relationships with people. On the other hand, trying to connect with people across lines of difference without having a way to address the elephant of identity also limits the potential for real intimacy and understanding.

So here I am; I know that many of the issues raised by identity politics are important but I also know that many of the conversations that happen around them no longer lead me to a place that is useful. Despite this I also know that I live in and am supported by a society built on the exploitation and destruction, past and present, of people, cultures, and ecosystems, most often along lines of identity. I know that this causes enough pain and despair to be lost in it several times over, and that if I shut myself off to feeling that pain at all, I lose a piece of my own humanity.

Yet if I choose to believe that we live in a world where everyone is either hurting, angry or complacent, then letting go of pain and anger dooms me to complacency – I prefer to believe that there is a whole spectrum of emotions accessible to people that continue to be engaged with life honestly and that the question of selling out is not so easily answered.

I guess for me the important thing is about what I choose to do with the knowledge that they have. Do I strive to connect with people as complete people with all of their experiences, rather than connecting with people as a collection of identities? To declare myself anti-sexist and then go around self-consciously seeking out women to have 'anti-sexist relationships' with strikes me as misguided and quite different than allowing myself to connect with and support strong and beautiful people in my life, no matter what gender because, on some level, I love them. The first instance almost inhibits intimacy, while the other uses organic relationships as a lens through which to understand how the experiences and opportunities of people in our lives are shaped by identity.

Sourcing my politics from my own desires and experiences is a much stronger model for me than setting the greater good of social revolution against my desires. It means that meeting my own needs is something I can do without guilt. I do not believe that we live in a zero sum world where my happiness always comes at the expense of someone else's pain. Sacrificing my own happiness does not, in itself, change the institutions and power dynamics that perpetuate oppression. I am not saying that we can't change the world at all, just that the model of how we do it needs to be different if it is to be sustainable. I have a desire for my life to amplify connectedness and well-being through my own well-being, rather than contributing, through my own isolation, to the isolation of the world.

This is not to say that I have it all figured out, or that there can be no concern for people who are outside of ones own life and experience. I may read an article on genocide of people I don't know halfway around the world and be moved to tears and trembling – but that response for me stems from my own lived experience, from the understanding that the people suffering are as real as the people in my life, that their desires are no less valid and their pain no less felt.

For me right now, living a life I can feel satisfied with is still about discomfort. I think that if I ever find that issues around identity and politics seem simple or easily navigated it will be because I have disengaged. Instead I think about myself as trying to maintain a tension between knowing and feeling the unvarnished reality of

suffering and remembering the capacity people have to build networks of mutual love, respect and support without letting the power of one of these thoughts erase the truth of the other.

The Political Perils of Idealized the Struggles of the Oppressed: An Inter-Movement Critique

By Sarah

"Who am I, as a white American man, to decide how an oppressed group should express their resistance? I support anyone fighting against U.S. imperialism, whether they are insurgents in Iraq or American Indians in Colorado, and I am not going to tell them what they should and should not do."

About 25 of us were packed into the back room of the Washington, DC Infoshop to attend a talk about the role of violence in movements for social change. When the presenter arrived at this point, I was not surprised; I had heard this argument so many times, in so many different forms, that I had spotted it long before it was spoken.

One person protested, politely suggesting that many Iraqi insurgent groups do horrible things that are not worthy of anyone's support. The presenter retorted that the mainstream media misrepresents the struggles of groups in resistance. Heads nodded in agreement, and the conversation quickly moved on to other topics. I am ashamed to say that I remained silent and allowed the issue to be buried.

'Iraq Iraq is not alone. Bring the war home.'

It was the January 27, 2007 anti Iraq war march, and the anti-capitalist bloc was marching through the streets of Washington, DC. Members of the newly re-formed Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) were shouting this chant, which quickly picked up with those around them.

I approached one person who was yelling with particular gusto and asked him what he meant by "Bring the war home." His response sounded something like this: "We want the chaos and revolt raging in the streets of Baghdad to come home to America. We

want home-grown insurgency. We want to bring down the U.S. empire."

