Constructive Anarchy

Building Infrastructures of Resistance

Jeff Shantz

CONSTRUCTIVE ANARCHY

To Saoirse and Molly

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Foreword

I am writing this foreword in the aftermath of the 2010 G20 summit in Toronto. At the protests I danced with Toronto Rhythmic Resistance, laughed at the signs and chants, felt the live power of the people, or at least a certain sort of that power. But I also felt the hatred, misogyny, racism, and fear that drive those who become riot cops, crown prosecutors, and judges, the affects that allow them to shut down so much of what makes them human beings, to become the faces, arms, shields and minds of dead power. Several friends spent days in jail, many more were beaten quite senselessly, and one of my students remains in custody, facing a charge of 'conspiracy to commit mischief'—that is, he supposedly talked with other people about what they would do when they went to a demonstration. We are all reeling from this massive repression, well planned and prepared, that took many people by surprise, because this time it affected relatively rich white people with 'good' parents, not just the indigenous, not just the Muslim, not just the poor.

As I try to work my way through all of this, as I try to do what I can to get people facing charges off more lightly, to find the music that will lull the bloodthirsty multitude of 'good citizens' so expertly conjured into existence by the current Prime Minister of Canada and his many highly-paid minions, Jeff Shantz is one of those people who gives me hope. That's because this book takes our attention away from where the mass media direct it, and focuses it instead on where it belongs, i.e. at the heart of the many people, groups, theories, practices, and tactics that compose the global anarchist movement. It brings us to the part of anarchism that is much more frightening, for the dominant order, than burning a few police cars carefully left unattended for precisely that purpose. The part that shows us how to work for ourselves, to elude rather than confront, to build, to enjoy … to live as human beings have lived for many thousands of years, prior to the invention of capitalism and the state form, as many of us still live, to some extent, and as many more of us, undoubtedly, will live, again.

Those of a more academic inclination will be pleased to discover that *Constructive Anarchy* is radical sociology at its best. It was written by someone who has been closely involved in various anarchist groups, practices, and tactics over many years, but who is also able to take a step back from the mess of ideological and personal commitments that such a life entails, in order to critically reflect upon it. Shantz deftly skirts the two greatest dangers of movement-based theory, that is, the tendency to over-academicize, thereby alienating those who primarily 'do', as well as the trap of refusing to theorize, which makes analysis impossible. It shows us that analysis must not be left to those who only think for a living, just as action must not be left only to those who find themselves compelled, in various ways, and

for various reasons, to do what they can to create a better world, here and now. All of us must do both, all of the time.

As the bosses themselves have allowed us to prove, once again, it's easy to find people who are willing to smash the bait cars that the cops throw to us, or to sit on top of them for a Facebook photo op. This is where fame, glory, and recognition—however anonymous, however ephemeral—are to be found, and I suppose we all need a little of that. What's harder to find, in my experience, is people who are willing to clean up the mess in the convergence space, grow and cook the food, look after the young and old, sit for long hours in the infoshop … and yes, even write books.

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Introduction
Constructive Anarchy

Few social movements in North America have enjoyed as strong a revival in the twenty-first century as anarchism has experienced. In the years prior to the Seattle World Trade Organization (WTO) protests of 1999, and especially following the success of those demonstrations, anarchism has re-emerged as a vibrant political force. In the past few years overwrought media coverage of anarchists has stirred memories of the moral panic over anarchism which marked the beginning of the twentieth century. As well, police assaults on anarchists during economic summits, including pepper spray, tear gas, rubber bullets and mass arrests, in addition to shootings and even killings, have suggested to the general public that anarchists are something to be feared. That view has been reinforced in mainstream media depictions of anarchists as "thugs" and "hooligans." The lack of informed analysis of anarchist politics has meant that the actual practices and intentions of this major, and growing, contemporary movement remain obscured. Obscured in recent sensationalized accounts are the practical and constructive activities undertaken on a daily basis by anarchist organizers seeking a world free from exploitation, oppression and repression. Little attention has been given to ongoing organizing practices undertaken by anarchists as part of struggles in communities and workplaces. An examination of constructive anarchy—projects that provide examples of politics grounded in everyday resistance—offers insights into real world attempts to radically transform social relations in the here and now of everyday life. These projects also raise possibilities for broader social transformation in the twenty-first century.

Where there has been broader attention given to anarchist activities, beyond discussions within anarchist circles, most discussion and emphasis has been given to forms of counter-cultural or subcultural activity. Academic commentators have been preoccupied with unique cultural activities such as anarchist zines, so-called autonomous zones and infoshops, street parties and protests like Reclaim the Streets, sexual radicalism and anarchist art projects. Perhaps the activities that have received the most attention, have been the militant street demonstrations and acts of property destruction undertaken by "black bloc" anarchists during major protests against meetings of institutions of global capital, such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) and International Monetary Fund (IMF). Indeed these have often been inspiring undertakings, enlivening activist imaginations and raising transformative possibilities. At the same time, as a result of the disproportionate focus on such cultural manifestations, less poetic, and seemingly more mundane forms of anarchist activity and organizing, in particular organizing within

workplaces, have gone unnoticed, overlooked or unremarked upon. Yet real innovations have emerged in anarchist approaches to workplace organizing, particularly rank-and-file groups and networks and organizing among the unorganized (outside of union structures). Such efforts also pose compelling challenges to mainstream organizing approaches within contemporary labor movements, which privilege centralized, hierarchical and professional organizational structures and practices geared towards negotiation and compromise (even where such are disadvantageous) with employers.

Anarchist organizing draws upon and expands tendencies towards mutual aid and solidarity that are present in everyday life, informal workplace and community networks and relations, in order to develop a real world alternative both to capitalist and statist institutions and social relations as well as to authoritarian forms of organization based on the exceptionalism of political vanguards. In order to bring their ideas to life, anarchists create working examples. To borrow the syndicalist phrase, they are "forming the structure of the new world in the shell of the old." *Constructive Anarchy* critically examines the possibilities and problems facing attempts to build radical community and workplace movements, which seek to pose effective challenges to capitalist forms of exploitation and control. The book also engages theoretical developments around these emerging political practices.

The text is organized to illustrate the development of the diversity of anarchist strategies and tactics and organizing practices over time and highlights anarchist involvement in non-anarchist workplace based movements, especially through analysis of anarchists and rank-and-file workplace organizing. Focus is placed on debates over organization within anarchist circles and theoretical attempts to understand anarchist practices as attempts to develop autonomy from authoritarian social relations via "infrastructures of resistance" in which self-determined community practices and values are opposed to processes of capitalist valorization.

Infrastructures of Resistance

It is sometimes said that while anti-capitalist and alternative globalization movements are clear on what they do not want, they are less clear on what they do want (socialism, anarchism, specifics). Certainly, recent movements have not been as effective as some of their predecessors (labor in the 1910s and 1930s; the social movements of the 1960s and 1970s) in sustaining the sorts of practices—intellectual and material—that put into effect aspects of the alternative world activists and organizers seek. My colleague Alan Sears attributes this current inability to a decline in what he calls "infrastructures of dissent," the organizations or institutions, such as union halls and working-class centers, that sustained communities of the poor and working-class through much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Given the limited nature of dissent as the plaintive approach of a "loyal opposition," I prefer the notion of "infrastructures of resistance" to speak to

the more transformative character of the change sought by radical movements. As anti-capitalist movements face possibilities of growth, as happened after Seattle in 1999, questions of organization and the relation of various activities to each other and to broader movements for social change can only become more urgent. Yet, the absence of durable organizations or institutions, formal or informal, rooted in working-class organizations and communities, makes for demoralization or a retreat into subculturalism, as has happened to many of the alternative globalization groups. We now face a pressing need to build "infrastructures of resistance" that might sustain not only activists and organizers, but especially the poor and working-class people who are being disastrously impacted by the current crisis.

The notion of "infrastructures of dissent" is drawn from the literature on social movements as developed by resource mobilization theorists such as Mayer Zald and John McCarthy (1990); it refers to the accumulated resources available to social movements in going beyond spontaneous expressions of protest to build sustained mobilization and dissent. Infrastructures of dissent often include the resources of mainstream or reformist groups, like non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or unions, which can be used by more radical groups for their own purposes. Within resource mobilization theories the term has been used almost exclusively to refer to formal organizations through which non-elites access institutions of authority and power, such as lobbying groups and registered charities. Resource mobilization explains movements as rational acts rather than irrational behavior, the charge often times leveled against anarchists. Emphasis is shifted to an understanding of the opportunities, costs and benefits perceived to derive from collective action, rather than to the psychological state of participants. Resource mobilization perspectives teach that developing movements for change require resources such as time, money and education. Resource mobilization theories, however, offer little help in understanding important cultural aspects of social movements. Focusing on institutional reforms and policy changes resource mobilization theorists are ill-suited to explain the personal meanings embodied in movements or the levels of sustained commitment which are able to mobilize despite "objective costs." Additionally, such theories are almost exclusively concerned with social reforms rather than radical, let alone, revolutionary, social transformation.

Writers coming from anarchist and socialist movements, such as Howard Ehrlich and Alan Sears, have developed this notion in a more accessible, yet, radical, fashion. Sears (2007) adapts it to refer to a variety of practices by which movements develop their capacities to sustain common memories, build collective visions, voice alternatives, and engage in debate and analysis. As examples, he mentions left caucuses within unions and socialist party organizations. Indeed anarchist and socialist movements and ideas themselves were only possible and thrived within the specific contexts provided by infrastructures of resistance developed as the working-classes, poor and oppressed struggled for social justice, freedom and self-determination. Through struggle and the pressing realities of meeting material, cultural personal and social needs and desires, people and their communities developed infrastructures of resistance to sustain themselves and

provide the necessary supports to sustain ongoing struggles and the inspiration of the new world they sought to make. As Sears (2007) notes: "The projects of rebuilding the infrastructure of dissent and revitalizing socialism are integrally connected." The same is true for anarchist movements in the present context. Yet discussions around strategies and the prospects for radical social transformation, within anarchist circles, have largely ignored the question of constructing infrastructures of resistance.

While sociological discussions of social movements often emphasize formal political organizations, I would argue that more priority should be given to social institutions, informal as well as formal, based on addressing the needs of poor and working-class communities. These contemporary infrastructures of resistance might include community centers, housing and shelter, food shares, transportation, community media, free schools, bookstores, cafes, taverns and clubs.

Large-scale civil non-cooperation and/or militant confrontation with the state and capital obviously require previous successes in organization and experience. Thus, as Ehrlich (1996b) notes, these are necessarily the outward, and dramatic, manifestations of ongoing experiments in overcoming authoritarian societies. Directing his discussion at anarchists, he encourages them to first develop alternative institutions. These are the building blocks of what he refers to as the transfer culture, an approximation of the new society within the context of the old (Ehrlich 1996a). Within them organizers might try to meet the basic demands of building sustainable communities. Infrastructures of resistance, operating in the shadows of the dominant institutions, provide frameworks for the radical re-organization of social relations in a miniature, pre-insurrectionary form. They are the rudimentary infrastructures of alternative ways of being, of alternative futures in the present. Building these infrastructures is decidedly not a millenarian project in which hopes for liberation or freedom are deferred or projected into some imagined future. Rather than utopian longings, these infrastructures of resistance, or transfer cultures, express real world practices in which utopian desires—the hopes and dreams of sections of the grassroots mobilizations behind Obama, for example—can be given life in the here and now. At the present time, as Sears notes, these infrastructures of resistance are quite weak, their development having been cut short by the political counter-offensive following September 11, 2001. Much work needs to be done to re-build these infrastructures if movements for social change are to raise real alternatives to capitalist exploitation and neoliberal governance.

Libertarian socialists and anarchists have always emphasized people's capacities for spontaneous organization, but they also recognize that what appears to be "spontaneous" develops from an often extensive groundwork of pre-existing radical practices. Without such pre-existing practices and relationships, people are left to patch things together in the heat of social upheaval or to defer to previously organized and disciplined vanguards. Pre-existing infrastructures, or what anarchists sometimes call transfer cultures, are necessary components of popular, participatory and liberatory social re-organization. A liberatory social transformation requires experiences of active involvement in radical change, prior

to any insurrection, and the development of prior structures for constructing a new society within the shell of the old society.

Various alternative institutions, whether free schools, squats, union working groups or alternative media, form networks as means for developing alternative social infrastructures. Where free schools join up with worker cooperatives, union flying squads and collective social centers, alternative social infrastructures become visible at least at the community level. Contemporary projects are still quite new. None have approached the scale that would suggest they pose practical alternatives, except perhaps in the case of new media activities and Internet networks. Yet all are putting together the building blocks that might promote practical alternatives extending well beyond the projects from which they originated.

Possibilities

Of course each community, neighborhood or region will have specific issues that have to be addressed right away. People will decide what their needs are. Specific contexts provide specific challenges. I can illustrate this from my own experiences in efforts to build infrastructures of resistance in Toronto.

At first glance, Toronto provides a not particularly supportive context for the development and growth of anarchist movements. As for much of English Canada, progressive political movements in Toronto are dominated by the reformist and statist social democratic left nationalism of the NDP and labor unions. Extra-parliamentary movements are, and have been for most of Canada's history, Marxist-socialist in orientation and the contemporary radical organizations and movements usually explicitly identify as Marxist, Leninist or Trotskyist. Indeed anarchism historically has been a minority, often marginalized, tendency in much of English Canada. Even so-called revolutionary socialist groups, such as the International Socialists and the New Socialist Group, call for "critical support" of the social democratic New Democratic Party (NDP). As will be shown in following chapters, unions have been closely aligned to the NDP, providing it with material resources, labor and campaign support.

Working-class struggles have been constrained within a framework of bargaining, negotiation and compromise with states and capital through the union movement and NDP. Even the most recent wave of working-class mobilization, the Ontario "Days of Action," rotating city-wide strikes against the former provincial government, was restricted within symbolic shows of strength designed to make the conservative government vulnerable to the NDP in electoral terms. Movements that emerged within the "Days of Action" to push more militant alternatives were silenced, chastised, disciplined and, even, physically restrained by protest marshals.

Movements that call for and actively organize to challenge capitalist political, economic and legal structures are rare. Anarchists often find themselves standing alone in confrontations with government, landlords or employers. This is a context in which labor leaders within specific "progressive" unions (like the Canadian

Auto Workers) and the provincial labor federation (the Ontario Federation of Labour) have openly condemned anarchists in the press and even discussed cracking down on anarchists with conservative politicians. Similarly anarchists have been dismissed as troublemakers by NDP spokespeople and supporters as well as by members of extra-parliamentary socialist groups alike.

At the same time anarchists have been successful in building trust within community and labor movements on the basis of a willingness to defend militant positions towards addressing exploitation and oppression and in maintaining principled approaches to politics and a willingness to act in solidarity with community-based groups, rather than approach them as recruitment grounds. By providing real world examples of militant practice and principled approaches to organizing, anarchists have begun to offer a pole of attraction for working-class and poor people seeking social change but frustrated with the complacency and timidity of unions and the NDP and mainstream social reform movements.

In order to direct our limited resources most effectively, anarchists decided to focus on a few primary areas of community struggle such as anti-racism and anti-fascism, anti-poverty struggles, and workplace organizing. Regarding the first area, they are involved not in street scraps with fascists, but in trying to work against the U.S./Canada border enforcement, and in stopping the increased detention of migrants. Their anti-poverty work in several neighborhoods has strengthened tenants' unions and other community-based organizations, as well as organizing unemployed and non-unionized workers—while also contributing to campaigns aimed at winning what they realize to be very limited demands from the state, such as the Raise the Rates campaign to improve social assistance spearheaded by the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty (OCAP).

It is in labor struggles that alternative globalization organizers might contribute to some interesting developments, doing things that are quite atypical for many North American anti-globalization organizations and unions alike. Indeed the goal of developing anti-capitalist perspectives within unions and other workplace organizations is one that contemporary alternative globalization activists have generally neglected. While many Left groups have focused their energies on running opposition slates in union elections or forming opposition caucuses, much work needs to be done in developing rank-and-file organization and militance. Those of us who are union members take the position that regardless of the union leadership, until we build a militant and mobilized rank-and-file movement, across locals and workplaces, the real power of organized labor will remain unrealized.

A few of the efforts I have been involved in include flying squads—rapid-response networks of union members prepared to take direct solidarity actions in support of non-union members in poor and working-class communities (see Shantz 2005). In Toronto, a flying squad was formed to coordinate strike support and help build workers' self-organization and solidarity among employed and unemployed workers, unionized and non-unionized. The flying squad is autonomous from all official union structures and is open to rank-and-file workers or workers in unorganized workplaces or who are unemployed. The flying squad

supports direct action against bosses of all types. In a Canadian context, flying squads have offered crucial support to direct actions around immigration defense, tenant protection, squatters rights, and welfare support by mobilizing sizeable numbers of rank-and-file unionists who are prepared for actions without regard to legality. Not limited in their scope of activity by specific collective agreements or workplaces, flying squads mobilize for community as well as workplace defense. By deploying flying squads workers in Ontario alone have successfully worked to stop deportations, halt evictions, helped win strikes and win social assistance for people that had been denied. Based on these examples, workers in Peterborough and Montreal have recently taken part in developing flying squad networks in their cities. The Precarious Workers Network coalescing in Montreal, and initiated by anarchists, is primarily organizing among unorganized and unemployed workers.

In my previous union I helped to form an anti-poverty working group. The union gave the working group (whose members came from outside as well as inside the union) an office, phone line and other resources, providing a useful space for union members and community members to come together to organize and discuss political strategies more broadly. The working group acts beyond the expectations of traditional unionism to assist people (members and non-members) experiencing problems with collection agencies, landlords, bosses and police and to help anyone having difficulties with welfare or other government bureaucracies. Assistance is offered for anything from filling out government forms properly to taking direct action against an employer or landlord who is ripping someone off. Those affected decide the best approach to deal with their situation, and the working group helps with resources and people to get it done. Recognizing that "established channels" rarely work in favor of poor people, the working group is committed to taking whatever action is necessary to get people what they need. It is a recognition, expressed by the union's membership, that union resources are working-class community resources, part of an infrastructure of resistance, rather than simply bargaining resources.

In a context with little historical understanding of anarchism and a Left willing to dismiss or even attack anarchists, organizers in Toronto have been remarkably successful at making anarchism relevant within a range of movements and community groups. These are simply initial, limited examples from first hand involvement. Community centers, food shares, child care, shelters and housing are other projects being developed. These efforts provide important lessons that are worth exploring in some detail. Thus, they provide the basis for the discussion within *Constructive Anarchy*.

Reflections

Anarchists need to be prepared not just intellectually but organizationally for radical struggles and transformation. As Sears (2008, 8) notes, historically

these infrastructures of resistance "cultivated collective capacities for memory (reflections on past experiences and struggles), analysis (discussion and debate about theory and change), communication (outside of official or commercial media channels) and action (networks of formal and informal solidarity." Infrastructures of resistance serve as means by which people can sustain radical social change before, during and after insurrectionary periods. They provide sustenance and support in the present and provide contexts for the development of meaningful solidarity.

As a child growing up in a union family I can remember many occasions in which members came together to share good times, discussion, play, and friendship—parties at the union hall, picnics, sports clubs and more. These events provided spaces in which members and their families could benefit culturally and materially from a shared community and culture, from mutual aid in practice. By the time I went to work in the plant and became a member of the local myself, most of these activities and spaces were things of the past. My fellow workers on the line were finding support and solidarity not within the shared spaces of the local, but often, instead, in born-again religions and reactionary clubs.

Indeed this is perhaps one of the lessons to be learned from the successful organizing done by the Right in the 1980s and 1990s. In times of need and crisis, the evangelical churches provided institutional support and emotional defense against capitalist alienation (though not necessarily in ways that the Left should emulate). Many evangelical communities provide food, clothing and shelter for members. Many can mobilize hundreds to build a house for someone in their community. The Left has been less active in developing these infrastructural capacities, though these are things we could be doing in our own neighborhoods. Too much time has been spent building ideological sects with greater connection to the social conditions of 1917 than the social conditions operating outside their door.

Infrastructures of resistance encourage people to create alternative social spaces within which liberatory institutions, practices and relationships can be nurtured. They include the beginnings of economic and political self-management through the creation of institutions which can encourage a broader social transformation while also providing some of the conditions for personal and collective sustenance and growth in the present. This is about changing the world, not by taking control of the state, but by creating opportunities for people to develop their personal and collective power. Infrastructures of resistance create or sustain situations in which specific communities build economic and social systems that operate, as much as possible, as working alternatives to the dominant state capitalist structures. They are organized around alternative institutions that offer at least a starting point for meeting community needs such as food, housing, communications, energy, transportation, child, education and so on. These institutions are autonomous from, and indeed opposed to, dominant relations and institutions of the state and capital. They may also contest "official" organs of the working-class such as

bureaucratic unions or political parties. In the short-term, these institutions contest official structures with an eye towards, in the longer term, replacing them.

Constructive Anarchy

Since the early-1990s anarchist politics have enjoyed renewed popularity among people seeking a future of alternative social arrangements free from the hierarchies, authoritarianism, violence and ecological destruction marking global capitalism. Contemporary anarchists maintain a commitment to historic anarchist goals of creating a society without government, state and private ownership of means of production in which people associate voluntarily. Indeed, the definition of anarchism presented at recent anarchist gatherings highlights the inclusiveness of its conception of liberty.

> **Anarchy**: A self governed society in which people organize themselves from the bottom up on an egalitarian basis; decisions made by those affected by them; direct democratic control of our workplaces, schools, neighborhoods, towns and bio-regions with coordination between differing groups as needed. A world where women and men are free and equal and all of us have power over our own lives, bodies and sexuality; where we cherish and live in balance with the earth and value diversity of cultures, races and sexual orientations; where we work and live together cooperatively. (Active Resistance 1998, n.p.)

In bringing these visions to life anarchists have marked the urban landscapes of North America with a variety of living examples of what I identify as infrastructures of resistance. Directing their energies to the enormous tasks of transforming everyday life through alternative social arrangements and organizations they refuse to wait either for elite-initiated reforms or for future "post-revolutionary" utopias. In order to bring their ideas to life anarchists develop working examples of future worlds or "futures in the present." It is through the living examples of these futures in the present, the infrastructures of resistance, that they attempt to "form the structure of the new world in the shell of the old" to borrow the famous phrase of the revolutionary union, the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). These actually existing utopias provide everyday instances of what Foucault termed "heterotopias." Their politico-theoretical expressions, both in theoretical articulations and in practice, serve as starting points for a reconsideration of anarchist politics. Together the infrastructures of resistance form the frameworks of a constructive anarchy, moving anarchism away from stereotypical notions of chaos, disorder and disorganization often mistakenly attributed to anarchism.

Contemporary anarchism offers a mid-range movement organized somewhere between the levels of everyday life, to which it is closest, and insurrection. Rooted in the former they seek to move towards the latter. Anarchists look to the aspects of people's daily lives that both suggest life without rule by external authorities

and which might provide a foundation for anarchist social relations more broadly. This commitment forms a strong and persistent current within diverse anarchist theories. This perspective expresses what might be called a constructive anarchy or an anarchy of everyday life, at once conservative (preserving relations of mutual aid, solidarity and self-determination) and revolutionary (seeking to transform social relations and end statist and capitalist domination). Constructive anarchy is not a singular theoretical position. Anarchists of various outlooks and perspectives can be, and are, constructive anarchists. Rather constructive anarchy might best be described as an orientation to the world and to acting in the world. It is an approach to struggle that emphasizes practical engagement and involvement in community and workplace struggles. Constructive anarchy is about developing ways in which people enable themselves to take control of their lives and participate meaningfully in the decision-making processes that affect them, whether education, housing, work or food. Anarchists note that changes in the structure of work, notably so-called lean production, flexibilization and the institutionalization of precarious labor, have stolen people's time away from the family along with the time that might otherwise be devoted to activities in the community (Ward and Goodway 2003, 107). In response people must find ways to escape the capitalist law of value, to pursue their own values rather than to produce value for capital. This is the real significance of anarchist do-it-ourselves (DIO) activity and the reason that I would suggest such activities have radical, if overlooked implications for anti-capitalist struggles.

For Paul Goodman, an American anarchist whose writings influenced the 1960s New Left and counterculture, anarchist futures-present serve as necessary acts of "drawing the line" against the authoritarian and oppressive forces in society. Anarchism, in Goodman's view, was never oriented only towards some glorious future; it involved also the preservation of past freedoms and previous libertarian traditions of social interaction. "A free society cannot be the substitution of a 'new order' for the old order; it is the extension of spheres of free action until they make up most of the social life" (Marshall 1993, 598). Utopian thinking will always be important, Goodman argued, in order to open the imagination to new social possibilities, but the contemporary anarchist would also need to be a conservator of society's benevolent tendencies.

The basis for constructive anarchism can be located, in part, in already existing social relationships, even if these relationships are largely dominated and obscured by the exploitative society in which they operate. Colin Ward suggests that anarchism, "far from being a speculative vision of a future society … is a description of a mode of human organization, rooted in the experience of everyday life, which operates side by side with, and in spite of, the dominant authoritarian trends of our society" (Ward 1973, 11). As anarchist have long indicated, the examples of viable anarchism are almost endless. These could include almost any form of organization, from a volunteer fire brigade to the postal service, as long as it is not hierarchically imposed by some external authority (Graeber 2004). Even more, as many recent anarchist writings suggest, the potential for resistance might be

found anywhere in everyday life. If power is exercised everywhere, it might give rise to resistance everywhere. Present-day anarchists like to suggest that a glance across the landscape of contemporary society reveals many groupings which are anarchist in practice if not in ideology.

> Examples include the leaderless small groups developed by radical feminists, coops, clinics, learning networks, media collectives, direct action organizations; the spontaneous groupings that occur in response to disasters, strikes, revolutions and emergencies; community-controlled day-care centers; neighborhood groups; tenant and workplace organizing; and so on. (Ehrlich, Ehrlich, DeLeon, and Morris 1996, 18)

While these are obviously not strictly anarchist groups, they often operate to provide examples of mutual aid and non-hierarchical and non-authoritarian modes of living which carry the memory of anarchy within them. Often the practices are essential for people's day-to-day survival under the crisis states of capitalism. Ward notes that "the only thing that makes life possible for millions in the United States are its non-capitalist elements. … Huge areas of life in the United States, and everywhere else, are built around voluntary and mutual aid organisations" (Ward and Goodway 2003, 105). If, as anarchist labor organizer Sam Dolgoff suggests, society is "a vast interlocking network of cooperative labour" (1990, 5) then anarchists should realize the promise of cooperation on a social scale and work to ensure that mutual aid and solidarity overtake authoritarianism and exploitation which seek to direct cooperative labor as means of statist capitalism.

A crucial element in contemporary constructive anarchy is the process of "social insertion" or the involvement of anarchists in popular social movements and the daily struggles of the oppressed and working-classes. This may include work in neighborhood committees, landless tenant movements or rank-and-file union organizing. In these activities anarchists do not set themselves up as an activist group or subcultural enclave but contribute to the day-to-day building of popular movements. Collective responsibility within the organization is viewed as a means to sustain work during periods of declining mobilization and to provide a proactive approach to struggle rather than the reactive response to injustice that marks some activist groups. Constructive anarchists maintain that the crucial issue facing the contemporary anarchist movements is not primarily winning an ideological battle among the anti-capitalist activists. Instead the most pressing challenge facing anarchists is how to ensure that principles of anarchist organizing that are already present within movements of the working-classes and oppressed—direct action, mutual aid, collective decision-making, horizontal networks—are developed and maintained as the predominant practices of the social movements.

The Path Ahead

The anarchist future in the present is based upon ongoing experiments in social arrangements, in attempting to address the usual dilemma of maintaining both individual freedoms and social equality (Ehrlich 1996b). These projects make up what the anarchist sociologist Howard Ehrlich calls "anarchist transfer cultures." Anarchism highlights the voluntary cooperation and largely non-violent sociopolitical activities that widely characterize social life, as opposed to the state which is understood as the major source of violence in the world.

> As a movement, anarchism has only partially realized its aims on a large scale for brief periods at times of social upheaval, but it has gone a long way in creating alternative institutions and transforming the everyday life of many individuals. It has a whole range of strategies to expand human freedom right here and now. As a result, it has an immediate and considerable relevance to contemporary problems as well as to future well-being. It provides a third and largely untried path to personal and social freedom beyond the domain of the tired social models of State-orchestrated capitalism or socialism. (Marshall 1993, 639)

One overdue project for sociologists, political scientists, anthropologists and activists alike is working towards an ecology of infrastructures of resistance in the contemporary period. What types exist? How do they thrive? The present work is intended as a beginning to such a project. The cases explored in this book offer a glimpse into what is actually involved in anarchist organizing. They allow the reader to see what anarchists are actually doing, beyond both the hype of mainstream media reports and the abstraction of much recent academic anarchist theorizing.

Constructive Anarchy provides in-depth analyses of anarchist involvement in a range of projects developed over the last decade offering detailed discussion of the varied organizational practices, strategies and tactics produced by contemporary anarchists over an extended period of time. Because a key issue of concern relates to the construction and maintenance of sustained anarchist organizational practices—against common notions that anarchism is about disorganization— this approach allows for a close and critical examination of the diverse attempts made by anarchists to bring their political ideas to life through engagement with workplace and community movements. Examining practices over the period of a decade the analysis provides an understanding of how specific tactics, strategies and practices have been developed, transformed, revised or discarded and under what contextual circumstances. In this way I am able to track the evolution of anarchist practices within specific projects or organizations rather than simply naming practices as is common in the recent writings on anarchist movements. For example, one of the interesting aspects of recent anarchist organizing, and one that has gone unnoticed or unreported, even by anarchist commentators, is the emergence of class struggle or anarchist communist perspectives from

within projects that begin life as cultural or subcultural in character, such as TAO Communications or the Anarchist Free Skool. Previous analyses, focusing only on the origins of such projects, or emphasizing their subcultural character, have not been able to recognize or comment upon such shifts.

The first chapter provides a discussion of "class struggle anarchism" and forms of organizational practices undertaken by anarchists. This chapter examines some of the pressing debates over organizing in which anarchists are engaged, highlighting various anarchist projects and organizational approaches which sustain people in the present while working towards broader social transformation. While much of contemporary anarchism, and recent studies of anarchism, emphasize "anti-organizationalism" anarchists have typically engaged in a range of organizational practices, often times within the context of broader working-class movements and organizations. Rather than a politics of demand, dissent or identity, geared largely towards the making of claims upon capital or the state (or supra-state bodies like the United Nations), anarchy emphasizes other priorities such as autonomy and self-determination. This discussion will help to contextualize analyses of movement organization and the practices, strategies and tactics that have marked various anti-statist movements that have emerged in the era of capitalist globalization.

I then turn, in Chapter 2, to the case studies of specific anarchist projects, beginning with an analysis of TAO Communications and anarchist media. Recognizing the limitations of shorter term street actions and protests and the need to build more durable organizations, many anarchists have shifted their energies towards attempts to build alternative "institutions" such as media centers. This chapter looks at the communications practices, both online and material, of TAO Communications an anarchist media venue based in a media collective with participants across the globe. TAO highlights anarchist commitments to gift economies and knowledge sharing.

The experiences of many anarchists involved in the construction of explicitly anarchist free spaces or autonomous zones, has convinced many of the need to break out of the social isolation that often exists within subcultural counter-cultural projects such as infoshops or free schools. Thus the next three chapters focus on the involvement of anarchists in broader community-based projects and coalitions. Chapter 3 examines anarchist participation in the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty (OCAP), a direct action anti-poverty organization that is, in many ways, organized along anarchist lines and which shares much in common with anarchist activism. OCAP has inspired similar groups in Vancouver (The Anti-Poverty Committee), London (the London Coalition Against Poverty) and elsewhere.

Chapter 4 examines the work of rank-and-file anarchists within mainstream unions. While such efforts have been largely overlooked, it is in rank-and-file labor struggles that contemporary anarchist communists have really been innovators, doing things that are quite atypical for many North American anarchist organizations. Unlike Left groups that have focused their energies on running opposition slates in union elections or forming opposition caucuses, anarchist unionists work to develop rank-and-file organization and militance. Much interest

and discussion has been generated by anarchist contributions to the re-emergence of union flying squads. Flying squads—rapid-response networks of workers that can be mobilized for strike support, demonstrations, direct action and working-class defense of immigrants, poor people, and unemployed workers—present a potentially significant development in revitalizing organized labor activism and rank-and-file militancy.

Of the issues to have emerged within the alternative globalization movement, perhaps the one most influenced by anarchism is the issue of borders and migration. Anarchists have long insisted that the rhetoric of globalization, with notions of the decline of the nation-state or the free movement across borders, should be made a reality. For anarchists, globalization is meaningless if it does not involve the end of nation-states and the elimination of national borders. Genuine globalization should include the actually free, unfettered movement of working-class and poor people in the absence of borders. It should aid people not capital. Chapter 5 addresses border control and the construction of "Fortress North America" and anarchist responses within No One Is Illegal movements. It discusses anarchist strategies and tactics and the development of a "new underground railroad" as anarchist try to confront and challenge tightening borders and expanding security initiatives.

A significant part of contemporary anarchist infrastructures are the "Autonomous Zones," or more simply "A-Zones." A-Zones are community centers based upon anarchist principles, often providing meals, clothing and shelter for those in need. These sites, sometimes but not always squats, provide gathering places for exploring and learning about anti-authoritarian histories and traditions. Self-education is an important aspect of anarchist politics and A-Zones offer important as sites of re-skilling. DIY and participatory democracy are important precisely because they encourage the processes of learning and independence necessary for self-determined communities. Chapter 6 examines the Anarchist Free Skool (AFS), a project begun in the multi-ethnic Kensington Market neighborhood in Toronto. The Free Skool provided a venue for long-time anarchists, novices and non-anarchists alike to come together and share ideas about anti-authoritarian social relations. An ambitious project the Free Skool which offered a variety of classes on diverse issues from film production and shiatsu to alternative economics and social analyses of violence against women. Anarchist participants in the Free Skool understood education as a political act and sought to challenge disempowering habits and broaden our awareness of alternatives to the inequalities of a capitalist society by expanding and deepening their knowledge of themselves and the world around them, sharing skills and providing an opportunity for community members at large to come together and explore alternatives. The Free Skool provided an important community resource and served as an organizing center in struggles to defend poor and homeless people facing criminalization and poor-bashing in the neighborhood.

Having explored the actual projects initiated by anarchists, and the everyday problems they encounter, the final section of the text develops some of the key themes, concerns and debates within contemporary anarchy. Chapter 7 outlines a

constructive anarchist re-thinking of revolution. It situates anarchist infrastructures of resistance as necessary developments if movements are to sustain themselves and develop greater challenges to state and capitalist authority. This chapter engages various anarchist projects and organizational approaches through the notion of "anarchist transfer cultures," which sustain people in the present while working towards broader social transformation. The self-valorizing activities undertaken by anarchists can pose significant challenges to statist and capitalist relations. Without them people are unable to develop self-determined movements for radical social change.

The concluding chapter presents the contours of constructive anarchy as expressed historically as well as within contemporary anarchist organizing. Anarchist organizing draws upon and expands tendencies towards mutual aid and solidarity that are present in everyday life, in order to develop a real world alternative both to capitalist and statist institutions and social relations as well as to authoritarian forms of communism based on the exceptionalism of political vanguards.

The Approach

The present work offers an engaged ethnography or analytical memoir based in action oriented research. It pursues a novel form of sociological writing reflecting on direct experiences in a critical and analytical way. It offers a close reading of everyday organizing practices of anarchists "on the ground," providing observations and insights that might not otherwise be available. This direct engagement with contemporary anarchist organizing should be of interest to both anarchists and students of social movements alike.

Constructive Anarchy represents a do-it-yourself anarchist history, a record of events and lessons learned, provided from an anarchist perspective, offering a critical reflection on substantial examples of anarchist practice as they have developed and changed over time as anarchists strive to make effective contributions to radical social change. Anarchists have often had a difficult time documenting their own histories. This is, on some level, understandable for a movement oriented towards direct action and rebellion against states and capital. On one hand there is hardly enough time to keep up with the day-to-day work of organizing, nevermind writing histories. On the other hand, there is the constant pressure of dealing with repression and criminalization. Unfortunately, this means that many lessons have been forgotten and new generations of anarchists find themselves re-inventing the wheel or drifting in to repeated debates and controversies without benefit of the insights gained through previous trial and error.

One of the problems encountered in trying to develop an understanding of contemporary anarchy is that anarchist practices within specific contexts and over specific periods of time are absent from the literature in any meaningful or detailed way. There exist fine introductions to anarchism, such as those by Sean

Sheehan and Ruth Kinna. On the other hand, there is a real absence in the literature of more detailed analyses of the strategies, tactics, projects and perspectives of contemporary anarchist movements "on the ground." Recent accounts of contemporary anarchism by social scientists such as David Graeber and Richard Day seem more concerned with anarchism as a metaphor for anti-globalization politics more broadly, addressing actual anarchist movements only in general and abstract terms. Thus Day's recent book, which is subtitled "Anarchist Currents in the Newest Social Movements," gives only a dozen pages in an introductory chapter to a discussion of real world anarchist projects. In each case these projects are dealt with in only general terms such that a grassroots movement like the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty is reduced to one of its activities, direct action casework, as an archetypal movement tactic.

Recent discussions of anarchy have tended to go in one of two directions. The first is to engage in heavy theoretical analysis, often pursuing an engagement between anarchy and recent developments in philosophy, especially various expressions of post-structuralism. The second is a focus on sensational, dramatic, symbolic or ephemeral aspects of anarchist practice. Whether this takes the shape of uncritical celebration (within anarchy) or contemptuous dismissal (usually but not always outside anarchy) such an approach usually tends not to reflect day to day grounded practices. What is missing is how people act in everyday longer term settings. What I present here demonstrates the range of serious and grounded practices rooted in anarchist organizing: practices that may draw on previous traditions and practices but also innovate and experiment. My selection of a range of projects allows the reader to compare groups that express elements of a more subcultural character with anarchist involvement in more heterogeneous community-based coalitions that organize more broadly around issues such as poverty and work.

It is necessary to examine the various ways in which activists have responded, and are responding, to changing conditions and the innovations they are constructing in terms of movement organizations and repertoires of action, as well as their development of values and ideas, strategies and tactics. In attempting to re-think social movements in the current context we might turn to overlooked or under-appreciated tactics, practices and forms of organizing that have been central to recent movement development and which pose important challenges to conventional thinking about politics. Taken together these aspects of movement practice express a striving for autonomy and self-determination rather than a politics of dissent or demand.

Constructive Anarchy provides the most extensive and detailed study of contemporary anarchist infrastructures in English-speaking North America. In order to appreciate the varied and evolving practices of anarchists engaged in ongoing social struggles I focus on diverse organizational practices ranging from direct actions, involvement in community groups, rank-and-file union work as well as the construction of more durable institutions such as free schools. I discuss groups that use community centers as bases to organize within specific neighborhoods with organizations such as TAO Communications, which do much of their work in cyberspace. My selection of case studies allows me to compare

groups that are geared primarily towards anarchist and radical subcultures with anarchist involvement in more heterogeneous community-based coalitions that organize more broadly around issues such as poverty, migration and borders and work. In developing this work I make use of a rich variety of materials, including personal movement archives consisting of hundreds of pamphlets and articles produced by anarchists themselves. I also access other sources, such as blogs and websites, in which anarchist knowledge is produced and distributed.

Anarchism is not a singular movement or theory. A look at the varied histories of anarchism reveals a rich diversity of perspectives and practices. Anarchism is probably best described as a multi-tendency movement of movements. It is not my intention within this project to document or detail all of the various tendencies and expressions of anarchism. Neither is the intention to analyze one theoretical version of anarchism. Criticisms and debates are directly addressed. For the most part, different tendencies within anarchism co-exist in complex, if sometimes strained, relationships of mutual engagement. Anarchist movements, which have come to public prominence since the Seattle demonstrations against the World Trade Organization in 1999, represent an important, if misunderstood, development in contemporary political theory and practice. It is expected that this book will be of great interest to students of social movements and political and social theory, especially those interested in sociology political studies, communications and social justice. At the same time it is my great hope that this work will be especially useful for activists and those directly involved in community advocacy—indeed anyone interested in learning from important contemporary projects to challenge neoliberal capital and effect positive social change.

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Chapter 1

Organizing Anarchy: Debates and Directions

> The bourgeoisie may blast and ruin their own world before they leave the stage of history. But we carry a new world in our hearts.
>
> (Buenaventura Durruti)

> We must act as if the future is today.
>
> (Howard J. Ehrlich)

When contemplating the politics of tomorrow, as the last decade of the twentieth century approached, little thought was being devoted to the place of anarchism as a harbinger of the future world, outside of relatively small anarchist circles themselves. As anarchist chronicler Peter Marshall (1993, 661) suggested in the early 1990s: "From Marx and Engels, who attacked all forms of unscientific socialism as 'utopian', onwards, anarchism has been dismissed as chimerical and fanciful—at best a romantic dream, at worst a dangerous fantasy." Noted historian Eric Hobsbawm characterized anarchism both as a "primitive rebellion" and as the death sigh of the historically condemned. In rather patronizing terms, Alexander Gray scolded anarchists for being "a race of highly intelligent and imaginative children, who nevertheless can scarcely be trusted to look after themselves outside the nursery pen" (Marshall 1993, 661). Similarly, Marxists have long dismissed anarchism as little more than "an infantile disorder" (Lenin) or worse as mere "banditry" (George Plekhanov). Such negative depictions have served to cement anarchism's reputation among political commentators as a case of arrested development, a remnant of the past, to be outgrown, rather than a glimpse of the future "new world." Some critics, trying to be a bit more generous, have seen in anarchism simply "a cry of pain for the future," (Apter 1972, 1). In this case, anarchism is presented, mistakenly, as merely another variant of utopianism, a nice idea with little chance of realizing making its lofty aspirations. Anarchism, in such depictions, stands in relation to the future as nostalgia stands to the past—as little more than a comforting dream of a better world. The tendency to associate anarchism with outmoded ideas, in an evolutionary schema of political development, is not limited to analyses of "classical" anarchism. Even commentators addressing more recent manifestations of anarchy insist that, despite its enhanced philosophical sophistication, anarchism "remains a primitive doctrine" (Apter 1972, 1). Anarchism, it is said, is a movement of the past, out of touch with the realities of twenty-first century hypercapitalism—certainly not a movement *of the future* or *for the future*.

Perhaps none of this is too surprising. As Beth Hartung (1983) notes, any suggestion that the state and other forms of imposed authority might be replaced by a decentralized network or federation, as contemporary anarchists propose, is

likely to be met with a sustained and vocal opposition. This is especially likely given that those who find current systems of imposed authority much to their liking are often those with the resources to mobilize public opinion in support of their preferences. There is certainly no doubt the opposition to the state and other systems of imposed authority "undermines the dominant mode of political organization and the number of vested interests within it" (Hartung 1983, 83). Thus the mighty force of resources, both material and ideological, that have been mobilized to condemn and discredit "the beast of anarchy."

Social or political theories that suggest possibilities for social transformation are almost certain to be set upon quickly with claims that it is merely an expression of idealism or naivete. Partly this charge relates to the extreme difficulty the modern mind, ensconced in statist social structures and ideologies, has in envisioning a society held together without the "cement" of government in the form of the state. The accumulated experiences, histories and mythologies of centuries of nation-state hegemony make it difficult to even imagine anything that suggests alternative or means of arranging society. So ingrained is the worldview of nation-states that many conflate the notion of society with the notions of state or nation-state. For anarchists, rather than being similes or course, society and state are counter-posed or even oppositional notions. At the same time there is tendency to avoid the fact that in each modern case in which people have worked to produce stateless societies on a larger scale, they have been met by extreme military violence from the representatives of states or nation-states. Such dismissals and refusals to grapple with anarchism mean that the diversity of actual anarchist practices are little understood and the lively debates over questions of organization within anarchist movements have been silenced.

At the same time, the story of anarchism in the twentieth century appeared to give some credibility to the popular assessments of the prospects for anarchy. Anarchist political movements, so vibrant to begin the the new century, already seemed exhausted by its fourth decade. The mass suppression of North American anarchism and syndicalism during the "Red Scare" of the 1910s, the violent suppression of anarchism by the Bolshevik regime its early years of institutionalization in Russia and especially the brutal defeat of anarcho-syndicalism during the Spanish Revolution seemed to signal the end of the line for the "primitive revolutionaries" of anarchism. By the early 1960s three prominent histories of anarchism concluded that anarchism had no future.

Clearly the reports of anarchy's demise have proven to be stunningly premature. Since the 1990s anarchism has enjoyed a rather remarkable revival. Indeed, as many commentators (Epstein 2002; Day 2005) note that anarchism, more than any other specific political perspective animates the newest social movements of the alternative globalization movements. Certainly, in terms of the radical currents within alternative globalization movements it is anarchism, rather than socialism or Marxism that provides the imaginal force and visions that animate movements

At the same time the shape and form of contemporary anarchist practice has led some critics, including critics from within anarchist movements themselves, to

believe that the prognosis for contemporary anarchy is not much more encouraging than the histories of the earlier movements. Much of anarchist activity in North America is still characterized by this description from the anarchist communist Dielo Trouda group in 1926: "local organizations advocating contradictory theories and practices, having no perspectives for the future, nor of a continuity in militant work, and habitually disappearing, hardly leaving the slightest trace behind them." Many of these short lived projects are based on the "synthesist" model—a loose assemblage of disparate ideas and practices under a general anarchist banner—of which anarchist communists have generally been wary. Such groupings work relatively well if the task remains at the level of running a book fair or community garden (both worthy projects in themselves). Yet, the absence of durable anarchist organizations, rooted in working-class organizations and communities, still contributes to demoralization or a retreat into subculturalism. Indeed, there have been explicit arguments among anarchists that attention should be given predominantly or even exclusively to building anarchist alternatives untainted by immersion in "mainstream" society rather than engaging within existing institutions such as unions or tenant organizations. In one recent article that received a good deal of attention within anarchist circles, an anarchist author explicitly dismisses issues of class and union organizing as old movement issues best left to Marxists and other socialists (see Jeppesen 2004).

Organizing Anarchy

Not only is the anarchist specter haunting politics, but it has also spooked social theory. While it certainly cannot be said that all the "Old Powers" have entered into a holy alliance to exorcize this specter (though they may do so soon), it would appear that anarchism is back on the agenda. At the same time, anarchist politics are often dismissed, in a rather caricatured manner, as synonymous with chaos and disorder. When discussing a previous project with colleagues, the joking response would almost always involve something along the lines of: "Anarchist *organizing*, isn't that an oxymoron?" In this, the work done by anarchists to develop means of relating, developing resources and efforts to effect social change becomes a set up for a rather tired punchline. Behind the joke though is an act of dismissal, a refusal to engage with and understand the diversity of real organizational practices in which anarchists engage.

Part of the problem is that anarchism, as a serious political movement, or movements, has largely been absent from the academic literature on social movements. Most sociological analysis of social movements within the context of English-speaking North American academia has been confined largely to the forms of the Keynesian welfare state and those movements that emerged during the epoch of Keynesianism (or the first years of its demise). This has meant a restricted focus, as in much social movement analysis, upon statist or reformist or integrative movements and strategies. Mainstream academic social movement

theories give priority to structures, organizations and practices that are relatively effective for making rights-based claims or demands upon states. Where broader cultural issues are addressed, the emphasis is largely on attempts to gain recognition or legitimacy for marginalized or "excluded" identities. All of this reflects the priorities of state-centric, integrationist or reform-minded politics. "Protesting by using the language of rights obviously means asking the State's permission for protection. 'Rights' are invoked, contested, distributed, and protected, but also limited and appointed by the law" (Del Re 1996, 107). Such movements tend to focus primarily on reforming legal systems to protect their constituency or identity group, gaining political access and increasing acceptance so that members might integrate into mainstream social and political channels (Rimmerman 2001; Schock 2005). From an anarchist perspective, such an approach to social justice seeks to assimilate people into an inherently oppressive system founded on exploitation, rather than fighting for the abolition of oppressive social institutions. Equal opportunity means something quite different than liberation (Rimmerman 2001, 56). The civil rights strategy that has been adopted by so many movements and movement theorists prioritizes people gaining the equal opportunity to be exploited. While temporary gains are not to be dismissed, and anarchists do work for short-term gains as part of broader strategies for change, it is certain that state-centered demands for inclusion are confined within a logic that allows for the reproduction and extension of the very processes that re/produce exclusion in the first place. These efforts are representative of what is sometimes called a politics of demand whereas anarchists pursue a politics of autonomy.

Anarchists stress the need to understand the important emerging movements that are mobilized according to different political priorities and for which mainstream sociological theories are less appropriate. In reality, anarchists do not reject organization or organizing at all. Indeed the history of anarchist politics is a rich history of novel forms of organizing. Some of these include workers' councils, temporary autonomous zones, flying squads, social centers and affinity groups to make only a partial list. These are novel forms of organization that have sometimes not been recognized as such because they do not fit the mold of organization as it is often constructed within theories and studies of organization. Such mainstream approaches privilege other characteristics, emphasizing that organizations are characterized by durability, material resources (hence resource mobilization), and hierarchy, with identifiable roles, positions and chains of command. Over-emphasis on such forms of organization exclude or obscure alternative forms, particularly those that are non-hierarchical or more fluid.

The diversity of anarchist perspectives, whether individualist, mutualist, anarcho-syndicalist or anarchist communist, emphasize a critique of existing social relations and a practical approach to social transformation. In the most bare bones formulation, Graeber (2004, 40) suggests that the only thing different strands of anarchy might have in common "is that none would involve anyone showing up with weapons and telling everyone else to shut up and do what they were told." At the same time there is much variety in the revolutionary strategies

and forms of social, political and economic organizations constructed by proponents of specific tendencies within anarchism. Anarchist organizations are expressed in a multiplicity of forms, including community associations, networks, social experiments and cooperatives. These projects range from small-scale, local projects around a specific issue or type of work to projects that are more global in scope. Strategies vary between insurrectionary approaches or the gradualism of alternative institutions. They can be community-based, more broadly, along the lines of alternative trade and exchange or they might focus on radical union building and workplace control.

To understand anarchist organizing it is clear that a starting point would be to look at some of the arguments, debates and practices in which anarchists are engaged around questions of organization. Such an approach might reveal a field of struggle that has been obscured. Such a field would be marked by a range of organizational dynamics. It would show that anarchism, far from being an infantile movement of chaos, consists of a variety of competing and complimentary approaches to organization, order and radical politics.

