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# in TENSION

*an anarchist agitation*

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**Tax Resistance  
Agents Provocateurs  
ICE & Technology  
& more**

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Free***



**In Tension** *is a journal acting as a place for anarchist analysis, dialogue, and reflection on activity that extends beyond single subcultures, issues, and social groups. Intended for people beginning to learn what anarchists are fighting and creating as well as people who have identified with anarchism for decades, In Tension is a way for us to talk to each other and report actions, issues, and initiatives that are otherwise under- or un-reported. We are interested in promoting the practice of doing things for ourselves and connecting our struggles locally, regionally, and internationally. In Tension also functions as an archive of sorts, a way to foster collective remembering.*

*In Tension is published in so-called Bloomington, Indiana each season. We welcome submissions of actions, events, and analysis from different perspectives that hold true to an anti-authoritarian, anti-state, and liberatory lens.*

*Please keep submissions to a length of ~1500 words or fewer. See [InTension.noblogs.org](http://InTension.noblogs.org) for instructions on how to submit anonymously and securely. For other correspondence, reach us at [InTension@riseup.net](mailto:InTension@riseup.net).*



*To us, to live life as anarchists is not about accepting a hollow title or stagnant ideology, but is about an active, intentional, and eternal becoming. It is not just about the ideas we have but how we put them into the world, and the strength we must cultivate to weather what unfolds when living against the dominant order of this society. We live in tension with this world every day: its jobs, prisons, ideals, social roles, and identities. We notice the ways others do too, and we refuse to avoid conflict in pursuit of comfort or for an illusion of safety. We chose "In Tension" as our title as a way to embrace the difficult balance of this beautiful and painful path. We accept the discomforts and challenges of being against so much of this world, and understand it as a reality of creating lives true to our values and hearts. We embrace our hostility for this world, and learn where to channel our time and energy to see ideas come to fruition. We notice and embrace ruptures small and large, where we can see through the facade of this world. It is neither complacency, nor an ascetic militancy, but a fostering of joy through the creation of our lives and a living-against. Rejecting a finality of destination, it is choosing to stretch beyond what is familiar, comfortable, or known, in a continual pursuit of freedom.*



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# 1970: ROTC Ablaze

Richard Nixon announced on April 30, 1970 that US ground troops were beginning an invasion of Cambodia in order to kill more Vietnamese people. This was after continued pressure from Vice President Agnew, and one night after having dinner with Henry Kissinger and a banker friend. By the following night, May 1st, college military offices were being set aflame.

*May 1, 1970 Greencastle, IN: An explosion and fire damaged the ROTC office and library at DePauw University. May 5, 1970 South Bend, IN & Valparaiso, IN: Notre Dame ROTC firebombed, and VU administration building destroyed by firebomb, respectively. May 6, 1970 Greencastle IN: The Air Force ROTC building was set on fire at DePauw University. May 15, 1970 Bloomington, IN: a fire in the ROTC annex at Indiana University caused heavy damage; the fire was believed to be the result of arson. May 20, 1970 Charlestown, IN: An explosion of unknown origin at the Indiana Ammunition Depot injured 20 persons.*

Surrounding states also reported firebombings of selective service offices, other ROTC facilities, and a police recruitment office in early May. By the end of the month the *New York Times* reported that:

*“More than 30 Reserve Officers Training Corps buildings have been fire-bombed on campuses this term by antiwar protesters, and the Defense Department is worried. For the Army, more than the other services, the R.O.T.C. programs at colleges represent the single most important source of officer material.”*

In June of that year, anarchist periodical *Fifth Estate* published a centerfold feature on those more inflammatory forms of struggle after “almost 600 college campuses as well as countless high schools joined the national strike, as chaos swept the nation for many days.”

These were powerful contributions toward ending the US invasion of Vietnam that had begun fifteen years earlier.

These arsons were occurring around the same time the IU student body largely voted in favor of retaining the ROTC program, according to the IU ROTC history page. By 1991, student protests led to another vote where this time IU Faculty Council and the IU Student Council largely favored banning ROTC on the Bloomington campus if the Department of Defense didn't change its position on recruiting gay people. A petition in town, garnering 1700 signatures, also favored the same. The IU Board of Trustees, however, voted 8-1 to allow the ROTC to remain on campus.

ROTC was a compulsory course for men at IU until 1964 when student pressure led the university to make it optional. Herman B. Wells and other administration at the time made the decision to retain the program rather than get rid of it entirely, prior to putting it up to a vote by the student body. Then Army Captain Douglas A. Haywood claimed in 1982 that ROTC was targeted not as an anti-military expression, but because it was the “closest Federal program to the public... It was convenient to direct dissatisfaction with the Government through the program.”

Today, IU Bloomington ROTC offices are located at 814 East Third Street, and a US Marine Corps Officer Selection Station at 530 E. Kirkwood Ave. next to Urban Outfitters. There's also an Army National Guard recruitment office on Morton Street across from City Hall, an Air Force recruitment office at 1800 West 17th Street, and an army recruitment office at 115 IN-46 (on the bypass by the mall).



*The burned-out shell of the ROTC building at the University of Kentucky after an attack in 1970.*

# The Spectre of the Agent Provocateur



When I saw the video of three or four people, their voices dripping with condescension, heckling a flag-burner in Minneapolis I thought, *here we go again. Have we learned nothing?* I have no idea of the context of the flag-burning, who the flag-burner is, or what their motivation, but I do know there are a hell of a lot of good reasons someone would burn the American flag. The hecklers are very certain there is only one explanation: that the flag burner is an agent provocateur.

While the idea of an agent provocateur is a few hundred years old, we still don't have a precise understanding of what it means. Technically, it means an agent of the state (typically paid) who incites others to do crimes in order to either invite repression or discredit protesters and their cause. There are a lot of assumptions in this definition. At the very foundation is the belief that here is a benevolent or redeemable aspect of the state that can be persuaded by moral righteousness, that the key to social change is being

palatable to a large number of people, and that violence and crime discredit protesters and their goals in the eyes of these people. The concept assumes that only an undercover enemy would commit a crime and that the state requires justification for its repressive violence. Already the concept is called into question.

## **Agents of the State**

Being an agent provocateur requires working on behalf of the state. Anything else can be categorized as either a misguided participant or one who simply chooses tactics that the accuser disagrees with. Sometimes it is impossible to know which category someone falls under. Other times, such as when someone faces state violence and imprisonment for their actions, like many anarchists and other have, it is very clear they are not state agents. Accusing someone of "doing the state's work" without being a literal state agent is extremely fraught. This requires an incisive understanding of what the state's work actually is. In many movements, there are literal

agents of the state who are knowingly welcomed and celebrated. Among anti-ICE resistance in the Twin Cities, for example, are elected politicians. People are still questioning why local police are not protecting residents and protesters from the Feds. Liberals cheered the Philadelphia Chief of Police's warning against ICE coming to her city. Under no circumstances can a Chief of Police be part of the resistance but a flag-burner is "doing the state's work for them." It is not just the politicians and enforcers. Many protesters and movement participants engage in lobbying and reform, even patriotism. There are those who drape themselves in the flag and those who tear it down and set it on fire. Guess which one empowers the state.

## **Legitimacy & Outside Agitators**

Implicit in the concept of the agent provocateur is the idea that there are both legitimate and illegitimate actors and legitimate and illegitimate actions. It is not only a question of what someone is doing, but who is doing it. Here we begin to converge with the

spectre of the outside agitator. The outside agitator can be applied more broadly; they need not be an agent of the state. They could be an undercover fascist, but also a Northerner, a white person, an anarchist. The imprecision of this label is part of its appeal; it can be used to attempt to delegitimize anyone. It can be used to impose an entirely wrong identity on someone because of their actions. Who determines who is a valid participant and who is “outside”?

Many white people from the North went to the South during the civil rights movement, especially during Mississippi Freedom Summer of 1964, to help register Black people to vote. They were accused of being outsiders interfering with the South’s business, implying that Southerners themselves would never do such a thing, not the white ones at least. Fueled by antisemitism and anti-communism, the spectre of the Jewish communist was especially dangerous. People were murdered. Martin Luther King, Jr himself said, “All men are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be, and you can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be...This is the inter-related structure of reality.” This applies just as profoundly to the white woman who was accused of burning down a Wendy’s in Atlanta in 2020 where her Black boyfriend was murdered by police.<sup>1</sup>

Her situation demonstrates that legitimacy is not determined strictly by identity. Even a white woman can have deeply personal and heart-breaking reasons to do crime and violence in an act of protest and revenge. In the video from Minneapolis the hecklers repeatedly

shout “What are you doing here?” in the flag-burner’s face. “Are you a boogaloo boy? An accelerationist?” They are trying to establish an identity that invalidates the burning of the flag. However, these questions are not posed in curiosity; it was merely a taunt to get the them to admit what the hecklers have already decided is true. An honest study of capitalism, the U.S. empire, even liberal democracy would show us there is no shortage of valid reasons for all types of people to act destructively. More suspicious than acts of escalation are the people who do not seem to understand this.

### **The Strategy of Nonviolence**

The spectre of the agent provocateur cannot be disentangled from the ideology of nonviolence. It is based on the assumption that violence, or even vandalism/a little property destruction is “bad optics” and “alienates” potential supporters. Anyone who is fear-mongering about agents provocateurs is also pushing the false narrative that successful movements are nonviolent. The only way they can do this is to, by either ignorance or malice, erase and obfuscate violent and destructive elements of a struggle. These myths have been well debunked by books such as *Pacifism as Pathology* and *How Nonviolence Protects the State*.<sup>2</sup> The fearmongers also reveal who and what they consider to be valid movements for social change. You will not find things like revolts by enslaved Black people, armed resistance by Indigenous Peoples against colonizers, or GI mutinies during the Vietnam War on their list of reference points. If they appear at all, they can only exist as things appropriate for other places and other times, but never here and now.

