he "bad subjects" ... on occasion provoke the intervention of one of the detachments of the (repressive) State apparatus. But the vast majority of the (good) subjects work all right "all by themselves," i.e., by ideology.

— Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses"

Bad Subjects

Political Education for Everyday Life

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With contributions from Jeff Noonan, Joe Lockard and Joel Schalit, Iosif Botetzagias and Moses Boudourides, Stephen Cushion, Alexandra Flynn, Tom Crumpacker, Gwyneth Rhys, Sarah Burdacki, Maia Ramnath, Mike Mosher, J.C. Myers, Mark Pegrum, Gregory Cowan, Andy Kirby, Colette Gaiter, and the Pink Bloque.
We call it the "info box"

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Protest Cultures

Cynthia Hoffman, Joe Lockard, J.C. Myers, and Scott Schaffer

This special issue of Bad Subjects arrives at the end of a tumultuous 2003 and the beginning of a 2004 that promises no less political tumult. As both year-ending and year-beginning, the issue looks at immediate pasts and futures of anti-war and anti-capitalist politics. These politics may manifest themselves critically in public protest, but events immediately visible to media are only one level of social articulation. A wide variety of geographically disparate and complex protest cultures generate and sustain these public manifestations, yet analyses are most frequently written from within a postmodern understanding of protest experience as anarchic, anonymous, and inchoately collective action. As critical as protest cultures are towards underwriting democracy, media representations persistently treat them as a less than fully comprehensible and abnormal phenomena that conflict with normal notions of economic progress or the necessities of public security.

This last year of protests against the Iraq War and globalist organizational structures that generate and maintain massive international economic disparities has created new prominence and critical roles for protest cultures. Bad Subjects — itself part of these protest cultures as a collective publication — has set out to examine the role of protest in confronting the dominant orders of the American Empire and capitalism; economic, cultural, and media globalism; and the modalities of state violence, visible and less visible. What current strategies of confrontation and protest are most effective in creating a shared resistance to the normalization of imperial culture? How does staging protests contribute to the creation of peaceful civil societies and social justice? What forms of political organization and collective action emerge from protests to energize democratic practice and confront anti-democratic authority?

Protest and organization are inseparable. The argument embodied in this issue is that protest generates, energizes and directs political organization, and that protest cultures create their own appropriate organizations. This organic linkage between expression and action is the very definition of protest politics, one that gives existential afterlife once demonstrator bodies have left the plaza and returned home. In his 1962 manifesto “For A New Orientation” written for Socialisme ou Barbarie, Cornelius Castoriadis posed a question that remains relevant to the current situation under a combinatory regime of neo-liberal economics and militarization. “What can revolutionaries say and what can they do in a capitalist country where the regime has achieved stability and does not encounter any difficulties in the short term, where the population is not politically active, where... even industrial actions occur very rarely and remain very limited in scope?” The project of the present Bad Subjects issue lies in an insistence that the answer to Castoriadis’s question lies in protest cultures, in foregrounding the vital importance of shouting where there is silence, in demanding that witness lead to action, in refusing to accept an absence of fundamental paradigmatic changes that will eliminate poverty and war, and in using protest to challenge the perfectionistic self-satisfaction of ‘end of history’ neo-liberalism.

People outside demonstrative political movements or viewers of CNN footage of large-scale protests, whether in the US or abroad, may think that these people arrived at the protest site, found like-minded people, and did the protest only to return home and to their regular lives. But political movements are like any other kind of social grouping, whether it’s a music subculture, the fan base for a local sports team, or a high school reunion — they need some form of organization, some cultural apparatus for continuing the life of the organization, and some means of attracting and retaining new members. We look at the modes by which people organize themselves into protest groups, maintain that organization through the development of a culture of protest, and impact larger public culture through their protests.

This issue includes essays from countries that have been in the forefront of protest against the Iraq War and globalization — the UK, Greece, Australia, and Canada — as well as from Americans who have participated in demonstrations overseas and are keenly aware of protest issues and styles elsewhere in the world. Ideological and tactical cross-fertilization now define local protest cultures far more intensely than they did in the 1960s, a development that parallels the transformation of German-born ‘Danny the Red’ Bendit-Cohen from a ‘foreign agitator’ in 1968 Paris to a 2003 European Parliament member from the German Greens elected to a parliamentary seat by the French Greens. In Europe, protest crowds cross the continent on trains; in North America, protest caravans stream over Interstate highways towards demonstrations. Ideological and spatial mobility have redefined the internationalism of social protest. While nothing today is as common as trans-national capital flows, trans-national protest participation is a common and unremarkable political sight. Anti-capitalist and anti-globalization protests intrinsically transform the foreign, rendering ‘alien’ subjectivities into a refusal of alienage and re-formulating putatively distant global economic and environmental issues as critical problems of immediate local concern. Contemporary protest cultures show ‘alien’ and ‘foreign’ for the bad politics they always were.

Too, the range of prose genres in this issue should be noted as a reflection of the human mélange of a demonstration crowd. Beyond the cultural studies, political, and personal essays common to Bad Subjects, this issue carries sociological, architectural, linguistic, and philosophical essays, often interwoven with per-
sonal protest experience. The politics of some essayists clash, as indeed the heterogeneous politics of the issue co-editors conflict sharply with the positions and advocacies of some contributors. This, however, is the essence of a protest crowd.

Analyzing Protests

The first section of this special issue provides philosophical and social analyses of protest and its goals. Writing from Canada, Jeff Noonan leads off by returning to the concept of protest as an originating force for socialism, and of socialism as a force for peace in the face of the Bush administration’s military and economic doctrines. Noonan looks towards the history of the socialist movement and finds Marxism’s “failure to consistently articulate its normative foundations in properly universal form prevented it from ever becoming a solidaristic movement for human emancipation,” while also arguing that “The truth of Marx’s predictions about the globally expansionary nature of capitalism have come to pass [such that] it poses a threat not just to the working class but to human life-activity in general.” From this vantage Noonan elaborates his case for re-conceiving socialist thought within an open framework of a social peace movement that can accommodate different political tendencies with shared progressive values.

Bad Subjects editors Joe Lockard and Joel Schalit analyse the political function of protest within a neoliberal environment, arguing that while manifestations of civic dissent receive nominal ideological tolerance, that same apparent democratic opportunity “continually reaffirms and normalizes the values of US capitalism. And thus the cycle turns on itself as state authority generates protest, protest confirms the existence and legal protection of democratic values, media re-state that protest is both part of the democratic value system yet marginal, and this circular hegemonic ideology in turn confirms the benign character of state authority.” Further, in states where protest genuinely challenges unpopular public and economic policies, democratic availability of protest opportunity becomes contingent and disappears.

Two Greek contributors, Iosif Botetzagias and Moses Boudourides, describe their social research on the politics of anti-Iraq War protests this past year in Greece. They find that idealistic anti-militarism contributed most heavily to generating street protest, but that public protests are also a site for ideological contention between left-wing parties for hegemony. Anti-war and anti-globalization politics can and are being co-opted for use in factional in-fighting among progressive parties in Greece, a situation paralleling that of other countries. Yet as Botetzagias and Boudourides point out, given the general agreement between protesters and their close proximity to general public opinion on the war, “there was no reason for the major Greek anti-war organisations to opt for a non-cooperative approach on the Iraq issue.”

Opposition to US war policy in Europe was especially strong among the young. There is little understanding in the United States of the depth of that political opposition, and of its present and future impact on US standing among this rising generation. The Blair government, through directives from the Ministry of Education, went to great lengths in attempting to ensure that high school students would not be on the streets protesting Bush’s visit in November. In another essay from Europe, Stephen Cushion examines media representations that denigrated the political consciousness of teenage anti-war protesters. He finds that they were characterized as victims, sexualized actors, consumers, immature and naïve school children, and celebrity-obsessed or fashion-conscious protesters.

FTAA Protests and Street Experiences

In the United States, protest in November 2003 centered on the FTAA meetings in Miami, meetings that sought to expand the economic domain of the NAFTA agreement and its neo-liberal market regime throughout the Americas. In her essay “Demonstraighting Out the FTAA,” Alexandra Flynn analyses the provisions and probable impacts of this trade agreement, due for implementation in 2005. She argues that a new ‘transgovernmentalism’ embodied in these agreements eliminates popular will and consent, and that protests are one means of obtaining public representation at bargaining tables.

Tom Crumpacker, like Flynn an unemployed attorney, used his time to accompany the anarchist bloc at the Miami FTAA protests and found that the rule of law did not extend to protest in that city. Crumpacker’s observations comport with those of Dade County judge Richard Margolius, who presided over trials of protesters and who stated on the record in his courtroom that he witnessed “no less than 20 felonies committed by police officers” during the demonstrations. “Pretty disgraceful what I saw with my own eyes. And I have always supported the police during my entire career,” he continued, “This was a real eye-opener. A disgrace for the community.” (Miami Herald, December 20) This potential for violence denounces protest locales as sites of social discipline and demonstrations of state authority. If the FTAA represents a new hemispheric neo-liberal market structure that constitutes a post-modern ‘invisible government’ dedicated to the interests of capital, one where anonymized forces rather than visible democratic actors provide governance, Miami demonstrated that older and well-tried methods of state control remain necessary to implement such neo-liberal arrangements.

Gwyneth Rhys writes from an alienated perspective on the anarchist actions at the Seattle WTO protests in 1999. As a progressively disturbed by that violence, she argues “my own rights were being stripped away because of the actions of people using legitimate protest and freedom of speech as a weapon for their own personal gain or to let loose aggression.” If illegitimate social violence, either through militarism or deprivation of economic rights, is a central issue at contest protest campaigns, then why should it be countenanced — even glorified — at protest actions? In her essay on this question, Susan Burdacki explicates the tactical and strategic dilemmas of protests, based on the diversity of tactics that she witnessed at the G-8 demonstrations in Genoa. Burdacki concludes “Violent forms of protest will not work successfully toward the ultimate goal of gaining credibility and bringing about change.” Maia Ramnath combines experiential reportage from protest demonstrations in Cancun and Miami...
with political strategizing in her essay “Peace and Justice, North and South.” Her essay distinguishes usefully between the different political forces mobilized by these demonstrations, particularly between those groups focusing on peace and those addressing global economic justice issues. Ramnath’s comparative observations between demonstrations in Mexico and the United States reinforce the need for critical awareness of class positionality and underwrite her conclusion that “cultures of resistance stem from the interaction of ideology with location.” Interestingly, each of these US writers functions under or contends with protest as a moral occupation, one of the distinguishing features of US protest cultures, as contrasted with the concept of protest as ideological expression that characterizes street politics in Europe and elsewhere.

Organizing Protests and Cultures

The issue section on organizing includes essays that address labor, political, and cultural organization. The organic interrelationship of these facets of protest cultures emphasizes the inseparability of labor and culture, and the denomination of class through culture. Problematics of this relationship remain central to understanding how class, gender, and race function not only to produce protest, but contribute towards achieving recognizable and discrete aesthetics of protest. Bad Subjects editor Mike Mosher’s essay suggests that political and cultural strategies need to proceed from within a united project, that labor organizing needs art culture to create an aesthetic for organizing success. Using the example of Silicon Valley, the prototypical post-modern economy that is notoriously hostile to labor unions, Mosher identifies potential correspondences between the techno-classes and their artists. Another Bad Subjects editor, J.C. Meyers, interviewed three labor and political organizers in northern California during November and December 2003 to listen to their assessments of organizing politics and the US left. As one of these organizers suggests, labor protests in the United States have become “a series of disconnected attempts to reintroduce radical unionism in different places. It has to develop its own rhythm; its own culture.”

It is in this same sense that anti-war and anti-globalization protests in the United States are still searching for a culture, one that recognizes that the economic models that have emerged from the US provide an ideological cutting edge for global capitalism through re-ordered and neo-liberal legal systems, privatization, social and health services cuts and termination, and increased capital accumulation by local elites. That specifically US protest culture, one that still remains substantially formless, unsystematic, and relatively powerless in political effect, hangs on the horizon.

To search out vocalizations of protest, however, Mark Pegrum argues in his excellent essay, “And on the Eighth Day: The Struggle for Linguistic Organization,” is to search through the artifacts of everyday intellectual life and practice. Alien languages and the presumptive alterity of non-anglophone language itself have come to represent threat and terrorism for mono-cultural statism under the New Xenophobia. Pegrum writes, “governments have disenfranchised dialectal grammars, how much more jealous will they now be of alien grammars?” Where unabsorbed language culture itself represents a social threat, then the richness of human cultures itself has come to function as a source of — as well as, paradoxically, a sign of cultural protest and resistance. Protest cultures exist within spatial realizations of their politics, and those politics are mirrored by the structures created as protests. Architect Gregory Cowan contributes a fascinating article on the ephemeral, mobile and collaborative protest structures in Australia, structures used to illustrate issues of land rights and spatial freedom. His essay considers the Australian protest tradition of Tent Embassies as a tool of democratic protest that has been employed for aboriginal rights and to focus recent anti-war demonstrations. Andy Kirby explores the issue of protest and architecture in an essay on an ecovillage in upstate New York, treating the community as a utopian work of protest. Kirby seeks to locate the ecovillage movement within a US progressive tradition of practical protest that provides alternatives for daily living, a tradition that included the Fourierist socialist New Harmony communities of Pennsylvania and Indiana, the Brookdale Farm community, and other nineteenth and twentieth-century efforts to convert protest into community-building.

The issue closes with two photo-essays that begin to define the aesthetics of US protest cultures. The first, by previous BS contributor and long-time friend, Colette Gaiter, reviews the graphics of Emory Douglas, whose work was central to defining black radicalism and the Black Panther image during the 1960s. Douglas’ images substantially defined the face of radical protest during the 1960s, and Gaiter provides an analytic tour of their content. A second photo-essay by the Pink Bloque, a radical women’s protest dance group from Chicago, tells the story of their demonstration actions over the past two years. Comparison of these two photo-essays, not to mention their color schemes, emphasizes the diversity of protest cultures that have emerged and continue to emerge in the United States. And we exit protesting and dancing into the new year.

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Protest, Socialism, and Social Peace

Jeff Noonan

... the friends of peace in bourgeois circles believe that world peace and disarmament can be realized within the present social order, whereas we, who base ourselves on the materialist conception of history, and on scientific socialism, are convinced that militarism can only be abolished from the world with the destruction of the capitalist class state.

— Rosa Luxembourg, "Peace Utopias", Rosa Luxemburg Speaks

Luxemburg wrote those lines three years before the outbreak of the barbarism that was World War One. I quote her in the late autumn of 2003, two years into the barbarism that is, in the words of former CIA Director James Woolsey "World War Four." According to Luxembourg, the success of the peace movement was contingent upon its understanding and opposing the imperialist causes of war. As Haliburton prepares Iraqi oil wells for American exploitation under the cover of US and British troops it would seem that Luxembourg's point still holds. What has changed, of course, is that there is no longer a vital 'scientific socialist' movement against imperialism. Is it the case, then, that one must conclude that the millions of anti-war activists who took to the streets in every country of the world, animated by the hope that mass democratic action could dissuade the tyrant of Texas from launching an openly illegal invasion of Iraq, were merely utopian?

Eight months into the war in Iraq the lies that justified the invasion have been exposed. There were no weapons of mass destruction and the Iraqi people have not welcomed the invaders as liberators. Perhaps it is only because most of the land forces of the American Army are bogged down in Iraq for the foreseeable future that the neo-liberal council of killing surrounding Bush has had to sheath the sabres that it had been rattling toward Iran and Syria. Their schoolboy bully saying — "wimps march on Baghdad, real men march on Tehran" — can no longer be heard above the daily grenade attacks on American invaders. But if the Iraqi resistance has quelled, for the time, the gung-ho attitude towards invasion, it cannot really inspire much hope in the anti-war movement. Its political composition hardly inspires the dreams of universal liberation that motivated the socialist opposition to the First World War. As yet there remains no sign of an organized, democratic political opposition to the occupation. Considered in relation to the ease with which the anti-war movement was ignored and the rapidity with which it subsequently evaporated, it is hard for opponents of the war not to feel like the virtuous non-Christians who tell Dante in The Divine Comedy: "In this alone we suffer: cut off from hope, we live on in desire." Cut off from hope, because no one can believe any longer that there is a scientific argument that, if understood, leads necessarily to socialism. Living on in desire, because the memory of the electric mobilization of millions in defence of peace under the slogan "No blood for oil" was a reality. That memory spurs the present reflection on the contemporary relationship between peace and socialism.

Whereas Luxemburg saw socialism as the outcome of a worldwide workers revolution, I want to explore the possibility of reconceiving socialism as human movement for social peace.

The idea of socialism as a movement for social peace is rooted in the deepest values that underlie the Marxist understanding of socialism. While not always explicit, the idea of socialism is rooted in a conception of the human being as both needy and self-creative. Unless our needs are met, however, the capacities through which our self-creative nature is realized cannot develop, and our potential for free existence is undermined. The liability to suffering the harm of need-deprivation, however, is not specific to or best exemplified by the working class; indeed, I will argue, systematic need-deprivation is the foundation of all forms of oppression. Thinking of oppression in terms of need-deprivation and harm thus uncovers a universal normative foundation upon which can be built a universal struggle for a social formation in which the social causes of harm are overcome.

First, I will examine how the classic conception of socialism as the historical mission of the working class failed to make clear the proper universality of the normative foundations and goals of the movement. This failure set Marxism in opposition to new movements against oppression that developed in the 1960s. Second, I will unfold the universal normative foundations of a possible social peace movement, explaining how these foundations entail a set of political goals that all oppressed groups can recognize as shared objects of struggle.

Socialists and Movements of the Oppressed: An Unmediated Dialectic

If the belief in scientific socialism cannot withstand the political experience of the twentieth century, the same cannot be said for historical materialism. The core premise of that theory is nicely expressed in Marx's famous aphorism in The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte, "men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please." As a tool of investigation historical materialism seeks out the objective limitations upon humanity's self-creative activity, not for the sake of positive scientific understanding, but rather to serve the goal of advancing human freedom beyond given social limits. But the historical foundation of Marx's materialist theory entails that it contains an essential political contingency. The achievements of political struggle against objective
limitations on human freedom alter those limitations, with the result that the specific problems faced by a latter generation might be quite different from those faced by an earlier generation, even if at a general level an underlying structure of unfreedom remains more or less identical. Marx himself was quite aware of this contingency. Towards the end of his life he explicitly rejected crude attempts to systematise the premises of historical materialism. In one 1877 letter, he asserted that historical materialism did not yield "a universal key to a general historical-philosophical theory, whose greatest advantage lies in its being beyond history." The inferences that historical materialism permits develop along with the history that it criticises, even as it maintains the same general goal of orienting struggles for human freedom.

If we examine the project of realizing human freedom today we discover two fundamental impediments to its achievement. First, human freedom is impeded by a socio-economic structure that subordinates need satisfaction and capacity development to its own self-expansion. The globalized capitalist market is supported by a politico-military system that has grown more aggressively imperialist in the last two years. The globalized market system and its defence institutions are in turn legitimated by appeal to a closed value system according to which ‘good’ is equivalent to the expansion and protection of monetary value. As John McMurtry argues in Value Wars: The Global Market versus the Life Economy, "the corporate market system allocates resources in mindless disregard for long-term economic sustainability or satisfaction of life needs because it is the first article of final faith that all must come right by the optimum of equilibrium driven by monetary and consumption maximisation within the market’s self-regulating, perpetual-motion machine." What serves the system is therefore judged to be good, what threatens it is by contrast bad, and thesevaluations are closed to refuting evidence. For example, in a private health care system what counts as good is not maximizing the health of the community that the system serves, but maximizing profits for private insurers and hospitals.

The strength of the hold that this underlying value system has on human consciousness should not be underestimated. It is this strength that in large part explains the second basic impediment to human freedom today. This second impediment is the absence of any large-scale, permanent, growing, social movement that consistently exposes the structural causes of need-deprivation. Marxism has historically claimed to be such a movement, but its own failure to consistently articulate its normative foundations in properly universal form prevented it from ever becoming a solidaristic movement for human emancipation. Its tendency to emphasise the centrality of the working class to the struggle for socialism thus alienated potential allies, and contributed to the discrediting of the very idea of a universal movement for human emancipation. It is essential to reflect upon this criticism if the argument for reconceiving socialism as a movement for social peace is to be plausible.

Marx understood socialism as the universal liberation of humanity, achievable through the actions of a specific class, the proletariat. He identified the working class as the universal class because, under conditions of capitalist production, he believed that the working class was universally deprived. While it remains true that absolute need-deprivation still exists, even in the richest countries of the world, and that capitalism still depends upon the exploitation of labour, a credible movement towards a socialist society can no longer insist upon the centrality of the working class to this struggle. Paradoxically for classic Marxism, the universality of capitalist relations of production and exchange today reduces the working class to one particular moment of a universal movement for human freedom. The truth of Marx’s predictions about the globally expansionary nature of capitalism have come to pass, the scope of the problem that it poses for humanity is now truly universal, i.e., it poses a threat not just to the working class but to human life-activity in general.

Rudolph Bahro, writing in 1978 in the midst of the Cold War, brought out clearly the fact that today the problem is not working class, but human emancipation. He argued in The Alternative in Eastern Europe that "today it is general emancipation that is the absolute necessity, since in the blind play of subaltern egoisms, lack of solidarity, the antagonism of atomised and alienated individuals, groups, peoples and conglomerates of all kinds, we are hastening ever more quickly to the point of no return." It is only by insisting on the universal, human dimension of the threat that globalized capitalism poses that socialism can become a unifying political force today. As a unifying force, however, socialism must supersede its historical origins as the theory and practice of a specific class, its outmoded distinction between exploitation and oppression, open itself to the positive implications of the arguments and experiences of different oppressed groups, and consciously ground itself in the universal normative foundation of life-value. Before explaining that foundation and its political implications, however, it is essential to understand the positive implications of the objections oppressed groups have raised against Marxist conceptions of socialism.

Looked at from the standpoint of oppressed identities, the Marxist insistence upon the universality of the working class appeared, in the firmament of the 1960s, as no more than the false universalization of one particular interest. Radical feminists, black nationalists, newly mobilized gay and lesbian militants, and others did not see their specific interests taken into account by leftist theory and practice. As the political vitality of the 1960s faded, these practical divisions became the subject of often abstruse but nonetheless important theoretical debates over the political implications of "essentialism" and "universalism," a debate began in earnest with the 1985 publication of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe’s Hegemony and Socialist Strategy. The core argument of theoretical spokespersons of the new social movements was that universals are always particulars that take on the appearance of universality only in alliance with power and only by excluding the specific interests of different groups. Thus, the universality that Marxists assigned to the working class owed nothing to the nature of the working class and everything to the exclusion of feminist, black, and gay and lesbian experience. The merit of this argument is that it brought to light content suppressed by an abstract assertion of working class universality. That is,
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It enriched our understanding of oppression as a concretely experienced reality under racist, sexist, and homophobic social and cultural conditions. Its weakness, however, was that it confused the problem of abstract universality (a universal produced by excluding differences) with the nature of universality as such (a common foundation to activity that is realized in specifically different ways).

When the idea of humanity is asserted as an abstract universal it simply asserts someone predicate of humanity as its truth (the essence of humanity is rationality, or self-interest, etc.) The truth of humanity as a universal idea, however, is not explicable through someone predicate. The universality of humanity is concretely expressed through the variety of self-creative practices of actual human beings in their different cultural, sexual, and gendered modalities. The postmodern critique of universality thus ignored the difference between abstract and concrete universality, between a universal that is a generic concept and a universal that is the achieved unity of differences arrived at through mutual negotiation and experience. Nevertheless, by giving voice to particular differences the new social movements made possible the development of a concretely universal movement.

This possibility, however, has not yet been developed. In the initial response to the postmodern critique, Marxists were quick to seize upon the serious philosophical weaknesses evident in the attempt to unite outside French theory and radical politics. Those criticisms were thoroughly justified, but the practical problem — the fragmentation of progressive movements — was left unresolved. Still, Marxists did begin to rethink the relationship between the exploitative dynamic at the heart of capitalism with the other forms of oppression (in particular, sexual and racial oppression) that are also at the heart of capitalist society. Despite sincere efforts however, this attempt at best yielded "additive" proposals to include other forms of oppression alongside of the demand for socialism. That is, without fundamentally rethinking the structure of the objective limits that capitalism places upon human life-activity, Marxist began to "add-on" to their platform demands for sexual and racial liberation, always with the coda that 'human' freedom could not be achieved within the limits of a capitalist world order. While a step forward, these efforts did not produce a genuine synthesis of critical horizons or the type of unity that contemporary political conditions demanded.

