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# An Obituary for Identity Politics

Flower Bomb

6/12/20

*I began writing this text about a couple months before the uprising in response to George Floyd's death. The uprising, which now has become a global event, has motivated me to share my perspective in this text. My experiences in Minneapolis from the 26<sup>th</sup> through the 30<sup>st</sup> of May have furthered my contempt for identity politics and so I have included additional critiques of it based on those experiences.*

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Rewind back to a time and place where people used pagers and pay phones. When front porches and public parks were the hang-out spots. A time when conflicts were resolved face-to-face and shit-talking came with real life consequences. These were the days before 'call-out culture', 'troll-baiting', and other internet-dominated social activities. Some say the internet and technological expansion have advanced the fight against oppression. My opinion? The internet is where all potential for social revolt goes to die. In addition to pointless petitions and

endless memes, recognition as a rebel can be gained through pity parties and academic loyalty rather than hands-on direct action. While providing an excellent breeding ground for keyboard warriors and pretentious academics, the internet also allows for the stunted development of social skills necessary in navigating face-to-face communication. Conflict resolution takes the form of indefinite internet drama and at most an awkward in-real-life re-construction of judge, jury, and executioner. Face-to-face interaction is almost unnecessary in the techno-society where phones have become a personalized commodity seemingly fused to one's hand. From a screen with adjustable dimming, a full spectrum of emotional expression can now be digitally represented from a cache of emoticons.

The internet is also a place where the lynch-mob mentality of "call-out culture" encourages people to view one another as one-dimensional beings – only defined by mistakes and imperfections. In the name of 'social justice' and 'outing abusers', a new statism emerges, utilizing fear and guilt to coerce allyship conformity. And similar to being charged by the State, once condemned on the internet, an individual may never escape that reputation. Instead, any or all personal growth and development remains trivial to the static nature of their past mistakes. Despite personal improvement, a convicted individual is sentenced to forever remain captive by the essence of their online portrayal.

In my experience as a 'marginalized voice' I've seen identity politics used by activists as a tool of social control aimed at anyone who fits the identity criteria of 'oppressor'. The traditional power-struggle for equality has turned into an olympic sport for social leverage, inverting the same social hierarchy that should have been destroyed in the first place. Many identity politicians I've come across are more interested in exploiting "white guilt" for personal (and even capital) gain than physically confronting any organizational model of white supremacy. I've witnessed victimhood used to conceal

blatant lies and bullying, motivated by personal revenge. All too often I have seen how identity politics creates a culture where personal experiences are trivialized to the point of passive silence. But this is all old news. Any experienced, self-identifying anarchist has seen or probably experienced some form of being ‘called-out’ or ‘cancelled’. So why do I bring it up? Because I *still* see this shit happening and I *still* see so many people lacking the courage to openly confront it.

I don’t expect this text to bring identity politics to a grinding halt. I am merely expressing my hostility for it and its authoritarian, anti-individualist nature. I *still* see self-proclaimed anarchists fussin’ over ‘white’ dreads (as well as seeing people cut their dreads under social pressure). I *still* see people justify voting like they did for Obama (this time it’s for Bernie). And I *still* see ‘allies’ mumbling frustration under their breath, too scared to confront the authoritarianism they see right in front of ‘em.

How many ‘white’ anarchists were called racist (or privileged) and shamed for refusing to vote this past 2020 election?

Imagine what anarchy would look like if people refused to obey the condescending demands of identity politicians. Would people feel more free to explore their lives beyond the narrow limitations of prescribed identity? Would they fearlessly reclaim their power to formulate their own opinions? Is there a joy to be experienced in the hysterical mockery of academic elitism?

Would this text be less valid if it wasn’t written by a queer person of color? What if I was a ‘white’, ‘cis’ ‘male’? Why would it matter?

In the grand scheme of things, it doesn’t. Because after all, this isn’t just about identity. This is about anti-authoritarian anarchy. If there is one thing I have seen the most in the past few years, it’s how identity politics moves like a plague, consuming every social space – ironically including anarchist circles. For me, anarchy is about destroying socially assigned

identity and all the limitations it imposes upon the imagination. Anarchy is an individualist experience that finds itself held captive by the prison of assigned identity. Rather than destroying that prison along with the society that constructs it, anarchism today has become a cemetery of dead potential, internalized victimhood, and an ideological competition for who is 'most oppressed'.

