



the
spaces
spaces
between
between

and we make a lot
and we make a lot
of noise because
of noise because
we love each other.
we love each other.

- a silver mt. zion

written & collected by
- the kids who never fucking left

USA Jan 71

So c'mon ye children,
if there's one thing we know,
it's that them gathering clouds are swinging low.

So don't you be precious,
man don't you be meek,
there ain't no damn glory in the long retreat.

Go call the fuzz,
they'll shine their lights on us,
we've been building in the dark,
there's so many of us.

Now blinking in the light,
there's so many of us.

Illuminated and proud,
there's so many of us.

-a silver mt. zion

What you will find tucked in these pages is not a completion, but a beginning. This project, The Spaces Between, was born out of conversations that have happened on porches, in bedrooms, on long bus rides, in meetings, through the intermediaries of glowing screens or telephones. It was born out of watching our far away friends burn it down and wonder when we might get that taste of residual accelerant on our own hands as they touched our lips at the end of a long night in the streets. But, we don't live in anarchist disney world. We live in those places where nothing feels flammable and everything can feel impossible. We live in the those places where we are truly engaged in what can best be described as the *project of anarchy*. Often there is no Left to fall back on in these places. Or maybe there is a Left, acting as the thorn in the proverbial side and the wet blanket on the flames. For so many of us there is no radical lawyer on the other end of your jail call. There are just your friends who answer the call and the first words are an earnest and heartfelt "are you fucking okay?" We've got us. We've got us in goddamn spades.

All the poetry of it aside, we exist and struggle in places that are far too often left out of the larger conversation. Every now and then our stories make it out, but we work to make that happen. Our stories aren't often asked after. What does the project of anarchy look like in the rural places, the borderlands, the small cities, or the isolated regions? The truth that we all know, all of us out here in between, is that it looks pretty damn different.

If we had to state goals for The Spaces Between project, one major one would be to center the rest of us, even if just for a moment, in the larger conversation. To carve out a place where our stories are at the center, however un-spectacular that they may be. That our tales would be just as cherished as the meme-ready images that flood out of the so-called anarchist strongholds on May Day or when some rupture of the social order occurs. That our tirelessness (or tired-ness) would be seen, duly noted.

Another major goal of this project is to facilitate connection between these places. In reading the following interviews there are common threads as much as there are stark differences. There are things that connect us to one another's contexts as much as there are the things that might serve to disconnect us. Consider this first installment (because there are more coming!) an invitation to converse, to strategize, to network, to build alongside and to share in both our joys and miseries. Come commiserate with us! Because, if your front porch is anything like our front porch, after the commiseration comes the "how do we do this better? together." After the sharing of the fuck up's come the magical sparks that keep us continuing on in the project of anarchy.

Here are some tales of fucking it up, trying again, failing, losing and sometimes winning.

We're humbled to share them.

- the kids who never fucking left

This first installment of The Spaces Between is a collection of interviews with anarchists who either currently are or once did live and struggle in a place that is outside of the so-called hotspots for North American anarchism. The interviews feature seven different locations. Evansville, Minneapolis, rural British Columbia, Modesto, Louisville, Athens and Tucson.

We wrote the interview questions for this first installment with the intention of getting a better understanding of what the current climate of struggle is in these places as well as how they are relating to larger political moments or movements. The responses are primarily written in present tense, reflecting the moment that is at hand in these regions or locations.

The responses from Modesto are written as a reflection on the past. This is one of those situations where people did leave that town and head elsewhere. When we, the curators of this project, talk about being the kids who never left we mean it as much about former Modesto Anarchos as much as the people who continue to stick it out in their town. *The kids who never left* are the kids who never bailed on the endless project that is anarchy. Sometimes leaving is a part of the project. As much as we might hate to say it.

Again, this is the beginning of something and certainly not a conclusion. We will be continuing to collect interviews and essays through June 2016. We will compile all interviews and essays into an anthology of sorts. We also will be touring again in 2016. The purpose of the tours is similar to the purpose of this zine you hold in your hands. To center our stories and experiences, to facilitate the building or deepening of connections across regions and to see what roads connect all these places between. We hope to see you

2016 Tour Inquiries can be sent to thespacesbetween@riseup.net

A collective of everybody & nobody. This zine is by and for all the kids who left that town and went to the next. It is for the kids who stuck it out. It is for all the kids who never left or never stayed. It is for all the kids who are still here in spite of it all. For the kids who keep trying even when we know quite well that it may never happen, that our dreams may be too big to ever realize. It is for the ones who are in this for long haul.

It is for all of us who are in these places in between.

*So this one's for the lost ones
And the dead ones & the ones who fell away
All our busted brothers
And tumbled lovers
Spitting at the rain*

*We all got born so afraid
And still search for words
To describe that pain*

*Hang on to each other...
Any fucking thing you love...
- a silver mt. zion*

We are continuing to accept interviews and essays through June 2016. Contact us to participate:
thespacesbetween@riseup.net

We will be doing more tour dates in 2016.
Keep updated by checking:
spacesbetweentour.wordpress.com

years, I think that many of us are good at maintaining long-term relationships with friends and comrades in struggle, despite drama, conflict, ideological differences, and so on. People are not always personally tight, but stick around for a long enough time to have meaningful interconnections.

*Yeah shit is bleak -
we've seen it and worried,
our timid leaps get knee-deep and buried,
entire weeks where I swear I can barely rise...
Though we've been denied too much hope in our lives
let tonight be the night when it ends.*

-a silver mt. zion

-the kids who never fucking left

Can you tell us about the overall political climate of your town?

Evansville, IN

I don't know about the town; I stay in my neighborhood. I moved here about a year ago from Oklahoma City. The neighborhood that I live in in Evansville is dirty and poor. I like living around other poor folks. It feels safer. People don't frown at the dirty winter coat my toddler wears, and I get tips from other parents about which charity to hit up. I like that my neighbors and I discuss our rat infestations and the free poison they give out at the housing authority. I like that people just push their shopping carts all the way home from the store and that the store has to pay a someone with a pickup truck to go find them all. Calling the cops seems generally frowned upon, though it happens. When I didn't have water, I got it from my neighbor; when they didn't have water, they got it from me. Ten-year-old boys were jumped at the fair. I see a lot of drunk people on the sidewalk, but I've never seen them hassled by cops. Houses are pretty cheap here, if you can get 6 to 10 grand together, even less if you go to an auction. Slumlords will buy as many as possible from the tax-auctions and then rent them monthly for what the entire house cost.

Minneapolis, MN

Well, first of all, while I live in Minneapolis I have only lived here for a matter of months. I recently moved back from anarcho-disneyland after several years. Before which I wasn't an anarchist or involved in any radical politics. Recently Minneapolis received nationwide attention during protests against the police murdering Jamar Clark on November 15th. As for the political climate, that's a broad question upon which I could ramble for hours, but put simply, radical politics are very muted. Black Lives Matter Minneapolis is essentially an amalgamation of non-profits and the NAACP, has good relations with city politicians and the Democratic Party, and has an implicit monopoly on protests that have anything to do with the police or white supremacy. There is a 'radical' splinter group from BLM that initially tried to hold their own actions, but the first one was brutally repressed by police and ended up just playing a support role for those they originally broke off from. Contrasting this is a

common presence of white supremacist counter-protesters, whether the Minnesotans who confusingly identify with the confederate flag, or those from the cesspool of the internet who shot at us. Visibly, the IWW provides a token anarchist presence to liberal demonstrations but there has been very little anarchist intervention in the political terrain, especially before the last couple of months.

British Columbia, CAN

The town I live in understands itself as a mix of hippies, radicals, growers, farmers, anarchists, rednecks, punks, TERFS, queers, and folks with fancy tin foil hats. It's a pretty mixed bag, but generally I'd say most people have some distrust or disregard for the state.