Anarchist Prefiguration: Heterotopias and Autonomous Zones

Part of the confusion over anarchist politics, for sociology, is rooted in the fact that anarchist organizations are not structured as social movement organizations, conventionally understood. For one thing, anarchist organizations are not geared primarily toward accessing state reforms or achieving symbolic representation through mass media. Neither are they organized to serve as incipient leadership in waiting within unions or Left political parties. At the same time, anarchist organizations are not utopian in means or ends, as is so often accused. Rather anarchist projects are often what might be described as heterotopian in character.

Social theorist Michel Foucault used the occasion of his 1967 lecture, "Of Other Spaces," to introduce a term that would remain generally overlooked within his expansive body of work, the notion of the "heterotopia," by which he meant a counter-site or alternative space, something of an actually existing utopia. In contrast to the nowhere lands of utopias, heterotopias are located in the here-and-now of present day reality, though they challenge and subvert that reality. The heterotopias are spaces of difference. Among the examples Foucault noted were sacred and forbidden spaces which are sites of personal transition.

Decades later Foucault's notion of heterotopias would be echoed by the anarchist writer Peter Lamborn Wilson. Written under the pen name Hakim Bey, his 1985 book, *T.A.Z.: The Temporary Autonomous Zone, Ontological Anarchy, Poetic Terrorism*, would become an almost instant contemporary anarchist classic. In the *T.A.Z.* Wilson/Bey outlines, in often fantastic flourishes, a lively version of anarchist heterotopias. These anarchist heterotopias, now called TAZ, are the anarchist society in miniature. In them structures of authority are suspended, replaced by relations of conviviality, gift sharing and celebration. They are living

embodiments of what the anarchist Peter Kropotkin termed mutual aid. And they exist, not in a post-revolutionary future of in the distance, but right here, right now.

While Bey's work put forward some unique visions, and did so in often provocative language engendering a fair bit of controversy within anarchist circles, what he calls TAZ, or something very close to them, have always been part of anarchist culture and politics, as well as the culture and politics of the working-classes and oppressed more generally. These have been, in other contexts, infrastructures of resistance. To mention only a few examples, one might make note of the culturally vital and politically raucous Wobbly union halls of the 1910s and 1920s, the revolutionary community centers of Barcelona during the Spanish Revolution in the 1930s and the variety of squatted cultural centers of Europe from the 1960s to the present day. Indeed Wilson/Bey's inspiration is drawn explicitly from the diversity of heterotopias and intentional communities of history, including pirate utopias, the Munich Soviet of 1919, Paris 1968, autonomist uprisings in Italy during the 1970s and the radical ecology camps of the 1980s and 1990s.

Over the last two decades, whether aware of this history or not, many young anarchists, punks and artists took Bey's message to heart, building a host of community centers, infoshops and free spaces, in cities across North America, including Toronto. These spaces are intended as something a bit more permanent than the temporary autonomous zone. Envisioned as permanent autonomous zones, or at least potentially durable ones, these anarchist spaces have provided support structures for oppositional cultures, infrastructures of resistance. They have formed crucial aspects of the broader do-it-yourself movements which provide alternative cultural and economic infrastructures in music, publishing, video, radio, food and, significantly, education. Anarchist heterotopias provide important sites for skills development, for learning and practicing those skills which are undeveloped in authoritarian social relations.

At the same time these prefigurative practices have not been without controversy within anarchist circles. Indeed often heated arguments and debate have emerged over the place of prefigurative practices, within the context of anarchist spaces. For some, any prioritizing or emphasis on prefigurative politics contributes to the drift into subculturalism and the tendency to overlook or underplay work within communities and organizations of addressing everyday concerns of poor and oppressed people in the here-and-now of everyday life.

To some extent, all of the projects discussed in *Constructive Anarchy* have a strong prefigurative or heterotopian character. This is true for rank-and-file networks and anti-poverty organizing as it is for more obvious autonomous zones, such as TAO, the Windsor Workers' Action Centre and the Anarchist Free Skool. Yet there is much more to these practices than expressions of prefiguration or heterotopian desire. From a constructive anarchist perspective, anarchism is not about finding a safe hideout from capitalism and the state and leaving it at that. Anarchism is not about autonomous zones in which one can be comfortable. Rather, anarchism

seeks to replace statist and capitalist relations and develop viable alternatives. The point is to change things.

Social Anarchism and Lifestyle Anarchism: An Unbridgeable Chasm?

The present situation is made even more interesting given that contemporary anarchism often materializes in novel, unfamiliar forms that bear little resemblance to organizational structures and practices undertaken within historical anarchist movements. Some have questioned the emphasis on prefigurative politics, arguing for more approaches that address practical concerns, as if there exists some dichotomy between the two. The apparent divergence of contemporary anarchist projects from those that have previously characterized anarchism, prompted one of anarchism's major proponents to sound a warning in the last decades of the twentieth century.

> Unless I am gravely mistaken—as I hope I am—the revolutionary and social goals of anarchism are suffering a far-reaching erosion to a point where the word *anarchy* will become part of the chic bourgeois vocabulary of the coming century—naughty, rebellious, insouciant, but deliciously safe. (Bookchin 1995, 3)

In his widely influential and controversial book, *Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism* (1995), Murray Bookchin, the leading anarchist theorist in North America during the post-WWII period, sharply and severely criticized emergent tendencies within recent anarchist movements. In the book's introductory chapter, "A Note to the Reader," Bookchin responds to "the fact that anarchism stands at a turning point in its long and turbulent history" (1995, 1). For Bookchin, however, this turning point is not one of return, renewal or growth for anarchism as a relevant social and political movement as some have suggested or hoped. Instead, anarchism stands at a day of reckoning because, in Bookchin's view, contemporary anarchists have abandoned or lost sight of the revolutionary tradition of anarchism. They have become satisfied, or worse enamored with, becoming simply another bohemian subculture with little real interest in confronting the powers of state and capital. For Bookchin, contemporary anarchism, particularly in North America, has made a potentially fatal retreat from the social concerns, and communal politics, of classical anarchism. Such social anarchist priorities have been replaced with a flight into episodic adventurism, subcultural cliquishness and a decadent egoism carried out within self-congratulatory scenes. Clearly this is not an abstract or entirely misplaced concern given expressions such as Jeppesen's (2004) dismissive claim that working-class issues are outdated matters best left to the Marxists. This unfortunate transformation threatens to render anarchism irrelevant at precisely the moment when it is most needed as an alternative to capitalist globalization and the deep social dislocations engendered by neoliberal policies.

Over two polemical chapters, "Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism" and "The Left That Was: A Personal Reflection," Bookchin, in often abrasive terms, outlines his views on what has gone wrong with anarchism and offers suggestions on how anarchists might return to their roots as a movement for social change. The principal essay "Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism" consists of an extended polemic against theoretical proponents of so-called "lifestyle anarchism," which Bookchin contends is based in individualism and subcultural obscurantism, which render it irrelevant to anyone who is not part of the "scene." Such is the fate of those approaches to anarchism that, like Jeppesen (2004), turn their backs on the workplace and community issues that concern working-class and poor people.

Bookchin is aware that the history of anarchism has always expressed a tension between a personalistic commitment, emphasizing individual autonomy, and a collectivist commitment, emphasizing social change and collective freedom. He contends that with the advent of anarcho-syndicalism, or revolutionary unionism, and anarchist communism at the turn of the twentieth century, individualist anarchism was largely marginalized amidst the emergence of mass workers' movements and the organized power of general strikes. One result was that individualist anarchism came to be seen, outside of artistic or literary circles anyway, as little more than bohemian exotica, a distinctly petty bourgeois indulgence resembling liberalism more closely than anarchism (1995, 7). Rather than ending the story, however, these tendencies have coexisted in constant tension with either becoming more predominant according to context or era. Indeed, some anarchist celebrate this tension as evidence of anarchism's pluralism, ideological tolerance and creativity (1995, 4). For Bookchin, however, it is the very failure of anarchism to resolve effectively this conflict over the relationship of the individual to the collective that has allowed for the worrisome condition in which he finds contemporary anarchism. In the current period the individualists are back and with a vengeance, threatening even to end the anarchist project as a viable force for anti-capitalist social change.

What all of the new (but definitely not improved) lifestyle anarchists have in common, in Bookchin's view, is that they have given up social analysis in favor of a "trendy" nihilism. Instead of traditional anarchist concerns with hierarchy, statism, capitalism and the commodification of everyday life, lifestylists are preoccupied with "autonomy," "primitivism," and "personal insurrection." For lifestylists, "[h]istory and civilization consist of nothing but a descent into the inauthenticity of 'industrial society'" (1995, 50). The return to "authenticity," now apparently anarchism's motive force, according to Bookchin, is driven by intuition and instinct rather than by analysis and reason. The supposed turn towards the "irrational" means that anarchists have given away the tools needed to dismantle neoliberalism. This leads to Bookchin's angry conclusion that lifestyle anarchism is not anarchist at all and has no legitimate claims to the courageous heritage of the social anarchists who too often paid for their convictions and commitment to social transformation with their lives.

Bookchin's second essay, "The Left That Was: A Personal Reflection," consists of a rather nostalgic trip down memory lane to the supposed "good old days" of the political Left. The reason for this essay's inclusion along with the main essay appears simply to provide an appeal to anarchists to give up their wayward individualist ways by following the proper path of the socialist, which the essay reveals. In the essay, Bookchin provides summary statements of leftist conceptions of internationalism, democracy and revolution which guided nineteenth and early-twentieth century resistance to capitalism and which are supposedly lacking from today's "Left," including the anarchists (1995, 68).

Overall, Bookchin's argumentative approach fails to appreciate, understand, or admit, the complexly nuanced relationship between individualist and socialist tendencies in anarchism, historically and in the current context. Where his work presents only an "unbridgeable chasm," others see an unavoidable byproduct of the innovation and experimentation of people seeking to question profoundly established conventions, including those of radical political movements and ideas. It is precisely this openness to rethink creatively and challenge accepted authority that has offered anarchism much of its strength and sustenance, and which has served as a source of its renown. A glance at anarchist projects and publications shows a lively and engaged mix of "individualist" and "socialist" perspectives and practices. Even more, Bookchin's approach overlooks or ignores the intermingling of lifestyle and social anarchists in action. The discussions in the present book, covering TAO Communications, the Anarchist Free Skool and the Windsor Workers' Action Centre, show clearly this intermingling of tendencies in the real world of organizing.

His characterization of lifestylists' commitment to imagination, desire, ecstasy and everyday life as apolitical suggests that Bookchin's analysis is also out of touch with the insights of social movements which have long recognized that the personal is indeed political. For Bookchin the only approved forms of social action seem to be creating formal organizations and developing programs. Cultural activism is missing from his conception of politics. However, some of the most striking acts of *lifestyle* anarchism—culture jamming, video activism, micro-radio broadcasts and free spaces—are profoundly social, directed at disrupting the pacifying effects of consumer *society* and the practices of *social* production and reproduction.

Even more, it is a bit unfair to portray lifestylists as "allowing no room for social institutions, political organizations, and radical programs" (1995, 51). Many anarchists who might be identified as lifestylists remain concerned with developing new social forms that might speak to the specific needs and interests of contemporary participants. Most contemporary anarchists are social anarchists who still believe in the possibility and necessity of social transformation. Of course there are divergent opinions about what social transformation entails and how best to pursue it. That social anarchist, even class struggle anarchist, perspectives have emerged within seemingly lifestylist practices, as in the cases of TAO Communications or the Anarchist Free Skool is a significant development that is often overlooked. Bookchin's deep nostalgia for past practices, even where those

practices are failed or discredited ones, unfortunately impedes his understanding of what today's anarchists are trying to accomplish and how they seek to accomplish it. Additionally, it remains true that people's perspectives and practices can change through the course of organizing and struggle.

In the end, the most straightforward evidence that Bookchin's analysis is out of touch with recent developments in anarchist practice is found in his assessment that "precisely at a time when mass disillusionment with the state has reached unprecedented proportions, anarchism is in retreat" (1995: 59). He even blames this "failure of anarchism" upon "the insularity of lifestyle anarchism" (1995: 59). While there is some truth to his assessment of anarchist subcultural tendencies towards insularity or "scenes" his analysis misses a key point. Anarchism has enjoyed a dramatic comeback recently and the boldness, creativity, and vibrancy of some lifestylist projects has contributed much to this. Ironically, the lifestylist practices criticized by Bookchin have proven, on certain levels, more compelling, and more liberatory, at least for some among recent generations of activists, than the "orthodox anarchism" to which they are contrasted.

In part, heterotopian practices express a refusal of waged labor, or at least a desire to refuse waged labor, a key aspect of the anarchist and libertarian socialist Left. This desire can provide a tremendous source of strength, resistance and determination to oppose capital and the state. A challenge for social anarchists and class struggle anarchists is to develop this desire beyond the level of subcultural manifestations or drop-out cultures, in ways that resonate with and contribute to broader resistance in solidarity with working-class and poor people's movements against exploitation and oppression. Anarchists can and should contribute to the development and maintenance of anarchic tendencies within those broader movements, working against the development of bureaucracies, formal leaderships and elitism within those movements.

Infrastructures of Resistance

Despite the great, and real, concerns raised by Bookchin, it must recognized, in any attempt to properly understand contemporary anarchist movements, that the habitat in which twentieth century radicalism could thrive no longer exists in the form that previously sustained radical movements and ideas (Sears 2008, 8). Anarchism and socialism, the forms of political radicalism that animated much resistance of the working-classes, poor and oppressed, were vital as components of broader infrastructures of resistance. These infrastructures developed within contexts of particular organizations of life and work. The last few decades have ushered in significant changes in the organization of social relations and conditions of production, which have transformed the possibilities for specific political projects (Sears 2008, 8).

The infrastructures of resistance included a range of institutions, venues, organizations and practices. Some important examples included alternative media

and publishing, shared spaces such as social centers bookstores, union halls and bars, workers campgrounds and medical clinics. Infrastructures of resistance also included practices such as rank-and-file networks, flying squads and working groups and opposition movements within unions. The infrastructures of resistance also included, notably, anarchist and socialist groups and organizations themselves. Key were informal networks of workers and community members inside and outside official union structures. In his discussion of the U.S. labor movement, *The American Labor Movement: A New Beginning*, Dolgoff reminds readers that the labor movement once put a great deal of energy into building more permanent forms of alternative institutions. An expanding variety of mutual aid functions were provided through unions in the early days of labor.

> They created a network of cooperative institutions of all kinds: schools, summer camps for children and adults, homes for the aged, health and cultural centers, insurance plans, technical education, housing, credit associations, et cetera. All these, and many other essential services were provided by the people themselves, long before the government monopolized social services wasting untold billions on a top-heavy bureaucratic parasitical apparatus; long before the labor movement was corrupted by "business unionism." (1990, 31)

These varying infrastructures of resistance provided, allowed for and encouraged a range of material and imaginal supports within communities of working-class, poor and oppressed people. As Sears (2008, 8) notes, these infrastructures of resistance "cultivated collective capacities for memory (reflections on past experiences and struggles), analysis (discussion and debate about theory and change), communication (outside of official or commercial media channels) and action (networks of formal and informal solidarity)." Indeed it is within these infrastructures of resistance that community became possible and practiced in real ways, moving from an abstraction to a material reality.

The decline of infrastructures of resistance left communities without alternatives or the possibility of alternatives, consigned to the sense that capitalism was the only option. This sense of resignation was reinforced by official institutions (unions and labor parties) that, in their rhetoric and actions suggested that another world was not possible and all desires had to be met or discarded within the context of capitalist social relations. Relations of exploitation. Cultural activities have been reduced to the occasional union barbecue or pub night. Shared spaces for discussion, debate, strategizing and developing collective visions and practices have eroded. So too have opportunities to nurture connections across generations of workers. The cultural activities of working-class elders and youths have been separated, and even segregated. Great distances obtain between the so-called "youth subcultures" and the touchstones of adult cultures, themselves divided along a range of consumer preferences.

That Sam Dolgoff learned these often forgotten or overlooked lessons from a critical engagement with the labor movement is telling. As a militant anarchist

Dolgoff had little time for those who, seeking comfort or moral privilege in anarchist "purity," refuse to engage in the real struggles in which people find themselves. Anarchy cannot be abstracted from day-to-day life situations and the difficult choices with which people are confronted.

> There is no "pure" anarchism. There is only the application of anarchist principles to the realities of social living. The aim of anarchism is to stimulate forces that propel society in a libertarian direction. It is only from this standpoint that the relevance of anarchism to modern life can be properly assessed. (1990, 8)

As Dolgoff concludes, anarchism is no "panacea that will miraculously cure all the ills of the social body" (1990, 10). Anarchism is simply a "guide to action based on a realistic conception of social reconstruction" (1990, 10–11). Far from the economic determinism or workerism of which anarchists communists and anarcho-syndicalists are so often accused, Dolgoff's vision shares many important insights with the views of recent "cultural" anarchists such as Paul Goodman and Colin Ward, as will be illustrated in the final chapter of this book. Rather than falling into the trap of excessive enthusiasm, one must always be aware of Errico Malatesta's reminder that anarchists are only one of the forces acting in society and history will move according to the resultant of all the forces. Thus, it is necessary for anarchists to find ways of living among non-anarchists as anarchistically as possible. This, beyond being a reflection on the difficulties facing anarchist organizers in overcoming authoritarian social relations, is a warning against being satisfied only with subcultural or lifestyle approaches to carving out spaces of anarchy within archic society. Emerging movements need to focus on the re-emergence of infrastructures of resistance if they are to be relevant parts of contributions to the development and growth of new waves of radical renewal and resistance.

Anarchist Communism: Organizational Dualism and Social Insertion

While much recent anarchist activity has emphasized the organization of alternative spaces, such as autonomous zones, some anarchists have begun to argue for greater theoretical and tactical clarity and focus among anarchists geared towards organizing militant anarchist poles of attraction within existing social movements and struggles rooted in working-class and poor communities. Constructive anarchism as an explicit organizational practice and orientation to social struggle has re-emerged as part of recent anti-capitalist struggles, and active reflection and debate regarding perceived limits of renewed anarchist politics. Yet it draws upon, and is situated, as part of a historical tendency within international anarchism. This tendency is typically referred to as the organizational or anarchist communist tendency within anarchism.

Anarchist communists believe that achieving a classless, stateless and non-hierarchical society (that is, anarchy) requires a social revolution, which will only

emerge through autonomous social movements and the revolutionary self-activity of the working-class. This distinguishes them from some versions of social anarchism or anarcho-communism, which, drawing most notably on the works of Kropotkin, for example, view the development towards anarchy as an ongoing trend within human social development that requires little effort by anarchists beyond the propaganda of anarchist ideas. Constructive anarchists agree that anarchism draws upon ongoing relationships of mutual aid in everyday life, but also view anarchist organizing as a necessary part of social change.

The most influential expression of the anarchist communist tendency on contemporary movements, and one that has directly influenced contemporary organizing is the tradition within anarchist communism known as platformism. The platformist tradition emerged following the Russian Revolution through the efforts of a group of Russian and Ukrainian anarchists in exile, including figures such as the former peasant militia leader Nestor Makhno and Ida Mett, who sought to analyze why the anarchists had fared so badly during the revolution in comparison with the Bolsheviks. Their conclusion was that despite their vastly better social and political analysis the anarchists lacked effective organizations. Drawing upon their first-hand experiences during the Russian Revolution, the Paris-based Dielo Trouda argued that anarchists had failed largely because of their lack of organization, which kept them from developing a serious challenge to the efforts of the Bolshevik's and, especially their conversion of the soviets from centers of working-class decision-making to instruments of the Bolshevik state. In order that anarchists not make the same mistake in future generations, the Dielo Trouda (Workers' Cause) group wrote a position paper, "The Organizational Platform for a General Union of Anarchists," in which they laid out some points that might serve as a guide in developing effective revolutionary organizations. Their suggestion, lest anarchists suffer a similar fate in future social struggles, was that anarchist form a "General Union of Anarchists" which would provide a space for the development of "theoretical and tactical unity" among anarchists and focus their activities on class struggle and radicalization of labor unions.

Contemporary anarchist communists also draw inspiration from anarchist-communist organizations such as the Friends of Durruti group which emerged in Spain to oppose the gradual reversal of the Spanish Revolution of 1936 and the decision of anarchists, including the anarcho-syndicalist union, the Confederación Nacional del Trabajo (CNT), to participate in the government. In the influential document, "Towards a Fresh Revolution," they echoed the earlier concerns of the platformists, condemning the CNT-FAI's reformism and collaboration with the Republican government. For the Friends of Durruti, this political turn by the anarchists contributed mightily to the defeat of the anti-fascist and revolutionary forces (Weaver 2005).

Another significant influence on the development of constructive anarchist theory and practice is the notion of "organizational dualism," a concept of some importance within the Italian anarchist movement struggling under fascist rule in the 1920s (Weaver 2005). For Italian anarchists, organizational dualism spoke

to the need for anarchists to be actively involved as militants within the labor movement, as well as contributing to the day-to-day activities of their own explicitly anarchist political organizations, groups and projects. Significant groups within the Chinese anarchist movement of the 1910s, such as the Wuzhengfu-Gongchan Zhuyi Tongshi Che (Society of Anarchist-Communist Comrades), advocated similar ideas (Weaver 2005). Thus while anarchist communists work to build explicitly anarchist organizations as spaces for theoretical, strategic and tactical development, they also work actively to contribute to daily struggles within organizations of the working-classes and oppressed.

The crucial contributions of platformist are not to be found in the specifics of a 1926 document but in the challenge that it puts before anarchist organizers to come together openly and seriously to develop anarchist strategies and practices in a way that is engaged in real class struggles against actually existing bosses, landlords and bureaucrats. Platformists have taken up the challenge of moving anarchism from its current status as social conscience or cultural critique. This is exhibited in the work being done by platformist groups in tenants' unions, workplaces, anti-poverty actions and fighting deportations to name only a few. It is important to keep in mind that the platform was only ever intended as a beginning, "as the first step towards rallying libertarian forces." Far from being a fully fleshed out program of action it provides only "the outlines, the skeleton of such a programme." Its authors recognized its many gaps, oversights and inadequate treatments.

More than 80 years after it was written and a decade after the fall of the USSR the platform has enjoyed a stunning revival. From Latin America to Ireland and Lebanon to South Africa and Canada, a number of groups have taken up the platform. At a time when anarchist movements are growing, the platform—which was only ever intended as an outline for action— has provided a useful starting point for anarchists looking "to rally all the militants of the organized anarchist movement." Unlike the original platformists, who focused their energies on gathering the majority of anarchists to their perspective, contemporary anarchist communist organizers have been more concerned with moving beyond activist, including anarchist, circles and building a real grounding in working-class communities and organizations. Part of anarchism's growth must include a commitment to developing visions and practices that can build anarchist movements rather than just "scenes" or cliques. If platformism offers a starting point for this process, then it makes a welcome and necessary contribution to contemporary anarchism.

Secondly anarchist communists argue that the purpose of the organization is to provide a center in which resources and labor can be shared in mobilizing active involvement in specific struggles. In addition, these organizational practices are carried out with an emphasis on what they term "social insertion," the involvement of anarchist militants in broader social struggles of the working-classes. This is in distinction from those anarchists who prefer to devote their time building separate anarchist subcultures and alternative social spaces.

In the absence of a broader strategy based on collectively debated analysis of real world experiences in struggle, anarchist organizations are confined to reactive

groups constantly responding to new situations, addressing moments of oppression and exploitation rather than challenging underlying social relationships. The result is a descent into "activism" or the playing out of repeated cycles of protest and demonstration usually on terms dictated by authorities rather than the movements' goals, interests or desires. An example would be labor movements that protest cuts to benefits or workplace speedups but never challenge the wage labor relationship. Similarly anti-poverty groups that protest rent increases but never challenge property rights. Building an effective resistance, let alone revolutionary movements, requires more systematic work (Weaver 2005). Of course it is certainly easier to avoid the collective work, the lengthy debate and discussion, the development and revision of ideas through practice and finally the legwork of organizing that anarchist communists take on. It is also easier to develop pure schemes in the comfort of one's apartment, rarely worrying oneself whether or not such beautiful fantasies "would inevitably disintegrate on encountering reality." Constructive anarchists, on the other hand, accept the shared responsibilities of building anarchist movements in connection with those who suffer the assaults of capitalism.

For constructive anarchists, anarchist ideas are not the responsibility of a vanguard or intellectual elite of "advanced workers" as Leninism suggested. Anarchist militants should not attempt to move movements into proclaiming an "anarchist" position, but should instead work to preserve their anarchist thrust; that is, their natural tendency to be self-organized and to militantly fight for their own interests. This assumes the perspective that social movements will reach their own logic of creating revolution, not when they as a whole necessarily reach the point of being self-identified "anarchists," but when as a whole (or at least an overwhelming majority) they reach the consciousness of their own power and exercise this power in their daily lives, in a way consciously adopting the ideas of anarchism.

The anarchist organizer does play an ideological part within social movements, for constructive anarchists, in actively contesting and opposing the opportunistic elements that emerge to shift the movement towards the dead ends of electoralism or vanguardism (Weaver 2005). Anarchists also play a part in opposing the reactionary elements that emerge within movements that seek to limit the movement from within or make concessions to opponents in the state and capital. These have certainly been the part played by anarchists within mainstream unions and within anti-poverty groups and social justice organizations. As an active minority within the working-class, anarchist communists work to provide a rallying point, through example and ideas, in struggles against capital and the state as well as standing against authoritarian ideologies or practices in working-class organizations. For the most part they remain small though growing. They certainly have no illusions about "leading" the anarchist movement, let alone the working-class more broadly. Instead they try to maintain relationships of solidarity and mutual aid with anarchists who take different strategic and tactical approaches while disagreeing honestly with them. Given the marginalized position of anarchist and libertarian

socialist ideas within the working-class in North America, at this point in time much work is still spent in getting anarchist perspectives out there.

Central to constructive anarchist organizing is the notion of social insertion or anarchist immersion in the ongoing everyday battles of the working-classes. This is explicitly intended as a counter-position to participation within the usual circles of "activist" groups or advocacy campaigns organized by "activists." Instead of acting on behalf of others or as representatives of the exploited and oppressed, as activist groups often do, anarchist communists argue that anarchists should involve themselves in movements of people addressing their own daily needs, whether material or otherwise. Examples of such groups include movements of rank-and-file workers, neighborhood associations organizing against landlords and police, poor people's movements against social cleansing, indigenous groups defending claims on the land and movements of immigrants and refugees opposing deportations. For anarchist communists these self-organized groups, mobilizing to meet their own real needs, rather than well-meaning activists choosing favored single issues to advocate, represent the possible force that might radically transform society (Weaver 2005). Without the labor and land of the working-classes and oppressed capital and states cannot sustain their power. Activists and advocacy groups, however, have no similar impact on the survival of capitalist or state authority.

From a constructive anarchist perspective, the central issue facing anarchist militants is not, *contra* the synthesists and even other forms of anarchist communism, winning a battle of ideas among other activists within the anti-globalization movements. Rather than devoting energy towards winning over other activists or self-identified revolutionaries, anarchist communists focus on ensuring that direct action, mutual aid, collective decision-making, horizontal networks, and other principles of anarchist organizing are encouraged and supported where they emerge within movements of the oppressed and exploited. become the living practices of the social movements (Schmidt 2005). Social insertion encourages a rethinking of how anarchist organizers develop their relationship with the non-anarchist actors driving the daily struggles of the working-classes and the peasantry. Anarchist militants and revolutionaries must be at the heart of social struggles rather than being satisfied with anarchistically "pure" activities at the margins. The predominant role of anarchist militants is, for anarchist communists, contributing to group autonomy from political opportunism and strengthening their libertarian instincts while supporting the development of movements in revolutionary directions (Schmidt 2005). It is also in helping to encourage radical alternatives and challenge the forces that would prevent such alternatives from emerging.

The anarchist communists are positioning themselves against the notion, predominant among contemporary anarchists globally, of an organizational synthesis in which self-identified anarchists group loosely on the basis of being anarchists and little more. Anarchist communists suggest that synthesist groups can fetishize unity at the expense of political activity. They argue that unity is often achieved through an abandonment of political principles or a

moderate consensus. Collective responsibility in following through on tasks helps to develop trust and commitment as well as the discipline that anarchist communists see as necessary to endure long-term struggles rather than immediate activities. This is particularly important in periods of downturn when struggles are in retreat and it is more difficult to win new recruits and maintain enthusiasm for organizing. For anarchist communists it is precisely this lack of collective responsibility, in a context of long-term strategy, that leads so many synthesist groups to decline or fall apart completely in periods of social quiet, despite the energy with which they might have formed during times of social mobilization and upsurge in struggles. For anarchist communists such activities are marked by spontaneity and individualism, which undermine more durable and effective organizing practices.

The intention is for infrastructures of resistance or anarchist transfer cultures to serve as training grounds or learning centers in which people develop their capacities, atrophied through generations of state rule and capitalist exploitation of labor, to assume both the running of collapsed social services at local levels and to defend against state repression of the social movements. Such an approach supports

> giving more power of decision to the grassroots groups that are born in the heat of the struggles, and are the current incipient bodies of dual-power—mainly the popular organizations with territorial power and popular assemblies. The democracy will be structured starting from a new approach that involves the shape of political representation. (Schmidt 2005; Lopez 2003)

Drawing upon insights suggested by the platformists, and their real experiences in a revolution, the contemporary anarchist communists have developed a unique perspective and organizing praxis rooted in their own real world experiences of struggle. Rather than upholders of a historical expression, contemporary anarchist communists represent a thriving, evolving approach to anarchism engaged in social change, not through the construction of anarchist subcultures or alternative spaces, but through active resistance among the working-classes, poor and oppressed. Arising most forcefully over the last decade its ideas have spread to influence anarchist activists in North America. Not the product of a single document, such as the platform, or activist call, such as characterizes much of the alternative globalization movement, anarchist communism has emerged out of the everyday needs of movements that are struggling against international capitalism and providing examples for movements worldwide. In particular their emphasis on organizing within poor communities and neighborhoods goes well beyond the original platformists' call for anarchist organizing within labor unions.

As anarchist movements face possibilities of growth, as happened after Seattle in 1999, questions of organization and the relation of various anarchist activities to each other and to broader movements for social change will only become more pressing and significant. As P.J. Lilley and I (2003) have suggested elsewhere: "If

anarchists are to seize the opportunities presented by recent upsurges in anarchist activity and build anarchism in movements that have resonance in wider struggles, then we must face seriously the challenges of organization, of combining and coordinating our efforts effectively. We will be aided in this by drawing upon the lessons of past experiences and avoiding, as much as possible, past errors." Through their numerous efforts, some of which are documented in the chapters that follow, the constructive anarchists provide vital and influential examples of how this work might be successfully carried out.

Conclusions

That some non-organizational anarchists have responded to anarchist communist organizing dogmatically and reactively, criticizing a document to dismiss a movement, referring to broad generalizations about "organization" in the abstract rather than specific organizational practices, suggests that some habits are tough to shake. It is precisely the habits nurtured during times of lethargy, insularity and marginality that must be shaken off during moments when people are beginning to seek alternatives to capitalist social relations. Thoughts of future societies are important but real strategies for making it happen are desperately needed. While most anarchists are actively trying to develop effective strategies, anarchist communists suggest some promising paths to pursue. Platformists contend, for example, that developing anarchist perspectives within unions and other working-class organizations are goals that anarchists have neglected for far too long.

As contemporary anarchist movements develop the questions of organization and the relations of various anarchist activities to each other and to broader strategies and tactics for social change will only become more significant and pressing. If anarchists are to seize the opportunities presented by recent upsurges in anarchist activity and build anarchism in movements that have resonance in wider struggles, then they must face seriously the challenges of organization, of combining and coordinating their efforts effectively. They will be aided in this by drawing upon the lessons of past experiences and avoiding, as much as possible, past errors. One of the repeated errors has been to avoid questions of organization, leaving activists, of various movements, not only anarchists, woefully unprepared when struggles erupt. When movements are in low ebb and goals are less ambitious, these questions may appear less immediate and the impetus to break out of the protective shell of the subculture less pressing. This has been the situation in North America until quite recently.

The emerging circumstances in a time of growth for anarchism, and anti-capitalist activities more generally, require new practices suited to the altered dynamics of struggle. As struggles expand and develop, the question is not so much whether people will form organizations or not, but rather which types of organizations will emerge. People trying to move beyond capitalism will certainly work to join forces with others to share resources, coordinate efforts and build

strength through solidarity. To avoid offering anarchist alternatives in such contexts is to leave the terrain open to authoritarian and/or reformist organizations to fill the breach.

A glance at the history of anarchism shows that organizational perspectives and activities, far from being marginal elements, represent the core of anarchist endeavors. Suggestions that organizational approaches represent a deviation from anarchism or the intrusion of un-anarchist ideas into anarchism represent a questionable attempt at historical revisionism. To be sure, most anarchists are involved in some type of organization or another, whether an infoshop collective, publication team or affinity group. Various alternative institutions, whether free schools or squats or counter-media, form networks as means for developing alternative social infrastructures. Where free schools join up with worker cooperatives and collective social centers, alternative social infrastructures, or anarchist transfer cultures, become visible at least at the community level.

At the same time anarchists do try to imbue all of their activities with the spirit of festival, celebration, and prefiguration. There's no point in dedicating yourself to ushering in a new society, and indeed putting in the effort to realize that society in the here and now, if it does not at the very least offer some sense of joy and happiness. A new society of drudgery and tedium does not sound so new at all. As Emma Goldman famously said (and really the quote had to appear somewhere in here): "If I can't dance, I don't want to be part of your revolution." Thus constructive anarchy recognizes and draws upon the strengths of the playful activities that so concerned Bookchin. This is exemplified in projects like the Anarchist Free Skool and TAO Communications, but within activities undertaken by anarchist anti-poverty activists and the labor organizers of the Windsor Workers' Action Centre as well. Each of these projects is discussed in the chapters that follow.

There has long been a productive tension within anarchist movements between prefigurative organizing within specific anarchist subcultural projects. These are expressed in a variety of anarchist subcultural practices, including infoshops, cabarets, bands and theater groups. At the same time anarchists have been and continue to be be involved in mass organizing oriented towards participation in broader movements of the working-class and the poor. Many are involved in both at the same time. The point here is not to force a choice between so-called lifestyle or social approaches to anarchism, thereby reinforcing a rather arbitrary division. Rather the intention is to go beyond such dualistic representations of anarchism. Indeed, as cases of the Anarchist Free Skool and Windsor Workers' Action Centre show, counter-cultural practices can make useful contributions to working-class or community organizing and resistance. Similarly, working-class or social anarchist perspectives can strengthen such counter-cultural practices, giving them a more radical character. Rather than an unbridgeable chasm, as some anarchists charge and some prefer, these tendencies are often interrelated and mutually engaged. One does not inherently preclude or close off the other.

There will be tendencies to preserve anarchism in small, ideologically pure, grouplets or narrowly constituted projects. Constructive anarchist Colin Ward has

warned anarchists about the rap of subcultural practices and avant-garde works "intended to shock the bourgeoisie, without regard for the fact that artists of all sorts have been shocking the bourgeoisie for a century, and that the rest of us find it hard to suppress a yawn" (Ward and Goodway 2003, 124). This will ensure the marginalization of anarchist movements and ideas. Some of the newly radicalized anarchists of the alternative globalization era have already taken up comfortable residence in the anarchist subcultural ghettos. These venues have allowed them to accumulate a fair bit of subcultural capital or alternative prestige. Some, such as Jeppesen (2004) will be content with that state of affairs, even advocate for it. Others have taken the similarly marginalizing path of protest mobilization, focusing energy preparing for short-term actions and moving from demonstration to demonstration. But anarchism can be, and in many cases is, much more as the following chapters will illustrate.

Chapter 2
"Seize the Switches": Media and Anarchy

Every tool is a weapon if you hold it right.

(Ani DiFranco)

Media skills are significant weapons in this age of mass rapid communication and represent significant aspects of contemporary movements against global governance practices. Such activities are necessary to impact the mainstream media, to bring people at large into the debate and to build networks of resistance to the global order. It is in this respect that we might understand the significance of alternative media or "counter-media" within anarchist movements. Recognizing the limits of mainstream political channels from which they are, in any event, largely excluded activists have decided to do it themselves. These various practices are all part of complex networks which are transnational, trans-boundary and trans-movement. While remaining highly suspicious of the impacts of technology, its class-exclusivity and its possible uses as means of social control anarchists have become proficient in wielding these technological products as tools for active resistance. In wielding these tools effectively anarchist have developed a busy presence on the Internet. Among the most important anarchist projects has been TAO Communications an organization that has played a major part in building global networks to counter capitalist globalism.

Mainstream Media and the Anarchists

Repeated media coverage of angry, black-clad, balaclava wearing youth demonstrating in the streets during global economic summits and political party conventions have suggested that anarchism is something akin to delinquency or even, in the more overheated reporting, terrorism. The actions attributed to so-called black bloc anarchists at global capitalist summits since the 1999 World Trade Organization (WTO) meetings in Seattle have returned anarchists to the headlines and landed them on the covers of *Time* and *Newsweek*. At the same time, the targeting of anarchists by the state and the startling images of police using pepper spray, tear gas and water cannons to disperse demonstrators, who are uncritically identified as anarchists, have constructed anarchists as something to be feared (Bergesen and Han 2005; Jansen 2009). That message has been reinforced in media associations of anarchism with chaos and disorder.

The portrayal of anarchists and anarchism by mainstream media raises questions regarding access to "worldwide multimedia communications networks" in this post-Gulf Wars world of media manipulation. It also suggests to some

commentators that in the age of flow through "smooth space" informational nodes may "displace boundaries and frontiers as the zones where practices of exclusion are concentrated" (Shapiro 2001, 83). Much research shows that mass media regularly provide coverage of political demonstrations which marginalizes protest groups (McLeod and Hertog 1992; Duemler 2000; Phillips 2000). This has been glaringly apparent in media coverage of the many demonstrations against global capitalism in North America over the past two years.[1]

> Corporate media have labeled the protesters as unorganized groups of radical environmentalists, single-issue extremists, and directionless anarchists bent on disrupting social order. The extensive involvement of unions and labor in Seattle has generally been explained as a one-time aberration, and the global trade issues focusing on NAFTA and the WTO have been mostly forgotten. (Phillips 2000, 43)

Recent studies of mass media reports of demonstrations find that "news stories about protests tend to focus on the protesters' appearances rather than their issues, emphasize their violent actions rather than their social criticism, pit them against the police rather than their chosen targets, and downplay their effectiveness" (McLeod and Detenber, 1999: 3). For example, news reports of anti-globalization protests stress the appearances of black bloc participants rather than the concerns which motivate them. Similarly emphasis is given to acts of property damage or conflicts with police. The issues raised by activists and the alternatives which they present are largely obscured.

McLeod and Detenber (1999), in their study of the effects of television coverage of an anarchist protest, have found that media reports which support the status quo significantly impact viewers' perceptions, leading them to be more critical of protesters, less critical of police and less likely to support protesters' rights. Status quo supportive reports also produce lower estimates of protest effectiveness and estimations of newsworthiness. Protesters are rarely called upon to counter the status quo perspectives or even allowed to offer a response.[2] According to media critics "protest coverage adopts 'official' definitions of the protest situation by focusing on questions of the 'legality of actions' as opposed to the 'morality of issues'" (McLeod and Hertog 1992, 260). In the process, "news coverage will

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1   As Edward Herman (1998, 202) makes clear, this is no coincidence: "It may be worth noting that the transnational media corporations have a distinct self-interest in global trade agreements, as they are among their foremost beneficiaries." Today, six firms control the majority of market share in daily newspapers, magazines, television, radio, books, and motion pictures in the U.S. (Duemler 2000, 47).

2   In Herman's (1998, 194) view: "The power of the U.S. propaganda system lies in its ability to mobilize an elite consensus, to give the appearance of democratic consent, and to create enough confusion, misunderstanding, and apathy in the general population to allow elite programs to go forward."

marginalize challenging groups, especially those that are viewed as radical in their beliefs and strategies" (McLeod and Detenber 1999, 6). Even, more, as in the case of anarchism, it can serve to frame opponents of the state and capital as terrorists (see Bergeman and Han 2005; Jensen 2009).

In the current context no groups are understood to be more radical than the black bloc anarchists of the alternative globalization struggles. Likewise no groups have been more subjected to marginalizing depictions than the anarchists. As McLeod and Detenber (1999, 19) note, "there is a pervasive social bias against anarchists. Anarchist movements are perceived, and in most cases mistakenly perceived, as groups that are against any and all laws." This is nothing new, of course. As Chomsky (1998, 184) reminds us, the specter of the anarchist or communist agitator has long been a favored trope of North American propaganda, dating back over a century (see also Hong 1992).

Especially the shadowy figure of the anarchist bomber, remains one of the most popular means for instilling fear and insecurity in people. In popular accounts the specter of anarchy is still used to conjure images of violence, chaos, destruction and the collapse of civilization (Bergeman and Han 2005). Nevermind that few anarchists have ever advocated violence let alone engaged in terrorist acts (Woodcock 1962; Bookchin 1995; Kornegger 1996). For Chomsky (1998, 185): "It's another technique of trying to create the marginalization of people, removing people from the actual social and political struggles that might make their lives better, and to keep them from working with one another by dividing them up in all sorts of ways." This is clearly seen in media overplaying of violence at recent demonstrations and the attribution of that violence to "anarchists" regardless of the actuality of events (Jensen 2009). While focusing on the motivations, concerns and issues behind demonstrations might highlight similarities with demonstrators, the context-free attention to violence makes such connections more difficult.

Mainstream media reports have depicted anarchists as anti-modern Luddites out to stop the flow of progress and human development. Such views overlook the richly constructive aspects of actual anarchist practice. As Phillips (2000, 44) notes, a closer look shows that the anarchists "have successfully used the Internet and satellite links to stream e-mail, radio and TV images throughout the world, and continue to work toward building real news systems independent of corporate media." Recognizing that corporate media are not likely to give up their control over information flows, anarchists have relied on the do-it-yourself principles which underlie much of their work. A main outlet for this DIY[3] media has been the Internet. Among the most proficient and important of the organizations developing and wielding these new media has been TAO Communications, an organization that has contributed much

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3   The Do-It-Yourself ethos has a long and rich association with anarchism. One sees it in Proudhon's notions of People's Banks and local currencies (see Proudhon 1969) which have returned in the form of LETS (Local Exchange and Trade Systems). In North America, nineteenth Century anarchist communes, such as those of Benjamin Tucker, prefigure the A-zones and squat communities of the present day.

to the formation and development of global anarchist networks. While TAO has continued on in a variety of activities, more or less depending on level and degree of involvement, energy of participants, collective resources and social context, during its heyday (roughly 1996 to 2006) the group provided a crucial infrastructures and necessary resources for a range of social struggles locally and, indeed, globally. This discussion focuses on activities during the highest period of activity within TAO.

Anarchy and the Net: TAO Communications[4]

Some suggest that the emergence of "flows" such as satellite communications, and the Internet, provide spaces for an enactment of politics outside of the bounded spaces of states (see Kuehls 1996). These "smooth" spaces are said to offer great opportunities for activism beyond sovereign territories. Indeed, as tools for organizing, "the new technologies are doubtless powerful, rendering international communication rapid, easy, and cheap, and creating the possibility of international bulletins and appeals that make the old telephone trees look rather quaint" (Hirshkop 1998, 212). The Internet especially has been crucial for organizing and communicating among grassroots activists over the past decade. "With a small computer, basic knowledge of the relevant software, and a modem providing access to a telephone line, one can transmit and receive messages, data, images and sounds, to and from any other international terminal" (Hirshkop 1998, 212). It has provided an important space for activists limited by traditional media channels which would otherwise not be available to them. Examples of significant efforts on the Net abound in recent years.

> National networks working for human rights in Burma and East Timor, labor organizers attempting cross-border alliances, students setting up national organizing projects, and many other groups rely on the Net to help them converse, share information, and strategize and coordinate across great distances in a short amount of time. (Drew 1997, 189)

Perhaps the most striking instance of a skillful traversing of "smooth space" were the now legendary communiqués of the Zapatistas of Chiapas, Mexico. The poetic and poignant messages, especially those attributed to Subcommandante Marcos, inspired activists across the globe and helped to build strong solidarity networks to support the Zapatistas and to try to build on their example in local struggles. Another influential example involved Radio B92 an independent broadcaster in Belgrade, Serbia, briefly shut down by the Milosevic regime for reporting on mass demonstration against the government in 1996. With the transmitter shut down the staff of B92 converted audio reports to computer audio files and were able to get

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4   This section would not have been possible without the participation of TAO worker P.J. Lilley.

their message out to a worldwide audience over servers provided by Progressive Networks of Seattle. Of note, anarchists played a large part in the networks emerged to support both Radio B92 and the Zapatistas. The organizing which has taken place around protests against the meetings of capitalist globalizers has further shown the possibilities for use of the Internet as an important means of communication.

However, "smooth space" is also occupied by those who would seek to contain open communications and limit participation and the creation of new political projects. The vision of the Internet as a realm of democracy and mutualism contrasts starkly with the rapid commercialization of the Net (see McChesney 1997).

> When the very structure of a society depends upon a lack of democracy, however, democracy will depend upon a fight, and upon social forces with the interests, will, and intelligence to struggle for it. Technology will doubtless have a role in this struggle, but it offers no shortcuts: one cannot buy democracy off a shelf or download it from a Website. It demands courage, fortitude, and political organization, and, as far as we can see, Microsoft has yet to design a software that can deliver these. (Hirschkop 1998, 217)

Political organization is exactly what the many tireless activists of TAO Communications have attempted to build over decades of organizing work. TAO Communications locates its prehistory in the Media Collective, a Toronto discussion circle formed in 1994 which was more situationist happening than formal collective. In the cross-fertilization which occurred at monthly meetings, Food Not Bombs (FNB), a mutual aid provider of free vegan meals, fed people, musicians met and played, rooftop gardeners shared seeds and tips, organizers of subway parties plotted and many guerrilla performances and cultural deconstructions took place. Before long, as often happens in such bubbling cauldrons, cracks appeared and in January of 1996 the Media Collective was laid to rest. TAO Communications, was one of the fragments picked up and reworked by anarchists, hackers and slackers and has since grown far beyond its Toronto roots to encompass a global network. Along the way TAO has given birth to a variety of offshoots, including A-Infos and resist.ca.

Organizers called themselves TAO as an acronym for mythical collectives of "The Anarchy Organization" (as if there could ever be one with a capital T) or "Those Amazing Orangutans" or "Tasty Apples and Oranges." More seriously the name alludes to non-Western anti-authoritarian traditions which pre-exist Pierre-Joseph Proudhon finding the word anarchy by centuries. The idea was to avoid capture by definition and state recognition; to stay active and keep moving, always changing. Due to the fetishization of the "new," which has become a characteristic mania of the current age, TAO members quickly embraced something viewed as quite old or passé, the anti-authoritarian revolutionary politics of anarchism, an anarchism infused with respect for the even older holism of Taoism. Notably, TAO turned to

their innovative approach to rethinking anarchism almost a decade before David Graeber would attempt to divide anarchism between the old and the new, and thereby reveal that even some anarchists remain unable to escape the fetishization of the supposedly novel.

For TAO organizers the so-called "new economy" has been marked chiefly by processes of glocalization. The more global relations and perceptions became, the more localized sizeable portions of the population became. After September 11, 2001, the conditions in which many working-class and poor people lived and felt were even further localized as borders closed and mobility became even more restricted, despite ongoing appeals to globalism and "free" trade. For TAO co-founder and organizer Jesse Hirsh, TAO emerged fighting a dual struggle. In his words: "On the one hand we're fighting local and provincial tyranny, and on the other hand we're involved in broader continental struggles against neo-liberalism and transnational capital" (2000). TAO sought alternative strategies to the so-called New Economy, and the mysticism surrounding it, which Hirsh refers to as the "virtualization of material reality." For TAO, the New Economy was characterized by making immaterial the basis for social and economic life. During the late 1990s Internet hype had become sheer mania. It's supposed vast, open, equal playing field was covertly but consistently being undermined by corporate privatization of the telecom infrastructure.

> It was also an idea at the time that the Internet was vast and open and resistant to censorship. As mostly tech workers, these anarchists had seen through the "California ideology" of net hype which valorized shiny, new, victimless speed capitalism. It was important before the window closed and the networks were completely carved up into proprietary corporate fiefdoms in order to secure any and all worker-owned and operated access (Lilley, personal communication).

TAO wanted to push against that closing window by opening up sourcecode and access, securing any and all worker owned and operated access, and cultivating an internationalist network based on mutual aid rather than profit. TAO workers wanted to maintain autonomy and be able thereby to extend support, infrastructure and relative security to radical communications for community organizing.

In the early years, even after the Seattle demonstrations signaled the breakthrough of alternative globalization struggles in North America, the battle was largely, in the view of TAO anarchists, "a clash of faiths rather than a genuine political economic struggle" (Hirsh 2000). It remained an ideological, even mythical struggle, both for capital and for alternative globalization activists. In Hirsh's view: "The focus is on media (and movement) spin and tactics, rather than long-term strategy and structure (for a better society and economic relations" (2000). The movements were still waging predominantly imaginal battles rather than taking up the more durable and forceful work of building the infrastructures needed to wage a struggle that might actually change social relations. The failure to take up this work was especially damaging given the vast amount of work

necessary to re-build such infrastructures given their collapse during the decades since the pinnacle of the New Left.

For TAO organizers, the emphasis was placed squarely on the material. In a society within which the cultural emphasis is directed towards attempting to make the material (capital) immaterial (the market, entertainment), TAO members chose to make the immaterial (the Internet) material (labor). As secretaries and coders for student, labor, and environmental groups, the emphasis has been on social struggle, on bodies in the streets, rather than so-called "virtual" reality. They have worked to mobilize the virtuality of the net(works) to serve the material needs of their local communities. TAO organizers opened an office and organizing center in an old office building in downtown Toronto—right in the heart of the communications district. TAO quickly set about providing meeting space for community groups who otherwise had no regular or stable place to meet. Groups that met at the TAO office included the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty, the Industrial Workers of the World, Anti-Racist Action (ARA), the Anti-Poverty Working Group and Books to Prisoners. TAO also provided logistical support for mass demonstrations. This included communication and radio coordination during actions as well as reports on police movements and legal support. TAO also offered media reports and irregular web radio for organizers to broadcast during actions. TAO anarchists have seen themselves not as activists, hackers or geeks, part of a hip tech subculture. Rather they have understood themselves as communications workers and organized as such. They formed a workplace branch of the IWW, Communication Local 560. The preferred approach was collective organizing. TAO traveling organizers denied the Internet's very existence, and talked instead about ownership of the means of production and other such sticky aspects of old-fashioned materiality. In Hirsh's (2000) words:

> The Internet does not exist. Instead it is the shift to a Network Society that is driving the changes our world is experiencing. The displacements and reconfigurations we're experiencing are a result of what can be termed Informational Capitalism, as the basis of our political economy shifts from Industrial to Informational means of production. What is "old" exists within a mutually contracting and expanding shell of the "new." Co-existence marks our time in history, as new modalities emerge alongside the preservation and reinforcement of the old. New network cultures flourish as fundamentalism marks and in many cases protects existing and in some cases ancient cultures.