Rather than taking aim at identity itself and the apparatus maintaining this paradigm, energy is spent tearing one another down, ignoring the complexity of individual uniqueness, and playing the State's role of defining each other based on membership to identity categories. Embracing a particular identity only reaffirms that identity's existence as a 'universal truth' – and therefore, by the colonial intentions of assigned identity, the servitude and enslavement of some to others as a universal truth as well.

I refuse to participate in upholding enslavement as a condition of my existence, and therefore these 'truths' are nothing more than political works of fiction. They are the products of a well-perfected, socially engineered god-complex that enters the mind like parasitic cordyceps, demanding unquestionable obedience. The atom of mental manipulation is a mind institutionalized by the incarceration of industrial society. Identity politics are the antiquated chains of colonization, polished by those who assign personal value to them. These 'truths' are the social constructs of control, keeping the life of rebellion shackled in a cold well of reform. And while many have become comfortable there, I have broken out to explore the infinite unknown terrain of hedonism and anti-political anarchy. 'Black', 'Brown', or 'White' power is the antithesis of freedom; it is the ideological charity work of a civilized, humanist form of rebellion. Identity politics is the sterilization of individuality, rendering it both obedient to the collectivist

a dream without the anaesthesia of hope, a declaration of joy with the lifespan of an exploding bomb.

*This text is dedicated to all those rebels whose only negotiation with authority is fire and destruction...I am forever inspired by your courageous wrath across racial and gendered lines... To the youth who made history on May 26th, to the rebels who perished, and to those currently held captive for their part in this war against the state. RIP George Floyd*

authority of identity and gullible to the nationalist myth of supremacy.

Ultimately, the 'human' is an animal domesticated with labels socially constructed to correspond to a hierarchy of economic status. And though this hierarchy has changed over the years, it is constantly held in place by a relationship of those who make demands and those who obey. No matter how the categories are arranged, the hierarchy represents authoritarianism; the group dominating the individual. What defines a 'human' is the degree of obedience and commitment to civilized roles and behaviors required by industrial society. The less cooperative a 'human' is, the more likely that 'human' will be compared to an animal. The animal is the undesirable being – even for the identity politicians who prefer to adopt the colonizers' ideological anthropocentrism. Perhaps this explains why there is such little discussion on animal liberation in leftist-anarchist writing. The marginalized voice is more concerned with being portrayed as equal to the civilized colonizer than with the lost connection between their animality and the earth. At the core of leftist politics is the humanist aim for social equality within industrial progress – all while the earth continues to be cut up into nation-states and ravaged for anthropocentric exploitation and expansion.

It is my opinion that as long as one maintains a personal relationship with the 'human' identity, similar to 'white' or 'male' identities, the individual will only continue to reinforce the colonial paradigm of civilized vs savage. And as long as this reinforcement continues, the individual also remains vulnerable to imprisonment within other identity constructs that further suppress feral potential.

I wonder when or if anarchists in general will move beyond the group-mentality of leftism toward individualist insurgency

— recognizing confrontation with identity as an act of personal emancipation. Will anarchists one day come to realize that anyone or anything above the individual represents an authority figure – whether it be “The Commune”, the “Movement”, or the cultural governance of identity? Maybe some, but I am sure not all.

### **The Victimhood Saint**

*After a 45 minute drive we finally arrive. It's been a long day of retail theft and this is the last stop. It's my turn and I plan to walk out with at least \$500+ worth of merchandise for online resell. But I'm already gettin' a bad feeling from this place. Unlike the other locations, this store is much smaller which to me means Loss Prevention will have a visual advantage watching the doors. Bigger places mean the enter and exit doors are spread further apart. In addition, the bigger the store, the more difficult it is to keep track of every shopper through the cameras. I decide to go for it anyways. Never know anything for sure until ya try.*

*I walk in, grab a cart and begin searching for the specific items I plan to take. I also scan the check out lanes and customer service desk. Two customer service employees busy chatting, check out lanes all blocked off except the one near the entrance and two near the exit. The entrance lane has a worker wiping down carts. One exit lane has a cashier, the lane next to it is totally empty. I take note of it as looking “too easy”, but I decide to refocus on where my items are located in the store. After loading my cart I start my journey to the exit. For anyone who shoplifts for a living, they know this is the exciting part. Every moment up to this point I've been just a regular shopper. But now, as I walk toward the exit, I begin to shed the costume of “shopper” and prepare for the criminal experience of “shoplifter”. As my heart starts to pound I feel my nerves initiate a well – developed calming response where I temporarily disassociate*

narrative of leftism which currently dominates contemporary anarchism.