Modesto, CA

Modesto is the traditional territory of the Yukot people's, who lived in the Modesto area before colonization and invasion of European powers. The name of the county that Modesto rests in, Stanislaus, is taken from the name of Estanislau, an indigenous leader that fought against the Mexican Mission system. There is a statue in Downtown Modesto dedicated to him yet is grossly unrepresentative of him and the Native struggle waged in the local area is by and large never discussed. I encourage folks to read, "The Stanislaus County Indian Wars" for more information about Native Resistance to colonization in the Central Valley. In near-by Sonora, only a few miles away, the Miwoks, another local tribe, were likewise driven from their homelands and forced into poverty within class society, barred from fishing, hunting, and gathering, and forced to work as day laborers.

Modesto, California is a town of about 200,000, and rests in the middle of a county that holds about 1,000,000 people. It is the tenth biggest city in California. The area surrounding it is largely agricultural, and is part of the Central Valley "bread box," which produces a huge portion of the food that is exported throughout the world. This system of agriculture is by and large a continuation of the colonization process that began by blocking the flow of deltas and rivers that once flooded into the valley, giving the soil its richness.

Resistance is a lot more like survival than any of us like to admit. I would like to see us build our capacity for autonomy and survival and maybe stop arguing so much over the labels used to describe this era of resistance and these acts of preparation...

I spent my teenage years nauseous from the side effects of the psychotropic drugs I was given to take the pain away. I spent my early 20s in the streets learning how to transform that sadness into anger- that rage into a weapon. In my 30s, I still wake every day with a mixture of grief and fury churning inside me. This stone stays with me throughout the day as I tend to the wounded at the hospital. It weighs heavily in the afternoon as I pass through checkpoints to try to bring aid and help others circumvent state controls. It settles in at dusk as I prepare food for my children, and they ask me if there are places in the world where it is possible to be happy- where the police do not arrest and deport our friends. As the moon rises, it sends me to bed spent.

Each day I rise with this sick feeling, and begin my labors anew. Despite everything I persist, not because there is so much we can do for one another, but because even small acts of resistance matter. I will not become jaded, embrace cold cynicism or give into the dissociate comforts of madness. Each generation of women in my family has gone to the asylum. As an anarchist I am resolute, if I end up in a state institution it will be a prison. While I am still free, I will trust in my family, friends, lovers and comrades. Together we will keep our rage sacred, and externally focused.

Evansville, IN - Second Perspective

Regionally we are in close contact with a half dozen locus of anarchists and about 600 acres of anti-authoritarian land projects.

Minneapolis, MN - Second Perspective

Surviving the winters has to be preparing us for something! On a serious note, despite all the fractures that have occurred over the last several

attle, San Francisco, Santa Cruz, Pittsburg, New York, St. Louis, Phoenix and elsewhere.

Currently, new crews are building and networking again. Learning from each other and taking on new projects. If we are to gain ground and push farther than before, we'll have to be better organized and work together.

These responses are short, but I did not have that much time work on them, so much has been left out. Check out rhhr.org and modestoanarcho.org for more info on Modesto projects.

Athens, GA

We are an extremely small town. We are the smallest county in Georgia (Clarke County) and it takes 15 minutes to get pretty much anywhere. This makes it extremely easy to plot our locations for actions, demonstrations, and propaganda. We are all very close to each other in location, those of us that don't live together.

There are also areas that are extremely green and undeveloped (so far) which make it easy to use trees and the cover of night to hide easy if we are doing something that could get us in a bit of trouble. Being in a college town has its advantages too, there's a lot more comrades than we expected when we first started organizing. It's very refreshing.

Tucson, AZ

The borderlands are a vision of the future, and at present it is not a nice vision. It is one of state and paramilitary violence, expanding police power, volatile racial exchanges, and mass incarceration. Here the state is losing its mask of humane governance. The more people see methods of social control for what they are, and the more economically and ecologically unstable the world becomes, the more alternative visions of social organization and the struggles that might make them a reality will be given credence.

After the gold rush and the incorporation of California into the US, Modesto and the Central Valley became a stopping point between Sacramento and LA, and was known as the "sin capital of California." Chinese, Irish-American, black, and Latino workers worked in the fields and it was here that radical anti-capitalist groups organized, primarily, the Industrial Workers of the World. People looking for more information can read, "Factory in the Fields".

Presently, like many American cities, Modesto is an extremely divided city and county, split largely on lines of race and class. Despite a large Latino population, which is primarily based in agricultural based industries and made up largely of immigrants (but with a growing working and middle-class), the area is generally known for being conservative. This is based in both the more established white population and also within the monied classes of property owning rural agro-elites. "Traditional values" have a large pull here, but there is also a large Democratic base among young people, the Latino population, and among union workers. Outside of the mega-pentecostal churches, the Catholic Church has a large pull in the Latino community as well. Outside of agriculture, Gallo Wines is one of the largest employers along with local school districts and the service industry.

There is a junior college located in Modesto, which is among one of the cheapest in the State, and nearby CSU Stanislaus, located about 15 minutes south. Both of these colleges are attended by largely working and lower-middle class students.

Politically speaking, outside of the farm workers movement in the Central Valley, both in the form of the IWW and later in the UFW, the far-Right has often had a foothold here. During and up to the 1980s, the KKK had a strong presence. A coworker of mine who is a communist, told me he used to go to towns like Stockton and Modesto and fight the Klan at demonstrations. In the late 1980s, the Klan marched past the high school I would go on to attend, a school with over 60% Latino students. In the 1990s, groups like Operation Rescue held an office in the town, and there is one known example of an abortion clinic being arsoned.

Needless to say, historically, groups across the political spectrum have used Modesto and the surrounding communities as a battle ground.

Louisville, KY

The overall political climate of Louisville could be described as apathetic and stagnant. Also, divided geographically- in other words, segregated.

Athens, GA

Can you tell us about the overall political climate of your town? Athens is an extremely stereotypical “progressive” college town. That being said we had an Occupy encampment that lasted for a couple of months. The general populace met it with mostly negative reactions. Most of us from Bombs Away weren’t around for it. Some of us only moved here recently and the rest of us were too busy with mundane jobs to understand what the fuck was happening.

There’s a large amount of non-profits and a large apolitical music scene. We had a social democrat run for mayor and get 41% of the vote and he’s turned his campaign group into an activist/lobbyist group.

Freedom University is an awesome activist network/freedom school that offers college-level classes, scholarship assistance, and leadership development for undocumented students in Georgia. They organize badass occupations and even interrupted a Board of Regents meeting with a protest last year. They are very awesome people.

There is a radical/anarchist community that we have sustained from an info-shop (Bombs Away Books) into a mobilized collective that does street team actions, Food Not Bombs, prisoner letter writing, free school classes, zines, street actions, and many other projects.

In a few months, a lot of the Bombs Away Collective will be living in a collective house, which we will also run as an info-shop/radical center. The radical scene is definitely developing here.

Minneapolis, MN

To be honest I don’t know for sure if this is actually unique to where I am or just the opposite was the case where I used to live, but I think because Minneapolis is not the type of place people tend to move to, and also statistically don’t move away, a lot of the anarchist milieu seem to be people that have lived here for a long time. Because of this there are still active anarchists with experience dating back decades; before Ferguson, before Occupy, before the RNC, etc. This also means that there is more age diversity here and for example, child care is taken seriously — anarchy isn’t just a club for twenty-somethings, even it can seem that way sometimes.

Modesto, CA

I think that Modesto Anarcho changed anarchism in North America in small ways, for the better. We tried to push aside what we say as ‘lifestyl-ist’ and ‘middle-class’ subcultural elements and push for a community and class based body of politic that was combative and rooted in everyday experiences.

I think were we failed was in our presentation to the anarchist movement, which was very much, “Look at us, we are crazy, cool, and proletarian.” This was a mistake largely on my part for presenting us as such, and it one of my biggest regards. The anarchist movement should be a space where we learn from each other and share resources and offer solidarity, not posture for the sake of being cool.

We also could have been smarter about our organizing. Often we did good work to bring people together, but many times were unable to take the next step. There are several examples of this, but I’ll leave it there.

