



ANARCHIST PRISONER  
SOLIDARITY

Until All are Free.

This issue of Fire Ant is dedicated to the memory of our dear sister and comrade Danielle Davis.

This is issue #3, Spring 2019. Fire Ant is a collaboration between anarchist prisoners and free roaming anarchists. Fire Ant seeks to raise material aid for anarchist prisoners while fostering communication between anarchists on both sides of the walls.

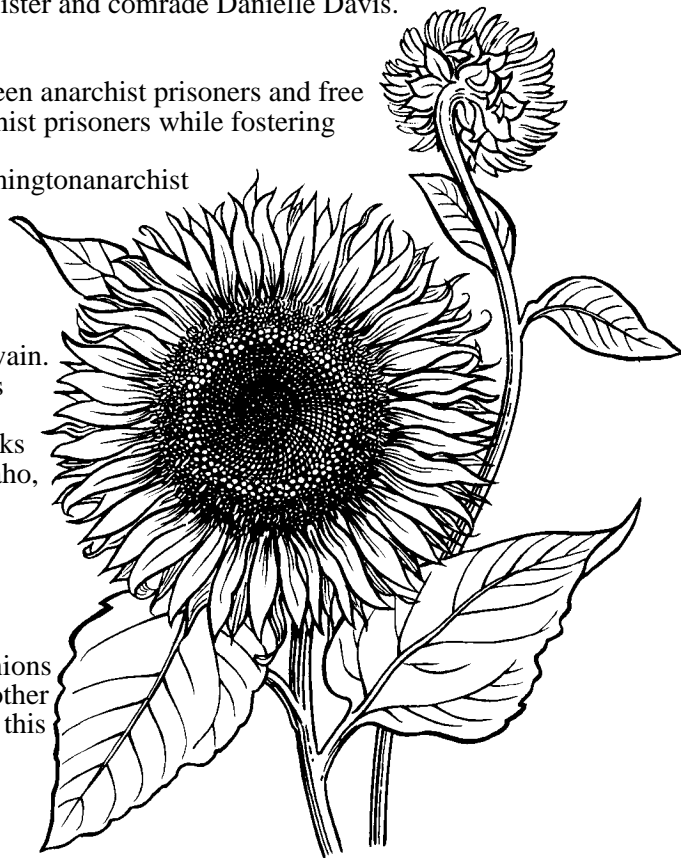
To support the anarchist prisoner war fund, please email [bloomingtonanarchistblackcross@riseup.net](mailto:bloomingtonanarchistblackcross@riseup.net). All money will go directly to prisoners. The fund currently supports Michael Kimble, Jennifer Rose, Eric King, Sean Swain, and Marius Mason.

To download this publication, please go to [bloomingtonabc.noblogs.org](http://bloomingtonabc.noblogs.org).

Front cover art by Michael Kimble. Back cover art by Sean Swain.

Thanks to the Bloomington crew for all their hard work on this project! Thanks also to Michael, Jennifer, Marius, Eric, Noah, Thomas, Sean, Rochelle, Peter and Fifth Estate, the Burning Books crew, Moscow ABC, Crimethinc, Final Straw radio, MJ from Idaho, the Squashed Crew, Cal, Owl, Mini, and Baba Yaga.

-Fire Ant



## Disclaimer

This publication is for entertainment purposes only. All opinions and views belong to the individual writers and do not represent other writers or anyone involved in the production or distribution of this publication.

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## Support Thomas Meyer-Falk

Imprisoned since 1996 for a bank robbery done to fund political projects, he was sentenced to almost 16 years. His sentence is now completed, but he is kept imprisoned indefinitely by a “preventative detention” law. In 1933, the nazis passed a law against Dangerous Habitual Criminals, allowing the courts to indefinitely imprison “habitual criminals” if they consider the person to be dangerous to society. Thomas hopes to be released by 2023. To contact him write to:

Thomas Meyer-Falk  
c/o jva freiburg  
Hermann-Herder-Str. 8  
d 79104 Freiburg  
Germany

## Letter from Thomas



Dear comrades,

Thank you so much for your inspiring zine, I love to read it and shared it with other inmates.

I hope so much that you are doing well and can continue your such important work: to give inmates a voice!

Much Love & Respect,  
from the other side of the world.

Thomas

# Woman Imprisoned Indefinitely for Sex Without a Condom

## by Thomas Myer-Falk

In Germany in 2014 a 29 year old woman was sentenced to 4 years in prison for having sex without using a condom. Because the court deemed her a threat to public safety, Preventive Detention-Indefinite Imprisonment- was added.

The story.

Jaqueline was a young woman who was in love with life, she hung around the surroundings of a biker club and had a few partners. Years before she had caught HIV, but was taking medication for it and therefore hadn't become ill.

Then Jaqueline's own mother, when she found out that her daughter had been sex with men, reported her to the police.

The trial.

The district court found Jaqueline guilty of "attempting serious physical injury", having sex without using a condom. According to the courts this was a highly dangerous "treatment" (the technical word in German law), and since she had done the same thing before, Preventive Detention was added.

History of Preventive Detention.

In 1933, the nazis passed a law against people who were identified as "threats to society", which allowed the state to keep someone behind bars for life after this person had finished his or her sentence. After World War II, in 1954, East Germany's High Courts repealed the law that had created PD because it was an "original nazi code". The courts in West Germany never had such moral doubts. In Spain, the constitutional court has overruled a similar law, because it violates the rule saying that no one should be convicted twice for the same offence.

No appeal!

The Federal High Court and the Federal Constitutional Court both refused to overrule the District Court's decision, so now Jaqueline, who is only 30 years old, faces a lifetime behind bars for only having had sex without a condom. No one was injured, no one was harmed, no one was infected with HIV. Lifetime, maybe, behind bars- based on a law which was passed by the nazis in 1933.

-Thomas



## Lao Tzu, Taoism, and Anarchism by Jennifer A Rose



The Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu became popular among Europeans and Western countries over the last 100 years, as his book was translated into different languages. The oldest biography of Lao Tzu from 100 BC says that he was an official at the ruler's court until he became tired of government intrigues and withdrew from the capitol to his estate, where he died of old age. This fits well into the picture given to us by Lao Tzu's teaching, and by the life of his later followers, which many anarchists may seek to emulate- ie. a life of autonomy, self-determination, etc.

Lao Tzu's teaching is contained in a small book, the Tao Te Ching, the "book of the world law and it's power". Lao Tzu's teaching is essentially an effort to bring man's life on Earth into harmony with the life and law of the Universe (Tao). Lao Tzu's path is for those who feel disappointed with life in the community. A Taoist, as followers of Lao Tzu are called, withdraws from all social life, and carries out none of the rites and ceremonies which a man or woman of the upper class should observe. Rather, they prefer a more simple and almost primitive life style, far from the city, surrounded by Nature and a few friends or comrades they may call "family" or "tribe". This is the main element of Lao Tzu's doctrine of wu-wei, "passive achievement".

Such is the similar practice and lifestyle of green anarchists, or anarcho primitivists, many of whom might agree with Lao Tzu who writes: "The more the people are forbidden to do this and that, the poorer they will be. The more sharp weapons the people possess, the more will darkness and bewilderment spread through the land. The more craft and cunning men have, the more useless and pernicious contraptions will they invent. The more laws and edicts are imposed, the more thieves and bandits there will be." Lao Tzu takes the existence of a monarchy or government for granted, however, in much of his teaching is aimed to being applied to the life of the state.