I don't wish for a return to normality and the daily misery of industrial production. I have no desire to celebrate ridiculous “victories” such as police accountability, firings, or prison terms – which will only be followed by the rebuilding of their ruined precincts or perhaps an equally authoritarian “community-based” replacement. I desire nothing less than the total abolition of *all* governance and policing. And perhaps those who hold some form of elitist power will find me undesirable and will orchestrate a smear campaign against me, banning my writing and “cancel” me from their Movement. But little would they know that the days and nights, between wide fields and the stars, and between the tree tops and the ground – is the domain of my adventure! And with it is a joy that follows anarchy as a vibrant life experience rather than a measure of social capital online, or a theory frozen in an academic journal.

The internet has created a culture of desperation for social continuity and digital validation. It is the breeding ground for “new” concepts of anarchism that are nothing more than communist corpses with hipster aesthetic. Anti-civ anarchy, impregnated by leftism now displays the extent of its power with endless twitter debates on “eco-fascism”. Twitter – a place where reclaiming one's life and body is shamed by the disciples of privilege politics – is a graveyard of voices glorifying their own death-by-internet.

My animalism looks nothing like adopting the imagery and behaviors of existing animals. Instead it is the silhouette of an illegalist, feral menace dancing around the burning prison of domestication. My abandonment of victimhood is a foreclosure on both the pity politics of morality-based organizing and the sainthood of innocence. My anarchy is an obituary for identity politics. It is a personal insurgency without a future,

neous ruptures of illegal activity. Covid-19 broke the order of daily productivity and civilized slavery, leaving people more time to contemplate their lives and the value of their free time outside of working. The uprisings in response to the murder of George Floyd demonstrated the weaknesses of the police power and control – even at their own home base. At this point I have no earthly idea what will come next.

I admit to finding it fascinating to see non-human animals and the earth flourish in the midst of our industrial despair. To see clearer skies, various animals walking the streets, flooding that loosens the foundation of this concrete jungle. I can't help but feel both the pandemic and these continued ruptures against authority are better than a return to normality; a normality where death from industrial civilization and the State is as routine as a slaughterhouse in full operation.

I wonder what kinda conversations people are having with each other or with themselves during this blooming destabilization of domesticated order. Will more and more people seize this opportunity to express anger and frustration through random acts of violence and sabotage against one another? Against law enforcement? Against the institutions that have become weaker due to financial loss and now stand more vulnerable than ever? I can only hope the uprisings continue in some capacity – above or *below ground* which is personally more favorable for me at this point.

Will people beg for the return of the old daily misery of monotony, or will they explore the depths of permanent uncertainty? Return to work or rewild? I guess only time will tell.

But here, I can only speak for myself. My anarchy is my own, as are my thoughts and words in this text. I don't write to impress any club of internet anarchists who flex intellectual texts for self-congratulatory praise. I make my diary public in an antagonistic effort to mock the victimist, anti-individualist

*from the panic in order to keep my senses sharp and focused. I have to be ready for anything. And I still have to maintain my "regular shopper" face and body language. As I pass through the "too easy" lane everything looks good.*

*Customer service people are still chatting not paying attention, the one cashier is too busy ringing up someone to notice. I pull out my fake receipt and casually make my way through the first set of exit doors. If I was seen or caught, this is about the moment I would hear someone approach me from behind or feel someone grab my shoulder. Out the second set of doors, all is good. Time to start making my way toward the back of the parking lot – and then it happened...*

*Anyone who has ever shoplifted long enough knows these dreaded words: "Sir... Sir!". I hear someone behind me yell out. I pretend to not hear it. Then I hear quick footsteps approach from behind. "Sir, I need to see your receipt" he says as he flashes me his Loss Prevention badge. Fuck. Where did this clean-cut lookin' hipster see me? Must have been in the clothes area behind me... maybe that lane was a fucking trap? Doesn't matter. Let go of the cart and walk away. I start to walk away and I hear "No no...sir we have to go back inside and fill out paperwork. Don't worry you will not be arrested". Yeah, fill out paperwork with all my information, have my picture taken for their records – fuck that. I continue walking away. Another LP runs out and is on the phone. This guy is on the phone with the police. I instantly realize the first guy was secretly stalling me till the police got there! I break out in full run. I hear them both running close behind me. I cross the street and bolt into a trailer park, zig zag between trailer homes and finally hide out in a steel shed. I force my panicked breathing to quiet deep breaths. I calm down and listen to them searching for me nearby.*