By calling the relationship between Marxism and the new social movements an unmediated dialectic I wish to foreground the lack of middle term through which each could recognize the other as fighting for essentially the same goal. This middle term would be the idea of humanity as the concrete universal in which feminist, anti-racist, anti-homophobic and socialist struggles would recognize their common foundation. In the absence of a principle through which mutual recognition could take place, the poles remained apart, if not outright hostile to each other. Thus, rather than socialists seeing in the new social movements the particularization of the idea of human emancipation, and the new social movements seeing in the Marxist idea of self-realization the universal concept at the basis of their particular struggles, each saw in the other pole simply a difference that was to be repudiated or incorporated.

In fact, however, this middle term was present all along, but overlooked because of an over reliance upon theories disconnected from successful practice. This middle term is the idea of humanity, understood as a needy life-form, but one defined essentially by its self-determining capacities. Human life needy and self-determining is the foundational value that animates, albeit in hidden form, all struggles against oppressive and exploitative structures. That is to say that different oppressed groups are oppressed for the same reason: some arbitrary determination (their sexuality, their colour, etc) marks them in such a way that the social formation in which they exist is able to deprive them of need-satisfying resources. The deprivation they suffer thus impedes the full realization of their general human capability to determine their own horizons and life-projects. Thought through in this way, the struggle of women, for example, is a historically specific struggle for the social conditions in which women would be free to develop their human capability for free self-development. As such, feminist struggle is one concrete moment of the struggle for universal emancipation. In so far as being women constitutes a specific form of being human, women have had to organize independently of other movements in order that the complexities of that experience can become manifest. However, as a moment of being human, the struggle of women is not radically distinct from other forms of anti-oppression struggle; each is implicitly linked to the other by the demand for the resources needed to ground the free development of the self-creative capabilities of the people concerned. In a theoretical context dominated by the critique of universality, however, the human foundation of feminist struggle remained obscured.

However, in the new political context coloured by more intense globalization and the return of imperialist war the reality of the global system as a threat to life is becoming increasingly apparent. I contend that this universal value of life as free self-development forms the normative basis of the two great mobilizations of the early twenty-first century — the anti-globalization movement and the anti-war movement. Against the subordination of need-satisfaction to the system imperative of profit maximization the anti-globalization movement has asserted that the true function of an economy is to ensure the health and develop the capabilities of the citizens that it is supposed to serve. Against the truth-blind rush to war the peace movement stood in moving solidarity with the long-suffering people of Iraq. Yet both have seen their numbers rapidly decline in the past year. This fact raises the problem of how a sustained mobilization can best be built. I will attempt to address that question by way of spelling out the principles of a social peace movement.

Movement for Social Peace

I was led to the idea of a social peace movement as a participant in the movement against the war in Iraq. On a normally apolitical campus in a small southwestern Ontario city we were able to mobilise hundreds of people against the war. Exciting as that experience was, however, the knowledge that we were only a small part of a global mobilisation of literally millions
of people was even more intellectually and politically energizing. No commentator anticipated the massive scale of the demonstrations on February 15th, 2003. If the idea of peace could catalyse so many in such a short period of time, I thought, perhaps it is the idea that progressive activists could draw upon to unify the disparate struggles against oppression. In order to realise this possibility, however, it is necessary to develop a conception of social peace.

Peace in general may be defined by contrast with violence. Violence, thought through philosophically rather than legally, is the wilful impairment or destruction of a life-capability or life itself. Life here is understood as a system of self-organizing activity dependent upon external resources (need-satisfiers) for its existence and development. A need is distinct from a desire in so far as the deprivation of a needed resource always causes damage to life-capability. Thus, a need can be distinguished from a mere desire according to the following criterion derived from John McMurtry's *The Cancer Stage of Capitalism*: “a need ... is a need to the extent that deprivation of it regularly results in reduction of the ability to move, to feel, or to think.” Movement, sentience, and self-conscious thought are the basic capabilities of the human life form. Higher-level specific achievements are complexes formed out of these three basic capabilities. A ballet, for example, combines the conscious thought of the choreographer, with the cultivated movements of the dancers, and produces in the audience an emotional and cognitive response. Freedom for human beings refers to the degree to which social structures permit or restrict the development of life-capabilities. Human beings are thus free to the extent that they have access to the need-satisfiers necessary to the development of those three basic capabilities, out of which specific activities can then be pursued as life-projects. Those basic capabilities do not differ from group to group, but establish the human foundation of free existence. The specific achievements of definite individuals may of course also be a function of their experience of the world, which is mediated by group membership. That is a difference of content, however, not form. However, groups do experience fundamentally different degrees of access to need satisfiers, and this difference, as I noted above, is the foundation of oppression. Since oppression is essentially structured need-deprivation, and need-deprivation reduces life-capability, we can understand violence as need-deprivation.

Peace, in contrast, would be a structure of social existence that is maximally conducive to the development and expression of life capabilities. Social peace, in turn, may be defined as the precise institutional conditions for the free self-development of human individuals within the different communities to which they belong. The limits of both individual and group activity are discovered by inference from the universal value of *maximal* life-flourishing. Group expressions that depend upon the subordination of other groups are illegitimate because they contradict the normative implications of the general idea of peace as the state in which human beings can realize their capabilities to the greatest possible range.

That the preceding reflection is nothing more than a prioristic theorising may be proven by reference to the anti-war movement. If we reflect upon what its normative foundations were, we can clearly see this idea of life at work. First, however, we must isolate the cause of the movement. The proximate cause was the unprovoked drive to war initiated by the neo-liberal advisers of the Bush government. The range of political positions in the movement was diverse, from the usual suspects (long-time peace activists and anti-imperialist leftists) to ordinarily unpolitical people who argued against the war on the basis of naive faith in international law and the United Nations. Everyone was united, however, in rejecting war as a legitimate means of resolving geo-political tensions because war inevitably brings in its train the destruction of innocent life. The normative foundation of the anti-war movement, stated negatively, was thus a rejection of killing as legitimate politics.

There is no negative, however, save by contrast with a positive. If the anti-war movement was motivated by a rejection of the legitimacy of political killing then it follows, as a corollary, that it was equally an affirmation of the positive value of life. Moreover, since the anti-war movement was active in every country, in support of a people whose survival would not lead to any direct material benefit redounding to anti-war activists, the positive affirmation of life at the heart of the anti-war movement was not chauvinistic or self-interested, but genuinely universal, i.e., human, crossing differences of nationality, race, gender, sexuality, and class. This positive value was most eloquently summed up in a placard carried by a pregnant demonstrator in New York City on February 15th, 2003. The sign stated simply, “Power is in giving life.”

The normative foundation of the anti-war movement may be summed up as an affirmation of the universal value of human life, and its protection as the overriding imperative of legitimate politics. As such, the anti-war movement was the most extensive manifestation in recent years of what McMurtry calls "the life-ground of value." The life-ground of value is a pre-philosophical and pre-theoretical capacity of people to normatively identify across differences on the basis of recognizing the value of other people (and animals) as living entities. This capacity usually operates beneath consciousness, but it becomes a conscious principle of action when we become aware of the unjustified suffering of other people. Unjustified suffering, in turn, means need-deprivation in the sense of need given above. As McMurtry explains in *The Cancer Stage of Capitalism*, "Such responses cross classes, cultures, races, and genders, and are grounded in a civil commons identification which admits of any degree of development or breadth of range. If people observe or know of the destruction or brutal reduction of vital life ranges, where no corresponding gains in security of other life can explain it, they rebel from it within, as if there were an acquired structure of thought that put them 'in common' with the lost life, and the life that remains."  This normative identification across differences united the diverse activists of the anti-war movement with the long-suffering Iraqi people.

Yet, as we know all too well, this life-grounded normative identification was unable to stop the war. Worse, it seemed to melt back into national chauvinism (in the US and the UK) or indifference once the actual invasion commenced. The retreat to chauvinism...
can be explained by the fact that while the life-ground admits of universal expansion, it can also be exploited to produce a stronger identification with life that is made to appear more valuable because it is ‘closer to home.’ The second response — a retreat to political indifference — can be explained as the inevitable result when any movement lacks a credible explanation of a way forward against an opponent that appears invulnerable. Neither problem is intractable, however, and both find the beginnings of a common solution in a politics of social peace. With regard to the first problem, the politics of social peace, by spelling out the universality of the life-ground, reveals that real security of life presupposes the conditions of universal peace. With regard to the second problem, the politics of social peace identifies innumerable institutional causes of oppression that can be challenged and successfully transformed today at the local, national, and international level, and thus provide the achievable targets for political progress indispensable to sustaining activists’ energy. Each response presupposes the other. Activists from a diversity of movements will be inclined to understand themselves as social peace activists only if they accept the universality of the life-ground as the necessary foundation of their particular struggles. In turn, they will accept the universality of the life-ground as the necessary normative foundation of their struggles only if it can be shown to achieve results, measured both in terms of victories and stronger and more extensive bonds of solidarity. I will address each moment of this dialectic in turn.

As a unifying principle of particular struggles the life-ground of value seems to immediately invite the charge of reductionism. That is, it seems to demand that oppressed social differences drop their claim to specificity and comprehend their oppressions as one component of the repression of the potentialities of an amorphous concept of ‘life.’ This concept might seem at first glance to be incapable of explaining just that which needs explanation, namely, why particular differences are singled out, demonised, attacked and destroyed. This criticism is serious and can only be met by reflecting more deeply on what is meant by ‘life’ in the relevant normative sense.

As we noted above, life is essentially self-organizing activity articulated into the three basic life-capabilities of movement, sentience, and thinking. To conceive of oppression on life-grounded terms is not at all to demand that the specific structure of oppression faced by different groups be reduced to a generic abstraction, but rather to disclose that what is oppressed in specific instances is just what makes life valuable. When a black man is denied housing or when a single white mother cannot find daycare what is oppressive about the situation is that each fails to satisfy a need. Because the need goes unmet, the capabilities definitive of their lives are restricted. Because those capabilities are restricted each suffers violence. That this violence is experienced relative to each concrete identity is not in dispute. All that the life-ground maintains is that what is valuable in life is the same for all life-forms; realizing their defining capabilities. The content can and does (and should) differ. The form of oppression, however, remains the same. Thought of in these terms the foundations for solidarity become apparent. Need depriving social structures do violence to those whose needs are deprived. This violence is not the spectacular violence of a cruise missile strike, but the mundane violence of need-deprivation that is so ubiquitous it generally passes without notice. When, however, we focus attention on the scale of need-deprivation it becomes apparent that a social peace movement directed against the universal causes of need-deprivation is necessary.

The dynamics that cause racial, sexual, and homophobia must of course be studied in their specificity. But the movement against them can only succeed if it addresses the deep-structural problems that cause these specific forms of need-deprivation. The deep-structural problem is essentially the life-blind value system that we discussed in the first section. That is not to say that there is an essentially economic cause to, say, homophobia. It is to say that homophobia as a legitimate means of human self-expression is compromised in a social structure whose sole value is expansion of the profit-making system itself. A life-grounded value system, on the other hand, regards any non-life harming mode of expression as legitimate, valuable, and enriching. The struggle for a new normative foundation for society is thereby directly a struggle for the release of the resources every group and individual needs in order to realize their general life-capabilities in specific life-projects. The struggle for social peace is thus a struggle for the conditions of maximal living diversity. This struggle thus focuses on the social grounds of need satisfaction, what McMurtry calls the “civil commons.” The civil commons does not reduce the individual to a function of its own reproduction (as in totalitarian systems) but rather is “the basis and guardian of individual life from which the individual differentiates as a unique and irrepeatable bearer of value.” This cannot be the goal of the social so long as all-round need satisfaction is not its primary objective, and it cannot be its primary objective so long as consciousness of life-value is impeded by the operation of different forms of oppression. When, however, we see oppression as social violence, and social violence as need-deprivation, we can see that social peace is the political form of the solution. Just as the demand for peace united opponents of the war across barriers of nationality, gender, ethnicity, and sexuality, so too, it may plausibly be hoped, may a social peace movement emerge out of the specific and on going struggles against oppression.

Thus, to return to the practical problem from which this reflection began, namely, the problem of why conceiving of oppression on the basis of the life-ground of value is important to particular oppressed groups, we can say that this conception is presupposed by all oppressed groups, although it is not always recognized. Oppression means need-deprivation justified by appeal to some (normatively) arbitrary feature of groups. The particular history of oppressions does differ, but their structure and consequences for the different groups is the same. Recognizing this common structure as a structure of need-deprivation and capacity disablement thus brings to light a genuine commonality in the lives of the oppressed. The shared reality of need-deprivation in turn constitutes the material basis of solidarity. More importantly, it identifies a non-dogmatic normative goal that can provide the organic link between distinct movements. Hence the theoretical disputes
that have divided progressive movements from one another can be overcome without any group having to dissolve its particular struggle into another particular struggle (feminism into socialism, for example). Each struggle simply reconceives itself as one essential moment of a comprehensive struggle for the social conditions in which its possibilities for self-creation (and the creation of new capabilities) are expanded. Practical alliance can evolve in definite contexts and grow outwards from local struggles once this basis of unity has been recognized.

Yet, as was noted above, the philosophical possibility of reconceiving progressive struggles on the basis of the life-ground is not itself sufficient. There was a dialectical relation between accepting the life-ground and seeing positive results of struggles. We must now examine this second pole of the dialectical relation. To begin with, we must clarify, on the basis of the understanding of violence provided above, just what types of threats all oppressed groups face today. Social violence was understood as any harm caused to the fundamentally valuable capabilities of human life by the normal operations of social systems. More specifically, social violence exists when institutions and social dynamics are arranged such that they compromise the life-conditions of definite groups of citizens. The degree of social violence can be ranked according to the threat-level to life that it poses. Thus, at the top of the hierarchy are direct threats to life. This level can in turn be sub-divided into immediate threats (war, starvation, etc) and mediate threats (long-term environmental damage that threatens ecosystems, for example). The next threat-level comprises economic dynamics that subordinate fundamental need-satisfaction to system expansion. Again this level can be subdivided in to immediate threats (socially-induced famine, lack of health care) and mediate threats (poverty wages and anomic work conditions). The third threat level is constituted by political systems that are indifferent to the expressed interests of the majority of the world’s population. As above, this threat level can be subdivided into immediate threats (totalitarian structures) and mediate threats (formally democratic structures that in reality respond for the most part only to market imperatives). The fourth and final threat level is comprised of cultural practices that depend upon ideologies of exclusion, inferiority, and domination. This level can be sub-divided into formal threats (officially taught in schools) and informal threats (the ‘common sense’ of segments of the population).

This hierarchy of threats thus identifies the objects of struggle of the social peace movement. Corresponding to the first threat level is opposition to war as a legitimate means of political conflict resolution, to the system dynamics that can be shown to be war’s deep cause, as well as to the forces responsible for continuing environmental despoliation. Corresponding to the second threat level is a complex array of demands designed to re-anchor the economic system in its life-grounded presupposition: the satisfaction of fundamental human needs. The politics of social peace should break with the antithesis ‘reform or revolution’ as meaningless in the contemporary climate, and instead insist on making radical demands that are achievable in the present. These radical demands should be focussed at the local level, both because the concrete experience of reality is local and because victories at the local level can be won now. “Radical” in this context means two things. First, it means shifting control over productive resources to direct producers and communities, rather than simply re-distributing income. In the factory this means struggling for greater control over decision-making processes, for shorter working hours, and for a greater share of corporate resources to be channelled to life-promoting social infrastructure. In the community this means establishing democratic control over unused space (empty buildings, vacant lots, etc) and transforming them into need-satisfying and life-enhancing uses. Second, it means gradually supplanting the life-destructive logic of global capitalism by a system of production, exchange, and distribution governed by the two-sided imperative of protecting life and maximizing its possibilities for self-development. Corresponding to the third threat level is the development of neighbourhood based political associations that are focussed on establishing democratic control over the local environment in the short term and at becoming a counter-weight, and eventual substitute for, the ossified and unresponsive institutions of national forms of politics. These neighbourhood associations would have to be consciously steered away from their tendency to devolve into middle-class councils of social exclusion. The best way to combat exclusion, however, is to counter it head on. In genuine political argument people’s horizons can expand, and the struggle between differences cannot be sublated into a universal movement of differences unless people meet face to face and learn through new experiences. Corresponding to the fourth threat level are struggles to develop new spaces in which oppressed differences can meet amongst themselves, develop perspectives on their own oppression, and, most importantly, communicate these to the wider social body as a step towards the self-transformation of oppressed and oppressors. The third and fourth objects of struggle can clearly work together in fruitful ways.

The anti-war movement was objective proof that the normative idea of life can mobilize millions of people against immediate threats to life. Its failure is not explained by intrinsic theoretical or practical deficits, but by the terrifying dogmatism of the Bush cabal and the hysteria generated by September 11th. Its rapid dissolution shows, however, that people will not remain engaged in politics unless they achieve victories. That is the reason why the politics of social peace must be built from local contexts. When people are made to hear of the social violence that exists in their own communities they can escape the gravitational pull of blinkered egoism and begin to work together. Establishing a cooperative in an abandoned building may seem insignificant when measured against the scope of global problems, but it can give people an experience of winning, an experience of solidarity, new insight into the perspectives of their neighbours, and new insight into the dynamics responsible for social problems. Without the insight gained by experience people will remain closed to one another’s differences, and without the experience of victory people will withdraw into apathy and the various forms of oblivion contemporary society offers in abundance.
Protest Culture, Neoliberalism, and Contingent Human Rights

Joe Lockard and Joel Schalit

If protest culture represents the expression of intellectual and political liberty in contemporary neo-liberal societies, it also represents the scope and limitations of such freedoms. According to such a perspective, the right to protest and engage in social criticism uncomfortably validates the political constellations that simultaneously produce war, poverty, and neo-colonial power relations. Such are the dialectical antimonies of participatory democracies with free market economies which express their hostility towards their own democratic political structures through their contradictory embrace of freedom of speech and constitutional rights on the one hand, with laissez-faire economics and military-driven foreign policies on the other.

What makes this uncomfortable balancing act work is the continuous demand for tolerance made by citizens and civil libertarians, specifically state tolerance of the necessary role that dissent always plays in democratic societies. For example, on a visit to Germany in May 2003, greeted by large groups of demonstrators, US President George W. Bush affirmatively stated "That's good. That's democracy. See, I love to visit a place that is confident in her freedom, a place where people feel free to express themselves, because that's what I believe in." Equally, American soldiers in Iraq repeatedly cite US domestic protest as a validation of their military campaign (‘we’re fighting here so you can protest there’), even as they occupy a foreign country and deny its citizens the most basic of political freedoms.

Protest may gain tolerance, but protest is feared depending on its origin. Media scenes of civil dissent within the dominant West have become part of neoliberalism’s self-complimentary ideological paradigm, whereas protests originating from subordinated cultures and nations represent an intrinsic threat. The confidence that Bush expresses is a belief in the efficacy of internalized social controls that marginalize dissent within powerful metropolitan cultures like those which exist in the US. It is market hubris that Bush exudes, a deeply-held faith that constitutional democracies will consistently reject the destabilizing potential of protest and affirm the ideological values that underwrite social inequality. For such a worldview, protest is the right of ideological losers who pose no intrinsic threat to a transnational, consolidated, expansive, and entrenched middle-class electoral bloc that bases its present and future prosperity on being winners in a global market.

Even if protest should be successful, it also unconsciously confirms a systemic belief in the internal capacity of electoral democracy — a narrowly-conceived understanding of democracy’s ultimate potential — to correct its errors and override the contradictory nature of constitutions which guarantee civil but not economic equality. In the United States, for example, the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s achieved retrospective legitimization as corrective social protest that confirmed, not challenged, the democratic nature of the nation, despite the fact that racial discrimination has shifted in nature rather than been eliminated. The social destabilizations of the 1960s and its protests have been converted into historical capital to contribute to confidence in the nation, not a questioning of that confidence. Such expressions of certitude emerge from a consumer confidence in protest as a state-protected value, not in the desirability or efficacy of social protest in practice: protest is one more available commodity and option for consumer dissatisfaction in a democracy.

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Dissent and protest evidence the existence of a free market of opinion, one that profits through diverse social valuations and confirms a fundamental governing stability. Communications media provide a nominally free exchange mechanism that informs the market of public opinion, and yet these very same media are the basis of an ideological hegemony that protest criticizes because these media continually reaffirm and normalize the values of American capitalism. And thus the cycle turns on itself as state authority generates protest, protest confirms the existence and legal protection of democratic values, media restate that protest is both part of the democratic value system yet marginal, and this circular hegemonic ideology in turn confirms the benign character of state authority. While protest may always express a post-capitalist utopian horizon that transcends this negative dialectic, in such a scenario, horizons do not consistently — if ever — translate into concrete political practices that transcend their negation by the market.

Under neo-liberalism, protest becomes a morally contradictory engine against state power because it confirms a democratic organization where fundamental human rights — personal autonomy, economic welfare, health, education — are subject to commodity regulation that prioritizes the market over socio-economic freedoms. To state this is neither to capitulate to such coercive incorporations nor suggest that this represents an irremediable state that cannot be overcome from within a market-driven society. Rather, it is to recognize the neo-eschatology of neo-liberalism. For contemporary neo-liberalism, civil protest constitutes the annunciation of a self-correcting mechanism where perfected repression derives from free expression. If this is the realization of Herbert Marcuse’s theory of repressive tolerance, where the state enables opposition only in order to moderate it, it also represents a new and vastly broader elaboration of both repression and tolerance. Where Marcuse’s understanding emerged from and was lodged within analysis of single nation-states and manichean Cold War polarities, to analyze the function of protest under the globalizing imperative of neo-liberalism is to elaborate on repressive tolerance as a constituent element of an emergent world system.

**Protest as Contingent Human Right**

Two forms of contingency condition contemporary human rights: contingencies of state and contingencies of capital. To have a ‘right’ per se is to be subject to the outcome of social negotiation between interests of states and capital, between citizenship and class. It is not a product of recognizing a greater metaphysical reality of universal human rights, or an ideal type of communicative activity where truth is determined through dialogue and consensus. Dissent and protest exist within the negotiation matrix of these forces no differently than any other assertion of human rights. Yet they have as their idealization a democratic set of affairs that corresponds with undistorted communicative activity, where consensus, policy and difference are arrived at through dialogue between individuals and the communities they belong to, and the state.

Concerning the state, classic liberal defenses of free expression derive from the capacity of protest to change systems of government in an ideally dialogical fashion, whereas under neo-liberalism the defense of free expression originates in its incapacity to alter perceived unalterable principles towards which all economic and governmental systems must converge through globalization. Contemporary protest frequently represents aggregated individual free expression rather than collective action, which does not share the same legal protection.

In the post-September 11 legal environment in many countries, protest as a human right is contingent on its inability to actualize the argumentative and alternative policy contents of political protests. Where protest embodies an actual challenge to the stability of government power or ruling social elites, the contingent nature of that right emerges. Actualization of nominal constitutional rights — such rights as appear guaranteed in nations that participate in global neo-liberal economic and political organizations — leads to their effective neutralization by the transnational economic rights of global corporations guaranteed by free trade treaties. Equally, actualization may be conditioned on a protest’s perceived test of a state’s alignment within and identification with this world system, and particularly its ideological sponsors in the West.

One example of this repressive paradigm appeared during and in the wake of Egyptian protests against the Iraq War. As documented in a Human Rights Watch report released in November 2003, during peaceful demonstrations in late March, Egyptian police dispersed protestors and violated their rights of free assembly, arrested hundreds, mistreated and tortured many detainees, and did not provide medical care. The Egyptian government, heavily reliant on US aid for arms and public works investment, quietly deployed the war but functioned under the constraints of its alliance with the US. To permit uncontrolled public expression of anti-US opposition, even where that expression might not have differed greatly from the private opinions of Egypt’s elites was to risk mass demonstrations that might threaten the Mubarak government’s 22-year existence. Since the Mubarak government has operated continuously under the emergency powers of Emergency Law 162, reconfirmed as late as February 2003 and now part of the international ‘war on terrorism,’ this recent suppression of anti-war protest is only a new instance in a long campaign of social repression. The offense of the anti-war protestors was less their global political opposition, much more its local manifestation and an implicit challenge to business-as-usual with the United States. In this instance, the inconvenience of free expression and free association determined its unacceptability and contingency; or translated into different words, Egyptian anti-war protestors demonstrated that political silence in public is the only right available on a non-contingent basis for non-conformists.