Yet the emphasis on new capitalist social relations was too often overlooked or underplayed by activists too caught up in the perceived newness of their struggles and the new possibilities held out by the promise of technological innovation and connectivity. In a manner envisioned by the revolutionary syndicalist Georges Sorel in the early years of the violent upsurges that would throttle the twentieth century, the new radicals were captured by their own social myth. As Hirsh (2000) suggests:

> The body of this movement is mythology, and the core of the mythology is the
> Internet itself. The primary myth that unites both sides of this conflict is the belief
> in consensus over the Internet. Email organizing is central to the organizing of
> either body, whether it is the bureaucracy of the WTO and IMF or the email lists
> of the DAN, PGA, or similar group.

This mythic emphasis has only become more expansive as the evolution of Web
2.0 and social networking tools like Facebook groups and Twitter organizing
expand. Some suggest that in the future most, perhaps all organizing can be done
on Facebook (Lesley Wood, personal communication). Yet the pursuit of this
myth has left organizers more adept at pursuing and performing spectacle than
building infrastructures that might allow movements to break the bounds of the
permitted and commodified. In Hirsh's (1996) view: "The Internet is the ultimate
red herring, the dazzling distraction that abducts our attention while power plays
with totality. Instead of addressing the decline of democracy in the real world,
Internet consumers discuss and debate the democratization of the Internet." For
TAO, the Internet is the most dominant myth of our time. It does not exist but
rather stands as an abstraction. Yet is has been successfully used to shift belief
systems and alter behaviors in dramatic fashion (Hirsh, personal communication).
This myth has a specific character, a specific meaning that makes it appealing to
alternative globalization activists, including anarchists. The mythic character and
meaning of the Internet is, for TAO organizers, none other than Utopia.

> It has become the technological metaphor large enough to absorb all the hopes,
> dreams, and desires of a civilization. Millions have rushed on-line in search of
> a meaning, a harmonious narrative that describes change. Billions are sunk into
> the Internet to feed the hunger to be the future: we become Spaceship Earth via
> the Starship Enterprise, "Free Enterprise." (Hirsh 1996)

Curiously, the focus remains decidedly on the immaterial, both for advocates
of capitalist globalization and for opponents. Institutions of capital, such as the
WTO (World Trade Organization), IMF (International Monetary Fund) and OAS
(Organization of American States), pursue and implement policies that have
consequences several degrees removed both from their intent or from those who
formulated them. Similarly, however, anti-capitalist or anti-corporate groups
that have emerged as part of alternative globalization movements, such as DAN
(Direct Action Network), PGA (People's Global Action) or IMC (Independent
Media Centers), have focused on broad campaigns and coalitions with appeal to
many constituents, without much regard for specific local needs or communities,
but which, over the course of a decade, have been able to achieve relatively
little in terms of challenging the power and mobility of transnational capital
(Hirsh, personal communication). This is one reason that it has been difficult for
alternative globalization movements to clearly express what they are for. With
no shared vision for a future society, what was once provided by socialism,

communism or, of course, anarchism, beyond further campaigns and protests, the movements have been unable to pose compelling alternatives to the status quo. Without the development and maintenance of infrastructures of resistance allowing rooted in specific community needs they have found it difficult to sustain broader struggles to achieve real transformations of social relations. As Hirsh (2000) suggests: "Corporate media may be concentrating and homogenizing a vision of globalization that excludes genuine narratives and stories, but alternative and independent media are themselves guilty of similar mistakes in depicting what is actually transpiring and what is relevant to our struggles." The result has been a rather detached battle of three letter acronyms, as TAO members have called it, largely captured within mass media circuits as commodities for consumption. Thus the alternative globalization protests at Seattle, Washington, Quebec City, Genoa, or Prague become reduced to objects in the market for what is sometimes called "riot porn," sensational images of activists fighting cops. What they are fighting over is less important than the fight itself.

> The Battle of the 3 Letter Acronyms, whether in Seattle, DC, or any of the many spin-offs, has been more of a carnival, marked by mass attempts of direct action, met with massive mobilizations of state security forces, covered on both sides by excessive media spin and propaganda. In the end what becomes clear is that the name of the game is containment, with either side trying to surround their opponent with the myths and messages of their respective movements or institutions. (Hirsh 2000)

For TAO organizers, one significant, and debilitating, consequence of the drift to the immaterial of activist groups focused on broad and abstract campaigns, has been the limited, even exclusive, ethno-social-economic makeup of their membership. Groups like the DAN and IMC, as well as counter-cultural anarchist projects such as Crimethinc, tend to be composed almost exclusively of well educated, privileged, "middle-class" white youth. This contrasts with the vast majority of the world who suffer the most damaging effects of global capitalism, who happen to be people of color, the working-class and poor. Given this disparity, Hirsh asks if the activists are to become little more than a new *noblesse oblige*. To address these concerns, TAO organizers tried to identify, and avoid, the processes and practices employed by groups like DAN in doing outreach and identifying targets for their campaigns and actions. Activists ask how the IMF and World Bank set policies and choose priorities, but they need to ask the same questions of themselves. The notorious unresponsiveness and anti-participatory character of large corporations must not be repeated by media activists. Otherwise they will play along in only representing the narrow interests of global elites (Hirsh 2000).

> In returning to the myth of the Internet, one can see that in fact it is the super-structure of the containment mechanism that frames these phenomena. If

anything, the message of the new economy, and the purpose of the Internet myth itself are to contain and hold everything and anything within itself.

The Internet is, for TAO, a super-imposed projection of the American Dream. It is the supposed land of opportunity, the mythical freedom of the market, the world of wealth and success for all who desire it. In the same way that people around the world one day dreamed of getting to America, everyone now wants to get to the Internet. For TAO, this new world utopia is really "an immaterial depiction of a very real (material) military prison industrial complex driven by a religion of technology and obsession with entertainment" (Hirsh 2000). It is the embodiment, the materiality, that anarchists must identify and contest.

> Through the virtualization of our culture, the medium of mythology reconstructs reality to manufacture consent. Growth and development are guided and directed by the few at the expense of the many. The technological mythology is reality in the virtual world, and our consuming desires drive us to live virtually perfect. In the process we have negated our sovereignty and secured the Platonic chains around our neck as we stare at the shadows on the cave wall. (Hirsh 1996)

While the Internet may be a myth, it is rooted in a specific material reality which formed it and continues to shape it. For TAO this material reality must be kept in mind at all times and organizing efforts must continue to address it. The material reality behind the Internet is, of course, the telecommunications industry, its vast media conglomerates, the multinational companies that profit from it and which are rapidly growing, expanding, monopolizing. While the Internet is offered as something of a utopia, the promise of a new world, TAO has focused activist attentions on the telecommunications infrastructures that actually provide "the means by which these dreams and domains actually exist" (Hirsh 2000). The Internet provides an ideological weapon for capital within ongoing struggles, such that the material basis of the new economy can be obscured or screened from accessible view.

> The information economy, the crisis economy, the global economy, are all pseudonyms for an economy based on perpetual war. Capital centralizes into the hands of conglomerates, originally the global military industrial complex: AT&T, General Electric, Westinghouse, Disney. A melee of media mergers make the way for corporate giants to wage information war in the battle for your mind. (Hirsh 1996)

TAO emerged from this context as a counter-power, organizing labor and real—rather than virtual—social networks "while building alternative network infrastructure for genuine political, social and economic change" (Hirsh 2000). Their activities have been geared, from the beginning, towards making the immaterial, material. In their view they set out to actualize the Internet, as a social

network, primarily through access and literacy. This was not access to technology, but to real world social and political networks. They sought to (re)discover the real, material, Internet (Hirsh, personal communication).

> We understood that Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (the freedom to hold opinions without interference and seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers) was in itself too much ideal, and not enough assertion, so was formed a 10-point program of concrete demands, based on the Black Panther Party's. (Lilley, personal communication)

The revised 10-point program reads as follows:

> 1) We want freedom. We want the power to resist tyranny and inevitability.
> We believe in community-based participatory democracy arising from direct action and public accountability. In this we believe that people will not be free until we are all able to effectively engage our society as equals in a process of voluntary cooperation. This process includes the freedom for everyone to become, belong, and just plain be, in a manner that does not violate the rights of others.
>
> 2) We want full employment and support for all people, engendering political, economic, and social egalitarianism.
> We believe that every person is inherently entitled to either full employment or a guaranteed income. We believe that the means of production should be placed in the hands of the people, so that communities are able to organize full employment, providing a responsible standard of living which sustainably tries to meet the needs of all people now and in the future.
>
> 3) We want an end to the robbery of our communities by capitalists.
> We believe that that the global ruling class and it's corporate economic entities have been built on plunder, pillage, conquest, and tyranny. We demand an end to economic slavery and dependence, with the cancellation of all debt, and restitution to be paid to all aboriginal and formerly colonized peoples.
>
> 4) We want free and decent housing, fit for the shelter of human beings.
> We believe that if the landowners and landlords will not freely give decent housing, then the land should be made into cooperatives, so that local communities, if necessary with aid, can build and make decent housing fit for their people.

5) We want free participatory education for all people that allows us to explore the diverse histories found in our cultures, and the diverse roles we all play in the present-day society.

We believe in an education system that enables people to develop a knowledge of self within a participatory and democratic learning process that also allows and encourages the transcendence of self.

6) We want an end to all forms of war. We want all people exempt from military service.

We believe that people should not be forced into military service, while also recognizing that people will protect themselves from violence and attack, by whatever means necessary. In this we support communities' efforts to organize self-defense groups to defend and protect their safety from the violence of the state.

7) We want an immediate end to the oppression and victimization of peoples at the hands of the state.

We support and are involved in feminist, as well as aboriginal, black, queer, youth, human, and animal liberation struggles, including the valuation of elders. We are anti-fascist, anti-sexist, anti-racist, anti-ageist, anti-homophobic, anti-speciest, anti-ableist, anti-authoritarian, and against neoliberalism and neoconservatism. We support the liberation of identity, and the right to self-determination.

8) We want freedom for all political prisoners, and a gradual abolition of all prisons, jails, and authoritarian mental-health institutions.

We believe that the legal system is neither just, nor representative of the needs and demands of the people. We envision a society that employs community engagement rather than social ostracization in dealing with those most disaffected.

9) We want a justice system that resides in the communities it affects, responds to the needs of all within those communities, protects the inalienable human rights of all, and seeks resolution rather than revenge, equality rather than the protection of elite interests.

We believe when all parties are represented, equally and fairly, as part of a due democratic process, that conflict resolution, aiming towards consensus, tends to sufficiently resolve crises, and leave all parties content. In this we admire and take as a model a number of aboriginal justice systems.

10) We want clean air, clean water, free universal access to all forms of media, health care, and public transportation, as well as the ability to produce and consume foods, herbs, and drinks, free of industrial toxins, pesticides, genetic engineering and manipulation.

> We believe that our environment and our interaction with and within it, determines not only our health and well-being, but our ability to participate as active members of our society.

Several projects were carried forward or initiated to win these demands. Early among the most important of these has been A-Infos. A-Infos is an ongoing mailing list culled from paper addresses the Toronto publication *Anarchives* had gathered since the 1960s, joined with the e-list established by the I-AFD in Europe, and supported by Freedom Press, which has operated out of London since Kropotkin and others began it in the 1880s. A-Infos is now carried on its own server within the TAO matrix, and its multiple lists and digests distribute news "by, for, and about" anarchists to over 1,200 subscribers in 12 languages, with substantial daily traffic, as as well as print and radio reproduction around the world. A-Infos has become the most important daily news source on anarchist activities. It has been crucial in posting anarchist calls for participation in anti-globalization protests years prior to Seattle and continuing to today.

Other projects supported by TAO with more or less success include: the Student Activist Network, the Direct Action Media Network (an unfortunately defunct precursor to the Indymedia conglomerate), PIRG.CA (public interest research groups) and the International Anarchist News Service. Other solidarity projects include work with the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty, Esgenoopetitj (colonial name: Burnt Church) First Nations, CUPE 3903 (strike-winning teaching assistants at York University), and numerous groups formed to oppose Bush's wars after September 11. Groups with whom TAO has worked as part of their organizing networks are Anti-Racist Action (ARA), the Black Radical Congress (BRC) and the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty, with many TAO workers enjoying dual membership in these other groups. From the original single machine, TAO came to operate at least eight boxes, serving the needs of over 1,000 members, a spread of organizations and individuals, who self-manage thousands of lists, hundreds of web-pages, as well as databases. From initial support for alternative media movements and micropower, pirate, radio broadcasts, TAO went on to support a variety of community-based movements, such as KEEP (Korean Diaspora), ANALAI (Tamil diaspora) and LACAR (Latinos Against Racism). Besides basic shell access without advertisements or space quotas, organized TAO workers have been able to offer secure access to web-based e-mail, and Internet Relay Chat. These projects, as mutual engagements of shared labor, have been understood as manifestations of infrastructures of resistance, and are viewed as contributing to further infrastructures. This counter-power, within TAO organizations, has been localized, emphasizing solidarity and diversity. As Hirsh (2000) recalls:

> We found it relatively easy to drop GNU/Linux systems into the networks, and as a result, a considerable amount of North American organizing happens over the tao.ca networks, in addition to groups from all over the world. This primarily manifests as email lists, but we offer all types of network facilities that we can,

including web, email, chat, databases, other network-based media. With that said our primary resource that people come to us for our own political and social networks. We provide the infrastructure that brings movements and groups together across time and space.

The starting point was a joyful leap into the gift economy. They started with labor, hardware, bandwidth and code, through open source free software, and guided these resources to political and social activism. Right at the start, TAO anarchists were clear to point out that they were not an Internet Service Provider (ISP), even an alternative one. They do not charge for access and in their view all communications facilities should be free and freely accessible. Thus their critical support for article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. For Hirsh (2000):

> Personally I see network communications as an aspect of cognition, and the sheer idea of paying for access to me is an equation of paying to use the cognitive abilities of one's mind. I've always regarded computer networks as externalized cognitive facilities, which to pay for, would be in my opinion, the ultimate in bondage and slavery. Paying for the labour behind it however is something completely different.

Workers should be recognized and supported adequately for their labor. In 1999 TAO workers joined the revolutionary unionist Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) with the intention of forming a union branch among telecom workers in the Toronto area. It was believed that this would solidify syndicalist and cooperative structures, help with the rotation of job tasks, improve benefits for TAO workers, and generally raise class consciousness, particularly in the on-line arena where labor is too often made invisible and victimized by speed need. Access to TAO communications systems and political networks has involved an active membership system based on solidarity and mutual aid. This participatory arrangement helps to alleviate tendencies towards a consumerist model that separates producers and users, with distinctions in power and control within the infrastructure. Each new member takes on rights and responsibilities contributing to the greater whole of the anarcho-syndicalist network (Hirsh, personal communication).

> In Barcelona in 1936, anarchist liberation of the city was greatly assisted by the daring seizure of the Telephone Exchange. Currently technology is used more as a tool of fascist repression, of surveillance and control, than of the kind of liberation TAO seeks. It will be ever more important to organize workers under that panoptic gaze, from the call centres now set up inside prison walls to the young women assembling chips in Malaysia, if we are ever to win our freedom. Seize the switches! (Lilley, personal communication)

Though much attention to anarchism comes from propaganda of the deed, most anarchists still recognize publication and communication are quite important to a winning strategy. "To publicly claim responsibility for our actions and offer explanation, to organize greater strength, shape context and record our history, it's the ability to publish that often raises the stakes and pushes us forward" (Lilley, personal communication). That may be partly why libertarians of all stripes took so quickly to the Internet and why its language of openness and freedom without censorship has become a target for commodification by the corporate colonizers of the Internet.

Throughout, TAO members have always insisted that, despite their global reach and connections across continents, the best way to relate to them was through face-to-face engagement and participation. This appeal recognizes, in the manner of the communist motto "from each according to their ability, to each according to their need," that not everyone can participate in the same way, fashion or extent. The emphasis is on participation in whatever way one is able. This is not a market exchange. Indeed TAO explicitly chose to devote their resources to working with individuals and communities that lacked technological resources, rather than unions, NGOs or funded community groups that have enjoyed access to relatively greater resources, even as this has limited their own access to resources.

> The only way to catch our virus is to be infected by an existing member. We are constantly flooded by requests for help and access to our networks, as we are one of the only worker-run member controlled network facilities in the world, and hence the demands and stress placed upon our organization are substantial. While we have been able to inspire and in some cases literally help establish similar organizations and structures elsewhere in the world, we do not represent established organizations like big-labour or large NGOs. (Hirsh 2000)

They have always been fully aware that their resources are scarce and the channels of support available to them are limited. They have not tried to commit to more than they are realistically able to deliver. In their words, they "are the rank-and-file of the movement against capital" (Hirsh 2000). As such, the emphasis is upon their labor and they recognize that that labor needs to be replenished.

For TAO, if the Internet can be said to exist after all, it is crucial to remember that we—the people who produce, engage with, and use the Internet—are it. Anarchists need to, through projects like TAO, work against the reification of the Internet, its separation from real labor and real struggles. Communities of the working-class and poor are one side of the power behind the scenes. They are forces engaging the spectacle that has been manifested as the detached battles of globalization (and the three letter acronyms). At the same time it is important to identify and challenge the other power in this, the "glocalized state held up by transnational capital, which is distributed, volatile, brutally violent, and contrary to what is depicted in the mythology: materialist if not fundamentalist" (Hirsh, 2000). For TAO, despite the novelty of Tweets and Facebook "organizing" there

is no quick substitute for the long, hard, everyday work of building more durable infrastructures in the here and now of daily life. A glocalized resistance that does not forget the local, the face-to-face. Despite the mythology of alternative globalization struggles, a mythology constructed by alternative globalization activists themselves, the "new" struggles are not all that different from the "old." Neither are the sources from which people and communities draw strength and nourishment.

> While most people pay attention to and try to play the Carnival of the Shell Game, we're involved in the real struggle. The struggle to defend against the attack on the poor, the rising tides of xenophobia, and the fear that comes with the displacement of rapid technological change (induced by expansive Informational Capitalism). It is time to stand and defend our selves by any means necessary. While this may not always be on the streets, it is always in social networks. (Hirsh 2000)

The anarchists of TAO Communications do not view the Internet as the "vehicles of new and more democratic social and political relationships" (Hirschkop 1998, 208). It is simply one possibly useful tool, the usefulness of which will be determined by the ways in which it is wielded and the character of the forces wielding it. "Perhaps the most striking change in the late 1990s is how quickly the euphoria of those who saw the Internet as providing a qualitatively different and egalitarian type of journalism, politics, media and culture has faded" (McChesney 1997, 180). This is certainly the case as far as the notion that the Internet alone, or primarily, could provide these qualitatively different forms is concerned.[5] The recent protests against global capital have situated the Internet as an important tool used by activist organizations, but, for TAO anarchists, this is only accurate within the context of actual movements "on the ground."

The trajectory of TAO sows the challenges facing anarchist infrastructures of resistance. As TAO became larger and enjoyed growing success, a number of subculturalists, or lifestyle anarchists, entered the group, largely because it seemed hip and held a certain subcultural capital. The subculturalists withdrew from workplace organizing, and shifted focus to more personalistic, artistic projects under a worker coop model. Anarchist communists and worker organizers turned their energies towards deeper involvement within community-based movements. Eventually the name OAT came to be used to signal the second growth.

Yet the experiences in self-determination, mutual aid and organizing and technical and practical skills gained and shared through TAO work, are also

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5   We should bear in mind Edward Herman's (1998) notes of caution regarding the threat to democratic use of new technologies by corporate concerns for profit and business influence on the flows of information. "Although the new technologies have great potential for democratic communication, left to the market there is little reason to expect the Internet to serve democratic ends" (Herman 1998, 201).

important resources. TAO organizers have been able to take the skills and lessons developed over years of daily labor apply them in a range of efforts in anti-poverty groups, rank-and-file workplace organizing, immigration defense networks and educational environments. Many of these projects will be discussed in following chapters. And this is crucial. Infrastructures of resistance provide opportunities and supports for the development and sharing of such experiential resources. Experiences in radical, even militant, organizing, and struggle, and capacities for moving beyond the conventional limits of political action (and the confidence to do so) are necessary resources for social change, but are too often lacking.

Anarchy and DIY Networks

Castells, Yazawa and Kiselyova (1996, 22) suggest that marginal movements are typically rendered invisible by corporate mass media until they "explode in the form of media events that call public attention, and reveal the existence of profound challenges to everyday normalcy." Yet these dramatic mobilizations are merely the surface manifestations of much larger movements composed of various emergent processes and practices. "These innovative, submerged networks act as 'cultural laboratories' in which new collective identities are formed" (Purdue, Dürrschmidt, Jowers, and O'Doherty 1997, 647). These laboratories can provide significant infrastructures of resistance, providing a base and support for more visible, and often dramatic struggles.

Anarchism makes up networks of autonomous communications. Influential anarchist writer Hakim Bey refers to these autonomous networks as "the Web." The current forms of the Web consist of the networks of zines and marginal publications, pirate radios, web sites, listservers and hacking. Bey (1991, 110) argues that at this point the Web is primarily a support system capable of sharing information from one autonomous zone to another. Despite his use of the conventional terminology of "the Web," Bey is at pains to make clear that what he is speaking of does not refer solely to computer technology. The information webwork of anarchy consists of the network of zines and marginal publications, pirate radio, web sites, listservers and hacking.

> The networks make up a distinct material infrastructure of communication that uses the technology of mass commercial society—computers, copy machines, mail system—but steers the use of these technologies toward nonprofit, communitarian ends. (Duncombe 1997, 178–179)

The Web provides logistical support for the autonomous zones, but, even more fundamentally, it also helps bring the autonomous zone into being. In Bey's view the autonomous zone "exists in information-space as well as in the 'real world'" (1991, 109). The Web, in part, makes up for the lack of duration and locale experienced by many autonomous zones. Its networks make up the anarchist underground of

the "future in the present." The significance rests not in the specifics of technology, but in "the openness and horizontality of the structure" (Bey 1991: 11). Material practices coincide with anarchist approaches to collective work.

> The network also lends itself to an ideal of social organization. One of the reasons that anarchism is so prevalent as a philosophy in the underground world is that it is a close abstraction of the network: voluntary, nonhierarchical, with omnidirectional communication flows, and each citizen a creator/consumer. (Duncombe 1997, 179)

As Plows (1998: 155) notes, the decentralized, fluid structure of DIY webs "allows actions to happen rapidly and spontaneously, without the limitations of the 'top down' approach." The avoidance of hierarchical organizing helps to avoid some of the problems which have "broken the militancy of other … revolutionary groups" (Plows, 1998: 155). It reflects a rank-and-file infrastructure in which those affected by specific issues and concerns direct and shape the character of the organization, strategies and tactics.

> It is a culture derived from a common discontent with the self-interest and blandness that is endemic in western society, and a rejection of the pyramidic power structure that only ever disempowers those at the bottom, and corrupts and compromises those at the top. The alternative power structure is a networking of self-responsibility and co-operation. (Merrick quoted in McKay 1998, 40).

One result of the flexible and participatory structures characterizing DIY is that, as Plows (1998, 155) suggests, "an initially small and local campaign has the potential to become the focus for a large-scale national protest site in the time it takes to network the information." Such rapid expansion and mobilization have been characteristic features of contemporary anarchist movements.

> The 'rapid response' networking technique is highly effective, and links back to anarchist methodologies and philosophies—there's a reliance on cooperation between autonomous groups, and a mistrust of traditional hierarchical or centralised structures and strategies which are considered as 'part of the problem.' (Plows 1998, 155–157)

The emphasis is on autonomy and solidarity of movements and the Web allows for concerted actions derived through mutuality and affinity rather than the command structures of parties and unions. While media create confusion about the message of anarchism, the anarchists "are clear on their objectives of building sustainable democratic grassroots communities that respect the environment and minimize domination in any form" (Phillips 2000, 44). For anarchists such communities might constitute social relations in a way that challenges and contests the

bureaucratic, hierarchical interferences of distant corporate bodies such as the WTO, IMF and World Bank.

Collaborative Production and the Digital Economy

A key contemporary issue—one that is socially and politically charged—involves the question of whether collaborative production and ownership in diverse areas and the growth of opportunities for collaboration, enabled especially through digital technologies and the Internet, might pose a serious challenge to the hegemony of international property rights regimes. Collaborative ownership extends throughout human communities historically and finds vibrant contemporary expressions in a variety of places, including academic research, open source software and community service networks. At the same time collaborative ownership is more than ever before confronted by powerful institutions and organizations, with the full weight of multinational corporations and national states behind them, seeking to extend the private control and management of both the processes and products of creative activities.

As Rishab Ghosh (2005a) suggests, intellectual property rights and policy decisions that treat knowledge and art as physical forms of property, far from enhancing creativity, actually limit public access to creativity, and discourage collaborative creative efforts while threatening to decrease creativity overall. For Ghosh a clear indicator of the extent of the conversion from knowledge and art to "intellectual property" is the widespread assumption that creative production is necessarily individual and private, with collaboration occurring only under commercial conditions. Collaboration, as in open source software development where thousands of people might organize informally without ever meeting, to produce high quality works, is often viewed as being an exception. Even more this exceptionalism is often explained as having a predominantly ideological basis. As Ghosh suggests, there is a somewhat romanticized notion that collaborative production and ownership on a large scale are driven by ideology and require the commitment of idealists in order to occur (2005a, 1).

Lost in hegemonic neoliberal discourses of proprietary rights and market competitiveness is the recognition of human sociality—that the greatest human achievements have been collaborative efforts. In the current context, as Ghosh notes, collaboratively creating knowledge has come to be viewed as a novelty (2005a, 3). As Ghosh suggests: "Newton should have had to pay a license fee before being allowed even to see how tall the 'shoulders of giants' were, let alone to stand upon them" (2005a, 3). At the same time open source and free software movements have played important parts in renewing public interest in collaborative creation more broadly. Indeed a strong and compelling case can be made that collaborative approaches to creativity are desirable and viable alternatives to proprietary frameworks based on widespread and strongly enforced intellectual property regimes. A great strength of the recent anarchist approaches is

the interest in exploring creativity from a diversity of perspectives, including, not only, economics, law and software development but also anthropology. Examples of recent and historic collaborative approaches range over collective ownership in indigenous societies, academic science and free software to name only a few cases that bring a historical perspective to bear on real world experiences. Examining creativity and the collaborative ownership of knowledge in different times and places to illustrate that collaboration is far from being a novel aspect of human societies.

Many analyses of collaborative and non-monetary production in digital economies, such as free software or the Internet, use the descriptor of gift-giving that supposedly characterizes "tribal" societies. Exchange within such societies is posed as consisting of the altruistic offering of gifts without expectations of exchanges. This description is popular in discussions of a variety of contemporary practices and is used to explain activities ranging from informal economies to do-it-yourself subcultures. Some anthropologists, however, suggest that production and exchange within tribal societies are more complexly arranged than is suggested by notions of altruistic gift-giving. Various anthropological accounts suggest that tribal societies engage in non-monetary or non-proprietary forms of production and exchange in a manner that builds complex webs of reciprocal obligation that bind members together (Ghosh 2005b, 7). The evidence presented in these anthropological works suggests that gift giving in tribal societies is carried out within a context of reciprocity and expected returns, either in terms of status, rights or more gifts.

At the same time the anthropological accounts suggest that there are relevant similarities between collaborative production and non-monetary exchange in tribal societies and collaborative ownership in the digital economy (Ghosh 2005b, 7). In refining altruistic notions of the gift economy, however, these anthropologists argue that in many cases gift-giving is based on the self-interested participation of individuals and communities connected through complex webs of rights and obligations. This is not to be taken, as property rights advocates might wish, as an argument against notions of the gift economy but rather is offered to suggest the multiple and complex manifestations of collaborative production and non-monetary exchange with human communities. Strathern (2005), for example, shows that in certain communities of Papua New Guinea one sees, rather than true collective ownership, multiple ownership or multiple authorship, where each "owner" might claim a definable but inseparable part of a collectively owned whole. Similarly Leach (2005) explores multiple ownership through a comparison of local practices in the Madang area of Papua New Guinea and global contributions to Linux development. In both cases individual contributions, even where they can be clearly identified, have no value outside of the collaboratively produced whole of which they are part. Leach (2005) makes the crucial point that the nature of ownership is based substantially on the mode of production and the processes of creation. This point is reinforced in the works of several anarchist anthropologists, such as Pierre Clastres, David Graeber or Harold Barclay, whose works explore, on the basis of

extensive anthropological evidence, collaborative production and distribution that is not motivated by concerns with exchange. For such alternative perspectives the reader might wish to consult Barclay's *People Without Government* or, more recently, Graeber's *Toward an Anthropological Theory of Value*.

At the same time Ghosh makes explicit his preference for analysis based on rational actors concerned with "balancing their *value-flows*" (2005c, 111). For Ghosh, the self-interested people engaged in collaborative production will do so as long as they take more from it than they put in. While most collaborative work occurs without clearly identified one-to-one transactions, as Ghosh recognizes, the author still insists on modeling collaborative participants as making rational self-interested contributions as long as benefits are greater than costs.

One should always be cautious about attempts to use rather conventional economic analysis to explain complex social relations and practices and Ghosh's reliance on such limited theories is quite unsatisfactory. Given the rather extensive sociological literature contesting the claims of rational choice theories, the absence of a sociological analysis is a glaring omission here. More nuanced and convincing arguments are offered by Yochai Benkler (2005). Moving beyond rational choice perspectives, Benkler provides an interesting discussion of systems of collaborative production that are sustained without direct reference to the benefits accruing to individual participants. Benkler (2005) notes that the Internet has enabled structures of production that are sustained even where the motives of contributors do not appear to be driven by a "rational choice" for individual rewards.

Some anarchists and libertarian Marxists have pursued the notion that the growing application of property rights to knowledge and creativity is in fact a new enclosure movement, similar to the enclosures of common land during the period of capitalism's emergence from feudalism.[6] Indeed it might be suggested that an increasingly vigorous application of the language of property rights to knowledge and creativity represents an enclosure of the mind. If the imposition of property regimes on knowledge and creativity constitutes a second enclosure movement, then what, one might ask, is emerging as the equivalent of the Diggers or Ranters? Against more pessimistic accounts of the new enclosures, John Clippinger and David Bollier (2005) suggest that the growing global acclaim for free software heralds the beginnings of a renaissance of the commons. The anarchists of TAO Communications provide one example of what the new Diggers might look like. At the same time current, and proposed, international trade policies pose tangible threats to the future of the knowledge commons and collaboration. For TAO:

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6   There has been growing body of literature recently that offers serious attempts to theorize political and social aspects of new enclosures, especially around intellectual property. Most notable are the projects that have been undertaken over the last decade by Massimo DeAngelis and the Commoner Group and by the Midnight Notes Collective.

> We must not abandon our bodies in the technological rush to be everyone and everywhere. We come from the earth and to the earth we will return. When our feet are on the ground we are more likely to not only recognize, but make change. Taking care of our bodies is the same as taking care of the land upon which we live. We must reclaim our land in the face of a cataclysmic environmental threat, and we must reclaim our bodies in the face of a cataclysmic nutritional technological threat. The Internet is a mind, a living global growing mind, that is demonstrating self-awareness in its drive for consciousness. We must engage and reclaim this mind, as it is collectively our own. In reclaiming our bodies, we must also reclaim our mind. It will be our love that will carve the path to reclaiming our mind. However we must be sure that the distortion of our love, as manifest through media mythology does not destroy our mind through its own reversal. (Hirsh 1996)

Some autonomist Marxist theorists, in looking at the interpersonal relations and exchanges of information associated with the computer or information society, have identified what they see as an increasingly collective appropriation of "communication" and apparatuses of communication (Cleaver 1992b, 9). Cooperative self-management is a striking feature of computerized communications networks. On a nearly global level computer networks, that may originate in workplace or institutional activities, are being increasingly appropriated by people for their own uses, for self-valorizing activities that challenge capitalist modes of valorization (Cleaver 1992b).

> Originally constructed and operated to facilitate the development of technology at the service of capital (ARPANET), contemporary networks (e.g. INTERNET, BITNET) have not only been largely constructed by the collectivities which use them—and retain the material stamp of that autonomy in their uncentralized and fluid technical organization—but constitute a terrain of constant conflict between capitalist attempts at reappropriation and the fierce allegiance of most users to freedom of use and "movement" throughout the "cyber" space they have created and constantly recreate. (Cleaver 1992b, 10)

Cleaver (1992b) suggests that the class character of the confrontation involved is revealed in the struggles between "hackers" and the state. Hackers certainly provide the most visible and perhaps notorious examples of battles over autonomy in computer networks. Organizational projects such as TAO or other projects such as riseup.net and resist.ca, offer more sustained aspects of those struggles. As TAO's Jesse Hirsh (1996) suggests:

> If we undress the myths surrounding the Internet, and examine the true meaning of the word, we see that it is not a story of technological revolution. Rather it is a narrative of popular revolution. It isn't about technology, it's about people. People coming together and expressing themselves freely. That in itself is a

revolution. We are the Internet. We are the revolution. We drive it, we make it, we use it, we are it. This is the return of the subjective experience. I think with my brain, but I act with my heart.

These efforts both break down the barriers to free movement put up by capital, in its efforts to enclose the Internet spaces and networks, and provide creative alternatives that seek to extend free movement.

> What has been striking over the last few years has been the constitution of a proliferating network of networks almost totally devoted both to the subversion of the current order and to the elaboration of autonomous communities of like-minded people connected in non-hierarchical, rhizomatic fashion purely by the commonality of their desires. (Clever 1992b, 10)

Examples include the many projects that make up the TAO network as well as similar projects such as riseup.net and resist.ca. Cleaver (1992b) points out that much less visible are the many different participants who use the technology for their own, and their friends' interests, even when accessing the network via institutional entry points (such as academic, corporate or state). An important aspect of these networks is that many participants in these various collectivities are workers in a variety of institutions. This was a key realization that motivated the practice of TAO organizers. While so-called computer "geeks" (well-educated youth from middle-class backgrounds) do play a significant part in the networks, they are not even the majority of participants (Cleaver 1992b). For TAO anarchists the emphasis has been on an active approach to media, a struggle over social and political awareness and, in the language of "older" struggles, for liberation (Hirsh and Lilley, personal communication). Freedom cannot be granted by external bodies, particularly not by any of the three letter acronyms that crowd the stage of globalization. For TAO, freedom has to be claimed, to be taken.

Conclusion

Anarchists recognize the processes by which some ideas gain ascendancy while others are marginalized. They know that access to corporate media is by no means "free and equal." Anarchists share with many academic media critics an understanding of mainstream media as geared to the interests of established corporate powers. The Internet has been about the unknown, living with and immersing oneself in the unknown. Yet there is much to learn about what resides behind the curtain. The question of hegemony attempts to address "which specific ideologies, representing the interests of which specific groups and classes will prevail at any given moment, in any given situation" (Hebdige 1993, 14). Anarchist communications may be understood as acts of counter-hegemony, or even anti-hegemony, which contest the views and practices of dominant institutions such

as global trade bodies, multinational corporations and neoliberal governments, with an eye toward abolishing them. Not only are these acts aimed at providing a sense that things can be done differently, they are also aimed at real practices of transformation of social relations.

> The symbiosis in which ideology and social order, production and reproduction, are linked is then neither fixed nor guaranteed. It can be prised open. The consensus can be fractured, challenged, over-ruled, and resistance to the groups in dominance cannot always be lightly dismissed or automatically incorporated. (Hebdige 1993, 16–17)

Shared views and practices help to forge solidarity among participants, "provided that there are some outlets which publicize group activities and issues, legitimate anarchist organizations and coordinate group members, thereby reducing the fear of isolation. This function may be provided by alternative media" (McLeod and Hertog 1992, 272). This may happen not only by helping to construct a sense of community and by improving the knowledge shared by anarchists but also "by linking anarchist and other 'radical' movements nationally and internationally. It also provides 'mobilizing information' about future anarchist events" (McLeod and Hertog 1992, 272). All of this can contribute to the constitution of movements and the challenging of hegemonic perspectives and practices.

The media work to return, symbolically at least, cultures of resistance to the hegemonic meaning structure. Members of resistance cultures are made to fit in the places where common sense would have them (as children, malcontents or trouble-makers) (Hebdige 1993, 94). These practices of marginalization can have the familiar effects of "dividing to conquer" potential allies.

> In the process, the protesters are isolated from the 'general public' even though they may share some views and concerns with significant portions of the population. In essence, the media coverage may discourage interest and participation in such protest activities and thereby inhibit the growth of critical social movements. (McLeod and Hertog 1992, 273)

Anarchists do not resist mass media by asking for improved representation but by telling their own stories themselves. They present counter-media to the major mass media which show little respect for the lives, feelings and experiences of the marginalized. In the words of Jesse Hirsh's (1996) appeal: "We need to look at the current media domination, and rise up in media liberation. We need to come together, and remove the mediation between us. Face-to-face communication is the best way to convey loving energy." This is done not only to counter hostile or inaccurate media representations but to share ideas, build solidarity and develop strategies for social change.

> Doing it yourself is at once a critique of the dominant mode of passive consumer
> culture and something far more important: the active creation of an alternative
> culture. DIY is not just complaining about what is, but actually doing something
> different. (Duncombe 1997, 117)

This contributes to a measure of control over means of production and reproduction
and encourages the construction of participatory and democratic cultures and the
breakdown of divisions between producer and consumer. TAO anarchists note that
the Internet may be seductive and alluring, but the Information Superhighway
is not a substitute for the everyday work of organizing with fellow workers and
neighbors.

> It's a simple idea, but in a society where consuming what others have produced
> for you—whether it be culture or politics—is the norm, the implications are
> far-reaching and radical, for doing it yourself is the first premise of participatory
> democracy. (Duncombe 1997, 130)

Anarchy encourages a critical reconceptualization of politics as currently
constituted. It offers a glimpse of politics that refuse containment by any of the
containers of conventional politics, whether by states or mass media. Anarchist
movements may further challenge the meanings of territoriality and sovereignty in
the current context. Such manifestations may open spaces for a (re)constitution of
politics by destabilizing tendencies towards enclosure of any totalizing discourse
such as "globalization" or "free trade." As Hirsh (1996) concludes: "One hopes
that in the middle of this mad search for utopia, we will realize that the earth is the
utopia, and we have been living here all along." This is a heterotopian vision, one
that is grounded in day-to-day work.

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Chapter 3

Whatever it Takes:
The Ontario Coalition Against Poverty

The Preamble to the Constitution of the Industrial Workers of the World begins magnificently: "The working-class and the employing class have nothing in common." Gathering steam, it continues: "There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of the working people and the few who make up the employing class have all the good things in life." The anarchists of the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty (OCAP) have taken this message to heart. OCAP is a direct action anti-poverty organization which, since its founding in 1989, has carried out a diverse range of, often militant, projects to confront and challenge bosses and governments of all stripes in Ontario, Left (so-called), Right and Center to defend the immediate and ongoing needs of poor people and to work to build towards a future where people are able to live decently. In doing so OCAP has become the focal point of working-class resistance to neoliberal capitalism in Canada's largest province. It has also become a powerful pole of attraction for class struggle anarchists in Toronto.

From the beginning OCAP has been dedicated to militant direct action rather than consultation and compromise. Their actions are determined by the real needs of their members and they take a course of action in which they do whatever it takes to meet those needs, regardless of legality, civility or social acceptability. OCAP is a poor people's movement and they organize among the diverse members of the working-class rather than trying to reach out to small business people or middle-class liberals. They do not organize as a broad but meaningless coalition in the manner of some synthesist anarchist groups.

There's a line that goes "the barricades run through the neighbourhoods." That's where you'll find the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty (OCAP). Their members are the people in their neighborhoods, the working-class in all its diversity: young, old, students, First Nations, disabled, unemployed, psychiatric survivors, immigrants, refugees, low wage workers, rank-and-file unionists, artists and playwrights, sex workers, homeless people and assorted ne'er-do-wells and even some older Greek Communists. They fight together and, unlike many groups in Ontario, they often win. They assert that they know what class they are in and they take their lead from their own needs, interests and desires rather than what the various bosses and bureaucrats tell them they should be happy with. OCAP is about dignity and self-respect in a system that begrudges poor people both. This chapter outlines the political context in Ontario within which OCAP organizes, how OCAP fights and some of the examples it sets for anarchists more broadly.

The discussion should make clear why most class struggle anarchists in Toronto are involved with OCAP and why anarchists from Italy to the U.K. have taken up OCAP's example.

Of Welfare Cuts, Safe Streets and the New Poor Laws

In 1995, as one of its first acts following election, the Conservative (Tory) government of Mike Harris cut social assistance rates in Ontario by 21.6 percent. By 1997, the Social Assistance Reform Act introduced other substantial changes to welfare and replaced general assistance with a two-tiered program consisting of workfare (Ontario Works or OW), which requires people to work or undertake training in exchange for diminished welfare payments, and the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) for people exempt for workfare for reason of disability. Another key change was that, in a punitive measure to minimize how much money people would receive, essentials like transportation, winter clothing, back to school and special diet costs were removed from the welfare rate and turned into "special allowances" that people would have to discover and apply for separately. Rather than being "special allowances," however, this program, consisting of payments for essential needs, became a bureaucratic trap for applicants because welfare case workers were not required to inform people about the supplements and applicants required professional testimonials to support their claims. Cynically the government expected to save money by hiding from people that to which they were entitled. The rationale, which proved successful for the government, was that most people receiving welfare would not know these essential funds existed, would not be told about them by their case workers and would therefore settle for the OW and ODSP base rates. This was all part of a broader punitive policy regime directed at poor people by the Conservative government and included freezing the minimum wage for the duration of their two terms, nearly a decade, as ruling party.

The Liberal Party was elected to replace the Tories in 2003 on a platform of change. Among the policy changes promised by the Liberals was an increase to the welfare and minimum wage rates. Unfortunately in the May 2004 budget, the Liberal government increased social assistance rates by a meager 3 percent, which translates into less than $16 per month extra for a single recipient of Ontario Works. The increase moved the monthly income for an individual receiving assistance from $520 per month to $536 per month. A single parent with two children now receives $1,119 per month rather than $1,085 per month. This is hardly enough given that OW rates have declined by almost 40 percent over the last 11 years in real dollar terms accounting for inflation (Hardill, 2005). Indeed Statistic's Canada's low-income-cut-off for a single person living in a major urban area is $1,675 per month which is more than three times the Ontario social assistance rate (Goar, 2005: A22). The low-income-cut-off for a family of three is $2,604 which is more than double the Ontario social assistance amount (Goar 2005, A22). With inflation continuing at its current pace of 2.3 percent, welfare recipients were in

worse shape financially at the end of 2005 than they were during the lowest point of Tory rule (Goar 2005, A22).

The dramatic funding cuts introduced under the Conservatives and maintained by the Liberals have left more poor people in Ontario with the difficult and unhealthy choice of paying the rent or feeding the kids (or themselves). Growing numbers of people have had to rely on under-serviced food banks for the bulk of their food. The perhaps predictable result has been the increase in the numbers of people made homeless in Ontario over the past 15 plus years. Unfortunately, those people who have been made homeless have been further subjected to extensive practices of criminalization, targeted by the state for their survival strategies on the streets.

It has been one tough year after another for those who have already suffered years of vicious attacks by various levels of government. Four years ago Toronto City Council voted to accept a proposal to ban homeless people from sleeping in Nathan Phillips Square, the public space at which City Hall is located. The amendment to By-law 1994–0784 specifically says "no person can camp"(which includes sleeping in the Square during the day or night, whether or not a tent or temporary abode of any kind is used) "in the square." Incredibly council went even further and decided to extend the ban to all city-owned property.

This move to ban homeless people from sleeping in public spaces like Nathan Phillips Square is only part of a City Staff Report *From the Street into Homes: A Strategy to Assist Homeless Persons to Find Permanent Housing*. In discussing "ways to address street homelessness" the report also suggests "enhanced legal and legislative frameworks and more enforcement of current provincial laws and city by-laws." The report also "recommends that the Toronto Police Service be requested to participate in the work of the Street Outreach Steering Committee." Behind the report's velvety language of "outreach" one finds the iron fist of the Toronto Police. This is no way to address homelessness in the city and is an open invitation for more attacks by police on homeless people. It offers little more than an excuse to expand the already bloated Toronto Police budget that, at around $690 million, already gobbles up 22 percent of Toronto's property tax dollars.

These proposed policies are a throwback to the brutal days of former mayor Mel Lastman's regime. Mayor Lastman had long engaged in an open campaign of class war against poor and homeless people (whom he labeled "thugs"). Adding to this chorus the Ontario Crime Commissioner (charged with overseeing crime policy for the entire province) declared in an interview with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) that squeegeers were the province's top concern. In 1999, with much fanfare (and plenty of snarling, spitting, growling and gnashing of teeth), Mayor Lastman and City Council launched a so-called Community Action Policing (CAP) program backed by $2 million of public funds. The following year the city government managed to find another $1 million in a supposedly tight budget. Following the model of Rudolph Giuliani's rampage in New York City, the money was spent to pays police overtime to harass, intimidate and threaten poor people in targeted areas of the city. Each year the police have kept up their campaign until

well into the fall. After that they hope "Mother Nature" will put in the overtime for them. As the police inspector in charge of the operation stated at its launch: "The best crime-fighting tool we have is minus-30 in February" (*Globe and Mail* July 26, 1999, A10). So having no home is now a crime. Given that several homeless people have frozen to death on the streets of Toronto the past few winters it would appear that capital punishment is being practiced in Canada after all; but only if your crime is poverty. Around the same time, the provincial Tory government, with much prodding from Lastman and Right-wingers on Toronto City Council, changed the Ontario Highway Act to make squeegeeing and so-called "aggressive" panhandling illegal. The resulting legislation, *The Safe Streets Act*, makes it illegal to give "any reasonable citizen" (whoever that is) "cause for concern" (whatever that might be). In sentiment and in practice this law has given police, local vigilantes, and business improvement associations great leeway to continue or expand their harassment of the poor and homeless. Yet the current *From the Street into Homes Report* only recommends that this brutal legislation be enforced more systematically.

Many Torontonians had hoped for more under the new council headed by the supposedly progressive mayor David Miller. Unfortunately, successive councils have shown that they too favor criminalizing homeless people rather than developing real solutions such as affordable housing. During its first term Mayor Miller's office sent bulldozers under the Bathurst Street bridge, a space often used for shelter by homeless people, to destroy the homes of a community of teenaged street youth. This attack was accompanied by a heightened police presence on the streets—street youth at the gentrifying corners of Queen & Spadina and Queen & Bathurst have been hardest hit. In 2010, homeless people who access services at these corners continue to be targeted by police, harassed, ticketed and arrested.

In addition, ticketing and arrests under anti-poor legislation such as the *Safe Streets Act* have already been stepped up. Young people have found themselves being held in jail for minor infractions and released on stringent bail conditions: not to possess cups, and cleaning equipment and prohibiting of access to parts of the city. Along with the massive ticketing, police have used pepper spray to awaken youth sleeping on the streets. The city government has also revitalized a "park ambassador" program to move and harass homeless people in city parks. Along with their efforts to drive squeegeers out of the city, the police have been busy chasing homeless people out of so-called "public parks." Poverty is okay, just keep it out of sight. Of course, a very real and vicious crackdown has been in effect for some time now. Police have routinely ticketed homeless people for a range of supposed offenses, be it trespassing, loitering or littering. Likewise some store owners make it a hobby to verbally or physically attack panhandlers or get the police to do it for them. Police claim that they're not trying to rid the city of homeless kids, just trying to keep people from stepping into the roadway. So far, however, there has been little demonizing rhetoric or physical harassment related to the jaywalking scourge.

It is important to consider this recent and ongoing history of the City's preference for criminalizing homeless people rather than addressing root social and economic causes of homelessness, such as lack of affordable housing, availability of social

services or access to jobs with a living wage. Council's proposed plans only serve to distort as criminal matters conditions that are fundamentally social and economic. People sleep at City Hall because the shelters are full and conditions in many of them are dreadful. People are forced to sleep outside because there's not enough truly affordable housing. By removing the homeless from the Square, the politicians hope to remove a major political embarrassment from under their noses. For critics, it will also send a message to every officer, city official, and narrow-minded vigilante in Toronto that it is open season on the homeless.

While the CAP was touted as "all of the forces' best and latest thinking on community-based policing" (*Globe and Mail* July 26, 1999, A10) none of this is new at all. These are the same tactics the bosses have hit poor people with for centuries (they called them "poor laws" in seventeenth century England). The names change but the intentions remain the same. Along with programs like workfare and the reduction or elimination of social services, criminalization is about driving the poor, unemployed and homeless into wage slavery or death. Serve capital or go away! In case this point is missed the "soft cops" in social services launched a "Squeegee Work Youth Mobilization" program to teach squeegeers to get jobs repairing bikes ($250,000 from City Council and $395,000 from the federal government). What was not reported was that this program was a complement to the CAP with police involved in its implementation and decision-making. Despite the great career prospects for budding bike repairers, the city Commissioner of Community and Social Services has admitted the program faces some obstacles: "The challenge is this is a group of kids that does not fit into the system. They are very wary of any kind of authority—police, schools and *even social agencies*" (*Globe and Mail* July 27, 1999, A9, emphasis added). Clearly that is a problem for statist programs.

Naturalizing Poverty Violence: Practices of Poor-Bashing

Longtime anti-poverty organizer Jean Swanson identifies such practices as poor-bashing, the widespread material and discursive attacks on poor people. She suggests that "poor-bashing is when people who are poor are humiliated, stereotyped, discriminated against, shunned, despised, pitied, patronized, ignored, blamed and falsely accused of being lazy, drunk, stupid, uneducated, having large families, and not looking for work" (Swanson 2001, 2). It also involves unequal power, threats, beatings and murder. Simply because people are poor.