*Finally after not hearing them anymore I text my accomplices a rough idea of where I am. I come out of the shed, trying to tidy up a couple things that fell inside from when I stormed in there.*

*The cops will be here any second. I see my accomplices car slowly drive by and wave em down. I jump in and lay down and we drive off.*

*I should have trusted my instinct. This was a bad run. But it could have been worse. Instead of being in jail tonight, I am comfortably here writing this text. But this is the reality of shoplifting – or any crime for that matter. No matter how many times you get away with it, it is important to expect to get caught one day. Be ready for it. And when it happens, study the panic, the emotions, the physical responses... know it all well. So the next time you engage in criminal activity, you have a better understanding of the worst case scenario. For me, this is elementary, and there is no place for victimhood or or an outcry of innocence.*

While Covid-19 created the conditions for state repression in the form of “stay-at-home” orders, ironically my opportunity for illegalist fun has expanded! Many businesses are left unattended for weeks at a time, meaning property damage goes longer without being reported. In the midst of the panic, supermarket Loss Prevention and security personnel are focused on the number of items people purchase in each cart without realizing the cartloads of food quietly slipping out the other door.

Before shutting down, many stores like REI, L.L Bean and other places would deactivate their security towers. I am guessing this was due to the high volume of people passing through with purchased merch with hidden tags still attached. Probably to avoid the annoyance of the alarm going off every few seconds, the towers were turned off, leaving open a grand opportunity to simply walk out with security tagged items hassle-free.

The past few weeks got me revisiting old memories of when my understanding of anarchy was that of an activity that only lasted as long as a may day march, a demonstration, or nighttime fun. I remember feeling like anarchy was the moment I wore black pants, shoes, gloves and a t-shirt around my face.

options have failed. Whether people are afraid of violence or not won't change the fact that police kill, and will continue to kill as long as the concept of law enforcement exists. In my opinion there is no “bettering” the police, and there is no “justice” when someone is already being buried six feet deep.

And the police are not all ‘white’. ‘Black’ cops kill ‘black’ people too.

The worst part about the online interpretation of events is that the people spreading this misinformation fail to communicate to the online-world the joy, smiles, singing and dancing of racially diverse rebels as they celebrated the destruction of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Precinct.

I mean shit, imagine being a person of color, harassed by police all your life, and then a day and night comes when you actually get to see a police station burning, and police completely abandoning the area. All this is erased from history when liberals credit it all to a group of people – white supremacists – who didn't exist in those battles in the first place.

To this day as I write this, there are still people spreading conspiracy theories on the internet like the famous “brick bait” video of cops unloading bricks (behind their own building – not in an alley as originally propagated). While I can't say for absolute certainty that there were no white supremacists at the events *at all* (I mean I saw some driving past in pickup trucks yellin' white power shit, and the ‘brown’ dude who rolled up in a truck rockin' pro-police slogans and a confederate flag) I sure as hell didn't see any in the battles. I have seen pictures of ‘black’ people locking arms to protect riot police, white allies turning other ‘white’ people over to the police in the name of ‘black’ support, and ultimately police regaining control and using these pacifying efforts to brutalize *peaceful* protesters.

### **Feral Delinquency**

It is my opinion that the last months expose weaknesses of civilization in very obvious ways. Governmental control had increased as a panic response to social tension and sponta-



first riot. The internet became their ground zero for one of the worst campaigns of lies and fear mongering I have personally ever seen.

As the victories of burning cop cars and police stations circulated online from all over the states, liberals rushed to the scenes in a desperate authoritarian attempt to assert their ideological morality and political program. They insist on a narrative that labels anyone who engages in sabotage as a “white supremacist” or “undercover cop” “infiltrating” the uprising.

Many of these liberals are the same ‘black’ people who failed to stop ‘black’ and ‘brown’ rebels from looting and destroying property. They failed to convince all ‘white’ people to evacuate the riots (because even some ‘white’ people knew not all ‘black’ or ‘brown’ people have a problem with them being there – recognizing their value as accomplices). And in an effort to preserve capitalist, reformist values, liberals of all races sought to halt the looting and vandalism by bombarding social media with blatantly false information. This false information is riddled with catch phrases like “outside agitators” and “white supremacists” in order to emotionally motivate readers to chose a side within a false dichotomy. And those who are not physically on the streets or there with rebels battling police are the target audience of these narrowed, inaccurate representations of reality.