Thus, the "Legalist theory" which provided the philosophic basis for dictatorship in the third century BC was attributable to Lao Tzu. He was not thinking of dictatorship though; he was an individualistic anarchist, believing that if there were no active government all people would be happy. Then everyone could attain unity with Nature for themselves. Thus we find in Lao Tzu and later Taoists, a scornful repudiation of all social and official obligations.

Lao Tzu's teaching, like that of Confucius's, cannot be described as religion; rather, it is a sort of social philosophy, but of irrationalistic character.

While most anarchists would consider themselves atheists, those interested in spiritual concepts of Nature have often looked to indigenous cultures. Taoism may also be of interest to anarchists as a compatible form of spirituality and social philosophy. The only difference being the Taoist concept of non-action as opposed to insurrectional anarchists of praxis preference for "propaganda of the deed".

I would encourage further study and discussion of this issue among anarchists, and also welcome any comments or criticism.

#### Reference Notes:

1. A History of China (3rd ed. rev and enl.), by Wolfram Eberhard, (University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1969).
2. The Way of Acceptance: A New Version of Lao Tzu's Tao Te ching, by Herman Ould (Dakers, 1946).

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USA



*We still have some "Free Jennifer Gann" (Jennifer Rose) posters available. Write us if you want some; postage money appreciated, but not necessary. Donations can be in cash only. Free Jennifer Rose! -Fire Ant crew*

#### „Poison & poverty“

As the sun sets on chain link & concrete casting a shadowy dark upon the projects, section eight dwellings & slumlord rent properties many look & peer about them but few actually see... Cops prowls in squad cars flashing harsh Red-n-Blues, blaring sirens & targetting with spotlights, looking for their quota. Peddling drug dealers look for buyers while addicts look for a fix... the youth look up to the gangsters-n-thugs... Cops don't see single parents who can't land a job or the eldest of siblings trying to put food in the pantry ... the dealer doesn't see that their pockets are being filled by the slowly seeping souls of the tormented while the addict cannot see clearly enough to recognize the person in the mirror ... the children don't see the desolate cage that awaits the gangsters & the thugs are unable to see they've become tools of the machine and in so doing merely contribute to the oppression, division & separation of the very people whom share a burden their own ...

<sup>drive</sup>  
Take a dive down any main street in the lower class neighborhoods here in America, be it Texas, California – anywhere. What you'll see there is evidence of caste & separation clearly by design. Liquor stores stand sentinel, flashing attractive neons upon intersections. „Pain management“ clinics can be found within walking distance of one another ... electricity can be „paid as you go“ without security deposit though at such inflated rate it's ridiculous. All done at the local „convenience“ store which conveniently holds stock of your favorite poisons... Leave those „hoods“ and cruise down the boulevards in upper or middle class areas and the „pain-management“ clinics pushing deadly, addictive opiates become yoga centers. Liquor stores and corner stores become whole foods markets or shopping centers. If you cannot grasp these dynamics set upon our socioeconomical structure there then perhaps you should take a closer look!!

Certainly people have a choice, – at least in most cases –, and that isn't being disputed here. What decisions we make, however, are greatly influenced by the options presented & available, the amount of options thereof and this, in fact, brings about a probability which cannot be disputed. When those up-scale communities offer little or no poor choices to the youth & residents while lower class communities present & offer little or no positive ones it should come at no surprise that failure plagues the majority of the poor!! Oh it's a shock factor when the suburbanite lands on the front page of the local city and state for some poor decision or another – likely <sup>receiving</sup> just a slap on the wrist.

... For the lower class taking the bait on those poor choices need only to be made once & the hooks are set deeply... Having something like a criminal record to the lower class is „a nail in the coffin“ so to speak. Prevent a multitude of vices, stumble stone<sup>s</sup> or attractively advertised poor choices dressed up as quick fix or easy money & a very real problem is born of the „statistics“. (You can call us statistics America but I call us a probability.)

I can recall clearly the moment that each new „craze“ hit the shelves for distribution. The „yellow jackets“, „minikins“ <sup>mini-things</sup> (?) or „no doze“ for those needy boosts or just like to rip & run... those evolved or graduated to „bath salts“ or other „legals speeds“ all advertised at the local „Hood stores“. Then too the „legal weed“ hit. (This is not natural, not weed & not safe folks!). The many names like; spice, K2, Kush, Space & a bunch of Brands, I'm certain I could fill an entire



Listing

page listening. Cheap and advertised boldly as „legal“!! Well, just legal long enough to set in motion an epidemic of addiction, abuse & disaster ... then made illegal and the addict then begins to fill up prison cells... Now the natural pot is widely legal and so long as „uncle Sam“ is in the profits you're good to indulge. This true also for your opiates & a wide range of „prescription“ dope which is stronger & more addictive than street drugs...

Ask yourself, could you find these things in places like; River oaks, Friends-wood, or Sugarland Texas?? Perhaps but I can assure you comrade that in these upscale communities they wouldn't be, or have been, on display, you need to know where to look or know someone from the hood ...

What's the lasting effects of taking the bait?? Out on the streets K2 has begun to reign king among the addicted. Cases of horrific incidents as well as terrible sad occurrences surround the drug ... Oh there's still meth & cocaine, heroin & many other street drugs but cities like San Antonio, Houston & Dallas Texas have K2 addiction so strongly noted as to be of epidemic proportions ... Though this lab made „legal weed“ has been an illegalized product for years now the effects of this synthetic super weed are lasting & staggering to witness ... The centre for disease control & prevention (CDC) noted November 20th 2018 the life expectancy for the „average“ is falling since 2014. Why? Suicide & drug overdose. 129 Americans take their own life each day on average. This according to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. The CDC reports 200 people a day died (each day) from overdose in 2017! Since 1999 overdose rates have jumped 255 %!! Who do you think made up the majority of those sad statistics? If we're not filling these prison cells, we're filling up caskets comrades – We've gotta ta take a stand ...

I've been behind the wall for 8 years & counting Brothers-n-Sisters. Locked in solitary 5 years plus & Texas just set off my parole eligibility date until 2021. So I've witnessed personally what poison does to the poverty stricken. I not only organize through my amazing contacts, (love & soli!!), but too spend my efforts reaching out to those I can even in Seg. I pass around my articles that have been printed & try to unify us now so that out there the awareness & unity grows into solidarity unbreakable. One such testimony & reach out I've written here ...

„I open with respect to all who read this & to those of the struggle who fight & suffer with the rest of us. I have been around Kado for about 18 months now. I've witnessed the actions and effort he has applied to this cause. In doing so, has inspired me to do the same or attempt to, at least. I have 11 yrs & 7 mo my first time down in prison. All due to drugs & drug related crimes. I grew up around the lower class & poverty, as the minority drugs & drug related violence and crimes were everyday. 8 yrs old was my first taste, 13 yrs old I was using regularly. 14 yrs was the hard stuff, 16 yrs was I.V usage & 17 yrs I was a full cocaine addict ... At 20 yrs I was on my way here. The system hit me with 20 years. I told them I was a drug addict & needed help. In need of substance abuse treatment. They told me I didn't „qualify“ – I didn't deserve it. I have had the chance to see what the system does first hand. How very little they care. I have had a chance to open my eyes & see what drugs & the system do. I am anti drug and very against the system & their course of actions with all of this. They both deprive us of the chance to live a life, have no regard for us or those we love & kill us slowly... I am a father to a 13 yr old girl who was 20 months old when I got locked up. I've been deprived of a chance to be a father after I sobered up, seen my errors ... I hope that I can contribute whatever I am able in these circumstances to this cause, whatever I can to those who are or have traveled the same path. I thank you your time! I offer any support I can!! Steve S [REDACTED]

As I'm unable to mail this individual's written statement due to policy I have taken the liberty to copy it in my missive to you (with his consent). After seeing many of my articles & talking with me through these walls for some time he has a desire to join the collective struggle. I'm in a position where getting to know people is near impossible comrades and in fact beyond talking, At a distance, don't really know this man but we can expand our struggle if we try. I encourage you all to reach out. Reach out!! There may be people right there in front of you!! This is comrade Kado & you are the struggle – Fight!