Where the test of free expression and public protest lies in their incapacity to effect significant social change, civil society is undergoing processes of constriction and devaluation of protest. In such environments, the legal price that can be exacted for protest increases commensurate with the disturbance and threat that protest produces. In societies such as Egypt, China, India, Indonesia, Russia, Uzbekistan
national capital, one that shifts expanded obligations in the context of globalization and the abuses of transnational activism. Klug argues that a distinctive third wave of human rights has emerged in recent years, in the form of a wave that promotes an evolved human rights paradigm, one that shifts expanded obligations onto socially-responsible corporations through conduct codes and trade agreements, and private NGOs such as Amnesty International, to promote human rights together with the public sector. Quite parallel to the US State Department's country reports on human rights practices, that emphasize an alliance with multinational capital to protect human rights via private-sector organizations (the Global Sullivan Principles, the Fair Labor Association, the Worker Rights Consortium, the SA 8000 initiative, the 'No Sweat' initiative, the Apparel Industry Partnership), this neo-liberal model posits that human rights can be re-invented by its domestic political forces as a social organism that can be improved by evolution or revolution as an improved means of human rights guarantees. Statist contingency is the political moment, of the cycle between rights expansion and contraction. The contingent relationship of rights to capital is paradoxically both more obscure and clearer than the dependency of human rights on state recognition and enforcement. Obfuscation of that relationship with capital has been one of the leading characteristics of a neo-liberal concept of human rights. In Values for a Godless Age (2000), for example, Francesca Klug usefully schematized modern political and legal development of human rights into three major waves. A first wave in the late eighteenth century opposed authoritarian polities through emphasizing legal guarantees of liberty, national declarations of rights and equality, opposition to abuse of state and Church powers, and protection of minorities. In a second wave after World War II, international human rights treaties assigned states a positive duty to protect rights and not abuse them, together with creating international courts and monitoring organizations. Klug argues that a distinguishable third wave of human rights has emerged in the context of globalization and the abuses of transnational capital, one that shifts expanded obligations...
The protest events for these movements, as well as their sheer magnitude, challenge the predominant idea of the non-participatory Greek. Yet does this latest development imply that the Greek protests occurred and developed independently of the Greek political parties? In other words, has the Greek civil society managed to articulate an independent movement, springing from ‘below’, or have Greek political parties managed once again to subdue any horizontal, societal grievances to their vertical, political agenda?

The major Greek parties, the Conservatives and the ruling Socialists, have tried to co-opt both sides, the national audience on one hand and their international supporters on the other, in a cynical attempt to ride the wave of popular discontent. Thus, during the Greek EU presidency, and while the (Socialist) Greek finance minister was hosting his EU counterparts, the Secretary General of his party was calling on the Greek people to march against “neo-liberal globalisation,” and placing himself on the front line of the demonstration during the ECOFIN meeting. A similar event occurred during the latest war on Iraq: while the Greek Conservatives’ leader was advocating “restraint and moderation” in dealing with Saddam Hussein, his party’s MEPs were endorsing a declaration by the EPP-ED (European Peoples Party-European Democrats) approving US actions in Iraq.

Iosif Botetzagias and Moses Boudourides

In recent years, ‘social mobilisation,’ both its essence and its form, has become a contested issue in Greek politics. Until the mid-nineties consensus opinion described Greek civil society as atrophic — if not non-existent. A variety of reasons were given for this shortcoming, the major argument being that it could all be blamed on the specific socio-economic conditions prevailing in Greece — clientelism, nepotism, cronism and the rest, a result of the country’s early parliamentarism and late industrialisation. Following such a rationalisation, Greece was assigned to a group of so-called ‘semi-peripheral’ countries whose destiny supposedly included populist leaders, military coups, and the absence of a strong civil society. The absence of any serious social protest, as well as the subordination of any minor movements to party politics, served as self-evident proofs of the non-participatory character of Greeks.

By the mid-nineties, this consensus broke down due to the rise of new social movements, especially environmental ones. Although it was quickly pointed out — and most probably is the case — that these protests were nothing more than petit-bourgeois, ‘not-in-my-back-yard’ kinds of resistance, their occurrence and volume gave food for thought. Before the argument died out, anti-/alternative globalisation and anti-war movements began to rise.
To which extent then, can the latest anti-globalisation and anti-war protests in Greece occur independently of the parties’ grasp and pose a challenge to existing political classes? Can we finally identify the emergence of a strong civil-society movement? What kind of people protest, how do they do it, to what do they aspire, and what are their claims? What are the alliances between different social movement organisations and what can they tell us concerning the strengths and prospects of the movement?

**Researching Protests**

In our work, first we examined newspaper reports of protest events dealing with globalisation and anti-war issues over the last five years. Second, we embarked on *in situ* research when major protest events occurred during the past year.

Media analysis shows — quite expectedly — that the overwhelming majority of protests occurring in Greece during the first half of 2003 concerned the war on Iraq and the EU summit. One way of ‘measuring’ interactions between social protest organisations is through network analysis techniques. By recording every organisation that participated in these protests, but also by recording instances of competing protests on the same issue at the same time but at different locations, we mapped a network of divergence or competition, and demonstrated a fundamental split within the movement: the competing factions grouped around the two major left-wing parties, the Coalition for the Left, versus the Ecology and the Social Movements (SYN) and the Greek Communist Party (KKE).

This phenomenon can be explained in two possible ways: either (a) the two blocs accommodate different kind of followers, both in socio-demographic and ideological terms, or (b) this was the outcome of a top-down approach, initiated by party leaderships, aiming to sealing off their own political space — and followers — from political rivals.

But which was the better explanation? We decided to use protesters socio-economic and ideological profiles: if analysis demonstrated that the rank-and-file of different blocs held competing beliefs, then the split would simply indicate pre-existing divisions among followers. On the other hand, if this turned out not to be the case, there would be good reason to argue that this was party politics. An opportunity to test our theory arrived with the EU summit in Thessaloniki.

**EU Summit Protesters and Ideologies**

Our team went to the EU Summit meeting at Thessaloniki, Greece, June 19-21, 2003, and lived in open protest camps to do questionnaire-based research. Although other research teams have conducted similar research in different countries, our data differ in two important ways. First, the people interviewed were activists and not one-off demonstrators. We obtained insight into a quite distinctive and under-researched social group. Second, at the time, the war in Iraq was effectively over, while in other research data were collected prior or during the war. Accordingly, we sought to ascertain whether there was a time-effect on perceptions of the Iraq War and its justification. Did military ‘success’ justify the ‘means’? We tried to estimate the echo of the Iraq War as juxtaposed to attitudes towards war in general. Finally, since different groups that hitherto had avoided any cooperation staged the Thessaloniki protests, we explored the extent to which this separation is due to distinctive socio-economic followings or rather to political resource mobilisation issues.

The 148 respondents were evenly divided between males and females. Local Thessaloniki residents predominated. Respondents tended to be under the age of thirty, either with high academic qualifications or currently students. Those active in the workforce tended to be highly skilled and employed in the private sector, especially in services and education.

Interviewees were seasoned protesters who arrived warmed up for Thessaloniki: nearly three-quarters had participated at a public protest the month leading to the EU summit. Although identifying a “democracy deficit” both at national and EU levels, respondents exhibited a great interest in politics (approx. 90% were ‘very much’ or ‘very’ interested in politics). The perceived “democracy deficit,” however, must be disentangled from electoral participation. Controlling for those unable to vote in the last parliamentary election, there was a weak and insignificant correlation between “satisfaction with democracy” and voting. Although the response rate concerning the party voted for at the last general election was low (approximately 19%), those who did cast a ballot were evenly split between the two major Greek leftist parties, KKE and SYN.

**War for What?**

Does it make sense to interview protesters on war issues during an EU summit, especially when this war was already over and the EU was not directly involved into it? Surprisingly enough, the protesters themselves seemed to think that it was relevant. For almost 11%, war was one of the reasons for demonstrating at Thessaloniki. When juxtaposed against other prominent reasons, war’s importance becomes even clearer, e.g., capitalism (10.8%), neo-liberalism (6.7%), globalisation (14.2%), the European Union (8.8%), EU policies (10.8%), EU leaders’ decisions and plans (4.7%). Furthermore, war had been an issue that had mobilised 87.2%, compared with much lower rates for social trade union issues (67.6%) and anti-globalisation (66.9%), allowing for multiple responses.

The research questions included one on the Iraq War and a second on war in general, both with statements for agreement or disagreement. In the Iraq War question, the only statement that provoked significant counter-reaction was one stating “The Iraq regime had to come down in order to stop the suffering of the Iraqi people.” Around 6% highlighted that this was not done by the Iraqi people themselves, indicating that for them a clear line is drawn between popular uprisings and foreign intervention. In the generic question on war, personal responses tended to highlight the difference between “a liberating, indigenous, popular, and/or class war” versus “imperialistic” wars, the former being condoned.

As far as the Iraq War, respondents overwhelmingly believed this was “a war for oil” (approximately 93%). Alliance claims that “Saddam was a threat to global peace” or that “his fall was necessary to stop the...
miser of the Iraqi people" failed to make an impression. The other side's claims, namely that this was a "Crusade" or a "racist war," were similarly rejected. The most important finding was the complete rejection of the United Nations as a mean for legitimising war, with over 90% disagreeing or disagreeing strongly that the UN could provide legitimisation. Does this imply rejection of the UN? This does seem to be the case upon comparing the level of trust respondents placed in different institutions: the UN scored very low — lower than the Greek public administration and national parliament, and similar to the media!

Analysis of the generic war question offers interesting findings. First, there is no correlation between the statement "war occurs due to interests" and any statement concerning the war on Iraq (contrary to anticipation of a strong positive correlation to the "war for oil" scenario). Second, there exists a small yet significant correlation between the statement "war is justified when bringing down a dictator" and "Saddam was a threat to world peace," and "The Iraqi regime had to be overthrown to end the suffering of the Iraqi people." A similar correlation exists between "war is justified when redressing an wrong" and the "The Iraqi regime had to be overthrown for ending the suffering of the Iraqi people." Among those who viewed war as "always unjustified," there exists a significant correlation with those who described the Iraq War as a "crusade" or "racist."

**Political Ideologies in Conflict**

At Thessaloniki — as was the case in almost any major demonstration against the Iraq War in 2003 — the major Greek social organisations decided to demonstrate on their own. How did this ideological choice between demonstration groups reflect differences between perceptions of war in general and the Iraq War in particular? We asked respondents to name the group they were to march with at Thessaloniki. Nearly three-quarters of the protesters were demonstrating with a group, but only 46% named the group.

There was a small yet significant association between group membership and whether "war is always unjustified," whether "war is justified when bringing down a dictator," and whether "war is justified when redressing a wrong." Results point towards different perceptions concerning war and justice between followers of different groups. But this difference did not emerge on the Iraq war question, where there was no significant correlation with political group.

Greek political activists universally condemned the Iraq War, a result in perfect accord with the near-total rejection of the war by the Greek public exhibited in many opinion polls. Second, and more interesting, there was no reason for the major Greek anti-war organisations to opt for a non-cooperative approach on the Iraq issue. Their followers shared an amazing consensus both between themselves and when compared to the general public.

This is an upsetting finding, and one our team intuitively expected to monitor. If there is no theoretical reason for acting separately, then one has to account for the split in the Greek anti-war and anti-globalisation movements.

It could be that the split experienced by the movement is actually the outcome of inter-movement conflict for hegemony. If one takes into account that the two major political parties behind the anti-war/anti-globalisation umbrella organizations (that is, the Social Forum/SYN and DRASSI Thessaloniki 2003/KKE alliances) have spent the better part of the nineties — or, one could say, since the restoration of the democracy in 1974 — trying to secure leadership of the Greek left, it could well be the case that we are witnessing only the latest episode of the war for supremacy within the Greek left, cloaked under up-to-date anti-war and anti-globalisation slogans.

Is the movement then to remain subordinated to petty party politics? We offer no definite conclusions. After Thessaloniki a certain disappointment arose, stemming from the movement’s apparent failure to capitalise on the social turmoil it created. One of the major left-wing parties, SYN, was quick to rename itself in June 2003 from Coalition for the Left and Progress to the Coalition of the Left, Ecology and Social Movements, trying to appear as the natural political patron for the ‘movements.’ On the other hand, groups originating within the extra-parliamentary left, such as Genoa 2001, created prior to the Genoa mobilizations, and ‘Alliance Stop-the-War,’ came together to create a new political party, the ‘Anti-Capitalist Rally,’ poised to compete in the national elections to be held in Spring 2004. It seems, then, that all routes leading from the protests are still open: accommodation within an existing left party, the establishment of a new and more radical party, or even the independent development (or withering away) of the movement.

Developments in the coming year — and electoral performances — will offer more knowledge concerning this open question.

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The data supporting this essay are reported in two research team papers:


Kalamaras, Botetzagias & Boudourides (2003), Anti-Globalisation and Anti-War Protest Events during the First Half of 2003: Analysis of data from the Greek newspaper ‘Eleftherotypia’
Misrepresenting Youth: UK Media and Anti-Iraq War Protesters

Stephen Cushion

Politics, Apathy and Youth Citizenship

Conventional media wisdom insists young people are simply not interested in politics. This might explain the kind of representations they receive. Popular images of youth — causing mayhem, lacking discipline, escaping responsibilities, while relentlessly in the pursuit of all kinds of consumption — suggest young people are far too busy to engage with politics. Whether it’s purchasing the latest playstation or terrorizing old women as they cross the road, the pursuit of simultaneous fun and danger is replayed in common, everyday practices and images. Sex, alcohol, fighting, celebrities, fashion, and so on, are what we are told excites the youth of Britain. Such one-dimensional representations of "youth" reflect an age group acting out instant whims, rewarding every impulse and exotic need. Meanwhile, speaking a language no politician or policy-maker learnt at Oxbridge or any Ivy League institution, young people converse in pop jargon, translating their own fears and desires into meaningful sentences of pleasure and resistance.

Politics and its policies, by contrast, remain outside, or at odds with, this sphere of youth consumerism, anchored in a particular model of citizenship that mainstream media continuously recycle. In the last decade or so, youth discourses of apathy and indifference have become part of the popular lexicon. As Steven Best and Douglas Kellner put it, “In standard media and socio-political representations, youth is pejoratively represented as cynical, confused, apolitical (or conservative), ignorant, bibliophilic, scopophilic, and narcissistic.” In recent years, political representations of British youth have become emblematic of discourses of isolation and disaffection. The "apathetic youth of today" headlines are a dominant media frame used to explain widespread political disengagement and declining levels of voting. Although sexy and shocking to read, they contradict the growing, and diverse, level of research that insists young people remain interested in issue-based politics, but feel angry and frustrated at the process itself. In an increasingly commercialized public sphere, then, apathy has become the "dumbed down" buzzword to report associations of youth and politics.

UK Media Coverage of Anti-War Youth

No better example of mass youth engagement was the February 15, 2003 protest against the war in Iraq, and the subsequent protests featuring, amongst others, school children. The media images of young protestors, especially school children, can be classified into three prominent themes. This provides a useful framework in understanding the wider themes of mediated portraits of young people and how this translates into generating images of youth citizenship.

Victims

Common portraits of youth, and children in particular, are based on adult anxieties and panics about potential risks in society that young people may encounter. Preventive actions taken to counter this invariably lead to young people being constructed as social victims. Much of the coverage during the protests broadly shared this signification. Most critics of the schoolchildren’s involvement in the various protests were based on them using anti-war marches as a means of passive truancy rather than active political engagement. Several reoccurring images in the print press symbolically inform this kind of coverage. For instance, one picture of a protestor wearing black tights and a short skirt, having written anti-war sentiments on her school shirt, as well as wrapping her tie around her forehead so it dangles down her face and body, encapsulates much of this furor over the involvement of schoolchildren. The image also features two police officers, each holding the schoolgirl’s arms, and while a caption tells us she "struggles with police," her grinning facial expression suggests she is enjoying the attention.

The implicit theme of an unruly truant, opportunistically missing school in the name of politics, and seeming to enjoy causing trouble for the police and education authorities, was a recurrent one during the protests. Instead of promoting the intervention of young people in the political sphere, these images imply an immaturity of political expression. In comparison to the safe confines of the schoolyard, they seem like frivolous citizens, eager to transfer classroom menace into more public displays of disobedience. Rather than receiving detention after school, they face serious, adult-like consequences of law and order. At odds with the mature, conformist, adult-world of politics, the protestors need protecting and educating before their actions and opinions can be meaningfully recognized. Transgressing norms of "child-like behaviour," the protestors are portrayed as victims of their age and youth-identity. The images can be seen as a hegemonic device: a site for restoring state-regulating messages of security and control that reflect broad adult fears and concerns.
**Sexualized actors**

Media representations of women as male objects of desire rather than meaningful social actors in the public sphere are well-versed in media and gender literatures. Recently, John Hartley coined the term "juvenation" to describe "the younging of culture" and increasing use of mediated sexual imagery of youth and children. It's an observation well-instanced in coverage of the protests. The predominant image of protestors featured young, attractive females, scantily dressed and prominently positioned against a backdrop of fellow (but less significant?) protestors. Focusing on females wearing tight, low-cut T-shirts, invariably revealing thin, well-tanned stomachs - often sporting belly-button rings — became an almost visual requisite in representing the many hundreds and thousands of protestors. In many ways, it perhaps — quite literally — reflects the "sexiness" of the protestors’ news value. Youth — and its sexual (contradictory) connotations of desire, lust and innocence — was always likely to attract the attention of news editors and liven up what is conventionally viewed as a dull, male occupation.

Yet this sexualization of protestors has significant wider implications in trying to represent young people as active citizens. Not only does the objectification of female actors undermine their role in the political drama, it further marginalizes the level of involvement from engaged male protestors. Despite being actively involved in politics, then, young protestors are implicitly associated with — and not separated from — an increasingly sexualized public sphere. In this way, the personal is very definitely political, as youth citizenship is clearly anchored in sexualized (male) discourses of pleasure. Even in a progressive site of youth resistance in protests against elites, media coverage can be seen to reassert the status quo; that is, in a context where the wider non-protesting youth might be more readily engaged with politics, they are provided with images that reflect traditional constructions of gender roles.

**Consumerism**

The unrelenting pace of capitalism and its widely accepted status as the only viable ideological recourse has meant state intervention in citizen life has significantly declined. Debates about citizenship have in recent years centered on asking if citizens of the state are today treated more like consumers. This is especially the case with young people, who as the age group with most disposable cash are primary targets of corporate marketing strategies. As a recent Nike slogan advocated: "just do it," and young people certainly have. They are now recognized as powerful consumers of fashion, food, magazines, cosmetics, drugs, cigarettes, sex, toys and so on.

Mediated images of young consumers have become a pervasive form of youth representation. Particular fashion accessories and consumer practices were prominently on display in images of young protestors. While this holds negative implications for encouraging a picture of active citizenship it does reflect some media savvy on the part of the protestors. The focus on particular fashion images and sounds — temporary anti-war tattoos, colourful whistles, inflatable Bush and Blair look-alikes and so on — reflects young protestors being visually creative, recognizing the media’s fascination with spectacle, in order to gain individual and collective prominence. Yet visual primacy is often at the cost of more effective aural forms of communication. In other words, journalists too often are quick to associate youth with identity and consumption, and sometimes youth are even quicker in accepting this role. However colourful, sexy and successful this is in gaining valuable news space and increased media prominence, it does risk taking youth at their visual, rather than spoken word. It delivers an impression of a passive, consumer-led youth citizenry in spite of the active, informed and well-articulated voices widely available.

Drawing on some of the points already mentioned, a number of themes emerge and reflect dominant media frames — general patterns of reporting — used during coverage of the protests. Below is a brief flavour of several such frames.

**Condescension**

The impression of an immature and naïve bunch of school kids playing in an adult playground is sustained in a good deal of coverage. Cast in the role of surrogate parent, journalists were quick to first highlight, and then condemn, the image of truants and the wider social implications of truancy. Little attempt was made to transfer active political engagement into meaningful messages of encouragement for the next generation’s fast-declining votership. Instead the story of young people’s sudden shift from "generation apathy," as one commentator put it, to prime time news status, meant political causes became secondary considerations to the "novelty" of youth contributions. For older youth protestors, the presence of school children not only overshadowed their own contributions, it meant having to share similar images as frivolous and opportunistic citizens.

**Pop culture celebrities**

A great deal of coverage associated the anti-war movement with celebrities and popular cultural activity generally. The day after the February 15 protest, much of the Sunday press devoted entire pages with pictures and comments from "celebrities on the march." A week later, "Political tinge takes over the Brits," read a headline referring to Miss Dynamite’s and Coldplay’s political statements at a British music awards ceremony. The most explicit link to popular culture was undoubtedly Tony Blair’s decision to appear on MTV Europe to debate the war. Over sixty-four articles local and national newspapers met his appearance, as well as coverage from major TV evening news channels. The MTV debate provided a valuable site for over 40 young people from 24 different countries to directly quiz the PM. Yet the representation of youth — engaged in the debate — drew press images of a passive, pop-cultural obsessed audience more interested in notions of peace and CND-identity than meaningful political dialogue. In
the Guardian, a left-leaning broadsheet newspaper, a political cartoon encapsulated this with Blair saying:

‘HEY, LOOK KIDS! THIS WILL BE A VICTORY FOR, Y’KNOW, THE IRAQI PEOPLE, PEACE, DEMOCRACY, TRUTH, ROCK ‘N’ ROLL, JUSTICE, TRIP HOP, NEW TRAINERS IN EVERY BAGHDAD CRA’ER. UM...’

No doubt the cartoonist was parodying Blair’s efforts to appeal to youth in popular cultural language. But more broadly it reflects the wider associations of youth once they are placed in the mainstream. Their roles as citizens are based on individualism, consumption and social identity rather than as a group, a collective citizenry, intent on demonstrating their political objections to an immoral war.

Powerlessness

Young protestors, when vox popped on TV or directly quoted in a newspaper, provided contributions that reflected a sense of powerlessness. Yet paradoxically they were engaged in political action. The comment "it doesn’t seem to matter what we think", was a common sound-bite used to demonstrate young people’s perhaps cynical but also realistic political expectations. This may, in part, be determined by what journalists select and choose to run as a "representative comment". Yet focusing on young people’s lack of power and expectations does represent a young citizenry clearly socialized and politicized into thinking of Government as omnipotent and ultimately deterministic. The news media did little to counteract this by emphasizing human or political agency.

Fashion-consciousness

The visual status of youth identity clearly informed the coverage of the protests. Indeed, it was most explicitly linked in the Western Mail, a regional newspaper, in an editorial that’s worth highlighting:

Taking a position against war is almost becoming a kind of fashion statement. It is the in thing to do. Hundreds of school children took to the streets against conflict in Iraq. But where were the young people in favour of war? Were there none at all who wanted to make a statement against a vile dictator who would by no means countenance the dissent of yesterday? Perhaps they were too afraid to speak against the fashion...

Here, young protestors are clearly involved in a fashion brigade rather than political protest. They are exercised not by political expediency but by the desire to find an identity and be accepted by peers. Central to this portrayal is the lack of value and intelligence granted to young people. Fashionable implies superficialness, a preoccupation with identity and consumption rather than an interest in politics and foreign policy. Certainly news reporting the day after the February 15 protest implied this too. A Sunday Times picture featuring females dancing at the protests certainly possessed a deeper more patronizing and sinister tone. Like a day out at the races, it suggests they dressed in glam and colour to enjoy more the the picture featuring females dancing at the protests February 15 protest implied this too. A policy. Certainly news reporting the day after the attention on young middle class protestors was far less direct and social identity rather than as a group, a collective citizenry, intent on demonstrating their political objections to an immoral war.

Demographics

This theme represents the overwhelming focus on protestors’ age and class status. There was a definite sense that journalists first asked for a protester’s age and then, acting almost surprised, replied "you’re how old? ... wow, that’s young!" Thus, stories were framed by age rather than political motivations. The attention on young middle class protestors was far less direct but often implicit. At times young protestors were seen as far too privileged and inexperienced to understand the plight of the Iraqi people. Informed by their Guardian-reading parents (a well-known British liberal paper), young protestors were often represented as simply following past political and social movements, recapturing an outdated pastiche of past anti-American marches. Rather than seeing young people as culturally appropriating and political by modernizing past social movements, the impression was that young people didn’t really understand the current movement they were in. In this sense, their value as citizens was based on a top-down, parental vision of citizenship engagement.