Different ideological motives create different interpretations of events. And since liberals and pacifists tend to dominate social media more than those who are too busy out in the streets, they have an advantage. And since liberals morally frame *all* people of color as obedient, victimist heroes, most people have difficulty admitting that people of color *are* capable of destroying property and participating in violent forms of protest. This also plays into the compulsion to blame ‘white’ people for forms of rebellion considered morally undesirable. Riots/uprisings are not all utopian and pretty. They are the dangerous elements of liberation that occur when all other

After these activities it was back to the “real world”. Back to wage-slavery, back to the daily routine of paying rent and penny-pinching my food stamps for groceries. Sure, there was the occasional clandestine activity along with tabling zines at punk shows or radical events. But there was this divide that always created a separation, always treating anarchy like an extra-curricular activity. Sure, my life was committed to rebellion; the very concept of a zine distro before I named it “Warzone Distro” was conceived while wasting company time on the shitter. Despite wage-slaving, my mind was always fixated on understanding how to cut corners and work the least for the most amount of money. I was the worker who handed my extra hours over to others. Half-day at work due to light truck load? Hell yeah, I’m out!

Over time, anarchy as mere extra-curricular activity just wasn’t enough. And what I mean by that is I became less and less tolerable of bosses, wage-slaving, alarm clocks, paying rent, and penny-pinching. I remembered what it was like being a kid and not having to conform to such obligations. I remembered adventuring all day outside from early morning to late at night. Everyday was a new adventure, and everyday I was learning something new about myself. Then, as a responsible adult I was learning something new about myself. I hated adultism, adulting, and the performative role and identity of “adult”. But I wasn’t tryin’ to become a child again. Those days have come and gone. I began to wonder what an anarchist life that transcended the adult/child binary could look like.

Fast forward years later here I am, jobless but no longer penny-pinching, and older but more youthful than I have ever been. Some say I am the worst of all worlds; hedonistic, violent, and childish. Of course, what these words mean and how they are applied to me is subjective to interpretation, but one thing is for certain; I feel far more free than I have ever felt and experienced. And I have a love affair with crime. It is an intimate

experience — committing crime with a furious contempt for society and the law. Causing disruption and getting away with it compliments my desires for anarchy moment by moment. Nowadays I adventure all day outside from early morning to late at night. And with every criminal activity I am learning more and more about myself. In addition to accepting the fact that my days of joy-riding the fuck out of life will either end in prison or sudden death, I am learning to appreciate the present more than the past or future.

One thing about crime that I have come to realize is a uniqueness that comes with breaking the law, a sense of individual ability, inability, strengths and weaknesses. All are discovered within the experience of breaking the law. And it is *this* experience that I intend to expand in order to discover more about myself, becoming ungovernable in an anti-social sense.

I reflect back on my past self imprisoned by the cult of identity-politics. I remember how one reason to glorify victimhood was to gain social attention and portray the (marginalized) identities assigned to me in a positive light. “Look at me! A responsible queer person of color holding down a job as a law-abiding citizen!”. But why? So I could prove how similar I was to all those ‘white’ hard-working class heroes that America needs to uphold its colonial establishment? Another wage-slave to passively, willfully accept the conditions of my enslavement? To become another christian of color pretending there is an imaginary kingdom above for all us hoodlums that just never got a fair chance in life? Fuck all that.

The reasons for white supremacists, homophobes, patriarchs, and patriots to fear people like me is beyond identity politics; I am a sworn enemy of their control and order. The societal castle they seek to build and maintain will always be the target of my sabotage!

I think most people can see and understand that *embracing* socially assigned identities is *not* necessary for *understanding*

ers and low-income housing units burned to the ground. But this is the difference between the textbook, sugar-coated ideologies of politics and raw, unmediated rage. The revolt didn’t happen due to any teachings of Mao or religious messages from a god. The fires, looting, and attacks against police didn’t *need* Marxism, a transcript of *The Coming Insurrection*, or an academic course on the history of anarchism. All that was needed was the chaotic expression of rage against representations of authority.

As expected, many people on the internet — including many self-proclaimed anarchists — passed judgement on the situation — most often coming from an ideological position that placed value in uniformity and a narrowed range of “acceptable” forms of revolt. In my experience, uprisings like this flourish best when least controlled or organized. The more that expressions of anger are controlled and organized the less anarchistic they become — essentially becoming pacified to accommodate a particular political vision. For me that is undesirable and also unrealistic. Destruction is destruction, violence will be violence, and to expect an uprising to be anything less is naive at best. While some can sit on the sidelines and moralize specific tactics or forms of emotional expression, they disregard the reality that full-fledged warfare has no inherent morality. Businesses that were boarded up and declared “black owned” weren’t spared by any moral consideration; they too were broken into, looted, and subsequently burned to the ground.