Noah „Kado“ Coffin, #1795767

All letters & support to my address



## On Chasing Paper by Sean Swain

Still me lampin' still clockin' dirt for our sweat  
A ballot's dead so a bullet's what I get  
A thousand years you had the tools, we should  
Be takin' 'em  
Fuck the G-ride, I want the machines that are makin' 'em

-From "Down Rodeo" by Rage Against the Machine

Chasing paper. Many of us who are locked up were chasing paper, and we chased it right through the prison gates and into the cells we now occupy.

We use our time in lock up to scheme and dream and come up with new strategies for chasing paper. We get money tattooed all over us. We listen to songs that will motivate us. We develop our visions. We identify our competition. We build our networks, our empires.

Maybe we don't think about how we are plotting and sweating and bleeding to get portraits of the faces of former slave owners, plantation masters who got rich by taking hostages and exploiting them for their sweat and blood. We don't stop to think that those dead slave owners continue to take us hostage - in a new way- and trick us into chasing them, collecting them, worshipping them.

If we stopped to think about it, to really think about it, we'd ask ourselves why we value the money that someone else prints. We'd wonder why we let them print it and distribute it and decide who gets more and who gets less. Why aren't we printing the money? Instead, we get tricked. We spend our lives and blood and sweat chasing paper and serving the system, the scheme of those who put the paper out.

How many of us catch it? And for how long?

If we stopped to think about it, we'd see that we really don't want their paper. What we want is the happiness and freedom that we see others have, others who have paper. We want nice things. A good house, a new car, the best clothes, great food, comfort. We want friends and loved ones who love and respect us. We want lives of purpose and meaning and importance.

What if I told you that we could all have that, if only we were the ones with power to print the paper...and to get that power we must take it from the ones who currently have it?

The ones who turn some of us against the rest, so we kill each other and save them time and bullets...

The ones who decide where the factories and jobs go...

The ones with the planes bringing the drugs into the country...

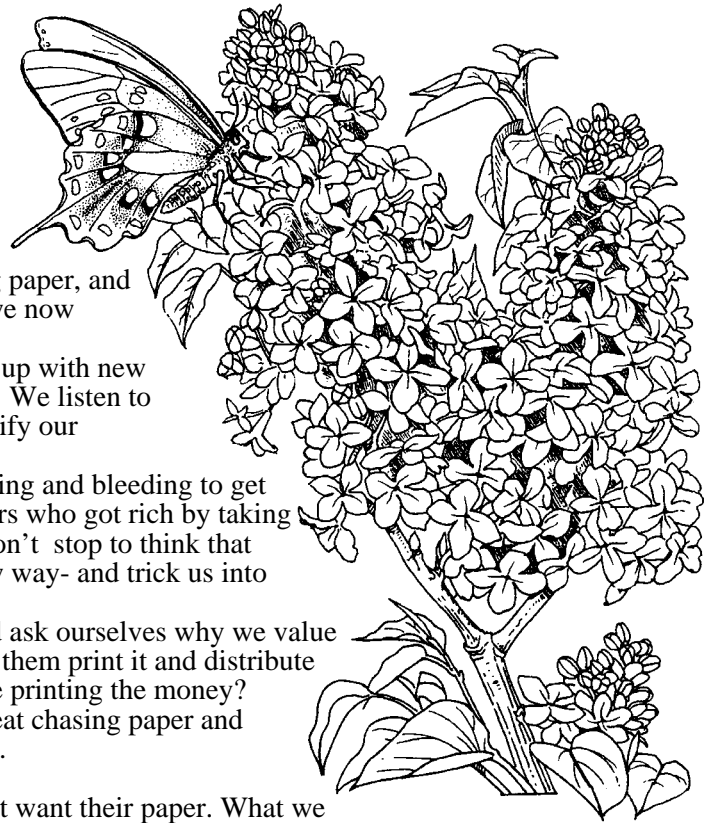
The ones who hand out the sentences...

The ones who count the votes.

They run things. They run us. They are our enemies, with happiness and freedom at our expense...living off of our sweat and blood. They're not special or smart or more deserving than we are, and we can be just as happy and just as free as they are, if only we spend our sweat and blood chasing revolution like we've spent it chasing paper.

There's only one thing that they have that you don't; they know a powerful secret.

And now you know it too.



## Support the Clarion Book Project!

Prison seeks to isolate our friends behind walls both physical and psychological. Separated from loved ones, anarchist prisoners are removed from the daily dialogue and exchange of ideas that give birth to liberatory projects and experiments. Imprisoned anarchists will find very little in prison libraries and network television to keep them informed on outside struggles, and, in absence of comrades on the outside mailing in magazines and books, they are left without access to subversive literature of any kind.

Since 2014, Bloomington Anarchist Black Cross has been sending monthly packages of literature to a handful of anarchist prisoners in the United States. These generally feature recently-published anarchist periodicals and zines, historical texts, and articles on current events. In addition, we send packages of books every other month. The project has fostered dialogue on current struggles, enabled US anarchist prisoners to express solidarity to anarchist prisoners around the world, and led to sharing of anarchist literature throughout the prisons where our friends are held captive.

While we have been happy to quietly work on this initiative without publicizing our efforts, we would like to expand its capacity. While we are able to print zines, we lack the funds to regularly purchase quality anarchist books for our imprisoned friends.

If you are an anarchist publisher who feels affinity with this project and would like to send us books for distribution to anarchist prisoners, please email us at [bloomingtonanarchistblackcross@riseup.net](mailto:bloomingtonanarchistblackcross@riseup.net).

We are in this for the long-haul, and appreciate the help.

with toner in our DNA,

Bloomington Anarchist Black Cross

[bloomingtonabc.noblogs.org](http://bloomingtonabc.noblogs.org)

## My 2019 New Year Wish List by Eric King

1. That the entire MOVE family and all long term political prisoners get freed. We've got a lot of wonderful people who have done way too much time. There have been some big releases the last several years, hopefully that trend continues.

2. The formation of a prison liberation front. Taking where our friends in the ALF and ELF left off, applying that knowledge, skill set, and tactics towards the prison system. There are countless D.O.C's and B.O.P offices and prisons around; offices where shit-nosed bureaucrats ponder ways to make more money off of our enslavement. Shouldn't leave out juvenile centers and I.C.E holding facilities. Since all prisons profit off our labor, let's go after those companies to disrupt the profit margin. We've been very vocal in being anti-prison, maybe now it is time to strike back? Time to cause problems for those who actually make decisions, they should regret those decisions. We've got so many options (targets), the fruit is ripe for the picking.