Swanson situates poor-bashing among other practices of inferiorization, such as racism, sexism, homophobia, by which the subaltern others are constituted and maintained. Robert Miles argues that the model for racialist inferiorization began in sixteenth century Europe as discrimination against the poor, especially beggars. This was part of a "civilizing process" designed to establish and legitimize a social system of emerging power differentials. Feudal rulers changed their behaviors initially by making their bodily functions more private. This behavioral shift

allowed them to contrast their "refined" activities with those of the "inferior" people whom they ruled (Miles 1993, 90–97). People in the business and industrial classes imitated this "civilized" behavior, presenting their prudent values, and preferences for thrift and investment, as inherited rather than socially constructed. Miles suggests that this civilizing project encompassed forms of domestic racism in Europe, in which privileged Europeans portrayed themselves as superior to the people they ruled, that provided the foundation for colonial racism.

> Since feudalism changed to capitalism in Europe, the elite have defended their wealth in the midst of poverty with myths, language, and patterns of thinking that justified treating Aboriginal people and women as cattle, people of colour as savages, the poor as "vicious" and lazy, and themselves as "civilized" and "virtuous." A huge part of justifying personal wealth is treating the people who don't have it, or the people it's taken from, as lesser human beings. (Swanson 2001, 186)

This inheritance was presented in biological or bodily terms. The word "breeding" suggested that the unequal social stations of the rich and poor resulted from biology rather than from circumstances. Breeding is defined both as "civility, culture, good manners, refinement" and as "biological reproduction." One's poverty is inscribed in their physiognomy; it is part of their body.

> The people of property were secure in their belief that they were a superior 'race' and that the poor in England, as well as the indigenous peoples of other continents, were somehow less human and deserved their poverty. For them, low wages for the poor, slavery and colonization became legitimate, even preferred, elements in the continuing quest for accumulation of wealth. (Swanson 2001, 42)

Police reformer, Dr Patrick Colquhoun, wrote in 1806 that poverty "is the source of wealth, since without poverty there could be no labour; there could be no riches, no refinement, no comfort, and no benefit to those who may be possessed of wealth" (Webb and Webb 1963, 8–9). He continued: "Poverty is therefore a most necessary and indispensable ingredient in a society, without which nations and communities could not exist in a state of civilization" (Webb and Webb 1963, 9). In the twenty-first century, as corporations and governments have imposed trade deals to expand global capital, attacks on poor people have implied that the degradation of large sectors of the world's population is a natural phenomenon that cannot be avoided.

As in sixteenth century England contemporary poor-bashing suggests that poor people deserve the conditions they endure on the streets (as in the poor houses or modern-day shelters and hostels). These views are internalized. Poor-bashing is so embedded in our thinking, in politics, in the media, in organizations and communities, that it is often difficult to identify it and challenge it. Poor people constantly have to challenge language, myths and assumptions about poverty and

poor-bashing. Opposing poor-bashing is a good way to confront the internalized messages of shame and blame over one's social situation. It can stop the bashers, deconstruct the messages about poverty and causes of poverty, and provide a starting point for organizing with other poor people to fight poverty.

Direct Action Gets the Goods

Poor-bashing is facilitated, in part, by the isolation, insecurity and lack of resources and support under which poor and homeless people strain. They lack infrastructures of resistance. And this lack is so pressing as to threaten people's survival. Even more, in many cases the movements that do exist to address such issues operate on the basis of service provision. This is particularly true of anti-poverty movements and groups. Often times such groups are focused on the provision of services, such as welfare applications or job training in which individuals are matched with specific resources which are provided by the organization on a provider-client basis. Such groups tend not to challenge existing relations of power and inequality and often leave people feeling disempowered and dependent on the organizational experts (Schock 2005). In a great number of cases people do not have access to adequate resources, in money, labor or technology, that are deemed necessary for movement success. This is certainly true of all situations where class inequality exists. Because of this, among other reasons, people resort to non-conventional forms of political action (Brym 1998, 346).

The last 20 years have witnessed the emergence of a wide and diverse range of social and political uprisings that have suggested important innovations in the strategies and tactics of radical movements for social change. Even more these movements have raised interesting questions about the character of what might be understood as appropriate political activity. Among the most notable forms of resistance recently have been the variety of "new poor people's movements that have emerged since from the late 1980s to today in response, partly, to the intensifying destruction of social safety nets" (Dyer-Witheford 1999, 103). Significantly, these movements have refused confinement within the parameters of actions or activism considered appropriate for "responsible citizens." Beyond the practices of civil disobedience characteristic of many new social movements, these new poor people's movements have developed and practiced a diverse repertoire of "uncivil practices." These movements are engaged in projects to develop democratic and autonomous communities and social relations beyond political representation and hierarchy. The political significance of their politics is found less in the immediate aims of particular actions or in the immediate costs to capital and the state but "more in our *creation of a climate of autonomy, disobedience and resistance*" (*Aufheben* 1998, 107). More than creating a climate, though, these groups and movements prepare the ground from which potentially potent struggles against states and capital might emerge.

The Ontario Coalition Against Poverty is one such group. As an organization OCAP recognizes that the only way to confront the various attacks on poor people is through collective action to disrupt oppressive institutions and practices. For OCAP, acts of direct action at the the point of oppression are the most effective means poor people have to challenge hostile political and socio-economic agendas and make gains. OCAP works on DIY principles in which the people affected by harmful policies are directly involved in making it impossible for those policies to be implemented. More accurately, emphasizing collective strength, OCAP is a "do-it-ourself" organization. As such they do not rely on representatives, vanguards or experts to do things for them. The collective power of disruption is applied both to defend individuals and families and to challenge broader political practices. This allows them to win real victories in the here and now while also building the struggles necessary to bring the system down. Right now, direct action at the the point of oppression is the most effective means poor people have to oppose hostile conditions and make gains on their own terms.

As a tactic of self-defense OCAP has developed "direct action casework." This involves bringing large numbers of members and allies directly to an offending agency, landlord or workplace and staying until they get what they came for. If people are facing an eviction OCAP goes directly to their home to make the eviction impossible for the landlord and sheriff. If someone is being denied back pay OCAP takes a picket right to the boss and disrupt business until the money is forthcoming. If an acceptable settlement is not forthcoming they raise the costs of offending agencies to the point where it is no longer worthwhile for them to act in an oppressive way.

Taking the perspective that direct interference with the practices of various levels of government and their business backers is the only way poor people can effect a real measure of control in their own lives, OCAP avoids token protest in favor of actions that physically upset their opponents' plans. Rather than pleading with them to stop hurting people or trying to shame them for their treatment of people, in the manner of some anti-poverty groups, OCAP acts to develop the means to prevent opponents from implementing their plans. On many occasions this has involved the direct targeting of businesses. OCAP notes that too often the business sector is linked to attacks on the homeless. As OCAP organizer John Clark recounts: "In one instance, a restaurant owner successfully lobbied to close a downtown shelter. We ran an ongoing picket of his business until he wrote a letter to the City asking for the place to be reopened" (personal communication). Anarchists in OCAP have, on numerous occasions, actually taken food so that hungry people, including they themselves, might eat. These actions have ranged from food expropriation raids on fancy dining lounges in elite hotels to what autonomists call the self-reduction of prices at grocery stores, usually in high-end markets in exclusive neighborhoods. When a Hollywood movie production drove sex workers from a downtown street without compensation (which had been given to small businesses for lost earnings during the shoot) OCAP disrupted filming with a contingent of people. The next day an envelope full of bills arrived at the office for the sex workers.

On June 12, 2001 approximately 50 OCAP members, Wobblies, students and rank-and-file workers of the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) and United Farm and Commercial Workers (UFCW) flying squads held a "mock eviction" at the constituency office of then Provincial Finance Minister Jim Flaherty, who is currently Canada's Federal Finance Minister. All of the items in his constituency office were not so neatly placed on the front lawn of his office as means to give him some small, personal sense of what people at the end of his own eviction policies experience. Flaherty has long been a central figure in pushing the hard edge of the neo-liberal capitalist agenda. As Labor Minister it was Flaherty who brought in legislation making it more difficult to unionize service sector workers and easier for employers to interfere with organizing drives. During his time as Attorney General he drafted the brutal law that makes it illegal to panhandle or squeegee in Ontario. A driving force in attacks on workers and poor people, provincially and nationally, Flaherty has been ready and willing to serve wherever needed to push through poor-bashing legislation. Many who had suffered under his government's policies expressed their appreciation over the action.

OCAP has regularly mobilized to challenge the unjust situation in which hundreds of empty apartment buildings in Toronto are boarded up by speculators looking to drive up property values or rents on other properties. OCAP has marched over 300 people to abandoned buildings with the intention of opening them up for homeless people. Police have used horses to keep people out and laid a variety of charges against participants. In several cases the outcome has been that the buildings have been opened as social housing.

> [In the winter of 1999], during a month when four homeless people had died on the streets, the City of Toronto was stalling on plans to open up an empty former hospital as a shelter. Pressure from local yuppie residents and businesses was behind this. We took over the building and, while they sent in the police's Emergency Task Force with battering rams to get us out and charged us with unlawful assembly, the plans to open it up were put back on schedule. (John Clarke, personal communication)

For people who are excluded from channels of power and don't want to deal with such oppressive channels anyway, direct action—taking responsibility for the decisions that affect our lives and acting on our own needs and interests—is the most effective means of building collective power. Precarious and unemployed workers, the poor and homeless people face particularly great challenges in the present period. Even where social provisions are available, the majority of services provided in the community are based on helping individuals accept and fit into existing labor market conditions. Retraining and employment counseling, while helpful, do not "help workers develop collective responses to unemployment or to workplace problems encountered once employed, nor do they emphasize or challenge the structural bases of inequality in the labour market or workplace" (Ross and Drouillard 2009). The typical forms of service provision that most unions and community organizations are

involved in, such as accessing government or legal resources do not entail much risk, either for recipients or providers (Ross and Drouillard 2009). Limited resources are available to support individuals, as long as this support remains constrained within a context that re-integrates applicants into the system of waged labor. Collective organizing for something more than this is both more difficult and more risky, in material as well as emotional terms. Even more, before people are willing or ready to take a leap and engage in such collective actions they must experience, or at least witness, examples of success.

Direct actions are also about education, especially self-education. When people do an action they learn that despite this system's best efforts to beat them down, they can actually enjoy some victories. They also learn that the authorities are not all-powerful or beyond their grasp, and they are not as alone as they might sometimes feel. Actions teach people how bureaucracies work, that decisions are often arbitrary and based on nothing more than expediency or the hope that they will accept "no" for an answer. Institutions that appear mysterious or impenetrable often come undone when confronted by a delegation of 10–20 people who are sure of their purpose. As OCAP suggests, direct action lets people see the fear in the eyes of bosses, cops, bureaucrats and landlords when they have to face their unleashed collective anger borne by the strength of their solidarity. It teaches poor and marginalized people that they can shake those in power and build a movement that fundamentally challenges the existing arrangement.

bell hooks (2000) notes that while it is now fashionable to talk about overcoming racism and sexism, class remains "the uncool subject" that makes people tense. Despite being such a pressing issue class is not talked about in a society in which the poor have no public voice (hooks 2000, 5). As hooks (2000, vii) notes, "we are afraid to have a dialogue about class even though the ever-widening gap between rich and poor has already set the stage for ongoing and sustained class warfare." Breaking this silence is crucial.

The new subjectivities emerging from the transition to neoliberalism have sought to contest and overcome the impositions of productive flexibility within regimes of capitalist globalization. Rather than accepting the emerging sociopolitical terrain or, alternatively and more commonly, attempting to restrain it within the familiar territories of the welfare state, recent movements have "appropriated the social terrain as a space of struggle and self-valorization" (Vercellone 1996, 84). For many contemporary activists and theorists the concept of self-valorization offers an important starting point for thinking about "the circuits that constitute an alternative sociality, autonomous from the control of the State or capital" (Hardt 1996, 6). Originating in autonomist Marxist reflections on the social movements that emerged most notably in Italy during the intense struggles of the 1970s, the idea of self-valorization has influenced a range of libertarian communist and anarchist writers. As Hardt (1996, 3) suggests:

> Self-valorization was a principal concept that circulated in the movements, referring to social forms and structures of value that were relatively autonomous

from and posed an effective alternative to capitalist circuits of valorization. Self-valorization was thought of as the building block for constructing a new form of sociality, a new society.

For radical political theorists, particularly those influenced by autonomous movements in Italy, the experiences of the social movements "show the possibilities of alternative forms of welfare in which systems of aid and socialization are separated from State control and situated instead in autonomous social networks. These alternative experiments may show how systems of social welfare will survive the crisis of the Welfare State" (Vercellone 1996, 81). These systems of social welfare, however, are based on social solidarity outside of state control through practices of autonomous self-management. Beyond providing necessary services these practices are geared towards freeing people from the necessity of waged labor, of valorization for capital or dependence upon state provisions as an "alternative" to waged labor.

As an internationalist organization having only contempt for the borders that divide working-class and poor people and shelter capital, defense of immigrants and refugees is another important aspect of OCAP's work. One particularly effective means of struggle has been pioneered by OCAP recently in struggles against deportations. This example, borrowed from labor movement histories is the flying squad, a rapid response network of rank-and-file unionists that can mobilize members to take part in direct actions to defend people facing attacks from bosses, landlords or governments. Little more than an active phone tree that any member can initiate, the flying squad offers a mobile defense force and support network. OCAP has also fought against borders by building active alliances with anti-poverty and workers' organizations in other countries. During the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, OCAP responded to a call by their allies in the West Cape Tenants' Group by taking a picket to the offices of the South African Trade Consulate. A couple of weeks later, at the request of the Equality Trade Union of South Korea, OCAP held a picket against Korean Air in solidarity with migrant workers in Korea who were being attacked by the South Korean government. In this case they targeted the capitalists who support, direct and benefit from government policies rather than the government itself. Some of this work is addressed in following chapters.

OCAP argues that transnationalist perspectives must be grounded in a respect for indigenous self-determination and struggles against colonial states which have worked to exclude and eliminate native peoples over centuries of occupation. Movements against borders in settler societies like Canada must always address how statist appeals extend the effects of colonialism and neo-colonialism. Left nationalist approaches have little to offer indigenous struggles for self-determination and land. Indeed indigenous communities have long rejected strategies that rest on identifications of Canadian citizenship.

In Canada the most powerful challenge to the legitimacy of national states currently comes from indigenous peoples' movements. Through these challenges

these movements also fundamentally contest the legitimacy of capitalism. What is needed is an honest and sustained discussion on how to embark on a process of decolonization. While this is still an emerging project for most groups, OCAP has long worked in solidarity with native communities against the colonial Canadian state. This has involved solidarity actions with Mohawks at Tyendinaga who are attempting to take back their lands from developers and Akwesasne, as discussed in the following chapter, where people struggle against the environmental contamination of their community, as well as material support for the land reclamation by members of Six Nations who have occupied lands stolen from them in order to meet community needs rather than the private profits of the developers.

Not surprisingly, anarchists are drawn to OCAP's values, commitment to direct action, self-determination and autonomy. Also agreeable to anarchists are OCAP's radically democratic group practices. Decisions are made at biweekly meetings which are open to all members. Despite many anarchists' preference for consensus decision making, OCAP shows that majoritarian votes can be taken in a participatory, democratic and effective manner. Time is always made for lengthy and vigorous debate and all sides are heard regardless of perspective or ideological bent. Debate is regularly carried over several meetings where further discussion is required. Anarchists have played important parts in these debates, arguing for militant perspectives in challenging employers and government officials and supporting radically participatory processes within the organization. Strategically anarchists have worked to focus on alliances with rank-and-file workers as part of a broader working-class perspective against poverty and social exclusion.

Ideological fetishes are left at the door and meetings generally maintain a focus on developing effective, winning strategies and tactics. The filibustering and manipulation which divert so many organizations with people from different political backgrounds and perspectives are mostly absent. This is largely possible because of shared commitments to anti-capitalism and libertarian socialist visions of a future free of bosses and bureaucrats in which people are able to make the decisions which affect their lives.

Campaign actions are reflective of OCAP's emphasis on actions which bring a very real cost to the government and its corporate sponsors rather than the rather tired routines of symbolic protests, banner waving and grievance filings which attempt to shame people who have no shame and care nothing about the needs of the poor and working-classes. OCAP initiates and carries out attempts to disrupt "business as usual" and attach a cost to harmful corporate and government policies both as a means to stop implementation of those policies and as a way to draw people into the movement who are tired of pointless and ineffective "protests" or acts of dissent. Workers and poor people have neither time nor energy to waste on efforts which do no have at least some real results.

Safe Park

The Nobel Prize winning novelist and poet Anatole France once famously quipped: "The law, in its majestic equality, forbids rich and poor alike to sleep under bridges, to beg in the streets, and to steal their bread." A pointed commentary on the inherent inequality of laws that target the survival strategies of the poor and homeless (since the wealthy do not need to sleep under bridges), France's words have taken on heightened significance in Canada recently. Over the last decade in cities across Canada those who have need to sleep in parks and other public spaces have increasingly experienced the "majestic equality" of the law against sleeping outside.

In August 1999 OCAP organized a several hundred strong occupation of Allan Gardens Park, an important meeting place for poor and homeless people in Toronto's downtown east end. An early target in the CAP, where police routinely cleared homeless people out or harassed people because of skin color or appearance, just prior to the occupation the park had been the site of a major flashpoint in Toronto's racialized policing projects.

> Local homeowners lined up across the street on the south side of Allan Gardens and clapped and cheered as the cops raided the park. Cops rounded up 65 black men who were just hanging out, playing soccer and dominoes. The cops made them get down on their knees, searched them, gave out three thousand dollars worth of loitering tickets and told them not to come back. (Gaetan Heroux, personal communication)

In the manner of the Diggers in seventeenth century England, the park was established as a communal "Safe Park." As OCAP put it in their communiqué from the occupation: "Let the City be on notice that it is our right to secure a safe place to sleep, eat and live that won't be interfered with" (August 7, 1999). For three days the park was a beacon of mutual aid in practice—people lived together, fed helped and cared for each other. Police response was unequivocal and violent.

> We were only able to hold it for three days before the police launched a violent attack on the site and forced people out. Despite this, the Safe Park led to an upsurge in our work as more and more people became convinced of the importance of fighting back. The viciousness of the response from the other side was also telling. The mayor and Premier Harris both denounced the event, the business media went into a frenzy and the police operation against us took things to a new level. We drew lessons from all this. (John Clarke, personal communication)

One of the major lessons concerned the role of mainstream media and the futility of symbolic actions aimed primarily at "raising awareness." Still this Temporary Autonomous Zone inspired people across the country, some of whom moved to

Toronto to take part in OCAP. It also inspired people to take a next, dramatic, step—one that would end in the first riot in Ontario in over 100 years.

June 15 People's Uprising: Fighting the Global Agenda in Your Own Backyard

On Thursday June 15, 2000, more than a thousand people gathered at the Ontario Provincial Legislature for a demonstration initiated and organized by OCAP. The demonstration was supported by 58 allied groups including the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW), the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW), the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), Anti-Racist Action, the Anarchist Free Skool of Toronto and the Industrial Workers of the World. People arrived from as far away as Halifax, Nova Scotia and Montreal, Quebec. Their numbers were made up of poor people, students, homeless, immigrants, youth, teachers, blue collar workers, First Nations, elderly.

Their reasons for coming together were many. Twenty-two homeless people dead in 24 weeks. Forced workfare labor. Olympic bids instead of affordable housing. Targeted policing. Squats torched by police officers. Callous politicians blaming poor people for the poverty of their system. The demands were quite straightforward and clearly stated: 1) Return the 21.6 percent taken from social services by the ruling Conservative (Tory) government as one of their earliest expressions of contempt for poor people in this province. 2) Repeal the malicious and misnamed *Tenant Protection Act* which has actually removed some of the protections previously in place for tenants including rent controls. This nasty bit of work has directly led to thousands of evictions each month in Toronto alone. 3) Repeal that other misnamed legislative assault the *Safe Streets Act* (the Tories having this perverse habit of naming their policies the opposite of what they are really about) which outlaws squeegeeing and panhandling.

Organizers had notified the government of their intentions months in advance. Their request was only that a delegation of six people who are suffering under these harmful policies be allowed to enter the "people's house" to address the assembled legislators. "No," they were told. That privilege, like so many others, is reserved only for elites, visiting "dignitaries," heads of state, the Queen.

When demonstrators insisted on their right to enter parliament, riot police attacked, including dozens of mounted police, to drive people off of the lawns. By this point it was obvious to all that they must either fight back and defend themselves or be brutalized. And fight back they did. Rather than disperse, protesters fended off the police assault for almost two hours. And an amazing thing happened. The police got scared. They broke ranks during a pitched battle, literally "hand to hand combat" as police later described it. The result was the first political riot in Ontario in over 100 years. Still there was no way demonstrators could overcome the numbers and force of the police. And their use of horses. Charging into first aid areas. Attacking medics and wounded alike.

Almost immediately the corporate media declared it a historic day in Canada. Never before has such a battle raged on the lawns of government they proclaim. All sides, both critics and supporters acknowledge that June 15 was an important turning point. It had been a long time since police in Canada had attacked any crowd with such force—and had that crowd hold their ground and fight back. People, many of whom had been brutalized by authorities, learned that they could stand up to the authorities and resist them. The authorities learned it too. This is one reason that their ideologues in the corporate media tried so hard to discredit organizers. They know that for many people there is now a sense that something can be done, that poor people can make it impossible for authorities to govern them.

OCAP was clear to stress from the start that June 15 was not a media event. They did not show up simply to be recognized. Successive ruling governments in Ontario have continued to do nothing to help people living and dying in poverty. OCAP notes that the police violence that took place in public view on June 15 is the same violence that is meted out daily against poor people in the province and country by the various upholders of what OCAP insists is a wretched political economic system. And OCAP has affirmed its promise to fight them with whatever it takes. Not simply to register their dissent. Not simply to hold silent vigils. Not simply to wring their hands in despair. Simply, and without apologies, to win. This defiance struck a chord with people across the city, province and country. While OCAP meetings typically involved 20 to 30 people, in the first meeting following June 15, more than 350 showed up to participate and express their sense of gratitude that finally people had stood their ground and fought authorities openly. Many were energized by what had happened. Many, too, were radicalized.

Since Seattle much has been made of demonstrations against various meetings of global institutions, the World Bank, IMF, G8 and OECD. In as much as these demonstrations have in some ways revitalized global resistance to neoliberalism and imperialism they have been important places for community organizers and political activists to learn lessons, develop and refine strategies and feel a sense of their own power. At the same time OCAP insists on the, sometimes overlooked, need to remember that neoliberal globalism is enacted everyday in localities around the planet through policies and practices of exclusion, appropriation, brutalization and confinement—what OCAP prefers to term class war. For OCAP, the local representatives of capital in municipal, provincial and federal governments are the real cutting edge of global exploitation and it is they who must be confronted and stopped. June 15 was among the first of a series of actions intended to make it impossible for the local representatives of capital in Ontario to rule over poor communities.

Overall 42 arrests were made relating to the events of June 15. Thirty-four cases were actually sent to trial with some charges being dropped and people in vulnerable situations compelled to take pleas. The most common charges included "obstructing" or "assaulting" "peace officers" or "possessing weapons" (typically picket signs and water bottles). The state even dug out an old charge which had not been laid since the

1960s, "participating in a riot," although it was not made clear whether a police riot in which one is caught standing one's ground constitutes such participation. Trials continued for three years after the police riot. Immediately it became clear that the courts would go after the most vulnerable people the hardest. Overall people who were homeless, had other charges or records and people with addictions received the most severe treatment.

On June 15th the police played out their roles as the strong arm of Ontario's neoliberal government. Anarchists do not want the government to succeed in passing further legislation against working people, students and the poor, just because they are able to use court charges and bail conditions as a deterrent. People cannot begin avoiding all protests, strikes or other forms of resistance because of fear of police repression. At the same time, people should not feel they have to stand alone or feel alienated by surveillance and images of riot shields and batons. It is crucial to recognize that some people are more vulnerable than others. So anarchists need to establish networks of defense not only to defend those arrested but in order to demystify the state's legal processes and to work to bolster confidence that people can fight to win. Most people certainly do not want to go to jail but it is well known that the city's prisons have become warehouses for poor people under recent governments and OCAP members insist that this is never forgotten as part of their solidarity work. If people go down because they took a stand then anarchists must stand by them and their families. Anarchists in OCAP organize funds and social support so that people do not feel abandoned to the merciless court and jail system. Jail visits and donations to jail canteens are aspects of this.

Court solidarity for June 15 defendants was consistently strong with 30 or more people regularly showing up to fill courtrooms and hallways. There was no way for judges and bailiffs to miss the fact that the defendants had tremendous community support. As people show up at court to do solidarity work they also gain insights into the system. The extent of attacks on the working-class which take place everyday, literally behind closed doors, tells everyone of the need to take their work inside the institutions. Visits to the courts, housing tribunals and immigration offices almost uniformly show poor people being targeted for punishment by the state.

Those who experienced it argue that the police violence which took place on June 15, 2000 is the same violence that is meted out routinely against poor people in Ontario. That violence is not simply delivered through baton blows and fists but through lengthy court proceedings, bail conditions, demeaning legal aid applications and of course jail time. And that is why OCAP stressed the political nature of the trials.

Since June 15 OCAP and allies have continued to build the fighting spirit of June 15 in communities and neighborhoods which are suffering the violence of this system everyday. For OCAP members, when police target people through their "Community Action Policing" they must be confronted by real community action and stopped. When the sheriff comes to evict someone from their home

the neighborhood must rally to make any eviction impossible. This is the work that OCAP and its allies have begun. Mohawk warriors, union flying squads, anti-poverty groups, anti-racist activists, anarchists and many more are currently organizing along with OCAP in streets, reserves, workplaces and residences to build a series of economic and political disruptions aimed at making it impossible for the rulers to continue their rule.

Common Front

These methods of collective direct action are also applied to broader struggles. Beginning in 2001, OCAP has organized in cities, workplaces, towns and reserves throughout Ontario working towards a series of acts of political and economic disruption throughout Ontario and beyond. The Ontario Common Front has tried to build a network among allied organizations (unions, First Nations, other OCAP-style direct action groups) which would target significant corporate backers of the government (Tories and Liberals), especially the major banks and real estate developers, in different parts of Ontario.

A significant lesson of the OCF has been the great need for local community work along the lines that OCAP has been doing in poor Toronto neighborhoods like Parkdale and Rexdale. With the end of the initial fall 2001 campaign OCAP re-dedicated itself to doing that work with renewed vigor. In the face of racist clamoring for war and tighter borders by Western imperial powers since September 11, 2001, OCAP has stepped up its efforts to support immigrants and refugees against racial and class discrimination and for a decent and just life.

The Common Front campaign made it very clear that in many communities considerable groundwork still needs to be done just to stop or push back the everyday impacts of government policies. In order to build stronger movements and more militant struggles, people first have to experience some victories no matter how small they might seem—in this context no victory is a small one. One of the most encouraging developments of the OCF has been the creation of fightback coalitions and OCAP-style direct action casework groups in a number of communities, most notably in Guelph, Belleville, Peterborough, Sudbury, Kingston and Ottawa. These groups already provide new resources for poor people which did not exist prior to the campaign. At some point they may form a necessary pole of attraction for activists seeking move beyond the staged reformism of the mainstream unions.

What should be noted is that the OCF drew many more anarchist individuals and organizations (Freyheyt and Black Touta in Toronto, Haymarket and the Anti-Capitalist Task Force in Ottawa and CLAC in Quebec) into it than any other coalition movement in Ontario. Actions in Toronto, Ottawa and Guelph would have been much diminished without the crucial parts played by anarchists in organizing, publicizing and putting their bodies on the line. Anarchists put out calls for action in Toronto and Ottawa. In Ottawa a successful snake march on October 16, 2001

was an anarchist initiative and anarchists did most of the organizing to pull it off. This is an important step in bringing militant, class struggle anti-authoritarians together to actively develop strategies, tactics and hopefully structures of action.

That anarchists have been able to take active and open roles in the OCF, in contrast to other coalition movements in Ontario, shows the place of anarchist ideas and practices within OCAP and has confirmed OCAP's respect for autonomy and decentralization. While OCAP initiated the OCF and has put most of the resources and much of the organizing into it, there has never been a question that OCAP would direct the campaign or interfere with local actions in the manner of some groups.

The Pope Squat

At the same time OCAP members recognize that one of the areas where they have needed to do more work is in building infrastructures of resistance, or transfer cultures, that can meet their needs in the here-and-now of everyday life without having to rely on claims against the state. These infrastructures of resistance would offer real alternatives and a self-determined base for developing our strength. At one time in the history of the labor movement, unions offered the basis for such counter power, providing medical clinics, elderly care, hostels, underground railroads and schools for workers. Today unions neglect this work, leaving the state to provide these things for workers. This has done a great deal to undermine working-class autonomy. OCAP's recent squatting efforts are part of a turn towards building more permanent dual power institutions where the organization provides for its necessities, in this case shelter, whether the state acts or not.

In Toronto there are over 2,000 evictions every month, many because people cannot afford to meet the expensive rents for most Toronto units. In order to address this situation directly, the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty and allies organized a squat during the July, 2002, Catholic World Youth Day events. The takeover of an abandoned building, appropriately dubbed "The Pope Squat," was timed to coincide with the Pope's first mass address. With local civic leaders and young visitors alike proclaiming Toronto as some kind of urban utopia, the Pope's visit provided a great opportunity to reveal the reality of "Toronto the Good" for a global audience. A week before his arrival the Mayor publicly declared that the homeless should be swept from the streets in time for the start of the Youth Day events. With the world's attention on Toronto for the entire week of the Pope's visit it was a perfect time to get word out about this situation. At the same time, the fact that the world was watching provided the possibility that the City and police would be less aggressive in their response. The Pope Squat put forward a number of demands on provincial and city governments:

- Allow the squatted building to be used for social housing;
- Inspect and order repairs on all unsafe and substandard housing;

- Stop economic eviction: raise the minimum wage to $10/hour and restore the 22 percent cut from social assistance;
- Bring back rent controls;
- Build 2,000 units of social housing every year.

At the same time as these demands were put forward the squatters also stressed that their intention was not to turn the squat over to any level of government to manage but rather to self-manage the space as social housing and a community resource center.

The evening of July 25, 2002, a large assembly of over 500 people turned up for a rally and enjoyed a meal provided by the Mohawks of Tyendinaga before marching to the building which activists had opened for the squat. The building, located in Parkdale, a poor neighborhood in Toronto's west end, had been abandoned for a couple of years. Prior to that, in 2000, the building had been the home to a number of people who were evicted by city officials with little fanfare. Discussions with Parkdale residents in the weeks leading up to the squat suggested a good deal of support for the action and an appreciation of the need for dramatic steps to secure affordable housing.

After much discussion it was agreed that people should stay and try to win the building as a self-managed space rather than turn it over to the City or Province to, perhaps, convert into government-run housing. People also wanted to be sure that the building not be given up while the homeless people who were squatting had no available alternative for permanent housing. As long as turning over the building meant putting comrades back on the street it was an absolutely unacceptable option for OCAP.

Among the more significant actions during the tenure of the squat was the CUPE union solidarity Sunday. This event saw several locals of the Canadian Union of Public Employees provide around-the-clock assistance, food and entertainment for the squat over the entire Sunday. Events included a labor forum which brought together unionists for a "soapbox speakout" about the situation of labor organizing in Ontario and possible ways to work towards solutions which will advance anti-capitalist struggles in the province.

On Tuesday, July 31, the Canadian Auto Workers pledged $50,000 for renovations. The money was contingent upon the City giving its approval to the renovations and upon the granting of more donations from other unions. Still, the CAW funds put pressure on the City to allow squatters to go ahead with their plans without interference. The fact that squatters were raising their own funds to do repairs took away any Council argument around lack of available City funds. As a show of community support and commitment to transform the squat into a permanent living space it also weakened the legitimacy of any repressive response from the state.

Friday, August 2, the CAW organized a rally and march of unionists along the original march route of a week before. Members from several unions, including CUPE, Steelworkers, Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, Elementary

Teachers' Federation, took part in a mobilization of 100–200 people. Notably the Mine Mill CAW flying squad, a group that had been inspired by OCAP actions as part of its own development, made the several hour trip, all the way from Sudbury, to stand in solidarity with OCAP and the squatters.

Guerrilla gardeners came by the squat to plant a lovely garden where there had been only an overgrown mass of weeds on the building's front lawn. Guerrilla gardening and squatting are both acts of recovery of unused urban spaces and the de-privatization of spaces which can then be turned over to public use. Similarly, the first days of the squat also saw artists and non-artists alike take part in a mural painting on the front of the building in an act of shared public creativity which broke down the divisions between artist and audience. The mural also made the connection between housing as privatized space and the privatization of creativity in the restricted spaces of galleries and museums.

Other events included a day-long street festival which filled the squat's yard with a variety of sound ranging from protest folk to experimental rock. Community oriented events throughout the week included movie showings on the side of the building. Friday night screened the revolutionary movies *The Murder of Fred Hampton* and *The Battle of Algiers*. A yard sale raised over $400 and brought several neighbors over to take at look.

Naomi Klein and her partner, former CBC host Avi Lewis, gave the Canadian premier of their documentary on political and economic repression in Argentina. The short but intense video which commemorated the life of Gustavo Benedetto, a young unemployed man killed by security guards, was well received by the 300 or so people who watched it in the backyard. Lewis and Klein properly drew connections between groups like OCAP in Ontario and the *piqueteros*, unemployed and poor people in Argentina, fighting against the machinations of global capital which would obliterate them.

As is often the case in such participatory forms of community-building, decision making developed through trial and error and experiment. All decisions affecting day-to-day living arrangements and upkeep of the building itself were made by the residents, formerly homeless people who were now living in the squatted building. Political organizing, and decisions about the broader campaign for housing were made by participants in community assemblies, involving people who supported and had taken part in various aspects of the campaign. Community assemblies were held in the yard every evening around 8:00 pm and involved upwards of 60 people. Squatters gave reports and updates of the day's activities inside the building before the assembly took up discussions of strategies for dealing with issues involved in keeping the project open.

People put in tremendous amounts of time and energy building support in the neighborhood prior to the opening of the squat. Every apartment in Parkdale was leafleted and people went door-to-door speaking with residents. The weekend before the opening a community picnic was held which brought out over 300 people, many of them from the neighborhood. In fact, the neighborhood response provided one of the most encouraging, and significant, aspects of the squat. Most

showed a real interest in the squat, and expressed hopes for its continued success. Hundreds signed petitions calling for the City to meet the squatters' demands. As the days progressed more and more neighbors visited the squat and offered words of support and encouragement. The Pope Squat was beginning to be viewed as a shared community resource, a meeting space in which neighbors could come together to meet and discuss matters of local concern. At the same time it might be said that perhaps the biggest problem with the squat, apart from the obvious resistance from local and provincial governments, was the failure to maintain and build connections with neighbors in Parkdale. While much outreach work had been done leading up to the squat, it was very difficult to get people to continue door-to-door outreach after the building was taken. People simply preferred to be at the squat site, which was a thrilling hive of activity, discussion and camaraderie.

None of this mattered much to the city or provincial governments, which were committed to maintaining the sanctity of private property. In November of that year, the provincial government finally moved to evict the squatters and take control of the building. Armed guards occupied the squat site at 1510 King Street for more than a year, until the building was finally sold to a developer. The government has decided it has hundreds of thousands of dollars to guard an empty building rather than spend nothing just to let people build a home for themselves.

OCAP and allies did not let the Province's actions stop their work of building squatting movements in a country where all squatting is illegal. This emergent squatting movement is partly the result of widespread frustrations among anti-capitalist activists, whether focused on fighting global capitalist institutions or on local manifestations, with the reactive or oppositional character of most recent actions. Squats represent positive and constructive acts of building community-based alternatives to capital in the here and now of everyday life. Making a real contribution to meeting peoples' human needs rather than condemning capital for failing to meet those needs offers a glimpse into how things might be done differently while materially beginning the process of providing real social change (as opposed to social critique). The Pope Squat served as a rallying point for many groups to come together and rebuild alliances. The Pope Squat signaled a partial shift in strategy towards a focus on constructing alternatives, on do-it-ourself institution building, rather than protest-style demands made upon government institutions. In this regard the squat was an aspect of constituting dual power structures in which participants build the capacity to meet their own needs. The Pope Squat was an integral part of preparing the facilities to house a self-managed social housing and community center.

Reform and Revolution?

Although they do press governments and employers for resources that members need to sustain themselves and help people build their capacity to fight, OCAP is not a reformist group. OCAP is an explicitly anti-capitalist organization, so

their long-term goal is the end of capitalism and the development of a society based upon mutual support and self-determination. Along the way they assert a responsibility to take care of each other and defend themselves against bosses, landlords, police and courts. In OCAP's view, since, the state's and the bosses' resources are all stolen from the working-class anyway, why should they not take back all that they can get?

OCAP tends to agree with longtime anarchist Lorenzo Komboa Ervin's position that reforms are part of people's survival pending revolution. When people are losing their home or can't feed their children, it's tough to fight for the revolution. Even small victories give people a sense that they can actually win. This breaks the demoralization and apathy that people often experience, particularly after years of struggling with welfare bureaucracies and government officials, and also gives a taste for bigger victories.

The extent of poverty existing within a political jurisdiction is one of the most important, yet too often disregarded, societal factors related to health (Raphael 2002). Poverty is a critical factor in whether, and to what extent, these and other key determinants of health, such as stress, social exclusion, social support, transportation and food, are present in a person's life. Health Canada identifies, among the crucial factors determining health: income, social status, education, social support networks, employment and social and physical environments (Raphael 2002). The *Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion* similarly specifies peace, shelter, appropriate food, a stable ecosystem, sustainable resources, social justice and equity as being prerequisites for health. Locally, the *City of Toronto Food Charter* clearly states: "Every Toronto resident should have access to an adequate supply of nutritious, affordable and culturally appropriate food. Food security contributes to the health and well-being of residents while reducing their need for medical care." Improvements in health in industrialized countries like Canada have been due more to improvements in living conditions rather than to advances in medicine or health care.

Much of this relates to diet which is linked in important ways to the development and treatment of many health conditions (Hardill 2005). As street nurse Kathy Hardill (2005) reports, the women, men and children who rely on social assistance in Ontario do not receive enough money to be healthy. A primary reason is food insecurity. Poor people in Ontario regularly go hungry, skipping meals or eating reduced meals in order to have money available for other essentials like rent, transportation or clothing. An extensive study by Tarasuk, Dachner, Gaetz, and Poland (2005) notes that chronically poor nutrition can disrupt the body's normal functions and increase the risk of infections. The authors also note that inadequate intakes of essential vitamins and minerals can exacerbate health conditions such as depression, substance abuse tuberculosis and a variety of sexually transmitted diseases. While that studied focused primarily on homeless youth the authors concluded that a key factor underlying nutritional deficiencies was the inadequacy of social assistance provision following a decade of neoliberal cuts to social provisions of the welfare state. Thus addressing the social experience of poverty is profoundly related to the health of the population.

In 2005 OCAP was alerted to the little known provision that allows for people receiving assistance to apply for up to $250 as a nutritional dietary supplement if a medical professional deems it necessary. This supplement is available to cover some of the costs for items such as vitamin and mineral supplements, iron rich foods, a high fiber diet and extra calories. Of course dietary deficiencies are a common problem facing poor people in Ontario as limited budgets cannot cover the costs of a nutritional diet while providing for other necessities like clothing and shelter.

In order to address this situation OCAP and its allies put forward an appeal to health care workers to assist in getting people signed up for the Special Diet Allowance. The appeal received a wide response with more than 50 medical professionals, including doctors and nurses working in several community health centers and hospitals, midwives, street nurses and professors of public health policy joining the growing coalition to advocate for the full release of the Special Diet Allowance. The coalition of health workers has insisted that everyone on OW or ODSP should be entitled to the full $250 monthly supplement without having to be individually examined by a medical professional. In their view the health problems facing people on OW and ODSP are so pressing that the full diet supplement should be released immediately. In addition, many people in poor communities across Toronto, and including several neighborhoods in the vicinity of York University, do not have regular access to a health care worker, having to rely on impersonal "drive-thru" service at drop-in clinics. Significantly OCAP and the health care workers' have made clear that the benefits rates leave all recipients in a position of needing the special diet allowance simply in order to provide a basic nutritional diet given the inadequacy of OW and ODSP.

In the meantime, OCAP and medical professionals have set up a series of clinics in homeless drop-ins across Toronto to process forms and assist OW and ODSP recipients in applying for the supplement. Already more than 500 people have been able to access the supplement as a direct result of the clinics. This has resulted in the government paying out close to three million dollars to poor people in the province. And the campaign is growing rapidly.

Many social movement theorists contend that the "social gulf between reformers and those whom they would protect or reform is a problem generic to reform movements" (Nathanson 1999, 480). The Special Diet Campaign has worked largely because anarchists were able to encourage health care professionals to set egos aside and take direction from poor people, anti-poverty activists and welfare recipients whose very health, even lives in many cases, rested on a successful outcome.

At the same time organizers are well aware of the limits of the campaign. As Hardill (2005, A17) notes: "Giving the full special diet benefit to all social assistance recipients won't solve poverty in Ontario. But it will dramatically improve the lives and health of those forced to rely on assistance." The organizers of the Special Diet campaign recognize this. Furthermore, as Raphael (2002) notes, the health consequences of growing levels of poverty in provinces like Ontario

are extensive and will be longstanding whatever efforts are made to reduce the levels.

The campaign around the Special Diet Allowance is one part of a larger campaign demanding that the government raise social assistance rates by 40 percent, an increase that would restore the cuts while increasing the rates to a level consistent with inflation over the last decade. This campaign has been spearheaded by a cross-province alliance, the Ontario Common Front. Additionally, a broad-based campaign under the banner of "Ontario Needs a Raise" has been initiated by a coalition of unionists, low income workers and anti-poverty activists to press for a simultaneous increase to social assistance and minimum wage rates. Significantly these campaigns are working to overcome the false divide between the "working and non-working poor" that recent governments have tried so hard to construct. They assert that all people have a right to live in dignity whether they are currently employed or not.

The extremely low social assistance rates and the poverty-assuring minimum wage are linked in the broader context of cuts to social programs and social funding and diminished rights of working people and must be addressed together. As community and health care organizers have suggested, government must restore the cuts to welfare and increase the rates to account for inflation. They must also raise the minimum wage to at least $10, something above a poverty wage. As well they should follow the example of Washington state and index the minimum wage to cost of living increases or to a percentage of average wages above 50 percent. No worker in a wealthy jurisdiction like Ontario should have to settle for anything less. Of course poor people cannot rely primarily on any government to provide a decent living. This is why the campaigns and coalitions, like OCAP and "Ontario Needs a Raise," which bring employed and unemployed, unionized and non-unionized workers together are so crucial.

Having said this it is important to understand the place of reforms in longer term strategies and not limit the focus to reforms. OCAP does not pursue reform for reform's sake and they do not organize primarily to win more or better reforms. As stated above, they take whatever they can get to make their lives a little better and to give them the strength and momentum to keep fighting, but they never lose sight of the fact that things are only really going to get better if they get rid of capitalism and build something new. At the same time they recognize the need to realize that there is a tension between the reformist and anti-capitalist aspects of OCAP's work and must always work to ensure that the day-to-day "reformist" work not come to dominate their activities or obscure the bigger picture. This is not about ideological purity but rather tactical emphasis. Some European social movements push wide-ranging and diverse demands on the state to make reforms that they know it cannot make. Revealing the state's limitations and playing on its inherent contradictions can press the state to potential crisis. There is still much debate about this perspective and, while it makes some sense, it can only be a part of broader organizing work.

The failure to recognize the limits of reforms and to situate demands for reforms within a broader strategy is a problem that still afflicts much of the labor

movement in Canada. Many union leaders still give all of their hopes to an idea that the welfare state will be rebuilt. They continue to offer compromises long after the other party has walked away from the table. For many union "leaders" there was nothing before the welfare state and workers only faced desperation. They forget that before the welfare state developed its responsibilities, unions were providing many of those very responsibilities within working-class communities.

Underpinning OCAP's activities is a grounded commitment to anti-capitalism. When OCAP takes on bosses, landlords and governments they always remember that oppressive institutions and individuals arise from specific contexts, products of an entire system that is unjust. It is this system of social relations, capitalism, which must be overcome not merely the variable policies or figureheads which sustain it. This understanding underlies OCAP's analysis and shapes strategies and tactics. OCAP takes its lead from members' needs and desires, not from what employers, politicians, government officials or social service bureaucrats tell them is "possible," or "realistic."

Conclusion

OCAP defiantly proclaims: "We don't do protests anymore." OCAP members learned a long time ago that marches and rallies to protest, register dissent or to shame governments that have no shame have lost much of their utility. Furthermore they serve to demoralize members and frustrate people who have real needs. Protest rituals and reliance on moral arguments confine struggles to the terrain of what the state and employers find permissible and thus are ineffective for making real gains on poor people's terms and in ways that meet their needs. OCAP members just do not have the time and means to come out for purely symbolic actions.

Recognizing that they have no interests or values in common with the economic and political bosses, they do not try to "reach them" on any level. Instead they attack them directly where it hurts—in their bank accounts. Part of that strategy means acting in ways that raise their costs of doing business. It also means refusing to accept any right they might claim to make the decisions that fundamentally affect OCAP members' lives or the lives of poor and homeless people more broadly. OCAP members neither recognize nor respect government or corporate authority and see it plainly for what it is: an impediment to people's self-determination and an attempt to monopolize social power in their own hands. OCAPers do whatever they can to make it impossible for the exploiters to implement and carry out their agenda.

A movement made up primarily of poor people, unemployed workers and homeless people of various backgrounds OCAP has been a pole of attraction for struggles against local regimes of neoliberal global governance. Through direct actions, rank-and-file militance and community organizing based on a sense of solidarity of the excluded, OCAP has provided an impetus for a recomposition of class struggle forces across the borders which keep oppressed and exploited

people divided. In doing so they provides important insights into the bridging of sectoral differences among movements of poor people, immigrants, refugees and indigenous people.

OCAP deploys a variety of tactics to overcome the divide and conquer tactics which keep the opposition to capitalist control divided and weakened. Its structure, practice and perspectives, based on mutual aid, solidarity and participatory decision-making are anarchic, indeed hallmarks of anarchism, though it is not an explicitly anarchist group. This anarchy of everyday life is a characteristic that constructive anarchists emphasize in encouraging anarchist involvement in community struggles. Still, OCAP is an anti-poverty organization lacking the resources necessary to lead the fight. Organized labor must take up the challenge in a serious way, drawing on the examples offered by OCAP but extending them radically. The old labor standard, "An Injury to One is an Injury to All" must be labor's driving principle once more. In the next chapter we will see some of the efforts anarchists are making to revitalize labor movements.

Chapter 4
Anarchy at Work:
Developing Workers' Autonomy

As noted earlier, in those periods in which anarchist movements face possibilities of growth, such as occurred after Seattle in 1999, questions of practice and organization and the relation of anarchist activities to broader movements for social change will become more pressing and hold higher stakes. One area in which anarchism will need to offer effective responses to such questions concerns workplace organizing. Indeed the goal of developing anarchist perspectives within unions and other workplace organizations is one that contemporary North American anarchists, and commentators on anarchism, have generally neglected. Even in cases where attention has been given to workplace organizing among anarchists, the focus has remained somewhat narrowly focused. Most discussion, even within anarchist movement publications, has tended to emphasize syndicalist organizing in which anarchist build alternative independent unions, rather than organizing within traditional or mainstream union contexts. This emphasis is understandable given that syndicalist organizing has made some important contributions, particularly in organizing within traditionally unorganized sectors. The work of the Industrial Workers of the World in organizing among Starbucks workers, truckers and even squeegee workers has provided inspirational examples of innovative organizing within the current context.

At the same time the work of rank-and-file anarchist workers within mainstream unions has largely been overlooked. Ironically it is in rank-and-file labor struggles that contemporary anarchist communists have really been innovators, doing things that are quite atypical for many North American anarchist organizations. Unlike Left groups that have focused their energies on running opposition slates in union elections or forming opposition caucuses, anarchist workers and unionists strive to develop rank-and-file organization and militance. They take the position that regardless of the union leadership, until there is a militant and mobilized rank-and-file movement, across locals and workplaces, the potential power of organized labor will remain unrealized.

In recent years, the emergence of union flying squads has generated much attention and debate. Flying squads—quick mobilization networks of rank-and-file workers, which mobilize for strike support, protests, direct actions, and, most notably, working-class defense of poor people, immigrants and unemployed workers—pose a potentially crucial pole of attraction for efforts to re-invigorate rank-and-file militancy and collective labor activism. For many anarchist union activists the flying squads present a significant possibility for organizing rank-

and-file power within the workplace. Anarchists work to ensure flying squads are autonomous from all official union structures and are open to rank-and-file workers who hold no union position or workers in unorganized workplaces or who are unemployed. The flying squads support direct action against bosses of all types.

Rank-and-file working groups and committees are generally recognized bodies within a union that are established to deal with specific areas of need. They step beyond the limitations of traditional unionism to assist both members and non-members. Rank-and-file and community alliances offer one example of how to make the connections which are crucial to developing militant working-class solidarity. They can bring anti-capitalist activists, community members and unionists together to work on a day-to-day basis. Some of the working groups that I have helped to organize and/or participated in have focused on anti-poverty organizing, indigenous rights, housing and defense of immigrants and refugees.

In my view there are striking, and instructive, similarities between flying squads and anarchist affinity groups, suggesting that flying squads reflect the type of organizational form preferred by anarchists. Flying squads, like affinity groups are organized on a smaller, typically face-to-face, scale, operate on the basis of horizontalism and member equality, engage in participatory decision-making, and gear their efforts towards direct action. While these are not strictly anarchist organizations, involving as they do a cross section of workers, they are areas in which contemporary anarchist unionists have focused their energies. It is within such rank-and-file initiatives that many anarchists have found the best possibilities for militant workplace organizing. Based on these examples, anarchists in Peterborough, Ontario and Montreal have recently taken part in developing flying squad networks in their cities. In Toronto, the anarchist collective Punching Out was active in forming an autonomous flying squad to coordinate strike support and help build workers' self-organization and solidarity, bringing together unionized and non-unionized workers along with unemployed members. The Precarious Workers Network coalescing in Montreal is organizing largely among unorganized and unemployed workers. The Downtown Workers Union in Montpelier, Vermont which organized service workers citywide also developed a flying squad. Underpinning these efforts is a growing commitment among some anarchists to what is generally called "social insertion." This perspective, again, reflects a shift of organizing efforts away from building anarchist subcultures towards work within working-class community and workplace organizations.