Despite young protestors being active citizens — collectively demonstrating political will in public spaces — news images of youth participating in protests suggested quite the opposite. Here, young people were represented as passive, consumer-led individuals, not concerned with forming a united front but establishing a personal identity and creating a private space. Clearly, UK media coverage of protestors offers a set of binary oppositions that are inimical to seeing young people as part of an informed, rational and democratic citizenry. Public/private, citizen/consumer and active/passive are all systematically invoked by news media to ensure the dominant frame of (youth apathy) remains. In many ways, this top-down adult interpretation of youth reflects the kind of representations young people receive more broadly when reported as participating in politics.

Young people lie at the heart of the democratic project yet are the least likely to participate in politics. The mediated portrayal of youth, politics and citizenship is critical to the future of any democratic state. Frequently charged with being dangerously apathetic, news media could look towards changing common media representations of young citizens, and promote more active contributions.

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Demonstrating Out the FTAA

Alexandra Flynn

While the three-day negotiations over the formation of a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) proceeded in Quebec City in April 2001, tens of thousands of demonstrators tooted placards outside, demanding to be heard. Having seen the impact of uncontrolled citizen participation in Seattle two years before, numerous steps had been taken by conference organizers to minimize the visibility of the demonstrators, including "protecting" conference participants by setting up high iron gates, and policing them with armed security guards and pepper spray. To the conference organizers, maintaining the integrity of the negotiation process meant cutting off contact between trade representatives and everyone else.

The protestors, excluded and ignored from trade organizations of every acronym, haven’t stopped participating despite the barriers — they have instead created their own avenues. They demonstrate in massive, organized groups when formal organizations meet; they run parallel meetings (like the Ponte Allegre which had mirror proceedings alongside the World Economic Forum in April 2002); they have written hundreds of books and articles on the inequality produced by unfettered trade regimes; and have used art and photography to express dissent.

January 1, 2004 will mark the tenth anniversary of the creation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). These past ten years have meant enormous changes to domestic economies. Overall, while wealth and prosperity have increased in both Canada and the United States, the income gaps of the wealthiest and poorest classes have widened. Other changes include successful challenges made by corporations resulting in governments paying damages for having introduced environmental standards that reduced corporate competitiveness; a reduction in the number of family-owned farms in Canada; and new patent rules that result in an increase in the cost of medications. Despite this, plans to expand NAFTA by implementing the FTAA are rolling ahead. Like NAFTA, the FTAA will permit an international body to make decisions traditionally reserved for the nation state and, also like its predecessor, no provisions have been introduced permitting non-state actors to either take part in decision-making or bring damage claims.

NAFTA’s underlying assumption is that social gains will ensue from the distribution of economic benefits, and that the pursuit of such gains are separate from trade and should remain in the hands of the responsible governments. When (and if) implemented in 2005, the FTAA will represent a market of approximately 800 million people with $11 trillion in production. While the European Union (EU), has acknowledged its role as a legislative body, NAFTA was reluctant to include provisions related to social, cultural, and political issues, nor did it provide a human rights charter. It stuck its head in the sand in creating mechanisms to deal with any social, cultural and political problems that developed in tangent to trade and investment.

This is not to give the impression that only governments have agency under NAFTA; investors and corporations do too. Under Chapter 11, they can sue NAFTA-signatory governments in special tribunals to obtain cash compensation for government policies or actions that investors believe violate their rights under NAFTA. If an investor or corporation wins its case, it will be awarded taxpayer dollars from the treasury of the offending nation. For example, Canada’s banning of PCB products meant refusing exports from a U.S. company, which under NAFTA was compensated for lost profits — using Canadian taxpayer dollars.

Unlike investors and corporations, non-state actors can neither bring actions nor, in general, get information on tribunal cases unless the parties to the conflict consent. There are significant limits on their ability to submit information, attend proceedings, get access to documents submitted by any of the parties and, sometimes even, obtain the final decisions of the panels.

And, because of the way in which it was enacted in Canada and the U.S., the public can’t invoke NAFTA in national courts as the legal basis for a cause of action. According to political theorists, the basic form of political involvement is voting, which takes place because the citizen wants change or because of increased awareness of his or her individual and collective rights. Additional participation occurs when citizens do not like the decisions that have been made by elected representatives. Participation then takes the form of lobbying in cases of social, economic, and political policies; and court challenges in the case of law. In rare circumstances, individuals with specific agendas will run for office. In each of these modes of participation, the bodies being appealed to are the elected government or the judiciary, and the interest to be gained is a change in how something is operating.

When NAFTA was created, the theory was that government leaders are elected to negotiate on behalf of citizens for domestic policies, of which international affairs are simply an extension. Public participation under this model would be confined to the nation state. But times have changed, and the old theory on participation no longer holds. The following are explanations of why non-state actors must be extended the right to participate in NAFTA and the future FTAA:

**NAFTA and the FTAA are governing bodies.** While NAFTA looks as though it is simply a set of administrative rules governing issues that have long since been a part of U.S.–Canada relations, they are actually rules that tie the hands of local and national level players. NAFTA is unlike other legislative deci-
sessions that domestic governments grapple with: powers previously under its control are turned over to the international organization.

Take the softwood lumber dispute, which centers around whether the stumpage fees payable by Canadian logging companies to the government are set below the resource rents that would be payable in a competitive market and, therefore, can be considered subsidies, since they would result in lower log costs for lumber producers. In 1983, the U.S. industry brought a countervailing duty action against softwood lumber imports, an action which subsequently flopped. Twenty years later, endless appeals and ineffective diplomacy have resulted in the industry being crippled. In the meantime, those affected stand back and wait for this mammoth trade organization to fix it, without any recourse of their own — not even to object to a body that will listen to them.

Anne-Marie Slaughter, a Harvard professor, suggests that "transgovernmentalism," a loosely connected set of relationships between domestic governments, judges, regulatory agencies, and transgovernmental organizations are "creating a genuinely new world order in which networked institutions perform the functions of a world government — legislation, administration, and adjudication — without the form." This leaves no single forum to which a governing agency can make decisions.

As George Bancroft put it, "The best government rests on the people, and not on the few, on persons and not on property, on the free development of public opinion and not on authority." The one avenue for public participation — the nation state — doesn't include a way for all of those affected to intervene. Public participation must be available in each element of the Slaughter-observed new world order.

**Some get a voice while others don't.** Non-state actors aren't monolithic; they include a combination of interests. Among matters not being covered in the FTAA negotiations are democracy, human rights, labour and environmental issues, immigration, capacity building and gender. These issues are undoubtedly intertwined with trade and investment and impact millions of people. Yet, while investors and corporations have a role within NAFTA and the FTAA, other non-state actors don't.

**People want a new model.** Hundreds of thousands of people protest when governments meet to discuss trade issues. Hundreds of books and articles have been written challenging the directions and decisions that NAFTA has taken. Parallel conferences have taken place while trade organizations meet. Lots of people want to be involved, and they don’t believe that lobbying their domestic governments is enough.

And it makes sense. A person may vote for a government for myriad reasons. What if you like a politician’s view on civil rights but not their views on trade relationships? And even if you vote based on their beliefs about NAFTA, Canada, the U.S. and Mexico are each only one of three parties. In 2005, they will be one of 34. Then there are organizations, like Greenpeace or Human Rights Watch, whose mandates are just as international as they are domestic. International identities mean that no national government is sufficiently connected with it for it to concentrate its lobbying efforts there.

**Political expectations have extended beyond local and national interests.** The public has an expectation of concrete, accepted, and acknowledged involvement in the international arena. Between membership in public international bodies, to involvement in private international bodies, to easier physical connections to other countries, issues abroad have become sources of concern at home. The expectations argument asserts that because citizens are concerned about international affairs, it is natural for them to want a voice in the decisions being made at that level.

Philosopher Charles Taylor believes that identities can be understood by the cultural groups to which one belongs. According to Taylor, membership in cultural groups must be considered alongside formal government and regulatory agencies, as the former offer a sense of community and civility not analogous in the latter. People do not simply have national identities, but global ones too. It means that we care and have opinions about people in other countries, with issues beyond those of the nation-state, and with how international institutions work. For years we have been told that "local is now global." If that is true, than democracy must exist where international bodies make decisions that affect us.

Political participation is essential where people have a direct stake in the outcome of the decisions being made. It follows that once a government hands off control to another body, the new body must provide direct non-state actor participation too. For example, when a federal government gives control of a domes-
tic issue, like health or law enforcement, to states or provinces, then the public feels it should have a way to have its voice heard in the new state or provincial body. The same thing has happened here, except that the Canadian, U.S., and Mexican governments have given decision-making power over traditionally domestic issues to an international body.

Accepting that NAFTA and the FTAA must have avenues for public opinion begs the question of how. I find it helpful to look at potential changes along a spectrum, ranging from "increasing transparency," to "reforming existing institutions," to a "full shift."

The first step means disseminating information of the decisions taken by NAFTA and its tribunals and the reasons why, and giving opportunities to the public to intervene by submitting legal briefs. While it would empower the public to better understand what kinds of decisions are made, this step wouldn’t give the public any decision-making agency or legal rights.

The second step, reforming institutions, would allow non-state actors to bring direct actions for such things as damages to the environment and violations of labour standards, and would tweak with public involvement in setting NAFTA and FTAA priorities. Reforming institutions means more than introducing superficial changes, though. Take the "Civil Society Committee," set up by FTAA negotiators, which invites civil society groups to submit their concerns. While it appears to acknowledge the importance of public participation, there is no obligation on the part of committee members to read or respond to the submissions. The Canadian government recently summarized non-governmental organization and social and political activist involvement as having "been a trying experience at times" with "the participation of and consultation with civil society is now an integral part of the FTAA negotiation process." However, without a seat at the table or real proposals for institutional changes, this kind of change is more lip-service than an invitation for real participation.

A full shift would mean a significant enhancement of NAFTA’s governance system and, basically, the abolition of NAFTA in its current state. As an example, the Hemispheric Social Alliance (HSA) has collaborated with labour organizations and citizen’s coalitions representing 50 million people, producing detailed alternatives to the dominant economic model. HSA’s principle is that trade and investment should be used as instruments for achieving just and sustainable development, not simply as ends in and of themselves. Changes at this end of the spectrum mean a NAFTA and FTAA that includes the public as a party to the process.

If it doesn’t happen formally, non-state actors will keep demonstrating, writing, making art, and making noise. You can’t quell participation by keeping people out. And you can’t claim to be a representative organization if you don’t allow the public a seat at the table.

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Anarchists: Impressions of the Miami FTAA Protests

Tom Crumpacker

In the long media buildup to the November FTAA negotiations, Miamians were often told that of the tens of thousands of outside protesters who would be coming to our city, ninety percent would be decent citizens who were exercising their rights to speech and assembly, but ten percent were “anarchists” coming to destroy our businesses and property. To me an anarchist had always seemed a rare kind of utopian intellectual proposing a theory that all government is inherently coercive — with a connotation of violence deriving from 19th-century assassinations by bearded men.

Official estimates said there were about 10,000 protesters. Many thousands in 280 buses had not been permitted to enter the city, and many Miamians and others had been excluded from the downtown area, which was barricaded and fenced in maze-like fashion within ten blocks of the Intercontinental Hotel, where the FTAA delegates were supposedly negotiating. There were over 5000 law enforcement personnel (mostly Miami police) involved in this operation, which reportedly was financed by eight and a half million dollars from Homeland Security, a half million from Miami-Dade, and one million "plus" from "private donations." The police were in new kinds of outfits, most black (foot phalanxes which pushed and herded protesters with their shields and bats around the streets), white shirts (bicycle patrols), brown shirts (tear gas and special weapons), and blue shirts (horseback patrols). They had and used new tanks, gunboats, bats, plastic shields, tasers, tear gas, stun guns, rubber bullets (which cause severe injury at close range), pellet bags and concussion grenades.

They had no bone to pick with the unions or South Florida progressives and their groups, but clearly were after the anarchists, who are discernible by what they wear — boots, dark pants and shirts and often bandanas on their faces like bandits, which they think protect
them from the gas. All week anarchists were being stopped, questioned and searched without cause or suspicion. There were hundreds of injuries, dozens of hospitalizations, 220 arrests leading to charges, many more taken into custody and eventually released without charge. I doubt seriously that any of the charges will hold up in court, if the accused can afford the time, distance and cost to contest. The police motto was "You can beat the rap but not the trip."

To my surprise my 32 year-old daughter turned out to be an anarchist. She had come with a group of fifty from Austin. By hanging out with her a few days I was able to get a clearer picture of what they are about. In general they are Americans from all walks of life, all ages (mostly young), who are idealists and activists. They had come at great personal sacrifice to face substantial physical risk in order to help create a better world for themselves and their families. They don't seem to want to discuss theory, and it's clear there is no common ideology. Some may be traditional anarchists, some economic-political decentralists, some "pagans," socialists, ecologists, democrats, liberals, conservatives, whatever. They have differing affinity and geographical groupings within the larger circle, and decisions seem to be made by rough consensus after all who want are heard. The smaller groups decide what actions they do, but all agree to support each other to the extent they can. Their "convergence center" was a warehouse they rented in central Miami for eating, messages, conferences, discussions that had to do with tactics and practical matters. They call their demonstration tactics "nonviolent direct action." This is really what they have in common. They emphasize responsibility and accountability and their ethical standards and solidarity seem strong: many of them were still here a week later trying to raise random money or help those coming out of hospitals.

One important purpose they had was to demonstrate that our hallowed constitutional rights are meaningless, and in this they were successful. Because of the buildup, the local media gave substantial coverage to the events of demonstration day; however, national coverage was eclipsed by the apparently significant Michael Jackson arrest story. At the rally and marches they had lots of American flags, African drums, and political puppet shows. Many were in costumes or on stilts. Their "cheerleader" groups sang chants and songs about the Bill of Rights. As they were being searched they would say "What about the Fourth Amendment," and as they were being pushed around the streets by police phalanxes they would shout "These are our streets." Their "weapons," used only in defense, were a few smoke bombs and small balloons filled with white paint, which sullied a few new police uniforms.

On Thursday morning, the morning of the march, I was with a small group who were marching into Overtown, the poorest section of Miami where they bring the homeless so tourists won't see them. The police lining the block ahead yelled to stop, but the two young men in front apparently didn't hear because they were talking. An officer jumped out and hit one of them on his head with his bat. We took him to a vacant lot where an anarchist van was called to take him to the hospital and an anarchist nurse was trying to bring him to consciousness. His friend was crying because a similarly inflicted skull fracture the previous day reportedly had resulted in partial blindness. One of the Overtown residents said to comfort him: "He'll be all right, don't worry, they do this to us all the time."

The local media reporters were initially antagonistic toward the anarchists but slowly began to come around when they saw what was really happening. At the end of the day when they finally began to interview some on TV, the anarchists were quite articulate about the trade agreements and their effect on our society. TV crews constantly searched for instances of anarchist violence, like throwing rocks or breaking windows, but never found any. Police chief John Timoney often complained on TV that they were outsiders here to cause trouble, but he himself is some kind of an outside "crowd control" expert hired a year ago to come here to mastermind this operation.

Timoney re-routed the parade at the last minute so that the delegates at the Intercontinental could have no view of it, but if they had access to TV they might have seen what happened. Regarding the negotiation, there wasn't any, or even discussion of the differences which had surfaced in Cancun. All that happened was that some Miami businessmen and Florida politicians (including the governor) tried unsuccessfully to woo or pressure the South Americans. As the self-styled "Gateway to the Americas," Miami hopes to be the future FTAA headquarters, supposedly a financial boon for all of us here. Mexico and Chile, already on the hook, were disappointed. The US will now negotiate bilateral agreements with smaller, weaker nations of the Caribbean and Central America.

As for the agreement signed, the Miami Herald, by no means a liberal newspaper (it provided free advertising to FTAA), said its "crowning achievement" was the promise to continue talking in the future. The South Florida Sun Sentinel editorial recommended the FTAA be put off until 2010. In other words, the only purpose of this conference, which was scheduled over a year ago, was to preserve the public illusion that the talks are progressing. While the demonstrations might have helped, I believe the real reason for FTAA's unseemly demise is the increasing poverty and misery which unregulated, unlimited capitalism is bringing to South America. The Herald summed it all up with a large color photo of a police phalanx on the front page, with the caption "Free Trade Area of the Americas." It was a political cartoon but the drawing was a real photo.

The men who run this city often speak of their devotion to the "rule of law," by which they mean the law that enforces their contracts and patents, especially in other countries. To me, the rule of law means the idea that the law applies to everyone equally, weak and strong, poor and rich. This November in Miami "law enforcement" was the use of raw power without regard to law. The only devotion to our Constitution and laws was shown by the anarchists.

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Seattle and the WTO Protests: An Other Side

Gwyneth Rhys

At first, none of us thought much about it. We were told that due to the protests planned for Tuesday, we should come in at six a.m. Not a morning person, I was unhappy, but I recognized why it was necessary. But by ten Tuesday morning, we were watching in shock from our sixteenth floor windows as protestors jumped on cop cars and tried to attack delegates, sent burning Dumpsters into the streets, and tore apart shops. Riots broke out in pockets around our building. Delegates tried to fight back, the cops pressed in, and it wasn’t even lunchtime yet. Gone were the cute turtle protestors of the day before. Instead we had black-clad anarchists smashing windows and setting things on fire. As my building went into lockdown we were sent home, maneuvering our way through jeering crowds, shouting police, swarming bodies, sounds of popping gas canisters. Curfew was issued that evening.

None of us thought these things would happen. Initially, protests were light, peaceful, and while it was difficult to get around, it was not too much of a challenge, and you could watch protests with a positive feeling that yes, change could happen.

I started sending daily riot reports to e-mail friends. A pregnant co-worker was accidentally caught in a crowd being dispersed with gas; weary cops grew jumpy and cranky, then pushed into neighborhoods outside of downtown, putting the smackdown on people who really didn’t deserve it. And yet, I couldn’t completely blame them — I was jumpy and cranky, and I hadn’t endured endless shifts in full riot gear with people throwing things at me or trying to hurt me or others.

News film showed a cop jabbing a protestor repeatedly in the chest with his baton — I’d seen that incident from our window — they never showed the protestor who’d started it by hitting the cop on the head with his big sign. The cameras loved theNike-wearing kids destroying the Niketown store, the fires, the looting, cops going after the gas-mask wearers.

Turtle-outfitted protestors couldn’t compete with Molotov cocktails and gas masks, and the image being created grew more skewed, encouraging more violence. It became impossible to distinguish most groups. By the time the news showed looters at Starbucks or Radio Shack, clothing had ceased to be an indicator; there were middle-aged folks in khakis, young people in Birkenstocks, anarchists with masks, gang-bangers flashing signs — all looking for a chance to take or break, not protesting anything anymore, but as one person said, looking to “party.” Because “protestors” were indistinguishable, police went after anyone, surrounding crowds and trying to move them in groups away from the center of downtown or arrest them.

I’d never had the chance to see first-hand the other side of these stories. Before, I’d looked at such incidents in my usual middle-to-left-leaning way; now I saw just how narrow the picture was. When we could go out, which was rare, the streets were littered with glass, burned things, trash; shops were dark, their windows boarded. One day I stood on a quiet corner, taking in the smells of horses and manure — a smell I find peaceful and pleasant from childhood memories — and watched a melee spring up around me within what felt like picoseconds.

I’ve never considered myself one thing or another — while my parents were mostly straight Republicans, they didn’t toe a conservative party line, and I learned to keep my politics more fluid. But it’s the belief of fairness and equality for all people more often seen in the left that resonated with me, especially because I grew up in the sixties watching such things as the civil rights protests, the ‘68 Democratic National Convention, and Kent State on TV in my most formative years.

Despite my parents’ conservatism, both of them had been active in some fairly forward-thinking political or charitable causes, and they taught me the value of speaking up for what you believe in. But I felt as if this lesson was being subverted, as if my own rights were being stripped away because of the actions of people using legitimate protest and freedom of speech as a weapon for their own personal gain or to let loose aggression. Why weren’t the people in charge of organizing protests taking more deliberate action against the violent? The left I’d identified with before suddenly seemed like disorganized, weak-willed cowards who thought looking the other way was safer (and I was deeply ashamed of the people who spoke out in support of the violent simply because they were protestors or had been arrested). At work we joked about needing a little Richard Daley-style intervention in Seattle.

What made it more baffling was the professionalism of the AFL-CIO march. With tens of thousands of members marching over miles of downtown Seattle, they showed that chaos didn’t have to be the order of the day. They planned their rally so we all had fair warning of how it would affect us, they kept troublemakers out and kept traffic carefully organized and moving, and whenever trouble looked like it might break out, they dealt with it firmly. I couldn’t understand why the city of Seattle, why all these other protest organizers, couldn’t do what this organization had done with far more people to manage.

A little organizing might have reduced some of my anger. Each night was a surreal experiment in trying to find a way home. Bus service was suspended without warnings, but parking in the core area was a crapshoot because you never knew when a block would be shut down by protests; cabs were almost non-existent in our block. My company had projects to complete and
Bad Subjects

I no longer believe that people can change things through protest or peaceful resistance: terrorism, the death of the democratic system in America, the way anyone who has disagreed with the war against Iraq was treated as unpatriotic, have left me with a belief that nothing we do matters any more. All protest seems to achieve now is to shut down traffic and get people pissed off at each other. I no longer see united voices with enough power to force the world to change.

If the left wants to make their message heard — especially in this war-torn world today — they have to show that they're in control of their messages and their people. On the left, we want to give everyone a voice, to be inclusive, but we won't lay down the law against fringe groups because that wouldn't be democratic. Letting everyone live and let live, or turning a blind eye to acts of danger, only allows those who subvert the act of peaceful protest into violence to paint a picture of the left that leaves middle-grounders like me leaning away. In the end, it was an organization I see as very conservative, the AFL-CIO, that many of us stuck at the Battle in Seattle remembered positively, precisely because they did keep control of their people and their message. They were focused and efficient, virtues I admit I rarely associate with my own leftist leanings.

A few years before the Seattle meeting of the WTO, I was at work when I got a call from my father, telling me that my mother was dying and to get home as soon as I could. I remember desperately switching lanes on the freeway, speeding, getting stuck behind people in the passing lane who were going far less than the speed limit, frantic to get home, praying I could say goodbye to her. I was completely helpless, and angry over being at the mercy of other drivers clueless about my emergency.

As I drove, I remembered an incident in Seattle that had caused a furor. A mentally ill man had paralyzed a section of downtown by holding a sword and keeping the cops at bay. Because he was in front of a large parking garage, no one was allowed to enter and all the blocks around it were shut down, trapping workers who had parked there or whose buses were not allowed in the area. The "sieve" ended at night, so they'd been unable to pick up their kids, make flights or appointments, or simply get home to feed their pet. Many were furious that the cops hadn't taken real steps to end the incident. One letter writer to the newspaper excoriated those people for complaining about not being able to get their vehicles out of the lot. As I struggled to get to my mom, I thought about those "selfish yuppies" and wondered how many people had been in situations like mine — less dire, of course, but people with acute needs who were prevented from dealing with them, who might be facing a crisis or serious problem they would not be able to solve because they could not get there from here.

For five days, with my building located dead center of the worst activity, I was held prisoner in my city, struggling to get to work, finding it difficult and frightening to get home from work, locked in the building, or running gauntlets of police, FBI, and Secret Service agents. I doubt most people really understand the
intense anger and resentment generated by holding people hostage from their own lives, and how quickly a social change message gets lost on those same people as they frantically try to do something they can’t, or feel unsafe. The political becomes personal with astonishing rapidity.

On my trip in that Tuesday morning, painfully early, dark and cold and wet, I saw people going to the big protests, loudly bragging to a bus of mostly druggy workers like me how they were going to bring the city to its knees. One guy carried a bullhorn, and when he got off the bus I noticed he was carrying a Ralph Lauren logoed umbrella. I’m pretty sure the irony was lost on him.

A year later, as I stood waiting for a bus that wasn’t coming, helicopters hovered overhead. I was meeting a friend from out of town after work — someone whose life’s work has been for good causes. My bus didn’t come. Finally someone who remembered it all too well, said, forget it. It’s the WTO anniversary. We’ll never get home. An hour later, I finally got somewhere near my neighborhood, walking in the cold, dark, wet November night, thinking about what it would have been like if one of my family were sick again. I was angry about missing dinner and the rare chance to see my friend. If there was a message in the anniversary protests, I couldn’t hear it.

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Sarah Burdacki

The evolution of our globalized economy and culture has not transpired without brutally taxing consequences around the globe, especially in our world’s developing nations. Voices of resistance have increasingly penetrated the flow of discourse concerning these world powers, materialized in the form of street demonstrations against organizations such as the IMF, WTO, FTAA, the World Bank, and G-8. While these undemocratic organizations zealously attempt to permeate the globe, their overwhelming power remains off the radar for most of the US population. The creation of false consciousness by the ruling elite, along with internal conflict within the anti-globalization movement itself, presents a two-fold obstacle for staging a revolution, or at least modifying existing conditions of globalization.