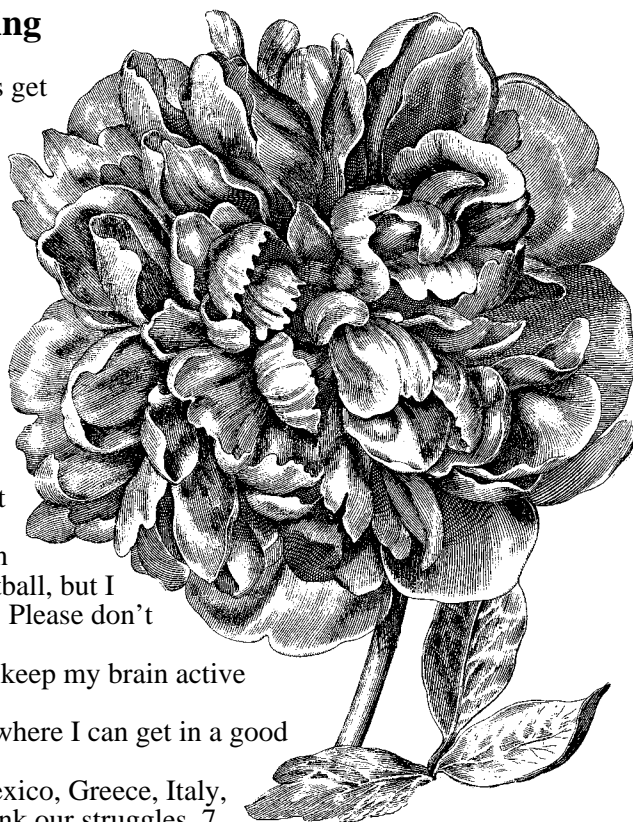
3. At the risk of exposing myself as a mega-hypocrite, for KC to win the Super Bowl. I hate the NFL and don't even enjoy American football, but I can't shake that love for my very problematically named local team. Please don't hate me, we've all got baggage.

4. To continue to learn Spanish, and maybe a little Basque. Want to keep my brain active and working instead of just sitting and turning into jelly.

5. Placement at a decent spot where the drama is turned down low, where I can get in a good routine and just do my time. Wish that for all of us stuck in limbo.

6. Build a relationship with the international comrades. In Chile, Mexico, Greece, Italy, anywhere they're fighting, inside or out. To have those bonds that link our struggles. 7.

For every worker at both F.C.I Englewood and the entire Florence complex to get just the worst runs of their lives, on duty, disgracing themselves and their profession.



Happy and safe New Year everyone!

## Update on Eric King From Eric King Support Crew

We have word from Eric. He is being held in segregation at McCreary in Pine Knot, Kentucky. He was immediately intercepted by SIS officers upon arriving and put into the special housing unit. It appears McCreary is just a spot to hold him while the BOP is working out where they send him. Right now he cannot receive books, photos, postcards or cards. Everything needs to be written in blue or black ink on standard white paper. Please do not use any thicker stock or borders on the paper. Letters with mailing labels will be rejected, hand written addresses only.

Eric is only being allowed two envelopes a week, so there is a good chance he will not be able to respond to letters, nonetheless, they are appreciated and something for him to feel connected to the world.

What Eric needs: If you sent a book from his book list, please wait to see if Amazon returns it to you.

If it is returned, please shoot an email to [erickingsupportcrew@riseup.net](mailto:erickingsupportcrew@riseup.net) and let us know what book it was so we can put it back on his list.

Because he is sitting in isolation with hardly any stimulation, he would love if folks could send him articles. He loves science, space, Manchester United football club, he loves silly jokes, to keep up on what is happening in the world, short stories...he is pretty easy to please. Please copy the text into a document before printing, any colored font will not make it in, because those pesky ink texts seem to cause problems.

It is unknown how long he will be held in McCreary or if his communication will continue to be limited with his wife and children when he lands in the next spot. He is hoping that they will be able to visit as fast as possible when he lands. Any donation to travel funds would be appreciated.

Today marks 218 days in complete isolation for Eric. While it seemed things were coming to an end, they back slid again and we await what will happen next. He is one of only 398 out of 180,193 prisoners in the BOP being currently held in segregation this long.

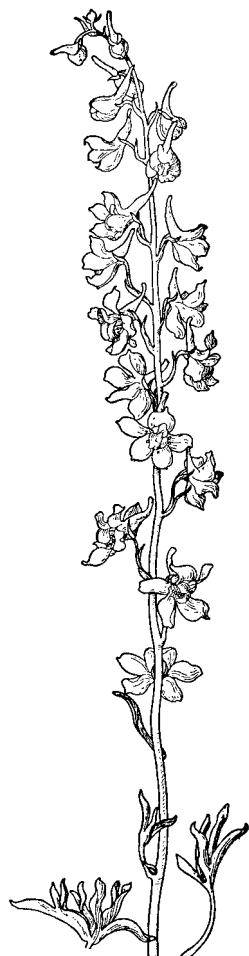
Your support has helped Eric get through this and not feel so alone.

Eric King # 27090045

USP McCreary

P.O. Box 3000

Pine Knot, KY 42635



## Just Ranting by Michael Kimblg

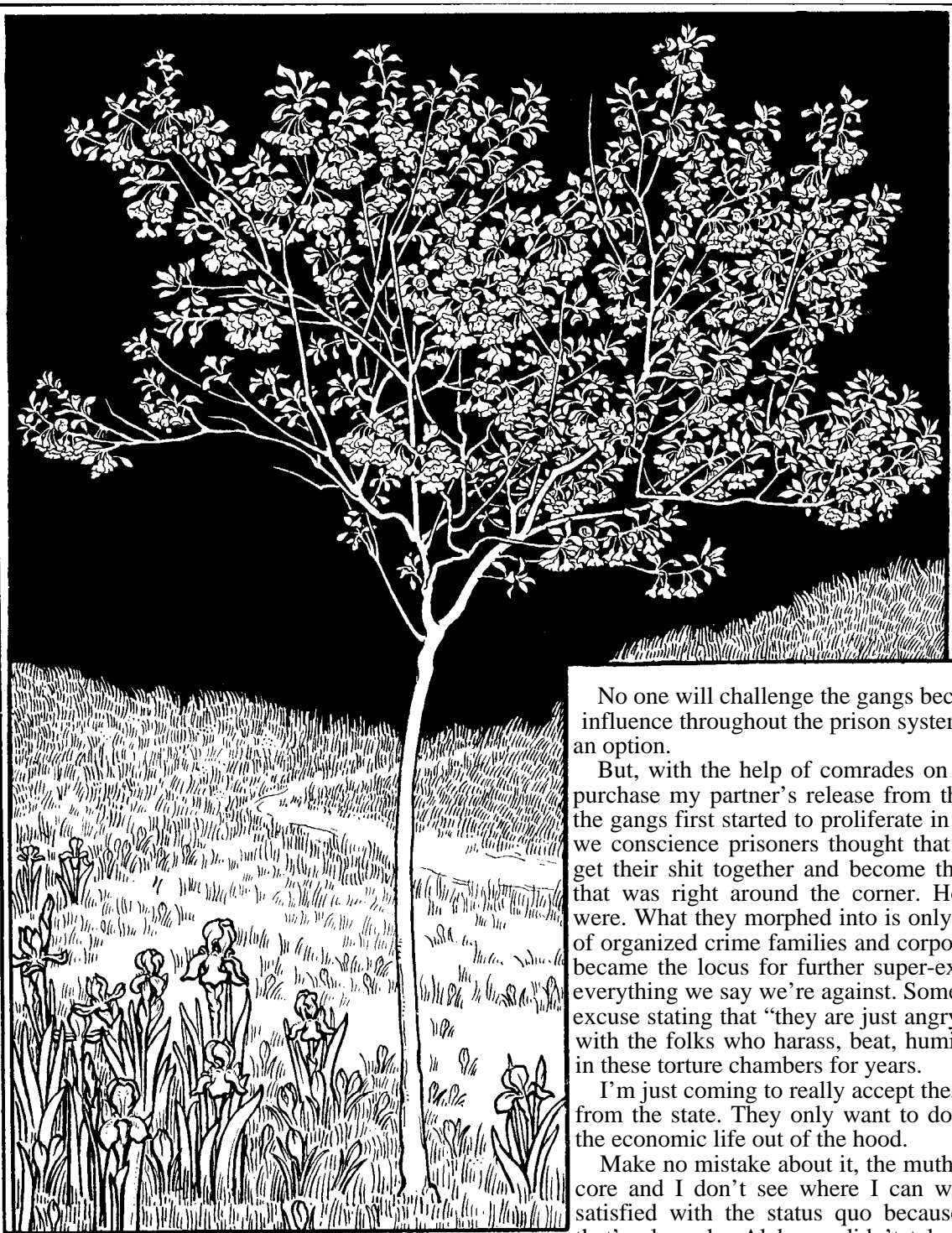
2018 was a really rotten year here in Alabama prisons. The year 2018 saw the pacification and recuperation of the most rebellious prisoners in the state. 2018 saw the escalation of gang wars and the strengthening and consolidation of their domination and control. Prisoners have been killed in this war, all with a blind eye by prison officials. 2018 saw the escalation in homophobia. In 2018 my own lover and partner was kidnapped and placed in a gang-controlled dorm, and forced into prostitution and labor.