Unions and the Decline of Infrastructures of Resistance

Over the last half century, many important infrastructures of resistance have severely eroded within working-class communities across North America. The erosion of infrastructures of resistance has resulted from a series of significant transformations in work and social life. It has also been impacted by shifts in

the re-organization of political and social priorities and opportunities of official institutions within communities of the working-class and oppressed. Most of the changes have been effected by defeats suffered through offensives of states and capital. At the same time, others have resulted from seeming working-class victories, including the legalization of unions themselves (Sears 2008, 8).

For all of their potential power, the trade unions in Ontario are restricted by a leadership that cannot allow decisive force to be unleashed. To understand the difficulties facing rank-and-file resistance one must understand the roles and structures of leadership beyond a focus on conservative or progressive union leaders. In Ontario, during the 1930s and 1940s waves of union organizing, wildcat strikes and occupations pressed a tactical retreat on the bosses and their state, leading to the extension of new rights to workers' organizations. In place of open class war, a process of limited and uneven concession granting was established. This truce had the effect of regulating and compartmentalizing workplace struggles to keep them below the level of serious disruption. Each industry, workplace or section of workers was viewed as having its own issues to attend to or, indeed, to bargain over. A new layer of union functionary emerged to broker and execute this deal. These union executives needed to placate membership with regulated contract gains while simultaneously ensuring labor force stability and an environment conducive to accumulation for the bosses. Negotiation is presented as a reasonable and effective solution to most problems. Bureaucrats strive to get the best possible deal for labor power rather than attack or end the overall system of exploitation. Emphasis is placed on bargaining power within the capitalist labor market.

Strike action becomes a last resort to be deployed only under very limited and legally defined conditions. Wildcat strikes and varieties of worker-initiated shopfloor actions are negotiated away and prohibited within contracts. Workers who engage in such actions are open to sanction, a point the union leadership often reinforces within the membership. While limited outbursts might be permitted, leaders are obliged to police the deal and restore order in the ranks of the workers when the bosses deem necessary. Bosses are not going to negotiate with people who can not or will not deliver what is agreed to. In response the bureaucracies have developed centralized structures and methods of control and direction which fit their role and function. In times of mobilization the union leaders, rather than helping to overcome hesitation, view those who are mobilizing as a threat to be isolated or stopped entirely. Critically, all of this is related to structural pressures on the union leadership based on their role within capitalist relations of production rather than on personal characteristics or perspectives as the Left reformists would have it.

At specific junctures in struggle bureaucrats will allow a space for the activities of Left militants if a limited or symbolic show of strength is tactically advantageous. Such militants will then be restrained, isolated or marginalized when the situation has reached a point that the leadership deems satisfactory. This is a central lesson for rank-and-file organizers and reflects situations that have emerged in the recent struggles over flying squads. For anarchist workers,

union activists must reject the role of "Left critics" of the bureaucracy. They must directly challenge the normalization of compromise with employers. Rather than simply challenge the bureaucrats, anarchist workers seek to contribute to a rank-and-file rebellion in the unions that can break the hold of institutionalized bureaucracy within the unions.

Over the past few decades working-class opposition in North America has been contained largely within official, typically legalistic channels. Most common among these have been established bargaining and grievance procedures via union representatives in economic matters. This has been accompanied by a containment of political action within the official channels of party politics and elections. Indeed the separation between economic and political spheres (and the relegation of unions to the limited terrain of economic management) is a reflection, and result of, the collapse of infrastructures of resistance that expressed the connections, even unity, of economic and political action, and the need for organizations that recognized the connections between struggles in these areas. Activities such as occupations, blockades, wildcat strikes and sabotage have been dismissed or diminished within unionized workplaces in which unions act as a level of surveillance and regulation of workers, attempting to contain their actions within the framework of contracts with employers. Indeed the main role of the unions became supervision of the contract during periods between bargaining and symbolic mobilization to support official union negotiations during legal bargaining. Rank-and-file militants have faced disciplinary actions, lack of support or outright shunning by union officials. Contracts continue to include provisions that prohibit wildcats, as agreed to by the union representatives, even as the negotiated options are whittled away.

In Canada, the institutionalization of unions as economic managers has been accompanied by the institutionalization of working-class politics within electoral politics in campaigns of the New Democratic Party federally and provincially, at national and local levels. Politics has been reduced to party campaigns and lobbying for legislative reform as proposed and channeled through NDP caucuses (Shantz 2009). In the current period these institutional pressures and habits have constrained working-class responses to structural transformations of neoliberalism and economic crisis. Unions have sought to limit losses rather than make gains. The approach has been to negotiate severance deals that limit the harm done to former employees (and members) rather than contest the rights of employers and governments to determine the future of workplaces and workers' livelihoods.

These arrangements have also engendered a certain faith in or reliance upon the system among the working-classes. Rather than seeking new relations, a new society, the institutions of the working-class presented and replayed the message that working-class desires and needs could not only be met within capitalist society, but, even more, depended upon capitalism for their realization. Such a notion played into the "trickle down" fantasies of neoliberal Reaganomics, which insisted that policies and practices that benefited business should be pursued as some of the gains made by capital would eventually find their way to the working-

class and the poor. Such was the justification for the massive multimillion-dollar bailouts handed to corporations as part of the economic crisis of 2008 and 2009.

Infrastructures of resistance provided the imaginal universe in which alternatives could be thought, pursued and even, if in part, implemented and realized. The decline of infrastructures of resistance left communities without alternatives or the possibility of alternatives, consigned to the sense that capitalism was the only option. This sense of resignation was reinforced by official institutions (unions and labor parties) that, in their rhetoric and actions suggested that another world was not possible and all desires had to be met or discarded within the context of capitalist social relations. Relations of exploitation.

There has also been a decline in working-class institutions such as the working-class social centers, "labor temples" or union halls as centers of cultural life and activity. Union cultural activities have fallen to the level of the picnic or pub night. Shared collective venues for discussion, strategizing, planning and for forming shared visions and mutual aid practices have eroded, as have chances to nurture connections among generations of workers. Cultural practices of working-class youth and elders have been separated and opposed. Consumer choices have marked the separation between so-called "youth subcultures" and the too easily forgotten adult cultures.

All of this has meant that more militant responses, possibilities of occupation, factory recuperation or wildcats, have not been raised as reasonable responses to capitalist crisis or restructuring. Now as the previous gains made by workers and social movements are being, or have been, erased under neoliberal regimes, the working-class, poor and oppressed are left alone to face precarious existence and exploitation without the necessary infrastructures that might sustain them or offer a basis for renewed struggle. This is true in terms of the loss of autonomous institutions of the the working-class and poor, but also in terms of the loss of public institutions (the reified outcomes of struggle reflected in the welfare state and various social services) which have been privatized, turned over to the market and its cold profit logic. Indeed, the last decade has witnessed a major retreat from organized labor in the face of the neoliberal offensive. This includes the decisions by some unions, including the social union Canadian Auto Workers (CAW), to cut ties with direct action anti-poverty and anti-globalization groups and movements right as those groups and movements were beginning to mount a growing militant challenge to corporate and political leaders in Canada (see Shantz 2009). In the face of the broad transformations, and deepening crises, occurring in Canadian industrial centers such as Windsor, Oshawa and St. Catharines, and particularly in the auto industry, the bedrock of private sector unionization, significant questions are raised about the capacities of working-class organizations and community advocacy groups to respond to the shifting realities and challenges facing the working-classes, poor and oppressed (Ross and Drouillard 2009).

At the same time shifting conditions change the context for perceiving and strategizing around struggles and can lead to new forms of resistance. Such has been the case as rank-and-file workers pursue alternative forms of organization

and practice in the current period of industrial crisis and union paralysis. It is in this challenging and difficult context that some workers and anarchists have forged alliances to address impending workplace closures and job losses. Over the last few years important signs of a stirring rank-and-file militance have appeared, suggesting possibilities for a radicalization of labor struggles that might challenge capitalist relations at a more fundamental level, questioning relations of ownership, control and authority, including the authority of union leadership and the construction of unions as primarily managers of collective agreements. These developments, and the presence of anarchists within them, provide for possibly crucial turning points in the working-class response to capitalist economic crisis and in the formation and structure of working-class organizing and struggle.

Developing Workers Autonomy: Anarchists, Flying Squads and Rank-and-File Groups

Militant anti-capitalists of various stripes, recognizing the crucial roles played by workers within production relations, have viewed the flying squads as important in the development of workers' organization against capitalist authority and discipline. Anarchists, maintaining the necessity of working-class self-organization and autonomy from bureaucratic structures, have been encouraged by the possible emergence of active networks of rank-and-file workers bringing collective resources to defend broad working-class interests. Here are organizations with rank-and-file participation working to build solidarity across unions and locals and alongside community groups, engaging in direct action while striving to democratize their own unions. No wonder then that the re-appearance of flying squads, particularly in Ontario, Canada, in a context of halting resistance to a vicious neoliberal attack, notably among some sectors of the labor movement, has been cause for much excitement.

The flying squad is a rapid response group of members who are ready to mobilize on short notice to provide direct support for pickets or direct actions. It is not necessarily an officially recognized body of the local. The flying squad structure may consist of little more than phone lists and meetings but, significantly, should maintain its autonomy from the local and national union executives. Generally flying squads should be open only to rank-and-file members since they must be free to initiate and take actions that the leadership may not approve of. Some flying squads refuse even a budget line item so that they are in no way dependent upon leadership. In Canada, flying squads have offered crucial support to direct actions around immigration defense, tenant protection, squatters rights, and welfare support by mobilizing sizeable numbers of unionists who are prepared for actions without regard to legality. Flying squads take direct action to interfere with bosses' capacities to make profits. Not limited in their scope of action by specific collective agreements or workplaces, flying squads mobilize for community as well as workplace defense (Shantz 2005).

Rank-and-file committees and flying squads can become important parts of struggles over a broad spectrum of issues affecting working-class community life, including those which the mainstream unions too often ignore such as housing, indigenous rights, defense of immigrants and refugees, unemployment and opposing the criminalization of poverty. They can offer spaces for building bridges between workers, across unions and industries and between union and community groups. Autonomous from traditional union structures and organized around militant non-hierarchical practices, rank-and-file working groups and flying squads can provide real opposition to conservatism within the unions as well. They provide a better approach than the more common model of the "Left caucus" which tries to reform union policy, usually, again, through resolutions at conventions (Clarke 2002). The rank-and-file committees actively and directly challenge the leadership within their own locals and across locals.

Flying squads of various types have long been an important part of labor militancy internationally. In Britain, community flying pickets successfully mobilized to defend hospitals in working-class neighborhoods against closure in the 1970s. In India several farmers' unions recently formed flying squads to confront officials at purchase centers to ensure that their demands for proper payment for their crops were satisfied. Members of the Carpenters Union in southern California, who were primarily immigrants, many of them undocumented, used flying squads and direct action effectively during the framers' strike of 1995.

While some type of rank-and-file organizing, along the lines of what we now call flying squads, has been a constant in labor movements, the contemporary flying squads in Ontario are inspired by the flying pickets that emerged during the CIO strikes of the 1930s, including, notably, during the 1934 general strike in Minneapolis. Flying squads played an important part in the 1945 UAW strike against Ford in Windsor. That strike, which won the legal rights associated with the Rand Formula (union recognition, dues check off and closed shop) for workers in Canada, turned when strikers organized an incredible vehicle picket in which the entire Ford plant was surrounded and shut down by several rows of vehicles. Flying squads were used effectively to mobilize people for actions throughout the strike and to spread information throughout the community. By focusing on building flying squads, anarchists are thus drawing upon traditions and practices that have long played a part in working-class organizing, though attempting to radicalize them.

Not coincidentally, the contemporary flying squads in Ontario made their reappearance in several Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) locals in Windsor during the mid-1990s as a mobilization force for actions against the newly elected neoliberal provincial government (see Levant 2003, 20). The network within the CAW spread during organizing of the Ontario Days of Action, rotating, city-by-city one-day mass strikes against the Tories. In the midst of a lengthy strike against Falconbridge mining, during which picketers were subjected to ongoing violence by company goons and security thugs, members of Mine Mill CAW Local 598

initiated a regional Northern Flying Squad to reinforce and defend the lines and step up the struggle against the company. They helped to organize a solidarity weekend that brought flying squads from across Ontario for militant actions against Falconbridge, actions that many consider to have been the high point of the strike.

On different occasions the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty along with the CUPE 3903 (Canadian Union of Public Employees) flying squad have gone directly to Pearson International Airport to demand an end to threats of deportation against families. Leaflets are given to passengers alerting them to the situation and visits paid to the Immigration Canada deportation office in the basement of Terminal One. After demanding and receiving a meeting with the airport's Immigration management the combined efforts of OCAP and the flying squad have caused management to issue stays of removal with the deportations eventually canceled. This unlikely result, rare in immigration cases, in which the removal dates were canceled prior to a Federal Court challenge, is a testament to the powers of direct action (Shantz 2005).

It must also be stressed that the presence of flying squads has been crucial in the success of these and other actions. Clearly government officials, security and police respond differently when confronted with a room packed with workers holding union flags and banners than when confronted with a smaller number of people that they are willing to dismiss as activists. Through such actions, the flying squad demonstrates how organizations of rank-and-file workers can step out of traditional concerns with the workplace to act in a broadened defense of working-class interests. The expansion of rank-and-file union flying squads, with autonomy from union bureaucracies, could provide a substantial response to the state's efforts to isolate immigrants and refugees from the larger community. The emboldened aggressiveness of Immigration Canada after September 11 makes such actions in defense of working-class people absolutely crucial.

In addition CUPE 3903 is home to vital working groups with real links to community struggles. Beginning in November, 2001, 3,903 members provided an office and resources for OCAP to work along with members of the 3903 Anti-Poverty Working Group. The working group moves beyond the limitations of traditional unionism to assist both members and non-members experiencing conflicts with collection agencies, landlords, employers or police, and to support anyone having problems with welfare or other government bureaucracies. The office provides a possibly significant example of a rank-and-file initiative that forges community alliances while fighting the local implementation of the global neoliberal agenda. This type of alliance offers one example of how to make the connections which are crucial to growing our movements. Indeed, it brings anti-globalization activists, anti-poverty organizers and union members together to work on a practical day-to-day basis.

Rank-and-File Committees

Another area of organizing work undertaken by anarchists has been within solidarity unionism and support for rank-and-file committees. Anarchist unionists have been actively involved in building and/or supporting alternative rank-and-file networks within and between unions and workplaces. In some cases this has meant supporting rank-and-file union members whose unions have refused to fight effectively for members' needs and concerns. One such case involves the Metropolitan Hotel Workers Committee in Toronto.

The hotel industry is Canada's largest employer of immigrants, women of color and single parents. It is generally acknowledged that hotel workers, across the industry, face horrible working conditions. Long hours of work are matched with low pay and unsafe working conditions. Too often these conditions are also matched with an inactive and compliant union leadership that views these problems as "part of the business." This has been the case for workers at Toronto's Metropolitan Hotel, where conditions are so miserable that workers accurately refer to it as a "five star sweatshop." Unfortunately, as is all too common, when the Met workers turned to their union, Hotel Employees/Restaurant Employees (HERE, now UNITE-HERE), for support their concerns were ignored, minimized or dismissed.

Faced with an ongoing situation of brutally racist management, which prohibited workers from communicating with each other in languages other than English and treated workers differently depending on ethnicity or religion, awful working conditions and a union that can only be described as passive, rank-and-file workers at the Metropolitan decided to get organized to take care of things themselves. To begin several workers came together to form the Metropolitan Hotel Workers Committee, a committee made up strictly of rank-and-file members, to share information and strategize effective actions and campaigns to improve working conditions and put an end to harsh management practices. Within months, more than one-quarter of the Metropolitan's workers had joined the committee. This became a crucial struggle for rank-and-file workers, most of whom are immigrant women. Of the approximately 200 workers at the Met, more than two-thirds are women, most of Filipino, Chinese, South East and South Asian and West Indian backgrounds.

Anarchists, including some within the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty and CUPE Local 3903 played active parts in assisting the MHWC in its development. They helped organize and mobilize people for rallies, took part in skill-sharing to address issues within the workplace, and challenged the union leadership to support the committee. The quick growth of the Committee spoke both to the seriousness of the problems facing Met workers and the longstanding need for effective action to deal with the issues given the union's unresponsiveness.

Faced with inaction, obstruction and outright hostility, from their local's leadership, the Met Workers finally decided to take things into their own hands. A true rank-and-file movement soon emerged together to take on the employer in a manner that is direct and effective, while also challenging the union representatives

over their lack of support. Despite the hostility of local leadership the Committee quickly made some important gains. Grievances, that had been stalled, were satisfactorily resolved and Committee members initiated skill-sharing with each other to teach themselves how to take grievances forward. This is do-it-yourself solidarity unionism where members look after each other, share resources and determine their course of action collectively—a real model for anarchism at work. Within weeks of forming the MHWC, workers were able to have a particularly nasty manager removed. This occurred after repeated requests to local reps to do something about this manager had left the situation unchanged. Due to the efforts of the Met Workers Committee a conference scheduled to bring 300 people to the Met was canceled, an outcome that stunned management. Through a series of direct actions and rallies the Committee confronted the hotel management directly with demands that management rehire, with compensation, all victimized workers who have been forced from their jobs and stop the practice of harassing and firing injured workers.

While the union leadership bemoaned the lack of translators, without explaining why a union would hire staff who do not speak the same language as large proportions of the membership, the Met Workers Committee members shared skills with each other to teach themselves how to pursue grievances and work refusals. While the union's top-down authoritarian structure prevents it from drawing on the skills and talents, including multilingualism, of members, the Met workers have provided translations skills that have allowed OCAP to expand its own anti-poverty casework to people it otherwise could not have assisted.

All along the MHWC members have maintained that they identify, not only as members of a particular union or as part of a specific workplace, but on a broad working-class basis. Thus they have reached out to poor and unemployed workers in community groups like OCAP as well as making alliances with rank-and-file members of other unions, such as the Anti-Poverty Working Group of CUPE (Canadian Union of Public Employees) 3903. With support from these groups the MHWC organized several direct actions and rallies at the workplace. In addition the Committee broadened its efforts to confront the bosses in the community as well as the workplace. Met Workers worked with the CUPE 3903 Anti-Poverty Working Group to press York University to remove the Met's owner, Henry Wu, from the Board of the York Foundation. This class-based organizing is significant, not only in terms of bringing greater resources to bear on the situation, but also in helping to break down the sectoralism that often keeps working-class folks divided by workplace, union or employment status.

As the Committee grew and enjoyed some successes they were approached by workers from other hotels to see about starting similar committees in more workplaces. These are crucial steps in building a vital network among rank-and-file activists geared towards autonomy and self-activity. Significantly, the MHWC focused its efforts on building an informed and active rank-and-file base rather than putting together a reform slate for infrequently held executive elections. These efforts will do more than any Left-led reform movements, leadership slates

or caucuses to establish the basis for a revitalized and militant workers' movement. That the MHWC had difficulty standing up under the pressures of hostility and lack of support from its own union leadership shows also the obstacles and challenges that such rank-and-file networks face.

Struggles Over the Flying Squads

The national and local executives of some unions in which flying squads and rank-and-file committees have emerged have clearly shown concern about these developments, as the case of the MHWC and its struggles with HERE illustrate. This has played out particularly badly within the CAW.

During the summer of 2001, people in cities, reserves and towns throughout Ontario were gearing up for the Common Front campaign of economic disruption, which would directly confront and interfere with the political programs and economic practices of the government and their corporate backers. This effort suffered something of a setback when the CAW leadership decided to withdraw support from the campaign in June. The decision came following the mock eviction of the Provincial Finance Minister, Jim Flaherty, from his constituency office by OCAP, students and members of CAW and UFCW flying squads. Then National President of the CAW, Buzz Hargrove, was so upset by the action that he agreed to meet with the Labor Minister to discuss union funding and support of OCAP. In an inexplicable act of collaboration, Hargrove sat down to establish union policy with the person who had only months before introduced legislation gutting the Employment Standards Act and extending the legal workweek from 44 to 62 hours.

Significantly, not only did the CAW cut OCAP's largest source of funding, but the National Executive of the union also clamped down on the CAW flying squads which were only beginning to grow. CAW flying squads were brought under control of the National by requiring approval of either the National or of local presidents prior to any action. The National even tried to prohibit use of CAW shirts, hats and banners at actions not sanctioned by the National. Thus the CAW leadership cynically used the excuse of the eviction to clamp down on a rank-and-file movement that it saw as a possible threat to its authority. The strangling of the CAW flying squads may be one of the sharpest blows rank-and-file activists have suffered recently and has deeply hurt efforts to to fightback against capitalism in Ontario.

These actions effectively derailed actions in major industrial centers like Windsor, where activists, recognizing the vulnerability of just-in-time production in Windsor and Detroit, had initially planned to blockade the Ambassador Bridge, the main U.S.–Canada node in the so-called NAFTA Superhighway. Stopping traffic on the bridge for even a short period of time would have caused millions of dollars in damages because of the reliance on just-in-time production in the factories on both sides of the border. This possibility was not lost on Hargrove, who let it slip during a meeting with representatives of OCAP Allies when he

angrily voiced his concern that in Windsor some members were talking about shutting down production at "our plants."

At this point, the CAW bureaucracy's clampdown on the flying squads is complete. At a panel discussion on creative tactics at which I participated during a recent Labor Notes conference in Detroit, Michelle Dubiel, a CAW Ontario Chapter flying squad representative, stated approvingly that marshals had finally been instituted in the CAW flying squads. Dubiel noted that there had been much discussion and some resistance to this but was reassured that members were eventually brought to see the necessity of marshals. The impact of this takeover of the flying squads has been lethal in some areas. A flying squad member in Sudbury recently told me that the northern flying squads were becoming extinct. Similarly the rank-and-file, cross-local flying squad in Windsor was shut down before it really got started.

Beyond Union Reformism and Flying Squads as Left Opposition

Some union activists have viewed the flying squads primarily as a means of union reform, a companion piece of the left caucus' loyal opposition to the union leadership. A prime example of this approach is expressed by Alex Levant, (who has put much work into building my former union's flying squad and served as a vice president in the local), in an article in *New Socialist* magazine (2003). Levant poses the problem for rank-and-file activism largely as one of "conservative leaders who practice 'business unionism'" (Levant 2003, 22). Levant (2003: 22) suggests that flying squads "pose a threat to such union leaders' positions by fostering membership activism, which bolsters left opposition currents in these unions." Business unionism, far from being a preference of specific leaders, however, is a structured relationship, legally and organizationally, within unions and between unions and bosses. Levant (2003, 22) is correct to suggest that such locals "contribute to the crisis of working-class self-organization by discouraging members' self-activity," but this crisis will not be overcome by replacing conservative leaders with leftist ones. Nor should we accept that social unionism, inasmuch as it re/produces structures of authority and compromise, albeit with a social conscience, is not still a form of business unionism (Shantz 2009). This is shown clearly in the case of the CAW, which has long practiced "social unionism," expressed largely as mobilizing members to support the NDP and/or donate to charities.

Taking the Left opposition perspective, Levant is unable or unwilling to openly or directly criticize leadership in the CAW for their ongoing efforts to control that union's flying squads. In his article Levant quotes CAW representative Steve Watson approvingly while making no mention of his role in the CAW breaking of the rank-and-file aspects of the flying squads. Notably, at the above-mentioned anti-deportation action at the airport, it was Watson who intervened at the last minute to keep CAW flying squads from participating fully, even though many

workers at the airport are CAW members, and could have played an important part in stopping the deportation.

I do agree with Levant that the flying squads have a tremendous potential in building rank-and-file militancy and self-organization. However, that potential can only be met if autonomy from the leadership is established and defended with vigilance. Flying squads do *not* "work best" when they "respect" the roles of the leadership as Levant (2003, 22) advocates. Flying squads work best when they understand the roles the leadership plays, including the role of taming and reigning in members' self-organizing initiatives at various points. It also seems that flying squads work best when they empower workers and when they foster self-determination.

Again, is its crucial to remember that leadership will, from time to time, call on the services of Left militants, when a show of strength is tactically advantageous, only to abandon, isolate or purge them when things have gone as far as the leadership finds useful. This is a crucial lesson that anarchists stress openly in discussions over the flying squads. For anarchist workers it must be borne in mind when considering flying squads with marshals under the direction of national and local executives. From an anarchist perspective, militant activists must reject the role of "Left critics" of the union bureaucracy, refuse the terms of the compromise with the bosses and directly challenge those who seek to enforce it. It is necessary to build rank-and-file strength within the unions such that the hold of bureaucracies can be ended and new forms of relationship between members, and between members and other working-class people outside the union, can be developed.

Towards the Re-Building of Infrastructures of Resistance: The Windsor Workers' Action Centre

The infrastructures of resistance help people and communities to develop the capacities to sustain human struggles over time and place. They provide a basis for self-directing these struggles strategically. They also allow for the crucial connection between local and immediate struggles and campaigns and broader and more thorough going projects of contesting and even overthrowing the existing social structures (Sears 2008, 10).

In Windsor many of the organizations and institutions that had recently provided infrastructures of resistance, such as the Windsor Coalition for Social Justice and the Anarchist Working Group, had disappeared. Central spaces in which activists had gathered, met and organized, such as the Eclectic Cafe, which had provided something of an organizing nerve center during the demonstrations against the meetings of the Organization of American States (OAS) had folded. The roving Coffeehouse 36 weekly anarchist gatherings had faded away after providing lively venues for discussion, debate and organizing. This loss of community venues is matched by losses in the unions, including the withdrawal of former union activists who have lost their jobs. As Ross and Drouillard (2009) note:

the CAW's strategy of using buyouts as a way to mitigate layoffs (while allowing employers to permanently reduce the workforce) has generated a growing number of ex-union members in the community, some of whom were local union activists. As these workers drift away into other workplaces or struggle to find new jobs, and with nothing to connect them to their former union or workplace community, they experience isolation and the dissipation of their activist knowledge, experience and capacities.

One interesting attempt to re-build working-class infrastructures of resistance emerged in Windsor at the end of 2008. On November 1, 2008, the Windsor Workers' Action Centre (WWAC) threw open its door with a celebration attended by a standing room only crowd (Ross and Drouillard 2009). Participants view the WWAC as a venue for developing new strategies for collective struggle and for providing resources, material and imaginal, that will contribute to new types of worker's organization and action. The concern is not solely with helping people survive the crisis, but, even more, to forge the solidarity and support that might build the capacity to raise seriously workers' alternatives to capitalism (Ross and Drouillard 2009). One key challenge is to make connections between unemployed workers and those who still have jobs. Similarly there is the need to build solidarity between unionized workers trying to hold onto relatively decent paying jobs and non-unionized workers, many of whom have never enjoyed such jobs in the first place.

The WWAC is founded in a series of regular meetings in 2007 initiated by anarchists and workers, social justice activists, students and faculty of the University through the University of Windsor's Labour Studies Program. Under the banner of "Work in Progress" (WIP) the eclectic group sought to build on the numerous strengths and vast experiences of organizing in Windsor. This diverse pool of ongoing organizing resources included active environmental coalitions that brought together union and environmental organizers, an active peace coalition, a variety of alternative media, including a monthly newspaper and longstanding radio program focusing on working-class concerns and union organizers and rank-and-file workers raised in the local environment of social unionism (Ross and Drouillard 2009). In addition was the presence of various anarchist collectives, including a group of community gardeners and food producers.

The initiative comes out of a growing sense that working-class organizations, and community advocacy groups, are not capable of confronting, let alone overcoming, the issues and difficulties facing the working-class and oppressed in twenty-first century capitalism. The WWAC is a material manifestation of working-class and poor people to develop and share resources amongst themselves in a way that will forge durable relationships within and/or between individuals and groups while helping to overcome the sense of isolation and defeatism that often impedes struggles. It is a space of mutual aid and solidarity, an infrastructure of resistance in the making.

In other contexts and eras, infrastructures of dissent, provided venues and resources through which workers and community activists could come together and collaborate on shared projects, making connections between seemingly distinct issues and concerns and creating a critical mass for dealing with them effectively. As Ross and Drouillard (2009) remind us, "workers' independent social and cultural spaces outside the workplace … allowed workers to gather, socialize, debate and argue, develop their own forms of cultural expression as well as bonds of friendship and solidarity that could underpin difficult struggles as well as generate alternative perspectives." Initial meetings thus emphasized building opportunities for bridging gaps, bringing movements, groups and activists together to find common cause and common ground.

Contemporary infrastructures of resistance must be places that recognize and are open to the diversity of working-class experience. They must be spaces in which people from different workplace and community backgrounds can feel comfortable and welcome. This marks them as distinct from union halls, church basements and university campuses, spaces that have often been used for organizing. As WWAC participants are aware, union halls can be difficult spaces to enter for non-unionized workers "given the broader cultural atmosphere of anti-unionism, the resentment fostered against unionized workers, and the fear of reprisal from employers if seen associating with the movement" (Ross and Drouillard 2009). Similarly many working-class people still feel uncomfortable or unwelcome on university campuses, spaces that are viewed as the domain of elites who do not or cannot relate to working-class people, or worse who look down on them. I still have vivid memories of being physically assaulted my first week as an undergraduate, simply for wearing my union jacket on campus, the student assailants repeatedly asking why I was wearing a union jacket on *their* campus. In other cases community organizers sometimes fail to recognize cultural diversity. I recall an anti-poverty group holding a welfare clinic in a church basement only to find that some Muslim people, who were among the groups to whom outreach was being directed, would not enter the building.

For the founders of the WWAC, it was essential that the space they created be open to any working-class people who wanted to participate, from a broad diversity of backgrounds and experiences. The gathering space should be free from direction by any particular group, organization or workplace (such as the university). Its focus must be straightforwardly to provide a free space, both in terms of openness but literally free in terms of cost, in which people can meet to pursue their own organizing needs. Additionally this space should allow for people to meet others, unfamiliar to them, who might have similar interests, experiences, concerns and intentions. These opportunities and encounters, it is hoped, will lead to new forms of interconnected struggle and even allow people "to develop broader forms of consciousness" (Ross and Drouillard 2009).

A key goal that motivated the creation of the WWAC space was challenging and overcoming the false divides that too often separate community and workplace struggles, as if they were somehow separate spheres (Ross and Drouillard 2009).

Indeed, the organizational structures, activities and membership of social justice groups often re/produce that divide. Anti-poverty groups, housing advocates, injured workers groups, migrant workers' organizations too often have limited aims, scopes and activities related to specific concerns of a particular working-class constituency with too little interaction between them, shared memberships or mutually engaged strategies and tactics. Precisely because such divides are false, in many ways the outcome of previous struggles and defeats, and even victories (see Sears 2008), "activists needed to better understand and organize around the *intersections* between work-based inequalities and injustices and those experienced in the family, in schools, in the grocery store, in neighbourhoods, and in the city" (Ross and Drouillard 2009). Participants in the WWAC were aware and concerned that unions have still not made organizing around working-class issues beyond the workplace a real priority. This situation has only gotten worse as unions retreat and retrench around a limited defense against demands for concessions (Sears 2007, 2008; Ross and Drouillard 2009).

In January 2009, the WWAC set up a phone line to assist workers in dealing with current employers or to help unemployed workers and community members deal with government agencies and programs such as Employment Insurance (EI) or Workers' Compensation claims (Ross and Drouillard 2009). WWAC participants have also developed and hosted workshops on employment standards to the Windsor Unemployed Help Centre and Windsor Women Working With Immigrant Women (an organization that helps immigrant women secure employment), and has developed workshops on EI and the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB). At present, the work of the WWAC is focused on service provision, in a context in which many people are without adequate support in dealing with government systems that are not accessible or easy to navigate (Ross and Drouillard 2009). Participants at the space expect that eventually more people who contact the center for assistance will visit the center and become more deeply involved on an ongoing basis, assisting others in areas with which they have had direct experience. Already there have been decent numbers of people stopping by to explore the space, discuss their concerns and take part in the variety of events the center hosts.

Among the most popular ongoing events has been the weekly free Friday Night Movie (Ross and Drouillard 2009). The movie nights are set up to allow any individual or group to schedule a movie and lead a discussion based on issues raised by it. It has proved to be a successful venue for bringing a variety of groups into the center. Among the groups that have scheduled movies and initiated discussions have been Engineers without Borders, Natural Parents, FedUp Community Gardening Network, the University of Windsor's Social Justice Law Society, and the CAW's Windsor Regional Environmental Council (Ross and Drouillard 2009). As has been the case in other contexts, such as the Anarchist Free Space and Free Skool in Toronto, the movie night offers a friendly, low-key opportunity for people from different backgrounds to build social relationships, initiate conversations and debates and strategize around crucial issues in the city. The movie nights also

serve as important forms of outreach, "drawing in people not already engaged and who might not come to a more overtly political meeting" (Ross and Drouillard 2009). The WWAC has also offered something of a free school, a site for practices of popular education. Again it is important to have a space outside of the structures of university and union that can pose certain barriers to people's participation. The initial ongoing class, launched in February 2009, focuses on "Philosophy for Workers."

One of the central, essential infrastructures lacking for a variety of organizations of the working-class and poor is simply space to meet and gather safely and securely. Non-unionized workers, for example are left with few spaces in which they can safely discuss workplace issues with other workers, learn about their rights and/or specific pieces of labor legislation, and organize collectively. This is especially troubling given their vulnerability in relation to employers who often violate employment standards legislation and subject workers to unilateral decision-making (Ross and Drouillard 2009). Addressing this ongoing need, the WWAC makes available free meeting space for several community organizing groups, including the FedUp Community Gardening Network, the Windsor Peace Coalition and the Windsor Fair Trade group, a group devoted to making Windsor a fair trade city (Ross and Drouillard 2009).

The availability of a common organizing space allows a diversity of social justice groups and organizers to meet, talk and build relationships. This provides opportunities to move beyond the fragmentation and isolation that often mark struggles and issues and allows organizers to make connections that would otherwise not emerge. Indeed participants in the WWAC note the numbers of people who have remarked that before spending time at the center they did not know about a range of other projects under way in the city (Ross and Drouillard 2009). This is clearly a case in which involvement or interest in a specific group or event can, through the presence of a shared space, lead to contact and involvement with other groups and issues, contributing to the expansion of group participation and the forging of relationships of mutual aid and solidarity (Ross and Drouillard 2009).

As with other projects, such as TAO Communications and the Anarchist Free Skool, some of the most important contributions are the unexpected projects that develop out of chance encounters that take place at the alternative spaces. The WWAC has served as the springboard for other infrastructures, projects and spaces. One such projects includes the initiative to form an Independent Media Centre (IMC) that would serve as a permanent common space for the various independent media producers in Windsor, including the monthly paper *The Scoop*, the weekly radio show *All in a Day's Work*, and the *Scale Down Windsor* blog (Ross and Drouillard 2009). The new IMC would provide a shared physical space for media production. Participants will offer skills-sharing and training in media production, including digital video production, print journalism, website construction and podcasting. A shared creative space will allow for "cross-

fertilization, mutual support, and a higher profile for alternative perspectives in the local media environment" (Ross and Drouillard 2009).

As has been the case with previous autonomous organizing spaces such as Coffeehouse 36 and the anarchist Who's Emma? Infoshop in Toronto, the possibility of burnout, as small numbers of organizers have more and more diverse demands placed upon them, and as more needs arise to be addressed in difficult times, looms large and ever-present. So too does the depletion of material resources for spaces that rely on donations and irregular fundraising among communities that do not necessarily have much spare change. As groups like the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty, the Anti-Poverty Working Group and the Anarchist Free Skool show, making connections with and organizing among those who are most marginalized within or excluded from working-class or radical organizations can pose serious difficulties, not the least of which is the collision of pressing need with limited resources.

In the WWAC these challenges are pressing. The space relies on personal donations from individual supporters for its rent and day-to-day operations. Work in the space is freely given as part of a gift economy on the basis of mutual aid. Anarchists are reluctant to seek more stable sources of income that might come from unions or philanthropical foundations. Of course government grants are off limits given the anti-systemic nature of the work that is done at the space or connected to the space. At the anarchist infoshop, Who's Emma? there was lengthy discussion and debate about pursuing registered charitable status, given the rather strict constraints that are placed on the work done by registered charities, including the prohibition against doing explicitly political advocacy work. There the decision was to seek charitable status solely for the educational programs done through workshops. In the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty similar debates took place over charitable status. There the decision was to avoid the charitable designation for all aspects of the group's work. At the WWAC such decisions have not been finally arrived at and indeed the future development of the space may well be impacted by shifting approaches to funding.

Similar concerns arise in terms of funding from union organizations. There again the fundamental issue is one of autonomy and liberty of action. Particularly for a group that seeks to support rank-and-file workers and community members, the freedom to be critical of union leadership and bureaucracies and the capacity to support rank-and-file members who are challenging leadership, without the threat of pulled funding (as happened to the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty following the mock eviction of the Finance Minister) is crucial.

Developing practices for overcoming barriers between people and movements and moving past the fragmentation and isolation that are part of relations of exploitation and oppression remain key challenges to be addressed in building and nurturing infrastructures of resistance. Ross and Drouillard (2009) note that most workers' centers have been geared towards more clearly defined or specific constituencies, typically around particular industries, workers, citizenship status or employment status. In their view, organizing workers as a class is a difficult

task, particularly as it must avoid the pitfalls of traditional labor organizations and movements.

The type of service provision that unions and community organizations are typically involved in, such as accessing government, contractually affirmed or legal resources does not entail much risk, either for recipients or providers (Ross and Drouillard 2009). Various limited resources exist to support individual workers, as long as it remains within a context that re-integrates them into the system of waged labor. Collective organizing for more than this is both more difficult and more risky, in material and emotional terms. Before people are willing or ready to engage in such collective actions they must experience or see examples of success. As Ross and Drouillard (2009) note: "Many people, whether unionized or not, are well aware of the pervasive injustice of the current state of affairs, but are skeptical that collective action can change these circumstances. If the CAW, the most powerful union in Windsor, must take major concessions to preserve jobs, what can other organizations do?" Anarchist workers recognize the need to show realistic alternatives in action.

Infrastructures of resistance, like the WWAC, must crucially develop and maintain capacities for making and securing real victories that are meaningful in people's lives. At the same time this requires that people develop the confidence to struggle further (Ross and Drouillard 2009). Even so-called minor victories, such as securing proper severance or benefits or delaying a plant closure can be essential. People, in a context of too many, often ongoing, losses, need to win, to experience what winning feels like. As Ross and Drouillard (2009) note, in the current context, even addressing the question of making real gains and attempting to develop new ways of answering it can be a real contribution to the regeneration of workers' resistance.

Conclusion: Rank-and-File Autonomy

For anarchists, rank-and-file autonomy means being prepared and willing to fight independently of the leadership and against it when required. As anarchist organizers they are upfront, open and direct about confronting the conservatives within their unions. No gloss should be put on efforts to contain rank-and-file militancy or excuse it for any reason. Anarchists contest reformist approaches to rank-and-file movements which would position them as little more than conscientious pressure groups. None of this is meant to imply that the leadership is holding back an otherwise radical membership. That is, of course, romantic silliness. Rather, developing militancy within union movements requires a clear recognition of the necessity for developing experiences of effective struggle that go beyond what the bosses or governments would permit and, at the same time, viewing honestly how the current unions' leadership impedes this.

Rank-and-file movements offer a space for radicalizing workers to come together and focus members' energies. When people engage in struggles, whether

strikes or demonstrations against neoliberalism, they develop at least some sense of collective power, confidence and an experience of doing things differently. This can encourage an openness to more radical ideas and practices with which to address to problems we find ourselves facing. Mainstream unions, even where some resources are given to political education, are generally not going to present and develop openly radical alternatives. Certainly the leadership of mainstream unions cannot be expected to do so. As workers this is one area in which anarchists can and should be active. Putting forward radical alternatives, agitating for those alternatives and working to make them real should be part of the work that is done by anarchist workers within rank-and-file networks.

These are merely first steps in a long process of building rank-and-file opposition, with much work to be done and opposition to be overcome along the way. At the same time it is encouraging that anarchists' efforts have been well received in various contexts. These efforts are initiatives for working-class self-activity that should not be limited to being a democratic complement to the bureaucracy. Anarchist workers try to think beyond this to see something more in the emergence and growth of autonomous rank-and-file networks. The need to build a resistance that includes rank-and-file unionists, non-organized workers, non-status workers and migrants is critical.

The capitalist offensives of the last decades have broken down working-class organization and infrastructures of resistance. Dismantling employment standards, freezing the minimum wage, eliminating rent controls and deepening cuts to social assistance for unemployed workers have made life more precarious for broadening sections of the working-class. This situation is not just a matter for deep humanitarian concern but a serious warning to the workers' movement. If the working-class is reaching such a level of polarization and a section of it is experiencing such misery and privation, we are in a profoundly dangerous situation.

Many workers are becoming tired of engaging in struggle only to find themselves under attack, not only by the boss, but by the officials of their own unions. The questionable actions of the Ontario Federation of Labour, especially during a recent Conservative Party convention in Ontario, when the OFL organized a separate action and then left the scene when activists were attacked by police, have convinced some grassroots activists and rank-and-file workers alike of the need to make end runs around the unions officialdom and develop real alliances. Certainly this is a healthy development, one which anarchists must take seriously. This means meeting with fellow rank-and-file workers and having serious discussions about what sort of assistance anti-capitalist movements can offer in their struggles against conservative leadership, policies and structures in their own unions. This is something that even anarchists who are less comfortable with workplace organizing can contribute to.

There are many important lessons from anarchist history that need to be learned, revived and shared. At the same time, the work contemporary anarchists have put into building rank-and-file workers' committees, flying squads and precarious

workers' networks shows that, despite their numbers, they can make real material contributions to building the capacities of working people for struggle. These interventions are not made in a vanguardist way to build our organization or recruit members but in a principled way to help build class-wide resources and win material gains. It is clearly a mistake to approach movements or unions either as recruitment grounds (as more formal organizations often do) or as social clubs (as is more typical for informal groups). For contemporary anarchist communists the key is to be involved in a principled way that prioritizes anarchists working to build working-class strength in their communities, neighborhoods and workplaces rather than building their specific "Big-A anarchist" organization. Developing particular anarchist organizations is significant only in as much as it contributes to those larger goals.

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Chapter 5
Building Bridges:
Anarchism, Borders and Resistance

Much writing on capitalist globalization speaks of diminishing nation-states in the face of growing trade and communications flows. Prominent analyses of contemporary movements have tended towards, on one hand, an uncritical celebration of smooth (borderless) aspects of globalism or, on the other hand, towards a "Left nationalism" that seeks to address the ills of globalization through appeals for a return to the protectionist Keynesian state. Despite apparent differences both approaches are underpinned by the same association of globalization with the decline of territorial nation-states. Both perspectives fail to come to grips with the evolving role of the capitalist state in fostering or maintaining the inequalities associated with globalization.

Perhaps out of hopefulness more than analysis some social theorists have uncritically celebrated a perceived decline of nation-states. Much has been made in recent social theory of the "flow" across borders supposedly characterizing the age of globalization. Thom Kuehls (1996) suggests that the emergence of flows, notably satellite communications and the Internet, provide spaces for an enactment of politics beyond the bounded spaces of states. These emergent spaces of action "are said to offer great opportunities for activism beyond sovereign territories" (Shantz 1998 97). Even Left social activists have been drawn to emphasize mobility and the permeability of borders. For example, one activist and academic inspired by the works of Gramsci and Freire, suggests, perhaps hopefully, that "the complex process of globalization that has increasingly decentralized production and centralized decision-making has diminished the importance of borders and of the nation-states within them" (Barndt 1996, 243). New technologies, most notably the Internet, are credited with facilitating global communications and global networks of anti-capitalist activism. These networks are said to have facilitated, in turn, a move beyond the nationalism that characterized earlier struggles such as those against free trade.

> Ironically, 'free trade' has offered us some free space, especially opportunities to connect across borders: geopolitical borders, sectoral borders that divides [sic] us as social change workers, and epistemological borders, the borders within our minds that impede both our connecting and our acting together. (Barndt 1996, 243)

Certainly the last decade of capitalist globalization has seen important linkages across geopolitical and sectoral borders. Anti-capitalist activists have, since Seattle, brought about an important new phase in coalition politics. Counter-movements must now attend to the difficult tasks of developing their strength among the disparate groups which when taken together form a majority increasingly excluded by the not so "New World Order" of global markets, transnational corporate structures and rapid financial and cultural "flows" (Shantz 1998). Great efforts have been made to connect workers and community groups around shared interests despite geographical distance. While these analyses have focused on important developments to organize global resistance to capitalist globalization, they have also tended to underplay the relevance of national state practices as part of globalization.

Recent events, most notably the criminalization, including imprisonment and killings, of anti-globalization activists, the extension of security forces since 9/11 and the military invasions and occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq, have shattered that hope and weakened this pole of analysis. At the same time the bold exposure of the truly imperialist nature of globalization sharply reminds us that struggles against borders, rather than diminishing, are perhaps the key struggles of our times.

The other side of the state decline coin has been a revival of Left nationalism or neo-Keynesianism which argues for a return to the social citizenship of the welfare state that, in North America, characterized the decades roughly from 1945 until the early 1980s. In Canada, the perspective of resurgent Left nationalism has been most forcefully articulated theoretically by Gordon Laxer and the editors of venerable Left publication *Canadian Dimension*. Politically Left nationalism has been a central feature of trade unions like the Canadian Auto Workers and union federations like the Ontario Federation of Labour. Such nationalist approaches to globalization actually strengthen the state's claims when what is needed is a critique of emergent state practices. Sharma (2002, 24) critiques sharply the "idea, very popular in much of the 'anti-globalization' movement, that what we need to counter the power of corporations is a strengthened national sovereignty." This neo-Keynesian approach "fails spectacularly to account for how that same 'sovereignty' is what destroyed communities of Indigenous peoples the world over and created highly exclusionary categories of membership based on ideas of 'race, gender and sexual orientation'" (Sharma 2002, 24). Indeed, nation-states have provided the military force for the expansion and institution of capitalist ventures while organizing the very "nationalized boundaries that contain people, most obviously perhaps in the nationalized character of labour markets" which control the mobility of labor to ensure favorable conditions of exchange for capital (Sharma 2002, 24). For anarchists, the state needs to be returned to the center of critical analysis and oppositional politics, rather than being viewed as a solution to globalized capital.

Against commentators who would argue that distinctions between here and there no longer mean anything in a wired world, Bauman (1998, 18) counters

that "some people—in fact, quite a lot of them—still can, as before, be 'separated by physical obstacles and temporal distances', this separation being now more merciless, and having more profound psychological effects, than ever before." Borders, and specifically state control of borders to free the transfer of capital while determining the movement of workers, maintain and extend processes of social polarization. In fact, recent social transformations have been marked by what Bauman (1998, 23) identifies as "the extraterritoriality of the new elite and the forced territoriality of the rest." This "forced territoriality of the rest" is made more and more to resemble a prison for anyone confined to it. For growing numbers of people the reality is quite literally a prison.

> For the inhabitants of the first world—the increasingly cosmopolitan, extraterritorial world of global businessmen, global culture managers or global academics, state borders are leveled down, as they are dismantled for the world's commodities, capital and finances. For the inhabitants of the second world, the walls built of immigration controls, of residence laws and of 'clean streets' and zero tolerance policies, grow taller; the moats separating them from the sites of their desire and of dreamed-of redemption grows deeper, while all bridges, at the first attempt to cross them, prove to be drawbridges. (Bauman 1998, 89)

This chapter re-situates the state as an active and crucial part of developing globalization processes. Rather than a diminished state, specific interventions by the state, especially around control of population movements, which play a crucial part in transforming social relations in the context of globalization, are highlighted. The chapter also looks at emergent strategies and analyses deployed by new movements that contest transformed state practices. These movements express what Sharma terms the "actual local," in opposition to nationalist ideas that conflate community and nation and nation-state and home. Actual local movements call simultaneously for self-determination and global connectivity while confronting the new realities of statist border practices. In doing this they develop creative strategies to organize against the local agents of local capital, including nation-states, while seeking to create political spaces and communities beyond appeals for state protectionism.

The chapter analyzes these emergent practices primarily through a discussion of some of the work undertaken by the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty and No One Is Illegal (NOII) over borders. It does so from the perspective of a participant in the struggles under discussion. Movements made up primarily of poor people, unemployed workers and homeless people of various backgrounds OCAP and NOII have provided poles of attraction for struggles against local regimes of neoliberal global governance. Through direct actions, rank-and-file militance and community organizing based on a sense of solidarity of the excluded, these groups have provided an impetus for a recomposition of class struggle forces across the borders which keep oppressed and exploited people divided. In doing

so they provide important insights into the bridging of sectoral differences among movements of poor people, immigrants, refugees and indigenous people.

Politics Beyond the State

Philip McMichael (1996) suggests that market flows are becoming the dominant reality of a "New World Order" of global capital. Financial capital has become the organizing principle of the world economy while nation-states are subordinated to maintaining global circuits of capital. Similarly, O Tuathail and Luke (1994) speak of dynamics of de-territorialization and re-territorialization marking the post-Cold War order, in which previously stable territorial formations (nation-state, ideological blocs, and markets) are devolving into chaos while unstable territorial flows (communications, and cultural codes) are evolving into "coherent cohesions." McMichael concludes that the newly forming governance of flows generates unconventional counter-movements to reassert popular governance which may refuse the terms of previous protests and may create some uncertainties for capital circuits. As O Tuathail and Luke (1994, 381) so succinctly put it at the end of the last century: "It is the 1990s and everything is changing."

Well, certainly not everything. Conventional analyses of social movements continue to overlook the emergence of unconventional manifestations of resistance. Such vibrant manifestations are marginalized in conventional social movements' literature. Analyses have been constrained by a rather myopic preoccupation either with organizational structures and resources which allow for access to the state or with "civil actions" (including civil disobedience) by which activists might register dissent or popularize claims. Where emergent movements have been addressed these same categories have been replicated, this time at a global scale. Thus we get a profusion of literature focused upon attempts to access transnational decision-making bodies[1]. In each case analyses are confined to specific movements conceptualized in relation to "single issues" or limited to readily identifiable appeals for civil redress via state means. While these analyses tell us much about visible organizations such as Greenpeace, Amnesty International or the variety of United Nations Conventions, they are ill-suited to address more microscopic attempts to re-articulate identity and community emerging out of the "New World (Dis)Order." Left out of conventional theorizing are movements that want no part of a world order, new or otherwise, which they view as authoritarian, exploitative, and inevitably genocidal (or "eco-cidal")[2]. What do they want? How do they organize?

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1   For only a few examples of this literature see works by Jackie Smith, Ron Pagnucco and Winnie Romeril (1994), John McCarthy (1996), Laura MacDonald (1994), Martin Shaw (1994), Susan Marks (2008) or Paul Routledge and Andrew Cumbers (2009).