Also, in my opinion, the more uncontrollable and unmanageable an uprising remains, the less likely the police will have the ability to adapt to its formation and dominate it. The police had the least control over hundreds of individuals rebelling in such a chaotic manner as to overwhelm them and send them fleeing.

Over the next few days, attacks against the 5<sup>th</sup> Precinct happened while liberals, pacifists, and identity politicians quietly crawled back to avenge their loss and inability to control the

*behind me erupt from a crowd that has now tripled in size. A brawl breaks out near the doors, and then a single rock smashes through the precinct window and is immediately followed by a hail storm of rocks, street cones, water bottles, and anything else within reach. The group of 5–7 ‘black’ pacifists cry out in desperation to stop the destruction, going as far as attempting to physically detain people, but ultimately are overwhelmed. They try to collect the rocks after being thrown and find themselves in multiple physical confrontations while doing so. People from the front of the building run over and join in on the vandalism. Eventually after every window is smashed the crowd moves toward the police parking lot and begin damaging police cars. I finally pause to catch a breath when I hear a stun grenade go off. The police run out from another door and begin shooting rubber bullets and tear gas. The crowd disperses but with hysterical laughs of joy and accomplishment. The 3rd Precinct is in ruins — and little did I know this was all just the beginning.*

The very next day a bigger crowd of mostly ‘black’ and ‘brown’ youth showed up and continued to wage war on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Precinct. By night, a three mile radius was liberated from police control by the people on those streets. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Precinct was breached and taken over. Police abandoned the area all together. Their building was looted and cop cars driven into the street and set on fire. A Target across the parking lot was broken into and looted along with other stores nearby. People celebrated the victory by shooting off their guns in the air. Strangers sang and danced around burned out cop cars, exchanged high-fives in passing, and shared looted food. People casually socialized in front of burning buildings while others threw rocks through the remains of store front windows for target practice.

While it might have seemed like a perfect utopia, it wasn’t divorced from reality. Fights broke out between small factions of people and long-awaited personal conflicts were solved in the now cop-free streets. Business owners shot and killed loot-

how society utilizes them as tools for social control. I think it is equally as easy to see how identity as a tool of revolution is limited and in fact has led to internal conflict within many revolutionary projects. But what blows my mind is the fact that for so many, these identities were not immediately rejected as a primal, personal form of rebellion. But to be fair I think it is safe to say that these identities maintained the power they do because they are so frequently used by leftist organizations for moral persuasion. Through victimhood and innocence, identity politics is used as an appeal-to-all method of creating group-think that ultimately encourages an individual to surrender independent thinking to a god-complex of morality and collectivism. I think this also plays a pretty big role in statism and the rejection of illegalist revolt.

I reject the statist, civilized binary of guilt and innocence, and therefore also reject the internalization of victimhood. I have no use for “call-out culture” or an internet lynch-mob against my enemies. On the internet, attempts to gain public support against one enemy only informs and empowers another enemy (the state) to confiscate my responsibility. And guilt and innocence is a legalistic binary that only serves to judge and divide based on moral determination. I despise the State, all its social manifestations, and it’s enforcement of repression against chaos. Therefore I am not a victim; I am a self-declared enemy in a war against it. I don’t expect pity, a pardon or charity from it, nor from its defenders.

*It was the day Chicago issued its Stay-At-Home order. My partner-in-crime and I were in my home town visiting my mom. While driving home from getting my mom some groceries I notice someone sitting on a park bench alone. “Big Momma” is her name. I was surprised to see her outside in the cold and not indoors at one of the local shelters. Come to find out the shelters had closed their doors probably related to Covid-19. I started to wonder how many others were outside in the cold...*

*My partner and I head over to a park that I used to do Food Not Bombs at and to my surprise there are about 20 people set up camp outside a building's air vent blowing out warm air. We walk over and ask how everyone is doing. Some people, after recognizing me from activist projects years ago, excitedly run over to greet me. They are all the unlucky ones locked out of the shelters at least for that weekend. My partner and I get back in the car and come up with a plan.*