No one will challenge the gangs because of their numbers and influence throughout the prison system. Going to the pigs is not an option.

But, with the help of comrades on the outside I was able to purchase my partner's release from that hell. Years ago, when the gangs first started to proliferate in the prisons in the 1990's, we conscience prisoners thought that the gangs were going to get their shit together and become the locus of the revolution that was right around the corner. How wrong and naive we were. What they morphed into is only what they could, replicas of organized crime families and corporate america. In fact, they became the locus for further super-exploitation, genocide, and everything we say we're against. Some folks try to give them an excuse stating that "they are just angry". But they are not angry with the folks who harass, beat, humiliate, arrest and put them in these torture chambers for years.

I'm just coming to really accept these fuckers are no different from the state. They only want to dominate, control, and suck the economic life out of the hood.

Make no mistake about it, the muthafuckas are fascists to the core and I don't see where I can work with them. They are satisfied with the status quo because they are thriving. And that's also why Alabama didn't take part in the August 2018



National Prison Strike. They have been bought off.

As I write this, the state is planing the murder of a prisoner by lethal injection. We have been on lockdown since the beginning of November due to ongoing gang warfare. We do not get regular exercise outside, and no one has a problem with this. The CERT (riot squad) has been stationed here at Holman since 2016 and are constantly beating prisoners, and when a response is mentioned, one is shouted down, threatened in some cases. All the reasons why we shouldn't respond are given. Pig Shit! It all boils down to: CERT is going to come in, beat us and take our cell phones, and destroy our property. Shit they are already doing, and more.

2018 also saw the placement of surveillance cameras throughout the prison. 2018 saw the suspension of parole for all violent offenders. But hey, as i always say, things can change at any moment, but i seriously doubt if it will be any time soon.

On another note, i'd like to send strength, love and solidarity to comrade Jennifer Gann, who was recently placed in lockup for defending herself and her sisters. And also to comrade Eric King, who is on hunger strike protesting the cutting off of his communication access. Our day is coming when we snatch out the throat of power.

Smash the state and it's flunkies! Death to all fascists! No compromise!

-MK



# THE HOLLOWING OF ANARCHY

*from scholium.noblogs.org*

*... just as early industrial capitalism moved the focus of existence from being to having, post-industrial culture has moved that focus from having to appearing.*

Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*

(ibid, 23)

When we know we are being watched or observed, we act differently. We do things for the sake of the observer, if not to please them, to get them to stop staring. Either way, we become highly aware of our bodies, how we're walking, where our hands are; and we think about whether they're still watching. From this light, we can say that being in the state of Exhibition hollows an object. Appearance immediately takes center stage and begins to call the shots.

Exhibition Value leads to objects primarily concerned with Appearance. In order to get attention, they rely on either populism or edginess: modes where the emphasis is on how the object will appear. Two domains where Exhibition Values flourishes are social media and gentrification.

## Social Media and Appearance

Having and Being make no sense on social media. Everything exists to be seen. You do not perform actions on social media, you adorn yourself with them. Pictures are posted to Instagram for the sake of being displayed, liked, shared, and commented on. Posting a picture with different motives is inconceivable. Exhibition Value is so strong here that objects are created solely for the purpose of being exhibited.

Why does Appearance crowd everything else out? Sometimes Being and Appearance clash, to the detriment of the latter. For example, humans are emotional beings, we can't always keep it together. Caught in such states, Facebook users sometimes confess vulnerable things through status updates, revealing their inner distress. This phenomenon – crying into Facebook – consists of the inner-tensions and turmoil of Being erupting despite carefully composed Appearance. It's embarrassing, and usually regretted afterwards. The lesson learned is that, where Appearance dominates, Being must be eliminated as much as possible.

Text is often meant to be seen. It therefore has some Exhibition Value. But it also has other types of value. It can facilitate communication between people, represent concepts, tell stories, etc. Artists and writers struggle with Exhibition Value. The knowledge that they will publicly display their work always threatens to intervene in the creative process. Artists whose work is clearly meant only to appeal to potential customers are called hacks. Astute readers can tell when writing is swimming in Exhibition Value. Advertisements fall under this category.

On the populist side of Exhibition Value, the more an object is created to be exhibited, the less transgressive it becomes. Objects created in an environment where Exhibition Value

Walter Benjamin developed the concept "Exhibition Value" in his 1935 essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." To say something has Exhibition Value means that there is a perceived value or benefit resulting from exhibiting it. The more people that see it, the better. The opposite of Exhibition Value is Cult Value. Byung-Chul Han contrasts the two in his book, *The Transparency Society*:

...they must be displayed in order to be; cult value disappears in favor of exhibition value...

"Cult value" depends on existence, not on exhibition. The practice of locking sacred items in an inaccessible room, and thereby withdrawing them from visibility, heightens their cult value...

Bare existence has no meaning as far as exhibition value is concerned. Whatever rests in itself – that is, remains what it is...possesses no value. Value accrues only insofar as objects are seen. (Han, Byung-Chul. *The Transparency Society*, Pg. 9)

When Exhibition Value is present, it threatens to take over an object's existence. Properties seen as threats to increasing Appearance are cast off, and properties seen as promising more Appearance are put in their place.

The contemporary era is marked by Exhibition Value. Appearances proliferate everywhere, while Being is irrelevant. This mentality has affected the anarchist milieu, particularly where the internet most strongly mediates daily life, like in the United States.

## Why Appearance?

When we say something has character, we are often referring to the extent that Being, or the various tensions and histories of an object, are hinted at in its Appearance. We aren't sure exactly what it is, but we can see that there's some sublime depth to the object. Exhibition Value, on the other hand, obliterates character and depth, because they uncontrollably interfere with Appearance.

On the subject, Han quotes Giorgio Agamben:

It is a common experience that the face of a woman who feels she is being looked at becomes inexpressive. That is, the awareness of being exposed to the gaze creates a vacuum in consciousness and powerfully disrupts the expressive processes that usually animates the face.

reigns will be crafted to appeal to popular sentiments. The best way to do so is to look for lowest common denominator values and style. In this mode of Exhibition Value, a culture's (or subculture's) dominant aesthetics and ideas are replicated.

Transgression – pushing against a culture's boundaries – threatens to close off Appearance because it might prompt disgust and thus turn people away. That which might offend is self-censored before it is born. In this way, Exhibition Value calibrates us, and leads to conformity of thought. Groupthink is what you get when morality and Exhibition Value meet.