Lastly, MA didn’t take place in a vacuum. There were groups and crews across the country in the period of 2008-2011 that were doing the same things we were. These groups were all involved in community struggles and projects, holding down a space, involved in propaganda, and trying to link all of these things together; in Denver, Flagstaff, Milwaukee, Se-

hours each week. We accomplish a lot in our meetings and most importantly we put our ideas from meetings into practice everyday. Meetings are important but don't get too sucked into them.

Tucson, AZ

I am just really proud of my friends who persist year after year in all their projects. I do much less than I used to before shift work, kids and the rest of life kind of caught up with me. I am proud of my friends who carry on the work we laid the groundwork for- taking it forward to places I couldn't even have imagined at the beginning. I am humbled, and heartened, by how many people's lives we've been able to touch and how we've in turn been changed for the better over the years we've been active on the border.

Evansville, IN - Second Perspective

I am proud that they have been so relentlessly cruel and critical, that they have shared in poverty instead of hoarded in it.

Minneapolis, MN - Second Perspective

I'm most proud of the way that my crew of friends has learned how to combat state repression. I know that if I ever get slapped with some serious legal charges, my friends will have my back and know what to do to help me through it.

Are there strengths you feel come from your unique geographical location or space in the larger political milieu?

Evansville, IN

The proximity to the other cities nearby (St. Louis, Carbondale, Bloomington) could help anarchist travel and stay in touch.

Tucson, AZ

I live on the border. We live in a war zone that only some people acknowledge or engage with. The political climate of my town has been greatly affected by the internal expansion of the border and the deputization of the police force. It's made basic survival harder, and collective struggle ever more important.

Minneapolis, MN - Second Perspective

Anarchism in Minneapolis has been in a lull for a while in many ways. Just a few years ago, there were a lot of anarchist or anarchistic projects in town, but now there are just a few ongoing efforts and most of those tend to be informal and low energy. Even so, Minneapolis has a long history of radical and liberal/progressive activism and organizing. It's a progressive city and very "blue" in a lot of ways. As such, there's a lot of leftist activism happening all over. I don't pay attention to most of the liberal/progressive stuff, but I am somewhat more attuned to the socialist organizing happening. There are a lot of socialists in town and many are publicly engaged in organizing and most of their groups have been around for a long time. Recently, there have been some big actions planned through Black Lives Matter Minneapolis, which is currently the hot new thing to be involved in or at least present for when things go down.

Evansville, IN - Second Perspective

Republican and Democrat administration both pursue gentrification and industrial development, as well as developer and investor tax abatement. There have been several small but loud incidents of racial conflict (before Ferguson) but it all has been dealt with by "community forums". The police routinely get in trouble for violations and are infamous for being quick to arrest, there is a saying here, "Come for vacation, stay for probation." There are basically no organized anti-establishment groups. One of the bigger political drives was folks raising \$30,000. to GIVE to a millionaire to accept free donation, by the city, of an old historic building for luxury apartments (this was touted as progressive grassroots organizing)!

**What struggles are most central to your location at this time?
(e.g. gentrification, police terror, houselessness, migration, anti-fascist work, etc.)**

Evansville, IN

Poverty, pollution, police terror and slumlords.

Minneapolis, MN

Well the struggle against police—or as most would say police brutality or police terror, but we all know it's just *the police*—has taken the center stage here as in the rest of the country, especially with the protests for Jamar Clark. Anti-fascist work certainly needs to be, but I think our response in that regard has been lacking, and that's my own fault as much as anyone else's. Gentrification is also a problem here as it is in many other cities, although its lack of opposition allows it to continue without much notice. The same goes for many other struggles, too. But to answer your question: police and their role in maintaining white supremacy.

British Columbia, CAN

Decriminalization of marijuana is pretty huge. Many people here make their livings or down payments growing or selling weed. Many youth here grow up fast and start smoking in elementary school. It's not uncommon for their fathers to end up in prison for growing at some point in their lives.

Police surveillance and intervention is also a growing concern. A few years ago Peter De Groot was shot and killed here by the police. The circumstances around his death were very questionable. The closest small town, which only makes up about 300 people, was on lock-down for days. Drones flew above the forest searching for him for days. There was an astoundingly robust police presence.

I am also proud that Modesto Anarcho was a multi-racial group made up of a variety of people from different backgrounds that accomplished a lot despite its small size.

I think that if we would have continued, we would have needed to up our organizing level and take on bigger and more large scale campaigns as well as get a functioning space and produce a real newspaper. These things cost real money. We would have to figure out how that would work.

Louisville, KY

I'm proud of the older anarchists in my town, for instilling a sense of mythology about their past actions, whether they were collective living spaces, street actions, or food not bombs. This mythology is what excited me in my teenage years and into my early twenties, and created a sense of unity.

Athens, GA

Restarting the Food Not Bombs chapter in Athens has been such an awesome experience. The homeless population in Athens doesn't have many sources for food on the weekends (even with the masses of non profits and churches here) and we are able to help with that. Getting together cooking, learning, laughing and growing have been very satisfying experiences.

Athens Homes Not Jails is something we are very proud of and excited to see grow. There is something satisfying about driving in a car with comrades and liberating abandoned houses. We are extremely stoked on everything that we do.

One thing that cracks us up is the fact that we have had weekly meetings every Tuesday for seven months straight since establishing our collective. It's been funny to see people be so surprised when hearing this. Like it's already an accomplishment to get people in a room together for a few

Minneapolis, MN - Second Perspective

I think both Minneapolis as a whole and myself personally have been suffering from inertia and stagnation. Right now, overcoming this stagnation is one of our biggest hurdles, as we need more explicitly anarchist organizing happening and getting the energy to make that happen feels overwhelming most of the time.

What are the things you are most proud of coming out of your crews of friends? Whether those be individual actions or ongoing projects.

Evansville, IN

Very little. Giving of time, energy, and resources to one-another.

Minneapolis, MN

Recently there have been several initiatives to increase coordination and discussion amongst anarchists and across different circles of comrades, and I think that so far it has been fairly successful. The counter-information projects that I mentioned above are also something I'm excited about as well. A counterinsurgency study group is being put together which will touch on some of the things I've mentioned. I can't wait for that to get going.

Modesto, CA

We were involved in a variety of campaigns that lead to win or victories. These including being involved in a fight that shut down a tallow factory that was polluting a neighborhood that some of our members lived in. We were involved in shutting down and countering neo-nazi and anti-immigrant groups which much success. We were involved in a Cop-watch campaign that stopped police from coming into a neighborhood and harassing people. We were also involved in large scale mobilizations in the area that drew hundreds and thousands of people.

Recently we were gifted some of Peter's chickens by our neighbourhood. His story lives on for us every day as we feed and tend to them.

Another prominent issue is land defense and indigenous sovereignty. The Sinixt Nation, whose traditional territory we live on, were declared extinct by the government in the 50's. Only a few still reside here and there is division amongst the small numbers. There are overlapping land claims from neighbouring nations who *are* recognized by the government. The Sinixt people have set up camps to defend territory in the past, particularly from logging.

Modesto, CA

Modesto Anarcho organized it's work into five main avenues, which include:

1.) Education and Propaganda: This included the publishing of our magazine, Modesto Anarcho, flyers, stickers, posters, and the production of zines. We also organized and put on a variety of educational events that we organized at Firehouse 51, the social center that we ran. Firehouse 51 was open during events, featured a hang out space, library, free zine area, place to make t shirts, and much more. We had a variety of events, from workshops, to speakers, to touring groups, to films. We also had events such as family Halloween nights.

Our magazine was run through a network of free boxes that were placed throughout the city in key areas, such as at the junior college or outside of the food stamps office. We also placed them inside the local library and in various liquor stores, smoke shops, record stores, etc. Also, hugely instrumental in our propaganda efforts was the existence of the Revolutionary Hip Hop Report or RHHR. This magazine was also largely anarchist, but featured interviews and articles on the hip hop culture and how it related to young people of color. The people involved in RHHR were also involved in Modesto Anarcho activities and vice versa, although it remained an autonomous project. The key point in its existence however, was that RHHR was well received in many areas and

places that Modesto Anarcho perhaps at first, would not be. For example, RHHR was distributed in a lot of barber shops and, after a time so was Modesto Anarcho. As the publications expanded their connections and networks, they grew their list of places where it could be carried and often included other magazines, such as Fire to the Prisons, with its distribution. Our sticker and poster campaign, "Stop Broke on Broke Crime" was also very popular.