Political discourse in US media fuels the fire of ruling class ideologies. One of the most apparent examples occurs in the vague and overused term “free trade.” Masked by linguistic association with the positive connotation of one of America’s most beloved concepts, freedom, “free trade” misleads the American public into believing that free trade benefits the entire world. At the least, it leads us to believe that because it is in our best interests, free trade must uniformly benefit the world as a whole. The US’s dominant world power status, combined with its frequently politically uninformed citizens, means that the real circumstances of free trade prevail without question.

While the oppressive repercussions of free trade are hidden from unquestioning Americans in one dirty four-letter word, linguistic ethnocentricity is also found in the misnomer "neo-liberalism," the term with which proponents of globalization choose to label their political position. Janet Conway defines neo-liberalism as "a conservative economic philosophy and political project that emerged in the 1970’s in response to the uprisings and new social movements of the late 1960’s. It appears as a bundle of policies promoting privatization, deregulation, and trade liberalization." The unsuspecting American audience is led to believe that neo-liberals are in fact proponents of the resistance to globalization and for the improvement of our world as a whole. Cloaked in the garments of free trade, neo-liberalism is yet another wolf dressed in sheep’s clothing.

The exploitation of the Third World by the First World gets masked in capitalist discourse as the process of "development." Underneath this disguise, however, lies the dichotomy between those nations that are overdeveloped (G-8 countries) and those that are underdeveloped (Third World nations). Of course, the former are never referred to as overdeveloped, for to do so would indicate a negative connotation. Likewise, underdeveloped nations are instead referred to as "developing" countries, implying that there is progress to be made, and that in fact this progress is inevitable. The relation between overdeveloped and underdeveloped countries demonstrates the extreme polariza-
Diversity of Tactics

To understand the movement and its politics, one must understand its terminology. All too often the terms “direct action” and “civil disobedience” are confused. Direct action is an all-encompassing term signifying numerous acts of protest, referring, as Janet Conway puts it, to “forms of political action that bypass parliamentary or bureaucratic channels to directly ameliorate or eliminate an injustice, or to slow down or obstruct regular operations of an unjust system or order.” Strikes, street demonstrations, and occupations are prominent examples of direct action. All civil disobedience is a form of direct action, yet this more specified form of protest also seeks to break laws it finds unjust. Conway states, “acts of civil disobedience are premised on the existence of liberal democratic institutions and the rule of law. The public and principle breaking of the law by otherwise law-abiding persons is meant to call attention to the unjustness of that law.” Famous examples of civil disobedience include the lunch counter sit-ins of the Civil Rights Movement and the burning of draft cards in the anti-Vietnam War movement.

Property damage resulting from both forms of protest is still considered non-violent by many activists’ standards. In this view, any damage except that to a human being is considered non-violent. Thus, even mass-scale rioting and property damage including arson and rock-throwing, can be seen as non-violent, a complicated and problematic distinction. Beginning with the Seattle demonstrations, protesters sought to use all means possible to oppose their target, whether creative or “violent.” This tolerance for a wide variety of demonstration tactics, as well as the need to find something to unify the various groups, led to the practical effect of a “diversity of tactics.” By the Québec Summit of 2001, the term had become a familiar one, and was practiced successfully.

Respect for the diversity of tactics simply means that no member of the movement will publicly denounce any form of demonstration anyone else uses. One does not necessarily have to agree with the form of protest nor participate in it in order to practice respect for the diversity of tactics. The notion of strategy versus tactics then enters the internal structure of the resistance movement. While the social forum, including discussion panels, informational tables, and marches, are planned and pre-arranged events by the propre demonstrators, can be considered strategy, the spontaneous, sometimes erratic actions of violent protesters can be viewed as tactics. Because tactics consist of isolated, often desperate actions, they can serve as temporary and ineffective solutions to a huge problem. While some see breaking the window of a McDonald’s as a powerful, symbolic action against globalization, others view it as a destructive act since insurance will cover McDonald’s loss and will not affect the company’s economic foundation. Basically, the concept of embracing the diversity of tactics presents the resistance movement as a united front, theoretically appearing stronger in the eyes of the media and toward their enemy, world power-holding organizations.

While this surface solidarity brought about by embracing a diversity of tactics seems ideal, it also creates much turmoil and stifles voices. An activist vehe-
ently opposed to violence as a means to particular ends cannot voice this opinion without being considered a traitor. Hence, there are internal pressures that advocate a fascist approach to demonstrating, which presents a dangerous situation that produces tension between those willing to work within the structure and those wanting to break it down. The opportunity for "anything to happen" at a protest also means that the police will be more suspicious and defensive of the resistance; a force not necessarily considered the enemy becomes vilified in the eyes of the resistance, as the protestors become demonized in theirs. Hence the real battle between globalization forces and the resistance may take a backseat. This gives rise to more arrests and more police brutality, which then becomes a focus of media coverage, thereby deterring attention from any peaceful advances. In addition, hardcore militant activists often want to expose more pacifist protesters to police brutality in order to harden their views; yet the debate about whether the violence is initiated by the police or the protestors becomes very blurred, and more times than not will be portrayed in the press as the fault of the resistance. Opponents of a diversity of tactics see the threat of violence as an ominous, restraining, an invitation for bad press, and ultimately the discrediting of the movement.

**G-8 Protests in Genoa**

As a member of the Genoa Social Forum at the 2001 protest of the G-8 Conference in Genoa, Italy, I saw the tension over the diversity of tactics firsthand. I was protesting in a group consisting of two people from each of the G-8 countries. We were participating on behalf of Legambiente, one of the largest environmental organizations in Italy. Relatively unaware at the time of G-8 and the protest movement, I was initially apprehensive about participating. Luckily, a Canadian girl I had befriended and who had recently participated in the Québec Summit, assured me that the protest would be organized in such a way that fear and chaos wouldn’t prevail. She almost guaranteed that we would be tear-gassed, but everyone would be looking out for it, and would work together to make sure people stayed safe and remained calm. Such was her experience the spring before in Canada, where protestors acted in a civilized manner, briskly walking away from danger rather than fleeing in stampedes. Due to cooperation, participants had remained active in the manifestation for long periods of time while being tear-gassed.

The situation was drastically different in Genoa. Perhaps due to the increase in protesters, the wider range of nations represented, and the language barrier, chaos rather than reason seemed to prevail. Without ever having heard of the diversity of tactics or the debate between violent and pacifist protesters, I encountered it in the flesh when two members of the Black Bloc anarchist group marched down the street where we were protesting with the intention of breaking down the fence separating us from the "Red Zone." This street had been designated as a peaceful zone. Pacifist protesters with raised white painted hands and white painted faces stood in front of them, attempting to create an obstacle against the potential violent encounter. The anarchists quickly left, and the pacifist groups lining the streets cheered for the apparent victory over them.

However, mere minutes later, around fifty Black Bloc members ominously marched back down our street, completely clad in black with black masks and make-shift armor on, ready for "battle" against the Italian Carabinieri. For about ten minutes, the two groups plus any other protesters in the area stood in a tense deadlock in the center of the piazza, ready to fight each other, when all of a sudden we heard the eerie sound of helicopters above us, and then metal cartridges of tear gas hit the ground. I remember thinking that the impact of a cartridge would probably give someone a concussion if it fell on their head. Unlike my friend’s experience in Québec, everyone scrambled all over the piazza in a scared frenzy.

Initially I was more scared of being trampled in a stampede than in being effected by the tear gas. That was before I felt the tear gas in my nose and eyes. People running in every direction, coupled with my lack of geographic knowledge of the city, meant I had to pay attention to where the leader of my group was and where he was directing us to go. I had to trust him as well, for the route he chose seemed an unwise path: Black Bloc members were headed that way as well and I associated them with danger. If I hadn’t listened to the head of Legambiente, however, I could have easily wound up in a more dangerous part of the protest.

The dropping of tear gas, although it broke up the intensity of the internal struggle within the resistance, only allowed the members of the Black Bloc to march down to the Red Zone, where they would be confronted by the police, and almost assuredly, more violence. That day Italian police shot and killed Carlo Giuliani, a member of the Black Bloc. While Giuliani has become something of a martyr figure for the movement, the media effectively demonized the actions and destruction of the Black Bloc. The following day of protest, due to the excessive violence, I decided to stay in a village outside of Genoa, where I watched coverage of the protest on Italian television. My fellow members of Legambiente and I were horrified to see the raging fires, smashed windows, and overall chaos in the city’s center. However, when our comrades who had participated returned from the protest, they raved about the peacefulness and organization that had characterized the day. "It was a beautiful manifestation" were their exact words. They knew of only one tumultuous part of the city, which the local television station had chosen to broadcast on continuous loop the entire day.

At the protest, I thought that the pacifists trying to stop the anarchists from entering the danger zone of the protest were foolishly trying to play heroes in a useless battle. However, under the diversity of tactics, because the street on which we were protesting was designated as a peaceful zone, it seemed hypocritical for the anarchist group to overstep the wishes of the pacifists occupying that street to maintain it as a peaceful area. The tension between the two factions caused much fear, needless chaos, and unrest in a place that officially denounced its occurrence.

It is also not clear how extensive the involvement of agents provocateurs, or police disguised as protesters, is in moments like this that threaten to tear apart the movement. These infiltrators, as Conway points out, "in the context of mass action, instigate more confron-
tional, provocative, or violent behavior in order to discredit or to provoke and legitimate repression by the police." I fear that the angry mob-like mentality of groups like the Black Bloc overshadows the intellectual battle against the ills of globalization; the group’s thirst for violence and destruction only seems to mirror the thirst for greed of the corporate world they are seeking to demise. Allowing that violence to destroy the work of those in the anti-globalization movement would seem like a perfect strategy for those who benefit from global neo-liberalism.

One certainty is that the resistance movement, despite its discontents with globalization, nevertheless benefits from its advantages. The Internet has allowed the movement to flourish, as people can advertise events, educate the public about its cause, and organize logistics concerning protests. However, the Internet needs to be used more readily and in the development of a more coherent strategy. There is a lack of communication among groups in the resistance, especially those with different attitudes toward violence and the diversity of tactics. Only by working out how to effectively present itself as an impassioned and united front will the movement gain any real steam. Violent forms of protest will not work successfully toward the ultimate goal of gaining credibility and bringing about change. Those who care about the future of the anti-globalization movement and the future of social justice need to participate in the development of this strategy.

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Peace And Justice, North And South

Maia Ramnath

From Fall 2002 to Spring 2003, much of my political activity focused on opposing the invasion of Iraq. Autumn 2003 was sandwiched by Cancun and Miami, and on all these occasions, success seemed far away. September’s euphoric WTO ministerial meeting spurred dissenters on, only to be trounced at the FTAA summit two months later. Setbacks are how we learn, right? In a single year of resistance in confrontation with both the neoconservative militarist and the neo-liberal strategies of world domination, I glimpsed two criss-crossed contrasts in protest culture coming into play. The first framed organizing either as antiwar or as global justice in the United States; the second framed global justice organizing differently in the north and the south. As we grapple with understanding the manifestations of power, and how resistance must evolve, there’s a lot to be learned from these juxtapositions.

Peace vs. Justice in the Global North

While there is significant overlap, it is fair to distinguish two strains of relatively privileged dissent in this country, with identities constructed through different genealogies, mentors, organizations and seminal campaigns. In the loosest sense, one could track them through their faiths: in spirituality, or in some form of a radical left. From World War I to Vietnam to Iraq, parts 1 and 2, both movements have vehemently opposed American wars, though that opposition has not been based necessarily in identical rationales, or compatible tactics of resistance.

So in a sense, it was a relief for me to take the streets once again this fall against the institutions of global capitalism, after a year of protesting the invasion of Iraq. This was more my style. Meaning...what? That I’d prefer the dissentary privilege of hanging out with white kids in black Carhartts and stenciled patches lining up for their vegan dinner from Food Not Bombs, over that of hobnobbing with cleaner, older white folks in sweaters and slacks bowing heads at a candlelight vigil? That I’d prefer ripping down fences to the beat of a bucket drum brigade over pledging not to raise my voice as I step across a line into the arms of the authorities? That I’d feel less discomfort with a culture that fetishizes tactics of confrontation and escalation, than with one that fetishizes tactics of non-confrontation and de-escalation? I won’t deny my tendencies. But it’s not quite what I mean. In any case these are superficial characterizations. And yet I do think that faultlines between organizing cultures often indicate deeper differences, both at the level of fundamental analysis and at the level of structural location, the latter especially when there is a subtext of race/class privilege involved.

It’s an acknowledged problem that global justice organizing in the United States tends to be dominated iconographically by a very specific subculture claimed by the crusty-punk-anarchist set, largely white; and that this very specific subculture can be alienating to people who are not young, not white, not male, or who just happen to like the wrong music. The underlying causes of such discomfort within a movement need to be addressed, if a movement is ever to gain critical mass — i.e. to become effective, and not merely an alternative enclave. Superficial stylistic expressions must not be mistaken for underlying substance, nor insular scenes for cohesive social movements. The Root
Peace vs. justice: from the perspective of the global north, the duality of such movements (or even of, say, God and Marx) doesn’t play out in the same way. It’s common sense: US military force is linked to the institutions of economic globalization. Plainly, the US dominates these institutions, as it dominates other transnational bodies. Plainly, securing the interests of American corporations is a guiding mission for the US military.

Of the two crude poles I’ve sketched above, both protest cultures are those of relative elites; they are movements of the global north. But they do not represent the range of counter-hegemonic political activity in the United States. Complicating this polar pattern are many embattled communities — immigrant, indigenous, of color and poor people’s movements — who whether by structural analogy or direct personal connection are functionally part of the global south. When I speak of the need for horizontal solidarity between organizers of the north and south, this applies structurally to those located within the official borders of America — the Coalition of Immokalee Workers [http://www.ciw-online.org/], Kensington Welfare Rights Union [http://www.kwrw.org/], Desis Rising Up and Moving [http://www.drumnation.org], to name a few — as well as beyond them.

Nevertheless, let me step across that political border for a moment to illustrate some differences between protesting in Cancun and in Miami — aside from the fact that at least in Cancun the problem of disproportional whiteness was somewhat lessened. Walking in the encampamiento and eco-village set up jointly by thousands of Via Campesino organizers, UNAM students from Mexico City, and an international Green Bloc, I remember commenting in delight, “Here it’s normal to be anti-capitalist!” Granted, these were self-selected populations of dissenters, but they still play a much more prominent, recognized role in mainstream politics than such dissenters do in the United States. Furthermore, among indigenous campesinos, a culture of resistance to globalized capitalism and its vehicle, US imperialism, is based in identification with, not alienation from, learned traditions. They’re a source of strength. It’s worth asking whether the value of our own subcultural self-images are anchored in their very oppositionality, their self-conscious marginalization, or in their actual content.

As far as the logistics of protest go, in Cancun there was room to move. In Miami all movement was forestalled, thanks to the homeland security funding and military technology that’s available to US police forces and not to Mexican. Eight and a half million dollars of Bush’s $87 billion appropriation for securing Iraq and the Homeland was earmarked for the FTAA meetings, and the preemptive rationale that applied here was the same as that applied in the wars on terror and Iraq: Get them before they even think of getting you. And get them hard. In the words of a colonel quoted in the Miami Herald on Nov. 21, regarding the new air strikes simultaneously being carried out in Iraq, “You crush a walnut with a sledge hammer. That’s war.” That’s law enforcement too.

In Cancun, when 80 demonstrators infiltrated the hotel zone to blockade the road outside the conference center, government and police officials negotiated in more or less good faith for several hours in two languages until our demands were addressed. In the end, they refrained from arrest; we rode back to town on top of two buses they provided, and were triumphantly
Bridging the Gaps

My goal here is not to parse the results of the trade talks, or developments in economic and military policy. But it is relevant to note that neither in the WTO nor in the FTAA negotiations is everything going in accordance with the US master plan: thus the shift in Cancun, we not only had room to move, we also had a potential critical mass of those willing to act decisively. Twice, diverse groups of people managed to take down large sectors of the security fence, with minimal police interference. Yet at a critical moment on the second occasion, the rising energy was dissipated into speeches instead of a plunge en masse through the gap. I have my own theories on how and why this happened; suffice it here to say that wherever you are, it seems that critical mass is as much a function of attitude as of gross numbers. How many people does it take to generate enough energy? And to channel it effectively? Fewer, if each individual is fully committed and empowered. The way to change that is directly related to questions of communication, dialogue and mutual intelligibility between protest cultures.

That's solidarity: neither a watering-down to the lowest common denominator acceptable to the American mainstream, nor a macho appropriation of the revolutions of our neighbors. I refuse to believe that resistance is futile in this country. In this country, revolutions of our neighbors. I refuse to believe that resistance is futile in this country.

In the textbook Gramscian sense, hegemony means a form of domination in which the component of persuasion outweighs that of coercion. Correspondingly, consent outweighs resistance among those subordinated. If the level of force is being ratcheted up, whether in silencing domestic dissent, quelling international opposition, or securing access to key resources, it's a sign that hegemony is precarious, that consent is slipping. It's an indication of weakness, not strength. However, this does not mean that control is slipping — yet. Only that it's being obliged to change its form.

Identification of target, like choice of tactic (whether as a philosophical or strategic good), is intrinsically linked to personal identity within a specific culture of resistance. The peace movement generally prioritizes manifestations of state power favored by the neo-con hawks: nuclear and other high-tech weaponry, open wars and military interventions. The global justice movement has generally prioritized those forms of power deployed via the neoliberal economics of monopoly and asymmetrical trade, yielding the violence of poverty and starvation.

But for maximum effectiveness, both the peace movement and the global justice movement must recognize the periodicity, and the symbiosis, of the two modes of dominance that the US empire has employed. We need to see that globally it's the same as the partnership between good-cop and bad-cop. And that response offers us the same choice as that between applying for a permit to hold signs behind a blue barricade, or getting beaten and gassed from streets we claimed without permission. The question for us is whether or not to collaborate in the process that shores up the empire; whether or not to cooperate in our own policing. So when I call on privileged activists to be willing to risk higher personal stakes, what I'm saying is that in order to unseat hegemony, more of us need to take the decisive plunge toward rejecting consent.

What would this mean? For one thing, it means insisting upon a free speech that is true political participation, and not just a sanctioned pressure valve for siphoning off dangerous steam. It means taking responsible initiative. It means forging respectful alliances. Where war is concerned, it means deepening analysis beyond sympathetic liberal and/or Christian conscience, to the mechanisms of imperialism and capitalism. It means setting goals that reach beyond the amelioration of unpleasantness and the tempering of conflict, to the structural underpinnings of injustice.

For privileged organizers, it means commitment to intelligent planning and to dialogue that reaches outside the subcultural comfort zone. We need to recognize the importance of context in conditioning our tactics, and this requires the ability to locate our own personal decisions in a much wider field of vision. Strategic coalition both within this country and between countries means being aware of our positionality within the structure of the capitalist system, and within the structure of the US empire. Cultures of resistance stem from the interaction of ideology with location. In other words, we make choices from within given locations, in conjunction both with those who share compatible principles but have different structural locations, as well as with those who share a location in the structure but who have different ideas about what should be done. It means maintaining horizontal communication lines to coordinate the concerted efforts of those at multiple locations.

That's solidarity: neither a watering-down to the lowest common denominator acceptable to the American mainstream, nor a macho appropriation of the revolutions of our neighbors. I refuse to believe that resistance is futile in this country. In this country,
resistance is imperative. The immediate failure of any given action doesn’t mean that we should give up, but rather that we should tailor our tactics to the evolving situation. The past year’s conjunction of ideologies and contexts, modes of power and modes of resistance, has offered a unique learning experience. It has served to clarify and reinforce that peace is best framed as global justice, and that global justice is best framed beyond the north alone.

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Unionizing Silicon Valley: Victories and Cultural Strategies

Mike Mosher

Past efforts organizing engineers and recent efforts in technical trades deserve study as models for organizing "no-collar workers," the heavily exploited programmers, writers and graphic designers of the contemporary computer and Web industries. If 'Silicon Valley' is shorthand for this demographic and technological sector in any region, its characteristics are most pronounced in that Northern California hyper-wired oasis. There have been some notable organizing accomplishments since 2000, as well as risks that might derail organizing work.

In 2001 unions represented about 14 percent of U.S. workforce, or about 17 million workers. Success in the last thirty years of government employees — the Service Workers International Union among government employees, and teachers unions like the National Education Association and the California Teachers Union — show that ‘symbolic thinkers’ (a once-prevalent management buzz phrase) realize the need to protect themselves through organization.

There have been some organizing victories already in the twenty-first century. Most notably, the International Union of Electrical Workers and the 630,000 Communications Workers of America merged in September 2000 to form a union of 743,000 workers. The United Auto Workers and United Mine Workers unions, powerful national unions with political muscle, also courted the Electrical Workers.

Communication Workers of America (CWA) telephone unions worked to organize the wireless telcom industry at Verizon and Cingular around the issue of retraining analog workers for digital hardware. In August, 2000 they held a walkout of 85,000 CWA and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers members that lasted 17 days to support Verizon’s organizing effort. Over 2,000 workers won representation by IBEW, bringing the total it represented in New England to 14,000. By mid-2001, 10,000 of 30,000 Cingular workers were represented by CWA.

The CWA scheduled an election at the now-defunct ETown.com in January 2001, to which the company immediately responded with layoffs. They obtained
organizing help from the Northern California Media Workers Guild that filed National Labor Relations Board complaints. The same year the CWA and AFL-CIO worked to rally institutional pension-fund investors against AT&T management’s planned breakup of the conglomerate’s long-distance, cable and wireless service, a plan intended to boost stock price and shareholder value.

There was some organizing effort directed at computer manufacturers or system assemblers. While 'Intel Inside!' stickers still predominate on the faces of computers where a union bug should be, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers organized two small computer providers in the Midwest. There was an effort to organize overworked and underpaid warehouse and customer service workers at Amazon.com just before the December 2000 Christmas rush. Management responded by distributing anti-union literature and special coaching of managers to fight the union drive. In 2000 a $97 million settlement was reached between Microsoft and its ‘permanent temps’ who brought suit. To organize Microsoft and Amazon would be great inspirational, symbolic victories.

The organization of online content providers was one model found in the 2001 negotiation between the Writers Guild of America and the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers, where an agreement rewrote outdated pay formulas for compensation for reused work that appears on the Internet and pays residuals for Web content reused on TV.

Risk Business

One very real issue is the continuous export of programming jobs to Bangalore, India. Cisco Systems, IBM, Intel, Microsoft, Oracle, Sun Microsystems, American Express have all taken advantage of workforces of highly-trained English-speaking computer science graduates. Though one US information technologists’ publication claims that programmers’ salaries in Bangalore have recently been as low as $550 to $650 (U.S. dollars) per annum, the website PayScale [http://www.payscale.com] gives their range from about $8,700 to $12,000. Some industrialists have griped that these programmers are overpaid in comparison to programmers in the U.S. Though the Bay Area Labor Council had a Plant Closings Project in California in the early 1980s that investigated, publicized and organized around the issue of work moved offshore — a project of a sort lacking today — the destruction of communities when a factory of any kind moves overseas generates anger that can be harvested for community organizing and political change.

Concomitant with these exports is the profligate issuance of H-1B visas. Some 195,000 H-1B visas were issued in 2001, about half of them to Indian citizens. In the year 2000 about 250,000 Indians worked in the US on H-1B visas. These programmers were supposed to go home if they were laid off, though the INS admitted in mid-2001 that it had not given pursuing them priority, though it probably has to a greater degree after 9/11. The visas also stirred much grumbling among older workers, who felt they were being passed over for younger, lower-paid Indians and Taiwanese. Yet to raise anger against these foreign workers is a delicate issue. How could there be organizing that was free from the stink of racism which so hobbled unionization efforts in the United States in the past? One solution might be for the union to employ some high-profile ethnic Indian organizers. The albeit expensive but most honorable option is to unionize the H-1B workers as well, with some sort of inventive protection provided them, such as a guarantee that if they are laid off by the company they would be given jobs under their visas as organizers by the union!

Unscrewing the Big Screw

The average American workweek has expanded in the past two decades, and in Silicon Valley there has been a perverse pride in workweeks extending up to 100 hours. The disappearance of the standard eight-hour day is the Big Screw, the issue around which anger at exploitation should crystallize into organization. When I worked for one large computer company, my elderly aunt, employed from high school to retirement, stayed with us. One evening when I came home at 7:00 p.m she nervously asked “You get time and a half for overtime, right?” My subsequent explanation about good salary and a department fringe full of fruit juices, and T-shirts when new products shipped, sounded awfully hollow. She had never been a union member, but had worked as a secretary in the office of a unionized steel factory. It was her generation that fought for what was the standard workday for about fifty years.