*A half hour later we are at another grocery store. Unlike other times, getting out of this one with free food is going to be a little difficult. The set-up has changed due to heightened security at the door due to Covid-19 and the fear of looting. But it is still possible to get out with a full cart. We load the bottom of the cart with bottled water, multiple loaves of bread, peanut butter, jelly, over 20 bags of mixed dried fruit, fresh apples and bananas. Were ready. We make our way to the door with me leading. My role is to peer around the corner at two self-check out clerks to make sure they aren't looking. If they are, I will pull out my phone like I am making a phone call. If not, I keep walking forward. My partner and the cart close behind, the coast is clear. First set of doors... second set of doors... all good. Finally get to the car and unload into the trunk. Success! Next stop is another grocery store, but we won't be getting food at this one: we're raiding the men's and women's bathrooms for huge rolls of toilet paper. The dispensers can be a little loud opening sometimes, but relatively easy to do with any kind of house key. Two backpacks filled with about three huge rolls each, we are all set.*

*Back at my moms we clean our hands thoroughly before making bags and bags of peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. Once we finish with that were off back to the homeless encampment. Every person gets two sandwiches, two apples, two bananas, some dried fruit and a bottle of water. In addition we wrap the toilet paper rolls in the grocery bags to keep dry and pass them out. We stick around for a bit and exchange laughs and talk shit on the cops. It was good to make new friends and catch up with old friends.*

*“What you or I may or may not consider ‘tactical’ isn't really relevant. This is less a war in the traditional sense and more a storm -uncontrollable and chaotic. This is one of the problems with the left's characterization of ‘the movement’ as something uniform, monolithic, and ideologically consistent. It isn't. It won't be. ‘The movement’ consists of a million individuals with their own individual views and opinions and actions, and it does no one any good to deride anyone who isn't doing things exactly the way you see fit.” Baba Yaga*

### **Another Word For “Black Leadership” is Authoritarianism**

*After marching, we arrive at the 3rd Precinct at East Lake St and Minnehaha Ave. BLM organizers begin howling into the megaphone about demands, with a few prayers and droning chants mixed in. I notice someone slowly creeping up behind me who starts bangin' his fist on the window. Concerned it will break, three bystanders begin quietly shaming him “this ain't the place for that, keep it peaceful!”. The person responds back quietly but with angry tension in his voice “that's the fuckin' problem, y'all muthafuckas never wanna do shit except march and chant...”. Discouraged, he starts to walk away. “I'm with you on that shit fo real tho” I tell him. “That's what's up – fuck all this other shit” he responds while walking away. A minute or so later, I lose my patience for listening to BLM talk about being peaceful and decide to go look for that same individual again. I round the corner to the back of the police station and notice a commotion. A group of about 5-7 ‘black’ folks are blocking the back glass doors of the police station, arguing with a group of about 20 ‘black’ and ‘brown’ angry youth – including the one from earlier. Unable to contain my own frustration I get caught up arguing with the police-defenders as well. Finally, in the middle of the shouting a couple of ‘black’ and ‘brown’ youth begin spray painting “fuck 12” near the commotion. Cheers*

I speak only for myself. When I began writing “Descending into Madness”, it was the same night I had walked out of a Seattle REI with two packs worth over \$300 each. The security tower alarms never went off as I walked right out with two rope-style security tags attached. Prior to walking out I joked with myself that my criminal affairs indicated that I was descending into madness because attempting this was fucking crazy. And then I was successful. And I realized on the car ride home that if it wasn’t for entertaining such courageous insanity I might not have never known that some of these stores have non-operational security towers.

In my opinion, the “Woke Leadership” of leftism leads anarchism over a cliff into a downward accelerating disintegration. Paralyzed by the fear and shame enforced by a new order, some anarchists will never make it to self-emancipation, or independent thinking as a rejection of group-think authority. It is by a narrow, liberal definition of anti-oppression that many individuals define themselves as anarchists – a type of definition that limits anti-oppression to the moralist, humanist confines of civilized society. It is not a coincidence that most anti-oppression praxis requires a statist apparatus to enforce laws that accommodate equal rights. And while there’s nothing wrong with people having equal rights under capitalism, that victory celebrates the power of statist reform rather than anti-authoritarian attack. And in front of this statist power are the “community leaders” or those who have no interest in critiquing authority. Instead, they have built their socio-political careers on petty reforms in the name of “the community” and scold radicals – calling them “outside agitators”. And following behind these leaders are ‘white’ anarchist allies, confused and frustrated, trying to decide between being called a racist for setting shit on fire or a good ally for kissing a ‘black’ preacher’s ass.