2.) Cultural Events and Festivals: We put on a variety of large scale concerts, festivals, and cultural events. This included the "People's Bailout," "Keep Your Head Up Festival," the "Chicano Unity Day," two graffiti festivals, as well as a variety of BBQs and Anarchist Café's. These events included DJ's, graffiti walls, hip-hop artists, speakers, needle/syringe clean ups, zine tables, and more. These events were an attempt to reach an audience that normally wouldn't come to anarchist events and also meet new people. Many of the larger festivals were organized by a wide variety of groups and even included a security detail. The role of Modesto Copwatch and RHHR in this regard cannot be overstated. Their contacts in the local hip hop scene proved to be invaluable and they did the majority of the leg work in organizing these endeavors. We also learned from doing these festivals that often the people who came out to them were not young men, but families.

3.) Solidarity work: Supporting struggles around the Central Valley was a key component to MA's work. We supported a wide variety of housing, indigenous, worker/labor struggles, homelessness, students, and other struggles through direct aid and solidarity. Some of our longest running support was for the DQ university occupation, which took place in Davis, CA, and was a Chicano and Native run indigenous university that was taken over by students in 2005. Around 2008, we began participating in direct aid of the occupation, bringing food and collecting donations. We were also involved in the defense of an occupied foreclosed house in Stockton that resulted in the bank renegotiating the loan. By far, the largest base that we interacted with in solidarity work was the families that we organized with around police terror and murder. In this vein we did this in a variety of ways that included:

plan to reopen the shop in our collective house in the summer. Hopefully that will serve as a radical gathering hub. When we operated as Bombs Away Books, it was really surprising to see all the radicals congregate as fast as they did.

Athens is a college town so people cycle in and out. It's shitty but it's also something we can use to our advantage. We would like to eventually offer collective/affordable housing to comrades going to school here or just coming through, so that they can get involved, be around friends, and feel at home. That's something we are currently working on but we are trying not to get sucked into the non-profit industrial complex while doing this. We have had some annoying shit happen but we have continued to grow and everyone is still having fun. So that's all that matters.

Tucson, AZ

I think my friends are fucking amazing and they are doing a lot of things right, with grace, humility and dedication. The main hurdle I see is setting unrealistic time-frames for how new projects get built up and not understanding that broader collaboration/trust takes years. There is a certain boom/bust cycle that is disappointing to observe because having so much initial enthusiasm squandered when things don't progress "quickly" enough is a damn shame. I think anarchists need to work on having a different relationship to time. The idea that the things we want can be achieved in a human lifetime is kind of delusional. I mean sometimes I feel like if you're not building something up that will continue after you or raising some babies... what the fuck are you doing, really?

Evansville, IN - Second Perspective

Being subsumed by liberals/hipsters and just being the fringe or the germ of an immunization.

Modesto, CA

Starting around 2004, anarchists in Modesto picked up the attention of the FBI and local law enforcement. Myself and several others were known by name and face by several local police departments.

I have had police threaten me via text messaging, we've had cameras placed up close to Firehouse 51, and I've had the FBI try and contact my friends and family several times.

In 2010, the person that I was dating at the time was hit and killed by a car while jogging. Several days after they passed away, the police came by the Firehouse due to a noise complaint, and made comments that made clear that they knew the person had died. This shows the level of surveillance the group was under.

If you're a big fish in a small pond – get ready for sharks.

Beyond that, just dealing with being revolutionaries in struggle. When we were organizing a walkout at the junior college, we had college kids call the Modesto Police Department on us because “Modesto Anarcho” is here. Ridiculous shit like that.

The whole secretive “oh we're the cool anarchists, we're awkward” flies right out the window. Either get ready to fucking fight and be comfortable with it or go the fuck home.

Louisville, KY

Isolation and conflicting ideologies are two of the most difficult hurdles.

Athens, GA

\$\$\$\$\$\$\$ But seriously, funding really sucks. We are finding ways to collectively overcome this. As mentioned above we grew out of a short-lived infoshop. Long story short, our landlord was a shithead. We do

- Providing legal support. Connecting families to attorneys. Going to court dates.
- Organizing protests and demonstrations. The biggest of which included the ‘Caravan of Resistance’ that went from Stockton, to Manteca, to Modesto. This involved hundreds of people across racial lines and pushed the boundaries of protest/demonstrations in the Central Valley. Concluded with a BBQ and speakers. More, much smaller marches and protests also took place.
- Connecting families together. For instance we organized a toy drive for families of those killed by police during the holiday time. Brought them into the organizing of the events.
- Production of articles, flyers, and propaganda about the cases of those fighting police brutality.
- Brought family members out to speak at events and into more generalized events.

There are a variety of other examples, that range from supporting rent strikes, to homeless struggles, to labor battles.

4.) General Organizing

MA was also involved in a variety of general organizing attempts that involved:

Modesto Needle Exchange, which organized to take out needles in public parks and also exchange dirty needles for clean ones. This was organized in response to parks in the Airport District being stricken with needles. This program was a large success, but was eventually targeted by the Sheriffs Department and shut down as two volunteers faced up to 6 months in jail. A support campaign was begun which involved banner

drops, propaganda work, and a variety of educational events.

MA was also involved in a variety of student walkouts both on the Junior College of MJC and the California State University in nearby Turlock. These walkouts were quite large and were self-organized outside and against the official student organizations and government. Police, snitch students, and a variety of actors attempted to stop these walkouts but they were largely successful in bringing hundreds of students together.

When organizing against gentrification, we threw a series of BBQs in a park that the city was attempting to close to keep the homeless (and everyone else) out of. We sought to bring people together in our neighborhood that were opposed to the closure and link gentrification to attacks on the homeless.

Lastly, MA organized the Modesto Solidarity Network, which took on three fights, all involving 'illegal lockouts' of tenants. They were all successful in varying degrees, however the last two were problematic and probably should not have been taken on for a variety of reasons.

5.) Intervention in Social Tensions

MA sought to intervene where it was able; in situations in which we were not invested through a long term project.

One of the most successful ways that we did this was in countering anti-PRIDE demonstrators at the yearly PRIDE celebrations. We were able to participate in these moments twice, both of which have been documented with video and were very successful in producing a conflictual environment against the anti-gay demonstrators.

Louisville, KY

I'd argue that the most important yet neglected struggle in Louisville is that of racism. Louisville is a highly segregated town with a lot of racism

As anarchists actively engaged in struggle, what are the largest or most difficult hurdles to overcome in your town?

Evansville, IN

Hand-to-mouth desperation, depression, isolation, interpersonal hurts.

Minneapolis, MN

First of all, the well-established left has monopolized the entire terrain of dissent and has rarely been interrupted in their operation of pacification. In the face of this, there are no easy answers. The logic of anarchy is not only denied by practically everyone—but the basic premises of revolt are obscured by the logic of the non-profit industrial complex which permeates even those who oppose it. Combined with state repression, this led to debilitating resignation from many partisans of revolt. In this dismal state of affairs, it is difficult to mount even the most meager offensive. I am incredibly inspired by those who still try.

British Columbia, CAN

I think what I have found most challenging here is how to relate to the Sinixt as a settler. The politics are quite complex so it's hard to figure out how to relate in good ways. Conversations are ongoing. We're doing nothing a settler round table discussion right now to address some of these questions.

Also I have experienced a lot of grief living here. Part of that is missing people, but I think a larger part is feeling less and less hope over time that other folks will leave the city. In so many ways my life drastically improved leaving and it's hard hearing how the city is tough on people and feeling like the people I love feel trapped.