The tech industries have some organizing problems and challenges not shared with rustbelt, smokestack America. There is the cyclical nature of the industry, where the fat times that spring from the spread of tech innovations like personal computers, of multimedia CD-ROMs and the Web boom, are followed by periods of contraction (usually occurring when the President is named George Bush). There is also the cultural mindset that prevents smart, skilled (often twenty-something) workers in T-shirts from seeing themselves as the labor proletariat. The tech industry pays well, often offering flexible scheduling, liberal vacations, and (of riskier value) stock option packages. Until the Dot Com bust, there was plenty of work. It boasts a perception of worker control of the work environment, whose contradictory reality is summed up in the phrase “You can work any eighty hours a week you like!” Engineers set the culture of the tech industry, for engineers often founded these companies. The supporting tech writers, instructional designers, graphic artists, interface designers feel part of the culture that the engineers drive. The tech industry, with its flattened hierarchies and informality, makes it easier for the programmer or Web designer to identify with the fate of the support staff. The marketing staff might be the most conservative and resistant, the support staff of administrative assistants, network technicians and loading dock workers the most realistic and progressive.
Since the first step is to change the cultural landscape, I want to see the fight take place on an accelerated scale in the realm of culture. There exists much imagery from a century ago (some collected in the 1998 book *Images of American Radicalism* by Paul Buhle and Edmund B. Sullivan) that besides looking cool would raise consciousness. "Fight for the 8 Hour Day" is again a resonant rallying cry suitable for T-shirts, posters, mugs, bumper stickers. Tattoos, anyone? Let's see if the goal is globally achieved before the tat fades. This rich archive of century-old organizing graphics waits to be re-purposed, updated and re-imagined. Yet artists in all fields should be invited, hosted and commissioned to generate new works to sharpen political understanding, freshen the spirit, stir the soul. The union should sponsor community murals in various neighborhoods that beautifully illuminate the issues, working conditions and potential for a better life. It should organize frequent benefit rock, hip-hop and dance concerts, events that are long on fun and short on speeches. When will each union sponsor annual labor song contests in each genre, the winning results to be spread at no cost via MP3?

Unionization needs marketing with the creation of interactive screen documents and popular websites. One hopes to see VRML worlds showing union workplaces, much as Tamiko Thiel did with a virtual World War II Japanese relocation camp [http://mission.base.com/manzanar/index.html]. Such visualizations would be hyperlinked to case histories and organizing tools and model documents. There could also be college organizing efforts among tech support workers — the underpaid drones who keep university computer labs running — for an organized cohort would then move into industry with heightened labor consciousness and organizing skills and that special fresh energy students can bring.

In the geographic Silicon Valley the South Bay AFL-CIO Labor Council [http://www.atwork.org/] includes a hundred thousand workers in 110 affiliated unions. The challenge before us — organizing Silicon Valley and all North American cyberproles and workstation jocks — is not going to be an easy one. Management will respond to any organizing efforts with counter-tactics of relocations, layoffs (as if they need provocation for those!), individual firings and lawsuits. Labor must employ traditional methods like strikes, slowdowns and counter-suits, as well as creative new ones. Our new strategies and tactics must make the fullest use of the liberational potential of the technologies we labor to create.

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He joined the Service Workers International Union in San Francisco when he worked for the San Francisco Art Commission as that city’s last CETA-funded community muralist. His article “Artist!” can be found at http://eserver.org/bs/53/mosher.html.

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Three Organizer Interviews

J.C. Myers

Interview with Arnold Becchetti, National Committee Member and Former Organizational Secretary for the Communist Party USA (CPUSA) on 22 November 2003, in San Francisco, CA.

**BS:** Where would you draw some of the dividing lines between the CPUSA and some of the other organizations on the US Left?

**AB:** The biggest has to do not with what we say we’re aiming for, but with the attitudes toward current struggles. You can’t build socialism without taking into account where workers are now. For some who are considered to be on the Left, there is in fact a contempt for workers — in the sense that they are preaching to workers and not involved in their struggles; or sneering at them, because they may not be in the lead on certain questions at a given moment.

The fact is, we have a number of our members who went through what we call the "Ultra Left" and came to our party.

**BS:** A number of the European Communist Parties went through a tremendous amount of change and reorganization in the 1980s and 1990s. Has the Communist Party in the US gone through similar changes or not?

**AB:** We did it differently, let’s put it that way. Of course there were pressures for change. I happen to have been in 1975 the representative of our party to the Italian Party Congress where they made the change to Eurocommunism. But that whole concept of Eurocommunism or African communism is against the basic thrust of history. History says we’re going to be united worldwide — workers of the world unite. It can’t be on the basis of individual countries and that is an error in our view.

I think they made a big mistake and you can see the result is disastrous. The Italian Communist Party, for instance, was a huge party — very strong — and it has split into several parties. The French Communist Party — similar problem. The Spanish party, the British party. They gave in, in our view, to the wrong kind of pressures. Rather than confront these pressures that were facing the working class and the people, they gave in to certain ideological pressures of the imperialists and a certain degree of even excusing your own imperialism, which is totally wrong. So we have continued to fight for an internationalist approach.

The Greek party has been hosting an annual get-together of Communist Parties of the world and we participate in that so we can begin to have some exchange and see what the problems are and how we can better work together against the common class enemy.

**BS:** How do you view the shift that seems to have been taking place from an older model of parties or formal organizations to more loosely organized networks and independent activists without any connection to organizations or parties?

**AB:** It’s a complicated question. Part of it lies in the fact, of course, that our party has been under almost constant attack, which escalated sharply with the Cold War. The arrest of our leadership — 125 of our leaders were arrested and jailed in the McCarthy period. Later, that law was found to be unconstitutional, but the damage was done and it gave rise to two things on the Left. Those who wanted to do something but were afraid of being labeled ‘communists’ tried to work outside of a relationship with the Party in any way — it even gave rise to some anti-communist Left. And those who had differences with us and tried to take advantage of the sharp attack on the Party itself — which is an unprincipled position.

And we had some problems within the Party. There are always struggles that take place within the Party over the right path for this moment and so forth. And we try to correct when we find we’ve gone in the wrong direction. But sometimes that has led to unnecessarily sharp polemics within the Party, rather than stepping back and saying, "Look, this is what we think, but life is going to decide who is correct."

Because of this attack we were not able to maintain as large an organization as we used to have, and therefore, we were absent from many of these struggles. When they were looking for leadership, we weren’t there. Not because of what we wanted, but because of the objective situation.

We’ve begun to overcome that now. In the more recent period, we’ve developed increasingly good relations with the labor movement — not just in this area, but in New York, Cleveland, Chicago, Seattle.

**BS:** It seems that younger people who are attracted to Left politics today are drawn more to the politics of anarchism than to the politics of socialism. Why do you think that is?

**AB:** That’s a very good question — and we’re cognizant of it. Anarchism is an expression of militancy within the labor movement, but in the ideological framework of capitalism. It doesn’t see the need for the workers to be in charge of the government and have a government. I can say that, because my parents were anarchists. My mother knew Elizabeth Gurley Flynn from the struggle around the Sacco-Vanzetti case. Sacco and Vanzetti were family friends.

For some, I think it’s, again, a way of evading anti-communism. The other side of it is, though, that many of the youth today — they don’t have any fear of anti-communism. And we’ll be able to work with these
people, because they’re honest; they’re seeking. And I’m sure a number of them will continue to join our party or the Young Communist League, which is growing very rapidly in its size and influence.

BS: Where does the US Left need to go next? How does it begin to recover?

AB: Well, you know, there’s something somewhat similar in the twenties. It took a very strong struggle on the issues confronting the working class at that time: unemployment, the need for unemployment insurance, Social Security — which we were deeply involved with. It’s that kind of a moment again, but — obviously — in a different setting. You don’t have to build Social Security, you’ve got to defend it now. The same with Medicare.

The forms of racism are not as clear as they were at that point. Then it was blatant. We still have blatant expressions, but that isn’t the main problem today — it’s the more “subtle” forms.

I think it has to come from an understanding that the working class is the key force to liberate humanity from capitalism and imperialism. It is a special product of capitalism; it is born out of capitalism. Not everybody has recognized that in the past and they were able, for instance, to keep the labor movement and the environmental movement at loggerheads. Well, Seattle put an end to that and there is a growing recognition that there is more in common than in difference.

There is growing recognition by other movements of the need for the labor movement to assume its rightful place at the head of the march of the people. That’s the only way that everybody will win. Labor can’t do it by itself — but it has to be the central element. That means organized labor. A single worker has no strength at all — only when they unite do they have any strength.

So it’s still that kind of a struggle, but increasingly it has to take into account the international globalization of capitalism that is happening and to fight for a working class and people’s globalization. You can’t escape globalization — that’s an objective process. But who is in charge and for what end — that’s the key struggle.

Interview with David Brown, Green Party County Council Member, San Joaquin County, California on 17 December 2003, in Turlock, CA.

BS: Where would you draw some of the dividing lines between the Green Party and some of the other organizations on the US Left?

DB: The first thing that comes to mind is where it is getting its money from. It doesn’t accept money from limited liability corporations at all — that separates it keenly from the Democratic and Republican parties. Its platform is a little different. It is predominantly a socialist platform, but honestly, the party is afraid to call it that. They are to the left of the Democratic Party; they are a peace party, as opposed to the Democratic Party, which voted in favor of the Iraq war. They have not gone so far as to condemn neo-liberal policies — which, to me, still puts it within the framework of mainstream politics.

We have been so keen on building numbers at this point that, in my opinion at least, we have watered down the platform to make it acceptable to as many people as possible without the risk of alienation. But, in people’s hearts, I think they see it as a socialist platform — but they’re afraid to say it. For instance, when Peter Camejo was running for Governor [of California] the last time, not during the recall, on NPR they asked him, "You ran as the Socialist candidate for President back in the seventies. Has your political outlook changed since then?" And he said, "It hasn’t."

BS: In Europe, Green parties have been organized as explicit alternatives to Socialist and Communist parties. Is this also the case in the US? How red is the Green Party here?

DB: Here, they wanted to change the idea of the party platform taking a stance and everybody having to fall in line. Within the platform, they recognized that the minority opinion within the party may actually represent the future’s majority opinion. It’s possible that a good idea just has not taken root yet. So, when a platform item is passed or when the party takes a stance on something, people are not expected to toe the line. And I have found that there is a strong socialist and Marxist minority within the party.

I think that on the surface, there is a distancing between Green and socialist politics, but the people who are organizers on a regional level tend to be socialists already.

BS: Is the more organized, more formal style of organization something that is necessary or is it becoming outdated?

DB: To be honest, I don’t know what the best route for it to go is. I don’t know whether the Green Party will last in the long-run in the US. It’s just very rare that a third party makes it. In some ways, the best it can hope for is to hit a critical mass where the other two parties steal its platform. There are some people who think we’re going to build a third party and it’s going to stay, but others are saying, “Let’s get these key points out there and eventually it will be stolen and we’ll move on.”

Sometimes you see the power struggle — people say it’s getting top-down; getting too structured. It seems like whenever there’s that kind of attempt, people are put in check.

One of the things I enjoy about the Green party is that the structure is very open to participation and input. They will set up a panel and instead of Robert’s Rules of Order, they use facilitators — a man, a woman, and a time-keeper. After the panel speaks, they ask for questions and the facilitators run through a process of gender-stacking to ensure that men and women get involved equally. The facilitators scan the crowd to see who is getting frustrated for not having their voice out or which section hasn’t been heard from.
**BS:** Do you take decisions by majority vote or by consensus?

**DB:** Consensus, if at all possible. They actually have a standard consensus process that they use. Someone will call for a consensus vote on a proposal. If they don’t have consensus, they will ask for objections. If, after debate, they can’t reach an eighty-percent majority, they don’t take a stand.

That’s actually a problem for some people — it alienated some people during the [California Gubernatorial] recall race. When the petition was going around [to have the recall vote placed on the ballot] there were members of the party who actively participated in trying to recall Davis. There were other members who actively participated in trying to stop the recall. So, when they called for consensus on supporting the recall, they weren’t able to reach it. They weren’t able to reach eighty-percent. And by this point, the process became so slow and drawn-out that they were ineffective. The recall went through and the point became moot. Once there was a recall, we ran a candidate, but then we couldn’t reach a consensus on whether to vote ‘yes’ or ‘no’ on the recall either.

A lot of Greens felt that, obviously, there comes a time when you have to make a decision and we’re so democratic that we can’t do anything.

**BS:** It seems that younger people who are attracted to Left politics today are drawn more to the politics of anarchism than to more organized forms of politics. Why do you think that is?

**DB:** It seems like they feel that the working class is not going to do anything unless they can actually feel like the time they’ve spent on it produces a tangible result. So, they look to the Peace Life centers with their newspapers and their annual craft sales or their luncheons where they hear each other speak or they bring in a nice liberal from somewhere else, and they just see it as ineffective. They say, “If it was doing something, the state would be on them — and it’s not. So, obviously they’re not making the state uncomfortable enough.”

Instead of having a meeting every two weeks and talk about it for two hours, they’re just going to go out there for two hours and do something. And I think that they’re right, because it has built up in a very short time a lot more energy. I think they are drawn to this anarchist philosophy of ‘propaganda by deed’ because when they do it, they actually have a tangible result. I think that’s why this idea is spreading:

If we go out there and actually do something, then the people will join us — otherwise, people aren’t going to waste their time.

**BS:** Would you argue for the Green Party to turn more in the direction of contemporary anarchist activism?

**DB:** There seems to be a generation gap. A lot of the established Greens are very uncomfortable with the tactics of the young people. I love their tactics — I think they’re great. But a lot of people are uncomfortable with it.

A lot of the older Greens have been to jail for political reasons; have survived the Black Panther Party movement; the American Indian Movement; and they carry with them a lot of baggage from the early seventies. Many of them feel that the younger activists are crossing a line and it’s going to get them killed. So there is a sense — almost a paternal sense — on the part of the older Greens that they have been down that road, and it leads to having your movement crushed.

I’ve been trying to convince Greens that you have this young movement that is actually going out there and doing something and you can either alienate them or you can share your experience: “Look, this is how COINTELPRO worked; this is what it did to us; this is how I ended up in jail; this is what happened to Huey Newton.” And some people are starting to warm up to it.

**BS:** Where does the US Left need to go next?

**DB:** I think it needs to go international. It needs to find a way to break out of the neo-liberal conversation. It’s amazing how you hear both sides of the argument and both sides are in favor of this neo-liberal vision of globalization. The Left somehow needs to step out of it.

These anarchist collectives and the Greens need to set up sister-city programs; connect the Greens in Manteca, California with the Partido Verde in a city in Mexico.

We don’t need a centralized hierarchy. Look at the example of Martin Luther King: he was very charismatic, but one he was killed, a lot of the energy dissipated. When you have these centralized leaders, it’s easy to stop the movement. If you want to build a movement, you do it person-to-person. If you want to kill a movement, you go to the meeting. When people don’t have an interpersonal bond first, we’re not as willing to stand by each other when things get heated-up.

**Interview with Todd Chretien, Northern California Organizer for the International Socialist Organization (ISO) on 15 November 2003 in San Francisco, CA.**

We see the importance of a socialist organization in beginning to put out the argument that while we should fight for whatever reforms we can win — be it defending abortion rights, or strengthening the unions, or winning voting rights for undocumented immigrants, or working alongside the Greens to get independent candidates elected — whatever the reforms are, we believe that the point of a socialist organization is to say in the long term we need to build a revolutionary
movement in this country that says reforms under this system, if you leave it intact — and if you leave their power intact — they will eventually take away whatever reforms they gave you.

For instance, in the thirties we built this tremendously powerful union movement. After WWII, unions represented 35% of the American workforce — now it’s 12%. We had abortion rights and although abortion under Roe v. Wade was never adequately funded federally, it was at least the law of the land — and now that is being chipped away. And you can go on and on and on in terms of the reforms that have been won: if you leave the system intact, it takes those reforms back.

**BS:** How do you view the shift that seems to have been taking place from an older model of parties or formal organizations to more loosely organized networks and independent activists without any connection to organizations or parties?

**TC:** I would just offer a brief historical explanation. Engels actually said that the mark of the American working class was that it was tremendously combative, but political organization always lags way behind. So, if you look at the most developed countries in the world, there is some type of labor party, or socialist-democratic party, or some type of party of the working class. Whereas, in the United States, the ruling class has always been able to prevent that organized political expression through repression and through co-optation of the Democratic Party.

In the 20th century, you had, on the one hand, the organization of a mass Communist Party and that organization was instrumental in building the unions that we have the remnants of today. Without the Communist Party there would not have been trade unions in this country, practically speaking. After WWII, two things come together to destroy that continuity of working class rebellion and its culmination in the political organization of the Communist Party in the thirties.

One is McCarthyism — McCarthyism was about destroying the Communist Party. People mostly hear about it in terms of directors and professors who lost their jobs, writers who were blacklisted, and that was certainly important. But the most important function of McCarthyism was destroying the Left and the labor unions. The labor unions that were led by Communists were expelled from the CIO, you had to sign an oath that said that you were not a member of the Communist Party. And they succeeded in destroying the political expression of the working class in terms of the Communist Party through repression.

There was also another problem, which was that the Communist Party came to identify its struggle almost uncritically with Stalin’s Russia — and that meant that they replaced the struggle for socialism in the United States with the defense of what they believed to be socialism in Russia. So, they did anything Stalin said. They had first opposed Roosevelt in the early thirties and then when Stalin said, “I want to make a deal with Roosevelt to fight Hitler,” they made a deal with Roosevelt to join the Democratic Party. Then, when Hitler made a deal with Stalin, then the Communist Party said, “We hate Roosevelt again.” Then, when the Nazis invaded Russia, Stalin said, “We like Roosevelt again,” and the Communist Party since that time basically has aligned itself with the Democratic Party. That really destroyed their authenticity as a political expression of workers’ radicalism and working class emancipation.

With the collapse of Stalinism in the early nineties, not only did it destroy that model of society, it also discredited — hopefully forever — that model of Stalinist organization. That’s good, on the one hand — but it left nothing in its place.

In the nineties, there has been an attempt to organize something new — the idea of loose networks as opposed to a party. That came together in Seattle and became very popular for a few years. On the one hand, we said about that development, “Excellent! That’s certainly better than nothing!” We would much rather have people organizing through consensus models and getting out in the streets and fighting back than not doing anything. And we were very involved in the global justice protests.

We saw that model as a step forward, but we also believe that it has limitations. We believe that we need an organization of people who are committed to the end-goal of socialism. And we believe that you have to group those people together who are committed to that end-goal in an organization that can act together, because the forces against that end-goal are so great. You have to come together and try to coordinate yourselves in more than simply a loose-knit way.

Our model of organization, we believe, is very internally-democratic. We argue everything out, vote on things — but then when we decide to do something, we try to coordinate our activities to do it all together. We believe that this is actually more democratic than many of the so-called looser-knit consensus models. Sometimes I’ve been in consensus meetings where they are fairly democratic and there is actually a good process. Most times I’ve been in consensus meetings where the people who are willing to stay the longest get to make the decisions and the people who are the most confident get to make the decisions.

**BS:** Where does the US Left need to go next? One big organization? A network of organizations?

**TC:** Well, this is one of those questions...where does it need to go and where can it go? The unions need to fight — and this is happening in Southern California with the grocery workers’ strike and the mechanics’ strike. We think that one of the most important developments is the reintroduction into the unions of the idea of class struggle: if you don’t fight, they will just keep taking things away from you.

I think the way it is going to happen this time is not one big explosion, but a series of disconnected attempts to reintroduce radical unionism in different places. It has to develop its own rhythm; its own culture.

If you present that model to the other areas of the United States now, it’s the same. Students who are taking absolutely massive budget cuts in California have to shut down their universities, sit in at the campus administrations, and say, “We will not pay for tax
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breaks for the rich!" Because that’s what this really is. You’re increasing student tuition and where does that money go? It goes to the pockets of the rich.

Those are broad developments. In terms of the organized Left, we think there are a few very important things coming up. One is the 2004 elections — and there is going to be unprecedented vilification of the Green Party and Ralph Nader. The argument is going to be: Ralph Nader cost Al Gore the election and that’s why we have George Bush and that’s why we’re in fascism.

Obviously, we can understand why people hate George Bush — we hate George Bush and we definitely want to see him out. But the point of building mass movements cannot be to replace Republicans with Democrats. Because all of history shows that if that is the point of your movement, once you replace a Republican with a Democrat, they will use their influence to co-opt your movement, take it off the streets, and then hand power back to the Republicans. And twenty years from now or thirty years from now, we will be doing the same thing — except that they might have destroyed the world in a nuclear holocaust or we might not be able to breathe the air anymore.

We think that now, after Ralph Nader’s good showing in 2000, he’s not going to get three million votes if he runs — it’s going to be harder, because the Democrats are going to go crazy saying, “How dare you vote for what you want! You must submit to the Democratic Party’s nominee, whoever that is!” That will be a tremendously important battle over the next year and we are going to do everything we can to say, “Now is not the time to submit. Now is the time to stand up.”

It’s not going to be easy. They have a lot of power and a lot of money and we don’t have a lot of power and a lot of money. But we think that the movement — the working class, poor people, students — are going to have a chance in the next generation to actually make their voices heard and to be engaged in a real fight for power in this country. And that’s what we’re trying to help to do.

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And on the Eighth Day: The Struggle for Linguistic Organization Strategies

Mark Pegrum

The Queen’s English is daily debased by ill-educated, slovenly users who insist on spreading ungrammatical chaos through all the media outlets available to them.

— Letter to Editor, UK press, 2002

If you don’t believe in God, you can’t believe in grammar. This is surely one of the most acute insights of Derridean thought, a sensational linguistic conclusion drawn from the death of God, that devastating — and simultaneously liberating — event noted by Nietzsche nearly a century previously. "If," writes Derrida in his Mémoires for Paul de Man, "I had to risk, God help me, a single definition of deconstruction ... I would say without sentence [without elaboration]: plus d’une langue." The typical Derridean wordplay of the final phrase suggests at least two interpretations: either no more of one (single) language, or more than one (multiple) language. With the end of modernity, there is no longer anything to anchor the play of signifiers, to chain them to their signifieds; indeed there is nothing to chain the signifiers to each other as we witness the rise of a world "without sentence," that unit of grammatical organization so crucial to shepherding woolly meaning towards its teleological realization. You have nothing to lose but your chains, as Marx might say to any oppressed preposition or adverb. Yet there will be no rationalized redistribution of the means of linguistic production: God dies; grammar collapses; meaning disperses into postmodern freeplay.

But not if DTW has anything to do with it. This abbreviation for "Disgusted-of-Tunbridge-Wells" was coined in 1994 by the linguist John Maidment to refer to writers in the gentrified small towns of the London Belt who regularly regale newspaper editors with comments such as that quoted at the outset of this essay. DTW leads an organized life — Maidment suggests that he or she may well have a military past — and believes everyone else should follow suit. That means unequivocally following the rules of grammar. For what could be more effective than good sentence structure in ensuring an ordered society?

Grammar at Home: The UK and the USA

Debates about the importance of teaching grammar, and restoring it to an antecedent, supposedly superior or more pure state are nothing new. Grammar, it seems, like pride, goeth before the fall. Samuel Johnson noted in 1755 that "tongues, like governments, have a natural tendency to degeneration," while decades earlier, Jonathan Swift had complained that Eng-
lish was declining so badly that "in many Instances, it offends against every Part of Grammar." If we wished to follow this road into the past, we might well eventually, by highways and byways, arrive at the walls of Babel itself.

However, the decline of grammar is rarely seen as an isolated problem. On the one hand, in common usage, the term "grammar" metonymically represents linguistic organization, even language itself, tacitly subsuming areas such as vocabulary and pronunciation. On the other, it is closely linked in the collective imagination to social and moral standards, as a symbol and guarantor of these. The English language debates of recent years, whether grappling with Estuary English in the old anglophone heartland of the UK, or Ebonics and Hispanics in the new heartland of the US, have been concerned with (re-)instating a bulwark of organization against the chaos induced by creeping social change. There is little doubt that for Britain's DTWs and their fellow letter writers elsewhere, frequently in league with the media and middle-class parents, grammatical organization is a key component of a wider program for the reinstatement of more traditional, authoritarian pedagogy and discipline.