Fundamental, too, is the misunderstanding of what violence and crime actually are. Burning a

flag is not a crime, nor is it inherently violent. Crime is constructed not only on a macro level by law-makers and institutions whose heinousness is self-evident, but on the individual level of against whom and under what circumstances a prosecutor or attorney general files charges. What is a crime when one person does it is not a crime when someone else does it. Violence, too, is an unsettled category, but I will leave that for others to define.

Prevalent, still, is the fantasy of justification. Rowdy protesters are “giving them a reason” to tear gas, beat, and arrest us. Resisting federal occupations is “giving them what they want” which is a reason to institute martial law. A study of history reveals states to be quite willing to repress peaceful protesters and nonviolent elements of a movement alongside the other elements, when deemed necessary. According to Tom Nomad, in his 2025 zine *A Call For New Lines of Conflict* about the second Trump presidency, “Within liberal democratic forms disagreement is tolerated, and even encouraged, to the degree that it participates in reducing politics to discourse, which protest fundamentally does. Once that limit is exceeded, and either direct conflict emerges, or demands cannot be accommodated within the state form, the niceties of rights and civil liberties fall away, and these states revert to raw police violence just as much as those states termed dictatorships.”<sup>3</sup> Violent repression is a question of how much the state can or is willing to accommodate, not of how disciplined or morally righteous the activists are. We estimate the state to be responsive to protest much more often than it actually is. One of the aspects of the increasing facism of this moment is that institutions, from the federal government to the local university, have made it very clear that they do not (and do not

have to) care what we think. The actions of ICE agents in Minneapolis are just the latest and well-publicized examples of the heavy-handed and even random state violence that all countless law enforcement agencies engage in every day. For many people, the unpredictable violence is nothing new; they know the state does not require justification. We are already in a condition of daily violence and open conflict.

The protest managers have gotten it in their heads that the morally superior thing for a protester to do when harmed or threatened is to not react, to “stay peaceful” instead of defending oneself or each other. This is essential to their strategy, as such an interaction will, presumably, make their attackers look bad and the peaceful party will gain the most public support. And this public support is supposed to result in a victory for their cause, winning the reforms they seek. First, at this point in the American experiment, it is clear that popularity or public support is disconnected from actual policies and decisions. Our “democracy” is much more mediated and much less real than the reformists would have us believe. Second, the question of what garners public support is not a simple one. Many people are much more inspired by the bravery of people fighting back and defending themselves and each other than they are by easily-ignorable smug liberals doing pacifism, “witness,” or claiming victimhood. Take, for example, the famous poll that said 54% of Americans think the burning of the 3rd precinct in Minneapolis in 2020 was justified after George Floyd’s murder. Third, we cannot assume we are operating on the same strategy when we do not all share a vision, a goal, or a horizon of social transformation. All struggles are (and should be) heterogeneous, complex, and contradictory. The protest

managers who seek to discipline participants into their singular, outdated vision do more damage than those who engage in self-defense and escalation.

### **Risk Assessment**

We have addressed the theoretical miscalculations underpinning the idea of the agent provocateur. And put the concern over optics and loss of public support in perspective. There are, however, a handful of other risks to consider. One, as mentioned above, is the opposite: management, disciplining, and peace-policing of protesters.

Second, it is true that escalation entails risk. Acts of vandalism, destruction, and violence are criminalized, even more so when they are seen as taken in an overtly political context. One way that people mitigate the risk is to do this kind of action in a covert way instead of openly during a protest, though this route loses visibility and the likelihood of spreading. Another way is to develop and proliferate best practices for not getting identified or caught. We also develop infrastructure to take care of each other when people face consequences like doxxing, harassment, criminal cases, or imprisonment. Instead of denouncing escalation, we can ask, how can we support people taking risks, prepare for the consequences, and insulate our movements against repression?

Third is the very real risk of entrapment. The way that state agents conduct entrapment operations differs from the common conception of agents provocateurs in its specificity and its duration. The agents begin by identifying vulnerable individuals who are more likely to be manipulated into committing crimes. Often these are crimes the person would not otherwise desire to carry out. Mostly,

in our current context, we see the state focusing its operations on young Muslim men and then accusing them of terrorism and locking them in a Communication Management Unit.<sup>4</sup> We also have cases from movement spaces like eco-defense, Occupy Wall Street, and NATO protests in Chicago in 2012.<sup>5</sup> We inoculate against these attacks not by further isolating and excluding someone who seems overly eager or awkward, even “sketchy,” but by including them in the things its safe to include them in and helping them learn discernment and best practices, as we continue to develop our own.

1. *Rayshard Brooks was murdered by an Atlanta Police Department office on June 12, 2020. The following day, the Wendy’s near where he was murdered was set on fire. His girlfriend, Natalie White, was charged with arson.*
2. *See Pacifism as Pathology (1998) by Ward Churchill and Michael Ryan & How Nonviolence Protects the State (2007) by Peter Gelderloos*
3. *theanarchistlibrary.org/library/tom-nomad-a-call-for-new-lines-of-conflict*
4. *Daniel McGowan did 7 years in federal prison for arsons claimed by the Earth Liberation. Read his experience with and assessment of CMUs here: <https://www.prisonlegalnews.org/news/2009/jun/15/little-guantanamo-exposing-the-cmu/> For more on the targeting of young Muslim people for terrorism charges, see <https://www.vice.com/en/article/the-line-between-fbi-stings-and-entrapment-has-not-blurred-its-gone/>*
5. *Case of Eric McDavid in 2006: <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/jenny-of-sacramento-prisoner-support-the-myth-of-entrapment> Entrapment of participants in the Occupy Cleveland in 2012: <https://www.fifthestate.org/archive/398-summer-2017/free-the-cleveland-4/> The NATO 3 from a Chicago protest also in 2012: <https://truthout.org/articles/terrorism-plot-or-entrapment-the-case-of-the-nato-3/>*

# How To: Find Someone in State Custody

You saw someone get arrested. You can't get ahold of your friend after they said they were getting pulled over. Maybe you heard about someone serving time for action and want to show them support. Whatever it is, you want to find someone in state custody. The place to start is your best guess at where they are. If they were recently taken in, usually this is the jail in the county where they were arrested. In larger cities, they will often be taken to a specific police precinct or station of the arresting officers. If you're not sure which county or jurisdiction, think about what route someone might have been on or, for higher profile situations, check news reports. That's not something you can do immediately, of course, but often within a day or two something will come out. You might end up needing to look or call around a few different places. ICE detention is different. It is best to get to know how ICE is operating in a certain locale and where they tend to take people. It's possible it will be a specific ICE detention facility. If someone has ICE concerns but are arrested by a local department, they are likely to be booked into the local jail, given an ICE hold and then later picked up by ICE (or not). If you're looking for someone who has already been sentenced and is serving time, they will be in a state prison system or BOP (the feds). Perhaps they will stay in county if their sentence is less than 2 years, but that varies by jurisdiction. Processing is always

going to take time; you often won't be able to know immediately.

The second thing you need is the person's state name, or A-number for immigrants. This is why people will try to ask someone as they're getting detained what their name and/or A-number is. If you don't know their name, you can troll the mugshot sites and check recent arrests in certain counties and guess who it might be by the timing and the charges. There might be pictures that can help. A lot of these sites are not always reliable, but they can give you some clues. Check out [RecentlyBooked.com](http://RecentlyBooked.com). Some county jails will also list bookings on their website. This tends to be more reliable. Similarly, you can narrow it down based on the date & time of arrest and the charges. Having a date of birth can help differentiate between people with the same name.

## 1. Local Jails

[vinelink.vineapps.com/search/IN/Person](http://vinelink.vineapps.com/search/IN/Person)

Although there is a lot of variability in how jails publicly share booking and inmate information, digital records and searches are increasingly common, making tracking people down a lot easier. Visit the jail website to check what is available. Regardless of what station they are booked at, the information should end up in the same county-wide database. Here is Monroe County, and many other places, bookings can be checked via

[VinkLink.com](http://VinkLink.com). However, an old-fashioned phone call is always an option to keep on the table. Smaller jails can actually be more responsive this way than large prison systems or big city jails. It might be hard to get a real person on the phone, let alone a person who actually knows and can



help, but repeated calling can pay off. It is public information and jails don't usually prioritize inmates' privacy, so if you call asking if a specific person is in custody, they should tell you.

## 2. State prison

[offenderlocator.idoc.in.gov](http://offenderlocator.idoc.in.gov)

State prisons are where most people go after sentencing (unless their case is federal, see below), or if their parole gets revoked. Tracking people in prison works similarly to jails, but there tends to be less variability. Most, if not all, will have an online inmate locator. Just search the state plus "inmate locator." There you can find someone by name or number. The locator will tell you their number

Search by Incarcerated Name

Searches may be done by last name or by both first and last names. To narrow your results, searches should be done by both first and last names when known. If you know the incarcerated individual's DOC number, searching by this method eliminates one step in the process.

Last Name:

First Name:

SEARCH RESET

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Search by DOC Number

DOC Number:

SEARCH RESET

and what facility they are located at. Sometimes people will disappear during transfers, or if they go to county for court hearings, but they should show back up soon. The Indiana DOC inmate locator is pretty reliable.