Myths of security in the city run deep and they are hard to unlearn. It can feel isolating to take on a whole new lease on life and feel like people you love don't relate to you in the same way.

notice if there is enough momentum behind them. Look at the recent Crimethinc tour. There is more interest in anarchism than there is actual projects and groups to get involved with. We need to change that. A big part of that is understanding that much of the scene needs to be left behind (not destroyed, or talked out of existence) but just given up on. It's time for something different.

Athens, GA

Currently we are assisting in organizing a regional anti-fascist mobilization against white supremacists trying to organize. Everyone involved is based in different parts of the region but the central focus is Atlanta. The first action is a counter protest against the KKK on April 23rd at Stone Mountain. More info can be found on www.alloutatl.com if you want to get involved.

We are involved with multiple zines including our monthly periodical Lit Fuse and other forthcoming titles. Some journals are coming up soon too. We organize the re launched Athens chapter of Food Not Bombs every other week (working towards every week soon), Athens Homes Not Jails where we liberate abandoned houses, and there's more but those are the big focuses as of right now.

Evansville, IN - Second Perspective

Zine distribution, collective housing, land project, writing, audio output, local radical history, hosting speaking tours. We don't connect locally yet. Regionally we try to show up if there is a call out for physical support and we try to engage in cross critique and stay aware of other folks' projects.

that is underneath the surface. There is so much that could be done here to improve race relations.

Athens, GA

Being a college town gentrification is something that is constantly being fought. Granted our collective has only been in the community for less than a year, we have big plans to create a very visible pushback from unwanted developments. We have also started a homes not jails campaign where some of us have liberated abandoned houses for those without shelters to give them a temporary refuge. We are aiming to expand this into a much larger network of squatted houses in the near future. The point is to create many spaces that challenge the confines of private property. Police are bastards here just like everywhere and we are planning to establish a copwatch chapter in the summer to give the working class neighborhoods empowerment from the cops that are always hassling them.

Also, we are co-organizing a counter protest against the KKK with our Atlanta comrades in April. We are expecting a huge regional turnout to create strong and permanent anti racist/anti fascist network here.

Tucson, AZ

Struggles against border enforcement, police brutality, the legal limbo that is immigration policy, increases in deportation and various executive orders have created for an entire generation of mixed status families. The crisis of asylum seekers, the increasing numbers of women and children fleeing violence in Central America. Dealing with crazy right-wing armed militia and paramilitary groups- fucking white supremacists. I could go on, but it's a little overwhelming to keep listing them.

Evansville, IN - Second Perspective

Gentrification. Police terror.

Minneapolis, MN - Second Perspective

Police brutality has been a big problem in Minneapolis for a long time (you know, since the development of the police). A lot of the organizing against that recently has been through Black Lives Matter Minneapolis. Historically, a group that has focused on that with strength and consistency is Communities United Against Police Brutality (CUAPB). Both of those organizations are extremely hierarchical and have some wack politics in addition to authoritarianism, in my view. Worker's rights is also big, as there is a strong push in the "Fight for 15" for \$15 an hour wages, particularly with one group that focuses on mostly immigrant workers in retail cleaning and other largely invisible and exploited jobs. There is also a lot of gentrification in Minneapolis, although that hasn't been a huge focus of a lot of organizing as of late.

How do anarchists in your town relate to the larger political climate or milieu? In what ways are you able to connect with current struggles?

Evansville, IN

I only really know one other anarchist, but I'm getting to know three other people who identify as such. As for how we relate to the larger political climate or milieu, I can only say through travel and internetting. Evansville is nice since it's only two and a half hours by vehicle from St. Louis, Carbondale, and Bloomington. I've enjoyed getting out to meet anarchists in those places. Carbondale has a new infoshop (The Flyover) and a radio program that I've participated with briefly while I was up there (I said three sentences on the radio). Bloomington seems rad and folks there get my gender politics. I was going to go up there for Philip's trial over the books-to-prisoners misunderstanding, but the Bloomington folks politely declined our company. I have a political-crush on Stl anarchists. A lot of Stl folks come to Evansville because of Covance med-studies, and I especially like it in Stl since the housing is well-established and criminality is commonplace. Where I am from, Oklahoma City, there

or high-profile struggles. Like I mentioned earlier a tons of literature was circulated through the 4th Precinct Occupation and inspired a lot of deeper conversations about what was happening. It still remains to be seen what will come out of that, but I'm optimistic.

British Columbia, CAN

I'm involved with quite a bit of magical education circles, where witches gather to learn skills and history together. I also live on a land project that is very busy with many projects and workshops, parties and events. We do quite a bit of emotional support work, harm reduction and skill sharing as well as growing as much of our own food as we can. We are building a barn through a completely community driven initiative this summer. I also do herbal abortion support work and am involved in a collective here that does that work.

Abortion support relates to larger struggles because abortion is challenging to access and deeply stigmatized. I feel that anything related to food security is related to larger struggles because we are living in a moment where our food security is rapidly dwindling. Learning and sharing these skills allows us to rely less on the state and corporations for security. And learning witch history, to me, is tied very much into learning about the rise and violent imposition of capitalism. rain' crowe's work explores this in fantastic detail.

Modesto, CA

Currently I do mostly media projects such as FireWorksbayarea.com and itsgoingdown.org

I am trying to get more involved in local struggles here and am working with other working-class anarchists to try and figure our shit out. I have been involved in some struggles and campaigns here in the bay area, mostly land defense struggles and also organizing where I work, which as a bus driver, in an autonomous self-organized group of coworkers.

In regards to the wider movement, I think the task ahead of us is to make our actions and struggles real on a national level. People will take

me stay connected and engaged with old friends the world over because with time inevitably comes change. Holding tightly to rigid certainty would have ended a lot of wonderful friendships and collaborations. As to facilitating national connections, I try to be a good host.

Evansville, IN - Second Perspective

Reading, substance abuse, interneting, *Absence In Common* by Kevin Hamilton, work-aholism.

Focusing on strengthening the commitments of long term comrades in the region basically with friendship and perseverance.

Minneapolis, MN - Second Perspective

Minneapolis has been somewhat isolated over the last couple of years. A few years ago, it was much more common for tours and speakers to come through, for example. Even so, there is generally a somewhat steady stream of people coming in for something or other. Also, many anarchists in Minneapolis travel a lot (especially in the winter), so they bring back insights, news, etc. at times.

What projects are you currently engaged in? How do those projects connect to local struggles as well as national struggles?

Evansville, IN

Projects that I'm currently engaged in (these are all in baby-stages): a zine-distro, a letters-to-prisoners weekly event, developing audio-programming, collective housing, garden commons, forming a land trust, developing an "accountability process," and weekly "working group" meetings that are a project in and of themselves.

Minneapolis, MN

I'm currently involved in several informal and overlapping counter-information projects. One thing in particular that I think is worthwhile is publishing and distributing anti-authoritarian analysis of local and

are some bad-ass anarchists, but not many and the city fosters more of a music/art/hang-out/drink milieu. Also in OKC, there's a primitive feel in some spaces, and folks have bought land up north and moved away.

Minneapolis, MN

Before recent events, it seems to me that anarchists didn't have a very effective relationship with street politics in the area. As a comrade described it, anarchists tended to be a dark cloud at protests; we stand a little off to the side, we don't really chant the chants because we don't like the wording... I'm sure many can relate to this as I know I've had that experience all over the country. At some Black Lives Matter protests earlier in 2015, anarchists might hand out pamphlets or fliers that offered a more radical critique, but this was the most that happened. This lack of coordination was definitely evident during the Jamar Clark protests, which I'm glad to say seems to have encouraged people to be better prepared for the next time it goes down.

While the occupation was still ongoing, anarchists called for a solidarity march on the southside of Minneapolis (the occupation was taking place on the north side) that was first of all, explicitly anti-police, and also didn't involve permits, communication with police, or internal policing (protest marshals or 'peace police'). The presence of protest marshals is ubiquitous in the Twin Cities, even the IWW uses them, because the idea of having an uncontrollable action is a foreign concept, or at least that's what I can tell. It was also an anonymously organized action—so many people felt obligated to know the personal information of the organizers, as if protests were the sole domain of nonprofits with biography pages for its leaders. Hopefully the practice of anonymous action call-outs can continue and become normalized.