On the flip side, transgression also dies in edgelord contrarianism. To be an edgelord is to give the appearance of transgressing. To do so on the public stage. When in front of an audience, it's nearly impossible to ignore them and act without their presence in mind. In such a situation, pushing against society's boundaries becomes trying to show that one is pushing against society's boundaries. Transgression degenerates into edginess or performative trolling. Nobody takes edgelords seriously precisely because of the Exhibition Value apparent in their public stunts. How then, to transgress when the whole world has become a stage?

With the internet as proof, Exhibition Value leads to populist head nodding or affective warfare. In the former, sentiments are unchallenging to the dominant norms, and are spoken for the sake of appearing on the correct side. In the latter, pre-conscious emotional reactions – anger, fear, outrage – are sought because doing so attracts attention in a competition against endless streams of other mediocre content. In both modes, Being is trumped by Appearing. The goal is to Appear, and to do so to more people.

### **Gentrification as Synonym for Exhibition Value**

In gentrification, the untidy is removed, and inoffensive Appearance is put in its place. Pre-gentrification urbanity was marked by Being. Every city, neighborhood, block, and street corner had history marking its walls. Histories of capital investment & flight, riots, crime, and people living the best they can. In the abstract, we can say that pre-gentrification urbanity had interiority, a result of its existence in a turbulent and chaotic world. This interiority, per Figure 1, breaks through to the surface and affects Appearance.

With gentrification, the goal is to bring capital back into the city, both business investments and people with money. Both as cause and effect, Appearance becomes a priority. People with money are afraid or disgusted by poverty, so the signs of poverty must be removed from public eye. Exhibition Value begins its creep.

Among other things, gentrification is the replacement of Being with Appearing applied to geography, population management, and architecture. The petite-bourgeois, the class that gentrification appeals to, defines itself by its ability to keep separate Being and Appearing. They are polite, they don't be-

come too emotional in public. They hide the turbulence of their toxic relationships within private residences. They keep their Being at bay through emotional repression. There is no graver sin to them than breaking into heated argument in public. The threat of embarrassment, of Being slipping through the mask of Appearing, always looms over their neurotic heads. This highly contrasts with pre-gentrification residents of cities. The homeless have their disputes in public, they have no private sphere to retreat to. The working class is usually perceived as being crass and crude.

The reinvestment of capital in the cities rode in on Exhibition Value's ambition. The sense that the Appearance of the petite-bourgeois suburbs is hollow brought young petite-bourgeois to the cities, to the location of exotic Being. Yet they were so stuck in Exhibition Value that they could only adorn themselves in Being. That, or their Being was not rife with inner turmoil enough to spill out into Appearance. So, the older petite-bourgeois saw them walking the urban streets and waiting their tables, and was not threatened. With the unpredictable messiness of Being largely absent, they began trickling back into the cities.

### **Exhibition Value's Left-Wing**

Cult and Exhibition Value emanate their own auras. The former gives off the impression of being special and sacred. The latter, cheap and fake. The way the object is treated is apparent in how it's perceived. As the world of Appearances becomes culturally known by wider segments of the population, there will arise a backlash against it. Frustration at a world of Appearances, as well as the work necessary for maintaining those Appearances, will mount.

Notably, Exhibition Value has built-in safety valves for this. Rather than be against a society drenched in Exhibition Value, the reformist response will be against Appearances that obscure the Being inside. Wearing our hearts on our sleeve will be seen as the authentic liberatory gesture. It will contrast itself with the phony, "non-authentic" Appearance deliberately crafted to appeal to those around us. It will set up the dichotomy as Transparency and Intimacy versus Performativity. In both the Right and Left wings of Exhibition Value, the focus is on the form that Appearing takes. Withdrawing from Appearances is, and will remain, totally invisible, and therefore pointless. If anything, withdrawing from Appearance will be seen as an attack on Intimacy/Transparency, and therefore saddled in with the Right. The Left-Wing of Exhibition Value will help systems of power by prodding us to reveal even more of our selves to the data-gathering machines of the Internet.

### **Anarchy and Exhibition Value**

Exhibition Value fits in snugly with politics. Every politician's speech, including those given by wannabe leaders at demonstrations, is created to appeal to people. For those that want to bring people over to their side, to adopt their val-

ues, to agree to their platform, Exhibition Value is the default mode. It is the value-form of populism.

It's telling that, since the ascendancy of social media, anarchy hasn't made many gains, but fascism has. Fascism is nearly impossible to define because it has so little internal meaning, its existence is based on the images it displays, images of power and strength. Anarchy is the opposite: it means too much.

That's not always a bad thing. What's beautiful in anarchy is its potential for defying Exhibition Value and politics, for concerning itself primarily with Being: subverting daily life, grabbing hold of life's trajectory from imposed social roles, etc. But that potential is often crowded out by other potentials. In contexts like today, anarchy has become just another political position.

Anarchy with an anti-political orientation highlights living anarchist values and ideas. The union of means and ends is taken seriously, and applied to daily life. From this vantage point, the practice of dressing up nice to appeal to normative society is seen as a manipulative political strategy.

Of course, to reject politics need not mean rejecting social struggle or revolt. Rather than spending time and energy trying to will mass struggles into existence, anti-political anarchists often embrace criminality and withdrawing from work in their daily lives. And not just to make more room for activist political projects.

Insurrectionary anarchy is notable for being a tendency both of anti-political and political anarchy. Sometimes, it values attack for its own sake, for the dignity and confidence it brings those who partake in it. In these ways, it embodies Being. However, it also contains Exhibition Value, in that it extols attack for the sake of being seen. Attack under insurrectionary anarchy can be a public gesture meant to inspire further attack. Because it contained both tendencies, insurrectionary anarchism helped bridge anti-political anarchy to the political anarchism prevalent today. Again and again, Appearance crowds out Being.

The contemporary anarchist moment is defined by Appearing. The only things valued are those that will be exhibited, as well as the legwork necessary for said exhibition. The allure of Appearance is so high that anarchists exaggerate their actions on anarchist news sites. This all has been facilitated by the Internet, where various content competes for the glazed-over, half-attention of Internet users. Its measure is quantitative: how many views, followers, or shares something has.

Daily life is often not spectacular, it has no clickable allure. Outrage, fear, anger, and excitement are what get attention, not clever scams, graffiti, lazing about, or taking care of your friends. And, in order for anarchy to be easily shared and viewed, it must be quickly digestible. Thus, the more complex and transgressive ideas within it – those arising from the influ-

ence of the Situationists, Fredy Perlman, and post-left anarchy – have receded.

It's notable that withdrawing from the techno-nightmare would be totally invisible to the culture of Exhibition Value we live under today. Yet said withdrawal, including learning to deal with the trials and difficulties that accompany it, should be alluring to people who define their political identity as being against social control.

The right-wing backlash that marks the contemporary political period provides further incentive for anarchy's hollowing. With smackdowns between antifa and far-right street-fighters on the horizon, those partaking on the antifa side are not going to come out victorious in one-on-one combat. Anarchists do not build a cult around images of strength the way the far-right does, and we don't have the tepid support of the police.

So, if said smackdowns are to be engaged in, antifa needs numbers. Thus, there is pressure to transgress societal values less, and to appear to embrace those that, superficially, we share with liberals. Opposition to race, gender, nationalism, and identity lose their sharpened edge and become the culturally-hegemonic common sense of being against racism, sexism, and Nazis. We end up appearing as the defenders of this society and its values, in opposition to the anti-establishment Nazis.