The potential effect on governments receptive to such concerns — goodwill and idealism notwithstanding — is well illustrated in the UK by the current Blair administration's National Literacy Strategy for schools, or in the US by the Bush administration's "No Child Left Behind" Act. Language, along with other key skills, is too important to be experimented with, or allowed to molder in the provinces or backwaters. One-size-fits-all programming, underpinned by new systems of standardized state or national testing, will ensure this can no longer happen.

And yet if complaints about the poor state of English grammar go back beyond Swift, and complaints about linguistic disorganization recall Babel, we might legitimately ask whether there is any real cause for concern. The pendulum swings one way, and it swings back in due course; what is new about the current linguistic cleanup?

One perennial issue which has recently assumed greater significance is that of linguistic discrimination based on what James and Lesley Milroy, in their 1985 Authority in Language, call the "intolerance of optional variability in language." As opposition to naked discrimination based on gender, race, religion or sexuality has increasingly become codified in the law of developed countries, and as social inclusion policies — to wit, the Blairite stance on university admission — have sought to redress class or socioeconomic imbalances, intolerance has mutated into subtler and more easily defensible forms. Discrimination on a linguistic basis can, after all, be attributed to inappropriately educational attainment or unsuitable strategies of communication on the victim's part, in patent disregard of the degree to which language, education and communication are interrelated and nonconformity is hyperbolized in the filtering processes of national testing. And whenever headway is made by leveling or pluralizing phenomena, from Estuary English in the UK to Ebonics/AAVE in the US, their threat is met with (counter-)reactionary force.

Community and individual identities are assaulted by a blinkered focus on standardization. If the back-to-basics move in compulsory education represents a challenge to the more student-centered, multifaceted approaches popular in recent decades - Vygotsky's social constructivism, Gardner's multiple intelligences, the New London Group's multiliteracies, in short, the kinds of paradigms which, along with the broadly constituted communicative approach in language teaching, still largely inform post-compulsory education in the humanities — then the imposition of linguistic control sends out a curfew call on the fragmented, hybrid identities of postmodernism. "In adopting particular norms of speech," writes Deborah Cameron in her aptly-titled Verbal Hygiene of 1995, "we are constructing particular identities for ourselves — and in submitting to other people's linguistic prescriptions we are also submitting to their ideas about who we are, or should be." If the sociopolitical imperative of postmodernism was to give a voice to every Other (whatever the degree of potential or actual co-option of the cultural manifestations of postmodernism by the culture and leisure industries) then those voices are increasingly being trained to sing from a single hymn sheet.

Identities are further constrained by the demands of post-Fordist economies, where language is treated as a product to be manipulated and (as Cameron has said elsewhere) "branded"; employees are instructed to read from scripts or employ pre-established phraseology. Anthony Giddens, Norman Fairclough and others have observed that what were previously seen as naturally developed linguistic and communicative capacities now seemingly require experts to teach them, and to shape their users. Here, then, the enduring desire for reality to be organized and order to be established through language merges surreptitiously and insidiously with the requirements of a burgeoning capitalist service sector.

Capitalism makes various demands of nation states, but in its classical liberal and neo-liberal forms it chiefly requires night watchmen: governments able to keep social order. These in turn require obedience from their citizens. In both cases, where feasible, consensus has been found preferable to coercion. This principle already has something of a pedigree in the West: it is inherent in the "Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen" which, as Michael Billig notes in Banal Nationalism, was circulated not in all the major languages and dialects of post-revolutionary France, nor even in some of them, but solely in the administrative language of Paris. The citoyens of the République needed to understand the expectations of their government as much — indeed, more — than, in their former incarnations as subjects, they needed to understand their king. Openly coercive regimes are highly susceptible to attack; witness, for instance, the end of the ancien régime of the Bourbons. But now the citizens are to collaborate in their own rule, which will be ideologically rather than physically punitive. The community is imagined. The panopticon is internalized. And the new order is realized linguistically.

Fast forward just over 200 years. With the new millennium have come the first major barbarian incursions into the Pax Americana established since the end of the Cold War. In a 2001 article, "On the Mortality of Language Learning Methods," Wilfried Decoo asks whether September 11th will lead to "a tighter grip on knowledge," including "the stressing of grammatical rules for
correctness." This much we do know: throughout history, when civilized order has been perceived as under threat, people have reached for grammar to secure its foundations. Right now, menaces not only to the USA, which is still smarting from its Ground Zero wounds, but to the whole of the West seem to be everywhere and invisible; one slip of grammar and who knows what the result might be?

Yes, the reports tell us, the terrorists communicated on the internet, as others in their wake continue to do. The net's language is fragmented, turned against itself, the ASCII code eaten from within by the terrorist virus, it's "our" language(s), "their" language(s), rendered entirely unstable. No transformational rules will differentiate subject, object and action, or tell you how devastating the last of these may be. Chomsky, his own changes of heart aside, cannot help; the answer is more surveillance.

And if, since before the days of the French Revolution, governments have disenfranchised dialectal grammars, how much more jealous will they now be of alien grammars? Other languages too effortlessly open up perspectives which, much like the internet, are beneath the radar of today's largely monolingual anglophone elites. In a time of crisis, other linguistic allegiances, even if partial, may appear unpatriotic. This meshes with pre-existing, if cyclical, ambivalences to foreign languages: the UK continues to vacillate between Anglo-vision and Euro-vision as regards multiple language learning, while the originally multilingual USA is home to the Hispanically-challenged US English Movement, an increasingly powerful voice among those seeking to establish English as the official language of the country and to halt what its chairman calls "the drift toward multilingualism." However, as Tove Skutnabb-Kangas and others have emphasized, monocultures, whether biological or linguistic, are fragile. Surely, then, the greater the homogenization — of biology, environment, or language — the greater the risk of (another) devastating viral attack?

Internationally as nationally, perhaps the most commonly invoked argument against a proliferation of languages or dialects is the need for a common, transparent medium for accurate exchanges of information. Languidly seductive to both the traditional right and elements of the traditional left, to those who wish to uphold English standards as much as to those who seek broadened participation in democratic fora, this notion is all too easily transmogrified into an apology for a vulgarized, if not bastardized, for(u)m of Habermas' ideal speech situation governed by communicative rationality. Lyotard's incommensurable fora, this notion is all too easily transmogrified into an apology for a vulgarized, if not bastardized, for(u)m of Habermas' ideal speech situation governed by communicative rationality. Lyotard's incommensurable language games could not be further away; nor could Derrida's scribblings in the margins of philosophy; nor could the Talmudic-hypertextual trope of the world wide web.

Yet in a very real sense we are dealing with a false dichotomy, since making a choice for a standardized language of communication does not necessarily imply making a choice against more personal, dialectal or creative language; it is possible to choose both. That is to say, in a world which is overwhelmingly multilingual, anglophones might at least consider the possibility of being multidialectal. This means opening up space(s) for broad-based national or international clarity and communication on the one hand, ideally as a collaborative process undertaken in full recognition of the attendant dangers of which the postmodernists have warned us. On the other hand, it means maintaining linguistic spaces for local identity and creativity. In order to avoid the reification of the former, and the ghettoization of the latter (a development sometimes unwittingly supported by postmodernism) it also, essentially, requires the building of bridges between them.

It is apparent that an emphasis solely on standardization leads all too easily to what George Ritzer has called "McCommunication," part of the broader "McDonaldization" of the globe. If we speak the same language, then we share the same manner of looking at the world, right? And that manner is increasingly economic rather than political. Thus, coming full circle, we return to the issue of standardization through education. Certainly, an anglophone state (or for that matter, any Western state) which educates its population to a sufficiently grammatical standard of English, one which is at least convertible to the dominant version emanating from the US and can be subsequently molded and shaped by the brigades of experts in the avant-garde of transnational companies, can expect that the global economic flows of the neo-liberal order will not bypass its borders.

Grammar Abroad: Beyond the Anglophone West

If consensus works better than coercion at home, the same is true abroad. Linguistic colonialism is less tenuous and far more cost-effective than military invasion. It works politically: we're going to bring our valiantly won sense of order to the rest of the world by teaching them our grammar. It works economically: it's much easier to sell T-shirts, films and warplanes to those who speak our language, and understand our values. But the ultimate export is undoubtedly the language itself, the flagship product of the multimillion dollar international ELT (English Language Teaching) industry which propagates Western values through the apparently innocent imposition of approaches such as CLT (Communicative Language Teaching).

Ironically, CLT, the dominant ELT approach for more than two decades, purports precisely NOT to be about grammar. Or rather, it de-emphasizes grammatical accuracy to focus on communicative fluency, and operates through holistic activities which stress the transfer of authentic information and the sharing of experience. It's about self-expression through conversation, self-realization through discussion and, certainly in its constructivist incarnations, about the negotiation of meaning along with the development of student autonomy and empowerment. In these respects, it is deeply antipathetic to DTW. And yet, while its key principles are under pressure in the anglophone homelands, it continues to take center stage in expatriate English teaching. There, strangely, it may be as much a force of oppression as liberation. For in the guise of conveying — or indeed, NOT conveying — linguistic grammar, we are conveying a cultural grammar to the rest of the world.

Tomes have been collectively — and individually — penned by the likes of Robert Phillips, Alastair Pennycook, A. Suresh Canagarajah and Lixian Jin & Martin Cortazzi about the ensuing, very unequal cul-
tural clashes between the garrulous West and its post-colonial Others, for whom the sharing of ideas and opinions may not be seen as an unproblematic good, nor identity as a project-in-progress to be renegotiated daily in experiential classrooms. Tones, too, have been written on the relentless promotion of English as the key to modernization, and on the limited topics around which ELT verbosity centers, salient among them shopping, traveling and other modes of spending which posit rampant consumption as a natural concomitant of global citizenship.

Although nowadays few may follow the somewhat fatalistic line of the German Romantics on cultural specificity, much less the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis of linguistic determinism, it might be that the superimposition of not only a linguistic but a cultural grammar of communication — for we are not talking about a co-existence of equals — amounts to a vandalism of the cultural and personal histories of other people(s) and an erosion of their purchase (not to put too fine a point on it) on their own shared values and perceptions. Meanwhile, standardized English tests from IELTS to TOEFL serve as the legitimizing filters of this cultural grammar, representing a formidable nexus of language and power, determining as they do Other paths of access to further education, superior employment opportunities and economic advancement ... and thence to full consumer status.

Other Futures

One of earliest grammars of a modern European language, as noted by Skutnabb-Kangas, is Antonio de Nebrija’s Gramática de la lengua castellana. It was published in Salamanca in 1492, that symbolic double whammy of a year when the Moors were finally driven from the Iberian Peninsula, thus consolidating Western European sovereignty over its own territory, and Columbus landed in South America, opening up new horizons for that sovereignty. A pivotal figure in both events was Isabella, Queen of Castile and Aragon, to whom the Gramática is dedicated by its author on the grounds that “language was always the companion of empire; and, as such, followed it, so that together they took root, grew and flowered, and afterwards fell together.” Little has changed in the interim, except that the world is today dominated by the most powerful empire in history, one which, if in denial of its own rule, is (al-)mighty beyond the wildest dreams of Isabella, and which speaks ... English.

And yet, as Derrida has shown us, every code contains the trace of other possibilities, other ways of being, other modes of organization and disorganization. Language is not only a means of control but of resistance, of “writing back,” as Pennycook puts it, against a dominant culture. When the Inquisitorial screws are tightened, when grammar is enforced at home and particular cultural paradigms are promulgated abroad, increased linguistic insurgency may be both a cause, and an effect. If linguistic standardization stifles personality, reifies debate and supports capital, it may also be subverted into a supra-regional mode of organizing resistance to — organization. Moreover, English need not be a blunt instrument wielded in the service of a single regime of truth, but can equally be a conduit for flows of alterity, especially if, as literary advocates from Chinua Achebe to Salman Rushdie have argued, it can be (re-)claimed in the name of counterhegemony, as individual and regional Englishes are clawed out of the anglophone monolith. Spanish gave rise to Spaniards; so too, English gives rise, in the face of countervailing forces, to Other Englishes, both within and beyond the core English-speaking countries. A grammatical solution exists — can only exist — in perpetual tension with grammatical dissolution.

Perhaps the negotiation of language and meaning will again come to complement grammar in anglophone educational systems; and it is conceivable that we could support variant dialects as well as collaborating on standard language forms. Maybe the spirit of communicative language teaching will leave us open to hearing what Others have to say, or choose not to say, whether in our tongue(s) or theirs; and it is not impossible that we could learn to import as well as export grammar, concurring with the conclusion of the recent large-scale Nuffield Inquiry in the UK that "English is not enough." Then, indeed, there would be plus d’une langue, in Derrida’s second sense of more than one (single) language — with any (single) language of communication at regional level existing in parallel to, and shaped by constant contact with, other dialects and languages. This might unleash some of the liberatory potential heralded by the deconstructive line of thought running from Nietzsche to Derrida and beyond.

The situation, then, may not yet be as bleak as the foregoing pages have suggested. Nevertheless, it could be. There is an interest, whether invested in certain nation states or multinational companies, in promoting the myth of an Adamic grammar. An unsettled DTW, the unwitting mouthpiece of larger forces, asks: if, before Babel, there was just one language, why not again? In times of change or crisis, the calls for grammar/order/God multiply.

God? Yes, maybe Nietzsche’s pronouncement was premature. God, after all, has never expressed His will not again? In times of change or crisis, the calls for grammar/order/God multiply.

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Street Protest Architecture - Dissent Space in Australia

Gregory Cowan

Street protests appear suddenly in prominent public places — their effect is to stand out in public, in dramatic and symbolic contrast to a context. In their conspicuousness, they enliven and animate the city as a form of public theatre. Berthold Brecht developed the idea of ‘city as theatre’ in his constructivist creative productions in modern Germany, and Frankfurt School thinkers Benjamin and Adorno theorised its modernity. In such theatre-cities, protest structures surprise and challenge both governments and citizens, actively engaging them in public space as players in the ‘political’ affairs of the city and state. These constructions are more than mere physical phenomena, endowed with ideas and motivations on a larger scale than the city. They represent more than buildings, and however unsettling, they form a necessary part of the civic architecture. Protest structures help to bring human and domestic elements into public and political life. Architecture in western traditions connotes constructions of authority and significance owing to its definition of the Greek origin of archetekton, original or authoritative making. As such, protest structures are frequently misunderstood as the antithesis of architecture, but on the contrary, their architectural role in democratic cities is significant.

This article suggests that conflicts and encounters between the ancient continent of Australia and its more recent Western/global architecture and culture are indicative of a process which gives rise to an architecture of protest. Architecture has often been regarded as an edification of ideas, but importantly, it is also used experimentally. In the avant-garde traditions of art, the case of experimental protest constructions is of interest because it suggests where our unsettled society may be going, rather than only where it has been. In the unsettled world today, many Australians are looking for a direction. Protest architecture is not so much driven by the construction of materials and shelter as it is by the relations and tectonics of people and ideas. In the context of cultures of social debate and dissent mediated through television and the internet, street protest architecture is primordial, real, and tactile.

This article highlights a series of Australian case studies of protest constructions, from the 1970s and the Aboriginal Tent Embassy in Canberra to more re-
cent protest constructions for Sydney 2000 and Perth 2003, noting that the architecture of protest construction is ephemeral, mobile, and highly collaborative. The essay traces from states of invasion to illegal occupation, to federation, world games, and global protest. A new movement of convergence activism is a mode of organising and building a movement that recognises the affinities and connections between land rights, environment and spatial freedom of many kinds.

The suggestion through these examples is that we appear to be dealing with an endemic Australian condition, which, however marginal, is a noteworthy model of democratic architectural process. Subverting the official and institutional state architecture, which is massive white and permanent, this architecture of counterculture is instead light, colourful and spontaneous.

Perth’s first Reclaim the Streets, marking and protesting Australia’s non-participation in the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg.

In The Temporary Autonomous Zone (1991), the poet Hakim Bey expands the idea of uprisings — the beginnings of which are found in upsurging protest movements. An alternative term is the Latin form insurrection, a term some historians use for failed revolutions. Rather than being socially ineffective, Bey argues, these ‘failed revolutions’ are liberating — providing an escape from the direct conflict of the protest culture with the state, and from what he describes as the “Hegelian spiral of that ‘progress’ which is secretly nothing more than a vicious circle”. Through uprisings, culture is liberated beyond “progress”. Such protest constructions, it is argued here, are effected by an architecture that operates beyond this circle of progress; a thinking and practice that operates ‘outside the square’.

Collapsible Architecture

The notion that architecture might be collapsible, tentative and ephemeral developed especially in the political climate of the 1960s. In Paris in 1968, inflatables played a key role as architecture for protest. The structures were theatrical, colourful and transportable, well suited to a new culture of mobile and global people’s movements that came to a flashpoint in Paris in May 1968. The situationists’ mapping and idea of the city as human centred, erotic space influenced the farthest reaches of the newly mediated Western world.

The notion of architecture with minimal means was well known in indigenous Australia. The range of applications of architectural design extended to tombs, hunting hides, animal traps and landscape enhancements from windbreaks to firestick farming. Materials were sustainable and in many cases regenerated between use because of the passive and mobile-extensive use of resources.

Urban public space was part of a culture new to Australia with the invasion. Roads streets and market squares were developed ancillary to private space, while places of worship and government institutions held great importance as civic spaces in the nineteenth century. As Peter Murphy observed in Civic Justice: from Greek Antiquity to the Modern World (2001) concerning the new world in the context of North America, Protestant colonial communities were motivated by the idea of a divine obligation to settle a new homeland.

In Australia this obligation to settle was ironically reversed by the Aboriginal Land Rights movement. The cooption of the ephemeral, portable, collapsible architecture, with the example of the beach umbrella and the camp tent in the establishment of the Aboriginal Tent Embassy 1972 was a brilliant strategic use of what had become leisure icons in middle class Australian culture. These elements were used as much in their strategic placement on the land as they are inherently symbolic. The ambiguous forecourt space in front of ‘Provisional’ Parliament House was an English lawn. The neatly mowed green lawn, so environmentally foreign, yet so colonially familiar to Australia suggests the natural environment tamed and controlled, in the same way that the national emblem features the kangaroo and emu astride the crest. In the insignia of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects, two kangaroos are featured for symmetry, but they also wear collars — suggesting the loss of freedom of the wildlife which tragically accompanies the operation of civilising the wilderness.

The Aboriginal Tent Embassy appeared at Federal Parliament, symbolically claiming land for Aborigines, a dramatic architectural symbol of the need for reconciliation. With the social justice activism, and the global perspective increasingly afforded to Australians in the 1960s, the tent embassy provided an architecture that allowed a group of Aboriginal land rights activists to represent a nascent Aboriginal nation. It was formed to represent a downtrodden and decimated group of people, who were being treated as foreigners in their own country. For the first time, a national Aboriginal flag was flown. The flag may be regarded in itself as an act of reconciliation—of a Western world symbolism of national flags, combined with the new political reality of federal Aboriginal nationhood. The mobile, temporary, and collaborative construction and maintenance of the Aboriginal Tent Embassy represents the advent of a rich architecture of land rights activism. Activists for Aboriginal land rights are deploying the architectural structure and symbol of the tent to reclaim the freedom to dwell nomadically across the Australian continent.

Reconciliation Place and Protest Space

The Government of the time reacted quickly to pass new legislation to prevent camping in public space in Canberra, allowing the Government to evict the peaceful protesters. However, the Tent Embassy was later restored and is now an enduring landmark in Canberra. Despite the National Heritage listing of the Embassy, its maintenance is an ongoing issue, and the most recent controversy surrounds the institutionalisation of Reconciliation Place as a permanent monument which some fear is intended to usurp the Embassy. In doing so, the Australian Government fails to recognise, accept and respect the values and life pattern embodied by the Aboriginal Tent Embassy. The Gungalidda Elder Wadjularbinna, a custodian of the Aboriginal Tent Embassy, has condemned the National Capital Authority’s plans to build Reconciliation Place in Canberra as part.
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of "a conspiracy to undermine and eventually replace the Tent Embassy." Wadjularbinna has described the plans for a reconciliation place as a refusal "to recognise, accept, and respect our living system, which is a unique, complex and balanced system of law/lore, spirituality, religion and social organisation." Maintaining the temporary Tent Embassy is therefore critically symbolic for Australia. Its culture of democratic activism, avoiding the Western tendency for architecture to become monumental and institutionalised, suggests a significant space for reconsidering architecture in the Australian environment and articulating the contrast between "White" and indigenous cultures.

The encounter continues between the Aboriginal Tent Embassy activists and the 'state' — the Australian Capital Territory authorities. Late in 2002, a sculpture was erected and removed by police. A Tent Embassy activist was arrested for reclaiming the Coat of Arms from Provisional Parliament House, arguing that indigenous permission had not been granted to use the kangaroo and emu in the Australian coat of arms. When in 2003, electrical power was cut off to the information office — one of the oldest parts of the Tent Embassy, the environment group Greenpeace supplied Photovoltaic Panels to provide adequate energy. More recently, the office was burnt in a fire and when authorities seemed about to use the opportunity to remove the structure, a safety fence was constructed and there was an altercation leading to the removal of the fence by the police when the National Capital Authority deemed it illegal.

Protest Architecture as a Democratic Tool

A "die-in" protest was held at the busiest intersection of Perth, Western Australia on the middle of Saturday the 22nd of February 2003, after war was declared on Iraq. In reclaiming the street intersection from the usual vehicular traffic, about ten thousand peace protestors, in the largest known gathering of its kind ever held in the city marched around the central city and to the United States Consulate and a newly established "Peace Tent Embassy," opposite. The Perth Peace Tent Embassy had been established two days earlier following an immediate march on news of the attacks on Iraq without a United Nations mandate.

Hundreds of citizens of the comparatively affluent community of Perth had responded to a campaign including e-mail and text-message communications to join the spontaneous protest march, only hours after the new allied bombing campaign had started.

Although Perth is known as the most isolated capital city in the world, there has been sense developing in the post September 11, 2001 era that important allegiances are being developed globally at two extremes. At the elite political level, there are national interests prosecuted by the Prime Minister internationally in the name of national security and economic growth. But at the street level, there are allegiances built by social justice communities and activist groups, com-
ing together at meetings and rallies, supported by an enormous Internet network available to the ubiquitous middle classes. The tent embassy goes a step further, providing a memorable physical form and a noticeable physical street location to accommodate debate and dissent about what seemed a physically remote set of issues — the cooperation of the Australian leadership in invading Iraq — as the campaign developed. As the government policy and the tax expenditure flowed toward aggression, the Perth Peace Tent Embassy made a stand. It continued well into April, for over thirty days, as the official war continued, and despite the onset of some very wet weather as the local weather changed towards winter.

The Tent Embassy represents a conveniently ambiguous form of architecture: it is sometimes an information stall, a storage place, sometimes a picket, displaying signs and placards, and sometimes a place to sleep secretly. It is assembled and disassembled quickly at will, but it is makeshift and therefore invokes dismissal by the cultural mainstream as 'inferior' and 'pathetic'. The Tent Embassy phenomenon is remarkable as an architectural expression of an element of the civic community for at least three reasons: it is ephemeral, appearing and disappearing rather unpredictably, and without adherence to the restrictive long term planning protocols of local councils; it is moveable and transportable, making practicable its assembly by diverse activists in small private cars or public transport; and it is a collaborative construction to which additions and subtractions are made organically and collegially. The Tent Embassy form effectively defines a focus and a forum for public debate through the attention activists draw and provides an unmediated face to face nucleation point for building the activist collective and community.

Tent Embassies have developed in Australia especially since 1972 as an effective and useful activists’ tool, owing a great deal to the Australian Heritage Commission-listed Aboriginal Tent Embassy in Canberra. Like the architectural strategies of the Archigram and the Utopie Group in May 1968 impressed the European and global avant garde architectural scene, the tent protest at provisional parliament sowed the seeds of a new way of thinking about architecture, to humorously subvert institutions and bureaucracy. Global activist groups such as Reclaim the Streets [http://www.reclaiemthestreets.net/], Critical Mass [http://www.critical-mass.org/], and Space Hijackers [http://www.spacehijackers.co.uk/] continue this idea, with ideas emanating from their ideological and activist centres through networks of virtual solidarity to the corners of the globe.

The notion of justice both locally and globally is of interest to a large number of citizens in the modern city, despite the apparent lack of a place for these issues to be aired, according to Peter Murphy. Murphy holds that the American republic is founded on a compromise between resistance to authority and civic rituals of justice. As the first great republic to disavow the city, the lack of the classical city’s equilibrium of contending forces has enduring and tragic effects on political and social life. The humanist legacy of civic pride, proportion, symmetry, and moral beauty is reflected in the great Italian city-republic with a great influence on Europe and the New World.