This is of course in addition to smaller contributions made at the occupation itself, like I mentioned earlier, anarchists continued to distribute pamphlets and fliers with critiques of the police and policing, critiques of the 'white ally' discourse which is very prevalent here. Some texts that were written during the events were printed out in the thousands and distributed, and of course people engaged in face-to-face conversations. It's far too soon to say how fruitful this was in the long run.

British Columbia, CAN

How we relate to the larger political climate is pretty complex, as complex as the range of politics we hold. Some of us engage in underground birth and abortion support work. Others host workshops or coordinate community spaces, houses and land projects. Some people turn to grant funding to run community programming or do art for a living. Others build houses by hand. Some retreat from the world. Others get clean or build a spiritual practice. Others try to engage with Sinixt solidarity work.

Many of us do a mix of these things.

Many of us are learning skills to become apocalypse ready - growing food, processing animals, setting up non-state dependant infrastructure.

Witch craft is also popular here. Cultural appropriation is also fairly rampant. While many folks don't trust the state they often have pretty weak understandings of white supremacy.

Modesto, CA

We were involved in connecting with broader struggles in a previous group that existed before MA, Direct Action Anti-Authoritarians (DAAA) Collective. We participated in the immigrant rights movement as well as in local struggles against polluting companies such as a local tallow plant (animal rendering facility) and a an incinerator that pumped dioxin into the local environment.

Throughout MA's existence, there were not many large scale movements that came and touched the local area in the same way. Occupy happened during this time, however it was a total shit show that was strangled by the local Peace and Life Center (middle class pacifists and non-violence types).

together, etc. We tried to break down the walls of isolation between "the anarchists" and "the people." We invited people over to BBQs and to drink with us.

Louisville, KY

In the recent past I've organized potlucks and movie showings, when those fizzled out, I made new friends with younger people and shared books with them. In terms of connecting with struggles nationally, I haven't been involved with any kind of work like that in quite some time. So I haven't got much to comment on.

Athens, GA

Our collective meets and does activities multiple times each week. Such as reading groups, dumpster diving, FNB, zine making, street actions, dinners, and just hanging out. Some of us travel to see our out of town comrades at least once a month and create regional projects with them.

A lot of the times we try to reach out to comrades not just nationally but globally. Find out what struggles their communities face, exchange stories and build solidarity. That's mostly been done online, but we encourage anyone to come to Athens, GA for a short or long visit. You have comrades here!

Tucson, AZ

I am terrible at networking, but I am great at having friends and lovers. All relationships take time. The slow unfolding of affinity and trust is a beautiful thing. It can't really be rushed. There are things that help create genuine connections: don't embrace alienation, don't talk in fucking abstractions all the time, and be honest about your own political journey. One of the few things that has stayed the same over the course of the last 15 years is the god damn certainty with which I express my political positions. Since realizing that, I guess I've been trying to inhabit spaces of nuance and embrace the gray areas a little bit more. This has helped

British Columbia, CAN

The main way that our home, a queer and trans radical land project, combats isolation is to throw events and invite loads of people to them. When we met new people, especially queer and trans folks, we are very inviting. I try to go out of my way to bring people into the fold, especially if they are new here. I make an effort to connect people with folks I think they would resonate with.

I think many of us stay connected to larger radical struggles through social media, to be honest. We share things and read them. Many people in my social circle take part in online courses together as a way to build community and stay connected to the world outside the valley.

Modesto, CA

MA had the unique experience of being a 'token' within the large milieu. It was cool to like Modesto Anarcho up to a point, because it was a 'small town' (wasn't all that small) and was working-class, etc. A big mistake we made was playing into this perception of ourselves. Some people described us as 'anarcho gangsters' which was ridiculous and stupid. This also had no bearing on the actual work that we were doing in Modesto. If I had to go back and do it over again I would very much caution myself from promoting this aspect of Modesto Anarcho to the wider scene.

The wider scene helped us in terms of sending people out to Modesto to speak, giving us materials, making shirts, hooking us up with copies, etc. Sometimes this happened in weird ways. People would come out to "look at the shitty place," etc.

Once, people tried to send the Invisible Committee here because of this. We took some big names to the swap meet and they took pictures of the vendors and people asked them to stop. Things like that.

Back to us, we really sought to connect different facets of struggles together within the various groups and families that we worked with. We invited people to come and speak at events, we brought families

Louisville, KY

Anarchists as of late, ever since the Occupy movement, have ceased to have any sort of organized presence in the Louisville area. I urge you to interview other people, so that I could be proven wrong, but I haven't heard of anything. This is coming from someone who was involved in many different projects over the past ten years. Anarchists, on an individual level, have continued to be involved in actions with the black lives matter movement.

Athens, GA

We try to steer people towards more radical critiques and get them to see past just the typical left/right arguments. Some people are extremely receptive to it and others just write it off as nonsense because it doesn't fit their agenda. A lot of the political figures in this town are opportunists, so we try to steer clear of them and really only interact when it's necessary. Most of the "progressives" have told us they have worked hard to be taken "seriously" and don't want to associate with anarchists to take any of that status away. It's pretty senseless but there are allies within some of those groups, we just try to reach out to people on an individual basis and find affinity in that way.

We do get a lot of public support; people passing by when we are doing FNB or doing street actions seem really enthusiastic. I do think being in the south; what we represent is scary to people seeing anarchist/communist symbols, literature, and discussion. It's really easy to find out who's your comrade or not in this town.

We did a spray paint campaign in solidarity with refugees around town, which some people were positive about, others not so much. We also committed an action on Indigenous People's day where we taped notes all over Lumpkin Street explaining how Wilson Lumpkin led the Trail of Tears and looked at mass genocide as an accomplishment of his. We also "spray chalked" the sidewalks around campus with similar messages. Students were taking pictures and seemed pretty into it. Apparently, the

next day classes went outside and talked about it. Not a lot of people knew who Wilson Lumpkin was and we were able to inform them about his fucked up legacy.

Tucson, AZ

The most inspiring work here usually isn't anarchist directed- it involves anarchists working in collaboration with a wide array of other people- religious groups, radical lawyers, human rights organizations, self-organized community defense groups and community organizers. An incomplete list of amazing projects over the past 10 years include: direct medical aid in the desert, legal clinics that help people get a legal reprieve from deportation through prosecutorial discretion or applying for DACA, abuse documentation of Border Patrol practices and reports on conditions in immigration detention, migra patrol groups (like cop watch) that responded to the roll out of SB 1070 (the law that deputized the police to check immigration papers), wider community campaigns like the struggle to save Ethnic Studies and the We Reject Racism campaign trying to get businesses to not let police check papers, the new sanctuary movement where congregations house people resisting deportation, community defense groups that pool resources to bail people out- the list could go on.

Evansville, IN - Second Perspective

There are two of us here who keep ourselves informed of current anarchist theory and efforts, and keep in touch with the regional collectives. Any other comrades here are totally unaware of any living anarchist traditions/praxis.

Minneapolis, MN - Second Perspective

In terms of anarchists relating to the larger political climate in Minneapolis and the US, that varies a lot. There are a lot of fractures within the anarchist milieu locally, so some individuals and groupings tend to

Evansville, IN - Second Perspective

What is easy isn't worth doing. Share your bare life and destroy the rest.

Minneapolis, MN - Second Perspective

When anarchists in the strongholds are creating movements or hashtags or trends or whatever to export out to other parts of the country, I wish they would learn more about what it means and looks like to adapt those tactics to different contexts and provide thoughts on that in what they put out for people to respond to and run with.

How do you combat isolation within your community? Both on the local level and within the larger anarchist milieu? How are you connecting your struggles locally to those occurring nationally?