The more our acts carry Exhibition Value, the more we can say they are political. The more our actions are not constructed for the stage of public opinion, but are entangled in our anarchist values, the more they are anti-political. In our very political moment, Being is less a priority than Appearing. Because contemporary anarchy is obsessed with Appearing, because it is just another leftist political position, it could very well lose its draw to dissatisfied, alienated people. Its transgression and dignified hostility to the qualitative poverty of this society were what made it special. New radicals are often content to generically call themselves "leftists." Why pick anarchy over the rest when it's barely different?

## Sources

Han, Byung-Chul. *The Transparency Society*. 2015, Stanford University Press

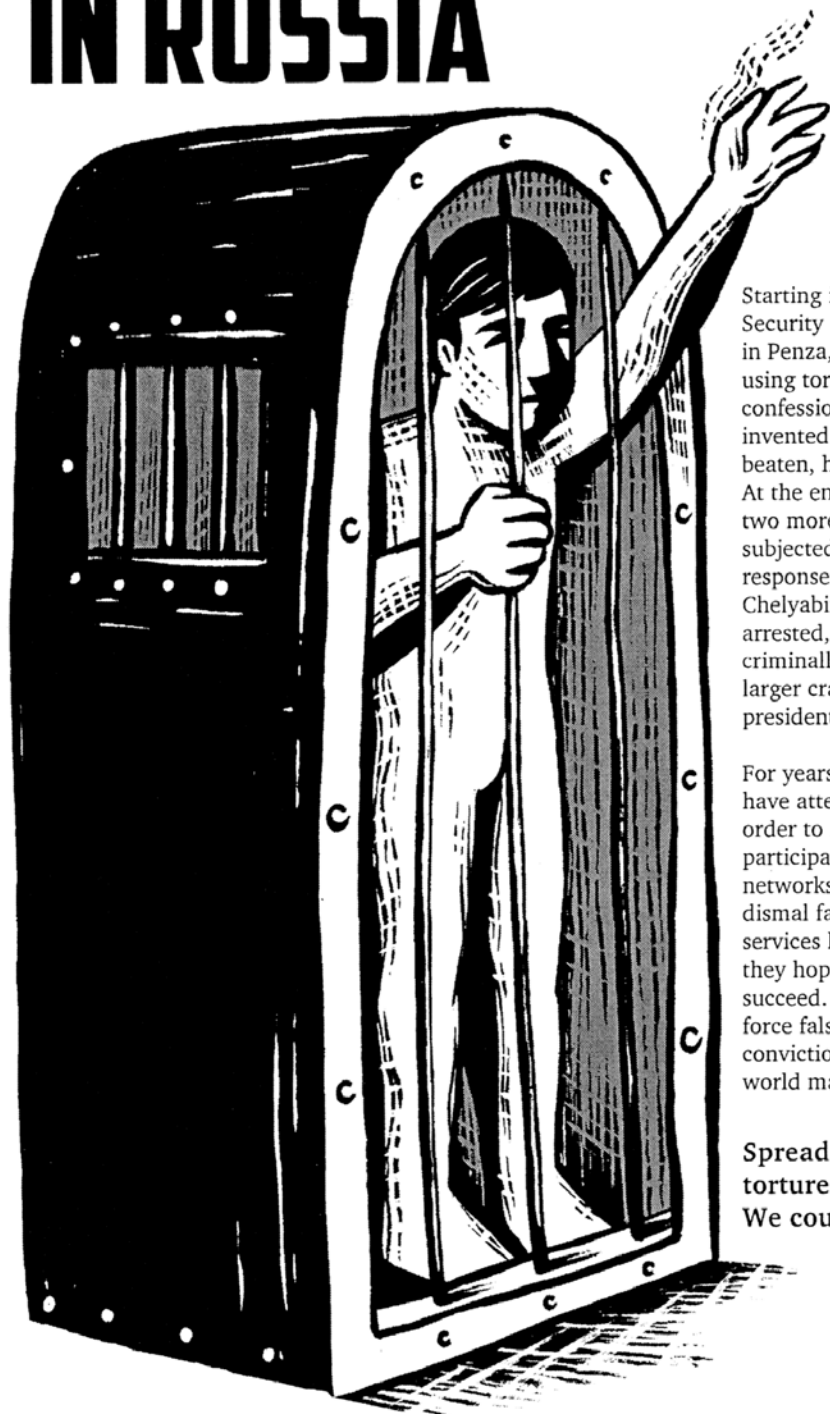
## Further reading

"The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" by Walter Benjamin

*The Transparency Society* by Byung-Chul Han (Many ideas for this piece were taken or built from provocations in Han's book)

*The Society of the Spectacle* by Guy Debord

# SOLIDARITY WITH THE TORTURED ANARCHISTS & ANTI-FASCISTS IN RUSSIA



Starting in October 2017, the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) kidnapped six people in Penza, planting weapons in their cars and using torture to force them to sign forged confessions admitting to membership in an invented "terror network." Arrestees were beaten, hung upside down, and electrocuted. At the end of January 2018, the FSB arrested two more anti-fascists in St. Petersburg and subjected them to the same treatment. In response to solidarity actions in Moscow and Chelyabinsk, several more activists were arrested, tortured with electrical shocks, and criminally charged. These arrests are part of a larger crackdown preceding the 2018 presidential elections and the World Cup.

For years, police agencies around the world have attempted to fabricate conspiracies in order to frame anarchists and anti-fascists as participants in nationwide or global terrorist networks. All of those attempts have been dismal failures. Now, the Russian security services have introduced an innovation that they hope will finally make this strategy succeed. If they succeed in using torture to force false confessions and wrongful convictions, other police agencies across the world may begin to utilize the same tactics.

**Spread the word about the  
torture cases in Russia.  
We could be next.**

crimethinc.com  
rupression.com  
#stopFSBtorture



# JUNE 11

## INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH LONG-TERM ANARCHIST PRISONERS

June 11th: the international day of solidarity with Marius Mason and long-term anarchist prisoners. In the 15 years this tradition has been observed, June 11th has facilitated support and action inspired by imprisoned anarchists — from noise demonstrations outside of jails to letter-writing nights, from fundraisers to arson. Setting aside this day is one way of remembering anarchists who are serving long prison sentences, generating support for them, and inspiring solidarity actions.

Because social struggles phase in and out, this day is a way to make sure that our imprisoned comrades are not forgotten. Our lack of memory is partially a result of the techno-alienation of the larger culture we're fighting against. But it's also a product of the dynamics of the anarchist space. People become burnt out and the cycle of forgetting continues.

June 11th is a way of combating that amnesia, of trying to sustain a long-term memory in the anarchist space. Not only does this generate support for anarchists locked in the state's prisons, it forces us to look back at what came before. Considering what previous generations did can both inspire us with ideas we've forgotten, and help us understand how our current practices came to be.

While those of us on the June 11th organizing crew focus on prisoners with long sentences, and sometimes point out how disproportionately long these sentences are based on the justice system's own sentencing norms, it is not because we are criticizing the government for being unfair. Rather than lobbying for fair sentencing, we seek the total destruction of all prisons: both as physical cages that kidnap people, and as a logic of social control that includes surveillance technologies, parole, and ankle monitors. While we support those who can finagle the state's own laws to get comrades released as early as possible, we're committed to those who are still waiting and those for whom this is not possible. We want to push the boundaries of what that commitment means. Our emphasis on long-term sentences is to make sure our comrades continue to receive support as time moves forward.