*It was good to see they were all maintaining and in high spirits despite the circumstances of the weather and the shelter closures. We left and decided to check other parks for people. Found a few lone wolves who happily took what we had left of the water and sandwiches. We arrive back at my mom’s house and settle in for the night. I open the fridge and giggle while scanning over all the stolen vegan food contemplating what to have for dinner.*

### **The Allyship Coward**

In my opinion, the concept of “Allyship” started with good intentions, but like other aspects of identity politics became sour and ready for immediate disposal. Here is how I feel about “Allyship”: If you *need* a politicized buzzword and concept to motivate you to build bonds with people across gendered or racial categories, your “solidarity” is disingenuous. If your style of communicating is loaded with talking points pre-approved by some Woke Ally 101 workshop, you have become a free-range puppet. Genuine mutual aid or solidarity doesn’t require trendy twitter phrases to motivate bond building. In other words, don’t work with me only because that’s what you read is the “right” thing to do, or because your progressive college professor told you to. Don’t kiss my ass and follow me because I am a *victimized*, ‘marginalized’ or ‘poc voice’. Or because your friends or comrades will guilt you. Don’t let something as fake as socially constructed categories define our relationship. Work with me only if you personally enjoy our interaction, my personality and most importantly *you* want to out of individual desire. I don’t believe in coercive mutual aid: it makes a fool out of two people at once.

There are also those who assume they know how other people think based on racial and gendered assumptions. These are the identity politicians who act as both police and representatives of others, coercing allyship through guilt and shaming campaigns. Using their identity, they declare themselves beyond reproach while utilizing a passive-aggressive method of communication for intimidation. But in my opinion, nobody

is *obligated* to support or listen to them, or any one, especially based on something as flat as identity. I am always weary of those who talk as if they represent the interests of people they have never met. It is foolish to think that just because people are socially assigned similar identities that *every* individual subscribes to the stereotypes of those identities.

Identity politics has successfully offered an understanding of how civilized society works, but as a solution to tearing it all down only leads to boundary policing identities, nationalism, internalized victimhood, and more stereotypes for people to find themselves fighting against.

Wanna know someone's experience? Interact with them directly. Don't make assumptions based on social constructions. Wanna show solidarity with people? Treat them as individuals with unique experiences and histories, not as mere drone members of homogenized groupings. And to those who still obey without questioning, another word for white ally is *still* coward!

### **The Woke Leadership**

Personally, I don't like to use the word "educate" to describe the communication of ideas between two individuals. "Educate" implies the instillation of universal "truths" rather than the horizontal exchange of personal perspectives. The context of which I see this word "Educate" used the most reinforces a social hierarchy between those who are "woke" and those who are not. Do people actually learn anything when the communication of ideas is asserted in a top-down manner? Maybe. But I prefer not to entertain that hierarchy.

Individual people are more than just 'white', 'brown' or 'black', 'male' or 'female', or whatever social construction assigned to them at birth. Therefore, communicating with identity-based assumptions will almost always come off as condescending. I see shit like "educate your friends", or "get educated", as if to direct toward a Church of Social Justice in order to be "awakened". And apparently the capitalist men-

tality of further monetizing information is acceptable without question. Some think the 'labor' of answering questions merits a wage, citing something as voluminous as a Google search if one is unable to pay. Ironically, many questions come in good-faith, and are from well-intending activists who endure being talked down to in the first place. In my opinion, this elitist way of responding to well-intending people discourages their empowerment by trivializing their personal histories and guiltting them into accepting others as paramount. There is a collectivism to this method of "educating" which creates the foundation of another social system of coercion. I have no interest in contributing to the materializing of that. I can offer a critical view or counter a point without socially stratifying the exchange.

I consider each and every individual mind a rushing, wild waterway of ideas that spill out when the dam of social subordination breaks down. Society collectively discourages any wildness, domesticating the individual and ultimately creating a caged animal within the mind. Beneath all the social conditioning there is a unique individual that discovers itself in chaotic contradiction with society.

Uniformity is the enemy of free expression. There is no "education", only popular opinion enforced by those who intend to think for others. I think ideas and perspectives can be exchanged in a way that doesn't resemble an authoritarian model of top-down communication. I'm not an educator and I seek to educate no one. Rather, as they grow and develop, I share my personal experiences and ideas with the world with the understanding that others will differ and have unique experiences of their own.

For example one thing that I have come to realize is that the illegalist life isn't for everyone. I have seen some people do it for a while and ultimately break under the weight of the very real stress of criminal activity. So when I write these words about criminality – and my contempt for identity politics –