### 3. Bureau of Prisons *bop.gov/inmateloc*

The BOP is the federal system. This means they were charged and sentenced by the federal government, not a state. The BOP inmate locator works just like the state systems. It will tell you what facility someone is being held at.

### 4. Immigration and Customs Enforcement *locator.ice.gov* *ice.gov/contact/field-offices*

ICE keeps a similar online locator tool, but it is a lot less reliable than the others. Many more people do not show up, or they do not get updated

when transferred. It is more difficult to get a helpful employee on the phone. To search for a detainee requires knowing their country of birth and either their A-number (if they have one) or their name. It can be helpful to try different variations on a name, especially if it is not the traditional English first & last combination. For example, if someone has two last names, try them both. One could have been entered as a middle name, etc. If you're struggling with the locator, you can also contact the field office for the place they were picked up. If a person already has a removal order, they may be deported quickly and no longer in the system. If they do not have a removal order, they can be in the system for quite some time. Tracking someone in ICE custody can be so difficult that people sometimes call in a journalist or local official to help and get ICE to take the search more serious. Even that does not work all of the time, and some people are "disappeared" in the system.

## Reaching Out

Most of the time, there will be both a physical mail and digital mail option for getting in touch with somebody in state custody. The website for the detaining agency should have the inmate mailing address. This is often different from the street or office address of the facility. They will also list any mail guidelines, like the color paper and ink that can be used, if photos can be sent, etc. They can be either department-wide or facility specific. Make sure to check both and follow these closely. Write with a return address that included both a first and last name, but it does not have to be your state name. Writing letters usually does not require being on an approved list like phone or visitation does.

The website will also guide you to the digital mail options. This will be done by a third party such as Securus, Connect Network, or Access Corrections where you will have to set up an account. Here you have to give your state name and often upload a photo of your ID.

When communicating with someone in custody, don't say sketchy things or talk about their case. It is all being recorded and monitored.

## Online Detainee Locator System Search Menu

### Search by Biographical Information

When searching by name, a detainee's first and last names are required and must be an exact match (e.g., John Doe will not find Jon Doe or John Doe-Smith). When inputting a hyphenated last name into the Online Detainee Locator System, please include hyphen in order for the locator to find the individual (e.g., Doe-Smith). You are also required to select the detainee's Country of Birth. (\* Required Field)

First Name: \*

Last Name: \*

Country of Birth: \*  
-- Select a Country --

Month:  Day:  Year:

[Search by Biographical Information](#)

### Search by A-Number

If you know the detainee's A-Number, ICE recommends you use the A-Number search. The A-Number must be exactly nine digits long. If the A-Number has fewer than nine digits, please add zeros at the beginning. You are also required to select the detainee's correct Country of Birth. (\* Required Field)

A-Number: \*

Country of Birth: \*  
-- Select a Country --

[Search by A-Number](#)

date accessed: 09/27/20022



# Beware the Hand That Heals : Madness and the Mechanisms of Social Control, Part II

THIS IS THE CONTINUATION OF AN  
ARTICLE PRINTED IN ISSUE IV OF *IN  
TENSION*

Indiana had a number of asylums, some of which began as tuberculosis treatment facilities. Prior to asylums, people in Indiana deemed mentally ill were confined to jails and almshouses. Many hospitals here were created as farm colonies, “where patients would labor as part of their treatment”. Labor was considered to be a great source of amusement for patients, kept them busy from their thoughts, and created profit for the institution.<sup>1</sup> Central State Hospital in Indianapolis opened in 1848, and eventually the need for services grew to be too great; Indiana opened three other facilities, including Logansport State Hospital, opened in 1888, which still operates today. Between 1952–1954, more

than 300 lobotomies were performed at Logansport, among innumerable other travesties. The farm colony model feels reminiscent of RFK Jr’s somewhat recent idea for “wellness camps”: his imagining of a rural farm retreat, where people go screen-free and detox from drugs, including prescription drugs, learn skills and work on “re-parenting.” Whether this sounds like a beautiful getaway or a forced labor camp depends a bit on your experiences, status and trust in authority figures and the state, but his idea isn’t new, with many religious groups offering this as a way to deal with ‘troubled teens’ and other misfits.<sup>2</sup>

So, what’s this all mean for our modern era? Trump’s executive order hopes to accomplish a few things, summarized by IDHA-NYC: it is promoting

greater use of involuntary psychiatric holds and institutionalization – and attempting to roll back existing legal protections that limit forced interventions. It is incentivizing states to enforce laws against squatting and loitering – tying funding access to carceral approaches. It is defunding harm reduction and housing efforts and expanding surveillance by empowering agencies to share health-related data on unhoused people with law enforcement.<sup>3</sup> Trump’s order is, surprisingly, framed in the language of care and safety for both those he is targeting and the ‘normal citizens’ allegedly impacted by the criminality and social issues he’s attributing to houseless communities. This order exists to incarcerate more and more people, and the distinctions between asylum and prison will continue to

blur. While the American prison system functions very smoothly, and seems unlikely to adopt even the guise of social justice, it is important to watch the ways that prisons and policing expand, to spread hostility towards prisons as well as a similar hostility towards the mental health facility, and to resist invitations from liberals or leftists to view it as or allow its function under the idea that its a better option than prison.

In Bloomington, we see this carceral spread in Stride's Mental Health Crisis Centers. Claiming to be a "safe alternative to emergency departments and jails," Stride is run by the substance-use treatment nonprofit Centerstone (who recently merged with Brightli and their affiliate companies, forming the largest nonprofit behavioral health provider in the US). Funded by a coalition of 40 organizations, mainly government agencies and nonprofits, Stride is located in the former overflow site of the Monroe County Jail. Offering intervention support for those experiencing mental health or substance-related crisis, Stride also has a mobile team that responds to calls. Stride probably does help people in tangible ways, partly because it is resourced by institutions interested in ridding themselves of the 'problem' of those in crisis. Stride offers 23 hours of diversion for people who are non-violent, which leaves one wondering how they define this on a case-by-case basis in real time, given the ways in which people's behavior is interpreted very differently based on race, class and gender. It is not a shelter, so sleeping is not permitted, nor do they feed visitors. In a push to reach more people, Stride initiated a billboard campaign that is largely funded by Cook medical, with support from the City of Bloomington, Bloomington Police Department, Monroe County Sheriff's Office, IU

Health and the Monroe County Board of Commissioners.<sup>4</sup> Stride exists in the context of Bloomington's Community Policing model, an attempt to redeem the image and role of the police and to cultivate an aura of 'care' in spite of the violence they enact.



Set in the context of Trump's executive order, as well as the 2026 Senate Bill 285 which would make public sleeping and camping a Class C Misdemeanor, we can see the state of Indiana extending their reach of control. With Bill 285, individuals would be issued one warning, then, after two days, if found camping within 300 feet of where the warning was issued, they could be jailed for up to 60 days and fined up to \$500. 'Delinquent' citizens will go to jail or into a nonprofit behavioral health institution meant to funnel them into being 'good': housed, employed and sober or at least actively working towards these things. Republican senator Cyndi Carrasco, who authored the bill, said that "we have a responsibility to do something to help people who are living on streets in encampments that pose health and safety risks."<sup>5</sup> She claims the bill is not intended to criminalize

houseless people but provide an opportunity for intervention. Again we see politicians, municipalities and institutions adopting the language of care while destroying autonomy and enacting violence.

The book *Bang Up and Smash: Women's Prisons, Probation and Bail Hostels* by ASBO details Women's Prisons in the U.K. and illustrates a disturbing melding of asylum and prison. Prisons in the U.K. have continued to perfect their matrix of control "behind a veneer of public health, rehabilitation, and cleanliness... co-opting the language of the left (of equalities, reform, mutual aid) while increasing repression (*ASBO*, 10). Criminality is viewed as an example of social disorder, a contagion that must be stopped. A glaring contradiction which is the basis for women's prisons is that "people are vilified for their criminal cunning, whilst being patronised as examples of female feeble mindedness (138). In 2015 the UK Department of Health claimed that about 21,000 prisoners, nearly a quarter of the prison population have Bipolar Disorder, Depression or Personality Disorders. As ASBO asserts, its hard to know if people are locked-up because of their 'disorder', or if it is being caused by incarceration, as well as if a diagnosis is even legitimate in the first place. There's no way to live unaffected by the brutalities of prison, or the brutalities of daily life, outside prison.

The U.K. has 2 main 'behavior modification' programs, or prison-within-prisons, which involve a lot of group work and therapy including drama and art therapy. All sessions are led by screws (correctional officers) and a "fair amount of Stockholm Syndrome occurs." These programs expose prisoners to even further scrutiny, and the

prison can find innumerable reasons to justify extending one's sentence. ASBO notes that one prisoner, despite complying with many of the stipulations of these programs, had her chance at parole knocked back two years for cutting her hair, as this was indicative of impulsive behavior that made her unprepared to return to life outside prison.

Like most prisons, drug use is rampant, and "discourse around drug use is used to criminalize and pathologize women...[who] often receive longer sentences for drug-related crimes," while at the same time pumping prisoners full of pharmaceutical medications, refusal of which can result in swift disciplinary measures (171). People who do not actively engage with treatment programs or who are private are labeled trouble makers, and their reluctance to disclose personal information is seen as proof of "minimising their actions" and failing to take responsibility for "offending" and so-called 'destructive behaviors'" (179). An emphasis is placed on individual failure in regards to rehabilitation, and feelings of guilt and shame are perpetuated in order to coerce compliance.