2   For lively accounts of movements that want no part of the neoliberal new world order see the recent collections *We Are Everywhere* (2004) and *A Movement of Movements* (2004).

Part of the problem for theorists may be related to the widespread, if unrecognized, attachment to the metaphors of civil society and citizenship usually employed to understand social movements. Conventional theories of identity, community or politics attempt to contain political actors within specific institutions or practices. Chief among these is the identity "citizen" founded upon relations of the subject to a sovereign nation-state. As Richard Falk (2000) points out the modern idea of citizenship was linked with the emergence of individuals in relation to sovereign territorial states. Sankaran Krishna (1994) further notes the conjoining of territory and identity in conventional discourses of citizenship. Such conceptions of (unitary and fixed) identity reject multiple or layered notions of identity (or sovereignty). As Simon Dalby (1997) notes, the language of territoriality, with its conjoining of identity and spatial enclosure, has furnished powerful ontological categorizations for politics. Significantly, "the territorial state remains the dominant frame for containing the citizen, both physically and symbolically" (Shapiro 2000, 80). Statist citizenship approaches do not contest relations that "give the national state the power to determine membership in the nation and the power to determine who can move and under what conditions into the territory controlled by the state" (Sharma 2002, 25). Statist notions of citizenship also reproduce the "foreigner" against whom the "citizen" can be mobilized to oppose (Sharma 2002, 24).

Anarchists and libertarian socialists identify a tendency in mainstream political theorizing to conceptualize challenges to the system of states only in terms which suggest reproductions of the state. Within social movement theories these categorizations have given rise to notions of the territory of movement activities. Part of this ground has been the privileging of "legitimate" or "permitted" means, "civil politics," via state centered politics. This concern is echoed by critical political theorists influenced by anarchist perspectives. For Warren Magnusson (1990, 55), politics as "creative popular activity" is obscured by the "reification of political community as the state and political theory as the theory of the state." Such thinking cannot grasp the significance of recent transformations. "Uncivil" movements which do not take as their motivation the gaining of state reforms or access to state power, but instead seek decolonization or the end of the system of states, are overlooked, denigrated or dismissed. They are labeled as anarchic, portrayed as terrorists (Bergeson and Han 2005; Jensen 2009).

> Further, in the context of progressive forms of resistance to the abusive sides of economic globalization, the strong tendency has been for individuals to bond across boundaries, which weakens in other respects traditional territorially based citizenship and its core reality of a symbiotic relationship to the state. (Falk 2000, 7)

Recent post-structuralist theorizing has attempted to move beyond "essentialist" notions of politics (identity or class) and privileged spaces for political action (the state). This is reflected in recent talk of "global citizens," "nomadic citizenship," "netizens" and similar notions. Peter Taylor (1995) suggests that we need to get

beyond the "state as container" metaphor because it neglects the multiplicity of states, nations and territories, and their interrelationships. Similarly, Michael Shapiro (2000, 79) encourages a new "understanding of politics that resists the identity-fixing effect of a state-oriented model of political space." This implies, of course, rethinking the various "identity as container" metaphors which offer stable, fixed, disconnected, "essential" identities.

Critical thinking around notions of diaspora has helped to problematize notions of citizenship, nation and belonging (Soysal 2000; Yuval-Davis 1999). At the same time such writings do not necessarily reject nation-states, emphasizing instead multiple (or global or nomadic) citizenship. What might be useful, building upon these notions is a focus on a diaspora of the excluded, including those who, as refugees or so-called "illegal migrants," cannot claim any citizenship or those, including poor and homeless people, who increasingly face a diminution of the claims they might otherwise make upon citizenship. This requires a focus upon class relations and the development of solidarity beyond the nation or state on the basis of commonality of exclusion.

What is emerging is a tension between statist or legal definitions of citizenship (based on exclusion and the tightening of statist border controls) and movements that assert a cultural citizenship, what Giorgio Agamben (1993; 2000) calls "citizenship without citizens." This is a grassroots citizenship of inclusion and solidarity, especially the solidarity of those who are excluded under the neoliberal state, notably refugees, poor and homeless people and indigenous people. It is often explicitly affirmed against notions of legality through illegal acts (underground railway, safe houses).

Borders and Exploitation

Recent class re-compositions have shown a predominant tendency towards vast proportions of the global working-class to be made "non-status" in terms of the absence of citizenship rights. A growing divide emerges between the seemingly "secured" working-class (which in recognizing its status is made susceptible to appeals for "increased security" against other sectors of the working-class such as immigrants, refugees, panhandlers, squeegeers and, of course, activists and "terrorists") and the unsecured proletariat[3] (including all of those proletarians that the secured working-class is supposed to fear) which increasingly suffers the status of being "non-status." For capital, the secured sectors can be mobilized

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3   This distinction between secured and unsecured members of the working-class is drawn from the work of Antonio Negri and autonomist Marxism. The secured working-class consists in part of unionized workers with benefits and securities such as unemployment insurance, cost of living allowances and pensions which may even extend beyond general rights of citizenship. The unsecured workers include temporary workers, homeless people and undocumented workers. See Hardt and Negri (1989) and Negri (2008).

against other sectors around neoliberal discourses of debt and deficit reduction, cuts to welfare, law and order in the service of global competitiveness. Increased policing, imprisonment, calls for harsher sentences and the death penalty as well as detentions, deportations and tighter borders are all signs of a culture of insecurity, crisis and fear. Similarly one might include private security forces, surveillance cameras, gated communities and laws that make panhandling illegal. In this context where markers of inclusion and exclusion are sought out it is not surprising that racism plays an important part. As anarchist organizer Harsha Walia (2006) notes, national state policies on immigration show clearly the character and power of nation-states within contemporary processes of capitalist globalization. This point is emphasized by anti-borders activists.

> A major part of the restructuring strategies of national states across the Global North has been the reorganization of migration policies that legally deny the majority of migrants the status of permanent resident or citizen. In this way, citizenship and immigration policies play a starring role in the shaping of even more intensified competition within global labour markets. Through national classification schemes the state is able to determine who is a citizen, a permanent resident, a temporary migrant worker, or an illegal. This allows the state to offer up a growing and highly competitive (read: vulnerable) workforce of non-citizens to employers. (Sharma 2003)

Racial and economic profiling maintain the system of divide and conquer which allows employers and governments to play sectors of the working-class against each other. These are among the various longstanding practices that drive wages down and prevent opposition movements from forming. As Zerehi (2003) points out, border security, immigration policies, racial profiling and police brutality are effective tools that allow for the exploitation of migrants as a cheap source of labor under capitalism. In addition, anti-borders organizers make the crucial point that border controls neither stop the movement of people, nor, in her view, are they intended to. Because migration is a movement for life and for new homes, no border control will stop this movement of people. Thus border controls have a significant ideological component.

> What ideologies of border control actually do in the context of worldwide crises of displacement and homelessness is to make the majority of migrants legally foreign within the nation state. Most people migrating to Canada now enter without permanent-resident status and come instead as temporary migrant workers or sans papiérs. Restrictive immigration policies, therefore, do not work to restrict the migration of people but to restrict their access to rights, entitlements and much-needed protections once they are living and working within the countries of the Global North. (Sharma 2003)

The unequal distribution of rights ensured by state definitions of citizen, immigrant, refugee or "illegal" serve the interests of capital in several ways. At the same time these differential categories harm workers across the board. First, the limitation of political or legal rights on the basis of birthplace makes people vulnerable and open to intimidation and extreme exploitation. Denial of social benefits such as welfare, disability benefits and unemployment benefits ensures a precarious workforce willing to take on undesirable or dangerous work and less able to organize for better conditions. Differential categories of citizenship also serve as markers of difference separating workers.

Workers have to get past the racist anti-immigrant hysteria, so readily manipulated by employers and politicians, to recognize that immigrants are not the cause of the social ills of capitalism. Poverty, violence and unemployment are standard outcomes of capitalist production for profit. As Zerehi (2003: 22) notes, however, hysteria around immigration and borders provides a thin veil "to distract voters from the real failures of capitalism." Migration is primarily the movement of people affected by that exploitation. Poverty and unemployment result from the capitalist structuring of work which sees some work 60-hour weeks while others are left without work. In reality, the ills of capitalism can only really be alleviated when those affected by exploitation, employed and unemployed, immigrants and non-immigrants, embrace each other in solidarity to defend against exploitation. This will require that organized labor work to overcome the nationalism which has driven much of labor politics in Canada. Unfortunately, as Sharma (2003) notes: "Our concerns—highly discriminatory immigration policies, border controls, racist policing, housing, health and employment practices, etc.—rarely appear on the radar, as evidenced by their almost complete absence in the concerns of the nationalist Left." This will have to change. Working-class cooperation, especially in this global age of capital movement across all borders, is necessary for a real defense of our neighbors and communities. Conversely, the strengthening of the state's powers and the tightening of border controls only works to tear apart our communities.

This is one reason that "No One Is Illegal" and anti-borders movements more broadly can be so threatening to capital. These movements can be the beginnings of a social re-composition that resists the capitalist terms of inclusion and exclusion and which threatens to draw together the unsecured with the secured sections of the working-class. In this context an organization like OCAP which draws together unemployed workers, homeless people, Natives, immigrants and refugees, students and teachers offers a particularly grave concern for local agents of capitalist security.

Immigration Practices in Canada Since September 11

September 11 offered an excuse to openly display the cruel forces of xenophobia and racism which are ever present, if often denied, features of Canadian society.[4]Among the institutions feeding those renewed forces is the Federal government with its zealous focus on ''security'' and manic obsession with the phantom of permeable borders. In an effort to show its allegiance to U.S. world order the Canadian government has entered into discussions around joint agreements around border security and immigration controls up to and including the creation of a security perimeter around North America, a "Fortress North America."

Towards this end the Canadian government has taken a number of steps. On June 28, 2002, the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* was passed into law. The Act was passed with a number of troubling amendments including the omission of appeal processes for refugee claimants (Zerehi 2003). Refugee claimants now have only 28 days following their interview with a Refugee Protection Officer to prepare a Personal Information Form and all required documents must be provided 20 days in advance of a hearing with the Immigration and Refugee Board. These are onerous deadlines which are difficult for many refugees to meet. Because the decision-making panel has been reduced from two members to one, refugee protection decisions are now made by a single decision-maker with no right of appeal for applicants.

One of the most troubling changes to the immigration system has been the signing of the "safe third country" agreement with the U.S. at the end of 2002 (CRIAW/ICREF 2003). This agreement, which was implemented in April 2004, means that refugees coming to Canada through the U.S. will be immediately turned away at the border. In effect this will deny asylum to many people since the U.S. refugee policies are more restrictive and require that refugee claimants apply within the first year of arrival. Return to the U.S. also means mandatory detention (Zerehi and Scott 2003). In addition many of the routes for international travel to Canada only go through the U.S. (Zerehi 2003). Notably this agreement may be extended to other countries that are deemed safe by the Canadian government. Unfortunately the safety of a country is often gauged according to trade relations with Canada, rather than its human rights record (Zerehi 2003).

Perhaps the most disturbing immigration policy change has been the increased detention of immigrants and refugee claimants in Canada. Since September 11, 2001, alarming numbers of people have been detained in Toronto jails and detention centers, often in solitary confinement. Under Immigration Canada instructions issued at the beginning of 2003, officers can detain refugee claimants if interviewees are hesitant in responding to questions or if they fail to provide "sufficient documents" (Zerehi 2003; Zerehi and Scott 2003). Provision of

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4   While this chapter has a post-September 11 focus I do not want to imply that the actions taken by the Canadian government since then are out of character. For critics, Canada's immigration system has always been racist, anti-worker and anti-poor.

sufficient documents does not ensure one's release as claimants must first post a bond in amounts averaging between $5,000 to $10,000. While under detention people have been denied access to proper sanitation and medical care and hearings often occur by video link. At the notorious Celebrity Inn, a motel near Pearson International Airport used as a detention center, families are split up. There have been reports of denial of essential services and supplies to Canadian-born infants and children due to the (non)status of their caregivers (Zerehi 2003; Walia 2006). Full information about people detained since September 11 has yet to be disclosed, even as late as 2010, despite the efforts of groups such as Anti-Racist Action and Colours of Resistance. In anticipation of growing numbers of detainees, Immigration Canada opened a new and expanded detention center on April 1, 2004 to replace the Celebrity Inn.

The Federal government is not alone in this. The recent neoliberal Ontario government of Premier Ernie Eves and its Minister of Public Safety and Security Bob Runciman, has been one of the region's strongest forces for both free trade and immigration controls. Runciman called for an "Australian-style" detention system for Canada which would include a "jail first ask questions later" policy. In Ontario alone, for 2002, $60 million was designated for public safety and security issues. That budget increased by another $8 million for 2003 with more money for border policing. In the early days of the attack on Iraq, the provincial government implemented emergency plans to ensure the easy flow of corporate traffic across the border while limiting the movement of people. Part of the emergency plan for the border included closed consultations involving the Ontario Provincial Police, trucking industry representatives, business leaders, Canada Customs and U.S. government officials.

The Great Lakes Security Summit, held in Toronto from April 7–9, 2003, brought together Canadian premiers and U.S. Governors from the Great Lakes region along with immigration officials, police representatives and business leaders for a joint conference on Canada–U.S. "border security." Part of broader government efforts to develop a regional economic and security zone, the summit focused on integrating policing at all levels and across borders, harmonizing Canadian and U.S. security and immigration laws and facilitating freer trade among provinces and states (Zerehi 2003; Walia 2006). At the same time as the summit sought ways to free up the flow of goods across borders, it sought increased restrictions on the movement of people between Canada and the U.S. As Zerehi (2003: 21) notes, the summit's real agenda "was to facilitate neoliberal globalization: the free movement of capital and goods, but zero mobility for workers." Such policies are clearly not about social or economic security for working people.

"No One Is Illegal": Organizing Defense of Immigrants and Refugees

A broad coalition of anti-poverty, anarchist, labor and immigrant defense organizations, including the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty, the Canadian

Union of Public Employees and Anti-Racist Action, No One Is Illegal is beginning to articulate, through public meetings and participation in actions, a mobilized resistance to the Canadian state's racist attempts to divide the working-class locally and internationally. This is especially important given that the federal minister responsible for the government's newly established office of "public safety and security" has identified as his primary goal the creation of "an Australian-style detention system," echoing Runciman's calls from Ontario.

A microcosm of the dangers facing us in this epoch are painfully illustrated in the recent personal experiences of three women who have been set upon by Canadian Immigration: Irma Joyles, Brendalyn MacDonald and Shirley-Ann Charles. Despite each woman having lived in Canada for many years, working, attending school and raising families, Canadian Immigration authorities targeted them for deportation without hearings. In order to avoid having to make the awful choice between leaving her child behind without her only support or bringing her to a climate which will worsen her health, Irma filed a Humanitarian and Compassionate Claim. Brenda, facing a similar impossible choice, also filed Humanitarian and Compassionate Claim. Unfortunately, on Monday, November 26, 2002 with no hearing at all, Shirley-Ann was deported.

According to Canadian immigration policy all three women were entitled to have Humanitarian and Compassionate claims heard. Instead, without explanation, officers were sent to Brendalyn's home to arrest her. In this time of war increased "security" apparently means that government can remove women without notice or hearing. Poor immigrants and refugees now stand without rights to due legal process. Prior to September 11 none of these women would have been targeted and pursued with such viciousness. It is likely that because they have children, homes and jobs they would not even have been investigated. Eventually, after much struggle, Brendalyn McDonald received a favorable decision on her application to apply for permanent residence. This was a major victory and came only after months of fighting the deportation order by Brendalyn, her family and allies. OCAP's efforts, including written correspondence and phone calls, small- and large-scale actions, the mobilization of unions and drawing media coverage, were critical in this victory and show the type of work that needs to be done to fight off government attacks.

These increasingly repressive practices, as outlined above, have emerged in the context of a long period of neoliberal socio-economic transformation. Free trade agreements like the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) implemented in 1994 between Canada, the United States and Mexico have given expanded opportunities to capital to influence social policies. Indeed the mid-1990s in Ontario were marked by economic downturn and factory closures in key industrial centers like Windsor and Hamilton. Economic shifts from mass to lean production techniques and the dismantling of the welfare state have weakened unions and community movements that have mobilized against these inequalities on a broader scale (see Sears 1999; Moody 1997).

Among the groups which have determined not to allow these practices continue and intensify is the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty. OCAP has been at the forefront of developing new, creative and effective ways of dealing with government agencies which target for mistreatment those who are deemed to be vulnerable. One of the most successful practices pioneered by OCAP is direct action casework. Unlike more hierarchical "client/caregiver" forms of casework, direct action casework directly involves the people facing injustice allowing them to determine what course of action to take. Unlike more passive forms of casework, direct action casework goes directly to the source of injustice, whether a welfare office, landlord or Immigration office, mobilizing large numbers of community members (neighbors, students, unionists, activists) to get whatever is needed. Over the years, this approach has been highly successful winning such tangible benefits as welfare and disability checks, wheelchairs, rent refunds and even stays of deportation. In three years OCAP has successfully supported over 50 families with immigration work.

In response to the increasingly inhumane treatment inflicted on immigrants and refugees,[5] OCAP, Colours of Resistance and Anti-Racist Action along with allied groups have organized a series of actions and events, including rallies outside the Celebrity Inn to draw attention to these issues and to demand rights and dignity for all detained people. In opposition to the Great Lakes Security Summit, a counter summit, "Do You Feel Secure?," was organized by various community groups under the banner, "No One Is Illegal." During the counter conference, organizers held a day of workshops and panel discussions on issues of defending immigrants and refugees, aboriginal self-determination, imperialism and colonialism and solidarity against capitalism and the states system. Pickets outside the summit site at the posh Sutton Place Hotel on Bay Street (Canada's Wall Street) were held Sunday evening and Monday morning.

One important recent case that shows the mobilizing potential and political effectiveness of No One Is Illegal networks in Canada involves the case of Laibar Singh. Singh came to Canada from India on a false passport in 2003 and claimed he had been falsely accused of being a member of the terrorist Khalistan Commando Force. In 2006, while still in Canada, he suffered a debilitating aneurysm that left him a quadriplegic in 2006. The 48-year-old lost his refugee claim and all subsequent appeals and in June 2007 was ordered deported. On the eve of a July removal date, supporters, following his wishes, moved him from Vancouver's George Pearson long-term care facility where he faced certain removal by the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), and took him to the Kalgidhar Darbar

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5   In addition to the examples provided in this chapter, accounts of this increased repression abound in both the popular media and the social movement press. See Galati (2002), Zerehi (2003), and Zerehi and Scott (2003). See also the websites of the Campaign to Stop Secret Trials (www.homesnotbombs.ca) and Project Threadbare (www.threadbare.tyo.ca).

temple in Abbotsford, British Columbia. Singh remained there until he was transported to the airport on the orders of the CBSA.

On Monday, December 10, 2007 more than 1,500 people came to the Vancouver International Airport and successfully rallied to prevent Singh's deportation. The mass turnout of supporters, mobilized on short notice, blocked traffic for hours, threatening a shutdown of the airport, and succeeded in preventing Singh's removal. CBSA said at the time that it feared for the safety of agents if they attempted to cut through the chanting mob and take Singh out of his taxi to an awaiting flight.

Following this successful defense of Laibar Singh, by members of the Sikh community in Vancouver and the No One Is Illegal network, Singh took shelter in Vancouver suburb Surrey's Guru Nanak temple. Despite the temple's declaration of sanctuary for the paralyzed man CBSA again sought his forced removal. On January 9, 2008, at 4:00 am in the morning Canadian Border Services Agency planned to break Laibar Singh's sanctuary under the cover of night. This would have been only the second violation of sanctuary in Canada. However, despite only a few hours notice, hundreds of supporters of Mr Singh arrived at his place of sanctuary to prevent CBSA from carrying out the deportation order. A tractor-trailer truck was parked behind a locked a gate preventing access to the grounds of the complex. This show of support forced CBSA to once again back off from breaking sanctuary and deporting Laibar Singh. Singh remains at the temple and has been receiving volunteer medical care around the clock.

Although there was tremendous support for Laibar Singh's case NOII also had to confront a growing and frightening racist backlash against him. Respondents to a poll by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) overwhelmingly supported deporting Laibar Singh, despite his medical condition and the fact that sanctuary would likely have to be breached to deport him. NOII has noted that if the government has wide public support for pulling a man in such marginalized circumstances out of sanctuary and deporting him, it will have a very serious impact on how broader immigration issues are treated in Canada.

Showing the strength of No One Is Illegal as a national network, supporters of Laibar Singh including members of Toronto's Sikh Community demonstrated at Citizenship and Immigration Canada Headquarters in Toronto to demand that then Minister of Immigration Diane Finley grant Mr Singh status and to call on the Canadian Border Services Agency to not break the sanctuary.

The No One Is Illegal network has also played an important part in the development of the anti-war movements in Canada. Of great importance, the anti-war opposition has begun to target the racist attacks on immigrant and refugee communities that have played such a crucial part in the Canadian state's participation in the war in Afghanistan, which is scheduled to continue until at least 2009. As a growing underclass of migrant and refugee labor, including many people who have already fled imperialist-backed wars, faces increased exploitation and criminalization in Canada, the necessity of the No One Is Illegal and anti-war campaigns coming together continues to be crucial.

These ongoing efforts are part of the growing No One Is Illegal campaigns which are building solidarity with immigrants and refugees, indigenous communities, unionists and anti-poverty activists against the attacks on vast sectors of the working-class which, under the veil of security, create miserable insecurity within our communities. As the situations facing immigrants and refugees become worse and worse and as xenophobia becomes the basis for social policy the need to develop creative and effective means of struggle becomes more and more pressing.

Flying Squads and Labor Unity

One particularly effective means of struggle pioneered by OCAP recently in struggles against deportations is the flying squad, as discussed in the preceding chapter. A rapid response network of rank-and-file unionists the flying squads offer a mobile defense force and support network for immigrants and refugees. OCAP along with allies in Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Local 3903 flying squad have gone directly to Pearson International Airport to demand an end to threats of deportation. Leaflets have been given to passengers alerting them to the situation and visits paid to the Immigration Canada deportation office in the basement of Terminal One. Deportations have been canceled. This unusual result, in which the removal dates were canceled prior to a Federal Court challenge, is a testament to the powers of direct action.

It must also be stressed that the presence of the flying squad has been key to the success of these ongoing actions. The flying squad demonstrates how labor organizations can step out of traditional concerns with the workplace to act in a broadened defense of working-class interests. The expansion of union flying squads, with autonomy from union bureaucracies, could provide a substantial response to the state's efforts to isolate immigrants and refugees from the larger community. CUPE 3903 has also formed an Anti-Racism Working Group and an Anti-Poverty Working Group to work hand-in-hand with OCAP on actions or cases. These are just a few of the initiatives that anarchist workers argue organized labor can take in the here-and-now to build a global network of solidarity and support in which more secure members of the working-class work contribute to the defense of less secured members. The emboldened aggressiveness of Immigration Canada after September 11 make such actions in defense of people much more pressing, as the case of Shirley-Ann Charles shows with frightening clarity.

There is more that unions could do. In the Netherlands, pilots can refuse, as a health and safety issue, to transport people who are being deported. This is something which should be implemented in airline unions in North America. Instead of refusing to attend the Pearson action, as they did, the Canadian Auto Workers, which represents many airline workers, could have used the opportunity to discuss the issue with their members as a first step in actively pursuing such a policy.

A New Underground Railroad?

These emerging circumstances of increased repression mean that unions and social movements must develop much more thorough and advanced strategies for support. Labor needs to organize outside of the limited confines of collective bargaining and the workplace to build networks of class-wide support. This must include support for unemployed workers, poor people, injured workers, immigrants and refugees among others. In effect these networks should form the basis for a new underground railroad which can secure safe travel across borders for people seeking to flee economic exploitation or political repression. As in the original underground railroad, this new network must be ready to operate outside of legal authorities. While community organizations can be expected to play a part in this, only organized labor has the resources to make this an effective and ongoing practice. Labor can help to provide transportation, safe houses and even employment, all of which will be necessary.

Recently such networks have emerged to transport conscientious objectors and deserters from the U.S. military safely across the border into Canada. War resisters support campaigns have established broad-based coalitions of community and labor organizations in cities including Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal to provide material support for U.S. soldiers seeking asylum in Canada because they refuse to fight in Iraq. Among their activities the war resister support networks assists war resisters in getting across the border into Canada and provide them with access to jobs and housing.

Since the attack on Iraq a growing number of U.S. soldiers have taken the decision to come to Canada as conscientious objectors. With the U.S. army "surge" extending its efforts against Iraq, requiring the mobilization of reservists and recall of vets as well as initiating talk of re-instating the draft, channels for bringing resisters into Canada will become, as during the Vietnam War, increasingly important. As of early 2008 upwards of 100 U.S. army resisters are known to have crossed the border into Canada with the help of a variety of groups. It is believed that possibly three times that number have crossed the border without going public.

Of course labor must work fundamentally against the statist categories of citizenship which arbitrarily grant workers differential political and legal rights. As long as these citizenship categories exist bosses will continue to use workers labeled as "illegal" for their own purposes. As long as there are vulnerable and hyper-exploitable categories of workers capital will be able to use these differences against workers. Workers labeled as "illegal" will still be subject to harsher working conditions at lower pay without social benefits. Legal precariousness will always be a mechanism for exploiting those workers who find themselves in such a situation. Thus labor must not stop at helping the movement of illegal workers but must fundamentally work to abolish those practices which make anyone illegal. As the movements have stated: "*No One* Is Illegal."

Capitalists have established free movement for themselves through free trade deals and other legal mechanisms while simultaneously working to limit the movement of workers. This works to their benefit by allowing them to pursue low wages and weak environmental regulations while limiting workers' options for seeking improved living conditions. Limiting the movement of workers makes it tougher for them to refuse the bad deals bosses offer them, which in turn keeps weakens wages and working condition.

Of course anarchists, syndicalists and libertarian socialists have long maintained that people have the right to live, work and travel wherever they choose and to associate with whomever they choose free from compulsion or fear, economic as much as political or social. As internationalists, or perhaps more accurately anti-nationalists, they actively oppose the national borders which serve to divide and segregate people. Governments have no right to determine community participation (citizenship) and anarchists view as illegitimate any government claims to territorial sovereignty. It is important to remember that these views were once central parts of the international labor movement at the time of capitalist liberalism a century ago. It is time for labor to remember this vital part of its history.

Beginning to Build Bridges Toward Decolonization: Confronting State Repression at Akwesasne

More recently transnationalists, notably anarchist organizer Harsha Walia, have argued that this perspective must be grounded in a respect for indigenous self-determination and struggles against colonial states which have worked to exclude and eliminate Native peoples over centuries of occupation. Movements against borders in settler societies like Canada must always address how statist appeals extend the effects of colonialism and neocolonialism. Left nationalist approaches have little to offer indigenous struggles for self-determination and land. As Sharma (2002, 24) notes, national states "exist in profound opposition to the self-determination of Indigenous people foremost." Indeed indigenous communities have long rejected strategies that rest on identifications of Canadian citizenship.

Along with No Borders movements, the most powerful challenge to the legitimacy of national states currently comes from indigenous peoples' movements which also confront "the authority of national states over people" (Sharma 2002, 25). Through these challenges these movements also fundamentally contest the legitimacy of capitalism. Sharma argues that what is needed is an honest and sustained discussion on how to embark on a process of decolonization. While this is still an emerging project for most groups, OCAP has long worked in solidarity with native communities against the colonial Canadian state. What follows is an account of one attempt to develop that solidarity through direct opposition to the Canadian state's intrusions upon native communities. It also illustrates the difficulties facing such efforts.

The Seaway International Bridge between the states of Canada and the U.S. is situated on the lands of the Kanienkahaka Mohawk Nation at Akwesasne—a constant symbol of the imperialist powers' occupation of Native communities and a daily affront to Native self-determination. The international border which the Seaway Bridge spans divides the Mohawk community between rule by the Canadian state and rule by the U.S.. Each day that rule is asserted against the sovereignty of the Mohawk Nation as U.S. and Canadian authorities determine who crosses the border and who does not. Often that decision is made only after people have been subjected to such indignities as strip searches and interrogations.

The Seaway International Bridge has been an important site in struggles over Mohawk sovereignty. A takeover of the bridge by Mohawks in December of 1968 signaled the emergence of a new level of militance in the community: "From [then] on, Mohawks would not wait for the authorities to attack their communities. They had decided to go on the offensive, to assert their sovereignty by setting up barricades and repossessing their traditional land" (York and Pindera 1991, 167). Although that action ended with the arrests of 48 Mohawks the rebellious mood was not dampened and the action was followed by a series of other confrontations between Mohawks and both Canadian and U.S. state authorities. One day each year residents of Akwesasne takeover the bridge in a show of defiance to state authorities and as a claim on their rights to self-determination and free movement.

On Thursday April 19, 2001, just a day before the main actions against the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) meetings in Quebec City, an action was planned by Mohawks with support from the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty, Anti-Racist Action (ARA), the Canadian Union of Public Employees, the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) and students from several high schools to open the border between Canada and the U.S. to allow activists to enter on their way to Quebec City. The action was intended as an assertion of Mohawk sovereignty, an opportunity to expose the conditions of life in which Mohawks live and as an act of solidarity with those traveling onward to fight against the brutality of corporate globalization. It built upon the longstanding relationship of mutual support between Mohawk Warriors and OCAP.

In the words of an organizers' statement:

> We have lived the past 100 years under the Indian Acts of two colonial governments. For 100 years we have endured the indignities of poverty, isolation, hunger and disease. For 100 years we have been environmentally destroyed. Our women give birth to babies that suffer from the effects of pollution, children born without intestines or intestines that grow on the outside of their bodies. We are told that new mothers can no longer feed their newborns because of toxin levels within their bodies. For 100 years we have not been allowed to speak out for fear of reprisals from our own 'duly elected' Indian Act governments (May 3, 2001).

It became immediately clear that the state authorities would go to great lengths to prevent any solidarity between Mohawks, community groups and non-Mohawk activists intent upon challenging these conditions. Police presence was overwhelming as between 400–500 police, including federal forces (Royal Canadian Mounted Police), provincial forces (Ontario Provincial Police) as well as municipal cops from the nearby city of Cornwall descended on the community. Several members of Metro Intelligence in Toronto (which keeps close tabs on every move OCAP makes) were on hand, including the then head of Metro, Steve Irwin. They paid close attention to the caravan throughout the day, staying especially focused on those of who eventually made it onto the bridge.

Counter-intelligence has been practiced by state forces in Akwesasne and other Native communities for hundreds of years. It is part of the rule to which Native peoples have been subjected since colonization. However, in the weeks leading up to April 19, state forces stepped up procedures, organizing counter-intelligence campaigns and police disruptions at a high level. It soon became clear that much time and money had been spent on massive campaigns of disinformation among the community at Akwesasne. Well-orchestrated radio and print campaigns warned residents that OCAP was bringing terrorists, sex offenders and murderers into the community. People were told to lock their doors and keep their children inside.

The action painfully revealed lingering splits within the community at Akwesasne. Band Council, a conservative body with little credibility in the community (as opposed to the traditional tribal council), worked with the Ontario Provincial Police against protesters and organizers. Band Council held public meetings at which they showed videos of the more dramatic confrontational footage from actions in Seattle, Washington D.C., and Philadelphia. Residents were told that protesters were going to burn their homes and loot stores in a crazed rampage.

When the caravan of a couple hundred supporters first arrived in Akwesasne we were turned around by Provincial police who told us we could not park anywhere near the bridge (even though we had parked away from the bridge). Not wanting to risk a confrontation before the action even got under way we drove back into nearby Cornwall.

Finally, after great delay, Shawn Brant of Tyendinaga, a nearby Mohawk community, and OCAP arrived to meet with Band Council and police. After much discussion an agreement was struck to allow our caravan onto the bridge to meet people crossing over from the U.S. side. The caravan agreed that the event would be peaceful and respectful of the community. We would simply meet folks coming from the southern side and welcome them across the border. Spirits lifted, we got the caravan in line and slowly set off for the bridge.

Our optimism was dashed almost as soon as the front of the caravan reached the bridge entrance. It seems we had been deceived. Police closed in on the caravan after the first three vehicles made it onto the bridge, stopping everyone else, including the buses and turning everyone back to Cornwall. I was one of only eight people from our side who made it onto the bridge. Police were lined up

in the hundreds behind us and on either side. We were forced to walk a gauntlet of police lined one every three feet all the way out to the middle of the bridge in what was clearly an act of intimidation since it served little military purpose. In the background, just behind the hundreds of police to the rear of us, the spew and stench of the pulp plant which regularly spits toxins into the air and water of Akwesasne.

While on the Seaway we could see Mohawk residents in a fenced off area just alongside the bridge. The police had certainly gone to tremendous lengths to ensure as little direct engagement as possible between the people of Akwesasne and members of the caravan. This is, of course, longstanding colonialist practice to separate, divide and ultimately to conquer. Eventually a couple of us made our way over and talked to folks through the fence as police photographed and videotaped us the entire time. The people told us that they were in support of people going to Quebec City for the actions against the FTAA but they were deeply concerned by the massive police presence in Akwesasne. Akwesasne was just now recovering from the most recent period of intense police occupation, surveillance and violence inflicted on the community ten years ago. People were fearful of increased repression and violence and the presence of several hundred Federal and Provincial forces made them uneasy. It reminded them too much of the troubled times of a decade ago and no-one wanted to risk re-opening old wounds. The people wished us well and as we returned to the bridge they gave us traditional words of solidarity.

Not sure what to expect next, there appeared in front of us at the arch of the bridge, a boisterous, joyful and noisy procession waving banners and playing drums. Our fellow travelers had made it on from the south side. We smiled and hurried to greet them. They told us that the feast and gathering had gone relatively well and they were anxious to meet up with people on the north shore. Of course, many would be denied that chance at the Canadian border (despite all of the state's "Welcome" signs). People waited hours to get through Canada Customs and Immigration. Immigration officers and police stopped people from entering Canada and many were turned around. Independent reports suggested that about 100–150 people out of 350 on the bridge actually made it through customs. (The low numbers were partly a result of a solidarity action by some activists to turn around if even one person was denied entry.)

At the entrance to Canada Customs and Immigration, Shawn Brant spoke across the chain link fence to the community members gathered on the other side. He spoke eloquently and forcefully against the efforts of the various state agents to keep us divided; he talked of the importance of learning from particular experiences of oppression and the necessity of making common cause; and he spoke of a new spirit of activism emerging in struggles against global capital (as in Quebec City) and against the local agents of capital (as in OCAP's work in Ontario). The fences must come down and the borders must be opened. No more practices of divide and rule.

Despite the tremendous difficulties faced the action was an important beginning in renewed efforts to build alliances across the barriers which are deployed to keep oppressed communities from coming together, sharing experiences and strategies, resources and ideas and struggling together in solidarity. This is, after all, what states and capital fear most. In addition to issues of state repression and sovereignty, warriors organized against industrial dumping and the locating of toxic production plants in and around Akwesasne and against the horrible experiences of poverty in the community. These are the features of the local face of corporate globalization and are the reasons for permanent connections to be forged between Mohawks and anti-globalization movements in the region. And real connections were forged at Akwesasne in addition to the continued relations which have been built between Warriors and OCAP.

Indeed, Native communities played a large part in organizing with the Ontario Common Front, a coalition of 80 community groups from across the province, for a series of economic and political disruptions which took place in the fall of 2001 in Ontario. Those actions were organized with the intention of making it impossible for the local agents of capital to impose the destructive economic and political agenda which they arrogantly trumpet at international meetings such as those in Quebec City.

On June 23, 2001 Mohawks from Tyendinaga and Akwesasne blocked the Skyway Bridge near Belleville, (west of Akwesasne), shutting down a local cement factory for the day. On Saturday, October 27, 2001 members from Ojibway and Mohawk communities shut down the Ministry of Natural Resources offices near Tyendinaga, forcing an evacuation of all personnel, in a demonstration against rampant racism in the ministry and ongoing harassment of Native fishers and hunters. That action was followed on October 28 with a major action against Canada Waste Management which runs a garbage dump just upstream from Tyendinaga. The dump which takes commercial garbage from across Southeastern Ontario is slated for an expansion which would see it grow by over five times capacity and begin taking commercial trash from the U.S.. The dump has already been linked to water contamination and declining fish stocks in the streams and bays of Tyendinaga. On the 28th the dump was completely shut down.

For some, April 19 signaled the beginning of a new period. People stood up, despite the deep and present history of oppression, and faced the various levels of the state which continue to intrude upon their lives. Solidarity was forged against both the local and the global forces of repression and exploitation.

As the May 3, 2001 statement from Akwesasne community organizers concludes:

> We have opened the door to building links with non-native people and organizations. We stood together to demonstrate to governments that they will no longer be able to isolate us from each other … We are not prepared to endure another 100 years.

These solidarity struggles have expanded to include support for indigenous land reclamations, such as the occupation by Six Nations members of land development near Caledonia, Ontario. As well, indigenous communities, Warriors and anarchists worked together in opposition to the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver and Whistler, British Columbia.

Conclusion

Class war, as modern war is always spatial, fought over the "right to define and enforce the meaning of shared space" (Bauman 1998, 4). Thus, Canadian and U.S. governments, under the cover provided by September 11, are devising joint agreements around border controls and immigration criteria. There has even been chilling talk from some authorities about establishing a continental perimeter, a "Fortress North America." As many anarchists have pointed out these practices are also about strengthening the government's hand in fighting the globalization struggles at a time when many sensed it was beginning to lose its grip. This is one reason why legislation against activism has gone hand in hand with a clampdown on immigration, the global mobility of labor.

An enormous part of the work of spatializing class war has been carried out through policing and criminalization of various subject populations. This criminalization is more broadly deployed than is generally described. It also includes, fundamentally, the use of the repressive legal apparatus to keep possible forces of dissent from ever joining together in common cause: classic divide and conquer tactics. Whenever members of the working-class are made to fear standing up against employers and the state, whether through threats of job loss, eviction or deportation this acts to quell possible dissent, in effect to criminalize dissent. When the legal state creates and perpetuates phony divisions between workers through immigration laws and the construction of "legals" and "illegals" one must recognize this as part of the spatialized class war. Such is also the case when these divisions are maintained through legal repression against poor people and homeless people. Any legal mechanism which impedes the recomposition of the working-class as a stronger force or which helps a decomposition of the working-class to the benefit of capital must be understood as the criminalization of dissent.

This is why, for anarchists, one must always be clear that really opposing the criminalization of dissent must mean opposing all immigration laws, all vagrancy laws, all coercive treatment of psychiatric survivors and all laws which weaken the forces of the oppressed classes in their struggles against their oppressors. This means, of course, that national borders themselves are part of the criminalization of dissent. Any time someone is turned back trying to cross from one country to another, even to visit, that is the spatialized class war. Anti-capitalist organizations must take up the challenge of borders at local and global levels. As Nandita Sharma (2003) suggests:

The Left needs to soundly reject nationalist endeavors on the grounds that the oppression and exploitation of Indigenous peoples, people of colour, queers and other Others occurs precisely because they are constructed as falling outside of the nation. What is needed in the place of Left nationalism is an honest and sustained debate on how to embark on a project of de-colonization.

OCAP and No One Is Illegal deploy a variety of tactics to overcome the divide and conquer tactics which keep the opposition to capitalist control divided and weakened. Still, OCAP is an anti-poverty organization lacking the resources necessary to lead the fight. Organized labor must take up the challenge in a serious way, drawing on the examples offered by OCAP and No One Is Illegal but extending them radically. The old labor standard, "An Injury to One is an Injury to All" must be labor's driving principle once more.

Chapter 6
Anarchy Goes to School:
The Anarchist Free Skool

Anarchists have long stressed the coincidence of means and end in movements pursuing positive social change. Prefiguration has been a regular feature of anarchist movements and this emphasis on prefiguration is an important aspect of constructive anarchy as well. For constructive anarchy, organizing requires spaces in which anarchism can be practiced and experimented with and learned, not so much as an idea system but as ways of relating and forming social relations in the world. Organizing requires spaces for anarchists and others to meet, strategize and share ideas and experiences. One preferred organizing space among contemporary anarchists has been the free school, a space for learning about anarchism. Free schools are typically heterotopian spaces, places by which people might realize utopian desires in the here and now of the present.

The following provides a glimpse into the workings of one such heterotopia, the Anarchist Free Space and Free Skool (AFS). Hopefully the images reveal both the promise and problems that people face while trying to create room for education outside of the confining structures of the permitted. These are experiences of collaborative learning over several years bridging classrooms and communities, particularly marginalized communities, to highlight opportunities for critically engaged teaching and learning. Through participatory approaches bringing students and street involved people together in contexts in which people are simultaneously teachers and learners these efforts contributed to a teaching/learning praxis informed by critical pedagogy and anti-authoritarian social perspectives contributing to empowerment for learners and communities. Along the way participants tried to effect positive changes in themselves, the school and the community.

Anarchy and Education

For anarchists, learning should help people to free themselves and encourage them to change the world in which they live. As Joel Spring (1998, 145) suggests: "[E]ducation can mean gaining knowledge and ability by which one can transform the world and maximize individual autonomy." Anarchist pedagogy aims towards developing and encouraging new forms of socialization, social interaction and the sharing of ideas in ways that might initiate and/or sustain non-authoritarian practices and ways of relating. At the same time it is hoped that such pedagogical

practices might contribute to revolutionary changes in people's perspectives on society, encouraging broader social changes. Anarchists seek freedom from internalized authority and ideological domination: "In the modern state, laws were internalized within the individual, so that 'freedom' merely meant the freedom to obey the laws that one had been taught to believe" (Spring 1998, 40). Internalization of the laws through socialization in school has been viewed as a means to end disobedience and rebellion. Freedom is freedom from *direct* control of the state but only if one acts according to the laws of the state (Spring 1998).

The proto-anarchist Max Stirner referred to the thought that one could not get rid of, the thought that owned the individual, as "wheels in the head." Such thought controlled the will and used the individual, rather than being used by the individual (Stirner 1967). What Stirner called "the ownership of the self" meant the elimination of wheels in the head. Stirner distinguished between the educated and the free. For the educated person, knowledge shaped character. It was a wheel in the head that allowed the individual to be possessed by the authority of the church or the state. For the free one on the other hand, knowledge facilitated choice, awakened freedom. With the idea of freedom awakened within them: "the freemen will incessantly go on to free themselves; if on the contrary, one only educates them, then they will at all times accommodate themselves to circumstances in the most highly educated and elegant manner and degenerate into subservient, cringing souls" (Stirner 1967, 23). For the free, knowledge is a source of greater choice rather than that which *determines* choice (Spring 1998, 39). Ideas, as wheels in the head, subject people to the ideas themselves. Domination does not refer only to the internalization of ideologies that refer to sacrifice for supposed needs of society, external to the individual. It also refers to moral imperatives that capture a person's creative capacities.

> There were two levels of wheels in the head. The first level led people through everyday life. One went to church and paid taxes because that was what one was taught; that was the way one lived. On the second level were *ideals*—ideals that move people to sacrifice themselves for the good of the fatherland, that made them try to be Christ-like, ideals that led them to give up what they were for some unrealizable goal. It was this realm of ideals upon which the strength of the Church and State was built. Patriotism and religious fervor were the results of people being possessed by ideals. (Spring 1998, 40–41)

Stirner objected to notions of "political liberty" because it only spoke of the freedom of institutions and of ideology. Political liberty "means that the polis, the State, is free; freedom of religion that religion is free, as freedom of conscience signifies that conscience is free; not therefore that I am free from the State, from religion, from conscience, or that I am rid of them" (Stirner 1963, 106–107). This perspective proved profoundly influential for a range of Free Skool participants, as it has for anarchist educators for decades.

The free school movement finds its inspiration in the anarchist Modern School movement begun by Francisco Ferrer in Spain. The free school movement emerged in the 1950s and spread through the 1960s as an effort to develop alternative forms of education and self-development in a context that was considered increasingly alienating, rationalized and industrial. Anarchists were actively involved in the free school movement and their involvement is seen as crucial to the anti-authoritarian character and direction of the movement. Free schools were viewed as "an oasis from authoritarian control and as a means of passing on the knowledge to be free" (Spring 1998, 55). Indeed, one of the principle proponents of the free school movement was the best known anarchist in the U.S., Paul Goodman, whose works were widely read and discussed during the 1960s and 1970s. Notably Goodman's works have been rediscovered by contemporary anarchist activists within recently emerged movements, and have become a key influence on constructive anarchy. Free schools were, for Goodman, part of a broader decentralization and de-bureaucratization of social institutions. Goodman argued that schooling had become a process of grading and certification that largely benefited industrial elites who gained trained, and largely obedient, personnel. Education had become more and more geared towards perceived labor market demands. For Goodman (1966, 57): "This means, in effect that a few great corporations are getting the benefit of an enormous weeding out and selective process—all children are fed into the mill and everybody pays for it." In response Goodman argued for the development of small-scale schools or mini-schools in urban centers. Through participatory involvement and decentralization, these mini-schools could allow for direction according to the needs and desires of students and the communities and neighborhoods in which the schools were situated. Goodman also suggested that "in some cases schools could dispense with their classes and use streets, stores, museums, movies and factories as places of learning" (Spring 1998, 56). Indeed Anarchist Free Skool participants pursued such an approach regularly holding classes on the sidewalks in Kensington Market. On other occasions classes were held in laundromats, nearby parks and at picket lines where workers were on strike.

The Anarchist Free Skool

The Anarchist Free Space and Free Skool (AFS) was initiated in April 1999 by artists and activists who had organized a fairly lively free school at a soon to be closed hangout, the Community Cafe. When the Cafe shut down some of the free school participants, looking to keep things going, set up shop in a roomy storefront location in Kensington Market, a multicultural, historically working-class neighborhood in downtown Toronto. The new Free Space and Free Skool was intended as a venue for committed anarchists, novices and non-anarchists alike to come together and share ideas about the prospects, difficulties and strategies for creating new, anti-authoritarian social relations. The primary vehicle for this was

an ambitious schedule of classes on diverse issues. The hopefulness of the new collective was expressed in a statement on the front page of its course calendar.

> Education is a political act. By deepening our knowledge of ourselves and the world around us, sharing skills and exchanging experiences in an egalitarian, non-hierarchical setting free of prejudice, we challenge disempowering habits and broaden our awareness of alternatives to the inequalities of a capitalist society. The Anarchist Free School is a counter-community dedicated to effecting social change through the application of anarchist principles in every sphere of life. This Space represents and opportunity for the community at large to come together and explore these alternatives. The Anarchist Free Space welcomes all applications for use of the Space.

Courses reflected the desire for openness—they were not all about anarchists talking to anarchists about anarchy (though a few of them were just that). Some of the courses included "Love Songs of the 20s and 30s," "Street Art," "Understanding Violence Against Women," and "Alternative Economics." Not just the mind but the body was taken care of in a yoga class and in shiatsu workshops. For most of the year at least one class was running every weekday evening. Far and away the most successful and long-running were "Introduction to Anarchism" and "Class Struggle Anarchism, Syndicalism and Libertarian Socialism" (see Appendix 1).

Some of the most interesting courses weren't courses at all but creative events or experiments. Every Tuesday at 9:23 pm sharp the International Bureau of Recordist Investigation gathered for excursions in their particular type of mayhem. The Recordists promised and often delivered: "A weekly meeting, open to those with an interest in Recordism, Surrealism, and other currents of the Fantastic and the Absurd in contemporary art and culture (and spirituality, and politics, etc., etc.), for the exploration of those topics via discussion, presentations, game-playing and other collective activities, and general nonsense and tom-foolery." One Recordist evening consisted entirely of a fellow cutting his way out of a cardboard box. Eyebrows were raised throughout the space when one of the Recordists' mummies turned up in the basement. The mummy proved popular, however, eventually garnering its own wardrobe and securing a privileged place in the front window. Another interesting event-class was the ponderously titled and sadly short-lived "Drifting as Foundation for a Unitary Urbanism." Inspired by the Situationists' *derivé* (or creating spontaneous pathways through the city), "The Drift," as it became known, brought people together to wander through the night-time city exploring the hidden, unseen, out of the way places of an alter-Toronto. Other memorable happenings ranging from the wacky to the profound included the infamous Satanic Ritual Party which brought the cops and almost made one of our pagan members quit; the *Go Guerrilla* performances and zine launch; a couple of afternoon punk shows; and (on the profound side) the Books to Prisoners poetry readings by ex-lifer John Rives.

In addition to classes the AFS tried to revive the anarchist salon tradition. As the course booklet noted: "Salons have a colourful history throughout the world and in particular within Anarchist Communities. Salons are intentional conversational forums where people engage in passionate discourse about what they think is important." At the AFS the third Friday of every month was reserved for lively discussions on various topics decided upon by participants. Often the salons included a potluck dinner and performance. By all accounts the salons were enjoyable and engaging affairs drawing upwards of 40 people.

Some projects never did come together and others suffered a lack of attention. The lending library suffered regular neglect as no-one seemed interested in taking care of it. Eventually it fell into complete disrepair. A free table for used goods never really took hold. Neither did the Revolutionary Anarchist Bowling League (RABL). More positively Anti-Racist Action and the Toronto Video Activist Collective (TVAC) made use of the space for meetings and video showings. Others such as Food Not Bombs and the Recordists eventually pulled out before dissolving completely.

Free Skool participants openly acknowledged the example of the anarchist educator Francisco Ferrer who suggested that radical pedagogy should question and challenge the traditional or habitual practices that sustain existing social structures (Ferrer 1913). Courses emphasized the capacities of people to act and shape society's direction, starting with local environs in which they lived, worked and learned. The anarchist Paul Goodman argued that within free schools: "The use of certified teachers could be dispensed with and people like the druggist, the storekeeper, and the factory worker could be used as teachers" (Spring 1998, 56). The participants at the Anarchist Free Skool pursued such an approach. In place of instructors who presented information in a unilateral fashion, with a dominant voice, classes involved AFS members who acted as facilitators, taking responsibility to photocopy and make readings available, ensure the space was available and open and people welcomed. Given their initial familiarity with anarchist ideas and texts they helped to fill gaps in knowledge, particularly about specific practices, theories or histories, where possible and necessary or to suggest texts for future reading. Often new students would ask specific questions about how anarchists had handled particular issues, such as justice or punishment, historically. Typically, responsibility for introducing a topic rotated through the class participants according to their personal interests or availability as they volunteered to take responsibility for specific readings or weekly topics. Following a brief introduction to the readings or cases, classes were opened up to a loosely structured discussion based on individual and collective readings of the topic. Even more, within Free Skool classes and meetings, anarchists tried to develop active listening, respectful debate and productive disagreement, in a context that recognizes the harm done to many "students" by their previous negative experiences in mainstream schools. Punctuality, passivity and obedience were in no way promoted at the AFS. Emphasis was on training for community action and the development of critical

social consciousness. Some even identified the structures and pace of modern urban environments as themselves barriers to learning.