The person who has been the focus of June 11th the longest

is Marius Mason. Marius is an anarchist, environmental and animal liberation activist who is currently serving a 22 year prison sentence. He plead guilty to taking part in an arson of a Michigan State University lab conducting GMO research for Monsanto in 1999, as well as twelve other acts of property destruction. Marius was imprisoned in 2009 during the Green Scare, a time when the U.S. federal government was cracking down on earth and animal liberation struggles. He was incarcerated in a high security unit until 2017 when, after constant advocacy by outside supporters, he was moved to general population. Finally, earlier this year Marius was moved from Carswell to Danbury, where he is much closer to many of his friends and family. In 2014, he came out publicly as transgender, using he/him pronouns, and eventually secured access to hormone treatment in 2016. For more information, check out the website his support team maintains.

## PRISONER UPDATES

Sean Swain went on hunger strike during the month of September after prison administrators removed some of his privileges in response to his writings. Michael Kimble was one of eight Holman prisoners in June 2018 beaten by the riot squad and thrown in lockup with seemingly no pretext. Eventually he was released back into general population. Jeremy Hammond was attacked by a guard after accidentally bumping into them, put in the solitary confinement for months, and then transferred to FCI Memphis with a higher security status. He has been removed from college courses and a counseling program that would have reduced his sentence by a year.

Eric King has been placed in solitary confinement after defending himself from a guard's attack in August 2018. He was transferred to USP McCreary, where his communication has been severely restricted. Joaquín Garcia has been sentenced to 13 years in prison for the bombing of a prisoner guard training facility in Chile. Connor Stevens of the Cleveland 4 will be released from prison in April 2019. Freddy Fuentesvilla, who was imprisoned with two comrades 10 years ago for bank robbery and the murder of a cop, was



released into parole in July 2018. Lisa, convicted of robbing banks in Aachen, was placed in solitary and then released back into general population earlier this year.

All charges in the J20 case in the USA have been dropped for the remaining defendants. This would not have been possible without all the support and coordination work done behind the scenes by defendants and their supporters.

Repression of anarchists continues especially in Russia and Italy. Russian anarchists are being tortured and arrested for membership in a fake organization called "The Network." In Italy, the state is conducting multiple operations to clamp down on anarchists, including the ongoing Operations Scintilla, Renata, Panico, and Scripta Manent.

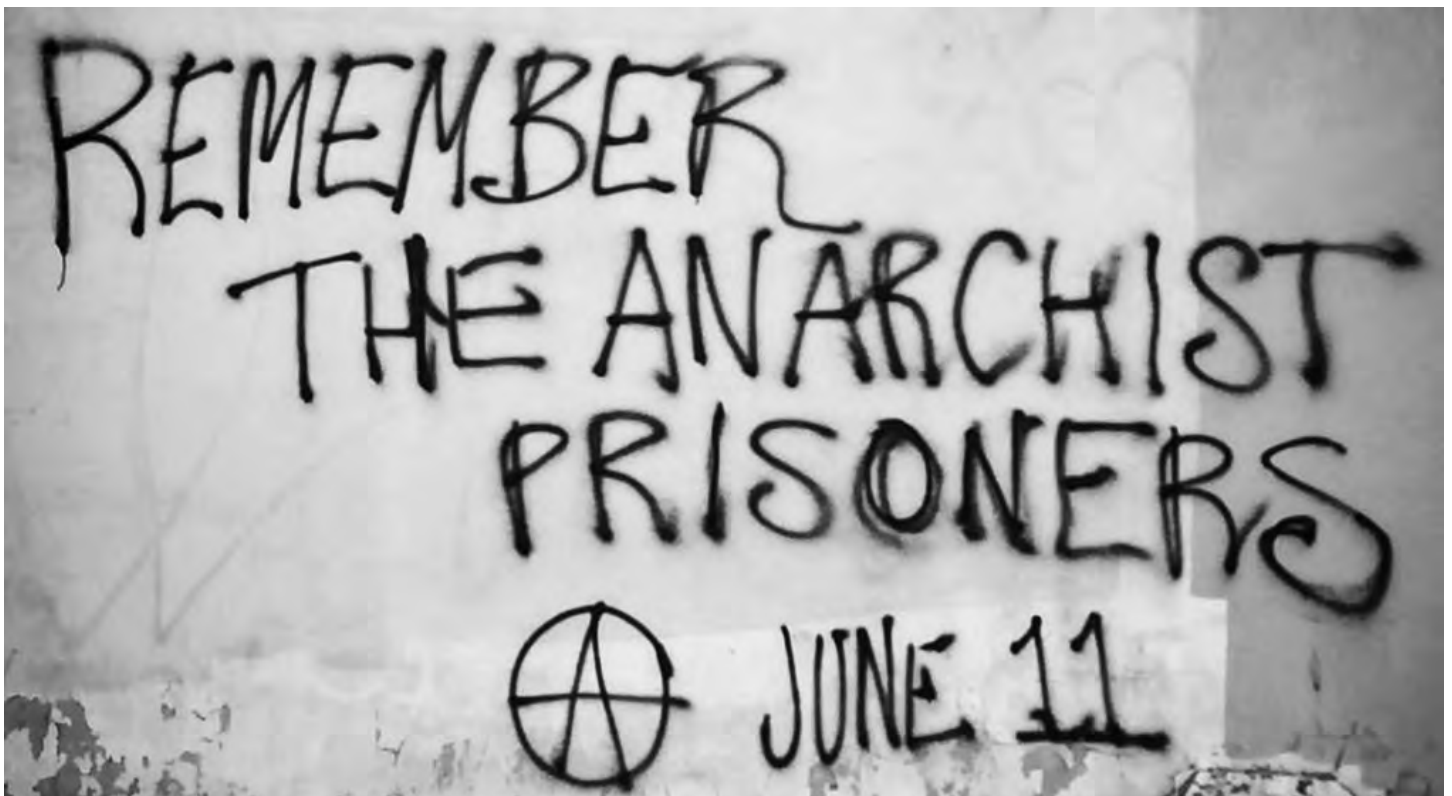
Most of this information would never have gotten out if it wasn't for folks doing support work for anarchist prisoners. Thanks to all the support crews out there, the Anarchist Black Cross, Greek Imprisoned Fighters Fund, and everyone taking initiative to support imprisoned anarchists.

## **JUNE 11, 2019**

We are calling on anarchists around the world to take initiative in whatever way speaks to one's own heart. In the past, we have seen solidarity attacks, noise demonstrations, graffiti, letter writing nights, dance parties, fundraisers, and much more.

In the coming months, we will be posting additional content to build up towards June 11, 2019. As always, we welcome posters, art, fliers, prisoner statements, report-backs, communiques, and anything else.

## **Check out [june11.org](http://june11.org) for more information**



# ANARCHIST PRISONER CONTACT INFORMATION

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## These comrades have recently been moved:

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Panagiotis Argirou  
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FROM THE MOMENT  
THAT THE BALLERINA  
AND THE IRON  
JOINED FORCES TO  
BREAK THE THIMBLE  
OUT OF JAIL, IT  
WAS ALL OVER BUT  
THE TWITCHING  
FOR THAT RICH,  
PRETENTIOUS  
JACK-ASS...

THE NSA HAD MONITORED  
THE DOG AND THE SHOE  
SINCE THAT RALLY AT  
FREE PARKING, BUT  
THEY NEVER SAW THE  
RACECAR COMING...



THE RULING ELITE REALIZED  
WAY TOO LATE: OCCUPY  
BOARDWALK WAS NOT A  
BUNCH OF PACIFISTS...

COPS DIDN'T CARE ABOUT THE  
BURNING DUMPSTER ON BALTIC  
AVENUE, BUT WHEN REBELS  
BROKE CONTAINMENT ON  
PARK PLACE, THE GAME WAS  
OVER FOR THE PRIVILEGED  
FEW...