While these ideas and approaches toward difference, 'mental illness,' criminality, and houselessness are not new, the level of technology and surveillance that are a part of our daily lives make this period unprecedented. The easy access of vast information, its spreading via social media, as well as state surveillance of our communications, movements and ideas mean we are entering an uncertain terrain. While we can't control our doctors sharing information, we can control what we disclose to them, as well as what we share online. More and more people have begun to identify with diagnoses and disorders, especially online,

where identity categories are a way to communicate experiences to people we don't have relationships with. In light of history, its worthwhile to resist the pathology that comes alongside diagnoses because these categories are revealed to be rooted in all the things we are against. It is of course much more complicated. Destigmatizing experiences around mental health or 'illness' is incredibly vital; it can be life-saving. Diagnoses can be incredibly validating, illuminating, and relieving for people who have struggled throughout their life, oftentimes alone or in silence. But we can explore diagnoses without overly-identifying with them, or wearing them as some sort of badge.

This is certainly only one layer, but we need better options. What are ways to maintain hostility and to get the relief or help we need? Society does not teach people how to care for or support one another. Our institutions and relationships are often built on hierarchy and revolve around punishment. Anarchist subculture does not exist in a vacuum, and our relationships and projects still crumble under poor communication skills, interpersonal issues, and an inability to navigate conflict, as well as an inability to embrace vulnerability about our issues and struggles. In my mind, the goal is about increasing our capacity for these skills and experiences and learning to sit through hard shit together, while still embracing voluntary association and striving not to become some giant anarchist health-care co-op or being in service to people in need whom we are not in relationship with.

So, what is left for us? How do we maintain our hostility if we also need some relief? As unrest with this world continues to grow, so will power's desire to isolate people, make our survival more difficult and tamp-down

on revolt. The state is cultivating creative ways to pathologize and incarcerate us, whether in asylum or prison. If our inclinations towards resisting authority and challenging dominant societal norms are being pathologized, then the only way forward can be to resist these institutions, their diagnoses and their treatment plans. And while this is a beautiful idea and worthy approach, it also falls short. Not everyone's brain challenges manifest in ways that merely require we embrace our wildness and lash out against this world. The ways that society is embedded in us run very deep, and its not always as simple embracing our desire to lash-out. What are pathways for those who are struggling with daily functioning, or those who are grappling with experiences that make social relationships difficult? Various anti-authoritarian groups have raged against psych-wards and involuntary institutionalization, notably the Insane Liberation Front in Portland, OR, Mental Patient's Liberation Project of NYC, and the Network Against Psychiatric Assault in San Francisco. In their zine, a group called Psychological Emancipation for Revolutionary Abolition (PERA) details a revolutionary approach, linking prisons and asylums and noting the anti-black and patriarchal history of those institutions. They encourage active struggle against psych-wards alongside developing interpersonal skills as revolutionaries, including bolstering psychological stability through a non-hierarchical "psychological affinity," which sounds like finding people who you share political affinities with and who share similar mental struggles and learning to work through them together. PERA also emphasizes developing personal and collective skills to improve our psychological state.<sup>6</sup>

While we cannot predict what lies ahead, we can use history to inform our path forward. Scrutinizing the ways in which our society recuperates words and flattens and pathologizes experiences can allow us to pivot, subverting their attempts at solidifying the ‘other’. This digitized age produces new challenges for encounter and connection, and new ways to be surveilled and managed; navigating them cautiously, if at all, is wise. What knowledge can we take from the field of mental health, and what should we discard? What tools can help us navigate our internal struggles without falling prey to the coercion of these institutions? If the aim is ultimately a pacified, controlled society, one that toils and spends without complaint, then it is up to us

as individuals, and within our social formations, to decide how to resist this pacification. It is unlikely that in the U.S. we will see much of a re-branding of prisons, as they function very effectively as is. But their web of control grows larger by the day, as evidenced by the spread of mental and behavioral health institutions that function with similar aims. For prisons and their counterparts, we must accept nothing less than their total destruction. Alongside this, we must be honest about the limits of our capacities in caring for one another, and seeing each other through crises; crises that will only grow more inflamed as this world crumbles. Hopefully, in this honesty, we can find new paths forward for ourselves and those we care about.

*ASBO, Bang Up & Smash: Women’s Prisons, Probation and Bail Hostels.*

*Active Distribution. February 2022.*

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On Wishes  
Mahmoud Darwish

Don't say to me:  
Would I were a seller of bread in Algiers  
That I might sing with a rebel.  
Don't say to me:  
Would I were a herdsman in the Yemen  
That I might sing to the shudderings of time.  
Don't say to me:  
Would I were a cafe waiter in Havana  
That I might sing the victories of sorrowing women.  
Don't say to me:  
Would I worked as a young laborer in Aswan  
That I might sing to the rocks.  
My friend,  
The Nile will not flow into the Volga,  
Nor the Congo or the Jordan into the Euphrates.  
Each river has its source, its course, its life.  
My friend, our land is not barren.  
Each land has its time for being born.  
Each dawn a date with a rebel.

عن الأمنيات

محمود درويش

لا تقل لي:  
ليتني بائع خبز في الجزائر  
لأغني مع ثائر  
لا تقل لي:  
ليتني راعي مواش في اليمن  
لأغني لانتفاضات الزمن  
لا تقل لي:  
ليتني عامل مقهى في هافانا  
لأغني لانتصارات الحزاني  
لا تقل لي:  
ليتني أعمل في أسوان حقلاً صغير  
لأغني للصخور  
يا صديقي لن يصب النيل في الفولغا  
ولا الكونغو، ولا الأردن، في نهر الفرات  
كل نهر، وله نبع... ومجرى... وحياة  
يا صديقي... أرضنا ليست بعافر  
كل أرض، ولها ميلادها  
كل فجر، وله موعد ثائر

# Defined by Action

- 1 “We took out a flock camera downtown on December 18th, and as of Jan 30 it is still broken. May the rest fall soon, along with the rest of the surveillance state and this necrotic husk of an empire. Fly free – fuck flock!”  
- unravel.noblogs.org



- 2 “At the winter solstice, i took out the lens of the flock camera on 11th and rogers with a brick. i would've taken out the solar panel too, but my ladder was too short. next time. at least, since it looks fine from a distance, it may take a while for them to notice.”  
- unravel.noblogs.org



- 3 Neo-nazis marching in Arkansas last December got pulled over afterward, resulting in the exposure of their members -- including Zachary Platter (age 36) of Bloomington.



- 4 Wheatpastes railing against the surveillance state, against flock cameras, and to “cut the net of control” from LA to Gaza go up during the City Hall protest on January 30th.

- 5 Graffiti reading “Fuck ICE” and “Fuck Acadis” seen on the windows of the passageway between the Fountain Square Mall and the parking garage on February 16th.

# Tax Resistance

*\*Disclaimer! I'm not an accountant or a lawyer. This is a political screed in a journal you grabbed off the street for free. Please do your own research on this topic and consider the risks carefully before you take action. The National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee is a good place to start.\**

As tax season approaches once again, a fascinating possibility presents itself; tax strike! Across the country, organizers are calling for mass tax resistance. Often quite liberal seeming folks are taking about withholding their money not just from corporations collaborating with the regime, but from the regime itself. As anarchist and other generally anti-authoritarian readers, opposition to the state's institutionalized theft and/or what this country does with that money is something that all of us should support. The lion's share of the taxes we pay fund the military, police, surveillance cameras, the subsidies that maintain oil and gas production, coal extraction, logging, and industrial agriculture, etc. However, active resistance to taxes, while an ideal, is something that many of us may feel is too high a risk at whatever moment in our lives we find ourselves. Not all tax resistance needs to be high risk, and research into the risks may prove them to be less intimidating than first imagined.

- Earn less than the standard deduction in the first place. Obviously many of us don't have this option, but by building bonds of mutual aid and solidarity we can take steps to reduce our dependence on money, and possibly help to support comrades crossing this threshold.

- File your taxes on paper and pay

by mail (make sure to get the USPS desk to timestamp your parcels). This creates work that the defunded and under-staffed IRS must devote time to processing. If enough people participate in this way, it could legitimately take more than a year for the IRS to finish. During 2020 the IRS fell months behind schedule.

- Change your deductible on your W-4 so that less or no money comes out of your pay check. This money functions as a zero interest loan for the government to do whatever it wants with throughout the year.

- Pay only the portion of the taxes you owe which doesn't support the war machine. This is a common tactic used among Quakers and other pacifist groups.

- Don't pay your taxes at all, but maybe still file. The Statute of limitations for not paying taxes is 10 years from the date you file. If you don't file, the clock never starts.

- Don't file at all. The IRS might not ever find out, even if we don't win. There are a lot of people in the country and taxes are complicated.

- Take risks which the IRS might consider fraudulent.

- Earn cash and don't report earnings to the IRS.

Now is a moment to reconsider how to relate to taxes. Paper filing may be more of a hassle than e-filing, but it's a no risk way to place stress on the system. Most likely this country will persist for at least a few more years, but paper filing is a small antagonism that can be taken each year with or without a broader movement. The same goes for W-4 deductions: just saving the money in your own account creates a small amount of interest for you, rather than loaning it to the state for nothing.