Organizers realized that there are many barriers people face to free and independent learning. They emphasized efforts to break dependency and inhibition within the learning process. The anarchist Emma Goldman criticized approaches to learning that emphasized the actions of rulers, elites and governments. Such an approach, still too common today, conditions people to accept a society in which the majority of people are passive, expecting groups of leaders to direct events. Such approaches typically reinforce authoritarian institutions. Anarchist Free Skool participants saw the impacts of such teaching first hand. In initial meetings of classes non-anarchist participants often expressed an acceptance of social stratification or presented a view that elites were entitled to the unequal social rewards they received. One of the common responses was that they had "more important jobs" or "greater responsibilities." The Anarchist Free Skool classes provided an important opportunity to discuss such questions in a constructive and respectful manner. Anarchists note that often the most important jobs, such as garbage pick up, were least rewarded. Similarly, work with the most responsibility, such as mothering, was not rewarded monetarily at all. Caring work, such as early childhood education and nursing, was not rewarded in terms of status, and was often under-rewarded, relative to the work's importance, monetarily.

For anarchists, learning should contribute to independence of thought and action and contribute to capacities for self-determination. In the view of Free Skool participants, it is always important to avoid ideological approaches to learning. Anarchist ideas should be subjected to lively criticism and revision like any other ideas. Debate should always be open and welcomed within anarchist spaces. Dogmatic insistence on the rightness of particular theories or ideas must be avoided and tendencies to dogma actively undermined. Anarchists at the Free Skool did not view the space as a place to indoctrinate or spread a particular ideology. Such an approach would be bound to fail anyway, and furthermore it would contravene participants' principles of anarchism and anti-authoritarianism. Education should support people in freeing themselves from social dogma and encourage their efforts to change social structures and social relations positively. Rather different varieties of anarchism and other radical thought were presented for debate, discussion and appraisal. Hidden histories of resistance and alternative social organizations were explored.

Classes enjoyed participation from around five to 30 people. Gender was mixed with the proportion of men, women and transgender participants varying by class. Similarly classes were facilitated by men and women in roughly equal proportion. The AFS was quite successful in overcoming the generational divisions that afflict many activist groups, particularly some of the direct action groups of the alternative globalization movement. The Free Skool provided a space in which children as young as a few months old played while folks in their 80s debated and shared jokes. Participants in classes ranged widely in age, with classes generally

enjoying involvement from a range including late teenagers to 60 and 70 year olds.

In addition to classes and events, the Free Skool also served as an information center in which books and other media were available on lone to community members. More than simply offering courses on alternative and independent media, the Free Skool made cameras and movie editing equipment available for community movie making. Experimental filmmaker Kika Thorne brought equipment for editing Super 8 film and showed anyone who was interested how to use it. This was all part of the broader emphasis on skill sharing. People registered their various skills with the Free Skool so those seeking to learn specific skills could easily contact someone willing to share information and experiences. Larger workshops were regularly held on specific topics, skills and activities including zine making, guitar, art, knitting, cooking and gardening. Sessions were also provided on self defense. Reflecting holistic approaches to health, classes and workshops were provided on nutrition, first aid and basic health care.

"Class" Organizing

Libertarian or anarchist approaches to education emphasize participatory involvement, consensual practices and relations and the limiting of stratification based on expertise or experience (Spring 1998). At the Free Skool the educational emphasis was on learning for social justice, learning as social justice. This was not an academic or even purely intellectual pursuit but rather a holistic approach to education in and as practice. For participants learning was geared towards positive social as well as personal transformation. Learners who were also teachers had a commitment to use their opportunities and resources, collective practice, knowledge, to contribute to the betterment of particularly poor communities. The Free Skool encouragement of social justice was not limited to the radical content of courses but as expressed as much in the structure and practice of courses and the space more broadly. In particular this included consensus-based decision-making processes and participatory practices in which learners guided the direction of courses and the space itself.

Anarchists emphasize the school as a site of political, cultural, social and economic power. Schooling instills a respect for authority and builds a habitual deference and adherence to the laws of the land. In the words of one of the directors of the anarchist Modern School movement in New Jersey in the 1920s: "From the moment the child enters the public school he is trained to submit to authority, to do the will of others as a matter of course, until the result that habits of mind are formed which in adult life are all to the advantage of the ruling class" (Kelly 1925, 115). Criticisms of the government-based public school system include its nationalistic emphasis (with anthems to start school days and flags on buildings and images of presidents or monarchs in every room. Also of concern is training for the demands of the labor market and industrial system rather than for critical

analysis or engaged "citizenship." It is part of organizing more broadly against patriotism and moral regulation within society as well as school systems.

Anarchists, like other radical education theorists, raise concerns about ways in which traditional schooling trains people to accept work that is monotonous, boring or without personal satisfaction (Spring 1998, 14). There is great, and growing, pressure from policy makers, government officials, bureaucrats and corporate leaders to direct all education towards the fulfillment of perceived or anticipated demands of the labor market. Education is viewed primarily, or even solely, as career preparation. Learning is placed in the service of a future social role and preparation for that role. As Spring (1998, 146) notes: "Knowledge is not presented as a means of understanding and critically analysing social and economic forces but as a means of subservience to the social structure." Not simply an abstract or philosophical concern, Free Skool participants were critical of the neoliberal education policies of their own province, which shifted the emphasis of education towards training geared to the labor market almost exclusively. The Ontario government at the time the Free Skool opened had recently legislated the requirement that university programs justify funding on the basis of the employment success of graduates. It forced programs to justify their existence on the basis of vague references to employability. This employability proof shifted emphasis in programs away from critical analysis towards supposedly practical considerations. Sociology programs, for example, shifted from critical theory or social movement studies towards supposedly more marketable areas such as criminology and family studies.

Another concern of anarchists is the contribution of educational discourses to the myth of social mobility within stratified capitalist social relations. Within these popular discourses, educational credentials are uncritically accepted as a basis, even *the* basis, for social rewards, or more as a measure of social worth or standing (Wotherspoon 2009; McLaren 2005, 2006). Unfortunately, such credentials are largely distributed along existing lines of inequality and reflect ongoing divisions of class and status. Rather than increasing mobility, education and the focus on credentials, prestige and reward reinforces social class divisions (Spring 1998; McLaren 2005, 2006). As Spring (1998, 29) notes:

> The poor are led to believe that schools will provide them with the opportunity for social advancement, and that advancement within the process of schooling is the result of personal merit. The poor are willing to support schooling on the basis of this faith. But since the rich will always have more years of schooling that the poor, schooling becomes just a new way of measuring social distances. Because the poor themselves believe in the rightness of the school standard, the school becomes an even more powerful means of social division. The poor are taught to believe that they are poor because they did not make it through school. The poor are told that they were given the opportunity for advancement, and they believe it. Social position is translated through schooling into achievement and underachievement. Within the school the social and economic disadvantages

of the poor are termed underachievement. Without school there would be no dropouts.

The anarchist approach aims at radically transforming society rather than reforming it. As Joel Spring (1998, 9–10) suggests, while reformist approaches to education try to eliminate poverty by educating the children of the poor to function within existing social structures, radical education tries to change the social structures that support and perpetuate unequal social relations. Reformist approaches can certainly make improvements, and these improvements are not to be dismissed, but they do not make the thoroughgoing socio-structural changes needed to address poverty and inequality. In Spring's (1998, 10) words: "The first approach would emphasize changing behavior to fit into the existing social structure while the second would try to identify those psychological characteristics of the social structure which keep poor people under control." For Free Skool participants, education should be part of processes of social transformation and human emancipation. Individual efforts to succeed within existing structures tend not to end inequality and injustice. Schools should not reinforce the social organization of society. They should challenge and change it.

> What must be sought in the future is a system of education which raises the level of individual consciousness to an understanding of the social and historical forces that have created the existing society and determined an individual's place in that society. This must occur through a combination of theory and practice in which both change as all people work for a liberated society. There should not be a blueprint for future change but, rather, a constant dialogue about means and ends. Education should be at the heart of such a revolutionary endeavor. (Spring 1998, 146)

For anarchists, educational alternatives are situated as part of overall attempts, within collective movements, to change broader systems of power, including but not limited to those of education. Anarchists seek a de-institutionalization of the socialization process. For anarchists, schools teach people to trust the judgment of the educator while developing distrust for their own judgment (Spring 1998; McLaren 2005, 2006).

> Implied in the concept of a society without schools is the end of all other institutions which are breeding grounds for dogma and moral imperatives. In a sense the church and state are themselves schools, with ideas of how people should act and what they ought to be. A society without schools would be one without institutions of mysticism and authority. It would be a society of *self-regulation* where institutions would be a product of personal need and usefulness and not sources of power. (Spring 1998, 52–53)

For anarchists at the AFS, working towards a new society depends, in part, upon changes in ideas and attitudes. New social relations do not spring into being fully formed from nothing. They must be taught, learned, played with, experienced, revised and re-learned. At the same time less acceptable or less desirable practices must be unlearned or discarded. This is not done immediately, the outcome of an act of will. Even more, people raised in authoritarian contexts, socialized within authoritarian assumptions, will understandably need to learn new ways of acting. They will need to adjust, through trial and error, to new ways of relating to one another. Yet there are relatively few accessible spaces available in which such practices can be engaged. Max Stirner (1967, 23) was drawn to ask: "Where will a creative person be educated instead of a learning one, where does the teacher turn into a fellow worker, where does he recognize knowledge as turning into will, where does the free man count as a goal and not merely the educated?" The AFS anarchists tried to provide opportunities for people to experiment and struggle with creating new forms of relationship, interaction and understanding one another.

Most Free Skool members struggled under public schooling regimes, finding their education to be constraining, restrictive and lacking venues for the expression of creativity. Many of the people who participated in Free Skool classes were decades removed from formal schooling. For them, the Free Skool provided a welcome alternative to their generally unsatisfactory and unsatisfying educational experiences. Many were thankful for the presence of the Free Skool, suggesting that they had searched a lifetime for such engaging learning experiences.

For Free Skool anarchists, the question of content is not the only one. Anarchists also stress the importance of methods. As in other areas of activity, anarchists stress the importance of a correspondence between means and ends, form and content. For anarchists, anti-authoritarian relations and practices cannot come from authoritarian methods. In education there is a link between methods and approaches to learning and the organization of the classroom and the character of the development of relations among participants. Learning can be an end in and of itself and should be an enriching process that allows for the rewarding experience of non-authoritarianism in practice. Concerns over the types of methods pursued in the classroom involve the nature and extent of control and authority (Spring 1998, 26). Radical education critics suggest that classroom techniques have been related to shaping a character that fits within and functions according to existing institutions of authority outside the school (in government or corporations). Modern mass consumer societies, according to critical theorist Ivan Illich, require a citizen character that relies upon, or is dependent upon, the advice of experts, which can be broadly integrated within decision-making processes (see Hardt and Negri 2009). The society depends upon the consumption of packages expertly planned and circulated according to marketing strategies. For radical critics, schooling prepares the individual by assuming responsibility for "the whole child" (Spring 1998, 26).

> By attempting to teach automobile driving, sex education, dressing, adjustment to personality problems and a host of related topics, the school also teaches that there is an expert and correct way of doing all of these things and that one should depend on the expertise of others. Students in the school ask for freedom and what they receive is the lesson that freedom is only conferred by authorities and must be used 'expertly.' This dependency creates a form of alienation which destroys people's ability to act. Activity no longer belongs to the individual but to the expert and the institution. (Spring 1998, 26–27)

Indeed Free Skool participants were explicitly working to overcome the dominance of experts in social life. This is not to say they reject the knowledge developed by some people in specific areas, such as computers, health care, nutrition or woodworking, based on experience and training. Rather it is the dominance of broad spheres of social life by experts and the frame of mind that suggests an uncritical deference to authorities. It also speaks against the proprietary character of much expert knowledge, as privileged possession or competitive advantage, within capitalist societies. More specifically, the Free Skool anarchists sought to allow everyone opportunities to develop their own expertise and confidence. Again, this was part of an overall emphasis on do-it-yourself or do-it-ourselves practices. People were encouraged to formulate answers and develop solutions to problems in a participatory and collective way, brainstorming, experimenting, practicing and reworking with fellow participants.

Anarchist critics argue that poor people learn in school that they should submit to the leadership or authority of those with more schooling. Those with more schooling, in terms of years and grade levels, tend to be those from more privileged class backgrounds who complete post-secondary education and graduate school. Thus anarchists seek to subvert this relationship of education and leadership or authority, particularly on the basis of class.

> Here the concern is not with order and efficiency but with increasing individual autonomy. The goal of social change is increased individual participation and control of the social system. This model rests on the conviction that a great deal of the power of modern social institutions depends on the willingness of the people to accept the authority and legitimacy of these institutions. In this context the question becomes, not how to fit the individual into the social machine, but *why* people are willing to accept work without personal satisfaction and authority which limits freedom. (Spring 1998, 131)

Anarchists attempt to overcome traditional teacher/student relationships which can inhibit students and reinforce authority structures of command and obedience. For Stirner, education should assist individuals to be creative persons rather than learners. Learners lose their freedom if will in becoming increasingly dependent upon experts and institutions for instruction on how to act. Rather than learning how to act they might determine for themselves how to act. Anarchists seek

educational practices and relations that will contribute to the nurturing of non-authoritarian people "who will not obediently accept the dictates of the political and social system and who will demand greater personal control and choice" (Spring 1998, 14). This includes experience in the development of collaborative practices, knowledge sharing and mutual aid, rather than the competition, for grades or status, or emphasis on individual knowledge possession, intellectual property and "originality" that marks much of mainstream, particularly post-secondary, education.

For anarchists, methods of discipline and reward in mainstream teaching undermine freedom and self-determination. Too often teachers use extrinsic motivation, through grades, threats of punishment or promises of promotion (Spring 1998, 25). The focus can readily be displaced onto the extrinsic motive, such as grades. This is a common feature of the neoliberal classroom, as grades, a surrogate for wages, become a primary concern of students seeking a specific credential, which can be converted to a job on the labor market. This is similar to the process by which satisfaction in the intrinsic qualities of labor has been displaced towards satisfaction in the wage, even where the work itself is despised and/or debilitating.

Part of the modern state's power rests in its awareness of the significance of the "domination of the mind" (Spring 1998, 40). For anarchists, freedom must extend beyond political liberty and equality before the law, to emphasize self-control over one's perspectives, beliefs and practices. Most educational systems have been geared towards the internalization of values and beliefs or the development of a conscience that favors support of existing social structures and relations (Spring 1998; McLaren 2005, 2006). Non-authoritarian practices of education seek to encourage this broader approach to freedom, through people's own efforts and experimentation, successes and failures. Anarchists do not claim to have perfect pedagogical practices or ready-made answers to difficult questions. They recognize that they themselves have much to learn about practices of freedom and radical transformation, socialized within authoritarian systems as they have been.

Anarchist Colin Ward suggests that one of the tragedies of social struggle is that people do not know immediately how to deal with freedom. We all need to learn through experience practices of consensus, direct action, mutual aid, solidarity and restorative justice. Education is a key aspect in organizing any society, whatever its scale. The goal of libertarian approaches "is therefore an educational method which will encourage and support non-authoritarian individuals who are unwilling to bow to authority and who demand a social organization which provides them with maximum individual control and freedom" (Spring 1998, 131). The DIO approach to education pursued by Free Skool anarchists was driven by a belief that "no social change is meaningful unless people participate in its formulation" (Spring 1998, 132). This convergence of revolutionary organizing and radical education is a key aspect of working to develop infrastructures of resistance. Thus it is an area of some emphasis for anarchists. For anarchists the failure of previous revolutions and their development in conservative directions, relates to the lack of

"radically new means of education and socialization by which all people could be brought into the revolutionary movement and become *acting members* of it rather than its objects" (Spring 1998, 133). Anarchist Free Skool members were clear that a non-authoritarian society could not be wished into existence and it would not happen without organizing, discussion and engagement. The Free Skool was part of those broader processes. At the same time Free Skool organizers were conscious not to become a therapeutic space and not produce dependency on the Free Skool as an institution.

In social and political terms the AFS was at its liveliest, and indeed its most relevant, during its second spring and summer when a number of members managed to bring a community organizing perspective to the space. Tired of the seemingly endless drift into pedantic debates and mystical dreaming the community activists tried to develop the AFS as a useful community resource. Importantly, unlike others in the collective, the community organizers had a clear vision and strategies they wanted to pursue. Taking the view that the AFS could (and should) be a worthwhile organizing and education center they reached out to serious activists in the city. The Ontario Coalition Against Poverty was invited to hold their movie nights at the space every Saturday and held several successful large "screenings." The anarchist communist zine *Sabcat* was produced out of the AFS and met with tremendous enthusiasm locally and abroad. *Sabcat* presented original artwork, reviews and articles on such topics as radical ecology and unionism or green syndicalism, anarchist communism, and alternative education. Trying to overcome the educational divide that separates "citizens" and prisoners AFS members initiated a Books to Prisoners program which became quite successful. Poetry readings and hardcore punk shows brought in hundreds of book donations along with the help of some independent publishers and distributors. Before long the first shipments went out from the Free Skool to inmates in both a women's and men's prison.

Whose Market?: Against Poor-Bashing

Almost everything I've ever read about such alternative spaces raises the business of gentrification in North American cities. This story is no exception. At the same time, the educational approach of the Free Skool maintained that members develop a commitment to social justice and community involvement in support of those lacking resources. Putting their education to work members of the Free Skool collectives took leading parts in the battle against gentrification in the Kensington Market neighborhood.

During a general meeting in May of 2000 a member alerted Free Skool participants to a petition which had begun circulation against plans by St. Stephen's Community House for a soup kitchen and hostel for homeless people to be opened on Augusta Avenue just north of the Free Space. The rather viciously worded petition openly attacked poor people saying they were unwelcome in the Market.

This was viewed by Free Skool members as an act of what anti-poverty organizer Jean Swanson (2001) calls poor-bashing. At the same meeting the collective decided without delay to interview every store-owner or manager in the Market to see who was carrying the petition and who supported the attacks on homeless people and the poor. Enlisting support from the AFS, teams of two spent the next few days talking to people throughout the Market. Where petitions were found, and thankfully very few places had accepted them, it was made clear that such anti-poor propaganda was unacceptable. A boycott of a trendy cafe previously frequented by activists was begun and perhaps coincidentally it closed by the end of the summer.

At the end of June a leaflet was distributed in the Market which asked: "Do you want Kensington Market to become just one more run-down neighbourhood with no hope for its future?" A second leaflet, circulated by the Kensington Market Working Group hysterically raged against the planned soup kitchen suggesting that feeding and sheltering homeless people was simply cover for the real "goal of destroying the family shopping atmosphere that is Kensington." Members of the AFS organized a campaign to attend the City's Committee of Adjustment hearing and brought letters of support for the soup kitchen. Eventually the plans were approved, although the Kensington business association has promised to keep up the attacks.

Later in the summer another more directly aggressive battle developed over harassment by the City of Toronto of a few homeless men living in the Market. The situation came to a head when one of the men asked several of us at the Free Skool for help in keeping city workers from taking his stuff to the dump. When we approached the workers they refused to tell us which by-law they were citing when removing the stuff but implied that they were under pressure from the business association. After some debate we worked out a deal where the city workers promised not to touch anything left in the area fronting the Free Space. The guys hung out at the space and sold their wonderful array of used goods in front of and alongside the Free Space. For a couple of months it was like a real street bazaar. Shoppers loved the piles of stuff and there was always serious bargaining going on. They sold more in those two months than the AFS ever did.

Vision Trouble

The Anarchist Free Skool was open for participation by anyone who had a general agreement with non-authoritarian and non-oppressive perspectives and practices. Anyone who agreed to these basic principles could take part in membership meetings and involve themselves in the decision-making process. The egalitarianism and participatory democracy of the relatively small collective should allow developing inequalities and grievances to be more readily identified and more immediately dealt with, as many anarchists historically have argued (Hartung 1983, 96). At the Free Skool this was generally, if imperfectly, the case.

At times the Free Skool found it difficult to develop ongoing political projects. Even agreement on short-term actions was difficult to come by. The Free Skool vision, as reproduced above, was a rather vague commitment to "deepening our knowledge of ourselves and the world around us, sharing skills and exchanging experiences." While promising a dedication "to effecting social change through the application of anarchist principles in every sphere of life" there was little agreement on what these principles were and even less sense of what strategies might be necessary to "effect social change" or even to "challenge disempowering habits."

The collective took as its model of decision-making process the consensus approach outlined by the Public Interest Research Groups. Consensus, whereby decisions are based upon lengthy discussions and much compromise of positions, is an article of faith for many anarchist groups who believe it to be more participatory, more open and more likely to lead to better and more satisfactory decisions. It was also viewed as an important part of participatory pedagogy.

Despite the commitment to consensus as a pedagogical tool, there were difficulties with the process. First, the Free Skool was sometimes fractious throughout its history, never quite sure if it was a counter-cultural "hang out," an artist colony or an activist resource center—never certain whether its politics were "lifestylist," petty bourgeois market socialist or class war anarchist. Art, theory, practice, education and/or activism? The AFS suffered from a failure to bring these approaches together.

Secondly, consensus, because of the long time involved in making decisions and because it always tends towards compromise answers, is in many ways unsuited to a lively activist group which must take quick decisions and may not be able to compromise on principles. Diverse groups with vastly divergent notions of what anarchism is about require a process which allows each vision to be expressed without either limiting or implicating the other members of the larger group. In practice this is very difficult to negotiate and to realize. Free Skool meetings often bogged down in hours of heated discussion over whether activist posters could be placed in the windows because some of the artists found the postings to be unsightly and aesthetically displeasing. Needless to say the activists thought it more important to publicize important events regardless of aesthetic considerations. The persistent lack of analysis and vision along with a failure to assess the political context for action and develop useful strategies for meeting stated goals consistently undermined the collectives' capacities to do political work. Clearly good intentions were not enough.

Conclusion

Projects such as the Anarchist Free Skool emerge to meet specific needs, transform as priorities and interests shift and eventually dissolve only to emerge elsewhere as the Anarchist Free Skool has morphed to become the Anarchist University. I prefer

autonomist Marxist Harry Cleaver's suggestion that such spaces are acts of self-valorization which can mess with the circuits of capitalist re/production. Certainly they represent places in which people have the time to value themselves and their relationships with each other beyond the commodified time in which much of our lives are contained. Following Cleaver we might understand Temporary Autonomous Zones both as aspects of a refusal of domination and as creative attempts to fill the time, space and resources thus liberated. At the same time, constructing creative spaces refusal will not be enough if left at that. The need to challenge and overturn existing authoritarian relations remains.

One must be careful not to underestimate the rather large amounts of real labor required to keep such autonomous zones running. While Hakim Bey often portrays autonomous zones as profoundly mystical moments, it is important to remember that they have a substantial materiality. Despite their heterotopian character, such spaces are constructed of the mundane, the everyday. As a sign in the Free Space proclaimed: "Anarchy doesn't mean dirty dishes." (Although a glance at the Free Space sink too often suggested otherwise.) In the end, it is how well the demands of the everyday are met that can determine the success or failure of autonomous zones.

Still there is always an aspect of the carnivalesque in spaces like the AFS. Whether it be the lively conversations, crass hardcore music, the quirky zines, humorous buttons, joyful camaraderie or the clarion of agit-prop, the spaces signal their difference from their surroundings, their "otherness." As liminal sites they can be places of transformation from present to future—glimpses of the "new world in the shell of the old." The process and outcome are aspects of the character of struggle.

Autonomous zones are hubs of DIY culture and politics. In scenes where transience and the ephemeral often predominate free spaces offer some permanence, some rootedness. They provide a space where the underground can move above ground and engage in an everyday discussion with non-activists, with people who want to find out what this anarchy stuff is all about. The Free Skool participants were successful at taking anarchist ideas beyond the confines of anarchist subcultures and radical political "scenes." Unlike many other infoshops and free spaces the Free Skool did manage to bring people from the neighborhood into the spaces. Most just dropped by to chat but many took part in classes and a few even joined the collective. The Free Skool provided a venue, within a working-class neighborhood, for non-anarchists to inquire about anarchism, ask tough questions and have discussions about anarchist theory and practice. It also provided a community center, a space in which community members could come together to discuss neighborhood issues and organize to address community needs, both through developing their own self-directed activities, but also by preparing collective approaches to local government authorities around aspects of city planning and policy. Without the Free Skool it is certain that the homeless shelter and soup kitchen would have been defeated and an important resource for poor

people would not have been available in the neighborhood. It is also certain that homeless people would have faced greater harassment and criminalization.

That the Anarchist Free Skool was able to extend its reach beyond current students to bring in non-students, particularly individuals from poor and working-class backgrounds, and those who had long ago left school behind (or been left behind by school), stands as a testament to the promise of the participants' commitment to open and engaged learning. It also showed the significant work done by Free Skool members in doing outreach into the local neighborhoods and communities, actively working to build bridges and take anarchism outside of any pre-existing subcultural comfort zones. A promising beginning though it still has not grown in the way needed to forge an organic connection with other communities.

This is by no means the final paragraph in this story. New ones are being written at this very moment. Already a number of people involved in the AFS have worked to start up a new space, an activist resource center geared towards political projects and solidarity work. Classes continue to enjoy life through the Anarchist University. Rather than simply affirming a commitment to some nebulous notion of anarchy these folks are developing the basis for shared principles and shared work as part of the preparation for opening new projects.

Intended as something a bit more permanent than the temporary autonomous zone, these anarchist spaces provide the support structures for oppositional cultures. They are parts of the broader DIY movements which provide alternative community and economic infrastructures in music, publishing, video, radio, food and education. Anarchist heterotopias are places for skills development, for learning those skills which are undeveloped in authoritarian social relations. Participants seek some autonomy from the markets of capital. Their emphasis opposes capitalist consumerism, emphasizing affinity, gift economies and mutual aid. In theory, they offer means for undermining state and capital relations and authorities both ideological and material. As noted above, practice often settles for something much less than that. As always the challenge is to maintain openness and inclusion while actually working to create "the future in the present." Many at the Free Skool struggled to show that freedom is not some fanciful idea, something for philosophers and mystics to ponder. It only has meaning when it is lived.

Appendix 1

The course descriptions for the most popular courses at the Anarchist Free Skool.

Class Struggle Anarchism, Syndicalism and Libertarian Socialism

Anarchism, as a political movement, emerged as part of broader workers' struggles for socialism and communism and contributed greatly to those struggles. Contemporary anarchists in North America, however, have generally forgotten this important connection as anarchism has become a largely subcultural phenomenon. Similarly distinctions between authoritarian and anti-authoritarian traditions within the diverse history of socialism have been obliterated by the horrors of state capitalist regimes calling themselves "socialist." This course seeks to reconnect anarchism with the struggles of working people to build a better world beyond capitalism of any type. The course is initiated by activists concerned with class analysis and day-to-day organizing and is not intended simply as a study group.

Introduction to Anarchism

This course will be a broad introduction to anarchist theory and practice, as well as a look at the history of anarchism and anarchist struggles. There will be readings taken from some of the major anarchist thinkers such as: Bakunin, Kropotkin, Goldman and others. Also, the class will be structured in such a way that the participants may suggest the focus and direction of the readings and discussion topics.

Chapter 7
Re-Thinking Revolution:
A Constructive Anarchist Approach

Anarchists are not satisfied with simply protesting against capitalist society and centralized, hierarchical power. Neither are they content to wait for a post-revolutionary utopian future. The "new world" must come now, from within the "old world." Contemporary anarchists are not satisfied to live safely within alternative or subcultural spaces in the shadows of capital, the government or state; they seek the complete dissolution of institutions of domination and control. To develop the skills and resources that might contribute to this, as a part of what they do, anarchists create counter-organizations, which foreshadow the structures of the future society.

> While their long-term goal is to replace the State by a federation of self-managing communes, contemporary anarchists are not content to dream of a mythic future. They try and change their lives here and now. (Marshall 1993, 638)

The constructive anarchist refuses to wait around for "the future." They wait for no Idea (whether anarchism, socialism or some other) to free them. An immediatist strategy of creating alternative futures in the present or autonomous zones is reminiscent of Stirner's appeal to "insurrection" rather than Revolution.

> The Revolution aimed at new arrangements; insurrection leads us no longer to let ourselves be arranged, but to arrange ourselves, and sets no glittering hopes on 'institutions'. It is not a fight against the established, since, if it prospers, the established collapses of itself; it is only the working forth of men [sic] out of the established. (Marshall 1993, 638)

Conceptualized as an event with specific temporality, as something for a future time, revolution appears distant.

> Todd Gitlin writing about SDS and the new left of the sixties said at the time that if we failed it would be a 'failure of nerve.' Perhaps he was right, then. But today I would say that if we fail it will have been a failure of imagination. Most people have no sense of how to move outside the present—even in their imagination. (Ehrlich 1996b, 341)

Rather than violent confrontation with the state, which in the North American context would amount mass suicide, contemporary anarchists follow Gustav Landauer's invocation to make the state obsolete by forming alternative arrangements and organizations. This view of revolution as a process of constructing alternative forms of sociation as models of a new society is largely shared by contemporary anarchists. In any event, revolution would not be possible without these pre-existing infrastructures, a point that is too often over look by would be revolutionaries and political sect builders.

> Revolution is a process, and even the eradiction of coercive institutions will not automatically create a liberatory society. We create that society by building new institutions, by changing the character of our social relationships, by changing ourselves—and throughout that process by changing the distribution of power in society …
> If we cannot begin this revolutionary project here and now, then we cannot make a revolution. (Ehrlich, Ehrlich, DeLeon and Morris 1996, 5)

Large-scale civil non-cooperation and or militant confrontation with the state and capital obviously require previous successes in organization and experience. Thus, as Ehrlich (1996b) notes, these are necessarily the outward, and dramatic, manifestations of ongoing experiments in overcoming archic society. First, anarchists must develop alternative institutions. These are the building blocks of what he refers to as the anarchist transfer culture, an approximation of the new society within the context of the old (Ehrlich 1996a). Within them anarchists try to meet the basic demands of building sustainable communities.

> A transfer culture is that agglomeration of ideas and practices that guide people in making the trip from the society here to the society there in the future … As part of the accepted wisdom of that transfer culture we understand that we may never achieve anything that goes beyond the culture itself. It may be, in fact, that it is the very nature of anarchy that we shall always be building the new society within whatever society we find ourselves. (Ehrlich 1996a, 329)

Anarchist transfer cultures express "elements of refusal" or non-cooperation with authority. Anarchists thereby attempt to undermine the state by refusing to obey its demands. This is more than simple civil disobedience since it also contains a positive character along with a defensive one. These revolutionary transfer cultures, which operate in the shadows of the old dominant institutions, provide frameworks for the revolutionary organization of social relations in a miniature, pre-insurrectionary, form. It is the rudimentary infrastructure of alternative ways of being, an alternative future in the present. It is decidedly not a millenarian project in which hopes for liberation or freedom are deferred or projected into some imagined future. Rather than utopian longings, these transfer cultures or infrastructures of resistance

express something along the lines of what Foucault calls heterotopias, real world practices in which utopian desires are given life in the here and now.

Re-Thinking Revolution

In conventional political theory, revolutionary as well as conservative, revolution is defined typically as the event of insurrection, generally when some group of subordinates ousts their erstwhile overlords. This establishes a point of rupture following which social reality is fundamentally and irrevocably transformed. The period of reconstruction following the revolution, in which new institutions, values and social practices are developed, often in the face of counter-revolution from the recently deposed elites, may also be included as existing within the revolutionary era. The period prior to the outbreak of active and open insurrection is generally not viewed as a part of the revolutionary period. While people may, during this time, be involved in smaller-scale struggles or have access to revolutionary education or propaganda, they are not, according to orthodox approaches, involved in the everyday work of rebuilding society. Such tasks are almost by definition part of a post-revolutionary period. Related to this way of thinking about revolutions is that, perhaps most importantly for the present discussion, revolution is inextricably bound to a statist framework and "the" revolution consists invariably or exclusively in the seizure of state power.

Anarchists would suggest that a starting point for re-thinking what revolutions might consist of is to stop conceiving of revolution as though it was a thing or a moment of rupture. Graeber (2004, 45) argues that taking such an approach might allow us to ask instead, "what is revolutionary action?" He then offers the following as part of an answer:

> [R]evolutionary action is any collective action which rejects, and therefore confronts, some form of power or domination and in doing so, reconstitutes social relations—even within the collectivity—in that light. Revolutionary action does not necessarily have to aim to topple governments. Attempts to create autonomous communities in the face of power … would, for instance, be almost by definition revolutionary acts. And history shows us that the continual accumulation of such acts can change (almost) everything. (Graeber 2004, 45)

Rather than a violent overthrow of the state in a destructive revolution (anarchists are not interested in seizing the state), contemporary anarchists are more likely to pursue constructive paths to social transformation through the creation of free zones and libertarian social relations. As Graeber (2004, 44–45) reminds us, "unless we are willing to massacre thousands of people (and probably even then), the revolution will almost certainly not be quite such a clean break as such a phrase [as "after the revolution"] implies." This involves a vast range of different tactics ranging from conventional means such as demonstrations, boycotts, occupations or strikes

to less familiar means such as poetic terrorism or electronic civil disobedience. Each tactic involves "propaganda of the deed"; an educational practice which not only shows that things can be done differently but offers practical examples and lessons learned.

For anarchists, the fatal consequences deriving from an absence of revolutionary transfer cultures has historically been shown in case after case, from France to Russia to China and beyond. If people are not prepared, and somewhat experienced, in terms of organizing and managing social relations they will have difficulty developing a new society in egalitarian and participatory directions, turning instead to leaders offering to coordinate change on their behalf. When these small groups of so-called "vanguards" come to manage revolutionary undertakings, people become dependent on them. In turning to vanguardist leaders people are to some extent expressing their lack of confidence, skills, knowledge or resources to make and carry out communal decisions. Even beyond this, once a vanguard assumes power it becomes extremely difficult to carry out popular education and skill or resource sharing. Where vanguardists take up post-revolutionary tasks of popular education it is typically from their own ideological perspective. The revolution's character will reflect the usually centralized position of the new ruling group. Significantly the hierarchical and authoritarian structure of vanguardist leaderships and the post-revolutionary societies they lead are not necessarily imposed on populations. To some extent they become default positions of the population where people feel unprepared to organize and construct viable alternatives. Active experiences of self-management and self-organization are necessary not only for contesting instituted authorities prior to any insurrection but also for resisting dependence on any leadership vanguards during and after insurrectionary periods.

Anarchists have always emphasized people's capacities for spontaneous organization but they also recognize that what appears to be "spontaneous" develops from an often extensive groundwork of pre-existing practices. Without pre-existing revolutionary practices and relationships, or transfer cultures, people are left to patch things together in the heat of social upheaval or to defer to previously organized and disciplined vanguards. Pre-existing revolutionary infrastructures, or transfer cultures, are necessary components of popular, participatory and liberatory social re-organization. Anarchists suggest that a liberatory revolution requires experiences of active involvement in radical change, prior to any insurrection, and the development of prior structures for constructing a new society within the shell of the old society.

Some anarchists have, rather sloppily, chosen to describe contemporary anarchist practices of developing alternative institutions as "dual power" strategies, applying, without irony, the term used by Lenin and Trotsky. Anarchists generally use the term dual power to suggest the idea that at some point anarchist projects will reach such size and scope that they will offer a plausible challenge or alternative to the state. This alternative will, if not rendering the state obsolete, will provide the base from which the state might be abolished.

> In typical revolutionary discourse a 'counterpower' is a collection of social institutions set in opposition to the state and capital: from self-governing communities to radical labor unions to popular militias. Sometimes it is also referred to as an 'anti-power.' When such institutions maintain themselves in the face of the state, this is usually referred to as a 'dual power' situation. By this definition most of human history is actually characterized by dual power situations, since few historical states had the means to root such institutions out, even assuming that they would have wanted to. (Graeber 2004, 24–25)

The term "dual power" was most famously used by Lenin in an April 9, 1917 article "The Dual Power," which was published in *Pravda*. Lenin defined the dual power, which consisted of popular institutions, the Soviets, as an incipient government that was growing alongside the official Provisional Government during the revolution. While the Provisional Government formed the government of the bourgeoisie, the dual power "government" of the Soviets consisted of popular organs that provided the constructive framework of a new post-bourgeois society. Significantly, as history would show, Lenin conceived of dual power as a mechanism by which the vanguard party could implement and enforce party control over the revolution. Lenin stated famously that the proletariat needed state power, that a centralized organization of force was required to lead the mass of people in the work of organizing a socialist society. Rather than an aspect of self-determination, or popular control of the revolution, the dual power structures served as a means of cooptation and centralization via the party within the state. Towards the end of 1917, with the Bolsheviks in power, Lenin finally ended the already shrinking autonomy of the Soviets, shifting all authority in political and economic matters to the newly instituted Bolshevik government. While the Soviets did certainly play an important part in the empowerment and education of workers in Russia it is also true that authority rested with the Bolshevik Party itself.

Rather than use the term dual power, I prefer to speak of infrastructures of resistance—anarchist transfer cultures understood as practices of self-determination and self-valorization (a concept I examine more fully below). While the notion of anarchist transfer cultures bears some resemblance to the idea of dual power, it is important to recognize the rather significant differences both in terms of form and substance. Various alternative institutions, whether free schools or squats or counter-media, form networks as means for developing alternative social infrastructures. Where free schools join up with worker cooperatives and collective social centers, alternative social infrastructures, or anarchist transfer cultures, become visible at least at the community level. Contemporary anarchist projects are still quite new. None have approached the scale that would suggest they pose practical alternatives, except perhaps in the case of new media activities. Yet all are putting together the building blocks that might contribute to the development of practical alternatives that extend well beyond even the projects that initially gave birth to them. In what follows I outline a couple of the building blocks of anarchist transfer cultures, specifically participatory democracy and gift economies.

Do-It-Yourself Democracy

There is a saying, popular in anarchist circles, that "elections are the means by which we choose the sauce with which we will be basted." For anarchists there is a deep problem with claims of representation made by any political leaders. Quite simply no one can truly represent anyone other than themselves except in some "best guess" approximation of other people's interests. The limited access to politics sought by many social movements, whether through representational or policy reforms, for many anarchists, are at base, re-affirmations of one's consent to be ruled, to have crucial decisions managed for them.

As one of the main building blocks of the anarchist transfer cultures anarchists offer visions of a participatory democracy which permeates all spheres of life (including the workplace, schools, the family and sexuality). In the spirit of Hakim Bey's *Temporary Autonomous Zones* contemporary anarchists call for a proliferation of "free" spaces, places and practices which refuse capture within the rigidly mapped territories of states and legal authority. These "autonomous" realms of thought and action emphasize inclusivity, openness, and fluidity, against the temporal and spatial confinement of states.

Reinventing democracy and what is meant by democratic practice has been a key concern of contemporary anti-globalization movements. Experiments with participatory forms of democracy provide living examples of people managing their lives without relying on state representatives. As only one example, one might readily refer to the direct action street demonstrations, from Seattle to Prague, that have garnered contemporary anarchy so much attention. The famous "this is what democracy looks like" chant, which captured the public imagination during the big anti-globalization actions and has gone on to become a regular, even overused, feature of almost every action since, has always contained a double meaning. On the one hand it is a public condemnation of what passes for democracy under capitalist liberal democracy, in which fundamental decisions impacting billions of the world's inhabitants can be made by a handful of rich men in luxury hotels surrounded by barbed wire and guarded by paramilitary forces. On the other it is an expression of activists' understanding that the means by which these undemocratic processes are confronted and impede must be built on a participatory and egalitarian basis. Democracy is not what is happening in the luxury suites and marble conference halls. It is the far messier, even dirtier process, that is happening in the gutters and potholes of the streets outside.

Contemporary anarchists are keenly aware of the dangers of majoritarian opinion in nurturing oppressive relations. Majoritarian democracy, in its origins, a military institution after all. Indeed we gain some important insights into the military character of representative democracy if we look into the origins of the term "democracy" itself. Coined as a slur by its elitist opponents, the word actually means the "force," or, even more, the "violence" of the people: *kratos* rather than *archos* (Graeber 2004, 91). This is the nightmare of elites, the worried vision of a populace in arms. Graeber notes that Machiavelli reverted to this sense

of democracy in his "modern" notion of a democratic republic. Majoritarian democracy only emerges where two factors coincide. These factors are, first, the sentiment that people should have equal say in group decisions and, secondly, that there exists an available coercive apparatus by which those decisions can be enforced (Graber 2004). It has generally been quite unusual in human history to have both at the same time: "Where egalitarian societies exist, it is also usually considered wrong to impose systematic coercion. Where a machinery of coercion did exist, it did not even occur to those wielding it that they were enforcing any sort of popular will" (Graeber 2004, 89). The domination of liberal notions of democracy, with exclusive decision-making and binding conclusions, that impact even those who have not participated in and do not agree with them, have obscured these facts.

Participatory democracy, of course, can be messy, chaotic, slow and unstable. Anarchists are not afraid of any of these outcomes and, indeed, seem to accept them as acceptable trade-offs for the ability to take part in and carry out the fundamental decisions that affect ones' lives. They are certainly preferable to the perhaps more convenient, but also more dangerous, alternative of being told what to do. And for anarchists, democracy crucially means that decisions you have not been involved in and which you fundamentally oppose are not binding. Furthermore, people can change their minds over time and rules must not be etched in stone.

There are other ways of doing things, however. The primary, though by no means exclusive or uncontested, decision-making process for anarchists is one of consensus. Anarchists prefer consensus-based decision-making because, theoretically at least, it seeks input and guidance from all participants in a project and, again theoretically, ensures that no one is coerced into taking part in a course of action that they have not agreed to or of which they do not approve. This is, and indeed is consciously intended to be, a far cry from the vanguardist "democratic centralism" or hierarchical party discipline of Leftist parties in which all upstanding members are expected to carry out the will of, at best, the majority or, at worst, the central committee. Within anarchist consensus processes no one is obliged to take any part in an action that they have not been a party to deciding and with which they are not in agreement. This is not about pressuring people to "come around" to the overall perspective of the group but is instead intended to be a process that allows a common strategy tactic or course of action to emerge "organically" from group discussion, debate and revision.

Those who might have problems with a decision in the making have a couple of primary alternatives available to voice their opposition, apart from arguing against the proposal. First, one may choose to "stand aside." In this case the dissenting participant can express her or his intention not to participate in the proposed course of action while also signaling that he or she has no problem with others going ahead with the action. They will stand aside rather than standing in the way. The second primary form of dissent, one that can pose great problems for anarchist consensus processes in practice, is to "block." In this case the a single dissenter can veto the

actions of the entire group, even if this dissenter is the only person who has any problem with the proposed action. Ideally the blocking option is only supposed to be invoked if the proposed action is viewed to be a fundamental violation of the group's principles or a violation of anarchist principles more broadly.

In practice, however, most of the anarchist groups that I have observed or participated in have, at various points, had to deal with blocks on a broad range of issues, not simply core principles. In each case decisions to block have been difficult, often leaving ill feelings for both the blocker and other members of the group. In extreme cases repeat or regular blockers have been shunned or expelled. In some cases issues around blocks have led to the abandonment of strict consensus for some modified form of consensus, for example 80 percent consensus, or a practice that searches for consensus but allows a vote (usually at 75 percent) one meeting after consensus has not been met.

Recently some anarchists have begun to rethink, and in some cases abandon, consensus. The one aspect of consensus that suggests it is actually an obstacle to organizing, especially within community-based groups that may have to make life or death decisions over matters such as housing or deportation is the often numbing length of time it can take for decisions to be reached. At the AFS six to eight hour meetings were not uncommon. Often several such meeting would pass and still no decision would have been arrived at. Incredibly, this grinding process was too often used to deal with minor issues such as whether or not posters could be put in the window or whether books should be sold at the front or back of the space. Clearly, not the process of an organization ready to put the bosses on the run. The length of time required to deal with even mundane, issues leads to further problems of consensus. People who are looking to act are often driven away as quickly as the process is slow. Another problem is that the intense argumentation, and again the length of time over which such arguments can be dragged out, actually discourages the more shy or less politically confident members from bringing proposals forward or weighing in on group discussions. Often time important proposals are not brought forward. People will decide it is easier simply to get some friends or comrades together to do an action rather than subject it to a long, potentially destructive consensus meeting.

Proponents of consensus argue, however, that these perceived drawbacks are, again, a worthwhile trade-off for a process that is developed to allow everyone to participate and to feel that they have real control over the direction their group is taking: "What is seen as an elaborate and difficult process of finding consensus is, in fact, a long process of making sure no one walks away feeling that their views have been totally ignored" (Graeber 2004, 89). Consensus processes also include specific practices to recognize and address the silencing of marginalized and oppressed groups. Usually speakers' lists are stacked, meaning that multiple lists are kept and an effort is made to ensure that women and people of color are given priority in situations where whites and/or males would otherwise dominate the speakers' list. Additionally priority is given to first-time speakers to ensure that the same people are not dominating the discussion.

The consensus process adopted and preferred by contemporary anarchists in North America is derived from the practices of the feminist movement of the late-1960s and early-1970s. Feminists during this period developed consensus processes largely as a conscious means of avoiding the hierarchical and often authoritarian practices and leadership styles of the New Left organizations, which were in many cases, not coincidentally, organized along the lines of Leninist vanguard parties. Consensus had much earlier origins in Quaker communities and, in fact the Quakers claim to have learned consensus from the decision-making practices of indigenous communities.

Looking at available anthropological evidence, suggests that every known human community has employed some form of consensus practice to arrive at group decisions. Anthropological and historical evidence is revealing: "Native American decision-making did normally work by some form of consensus. Actually, so do most popular assemblies around the world now, from the Tzeltal or Tzotzil or Tojolobal-speaking communities in Chiapas to Malagasy *fokon'olona*" (Graeber 2004, 86). While consensus is seen in a wide range of human communities, there is one striking caveat: "every one, that is, which is not in some way or another drawing on the tradition of ancient Greece. Majoritarian democracy, in the formal, Roberts Rules of Order–type sense rarely emerges of its own accord" (Graeber 2004, 86–87). One might ask why it is that, throughout the world, relatively egalitarian communities have preferred to practice some form of consensus decision-making. Anarchists suggest that the most straightforward answer is that in a face-to-face community it is much easier to find out how most members of the community would prefer to act, than to work out ways to convince, or compel, those who do not want to go along. Reinventing democracy and what is meant by democratic practice has been a key concern of contemporary anti-globalization movements. Experiments with participatory forms of democracy provide living examples of people managing their lives without relying on representatives.

Indeed, representative democracy, especially where it is confined to a two party system, as in the U.S., is a reflection of contemporary anarchism is partly a response to the dull conformity of consumer capitalism, which constrains desires in the permitted realm of market circuits. As a creative response anarchists defend pluralism and diversity in social relations encouraging experimentation in living and disdaining censorship. Not believing in the possibility of one "correct" response to questions of authority and power, anarchists encourage people to develop multiple alternatives through consideration of the specific conditions with which they are confronted. The issue is not to make democracy "more representative": the problem is rather that it is too "representative" in the first place.

Do-It-Yourself Economics: The Gift

There have been numerous anarchist projects based on notions of the gift economy. Projects like TAO Communications, the Pope Squat and the Anarchist Free Skool are all based largely on economies of gift presentation (not necessarily based on exchange). As well, anarchists have played important parts in developing aspects of the gift economy in broader projects such as the Internet and open source software such as Linux.

Among the most influential writings on gift economies are those of Marcel Mauss, a "founder" of French anthropology. In addition to his anthropological research Mauss was a socialist who was active in the consumer cooperative movement in France. Mauss argued that socialism would never come "from above" through any type of state apparatus, regardless of the self-proclaimed character of that state. Mauss followed the anarchists of his day in suggesting that the beginnings of a new socialist society could be constructed in the shell of the old capitalist one through practices of mutual aid and self-organization. In practical terms Mauss saw the development of an anti-capitalist economy coming from efforts to build and coordinate grassroots cooperative projects. According to Graeber (2004, 18), Mauss "felt that existing popular practices provided the basis both for a moral critique of capitalism and possible glimpses of what a future society would be like." Mauss was deeply troubled by the direction socialism was being taken in the Soviet Union under Lenin, especially the reintroduction of the market under the New Economic Program (NEP) the 1920s. Graeber (2004, 17) sums up Mauss' overriding concern for socialist development as follows: "If it was impossible to simply legislate the money economy away, even in Russia, the least monetarized society in Europe, then perhaps revolutionaries needed to start looking at the ethnographic record to see what sort of creature the market really was, and what viable alternatives to capitalism might look like." In his *Essay on the Gift* (1925) Mauss argued that the basis of contracts and exchange was not, as economists have tended to claim, in barter. His studies suggested that there has never been an economy based on barter. Instead the origins of contracts and exchange in non-monetary economies rests in communism or "an unconditional commitment to another's needs" (Graeber 2004, 17). Rather than barter, the key economic practice of non-monetary societies has been the exchange of gifts. Mauss rejected popular views that stateless or marketless societies were simply underdeveloped "pre-state" or "pre-market" societies in a teleological schema that had yet to unfold properly. Prior to Mauss' work the assumption, in much of the West, had been that marketless economies were trying to participate in market behavior, but simply "hadn't yet developed very sophisticated ways of going about it" (Graeber 2004, 21). Instead Mauss (1925) suggested that stateless and marketless societies were structured the way they were because that was the manner in which their members wanted to live. Even more, those societies rather than foreshadowing the market in their economic interactions, notably through barter activities, actually operated according to a logic that is in many ways

antithetical to the market. Rather than economies of barter these were economies of the gift.

Focus on gift economies has returned to the center of political thought during the period of alternative globalization struggles as people seek new ways to reorganize their lives and communities. In his compelling and provocative essay, *The High-Tech Gift Economy*, Richard Barbrook argues that the gift economy provides a starting point for thinking about social relations beyond either the state or market. More than that, the gift economy provides the basis for an incipient anarcho-communism, visions of which, have inspired a variety of recent community media and do-it-yourself cultural activism. Despite the contributions Barbrook's article makes to a rethinking of both emergent social movements and alternatives to statist capitalism, his emphasis on gift exchange leaves his analysis at the level of consumption and exchange, rather than addressing crucial issues of production. Yet it is predominantly questions of production, and especially the transformation of production relations, that has motivated anarcho-communists historically. In this brief discussion I attempt to look more closely at the contestatory and transformative aspects hinted at by DIY production within the gift economy. Such production, more than issues of how exchange occurs, suggest possibilities for eluding or challenging relations of capitalist value production. Crucial for understanding the liberatory potential of the "new economy," beyond the practices of consumption or exchange, is the notion of self-valorization, or production which emphasizes community (use) values rather than capitalist value. As Barbrook suggests, for participants in a diversity of contemporary affinity groups, DIY activities offer a context for coming together, a shared opportunity for mutual expression and unalienated labor.