Evansville, IN

Combat isolation? You just feel it. Bathe in it. Just kidding. You desperately beg people to move to your neighborhood, you work hard to create events that would bring people out of the wood-work, you internet. You travel to Carbondale, Bloomington, and Stl. You write letters and read and discuss. I'm not good at reaching out, and I suffer because of it. How do we connect our struggles to those occurring nationally? Letter-writing to political prisoners, I guess.

Minneapolis, MN

Luckily, Black Lives Matter has already done that for us, connecting the protests over Jamar Clark to what went down in Ferguson and Baltimore (even if it's to prevent us from acting similarly in our response). As far as isolation goes, I don't think we've done a very good job at that. We had a huge opportunity to make real connections with a wide variety of people that were at the 4th Precinct occupation, but for the most part we failed to really build any bonds outside of the anarchist milieu. And I'm as responsible as anyone for not being more proactive about that. Once again, I can't speak for everybody, this is only how it seems to me.

Athens, GA

Find each other, don't be cliquish. Don't waste time arguing semantics, develop relationships, find affinity and be quick to act! Also, don't trust liberals, landlords, or cops! Have fun with it! Find what works for your town. It sounds cliché, but it's true. Smaller towns have advantages that larger cities don't and vice versa.

Tucson, AZ

Whether you're looking back at the struggle to save Ethnic Studies and the fight against SB 1070 or looking forward at the response to the continuing border crisis these are struggles that first off aren't primarily anarchist ones- and secondly don't lend themselves easily to singular narratives. Working across a spectrum of political identity, language and race is an important skill. The things we want are audacious and they will require a lot of other people. I think learning to be quiet, observant and a better listener will get you a lot farther than crafting the perfect manifesto. There is a lot of potential in struggles that require stepping out of your comfort zone- culturally, linguistically, and personally.

There is no such thing as allyship, that's a politician's word. Everyone has needs and expectations even if they pretend they don't. Better to work towards collaborative resistance, which requires you communicate your position and investment honestly- so others understand why you're in it and what you are, or aren't, willing to give up.

I have optimism that if we put in the work to be self-reflective, most anarchists will eventually find a place for their specific skill-set in struggle. Not every collective or project will meet your needs. It's important to be honest with yourself about what you need to be satisfied in your political life because the daily grind is what we've got right now. Unfortunately it all won't burn down tomorrow.

gravitate to certain projects over others. Some anarchists have been really involved in Black Lives Matter stuff, the Wobblies do a lot of organizing locally and have hosted national gatherings, a lot of anarchists are involved in urban permaculture (although most of those efforts are more focused on their houses than on organizing for food security or sovereignty), some consistently focus on prisoner support and letter writing. Despite the fractures ensuring that people stick to their chosen areas of focus (which also typically means their friend circles), many step up when something goes down like the cops executing someone in the street (such as Jamar Clark last November).

Is there an established Left with which you ally at times? What does that look like? What conflicts may or may not exist?

Evansville, IN

I don't know any leftists in Evansville. Maybe I work with one. That person and I have never talked about politics.

Minneapolis, MN

I've touched on this already but I'll elaborate. Black Lives Matter Minneapolis has a very tight grip on protests around police and white supremacy. Each of its leaders—which to make very clear, are the people who give orders, there are no pretensions about horizontalism—have a background in the non-profit industrial complex, which is very prominent here. So there is certainly a well-established left. As to whether or not we ally with them, to my dismay there is far more cooperation than there should be. Because ultimately, for those of us who desire revolution of any sort, we need to recognize that the Left is actually going to be a major hurdle. Black Lives Matter Minneapolis have made statement after statement in no uncertain terms that they are interested in preventing rebellion and channeling dissent into political channels. And they held true to these promises (or more accurately, threats) and very thoroughly policed the 4th Precinct operation just as their demonstra-

tions. Black rebels were snitched out openly by white allies, arrests were ignored up by the “protest leadership” if the charge wasn’t civil enough. So it should be clear that, as anarchists, or for that matter any partisans of revolt regardless of their label or politic, we have very little in common with these groups and in fact will find ourselves on the opposite side of the barricades. It’s time to treat them that way.

British Columbia, CAN

Oh definitely. The histories of resistance and liberal organizing are long in this place. Activist communities and social programs are robust, particularly for a rural area.

Many folks attend rallies or organize them. There are lots of opportunities to connect with elders of resistance. The Women’s Center here is very active and one of the oldest in so called Canada. Many folks with anarchist leanings do support work, work for non-profits or work in the trades. The events that I have seen the most people come out to are generally fundraisers, like dance parties, for front line resistance. As well as events that support the Sinixt.

Modesto, CA

The Left groups that existed in the Modesto area included the Peace and Life Center (left liberals/progressives, published a local shit rag, held pointless sign holding events, etc), NAACP (attempted to put a wet blanket over the black and latino communities every time the police killed someone, the unions (Teamsters attempted to intervene in Occupy, total shit show, ended up being in a local with the same organizers), and in Stockton, the Nation of Islam.

This last group we interestingly had some connection too, as one of our close comrade’s father (who was a mentor and advisor to many of us) was in it, and the Nation also allowed us to host several events at their Mosque as well as provided security at several of our events. Lastly the Democratic Party, which in the case of the immigrant movement, tried to wrangle it to death.

What lessons do you feel those same larger anarchist strongholds could take from communities like your own?

Evansville, IN

I don’t know if this is a lesson, but isolated anarchists get how precious we are to one-another. But maybe we’re too much up in each other’s shit. I don’t know.

Minneapolis, MN

Continuing with my last response, the concentration of anarchists can actually contribute to the decline of struggle. Outside of these “strongholds” anarchists actually have to experiment and think more strategically about how to expand the horizon of struggle, whereas it can be easy to fall in a routine if you feel like you’re living in anarcho-disneyland. But outside of these places, either we give up or we are forced to adopt a more dynamic approach—I’ve chosen the latter.

British Columbia, CAN

Learning how to treat people better. Being accountable to knowing you will see someone again and again and again. Not treating people as disposable. Connecting with elders and learning from them. Learning how to slow down and connect to what is present in our bodies and spirits, as we move through the work. The value of art and time for creative exploration.

Modesto, CA

If big cities could learn anything from Modesto Anarcho, it’s the importance of having a base of support and connection to actual communities in struggle. If we could learn anything from the big cities, it’s that infrastructure and the ability to make money to sustain our projects is important over the long term.

because of obvious reasons. When Crimethinc came here with the To Change Everything tour it recharged us and made us realize the struggles in our town are tied to the global struggle. No matter how insignificant we feel at times being in a small southern college town; we have the same capabilities as bigger cities to start something big when the time is right. It gets closer everyday. Our numbers grow every day. It's coming.

Tucson, AZ

I guess I look to friends in other places both for inspiration and to ground me. It's easy to romanticize struggle in other places- the farther away the shinier it seems. I've learned in my travels that anarchists are hilarious fallible. We are imbued with similar flaws with our hopelessly high aspirations and our inclinations towards judgment and alienation when they don't work out. The lessons I've taken from larger anarchist communities is that "community" is a tricky word- trust takes time, ideological militancy that courts too much categorical abstraction can be something of a rabbit hole, and social propriety is greatly overrated. We should look at the gap between our desires and our concrete achievements honestly-- and perhaps be nicer to each other.

Evansville, IN - Second Perspective

Don't give up. The spectacle projects even "anarchism" in a singular lifeless dimension.

Minneapolis, MN - Second Perspective

One thing that I've seen a lot of here in Minneapolis is tactics from other places being adopted without much consideration, prioritizing form over function. For example, mic checking still happens at Black Lives Matter and other such protests, even though the people calling for mic checks often use megaphones to do so... Mostly, the anarchists aren't the ones doing that. So I guess my point is that I wish I saw more lessons from anarchist strongholds being employed in creative, useful ways so that we could have more of an influence on how Lefty organizing happens here.

I would say that Modesto benefited from not having a large left presence in the area, and especially because the "Leftists" and "progressives" that were there wanted nothing to do with our class war politics.