Ultimately, just like how taxes take a “small” amount from each person, these actions only have an impact collectively. However, this year a group called “National Tax Strike” has formed to agitate and organize a tax strike against the Trump regime for many of the things it's doing. While there goals may not be enticing to many of our readers, their methods are something to get behind: to undermine the public's acceptance of the inevitability of taxes presents a bright possible future.

It's important to look at this moment and try to understand what a successful tax strike would mean. As the Trump regime continues to destabilize the global economy and undermine US hegemony, Federal Reserve bonds trade lower and lower, countries like Ethiopia and Kenya have redenominated their national debts in Yuan, for the first time in decades oil is being traded in currencies other than USD, and countries have been pulling their gold reserves out of the US. A real tax strike could be a fatal blow to global confidence in the US government's ability to pay its debts and its legitimacy as the global reserve currency, which are the foundations of the US's global economic domination since the start of the post war era.

Now is the time to do research about tax resistance, to consider what risks are acceptable, to take action, and to encourage others to do the same. The state is not omnipotent, nor omniscient. Through collective action we can challenge it and take back one of the parts of our lives it has stolen from us.

# & the Technology of Control

Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents may very well be the shock troops of an ascendant fascist order. This is not hyperbole. Such as it is we want to highlight some of the infrastructure that enables ICE in an effort to undermine it and them.

This might seem redundant to our regular readers since we've highlighted some of this before. Surveillance technology, law enforcement and their training modules expands and persists as a bi-partisan effort that predates this administration – and both parties have laid the groundwork for a fascist takeover. As has been said elsewhere too, Minnesota isn't under occupation – Minnesota is an occupation. In fact, the whole USA is a settler-colonial occupation and it bears remembering. Every law enforcement outfit is premised and empowered by racist doctrine. Even if it wasn't – even if it was reformed – it would still be a top-down force to maintain class distinctions (i.e. enforcing poverty) imbued with the same corrupting authority that enables abuse, exceptionalism, and corruption.

## HISTORY

While the first policing initiatives in this country came from slave catchers, ICE is much newer. They were established in 2002 by a DHS directive following the September 11th attacks. This was the beginning of the PATRIOT Act era, as the US government ramped up its monitoring and harassment of people domestically (aided in great part by the leaps in technological and

consumer innovations of the era) and expanded its patterns of torturing and imprisoning people without charge abroad.

The Clinton administration is credited for building the framework under which ICE thrives, with the 1996 passing of two immigration laws (the AEDPA and the IIRIRA), while also implementing a “prevention through deterrence” program that pushed crossings further into the desert – resulting in more than 10,000 deaths from exposure since. ICE expanded its efforts significantly under President Obama, leading to a record number of deportations. Under the Trump administration ICE expanded their focus beyond immigrants who had been presumed guilty of a crime. Under the Biden administration they increased their focus on this “other” category further – thanks to an exception allowed by a 2021 memo for those not explicitly considered a “national security,” “border security,” or “public safety” threat.

The expansion of the surveillance and policing states has been a bipartisan endeavor, and advanced technologies have lent themselves toward those efforts with an increasing rate of privatized infrastructure development. Companies like Palantir and Flock, as well as broader techniques such as geofencing, are notable but not exclusively culpable in this respect. As their technologies proliferate across the American landscape furthering this dystopia, we seek to profile them here in an effort to encourage their dismemberment.

## TECHNIQUE

*“Police officers are being told to ‘be as vague as permissible’ about why they are using the Flock surveillance system in order to not leak sensitive information via public records requests, according to records obtained using a public records request. The warning originated from a Houston-area police intelligence center that includes members of the FBI and ICE and suggests without evidence that people are using a website called HaveIBeenFlocked.com to ‘potentially retaliate against law enforcement.’”*

– 404 Media

*“Subject to and during the Retention Period, **Flock may access, use, preserve and/or disclose the Footage to law enforcement authorities, government officials, and/or third parties, if legally required to do so or if Flock has a good faith belief that such access, use, preservation or disclosure is reasonably necessary to comply with a legal process, enforce this Agreement, or detect, prevent or otherwise address security, privacy, fraud or technical issues, or emergency situations.**”*

– Bloomington Flock Contract, with protocols for sharing their information so broadly defined as to be almost meaningless.

The great reporting 404 Media Co. is doing about Flock cameras now is the way *Vice* was writing about Ring doorbell cameras around 2018-2020. Police departments have contracts with Ring to access footage the way federal and local agencies do with Flock today. Although the proposed partnership between these surveillance giants was very recently postponed, it doesn't mean it won't happen or that they won't continue

their invasive tendencies that increase criminalization of all kinds of people (particularly the marginalized, as always) and create new vulnerabilities in people's lives. The relatively obvious abuse by police in their broad searches of Flock footage, their use in the tracking of a woman from Texas after she sought abortion care and went to Illinois, and the relative ease in which they've been shown hackable by other potentially malicious entities show that outright stalking and other dangers are further enabled by these services. Early reports about the racial bias and profiling by Ring cameras and the recent publishing of Nest (another brand of home camera) footage three weeks after the account holder suspended their subscription service with the company underline the threats that proliferate from such technology even while it's in a relatively passive state.

Democrats have recently pushed for ICE to wear body cameras – a position that was advocated for by police unions and certain conservatives long before the democrats crossed the aisle to make this happen for many police forces a decade ago. The liberal shift occurred during Black Lives Matter protests from 2014-2020, after police murders of Mike Brown, George Floyd, and many others. This recuperative strategy to rebuild trust in police while, according to *Mapping Police Violence*, murders by police have only gone up each year show how the cameras are not particularly helpful. Even the Associated Press reported that since 2016 (when 80% of large departments had implemented body cameras) studies remain inconclusive as to whether police “use of force” has been affected. The Crimethinc essay “Cameras Everywhere, Safety Nowhere” put it succinctly: “Every camera attached to a cop is another machine to pacify us.”

ICE recruiting has spread further onto campus, at gun shows, and online platforms like YouTube thanks to algorithms and geofencing. Geofencing is the manner by which corporations and governments pinpoint your location to either advertise to or criminalize you, depending on their taste. Using GPS, cell signals, bluetooth, and other applications on your devices, geographic boundaries can be set to pinpoint your location at any given time – even well after you had visited the area. Notably used to prosecute January 6th rioters, Capitol Hill Autonomous Zone defenders



in Seattle in 2020, and for targeted advertisements by fake clinics known as pregnancy centers – it is clear how technology as our constant companion is weaponized against dissenters and anyone maligned by political forces. If we are really against police and prisons, we must understand this.

Early this year 404 Media wrote that ICE purchased the programs Tangles and Webloc to track the cell phone activity of entire neighborhoods and monitor people over social media (largely through the trackers in targeted advertising on those platforms) and through internet data. It can be helpful to limit permissions in apps and on your devices, turn off location data, and even to abstain

from social media entirely. Still, even the Twitter alternative Bluesky is vulnerable to this, and the government doesn't need a warrant to attain it (unlike phone records). In addition to health and immigration status, Tik Tok is now also collecting precise user location data. Additionally, ICE has been shown taking photos for and with their facial recognition database Mobile Fortify that builds off these and other platforms.

The basis for the internet itself, the Advanced Research Projects Agency Network (ARPANET), was developed by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), which was of particular use for coordinating US missile launches/strikes. Other projects DARPA had a hand in include GPS, drones, and stealth technology, for similar reasons. One look at Bloomington's aspiring tech district, a la the Mill, the Trades District, and the Forge – and their connections to/contracts with the military industrial complex – illustrates this continuing point clearly.

ICE also uses a Palantir tool called ELITE to map their raids in advance. This is not a common consumer product that we are likely to interact with, but the company collaborates with Amazon Web Services for US intelligence and military contracts. Palantir works with many defense contractors and the ship building portion of the Hyundai Group. They also work directly with military, intelligence, and health services for many governments (including supplying their Foundry software for monitoring COVID-19 vaccines in the UK). According to 404 Media, “The [ELITE] tool lets ICE populate a map with potential deportation targets, bring up dossiers on each person, and view an address ‘confidence score’ based on data sourced from the Department of Health and Human

Services (HHS) and other government agencies.”

## HEALTH IS IN YOU

The murder of white US born citizens by ICE without any real justification shows the expansion of state efforts toward a more totalitarian end. The Department of Homeland Security has even gone so far as to posthumously label them as “domestic terrorists” after they were murdered. This top-down violence is all too common against Black, brown, and indigenous people by various policing agencies already – which is often forgotten in the sentiments of people worried about what agencies like ICE will do next. “How long before they kill someone in their home without a warrant?” some ask as if they haven’t already, as if local police departments haven’t been doing this since their inception. Our proximity to Louisville where Breonna Taylor was murdered by cops in 2020 *with* a warrant (for a different address) brings the inconsistency of this sentiment much closer to home.

Atatiana Jefferson and Botham Jean are examples of the same in the two years prior.

This is all so recent and also so consistent. “For years, detained immigrants at ICDC (Irwin County Detention Center in Texas) have reported human rights abuses including lack of medical and mental health care, due process violations, unsanitary living conditions,” and even forced hysterectomies according to a Project South 2017 report. Even a 2017 DHS study found that ICE’s medical facilities didn’t meet their own standards.