Contemporary usage of the term DIY in underground movements comes from punk rock and its visceral attack on the professionalization of rock and the related distance between fans and rock stars. This anti-hierarchical perspective and the practices that flow from it are inspired by a deep longing for self-determined activity that eschews reliance on the products of corporate culture. As an alternative to the market valorization and production for profit embodied in corporate enterprises, anarchist DIYers turn to self-valorizing production rooted in the needs, experiences and desires of specific communities. In place of a consumerist ethos that encourages consumption of ready-made items, anarchists adopt a productivist ethos that attempts a re-integration of production and consumption.

It is perhaps highly telling that in an age of multinational media conglomerates and gargantuan publishing monopolies a number of younger people have turned towards artisanal forms of craft production in order to produce and distribute what are often very personal works. Even more than this, however, are the means of production, involving collective decision-making as well as collective labor in which participants are involved, to the degree that they wish to be, in all aspects of the process from conception through to distribution.

While cultural theorist Walter Benjamin spoke of disenchantment in the "age of mechanical reproduction," DIY projects offer expressions of re-enchantment

or authenticity. This authenticity is grounded at least in the sense that such works help to overcome the division between head and hand that reflects the division of labor in a society of mass-produced representation. As attempts to overcome alienation and address concerns with overly mediated activities, DIY activities suggest a striving for what an earlier era might have called control over the means of production and what has now come to include control over the means of representation. Perhaps ironically this has been aided by the availability of inexpensive desktop publishing and other means of "mechanical reproduction" since the 1980s (though not all anarchists choose to use it).

Along with DIY production often comes the collective production of alternative subjectivities. For many the content as well as the process of DIY production expresses a confrontation with the cultural codes of everyday life. While such activities express a variety of styles and viewpoints, they tend to present a vision of a desired society which is participatory and democratic. In production, content and, often through distribution in gift economies, they advocate active production of culture rather than passive consumption of cultural (or even entertainment) commodities. Self-production provides an opportunity for producers to act against the proprietorship of information. Most DIY communications, whether literature, music, videos or broadcasts, for example, are produced as anti-copyrights or as "copylefts" and sharing of material is encouraged. Indeed, as a key part of gift economies, DIY takes on an important place in experimenting with communities that are not organized around market principles of exchange value. They help to create a culture of self-valorization rather than giving creativity over to the logics of surplus value.

Anarchist Counter-Power?

The arguments made concerning gift economies find an interesting parallel in the political realm within the more recent research of the French anthropologist Pierre Clastres, whose works, it might be noted, influenced the writings of Deleuze and Guattari. Clastres wrote against the teleogical perspective within much political anthropology, which saw the state as a more efficient form of organization, an advancement that superseded the forms that had preceded it (Clastres 1989, 1994). Clastres primary research involved stateless Amazonian societies that were assumed within mainstream political anthropology not to have achieved the same level of development as the Aztecs or the Inca. Clastres, however, did not accept this conceptualization, which he saw as reflecting the biases of Western political economy. One of the most important insights offered by Clastres is that non-statist societies seem well aware of the dangers posed by concentrations of power and spend much of their community life engaged in efforts to ward off such concentrations. Such societies organize to ensure that no one gains control over economic resources that might be wielded in constraining the freedom of others as well as to ensure that no one is subjected to the orders of another (Clastres

1989, 1994; see also Bey 1991, 1996). Clastres (1989, 1994) suggests that this is one explanation for the periodic inner conflicts and symbolic violence that mark generally egalitarian societies. This goes beyond conventional political notions of counter-power in which dissident groups establish institutions, such as alternative communities or radical cooperatives, by which the state and capital might be opposed. Clastres' work has further implications for anarchists.

> It suggests that counterpower, at least in the most elementary sense, actually exists where the states and markets are not even present; that in such cases, rather than being embodied in popular institutions which pose themselves against the power of lords, or kings, or plutocrats, they are embodied in institutions which ensure such types of person never come about. (Graeber 2004, 25)

This is a power that is counter, not only to a present and operational power, but, beyond that, to a latent or potential power. Graeber (2004, 25) suggests that this is an opposition to the very "dialectical possibility" of concentrated power "within the society itself." The symbolic violence that marks many relatively egalitarian societies seems to arise from the many tensions involved in maintaining egalitarian social relations (Clastres 1989, 1994). Peter Lamborn Wilson (Hakim Bey) returns the Deleuzian notion of "war machine" to its roots in Clastre's anthropology by using the term "Clastrian machine" to speak of the mechanisms that are deployed to ward off the emergence of concentrated power and domination (1996). Anarchists such as Bey suggest that, taken together, the work of Mauss and Clastres begins the groundwork for a theory of revolutionary counter-power. In this view, such an approach can provide an interesting perspective within which theories of value and theories of resistance might be synthesized.

> Institutionally, counterpower takes the form of what we would call institutions of direct democracy, consensus and mediation; that is, ways of publicly negotiating and controlling that inevitable internal tumult and transforming it into those social states (or if you like, forms of value) that society sees as the most desirable: conviviality, unanimity, fertility, prosperity, beauty, however it may be framed. (Graeber 2004, 35)

For contemporary anarchists, counter-power is rooted in the imaginative work of identification with others that makes understanding possible. Institutionally it provides an impetus for both the creation of new social forms and/or the transformation or revalorization of old ones. In the next chapter I examine more extensively notions of anarchist counter-power especially as they relate to mutual aid in everyday life.

The Missing Link? Transfer Cultures and Class

Many critics, most notably Murray Bookchin (1995), have argued that prefigurative anarchist practices lend themselves primarily to subcultural expressions or what he terms lifestyle anarchism. Lifestyle anarchism, in Bookchin's view, while making participants feel good, leaves capitalist structures, especially the market economy, untouched. Bookchin's concerns are certainly credible. Any movement that exists primarily as a counter-cultural expression faces the well known threats of cooptation, as elements of the counter-culture are commodified and corralled by the logic of capitalist exchange, or marginalization, as the counter-cultures are simply ignored or tolerated, left to "do their own thing."

Yet I would argue that once one looks past the surface of anarchist heterotopias one finds interesting aspects of what one might call class struggle or anti-capitalism. While these practices may appear as strange in relation to more familiar manifestations of class struggle, such as strikes or boycotts, they actually show everyday practices by which the logic of capitalist valorization is subverted, contested and refused. I would argue that much of the controversy over heterotopian anarchist practices relates to the too easy focus on their cultural or symbolic aspects. This is reinforced perhaps in the use of the term transfer cultures to describe these practices. At the same time, anarchist notions of transfer cultures actually reflect attempts to restore the economy to its proper place as simply one aspect of culture, rather than as a privileged sphere separated from and predominating over all of the other aspects of culture, as is currently the case under capitalism.

If there is one area in which anarchist theory has been under-developed it is in terms of analyses of capitalism and the relationship of class struggle with social change. Much anarchist analysis recently emphasizes the experiences of people as consumers confronting alienated products rather than, the greater concern of Marxists, producers alienated from their products and from the labor process itself. This reflects more than an omission and may, in fact be a conscious oversight by some anarchists. Such is reflected in Sandra Jeppesen's (2004) perplexing claim, in an article that received some circulation in anarchist circles, that anarchists don't need to worry about class, they can leave it for the Marxists.

Rather than that sort of dismissal, I would rather see what, if anything, anarchists might learn from the Marxists. I would argue that, in fact, anarchists have much to learn from Marxists, especially those who have been identified as autonomous Marxists. In my view, some important insights into the political economy of anarchist transfer cultures can be gained by looking at the works of autonomous Marxists who offer a perspective that is, in many ways, complementary to anarchism but who have given much more attention to the economic significance of autonomous activities.

Self-Valorization: The Political Economy of Anarchist Transfer Cultures?

The cycle of struggles of the late 1960s and early 1970s gave rise to perhaps the most serious attempts to conceptualize autonomous creativity as both a source of working-class power and a potential movement beyond capitalism. It is this focus on autonomous creativity and the constitution of social life beyond, or in conflict with, capitalist commodification (including especially of labor) that led to the usage of the term "autonomist Marxist" to identify such work (Cleaver 2000). As many commentators, including Richard Day, and Michael Hardt have noted, Italy since the revolutionary upheavals of the 1970s has served as something of a laboratory for social movements and, notably for experiments in alternative institutions. From networks of "social centers" or self-managed community centers, to squats, to free radio stations, Italian projects have prefigured some of the organizations to develop within the anti-globalization movements of the last decade. These practical initiatives have been accompanied by significant developments in political theory with ideas such as "the refusal of work," often providing the revolutionary underpinning for the activities of the social centers or other alternative economic projects. Autonomist movements have also been influential in informing the theoretical developments of recent anti-globalization movements. Among the many significant autonomist ideas to have influenced anarchists are the notions of revolutionary refusal and self-valorization or auto-valorization. These theoretical developments, which I would suggest offer important insights into anarchist transfer cultures and DIY practices are examined below.

Work by Italian Marxists such as Panzieri and Mario Tronti attempted to understand processes by which capitalist power could transform all of society into a "social factory" while at the same time seeking to analyze the potential for resistance posed by emerging acts of refusal within the working-class. The many practices of refusal, that might range from a refusal of rent in squatting or a refusal of work in wildcat strikes, suggest a starting point for movements against the dominance of capitalist value, private property and profit. It is the refusal to accept or play by the various rules, procedures and, certainly, practices of statist capitalism. This may include a refusal of work, of rent, of schooling of discipline of punishment and more. These are aspects of what are called both within autonomist and anarchist circles, a "politics of refusal." These politics of refusal articulate expressions of that visceral response that John Holloway (2002) calls "the scream," the one "No" that anti-capitalist movements of many varieties shout in the face of authority.

Among the most important refusals in Italy, and a central concern of autonomists Marxists, was the refusal of industrial work, especially by younger workers entering the permanent workforce at the end of the 1960s and beginning of the 1970s. In fact the refusal of industrial labor, or mass work, was a significant trend within working-classes throughout the industrialized world during the period from the late 1960s to the 1970s. The economic decline that gathered steam with the 1973

oil crisis and which set the foundation for the neoliberal regimes that emerged in the 1980s, undermined, to a certain extent, the capacity of workers to refuse work. Yet the attention given by autonomists to the refusal of work, both as a practical strategy and a theoretical tool in social analysis, was quite important in returning focus to struggles against the imposition of waged labor as a central aspect of struggles against capitalism. Indeed the refusal or work, as work for wages, was perhaps the key aspect of earlier working-class and poor people's movements, including the struggles of the Industrial Workers of the World in North America in the first decades of the twentieth century. During the period of Keynesianism the refusal of work was relegated to the sidelines, at least in anti-capitalist analysis if not in the minds of working people, in favor of an emphasis, notably within labor bureaucracies, with compromise and conciliation with capital.

The refusal of work, or more precisely the refusal of jobs and the wage relationship, has been a central aspect of anarchist organizing from the start. This was forcefully, and clearly, expressed in the IWW call for "the abolition of waged labor." Indeed anarchists played crucial parts in the early organizing that eventually won the eight-hour day and the 40-hour week. Mayday, the global workers' holiday, actually commemorates the struggle for the eight-hour day in Chicago that ended violently in the Haymarket massacre and the arrest and execution of several anarchists, including Albert Parsons. This is not a struggle for better wages or working conditions, a struggle that would leave the system of wage labor intact, but a struggle to eliminate the system of domination that is waged labor entirely. Thus contemporary constructive anarchists echo the historic call of anarcho-syndicalists in the Industrial Workers of the World: "End the wages system."

Clearly anarchist activities such as the black blocs and anarchist street fights with police represent acts of refusal. Yet if one looks at longer-term practices such as TAO Communications, the Windsor Workers' Action Centre, the Anarchist Free Space or the Pope Squat, something more intriguing, and I would say more important, is happening in terms of what anarchists are doing to transform social relationships.

Out of the attempts to theorize the development of working-class autonomy against capitalism, the Italian New Left Marxist Antonio Negri suggested the notion of working-class *autovalorizzazione* or what has been translated as auto-valorization or more commonly self-valorization (Cleaver 1992a, 128–129). Negri's conceptualization of auto-valorization was an attempt to develop the understanding of the power of refusal to subvert capitalist domination and, significantly, to show now the power of refusal must be complemented by a power of constitution. The concept of auto-valorization offered an important theoretical tool for understanding the growing manifestations of creative alternatives that were becoming increasingly important, especially for younger people in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Cleaver 1992a). Such manifestations included:

the creative use of times, spaces and resources liberated from the control of Italian and multinational capital—uses such as the proliferation of 'free radio stations' or the widespread development of women's spaces which, along with many other self-managed projects, helped constitute what many came to call 'the counter-culture.' (Cleaver 1992a, 129)

Autonomist Marxist theory moves beyond orthodox Marxism, and indeed beyond Marx himself, in sketching the extension of capitalist domination beyond the factory and throughout much of social life (Cleaver 1992b). This has led some autonomists to speak of the "social factory" or the incorporation of personal life (home, school, relationships) into capitalist reproduction. In this the autonomists share some common ground with critical theorists, notably those of the Frankfurt School, who have analysed the "colonization of everyday life" by capitalist imperatives of production and exchange for profit (see Katsiaficas 1997). The tendency of capitalism to expand its valorization throughout the social factory initiates not only wider refusals, but also encourages a proliferation or growth in the number and diversity of self-valorizing projects to confront capital in the spaces opened by those refusals (Cleaver 1992a, 131). The refusal of capitalist domination, or subsumption, is very closely related with the affirmative activities of self-valorization. The refusal of work, for example, is a necessary contributor to self-valorization in that it allows for the liberation of spaces that might then be filled through alternative, autonomous projects.

> If capital is successful in converting all of life into work there is no space or time or energy for self-valorisation. The refusal of work with its associated seizure of space (e.g. land, buildings) or time (e.g. weekends, paid vacations, non-work time on the job) or energy (an entropy raising diversion from work) creates the very possibility of self-valorisation. (Cleaver 1992a, 130)

If refusal offered a negative moment in the opposition to capitalist domination, auto-valorization expressed a positive aspect of struggle towards an alternative. This is a valorization that, as expressed in the prefix auto or self, is autonomous from capitalist valorization and, indeed, attempts to articulate a movement beyond solely resisting capitalist valorization. As Cleaver (1992a) suggests, it is a self-defining and self-determining process that seeks to constitute something other than capital. What that "other than" is remains open to a great variety of responses. Indeed, self-valorization can be said to articulate simultaneously, as one recent popular expression puts it, "one no, many yeses." This has rather profound implications for rethinking how one might conceptualize communism. It certainly speaks against hegemonic notions of communism.

> An important part of Negri's elaboration of the concept of self-valorisation is his recognition that, unlike valorisation and unlike most socialist visualisations of communism, it does not designate the self-construction of a unified social

project but rather denotes a 'plurality' of instances, a multiplicity of independent undertakings—not only in the spaces opened within and against capitalism but also in their full realisation. (Cleaver 1992a, 130)

Such a conceptualization is actually very close to visions of communism put forward historically by anarchists. For anarchists, communism is viewed as involving decentralized, multiple groupings arranged as federations or networks. One aspect of self-valorizing activities has been the construction of lateral networks as means of building connections between groups. In this way quite local groups organized around particular practices in specific contexts are able to avoid the limits of insularity or isolation. As Cleaver (1992b, 9) notes many cooperative networks have provided the means for circulating information and struggle in ways that extend community beyond even national frontiers. Communism, viewed through the lense of self-valorization, then, is "thus not only a self-constituting praxis, but it is also the realisation of 'multilaterality' of the proletarian subject, or, better, of a subject which in its self-realisation explodes into multiple autonomous subjects" (Cleaver 1992a, 130). Note that this is a non-or, indeed, an anti-hegemonic politics.

Against traditional socialist demands to subordinate difference to unity in the struggle against capital and in the construction of a unified post-capitalist order, [they] embrace what Negri calls the 'multilaterality' of self-determination, the multiplicity of autonomous projects whose elaboration can constitute a new world whose 'pluralism' would be real rather than illusory as is the case today in the world of capital. (Cleaver 1992a, 132)

It is also a politics that breaks the bounds of rigid conceptualizations of what is meant by working-class or by class struggle.

The concept has also proved flexible enough to be useful for understanding and appreciating struggles which have often been considered outside of the working-class. These include not only the struggles of so-called urban 'marginals' which have often been relegated to the 'lumpenproletariat', but also a wide variety of peasant struggles. (Cleaver 1992a, 130–131)

This fact helps, in part, to explain the enthusiasm that some anarchists have shown for the notion of self-valorization. Contemporary anarchists have, as earlier discussions have shown, generally identified with or more closely associated with struggles of the urban "marginals" or with peasant movements. At least as far back as Bakunin, who saw the "lumpenproletariat" rather than the industrial working-class of Marxism as the most likely rebellious or revolutionary anti-capitalist class, anarchists have given serious attention and support to organizing among capitalism's poorest. Marx was himself famously dismissive of the lumpenproletariat, a group he viewed contemptuously as opportunistic mercenaries

likely to betray the working-class to the highest bidder. Such a view was taken up by generations of Marxists who viewed the poorest classes as, at best, powerless or ineffectual and, at worst, reactionary. Many anarchists would certainly share the broad conviction that revolutionary constituencies involve some alliance between the least alienated and the most oppressed. This is particularly pertinent when it comes to understanding contemporary anarchist perspectives on work. It must be remembered that many of the generation that has brought anarchism forcefully back to the political stage are younger workers who have faced limited employment options typically in precarious and deskilled, as well as heavily surveilled, service sector jobs.

Autonomist Marxists conceptualize self-valorization not as unified throughout the working-class but as reflecting a great deal of diversity. Thus autonomists tend to stress not only the autonomy of the working-class from capital, and from the official working-class organizations, but also the autonomy of the various sectors that comprise the working-class from each other.

> To recognize and accept the diversity of self-valorization, rooted like all other activity in the diversity of the peoples capital seeks to dominate, implies a whole politics—one which rejects traditional socialist notions of post-capitalist unity and redefines the 'transition' from capitalism to communism in terms of the elaboration from the present into the future of existing forms of self-valorization. (Cleaver 1992b, 8)

According to Cleaver (1992b), communism, reconceptualized in terms of processes of self-valorization finds much harmony with anarchist views, such as those expressed by Peter Kropotkin. Communism, for autonomists as for anarchist communists, is understood "not as a some-day-to-be-achieved utopia but as a living reality whose growth only needs to be freed of constraint" (Cleaver 1992b, 8). The focus is on self-activity and new forms of social cooperation. The concept of self-valorization expresses not only people's self-activity against capital, in terms of what might be called resistance but goes further to encompass those activities that might contribute to the creation of new ways of living without the state and without capital. Cleaver (1992a) suggests that being able to differentiate clearly between autonomous practices and those practices that contribute to capitalist valorization is a necessity for contemporary political strategies. He argues for the need to illuminate the character and dynamics of autonomous struggles in ways that help in the inversion of the repressive perspective of capital.

The new subjectivities emerging from the transition to neoliberalism have sought to contest and overcome the impositions of productive flexibility within regimes of capitalist globalization. As discussed above, in the context of OCAP, recent movements do not accept the emerging sociopolitical terrain nor do they attempt to restrain it within the familiar territories of the welfare state. Instead they struggle over the making of alternative socialities, autonomous from control by the state or capital. Contemporary notions of self-valorization echo the arguments

made by classical anarchist communists such as Kropotkin and Reclus, regarding the construction of grassroots forms of welfare developed through mutual aid societies. Self-valorization is one way by which a variety of recent theorists have sought to identify social forms of welfare that might constitute alternative networks outside of state control (Hardt 1996; see Vercellone 1996, and Del Re 1996). As Del Re (1996, 110) suggests, part of the new parameters for change includes "the proposal to go beyond welfare by taking as our goal the improvement of the quality of life, starting from the re-organization of the time of our lives." These alternative forms of welfare are the infrastructures of resistance that might form the basis for durable anti-capitalist struggles in the here and now of everyday life, and which might allow anarchist projects to break out of their subcultural limits.

For anarchists, such as those active within the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty and No One Is Illegal, the experiences within infrastructures of resistance "show the possibilities of alternative forms of welfare in which systems of aid and socialization are separated from State control and situated instead in autonomous social networks. These alternative experiments may show how systems of social welfare will survive the crisis of the Welfare State" (Vercellone 1996, 81). These practices of social welfare express, not state control, but rather autonomy and solidarity through mutual aid and autonomous self-management. Providing needed resources or services raises the necessity of freeing people from the compulsion of waged labor, of valorization for capital. In this, self-valorizing activities challenge the limits even of the gift economy and shift emphasis again towards that great concern of anarcho-communists historically—the abolition of the wage system.

Conclusion

Anarchists suggest that people should be organizationally prepared for revolutionary struggles and transformation, not only intellectually prepared. There is a real need for political and economic organization suited to meeting people's immediate needs while managing the equitable provision of resources across communities. Anarchist infrastructures of resistance serve as means by which people can sustain radical social change both before, during and after insurrectionary periods. As Bey (1991, 1994, 1996) suggests, whether an insurrection occurs tomorrow, next week or in 100 years, people can act as if the revolution is underway today. Waiting until after an insurrection to exercise power over our lives means nothing less than a postponement of our liberation. People can participate in liberatory economic and social relations immediately and can begin re-organizing society now. There is no need to wait for the bosses and politicians to abandon history's stage first.

This anarchist immediatism encourages people to create alternative social spaces or infrastructures within which liberatory institutions, practices and relationships can be nurtured. Immediatism includes the beginnings of economic and political self-management through the creation of institutions which can encourage a broader social transformation while also providing some of the

conditions for personal and collective sustenance and growth in the present. This is about changing the world, not by taking power, but by creating opportunities for the exercise of people's own personal and collective power. Anarchist immediatism creates situations in which specific communities create economic and social systems that operate, as much as possible, as working alternatives to the dominant state capitalist structures. Anarchist immediatism is organized around alternative institutions that offer at least a starting point for meeting community needs such as food, housing, communications, energy, transportation, child care, education and so on. These institutions are autonomous from, and indeed opposed to, dominant relations and institutions of the state and capital as well as "official" organs of the working-class such as unions or political parties. In the short-term these institutions contest official structures, with an eye towards, in the longer term, replacing them. These are the anarchist infrastructures of resistance.

Anarchists do not seek uncritical allegiance to alternative institutions but rather active, engaged participation within them. Within discussions of transfer cultures the expectation is that at some point the alternative institutions will reach a critical mass such that there will exist two parallel social systems vying for people's support. Anarchists are a very long way from that point however. While this work highlights anarchists applying their principles and practices to areas that they know best, such as housing, communications and welfare, it is clear that much remains to be done. Taking up Colin Ward's (2003) suggestion, one might well ask: "Where are the anarchist experts on medicine, health services, agriculture and economics?"

A problem for any visionary politics remains that the present imposes itself relentlessly upon the future. It is always necessary to remember that these self-valorizing activities are marked by their emergence within the shell of capitalism. The history of this birth scars them. It also presses in against them to limit their range and scope and to corrode their capacities to be sustained. Advocates of constructive or heterotopian anarchy argue that, since there is no way to know whether an insurrection will occur, or if it will be successful, it is worthwhile to create situations in the present that approximate the sorts of relations in which we would like to live. The creation of alternative institutions and relationships, which express our more far-reaching visions, is desirable in and of itself. It is important to liberate or create space within which we might live more free and secure lives today, not only to build a new society. Not surprisingly for a perspective that emphasizes the connectivity between means and ends, anarchist thinking about organizations is in many ways related to anarchist notions of revolution.

> And that, since anarchists are not actually trying to seize power within any national territory, the process of one system replacing the other will not take the form of some sudden revolutionary cataclysm—the storming of a Bastille, the seizing of a Winter Palace—but will necessarily be gradual, the creation of alternative forms of organization on a world scale, new forms of communication, new, less alienated ways of organizing life, which will, eventually, make currently existing forms of power seem stupid and beside the point. (Graeber 2004, 40)

There are of course limits to this approach and despite the agreement that most anarchists would have with Graeber regarding the seizing of power within a national territory many would disagree vehemently with the idea that alternative forms of organization gradually replacing archic forms of power is somehow enough. Many anarchist communists would suggest that if at any point these alternatives actually come to pose a threat to existing forms of power they will be met with, likely extreme, acts of military violence. Such spaces, according to anarchist communists, will need to be defended. Indeed the conflict over the continued existence of these anarchic spaces, or indeed over the continuation of archic forms of power, may well produce the very forms of sudden revolutionary cataclysm that Graeber denies.

At the same time Murray Bookchin is surely correct in suggesting that building alternative institutions cannot be enough. It must also be necessary to resist and oppose dominant institutions and organizations which will certainly seek to control, subvert or cancel any alternative institutions that actually do become strong enough to threaten the dominant structures. It is not enough to ignore the hegemonic institutions, as some anarchists might hope. Their capacities and strengths must also be corroded and diminished. Past experiences also teach that any movement that exists primarily as a counter-cultural expression faces the well known threats of cooptation, as elements of the counter culture are commodified and corralled by the logic of capitalist exchange, or marginalization, as the counter-cultures are simply ignored or tolerated, left to "do their own thing."

Conclusion
"Quiet Revolutions":
Constructive Anarchy and Mutual Aid

The limited access to politics sought by many social movements, whether through representational or policy reforms, for many anarchists, are at base, re-affirmations of one's consent to be ruled, to have crucial decisions managed for them. For anarchists there is a deep problem with claims of representation made by any political leaders. Quite simply no one can truly represent anyone other than themselves except in some "best guess" approximation of other people's interests. Superseding the status quo requires, in part, a refusal to participate in dominant social relations. Anarchists call for a refusal to surrender people's collective power to politicians or bosses. Such a refusal requires, of course, a material capacity, support and resources, to make it possible. Anarchists seek to re-organize social institutions in such a way as to reclaim social and economic power and exercise it on their own behalf towards their own collective interests. They seek an alternative social infrastructure that is responsive to people's needs because it is developed and controlled directly by them. This is a social framework in which decisions regarding social and economic relations are made by the people affected by them. Such an approach takes a firm stand against the authority vested in politicians and their corporate masters. It also speaks against the hierarchical arrangements that exemplify major institutions such as workplaces, schools, churches and even the family.

In an earlier chapter I outlined anarchist perspectives on and debates over social movement practices and approaches to social change. In this concluding chapter I wish to discuss anarchist perspectives on society and social relations more broadly. At the heart of anarchist infrastructures of resistance, in all of their various forms, are practices of mutual aid. In this last chapter I outline anarchist perspectives on mutual aid as part of anarchist understandings of social life. This provides the outlines of what might be called an anarchist sociology. Anarchism is not involved in the drawing up of social blueprints for the future. This is one reason that anarchists, to this day, have been so reluctant to describe the "anarchist society." Instead anarchists have tried mainly to identify and understand social trends or tendencies, even countervailing ones. The focus is resolutely on manifestations of the future in the present.

Constructive Anarchy and Mutual Aid

Constructive anarchy sustains various means by which people can take greater control over the decisions that fundamentally affect their lives, including around issues of work, shelter, education or technology. Anarchists argue that shifts in structures of employment, such as flexibilization, lean production and the institutionalization of precarity in labor, have stolen time away from people that might otherwise provide opportunities for community activities and resource building (Ward and Goodway 2003, 107). Meaningful participation is required. In the face of this, people must develop ways to elude or escape the capitalist law of value, to engage their own values rather than being subsumed within value for capital.

In many of his writings the anarcho-syndicalist Sam Dolgoff stresses the importance of constructive anarchism, rich in positive and practical ideas rather than instinctual acts and negative or reactive stances of which anarchists are often accused. Still, constructive anarchy does not rely on ready-made plans or the supposedly "scientific" calculation of some variants of Marxism-Leninism. The basis for constructive anarchism is already available in currently existing social relations, even if these relations are dominated and obscured by the authoritarian society around them.

> The anarchist theoreticians limited themselves to suggest the utilization of all the useful organisms in the old society in order to reconstruct the new. They envisioned the generalization of practices and tendencies which are already in effect. The very fact that autonomy, decentralization and federalism are more practical alternatives to centralism and statism already presupposes that these vast organizational networks now performing the functions of society are prepared to replace the old bankrupt hyper-centralized administrations. That the 'elements of the new society are already developing in the collapsing bourgeois society' (Marx) is a fundamental principle shared by all tendencies in the socialist movement. (1990, 5)

If society is "a vast interlocking network of cooperative labour," as Dolgoff suggests (1990, 5) then those networks of cooperation will provide a good starting point, if only a starting point, towards throwing off the bonds of coercion, authoritarianism and exploitation. It is in the relations of cooperative labor, which encompasses millions of daily acts, that one can find the real basis for social life. Without these networks, often unrecognized and unpaid, society would collapse.

> What is needed is emancipation from authoritarian institutions OVER society and authoritarianism WITHIN the organizations themselves. Above all, they must be infused revolutionary spirit and confidence in the creative capacities of the people. Kropotkin in working out the sociology of anarchism, has opened an

avenue of fruitful research which has been largely neglected by social scientists busily engaged in mapping out new areas for state control. (1990, 5)

A crucial, even central, step in these processes of emancipation is the abolition of the wage system and the distribution of goods and services according to the old communist principle, "from each according to ability, to each according to need." This is a basis for anarchist mutual aid. It also suggests to anarchists a new form of communism quite distinct from the authoritarian varieties that have dominated discussions of communism.

> Libertarian Communism is the organization of society without the State and without capitalist property relations. To establish Libertarian Communism it will not be necessary to invent artificial forms of organization. The new society will emerge from the 'shell of the old.' The elements of the future society are already planted in the existing order. They are the syndicate (union) and the Free Commune (sometimes called the 'free municipality') which are old, deeply rooted, non-Statist popular institutions spontaneously organized and embracing all towns and villages in urban and in rural areas. The Free Commune is ideally suited to cope successfully with the problems of social and economic life in libertarian communities. Within the Free Commune there is also room for cooperative groups and other associations, as well as individuals to meet their own needs (providing, of course, that they do not employ hired labor for wages). The terms 'Libertarian' and 'Communism' denote the fusion of two inseperable concepts, the individual pre-requisites for the Free Society: COLLECTIVE AND INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY. (Dolgoff 1990, 6)

Of course, experiences of both the syndicate and the free commune have been greatly eroded, if not entirely eliminated, over centuries of statist imposition. This situation has been addressed by the anarchist Paul Goodman in rather poignant terms: "The pathos of oppressed people, however, is that, if they break free, they don't know what to do. Not having been autonomous, they don't know what it's like, and before they learn, they have new managers who are not in a hurry to abdicate" (Goodman quoted in Ward 2004, 69). That means that people have to construct approximations in which the social relations of a future society can be learned, experienced and nurtured. This is part of the impetus behind the creation of free schools, infoshops, workers centers, industrial unions and squats. These are places in which the life of the free commune, buried beneath the debris of authoritarian systems, can be glimpsed again, if only in a limited form.

> Anarchism envisions a flexible, pluralist society where all the needs of mankind would be supplied by an infinite variety of voluntary associations. The world is honeycombed with affinity groups from chess clubs to anarchist propaganda groups. They are formed, dissolved and reconstituted according to the fluctuating whims and fancies of the individual adherents. It is precisely because they

'reflect individual preferences' that such groups are the lifeblood of the free society. (Dolgoff 1990, 8)

The classical anarchist theorist Peter Kropotkin (1972, 132) has argued that the state, the formalized rule of dominant minorities over subordinate majorities, is "but one of the forms of social life." For anarchists, people are quite capable of developing forms of order to meet specific needs and desires. As Ward (1973, 28) suggests, "given a common need, a collection of people will … by improvisation and experiment, evolve order out of the situation—this order being more durable and more closely related to their needs than any kind of order external authority could provide." Order, thus arrived at, is also preferable for anarchists since it is not ossified and extended, often by force, to situations and contexts different than those from which it emerged, and for which it may not be suited. This order, on the contrary is flexible and evolving, where necessary giving way to other agreements and forms of order depending on peoples' needs and the circumstances confronting them.

Living examples of the anarchist perspectives on order emerging "spontaneously" out of social circumstances are perhaps most readily or regularly observed under conditions of immediate need or emergency as in times of natural disaster and/or economic crisis, during periods of revolutionary upheaval or during mass events such as festivals. As Hartung (1983, 90) such examples are characterizes by their brevity: "Traditional structure (form) is absent or in disarray and social order takes on a different content. The order experienced and created by the participants is situated in a fleeting social anti-structure." Contemporary anarchists are not satisfied with fleeting or passing forms of organization but instead focus their energies on building more sustainable infrastructures that allow for the maintenance and development of capacities for resistance and social change. Anarchists try to extend mutual aid relations until they make up the bulk of social life.

While some commentators question the pedigree of contemporary anarchism, I would suggest that there are clear precedents in the works of classical anarchist writers. Proudhon, for example, sought social transformation through cooperative experiments such as workers' associations and the People's Bank, urging workers to emancipate themselves by constructing their own alternative economic institutions. Mikhail Bakunin, for his part, viewed trade unions not merely as economic institutions but as the "embryo of the administration of the future" and argued that workers should pursue cooperatives rather than strikes (Marshall 1993, 627). Recognizing the impossibility of competing with capitalist enterprises he called for the pooling of all private property as the collective property of freely federated workers' associations. These ideas would serve as the intellectual impetus for anarcho-syndicalism and its vision of the industrial syndicate as the seed of the future society.

The primary historical influences on constructive anarchy are Kropotkin's anarcho-communism and the libertarian socialism of Gustav Landauer. Anarchist

styles of sociation and organization express the persistence of archaic forms within the (post-) modern context. They reveal the return of the repressed in sociological types exemplary of "mechanical solidarity" and *Gemeinschaft*. Landauer's work, until recently largely forgotten, provides perhaps the most interesting touchstone in the current re-envisioning of anarchy. The most significant early anarchist thinker in Germany after Max Stirner, Landauer's views, where they are known at all today beyond anarchist circles, come to people not through his own works but largely through a chapter in *Paths to Utopia* by the existentialist philosopher and sociologist Martin Buber who was Landauer's friend and editor. Influenced by the works of the sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies, Landauer identified himself as an "anarchist socialist" to distinguish himself from popular currents of Stirnerist egoism. Drawing upon Tönnies distinction between *Gemeinschaft* (organic community) and *Gesellschaft* (atomized society), Landauer desired the rebirth of community from within the shell of statist and capitalist society. The forms within which the new society would gestate were to be the *bunde*, local, face-to-face associations. Like Proudhon and Bakunin before him, Landauer advocated the formation of producers' and consumers' cooperatives.

The anarchist-socialist community, for Landauer, is not something which awaits a future revolution. Rather it is the growing discovery of something already present: "This likeness, this equality in inequality, this peculiar quality that binds people together, this common spirit is an actual fact" (Marshall 1993, 411). In as much as anarchism would involve revolution, this "revolution," for Landauer, in a manner that very much prefigures later autonomist theories, would consist of elements of refusal in which individuals withdraw cooperation with existing state institutions and create their own positive alternatives.

> The state is a condition, a certain relationship among human beings, a mode of behaviour between them; we destroy it by contracting other relationships, by behaving differently toward one another … We are the state, and we shall continue to be the state until we have created the institutions that form a real community and society of men. (Marshall 1993, 411)

Landauer thus advocated the development of self-directed communities which would permit a break from institutions of authority. Revolution, reconceptualized by Landauer as a gradual rejection of coercive social relations through the development of alternatives, was not a borderline between social conditions (marking temporalities of "pre-" and "post-") but a continuous principle spanning time.

Among the primary historical influences on constructive anarchy, perhaps the most significant is Kropotkin's version of anarcho-communism and, especially, his ideas about mutual aid. In *Mutual Aid* Kropotkin documents the centrality of cooperation within animal and human groups and links anarchist theory with everyday experience. Kropotkin's definition suggests that anarchism, in part, "would represent an interwoven network, composed of an infinite variety

of groups and federations of all sizes and degrees … temporary or more or less permanent … for all possible purposes" (quoted in Ward and Goodway 2003, 94). As Ward (2004, 29) reminds us: "A century ago Kropotkin noted the endless variety of 'friendly societies, the unities of oddfellows, the village and town clubs organised for meeting the doctors' bills' built up by working-class self-help." Both Kropotkin and, to a much lesser extent, Marx, commented on and were inspired by peasant collaboration in various aspects of daily life from the care of communal lands and forests, harvesting, the building of roads, house construction and dairy production.

Kropotkin's political archeology, and especially his studies of the French Revolution and the Paris Commune, informed his analyses of the Russian revolutions of 1905 to 1917 and colored his warnings to comrades about the possibilities and perils that waited along the different paths of political change. This remains an important social and political undertaking in the context of crisis and structural adjustment impelled by the forces of capitalist globalization.

Kropotkin argued that human societies developed through processes involved in the ongoing interplay of what he called the "law of mutual struggle" and the "law of mutual aid." In several book-length research works, including *Mutual Aid*, *The Conquest of Bread* and *Fields, Factories and Workshops*, Kropotkin tried to sketch the manifestation and development of mutual aid historically. What his research suggested to him was that mutual aid was always present in human societies, even if its development was never uniform or the same over different periods or within different societies. At various points mutual aid was the primary factor of social life while at other times it was submerged beneath forces of competition, conflict and violence. The key, however was that, regardless of its form, or the adversity of circumstances in which it operated, it was always there "providing the foundation for recurrent efforts at cooperative self-emancipation from various forms of domination (the state, institutional religion, capitalism)" (Cleaver 1992b, 3). Kropotkin was not, in a utopian manner, trying to suggest how a new society might or should develop. In his view it was already happening. The instances were already appearing in the present. These forces manifested themselves in various ways depending on historical period or social context but significantly for Kropotkin, they were typically observed in conflict rather than in stasis or equilibrium. Neither was this a strictly evolutionary schema, since Kroptkin included critically within his view of the interplay between these forces, periods of revolutionary upheaval.

Perhaps the broadest and most sustained vision of constructive anarchy comes from Colin Ward. Ward is best known through his third book *Anarchy in Action* (1973) which was, until his 2004 contribution to the Oxford Press "Short Introduction" series, *Anarchism: A Very Short Introduction*, his only book explicitly about anarchist theory. Longtime anarchist George Woodcock identified *Anarchy in Action* as one of the most important theoretical works on anarchism and I would have to agree. It is in the pages of that relatively short work that Ward

makes explicit his highly distinctive version of anarchism, what I term constructive anarchy, an anarchy of everyday life.

Ward follows Kropotkin in identifying himself as an anarchist communist and has even suggested that *Anarchy in Action* is merely an extended contemporary footnote to *Mutual Aid* (Ward and Goodway 2003, 14). Still, Ward goes beyond Kropotkin in the importance he places on cooperative groups in anarchist social transformation. Ward is critical of anarchists' preoccupation with anarchist history and in his own works prefers to emphasize the here-and-now and the immediate future (Ward and Goodway 2003). Ward describes his approach to anarchism as one that is based on actual experiences or practical examples rather than theories or hypotheses. Through the responses of readers to articles published in *Anarchy* Ward found that for many people anarchy aptly described the "organized chaos" that people experienced during their daily lives, even at their workplaces. Incredibly, this perspective on anarchism was so outside of the parameters of mainstream anarchism that in 1940, when Ward tried to convince his Freedom Press Group colleagues to print a pamphlet on the squatters' movement "it wasn't thought that this is somehow relevant to anarchism" (Ward and Goodway 2003, 15). Such sentiments continue as expressed in the recent debates over social anarchism.

While having no formal background in sociology Ward argues for the importance of taking a sociological approach to the world. In developing a sociological anarchism Ward takes up the call of fellow anarchist and popular sex educator Alex Comfort who was one of the first to argue that anarchists had much to learn from sociologists. In his work *Delinquency* (1951) Comfort called for anarchism to become a libertarian action sociology. Ward draws some of his inspiration from the sociology of autonomous groups. His readings of the now out of print sociology bulletin *Autonomous Groups* contributed to understandings of capacities for influencing social change within informal networks such as the Batignolles Group, founders of Impressionism and the Fabian Society. Notably these groups were incredibly effective, exercising an influence well beyond their numbers. As Ward (2003, 48) notes, because anarchists traditionally "have conceived of the whole of social organisation as a series of interlocking networks of autonomous groups," it is important that they pay serious attention to the lessons to be learned from successful ones. Autonomous groups that Ward studied or participated in were characterized by "having a secure internal network based on friendship and shared skills, and a series of external networks of contacts in a variety of fields" (Ward 2003, 44). Among these groups Ward counted the Freedom Press Group, A.S. Neill's Summerhill School of alternative education, Burgess Hill School and South London's Peckham Health Centre which offered approaches to social medicine. Autonomous groups are distinguished from other, archic, forms of organization, which are characterized by "hierarchies of relationships, fixed divisions of labour, and explicit rules and practices" (Ward 2003, 48). Autonomous groups are marked by a high degree of individual autonomy within the group, reliance on direct reciprocity in decision-making, for decisions affecting all group members, and the temporary and fluctuating character of leadership.

When people have no control over, or responsibility for, crucial decisions over important aspects of life, whether regarding housing, education or work, these areas of social life become obstacles to personal fulfillment and collective development. Yet when people are free to make major decisions and contribute to the planning and implementation of decisions involving key areas of daily life there are improvements in individual and social well-being (Ward and Goodway 2003, 76). Ward finds resonance in the findings of industrial psychologists who suggest that satisfaction in work is very strongly related to the "span of autonomy," or the proportion of work time in which workers are free to make and act on their own decisions.

The provisions of the welfare state are, of course, contradictory and most anarchists do not take a cavalier approach to what have been important, and often necessary, services for many people, including many anarchists. In discussing the welfare state, Colin Ward sums up its positive and negative aspects in short: "The positive feature of welfare legislation is that, contrary to the capitalist ethic, it is a testament to human solidarity. The negative feature is precisely that it is an arm of the state" (Ward and Goodway 2003, 79). Ward points out that the provision of social welfare did not originate from government through the "welfare state." Rather, it emerged in practice "from the vast network of friendly societies and mutual aid organizations that had sprung up through working-class self-help in the nineteenth century" (Ward 2004, 27). This is the same point made by Sam Dolgoff with reference to the importance of mutual aid groups for the provision of education to elder care within the labor movement in the U.S..

In numerous works Ward has illustrated how, since the late nineteenth century, "'the tradition of fraternal and autonomous associations springing up from below' has been successively displaced by one of 'authoritarian institutions directed from above'" (Ward and Goodway 2003, 17). As Ward suggests, this displacement was actively pursued, with often disastrous results, in the development of the social citizenship state: "The great tradition of working-class self-help and mutual aid was written off not just as irrelevant, but as an actual impediment, by the political and professional architects of the welfare state … The contribution that the recipients had to make … was ignored as a mere embarrassment" (Ward and Goodway 2003, 18). From his research on housing movements Ward comments on "the initially working-class self-help building societies stripping themselves of the final vestiges of mutuality; and this degeneration has existed alongside a tradition of municipal housing that was adamantly opposed to the principle of dweller control" (Ward and Goodway 2003, 18). Similar forms of degeneration have befallen others of the working-class infrastructures of resistance.

Ward's work is directed towards providing useful "pointers to the way ahead if we are to stand any chance of reinstituting the self-organisation and mutual aid that have been lost" (Ward and Goodway 2003, 18). Ward focuses on recent examples, such as holiday camps in Britain, "in which a key role was played by the major organisations of working-class self-help and mutual aid, the cooperative movement and trade unions" (Ward and Goodway 2003, 17). A significant theme

in the perspectives of constructive anarchy is "the historic importance of such institutions in the provision of welfare and the maintenance of social solidarity" (Ward and Goodway 2003, 17). Much work remains to be done in building or rebuilding such infrastructures of resistance today. Indeed there is work to be done in returning the focus of analyses of radical social movements and revolutionary movements need to infrastructures of resistance and their large part in social transformation.

Conclusion

As we have seen, anarchists do disagree over the tactics which they view as necessary to realize a free society. Anarchists also vary greatly in their visions of the libertarian future. Unlike utopian thinkers, anarchists exercise extreme caution when discussing "blueprints" of future social relations since they believe that it is always up to those seeking freedom to decide how they desire to live. Still, there are a few features common to anarchist visions of a free society. While anarchists are not in agreement about the means to bring about the future libertarian society, they are clear that means and ends cannot be separated. Anarchists argue that for most of human history people have organized themselves to satisfy their own needs. Social organization is conceived as a network of local voluntary groupings. Anarchists propose a decentralized society, without a central political body, in which people manage their own affairs free from any coercion or external authority. These self-governed communes could federate freely at regional (or larger) levels to ensure coordination or mutual defense. Their autonomy and specificity must be maintained, however. Each locality will decide freely which social, cultural and economic arrangements, to pursue. Rather than a pyramid, anarchist associations would form a web. Their structures and relations are marked by horizontalism rather than verticality. As Ward points out: "Coordination requires neither uniformity nor bureaucracy" (2004, 89). Examples can be found throughout people's daily lives. As David Graeber (2004, 76) suggests:

> The moment we stop insisting on viewing all forms of action only by their function in reproducing larger, total, forms of inequality of power, we will also be able to see that anarchist social relations and non-alienated forms of action are all around us. And this is critical because it already shows that anarchism is, already, and has always been, one of the main bases for human interaction. We self-organize and engage in mutual aid all the time. We always have.

The non-Marxist theorist Ivan Illich, whose works have had some influence within anarchist circles, refers to autonomous capacities as "vernacular subsistence." By vernacular subsistence Illich means "autonomous values and practices through which people have satisfied their everyday needs despite and against the depredations of the 'economy'" (Cleaver 1992a, 124). Anarchists suggest that the

majority of people in a society such as the United States owe their very survival to everyday activities of "vernacular subsistence."

It is this struggle over the self-liberation of creative living labor that is embodied and expressed in the anarchist striving for autonomy in various spheres of activity. These subsistence practices or infrastructures of resistance point the way towards the development of real world alternatives to capitalism, while providing the resources, solidarity and support to allow people to build those alternatives. The challenge remains how such subsistence activities might allow for the creation of greater spaces for their autonomous development and the extension of such infrastructures into growing spheres of life. There is an ongoing push and pull between forces driving towards disvalorization or the channeling of productive energies into capitalism and the forces working for autonomous development. What is perhaps most interesting is that, against the fears of the critical theorists, is that such autonomous subjects repeatedly arise even from within the expanded grasp of capitalist control and the colonization of everyday life.

The anarchist future in the present must, almost by definition, be based upon ongoing experiments in social arrangements, in attempting to address the usual dilemma of maintaining both individual freedoms and social equality (Ehrlich 1996b). The revolution is always in the making. These infrastructures of resistance make up the foundation for what the anarchist sociologist Howard Ehrlich calls "anarchist transfer cultures."

> Despite the dominant authoritarian trend in existing society, most contemporary anarchists therefore try and extend spheres of free action in the hope that they will one day become the mainstream of social life. In difficult times, they are, like Paul Goodman, revolutionary conservatives, maintaining older traditions of mutual aid and free enquiry when under threat. In more auspicious moments, they move out from free zones until by their example and wisdom they begin to convert the majority of people to their libertarian vision. (Marshall 1993, 659)

How long these infrastructures of resistance might endure is an open question. Some have collapsed already; others continue and thrive. Unfortunately some have been overcome by sectarianism or competing visions. Others have folded due to lack of resources, funds or labor. Many wrap up as specific needs are met. Still others have evolved or transformed into something different than that from which they originated as new issues and concerns emerge. Almost all have given birth to other new projects. Most have encouraged some participation in previously existing projects—around anti-poverty, immigrant defense or housing. Overall, however, the freedom experienced and nurtured in such spaces is often quite fragile and tenuous as I have tried to illustrate.

Anarchism, like utopianism, is important because it shows the vitality of imagination necessary to envision other social relations different from the current situation. Anarchism presents concrete alternatives which call into question the practices and assumptions underpining present social relations. As mobilizing

social myth it provides the glimpse of the future which inspires action today, sustaining efforts under conditions of extreme duress.

> As a movement, anarchism has only partially realized its aims on a large scale for brief periods at times of social upheaval, but it has gone a long way in creating alternative institutions and transforming the everyday life of many individuals. It has a whole range of strategies to expand human freedom right here and now. As a result, it has an immediate and considerable relevance to contemporary problems as well as to future well-being. It provides a third and largely untried path to personal and social freedom beyond the domain of the tired social models of State-orchestrated capitalism or socialism. (Marshall 1993, 639)

The perspectives and practices of constructive anarchy, in striving to address immediate day-to-day concerns, provide an important reminder to revolutionary anarchists that anarchists must offer examples that resonate with people's experiences and needs. Additionally, any movement that fails to offer alternative and reliable organizational spaces and practices will be doomed to marginalization and failure. Or as Alexander Herzen has remarked: "A goal which is infinitely remote is not a goal at all, it is a deception" (quoted in Ward 2004, 32). Infrastructures of resistance show that the goals of anarchy are not so distant as commonly believed. Even more, they show that anarchy, rather than a curious subculture manifestation, content with its subcultural status, is involved in a range of practical endeavors to build strength and solidarity within communities of the working-class and oppressed in a way that opens further avenues for positive social change and resistance to states and capital.

Some critics might dismiss constructive anarchy as being "non-revolutionary." To do so is to repeat the mistake, common in much thinking on the Left, of conceiving of revolution narrowly as a specific moment of upheaval or seizure of power (usually in terms of the state) carried out along particular sequences that can be repeated across time and place (as if the next revolution will mirror Russia of 1917). Under this sort of narrow view, which insists on a rather abstract opposition between revolution and reform, a wide variety of anarchists would be conceived as reformists, regardless of their actual practice. Constructive anarchists recognize that revolutions do not emerge fully formed out of nothing. This perspective emphasizes the need, in pre-revolutionary times, for institutions, organizations and relations that can sustain people as well as building capacities for self-defense and struggle. Taking a more nuanced approach to revolutionary transformation one can understand constructive anarchy as concerned with the practical development of revolutionary transfer cultures. Anarchist organizing is built on what Colin Ward calls "social and collective ventures rapidly growing into deeply rooted organizations for welfare and conviviality" (2004, 63). In his terms these manifestations of constructive anarchy are "quiet revolutions."

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