"You mean, you actually support Iraqi insurgents and want their activity to spread to the U.S.?" I asked.

Somewhat more belligerently, he said that he supports anyone fighting against the U.S. and accused me of not being radical. He then resumed chanting, his voice blending with the fifty or so people yelling the lines in unison.

"Those in positions of privilege who are interested in radical social change should support resistance movements led by oppressed people, withholding all judgment."

This principle has surfaced in countless radical spaces that I have been a part of, from feminist meetings to Indymedia workshops to anti-war events. Whether explicitly spoken or silently assumed as a foundational truth, it has often had the status of an axiom that is nearly impossible to question. Sometimes it leads to awkward clashes and moral dissonance, but I have never seen it thrown out into the open for all to debate.

I think that this principle contains powerful and misguided claims about human subjectivity. It casts oppressed people as essentially simple and good and constructs their subjectivity as radically different from that of privileged people. It homogenizes complex factions into unified wholes, denying diversity and individual agency. It answers nuanced questions about justice with overly simple statements about human character, jumbling up important discussions within social movements.

I want to look at this principle more closely and examine its claims about human subjectivity. I have chosen to focus on examples involving Iraq to keep the discussion specific and grounded in reality. All of my examples involve conversations in radical settings in the U.S. because I am interested in looking at how this principle determines what is and is not talked about in these spaces.

We live in a society where constant criticism, insult, and dismissal are everyday instruments and manifestations of oppression. People in positions of privilege learn and adopt these oppressive behaviors, not necessarily because they want to, but because their social positions shape who they are. In order to help disrupt this dynamic and contribute to collective liberation, people in positions of privilege must radically transform

themselves; they must examine and change their own oppressive thoughts and behaviors and fight against the oppressive social structures — whether cultural or institutional — that they are caught up in.

The principle that “people in positions of privilege should withhold all judgment of oppressed people in resistance” is an attempt to solve this problem. It suggests that, in order to reverse oppressive social dynamics, privileged people should avoid criticizing and judging oppressed people; indeed, privileged people telling oppressed people what to do and who to be is the very problem, according to this line of thought. Instead, privileged people should take leadership from oppressed people in combating social problems, whether those problems are expressed in interpersonal dynamics or social structures. Only then can we turn social hierarchies on their heads within social movements, and thus ensure that the change we create is truly liberating.

I think that this approach begins to break down when you look at how it constructs the subjectivity of the oppressed versus the privileged person. When I use the word subjectivity, I refer to the internal reality of the person: her interpretation of experience, process of thought, repository of memories, and unique consciousness. I use this word because of its strength; I wish to demonstrate the totalizing effects of claims about human subjectivity.

First of all, to claim that oppressed people are beyond reproach implies certain boundaries. It suggests that privileged people exist within a field where outside and internal criticism is welcome and constructive, but that they should make sure that this criticism stays within their field and does not extend into the realm of oppressed people. This framework is cast as important for the political transformation of privileged people; by absorbing and internalizing criticism from the outside, as well as generating criticism of those who share her social advantage, the privileged person can begin to identify and change her own oppressive ways and those of the larger group to which she belongs. Thus, individual and collective transformation are closely related; the privileged person must continuously work on herself in order to challenge structural oppression and affect positive change in her personal life. Within this framework, the subjectivity of the

privileged person becomes hugely important for political struggle. The privileged person must navigate a complex mental terrain, fraught with dangerous thoughts, learned behaviors, and possible mistakes. By employing agency and force of will, the privileged person can transform herself into an agent of positive social change.

The subjectivities of oppressed people are decidedly more static, according to this line of thought. Oppressed people exist within a field that is closed off to criticism — this tool for understanding and growth, by which the privileged person is established as a political subject, is denied them. The oppressed person is seen from the outside — as a part of an oppressed whole — but it is impossible to peer in to learn about her inner workings, if they exist at all. She is a political subject because of the group to which she belongs, not because of her unique desires, goals, motivations, or personal choices. Within this framework, the oppressed person is no longer insulted, harassed, and disproportionately criticized. But she is still “other.” The self that she occupies is unknowable; questioning and criticism cannot be used to decipher the cause of her actions. She is still contained within the category that oppression has created for her — a category of difference as defined by the privileged outsider.