Reconciling Nomadic and Sedentary Civic Architectures

The spontaneity and collapsibility of the civic protests are significant features of the protests discussed above. The humanity and humility of these structures are a poignant architectural expression of the individuals and collectives behind organising them and temporarily emplacing and inhabiting them. Like the ideological structures which have been compared with the activist thinking of Hannah Arendt, these activist spatial occupations of the city can be seen as attempts for the New World city to reclaim the citizen’s expression of the freedom of the peripatetic and peregrine in the classical city. The Greek peripatetic denotes the wandering scholar, studying and learning on the path, while the Latin peregrini were those to wander in public places. For there to be a freedom to walk (let alone to dwell and to protest) in a public space, there must be public spaces in which to wander, and a social belief in their importance. However, in reference to this public space res publicae Murphy suggests the American republic lacked, this could be extended to Australia.

The street protests described above rely on their ephemerality, mobility and collaborative construction and maintenance for their effectiveness. The appearance of temporariness both theatricalises the tent protest and gives it a modesty and humility. The movement of these protests allows them to be assembled and relocated with minimal equipment and unskilled erectors. (It has also been interpreted as zealous law enforcement personnel in the past as an invitation to dismantle structures.) The collaborative nature of the protest encampments reinforces the shared “power” of the collective of people supporting them. Within a broadly social-justice related protest moment around the globe — a movement which is not uniquely Australian — there appears to be a culturally ‘Australian’ architecture developing — both political and physical — as an agency of protest occupations in public space. This model suggests a potentially valuable strategy for building the city by addressing the equilibrium of forces of the sedentary and the nomadic. It suggests there is hope for the democratic and popular use of architecture rising from communities and sustainably expressing their dreams visions, and desires.

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Reclaim The Streets, King Street, Perth, 31 August 2002
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Domestic Protest: The Ecovillage Movement as a Space of Resistance

Andy Kirby

The rise of a protest movement to challenge the forces that promote the globalization of a non-sustainable capitalist/industrial system has been paralleled by the rise of the ecovillage movement as a national and international enterprise. Members of ecovillages, such as the Ithaca ecovillage in upstate New York [http://www.ecovillage.ithaca.ny.us/], cite similar factors in their choice of lifestyle to those voiced by protestors at such events as annual meetings of the WTO and NAFTA. Residents may even be involved in active street protest over these issues, combining demonstrative activism with the development of an alternative lifestyle that promotes social and ecological sustainability in a domestic venue.

The notion of a domestically based mode of protest challenges conventional understanding of civil disobedience, which has tended to be conceived as responding to specific, time-sensitive events taking place in public (though increasingly shielded) venues. Engaging in a domestically-based protest offers the potential for modeling a positive response to a social situation that is viewed as untenable, inequitable, corrupt, and repressive. Such domestically-based protest has a long and distinguished history. This is especially so in the US, where intentional communities, based on values that run counter to accepted norms, are as old as the settlement of the country itself.

Utopianism vs. Consumerism

When Thomas More wrote his most famous work in the sixteenth century it was in response to the disruption of the social fabric that he was witnessing as a result of early capitalist ventures. His concern was less with the problem of producing more goods than with the inequity of their distribution. Foreseeing the devastating effect of the new modes of production on traditional communities, he began to dream of a better way of life, and to create an imaginary space, now the common term for all imaginary spaces, called “utopia.”

Throughout the period of the settlement of the US, islands of difference have surfaced in the creation of visionary communities that have sought to demonstrate an alternative to the capitalist/industrial system. Over this period there have been ebbs and flows in the level of activity, often in response to the major issues and challenges of the day. Whether on religious, political or social grounds, all community builders believed that social change could best be achieved through the construction and demonstration of a single ideal model that could be duplicated throughout the country. Observing that individual dissent, gradualist reform, and revolution had proven ineffectual in creating change, citizens and reformers were drawn to a mode of protest that was novel, non-violent and total in scope.

The space that has been created by the ecovillage at Ithaca represents an alternative space in which its residents are striving to create a viable alternative to the consumer-driven society that surrounds them. This society has, through three hundred years of linear development, transformed the country into what may be termed a "consumer landscape." This term defines the manner in which the principles of consumerism have been given physical form. Consumer values have been inscribed upon the landscape, such that our adopted patterns of consumption appear perfectly "natural" to us, and without consequence. The co-evolution of physical form and selfhood that has been promoted by the dominant social paradigm has resulted in a self that is identified through patterns of consumption and a landscape that is constructed to fulfill our consumption needs.

The social and normative character of the environment that we inhabit tends to set limits on our ability to mould that environment, making it difficult for us to envisage or explore new possibilities, even though such potential for change may exist. An increasing sense of dissonance between our sense of our own values and ethical standards and the behaviors that we are forced to adopt through participation in consumer culture leads to the drive to find new ways of relating to the world around us. The rise of a movement that is concerned with the social and ecological consequences of the industrial/capitalist system reflects the emergence of new ways of thinking about the world and our place in it. The ecovillage movement represents the most radical expression of this movement towards reworking the self-world relationship. This is to be achieved through the creation of an alternative space in which the prescriptions and proscriptions of the dominant culture are excluded in favor of values that represent what has been termed a "new environmental paradigm." An emphasis on supporting sustainable practices such as organic agriculture, bioregional initiatives, recycling, and the practice of voluntary simplicity, flies in the face of the consumptive and globalizing force represented by the dominant social mode. It is through the support of such initiatives that domestic protest flexes its muscle, creating markets for equitably and sustainably derived products, and denying the connection between status and possession of goods.
Ideologies of Spatial Possession

Ideologies of possession have become a defining factor in the Western lifestyle. While the industrial/capitalist system generally captures the loyalty of its members through the promise of economic reward, the capacity to possess material things has tended to become entwined and confused with struggles to possess the self. This phenomenon has two related aspects.

First, success in the capitalist system results in an increasing ability to isolate and disconnect oneself and one's family from the social world. While the poor generally live in closer physical proximity, the middle class strives for their free-standing suburban house and yard, the upper-middle class move into gated communities, and the rich seek isolation on their estates. Thus, possession of the self has been defined by the ability to exclude and separate from others. Members of ecovillage communities question the given-ness of this association of class and success with space, linking it with increased isolation. By way of alternative they invoke notions of community, involvement, support, and mutuality as a kind of wealth that is ultimately more personally satisfying as well as less destructive to the environment.

Second, in a capitalist environment that defines human-ness in relation to systems of production, self-possession reduces identity to a question of power. In order to freely possess oneself in such a system one must be free of dependence on the will of others. This takes the form of an individualistic struggle to achieve independence within a set of culturally circumscribed limits. This is a struggle that disparagingly became known as taking part in the "rat-race."

Opposed to these ideologies, the ecovillage movement developed out of the counterculture movement that flourished over a relatively brief period in the 1960s and early 1970s. Recognition of the devastating effects of unrestrained industrial development, together with a sense of dissatisfaction with the purely material rewards that were offered by a capitalist society led to the rise of the commune movement. This was particularly strong in the US, where the communes were predominantly psychosocial in nature and anarchist in organization, adopting a largely isolationist stance to the wider society. Many of those involved in the ecovillage movement today were either involved in, or influenced by, the commune movement and other protest movements of the counterculture days.

Middle-Class Communalism

Aside from this link between the communes of the past and the ecovillage movement of today there are few similarities. The ecovillage movement is a solidly middle-class venture. Undertaking the purchase of land for development, and the construction of homes that incorporate environmentally friendly technology, means that ecovillage homes do not come cheap. Financing such a project requires commitment that is every bit as economic as it is ideological. It is a task that, as one resident of the Ithaca ecovillage explained to me, is left to the middle classes almost by default. As this resident saw it, the rich are too rich to care, and members of the working class are stretching just to make ends meet. It is only the middle class that are comfortable enough to be able to pool their resources in order to be able to commit to a project such as the construction of an ecovillage. Thus, while the middle class has not been generally associated with protest, innovation, and challenge to the dominant cultural mode, often
seeming in fact to represent the very antithesis of radicalism, it finds in the ecovillage a just cause.

The ecovillage at Ithaca is situated on the outskirts of Ithaca, an upstate New York town. The site consists of 176 acres of land that had originally been zoned for the construction of suburban homes on half-acre lots. Instead, residents plan to build up to five ecovillages on the site, eventually achieving a similar population density to that proposed by the original suburban model. However, the ecovillage plan will leave over 90 percent of the land open for woods, conservation, recreation, and organic cultivation.

While the first ecovillage on the site was built in 1995, the second is now nearing completion. Each of the two ecovillages consists of 30 households, living in individual homes, constructed according to ecologically friendly criteria. Initial figures for the first neighborhood indicate that its residents use approximately one third of the resources that a typical comparable residence would use. While this represents a considerable improvement, those residents whose primary focus is on achieving ecological sustainability point out that on a global scale this is still way too much.

The ecovillage movement offers a critique of the current social mode, proposing that environmental degradation follows from social degradation. It is our culture’s unwillingness or inability to connect with people that is reflected in a similar attitude towards the ecological environment. Accordingly, failure to understand the complexity of our social needs is mirrored by a lack of comprehension of our ecological needs. Cut off from relations with each other and with the environment, this culture has tended to apply makeshift and expedient solutions in both areas. The ecovillage movement proposes a radical solution to social and environmental alienation on a local level in the creation of an ecologically sensitive community. It seeks to contrive, by the spatial arrangements of its built form, a reintroduction of individuals to each other and to their surrounding environment. In this way, a sense of connectedness in various forms is expected to be produced. The web of interconnections thus formed constitutes a binding force that supports the lives and aims of the residents of ecovillage communities.

On a global level, residents of the ecovillage at Ithaca are keenly aware of the ways in which membership in the dominant culture imposes upon the lives of those in developing nations through the predatory and exploitative practices of global capitalism. The adoption of practices that aim to reduce their ecological footprint are intended to address global inequalities through ensuring that the products of exploitation and repressive practices find no place in their domestic environment. Creating a space in which such products play no role is part of the overall strategy for demonstrating the viability of a socially and ecologically sustainable lifestyle to the American middle class whose spending power drives the practices that destroy the cultural and ecological environments of developing nations.

As already indicated, the ecovillage movement is the latest manifestation of a long history of intentional communities that have sought to demonstrate a workable alternative to the mode of the day. The assumption has often been made by adherents of such communities that all that they needed to do was to present the results of their social experimentation to the general public in order for its obvious merits and superiority to be immediately grasped and emulated. Needless to say, this has seldom been the case, with most intentional communities dying out within a few years of their creation, although some notable exceptions have persisted beyond the lives of their original members. This observation poses a challenge to the ecovillage movement which is barely a decade old in America.

One potentially decisive difference between the modern ecovillage movement and earlier intentional communities lies in the conditions under which it has emerged. Previous intentional communities, often espousing concern for social relationships and an ethic of stewardship towards the land, were begun during a time of rapid expansion in a relatively unpopulated country. They were often sidelined by the rise of an individualistic conceptualization of selfhood that arose as a response to the resources and riches offered by the "empty" landscape that was assumed to be there for the taking.

**Linking Protest Forms**

Today, the limits of resource exploitation are beginning to be recognized, as well as the negative effects on both social and ecological environments that have resulted from human productive activities. It has been said that an emerging ecological worldview is replacing the modern industrial worldview that has been responsible for the decay that we are experiencing. The seemingly inescapable consequences of past productive activities are creating a groundswell of public opinion that is unprecedented in American history, perhaps being paralleled only by such changes as the abolition of slavery and the advent of universal suffrage. From this perspective, protest, whether a demonstration in the form of the creation of alternative spaces, represents the most radical form of attitudes that are already beginning to find acceptance in the general population.

Despite the fact that active protest and domestic protest spring from the same perceptions of and beliefs about the current social paradigm, their respective treatment by the press and media differs radically. Reports of demonstrations against organizations such as the WTO and World Bank generally focus on the negatives, presenting the demonstrators as misinformed, antisocial, and anarchistic in nature. By contrast, coverage of the ecovillage at Ithaca, which has been particularly successful in gaining national and international attention, has focused on the positives, the potential ecological gains, and the potential for social connectedness that is often felt to be lacking in contemporary society. Thus, the ability of the ecovillage at Ithaca to affect public opinion by providing educational opportunities and demonstrating effective alternative strategies continues to be an important factor in the development of a social and environmental consciousness.

The difference in treatment between active and domestic protest may be partly explained by the respective markets for which they provide fodder. While
The Revolution Will Be Visualized: Emory Douglas in *The Black Panther*

Colette Gaiter

Beret-wearing, gun-toting, angry young black men in black are the most persistent icons representing the Black Panthers from the 1960s and 70s. According to mainstream media accounts, their mission was essentially to scare white people about armed revolution in retaliation for discrimination. Mission accomplished — people were scared. J. Edgar Hoover, then head of the FBI, declared the Panthers the greatest threat to American national security. The armed revolutionary icon was a carefully cultivated part of the Party’s public image, but only part of their story. There was another part of the Black Panthers’ visual campaign aimed at poor black people living in US ghettos and oppressed people around the world. According to Emory Douglas, the Panthers’ Minister of Culture, who created the vast majority of those images, the messages to “the people” were the critical ones.

About thirty years after *The Black Panther* newspaper ceased publication, the work of Emory Douglas as a protest artist is not widely known. In contrast to the current climate of forced consensus in media messages and images, protest graphics of a generation ago are shocking in their directness. In revisiting them it is important to remember the conditions that made protest necessary. Even though institutionalized injustice, poverty, and official policies of government deceit still exist, today’s political complacency is only possible because the protests of a generation ago succeeded in raising consciousness and improving conditions to some extent.

The beginning of 2004, a presidential election year, is a good time to take another look at Emory Douglas’s work as a graphic designer, illustrator, poster artist, political cartoonist, and master craftsman of the Black Panther Party’s visual message. In addition to designing and laying out the weekly Black Panther newspaper, he was its main artist. Douglas used a distinctive illustration style, cartooning skills, and resourceful...
collage and image recycling to make the paper as explosive visually as it was verbally. He was a one-man band, showing the same versatility with different visual styles and methods as a musician who can play several instruments as well as write the music.

On the back of each Black Panther weekly tabloid paper was a poster, usually created by Douglas. Like rap lyrics that layer "rhymes" to create images, Douglas's densely packed layered images told detailed stories.

In this back page poster, Douglas spanned a range of issues and condensed the anguish in American black communities into one mixed media collage.

When *The Black Panther* newspaper was first published, African Americans were virtually absent from the mainstream (white) American media landscape. Public images of black people were almost exclusively limited to roles of servants or cultural stereotypes. The black press, influential in African American communities because of segregation, followed the pattern of mainstream media in concentrating on the middle class. Black Panther Party leaders profoundly understood that an essential key to black liberation was creating and controlling images used to represent black people.

In *The Black Panther* newspaper, images of poor and working class black people proliferated. Although the Panthers are perceived as a male-dominated organization, Douglas often featured women in his illustrations.
"Hallelujah! The might and the power of the people is beginning to show." Wearing an apron indicating the type of work she does, this triumphant woman sports a button with the faces of political prisoners Bobby Seale and Angela Davis. Douglas often used "signs within signs" in his drawings — people holding signposts or wearing buttons, tags, labels, and other integrated messages.
The woman in this poster carries a generic "Vote for Survival" sign. The text at the top advertises "Chairman Bobby Seale for Mayor, Minister of Information Elaine Brown for Councilwoman, Ron Dellums for Congressman, Shirley Chisholm for President." Bearing a tag reading, "David Hilliard, People's Free Shoe Program," the shoes in her handbag were more evidence of the Panthers' community programs. Again, a poor woman became politicized after the Black Panther Party raised her consciousness and met her needs.

All Black Panther Party activities were based on their 10-point program for self-determination. The Ministers of Information, Eldridge Cleaver, and Culture, Emory Douglas, made sure all their messages referred directly to the ten points.

1. We want freedom. We want power to determine the destiny of our black and oppressed communities.

2. We want full employment for our people.

3. We want an end to the robbery by the capitalists of our black and oppressed communities.

4. We want decent housing, fit for the shelter of human beings.

5. We want decent education for our people that exposes the true nature of this decadent American society. We want education that teaches us our true history and our role in the present-day society.

6. We want completely free health care for all black and oppressed people.

7. We want an immediate end to police brutality and murder of black people, other people of color, all oppressed people inside the United States.

8. We want an immediate end to all wars of aggression.

9. We want freedom for all black and oppressed people now held in US federal, state, county, city and military prisons and jails. We want trials by a jury of peers for all persons charged with so-called crimes under the laws of this country.

10. We want land, bread, housing, education, and people's community control of modern technology.

Douglas reused images and turned them into icons. One favored visual theme, borrowed from religious iconography, Russian constructivism, and other hero-worshipping genres, is "beatification." Using a visual device often used to portray saints, holy people and powerful leaders, Douglas turned ordinary people into heroes. The radiating lines were a recurring graphic image and almost a signature on his posters. Previously ignored by almost everyone, in The Black Panther paper, poor people were prominent as icons of the newly politically conscious. Douglas showed respect and affection for the people he portrayed. His drawings maintained poor black people's dignity while focusing on their plight. There was no patronizing. He drew dark-skinned African-featured everyday people beaming with pride.
This more somber application of "beatification" collages poor people’s struggles and again incorporates direct messages on signs within the image.

The main hero and most powerful icon of the Party was its leader, Minister of Defense, Huey P. Newton. Attractive and photogenic, he was the natural choice to visually represent the party and its programs. In this image, the radiant lines communicated Newton’s reverence and power within the party.
A murdered party member was posthumously "beatified," becoming a martyr.

Jail bars metaphorically and consistently reinforced the message that poor and oppressed people were imprisoned by their plight. The imagery also literally referred to the disproportionate and often illegal incarceration of black men. Douglas often used prison bars as design elements, even in editorial layouts.
This image responded to the Fred Hampton murders in Chicago, when police raided the Panther leader’s apartment in the middle of the night. "Every door that the fascists attempt to kick down will put them deeper into the pit of death. Shoot to kill." This poster was clearly a directive for self-defense in the face of police brutality. Always empathetic with poor people, Douglas’s drawing included missing plaster to indicate substandard living conditions.

"Misery Misery! Ain’t we got a right to the tree of life!" Although the posters often portrayed harsh conditions, there was no self-pity. The woman in this drawing, hand on her hip in defiance, shared her home with an oversized rat.
Another packed image tells the story of a young child trapped in poverty, but she holds a picture of a boy in the Panther free breakfast program and stands in front of 1968 presidential candidate Shirley Chisholm. "A vote for Chisholm is a vote for survival."

Paradoxically, even though they graphically portrayed injustices and indignities, Douglas's messages were essentially hopeful. These posters were not meant for the mainstream public, or those inflicting the misery, but gave people suffering in ghettos assurance that the Panthers were working to help them improve their lives permanently. J. Edgar Hoover was correct in a sense. The Panthers’ message was a direct and serious threat to the capitalist status quo. The danger was not that the group would manage an armed coup and take over the government. Empowering people to stop facilitating their own oppression was far more frightening.

For over ten years, Emory Douglas worked to make the Panthers’ ten-point program a reality in the pages of *The Black Panther*. His prolific and aesthetically powerful work was meant to be a catalyst for change where it would have the most lasting effect — within the people themselves.

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Pink Bloque: A Photoessay

Rachel Caidor, Dara Greenwald, and the Pink Bloque

The Pink Bloque is a Chicago-based radical feminist dance troupe dedicated to challenging the white supremacist capitalist patriarchal empire, one street dance party at a time. We string these words together nonchalantly to describe a project and process that is still incomplete one and a half years after its inception. We, like most girls, just wanna have fun. We want to innovate, educate, and gyrate. We want to create change — if not in the nation where we live, at least in the way we engage it. We came together out of a desire to make protest more appealing — visually, physically, emotionally, viscerally, etc.

Like many other people in the wake of first the amazing protests against the WTO in Seattle and then the chilling aftermath of September 11, we wanted to keep social justice movements visible but knew that the world had changed. By the time the US began bombing Afghanistan, we knew everything was different — and at once frighteningly status quo. For us to sustain our resistance, we needed things to look and feel different in the streets.

The following is a glimpse into our process. We started as a frustrated group of friends and acquaintances wanting to dance our way to revolution. Almost two years later, we are still dancing...


Here we are on May Day. It was our first action, before we had a mission or a platform and far before we had choreography. We had a half of a plan, to join with a larger demonstration and incite a roving dance party. We anticipated there would be little dialogue or information about women or people of color, and we anticipated that if there was, it would be pretty boring stuff to read. So we busted out Donna Summer’s “She Works Hard for the Money” on the boom box and we made flyers about the wackness of the wage gap. When we got downtown, we saw that there was no larger protest to join. So we decided to go ahead and make a spectacle and have a dance party in and of ourselves. We had no context or ‘cred’ — just some tight pink pants. It was like a roller coaster: the first spot where we set the boom box down and danced and handed out flyers, we did not know what to expect and we were scared. At the next spot, we were getting bold and handing flyers out to cops. By the third spot, we were turning cartwheels and feeling like “Let’s go again!!!”
Fox News and other such media were making a big to-do about this meeting of international business and government leaders. They were touting it as if it was "The Next Seattle." The Chicago Police Department had pumped millions of dollars into training officers in quelling protests and they had even bought a mint’s worth of surveillance equipment. It did not seem like a big deal until the media made it one. We decided to participate in the organized march — this was our first time being part of a larger protest. It was intimidating — and cold — to be out there with a boom box, pink sweat suits, and about one million riot cops who disagreed with us about our being "2 cute 2 be arrested." But we danced anyway, right in front of the cops and the other couple hundred protesters. Again, we were scared; and again we did it anyway. It was daunting to see what we were up against. Eight cute girls in pink suit and ill-timed dance moves versus eight hundred police with who-knows-what-lethal-and-non-lethal weapons aimed at us. We were a splash of color in an otherwise militarized palette of oppression. But we were not alone; we were part of something larger.
We had a few more demonstrations under our belt by now. We had some theory, we had sweat suits, we had a well-choreographed dance and we had a really loud sound system this time. We joined with hundreds of others on the street and millions around the world to say "No!" to war, racism, and hate. The Bush administration probably was not paying much attention to us that day, but good still came out of that day.

We managed to dance successfully in the street. More importantly, we got a pretty good street dance party going. People were excited for the encouragement and after a while were mimicking our moves or just joining in with their own. War loomed overhead, but on the street there was community.
During the first week of August 2003, we took a cue from Justin Timberlake and went on tour. We traveled to six East Coast cities in the hopes of connecting with others who wanted to make public protest fun and engaging for themselves and others.

Like Justin, we wanted to rock some bodies. We wanted to express that while blatantly ripping off Michael Jackson may be justified, occupation abroad and repression at home were UNJUSTIFIED! We held workshops where we shared our tactics for cute-ing up the issues and how we get our groove on in these scary times. New York was the last stop of our tour. By that time we had danced with hundreds of new friends, on countless streets in cities far from home. It was a feat, not only because we are a scrappy, under-funded group of leftists — and who would imagine we could manage to go on tour without going hungry or getting arrested; but also because we saw so many people excited to engage the street, their physical bodies, and the bodies politic in which they lived in a way that reflected joy and fun rather than destruction and despair.
We wanted to include this picture because we wanted to show that while the Pink Bloque comes out against issues like neo-liberalism and war, we also want to take to the streets to demonstrate against issues that are closer to home — issues that affect us every day as women and as humans. We were part of the kick-off of Domestic Violence Awareness month. This was a sanctioned action, which is not usually our style; but we realize that part of being effective activists is knowing when to break your own rules. We had some great talks about violence against women, street action, and feminism with total strangers. Our action was summed up by a suburban high school student who approached us, eager to learn, who asked "Hey, do you guys like to party?" Why, yes we do!
Here we are again, a splash of color. This time we were among the 10,000 people who took over Lake Shore Drive, one of Chicago’s main traffic arteries, to tell the world that we did not stand behind the war in Iraq. While this picture makes us look like a pink blip, we do not think that is the point. We are sure that protests all over the city and the world will be peppered with pink blips and green blips and turquoise blips and people dancing or people juggling or whatever...the point is that we are together with ten thousand other people, dressed in pink and green and black and grey and we are all clamoring for change, resisting in multiple ways, but still resisting.

The Pink Bloque is based in Chicago. For more information about us and to see the rest of our actions online, visit: http://www.pinkbloque.org

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