## BRING IT HOME

*“Across the government training ecosystem, financial instability among*

*key vendors has raised new concerns about continuity, reliability, and investment...Your training platform is more than a system. It’s a line of defense against liability, oversight failure, and operational breakdown. When that foundation rests on an unstable vendor, the risk isn’t just contractual; it’s systemic.”*

– Vector Solutions

A handy pocket-sized zine called ICE Collaborators in Bloomington handed out at the January 30th protests outside City Hall highlighted some of our local connections to ICE. Our local Home2Suites, a Hilton affiliate, is highlighted within for its “its explicit policy NOT to cancel ICE contracts.” Local government and law enforcement are highlighted for their ties to white supremacy, clearing encampments, pushing for a larger jail, and their obvious tendency to compromise with and protect other authority figures. The Indiana National Guard recruitment offices, which have been vandalized at least twice in recent memory, are also mentioned – since the National Guard is in place to suppress movements for freedom and Renee Good’s killer also served with the Indiana outfit abroad. House bill 1343 also recently passed in the Indiana House and Senate, awaits Governor Mike Braun’s signature to grant himself a “military police force” within the National Guard that he can personally deploy anywhere in the state. Flock cameras, which we began to map locally in *IT* issue 3 (and also mapped on deflock.me), are mentioned as being best when broken, of course. Finally, Acadis/Evisage/Vector technologies (also mentioned by us in *IT* issue 2) is highlighted for their \$25 million in ICE contracts over the last 20 years. Located in suite 200 of Fountain Square Mall they provide software to make ICE’s training more efficient – in addition to other DHS, military,

and law enforcement contracts. Previous chief Brad Tubbs moved away to Carmel, but his co-founder Ari Vidali remains involved and lives in Bloomington.

It bears emphasizing that policing of immigrants, down to the funding of ICE, is a bipartisan effort. Ultimately all policing efforts are.

When we grant power to politicians over us, empowering them rather than ourselves with voting and petitions, we set the stage for them to control our lives. Even if they are benevolent at times, the possibility of the incursions we are now seeing first hand in this nation are always present just beneath the surface – and the power provided to government figures (particularly without almost any accountability) will inevitably corrupt. Advancing technologies, while sometimes a useful tool to evade and organize against such forces, always ultimately benefit the military and the policing apparatus of the state foremost – serving their efforts to surveil, criminalize, imprison, and kill. The efforts to undermine those forces through hostility to their control and destruction of their means is in the interest of self-preservation and ultimately freedom.

*“When you start doing what could drive people to your side instead of what you think is right, you do politics. From the moment you impose limitations on yourself out of fear of not being understood, you are, de facto, already a political entity, and therefore you become part of the problem, one of the many cancers that infect our existence. One should never measure his own words and actions just to become acceptable to people, to the crowd, otherwise there is great risk of being transformed by the very ‘intermediate’ objective he wants to achieve.”*

– Alfredo Cospito

# Enemy Territories



## Ásatrú Folk Assembly



The Ásatrú Folk Assembly, also known as the Church of Ásatrú, is a white-supremacist religious organization active across North America, as well as internationally, in places like Russia, Argentina, and South America. Originally formed in 1969 in Northern California as the Viking Brotherhood, the group has weathered a few iterations to become the Ásatrú Folk Assembly. Ásatrú is an Icelandic religious organization of the 1970s that follows Heathenry, sometimes called Germanic Paganism, which is one of a number of religions under the umbrella of Neo-paganism, or pre-Christian, folkloric religious movements. Ásatrú focuses on many of the Norse gods, whereas its sibling Odinism focuses on Odin. Odinism generally skews more overtly white-supremacist and Ásatrú more inclusive, though not in the case of the Church of Ásatrú.<sup>1</sup>

While there is not a stagnant theology, these religions are polytheistic and emphasize an animistic view of the natural world, a rejection of industrial society, back to nature practices and prioritizing the virtues of honor, integrity and loyalty. Neo-paganism is a large umbrella, and practices that seek to rediscover spiritual and place-based practices of Northern Europe that preceded Christian domination

are not necessarily white supremacist. However many do mingle with more right-wing ideologies and political movements. It seems the Icelandic Ásatrú Organization, which began in the 1970s, weathered its own splits along the questions of white separatism, white supremacy and abortion. One notable expression of Germanic Paganism was the Völkisch movement, which began in the late 19th century and grew in popularity in accordance with the Third Reich. Emphasizing a Pan-german ethno-Nationalism, its antisemitism and hatred of outsiders came to its logical conclusion with the Holocaust.

The specifics of titles, practices, and affinities within Neo-paganism can get complicated pretty quickly. Many adherents to various Neo-pagan religions reject white-supremacist and separatist inclinations, and many Neo-pagans have explicitly denounced racist Odinism and the Church of Ásatrú. In the U.S. there are various groups that organize around Ásatrú—at least one of which is explicitly against discrimination on the basis of race, gender and sexual orientation. The Church of Ásatrú is not such a group; non-white and LGBTQ people are explicitly excluded from joining. Ásatrú is also growing in popularity in prisons, where

institutional protections for religious practices mean that followers are afforded certain rights. Membership in prisons is overwhelmingly white-supremacist.<sup>2</sup>

While the group denies racism, and does not publicly condone violence, a closer look at membership reveals numerous individuals within the Church of Ásatrú are also active in a wide range of militantly violent Neo-Nazi and white-supremacist groups. Corvallis Antifascists have done extensive work to expose co-membership, revealing members also active in groups such as Patriot Front, the Golden State Skinheads, RAM (Rise Above Movement), Hammerskins, the KKK, as well as Atomwaffen and Operation Werewolf.<sup>3</sup> Despite their claims to the contrary, this intricate network of affinity reveals the Ásatrú Folk Assembly for what it is: white-supremacist organizing with enough distance from overt and violent white-supremacist organizing to avoid scrutiny. They are the positive, community element, focusing on filling the voids left by Modern society and the government that leave people feeling expendable.

Some of the events that the Church of Ásatrú organize are study groups,

feasts, movie nights, hikes, jiu jitsu training, fishing excursions; all ways to gather and build relationships. They offer funds for members experiencing financial hardship, run food pantries and perform ceremonial marriage and funeral services, and other rites of passage at their Hofes. These pro-social activities are useful in making individuals feel valued, growing their community and institutions, and to disseminating their ideology more broadly.

As an organization, they have begun purchasing Hofes, which is the Ásatrú term for temple. Currently they have Hofes in Brownsville, California; Linden, North Carolina; Murdock, Minnesota; White Springs, Florida; and outside of Youngstown, Ohio at 4125 Lanterman Rd, Austintown, OH 44515. In 2022, the group purchased 70 acres of land in Jackson County Tennessee (roughly 80 miles east of Nashville), intended to be the group's "corporate and ecclesiastical headquarters" as well as the location for a future Hofe, and school for young people.<sup>4</sup>

While perhaps appearing separate, this type of organizing exists in tandem with in-the-streets white supremacist violence offering a large swath of roles for people to fill, and ways for the group to develop independence from a society and government in conflict with their values. This type of organizing is still very dangerous, as their ability to foster community and meet substantial material and spiritual needs creates the perfect ecosystem in which to indoctrinate people into a full-fledged white supremacy, if they are not already. Such a community can quickly gather momentum and begin organizing in other worlds and subcultures. Add to that being well-resourced financially, owning land

and buildings, and one can easily see the threat. In Indiana, the group has had meet-ups at Indiana Viking Fest in Whitestown, IN, and groups across the country regularly gather in public restaurants and bars. Jonathan Rock of Indiana is one of the religious leaders of the Ásatrú Folk Assembly. Apprentices, called "folkbuilders", seem to be responsible for organizing events and building up membership. In Indiana, these folkbuilders are Josh Bailey, Jacob Rutledge, and Aidan McMillan, though pictures of Indiana gatherings posted on their website reflect a much larger membership. Being common names, if any ring a bell, their photos can be found on the Ásatrú Folk Assembly website.<sup>5</sup>

We can see parallels with this organizing model and that of conservative political figures: individuals who make sure their influence reaches many spheres, actively engaging with community organizing in places like churches, as well pursuing politics. A great example is Micah Beckwith, Indiana's Republican Christian-Nationalist Lieutenant Governor who also serves as Pastor of Life Church in Noblesville, Indiana. Beckwith is active in trying to bridge the divide of church and state, is active in promoting 'traditional values' via the Indiana Family Institute, and has a relationship with Purple for Parents, an anti-LGBTQ organization.

Similarly, Joey Gibson, founder of the far-right group Patriot Prayer which is active on the West Coast and known for pro-Trump rallies that often erupt into brawls, pursued a campaign for U.S. Senate after many years of in-the-streets activity. His campaign was not successful, due to his visible role in violent far-right activity, but easily could have been for someone with

the same politics without his level of visibility.

Plenty of our enemies have begun to see the utility of a multi-pronged approach to organizing and spreading their agenda. Visibility poses unwelcome risks to some of them, and it's important for anti-racist organizing to understand that battles won't only be won in the street, not only in overt ways, but behind the scenes as well. Let's be observant of the spectrum of ways that white supremacist organizing happens and the quickness with which it can spread to communities that are not explicitly white supremacist. Could members of the Church of Ásatrú be at your local Farmer's Market? Contra dance? Land-based-skills workshop? Old-time music fest? Craft fair? Understanding the terrain on which they operate and monitoring them in our areas is crucial. Figuring out ways to disrupt white-supremacist organizing is a short and long-term endeavor, one that can feel particularly challenging in areas that skew more patriotic, predominantly white and given a state or region's specific history with white-supremacy. Interrupting their effectiveness only grows more difficult as their influence and power spread. Now is always a good time to nip it in the bud wherever white supremacy grows!