It is easy to see how this line of thought leads to the essentialization of oppressed people as inherently good. The reasoning is that those who suffer under oppressive institutions, governments, and cultures know far more about the workings of oppression than those in positions of privilege ever could. Thus, oppressed people are driven towards positive radical change as a direct consequence of their conditions. Unlike the privileged person, who must fight against the oppressive behaviors she has inadvertently learned, the oppressed person must merely be who she is and follow the knowledge that her social position affords her.

It is true that direct exposure to oppression is a powerful source of knowledge. However, as Joan Scott has argued, personal knowledge through experience is not unmediated. Systems of oppression also serve to beat people down, delude them, and shape their responses. No one can avoid being situated in a historical moment that has power to affect her perceptions of reality.

There is no doubt that privileged people in resistance movements need to do a great deal of work to overcome learned oppressive behaviors. However, this effort will only be hindered by embracing clichés about the essential goodness of oppressed people. I think that it is absolutely vital to re-think an approach that renders oppressed people infallible and unrepachable and devise new methods for combating oppression that take human variation and complexity into account.

Let us return to the previous examples to look at what happens when the principle that “oppressed people in resistance are beyond reproach” is applied to real political situations.

In the first example, the presenter essentialized all resistance movements against U.S. imperialism as deserving of indiscriminate support — as pulled by the same force towards good. Yet, who are these “oppressed Iraqi people” bound together by common struggle? Are they Sunnis, Shiites, secularists, socialists, or capitalists? Are they the ones blowing up crowded markets, fleeing Iraq, attending peace rallies, or hoisting the caskets of their children on their shoulders as they march through the streets? Are they the ones carrying out honor killings or fighting for their abolition? The category of the “unified oppressed group” becomes dangerously homogenizing; a complex social situation, with many competing political visions, is reduced to a cliché. Individual subjectivity is lost; all become a part of a whole that does not represent them — that is patently false.

It is easy to see how dangerous this line of thought can become. The false category of the oppressed group makes it impossible to openly discuss oppression within that group — ethnically motivated discrimination and murder, patriarchal oppression, religious tyranny, etc. It also prevents distinction between groups with different political goals.

In the second example, the SDS protester not only expressed solidarity with those bringing chaos to the streets of Iraq, but also implied that people in the U.S. have something to learn from them. He swept all Iraqis up into a single group, and then claimed that this group is somehow benefiting from civil war in Iraq. In other words, the Iraqi people are being pulled towards a good that they might not be able to see (given that they are fleeing the country en masse), but this protester can see it. And he wants to bring it home.

Who knows what reasons the other people had for yelling the chant. Perhaps it meant something totally different to them, perhaps they agreed with the person I talked to, or maybe they just had not thought it through fully. Either way, the effect was overwhelming: the voices chanting in unison were impossible to scream over.

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The principle that oppressed people are beyond reproach contains claims about human subjectivity that are damaging and false. Yet, it is an attempt to answer vital questions about justice within social movements. How do we create fair, equitable movements for radical change? How do we prevent the oppressive power relations that we are fighting against from infecting resistance movements? How do we create coalitions among diverse groups of people? How do we handle political disagreement amongst people of differing cultural and privilege backgrounds?

The answers to these questions are beyond the scope of this essay. What I have argued here is that the answers do not lie in clichés about the essential goodness of oppressed people. Political situations are infinitely variable, and so must be correct courses of action. Questions about justice within social movements must be addressed honestly and deeply, with attention to nuance and specificity. While it is important to discuss these issues collectively, it is also vitally important to think for oneself — to approach these questions with open eyes and to take on the full weight of one’s decisions.

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