1. <https://www.vice.com/en/article/how-a-thor-worshipping-religion-turned-racist-456/>

2. <https://www.splcenter.org/resources/reports/new-brand-racist-odinist-religion-march/>

3. <https://evantifa.noblogs.org/post/2023/06/23/asatrumasons/>

4. <https://www.splcenter.org/resources/extremist-files/asatru-folk-assembly/>

5. <https://www.runestone.org/news>

# A Lexicon

# Terrorist

At the time of writing, January 18th (the day of the forest defender, a day to remember the sacrifice of Tortuguita for the Weelanee forest)—the throwing out of the Stop Cop City Rico charges, the murder of Renee Good at the hands of ICE, the abduction of the president of “Venezuela,” Nicolas Maduro, and the upcoming trials of the Prarieland defendants—swirl around the moment like tempest. All connected across the whole of this hemisphere by a single word: Terrorist.

“Georgia,” with the backing of the blood-soaked Biden regime, leveled “Domestic Terrorism” charges against comrades attending a music festival and used those charges as the basis of a RICO case to label the entire movement in defense of the Weelanee forest as “terrorists.” Why was the movement full of “terrorists”? Because it burnt cop cars and fought the cops inside, destroyed the equipment which destroyed the forest, threw fireworks at riot cops throwing flash bangs and teargas, and dared to match the force of the state in kind.

In “Minneapolis” Renee Good, who had stopped to record ICE agents as

they occupied the city and tried to do their job of abducting the racial enemies of the regime, attempted to retreat after being surrounded by ICE. Maybe she hit that cop with her car or maybe we can still believe our own eyes, but whatever happened, in the end, she was murdered. In the aftermath, the regime and its media apparatus declared her a “terrorist” and in turn some in the crowds declared ICE the “real terrorists.”

The term “Terrorism” was first used by the Jacobins to describe the “Reign of Terror” during the French Revolution; the agents of Committee of Public Safety who carried out the Terror were officially called “terrorists.” Later the term was used to describe the repressive violence of the Tsarist police apparatus against the Russian Nihilist/Narodnik movement, and appropriated by that movement itself to describe their violence against the empire. During the Russian Civil War, the terms “Red” and “White” Terror came to describe the killing of those who were perceived to oppose whichever faction they happened to be subjected to.

In the rest of the 20th century, terrorist was applied to groups like the

Irish Republican Army, the Palestine Liberation Organization, Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army, and uMkhonto weSizwe in “South Africa” among many others. By the turn of the millennium “left-wing” “terrorism” had largely fallen from the headlines in favor of “white-supremacist,” “Islamist,” and stochastic “Incel/misogynist” terrorist attacks which sought (and seek) to destabilize the current order and change the world for the worse.

If resistance to the state and repression of that resistance are historically both terrorism, the question is not which side are the terrorists, but rather who isn’t. When the state understands any substantive resistance to its violence as violence in itself, such as in the case of Renee Good, terrorism becomes synonymous with action. In this moment, to resist the state’s genocide in any meaningful way is to commit an act of terrorism. Only by doing nothing as lives are ruined and ended is anyone free from proscription as a “terrorist.” The only question left for us to decide is whether to proudly declare ourselves “terrorists” or abandon the term altogether.



# Land Defense, Animal Rights, and Anti-Imperialism: an interview

**Thanks for talking with us. You've been involved in so many things: eco-defense like I-69, animal rights, Palestine solidarity, anti-nuclear. What ties these together for you? Is there something foundational—a belief, a politic, a principle—from which these activities spring? Like, what's your starting point?**

My starting point is that capitalism is an exploitative, unjust system that invariably leads to repression, war, and environmental destruction. What Occupy Wall Street referred to as “the 1%” (more like .01%) hoard wealth and use force as necessary to make sure that happens. They also use their ownership of the mass media to heavily brainwash us about what they're up to (as exposed in books such as *Manufacturing Consent*), and it's vital for us to learn to see through that—that's my other foundational principle. Anyway, ultimately I would like to see a society where capitalism is abolished, where the working class is organized to serve its own interests.

**You came to Bloomington for your post-doctoral fellowship?**

Yes. Pretty soon after I got here was when the first Iraq War, the so-called Persian Gulf War, kicked off. We organized a group called the Committee Against War in the Middle East (CAWME) in response to the August 1990 invasion of Iraq when I came here. As soon as the US invasion was launched, we set up an encampment in Dunn Meadow.

It was kind of a disheartening experience that there was so much support for the Gulf War from the American public. After it was over, we held a somber funeral-type event for all the people in Iraq who got killed, and we got heckled a lot. It really struck me how brainwashed most Americans are. It's often been said that Americans are the most brainwashed people in the world, and I find that unfortunately, maybe just because anticommunist and other pro-establishment, imperialist narratives are so pervasive in our society, even a lot of leftists sort of absorb that.

**You were talking about the Committee Against War in the Middle East.**

Yeah, that group, a Palestine solidarity group whose name I don't recall, as well as a socialist group called Solidarity that I was involved with at the time, did a lot of activism in terms of organizing speakers and film showings and so on. Somewhere in there, I met up with a bunch of anarchists who organized the Secret Sailor book store, a radical book store and event venue in town. It was about that time that I started reading about animal rights and became vegan, and many of them were vegan as well, so I had that in common with them.

**What was it like working with the anarchists back then?**

It was just a very politically solid group, very dedicated activists, many

of them vegan as I mentioned. We did a lot. We organized a demonstration in Indy when Clinton came through town to speak, so we protested the sanctions and bombings of Iraq. Some of us also went to D.C. to protest against the World Bank and IMF, as well as Bush's inauguration after he stole the 2000 election. There was also a boycott campaign against corporations such as Nike that were involved in exploiting workers in Indonesia and other places that a broad coalition of activists was involved in.

**Can you talk about the Anti-I-69 campaign?**

I got involved with that back in the early '90s, when I and my wife at the time lived about a mile away from the planned route. The main group, Citizens for Appropriate Rural Roads, took the approach of showing up to legislative meetings and town hall meetings by the state Department of Transportation, as well as writing many letters to the editor, challenging their perspective and pointing out that, look, we've got roads already that could be expanded and developed without tearing up forests and cutting through people's farmland and so on, and it would be a lot cheaper, so why don't we do that?

As you know, that campaign ultimately failed and I-69 was built, but a diverse group of student, faculty, and community activists I was involved with called the Protect

Griffy Alliance (PGA) successfully stopped a golf course IU trustees wanted to build next to Lake Griffy. Ironically, although this was maybe the most successful activist campaign I've been involved with, a bitter controversy emerged afterwards when one of the members, my friend L., went public with allegations that another group member who she had been romantically involved with emotionally abused, raped, and stalked her, and some members of the group didn't believe her.

**You mentioned before that there was a tree sit out on 2nd Street. Do you know what's there now, the place that the tree sit was?**

Yeah, apartment complexes. Most of that land was undeveloped and it was just your typical karst topography with caves and forests. It was unspoiled land smack in the middle of Bloomington, quasi-old growth trees were there. So yeah, local environmental activists, most of them part of the Secret Sailor group that I mentioned, organized a tree sit. There was also a tree sit for similar reasons out in Yellowwood State Forest. The state wanted to do a bunch of logging so there was a tree sit out there.

Frank Ambrose<sup>1</sup> and Marius Mason<sup>2</sup>, among the organizers of the tree sits, were involved in trying to combat deforestation all over this area. They engaged in some tree spiking and tried to sabotage construction of the bypass that goes to Ellettsville. They also sabotaged a GMO lab in Michigan, which is where they were from. And that plus the tree spiking is what caught the FBI's attention. Ultimately, Frank struck a plea deal with them and became an informant.

**Do you know where the tree spiking was? Was that in southern Indiana?**

It was in Morgan-Monroe State Forest.

**What was it like during the period of repression after such activities?**

I guess I first realized the extent of it when on the day of 9/11 there was an opinion column published in the Indiana Daily Student condemning Ambrose as a terrorist, because he was suspected of those acts of sabotage against logging, etc., so I went to the IDS to complain, and met a woman there who was also there to complain, and who later became my 2nd wife. Anyway, I think the repression ultimately killed Earth First! type environmental activism here and elsewhere.



**What has animal rights activity looked like over the years? There's not really much going on these days, though there was the tiniest bit of attention to that horrible chick study on campus. Was there an era or version animal rights activism that you wish was still around? If not, what would you like to see?**

I became vegan in 1997 after reading the book *Diet for a New America*. In 2008, I watched *Earthlings* and read the work of animal rights philosopher Gary Francione, who's been a vegan longer than Ingrid Newkirk, founder of PETA—he actually got her to go vegan. Anyway, his philosophy of animal rights is very sound and inspired me to be more active. He just

says we shouldn't exploit animals, period, just like we shouldn't exploit humans. Even if you're nice to them, you're still exploiting them. The emotional side of my heightened interest in animal rights was watching *Earthlings* and seeing what was being done to animals. We organized a table at the farmer's market promoting animal rights and showing video clips of different things.

Then in 2014, my partner and I got involved with Direct Action Everywhere (DxE), which had the same basic philosophy as Gary Francione—don't exploit animals, period—but took a very different approach from him involving direct action. So, entering restaurants and

grocery stores like Chipotle and Whole Foods that were involved in promoting the notion that there's such a thing as humane meat and staging speakouts. We also wrote a letter to Whole Foods' CEO, John Mackey, about all the falsehoods they were putting forth about supposed "humane" treatment of animals by their suppliers (which was a followup to a letter from animal welfare groups complimenting them on their "humane" practices), and I expanded on that in an article for DxE's blog. Whole Foods claimed that the animals that wind up in their freezers were out roaming around in fields and happy and so forth, but in reality they were all very exploited and suffering a lot because the laws in place to protect pets don't exist for farm animals. So, even on so-called humane farms, they're treated terribly: disease-ridden, crowded conditions where they have little room to move around and typically don't get to go outside at all, etc.

Eventually, DxE started doing open rescues of animals in these facilities. They focused on getting the ones out

who were too sick to be of any value to the company and that was their way of getting around being accused of stealing animals. They got accused of it anyway, but that was their basic contention, which sometimes worked in the legal cases that were filed against them: these animals would have died before they got to market anyway and so they rescued them and took them to sanctuaries so they could have the kind of life they should have had.

**Were there any open rescues around here, do you know?**

Not that I'm aware of. There were some pretty active DxE chapters in Chicago and we had a DxE chapter here that could have gotten involved in rescues, but we didn't want to risk jail time or anything like that. Instead, we got involved with Anonymous for the Voiceless, and may return to that at some point.

**You've talked a lot about protests and educational things like speakers and film screenings. Are**

**those still what you see as what radicals should be doing or have you changed your mind about what is the most meaningful, like, intervention and activity?**

Certainly I think its the case that direct action of some sort is what's most effective at changing things. Although protests certainly have their place, you're not going to change the world just by standing in the cold with signs and chants and speeches and so forth. One of the things that made the Protect Griffy activism that I mentioned so successful was that we engaged in such a wide variety of tactics (door to door canvassing and petitioning, sit-ins, letters to the editor, very creative protests) and got such a large and diverse cross-section of the community involved.

Really, I think the main engine of social change has been countries in the Global South where people are really in desperate circumstances so they engage in more both radical and risky action like taking up arms to try to overthrow corrupt governments and

things like that. Palestinians have been trying to free themselves from Israel for the entirety of Israel's existence. Before that, as well, when European settlers were colonizing the place. So, its important for us to recognize that despite all the flaws or shortcomings that those movements have, they are fighting against imperialism and for those people's liberation. That's the main agent of change, I think, in the world. Especially now that Trump and Netanyahu have taken us to war with Iran, we are in for some very tough times economically and that, along with the war itself, may radicalize many people and mass movements that are more militant like you saw in the 1930s could emerge again.

1. *Ambrose turned state's evidence, contributing to the deep fear and extreme sentencing of the Green Scare. For more on him and other snitches, see [animalliberationpressoffice.org/NAALPO/2023/07/09/animal-liberation-snitches-update/](http://animalliberationpressoffice.org/NAALPO/2023/07/09/animal-liberation-snitches-update/)*
2. *To find out more about Marius, visit [SupportMariusMason.org](http://SupportMariusMason.org).*



# Flick Picks



## **Pan's Labyrinth (2006)**

A dark fantasy set in 1930's revolutionary Spain. A young girl is caught up in a fantastical world just outside her increasingly unpleasant reality when her pregnant mother remarries a fascist general and they go to live with him. There is anarchist resistance in the mountains and it seems to be growing closer. Spanish with English subtitles available.

## **Kahnesatake: 270 Years of Resistance (1993)**

This documentary by Alanis Obomsawin details Mohawk resistance to the government's attempted expansion of a golf course in Oka, Quebec, Canada. Through the lens of this boiling point, the film discusses the history of colonization and indigenous resistance, and stands as an important counter to western narratives and news reporting of the Oka Crisis.

## **La Haine (1995)**

This French anti-police classic follows the lives of 3 friends from a poor, immigrant neighborhood in Paris. Interacting with difficulties in the world around them, this film watches as they also navigate personal tensions within their friendship. With a backdrop of riot footage and French Hardcore rap, this enthralling and unsettling movie is best watched when you're ready to get your angry and proactive juices flowing.

## **Anarchist From Colony (2017)**

Set in Japan in 1923, this is period drama about Korean anarchist Park Yeol and Japanese anarchist Fumiko Kaneko. Organizing against the imperial government feels relatable in a way, and there's a fun sense of humor throughout – something I don't often see anarchists do well. After a major earthquake strikes Japan the government says Koreans have been poisoning the water and setting fires to direct the ire of its subjects after this frequent scapegoat. Yeol and Fumiko are arrested and accused of trying to assassinate the emperor.

## Ode to Turkey Vultures

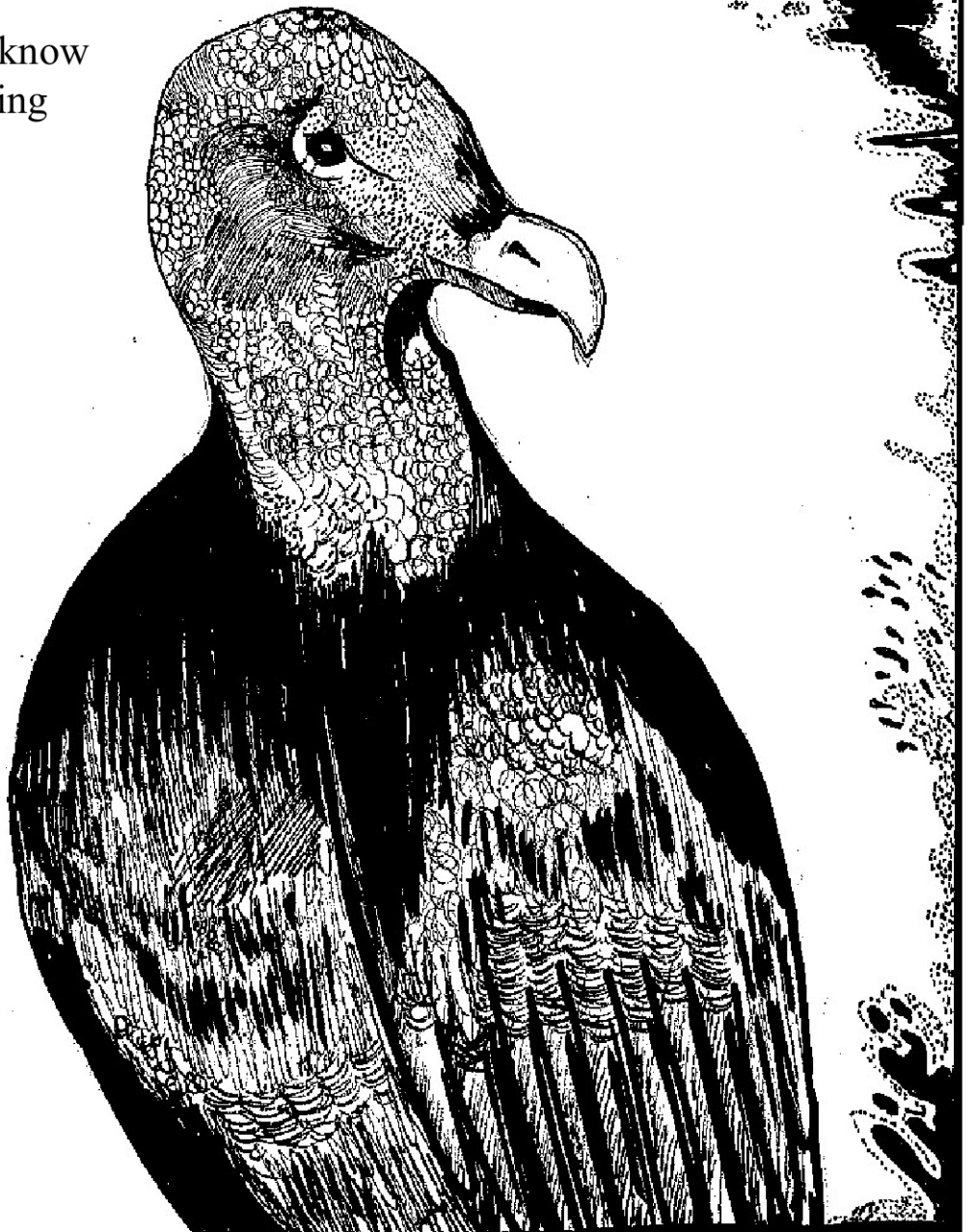
who waste not even their own shit,  
cleaning their feet with the gastric acid  
that makes nourishment of carrion  
sniffed while soaring, flight without flap –  
O the enoughness of thermals.

All this efficiency in their bodies &  
yet they accept interdependence,  
joining evening committees on pine trees  
to discuss the findings of their days.

Vultures leave little trace but know  
their lives to be worth defending  
with hiss or vomit  
projectile vomit –

O the projectuality of living  
off pine, wind, found death.  
Not a pipe dream perhaps:  
the turkey vultures' present.

*The facts of this ode were gathered from a raptor feeding at Eagle Creek Ornithology Center, several pages of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's website, and over a year of observing many vultures who roost on the south side of Bloomington.*





*In Tension aspires to be a place-based project, and as such, we must state that “Bloomington” and “Indiana” should not exist. At the deepest fulfillment of our liberatory project, these entities would be dissolved. The devastating impact of European colonization, settlement, and industrialization on the land, its human and nonhuman inhabitants, and the way in which we relate to it cannot be overstated. This land is unceded territory of the Myaamia, Kaskaskia, Kiikaapoi, šaawanwaki, Neshnabek, Wandat, Waayaahatanwa, Peeyankihšhiaki, Peewaareewa, Lenape, Bodwéwadmik, and others.*

*Toward the end of the U.S. and every empire.*