Louisville, KY

Historically for May Day there have been actions in which we've involved the established Left, to varying degrees of success/failure. One May Day march in particular involved different groups in the street together who had never had much interaction beforehand. This resulted in a sense of disunity that led to the march being herded off the street and onto the sidewalk. Arrests were made and there was very little support made for the arrested.

The conflicts that have existed in the past have been a lack of unity regarding tactics, as well as a lack of solidarity. In other words, a sense of political deafness.

Athens, GA

There's one of the groups we brought up in one of the earlier questions. They are called Athens For Everyone. They are a non-profit lobbyist, activist group here. I would say they are the only other real active "left" here. It's frustrating because we are friends with some of them and there is definitely affinity. But we seem to drift apart on issues such as diversity of tactics, representation, identity politics, media narratives and things like that. Their leaders tend to police movements and delegitimize anything that isn't "professional" activism. That's a huge problem to us. Every demonstration they have called has demonized anything other than "positive messages." They refuse to acknowledge right wing enemies or reactionaries and won't acknowledge any counter protest measures. Instead they aim to create "positive gatherings to spread a message" in order to grab headlines in the local paper. It's really frustrating; to us not confronting the social institutions and forces that trample us daily is the personification of privilege. You have to act and you have to know your enemies. There's no way to be neutral in this.

We hope to eventually see people in the streets and mobilizing here one day. It's very possible, but since this is such a progressive town, there's not really as much outrage. There definitely should be. There will be.

We just think that maybe Athens has been overrun with pacifist, social democratic ideas for so long that it's going to take some time to agitate that situation. People are starting to see that the smiley face democracy isn't working entirely and a lot of those people have gotten involved in our collective.

I don't expect to see people black blocking downtown anytime soon but I do see more people demanding confrontation and that's exciting. We are using these calm moments to find each other and when the time comes. We will be in the streets. No doubt about it.

Tucson, AZ

I suppose there is an established left here- it's funny to say it that way since that phrase could easily describe the other half of some of our collectives! Rather than fixate on figuring out who is part of the "left," I find it more helpful to focus on the concrete work. I have found that I can do meaningful political work with a wide variety of people as long as the practical outcomes feel authentic and honest to my politics. Helping people deal with enforcement, extending solidarity to migrants, working on wider community campaigns to address systemic racism requires such a breadth of resources and talents. I feel lucky that I am able to work with folks who have been politically active here for decades. I don't really care if they don't identify as anarchists.

There are definitely political differences to hash out and conflicts usually get worked through when deciding on goals and strategies for different campaigns. It seems unnecessary to preemptively preclude collaboration based on ideology. Even if working only with other anarchists was desirable, and to me it's not, there aren't enough anarchists here to do that.

like that to shatter it—only dedicated comrades and strategic thought. A high concentration of anarchists doesn't guarantee anything, especially not a strong movement.

British Columbia, CAN

I think the facilitation, space holding and communication skills I learned in anarchist circles really help me out here. Both with my work in the world and also in how I engage the community space of my home. Also funny enough I find my work, which is being a community supported witch, author, herbalist, community educator, and herbal abortion care provider is greatly helped by my urban networks. When we fundraise for projects having access to urban networks is hugely helpful.

Modesto, CA

The 'anarchist strongholds,' such as the bay area, are like the Hollywood of anarchism in the US. It's where a lot of the anarchist material that is produced is made and printed. However, often these communities are extremely divorced from poor and working class neighborhoods.

Louisville, KY

I've learned about the importance of security culture. That is probably the most important lesson that I've learned from other anarchists.

Athens, GA

Get organized, find each other, spread propaganda, and do it now. Our Atlanta comrades have given us such awesome advice and have shown us solidarity from day one. We have learned that the relationships we build must surpass the constructs of modern life and be rooted in resistance. Modesto Anarcho inspired us to start making zines and propaganda.

Crimethinc helped us develop critiques and connect dots to modern day society that Kropotkin, Goldman, Bakunin and all the classics couldn't

fucking real sometimes. Friends still get deported or go to prison or die too young from some combination of despair and maladaptive coping. There is a certain emotional exhaustion that comes with years of struggle, but I think in the dark moments perseverance is a good stand in for hope. You do what you can anyway because your own spiritual survival depends on it.

Evansville, IN - Second Perspective

We have supported long term anti-infrastructure initiatives. We have worked for years trying to foster a germ of an anti-authoritarian collective with base resources for growth: shared houses, urban land, forested land that we are trying to offer to prisoners and comrades who need a reprieve from trauma, a commercial space, etc.

Minneapolis, MN - Second Perspective

That varies tremendously. Sometimes that's working as allies when shit goes down, sometimes that's being involved long-term in community organizations addressing certain issues, sometimes that's organizing medium- or long-term anarchist projects, sometimes that's dealing with conflict or harm that arises within friend circles/the scene/the subculture.

What lessons have you taken from larger anarchist strongholds?

Evansville, IN

That it's possible and real.

Minneapolis, MN

As I said, I think the most important lesson to take from the so-called anarchist strongholds is that there is nothing inherent about where we are that means we can't do the things these "strongholds" can. They are simply at a capacity, or at least appear to be, to do things that we might still need to work towards. I'm tempted to leave it at that, but I think this point is so important that two sentences doesn't do it justice. The veneer of social peace is fragile. It doesn't require a mass movement or anything

Evansville, IN - Second Perspective

Not really. There is no protest climate, no counter information projects from any Left, but there are charities and nonprofits that do stupid useless consumer-activism and fortification of gentrification. Also, a couple of us have spent about a decade here buying around two acres and what will likely be eight to nine houses by the end of 2016, all in a five block radius; we need a strong core of anarchists so that we aren't saturated by the substanceless politics of the people we meet who will entertain our projects. (we don't want to be the first wave of gentrification, but a resonance of Exarchia)

Minneapolis, MN - Second Perspective

The Left in Minneapolis is well established. There are really visible and well-entrenched socialists, as well as some Communists. Anarchists here definitely ally with some of the authoritarian Leftists at times, and that used to be way more true in the wake of the 2008 RNC because there was so much infiltration and state repression. Those alliances might become more active and robust again if the socialists who were targeted in the 2010 raids and grand jury subpoenas are indicted. With so many people (anarchist, socialist, etc.) being around for so long, there are plenty of conflicts despite us all being within the same general context. Some of those are interpersonal, some political, many revolving around a choice of tactics and many being fundamental ideological differences between anarchists (in the big tent sense) and authoritarian Leftists.

When we, as anarchists, read about or see media coming out of larger cities or strongholds, so much of what is put out there are these fantastic moments in the streets. For many of us those moments are not reflected in our own communities. What are reactions to seeing those manifestations of anarchism in other places?

Evansville, IN

I'm not sure. We definitely read and talk to people in order to learn as many lessons as possible, and we show emotional support. Ferguson happened before I moved north. When I lived in OKC, if was more, "Whoa, that's bad-ass!" Maybe there was more going on, just not in my world. It's tough knowing what to talk about. Listening to stories, it seems like some of the folks who survived "these fantastic moments" are pretty roughed-up about it. There was a lot of direct-action in Oklahoma around the tar-sands fight. The Great Plains TarSands Resistance brought a lot of people together, but two of my friends were looking at ten years for a banner drop. That's awful. I'm just saying all of this to say the manifestations of these front line battles seem to be mostly emotional and intellectual for me. But also pride and respect.

Minneapolis, MN

Well maybe this isn't such a fair answer because very recently after leaving anarcho-disneyland for my freezing hometown, I did get to experience fantastic moments in the streets here as well. For one evening, the control of the "protest leadership" completely broke down and fights with the police became very intense, with rocks and even a few molotov cocktails being thrown. But I think that this underlines the point I want to get across. If people are committed to building capacity for street confrontations—which is not necessarily something desirable in itself, but as a possible indicator for a growing insurrectional struggle—then it can happen anywhere. Far too often in the United States we resign ourselves to watching the riot porn coming in from Greece or Chile or even on a smaller scale looking at Oakland or Seattle, but this is at the expense of our own struggles.

Louisville, KY

I've found wheatpasting and running a distro to be the most successful tactics at creating friendships and getting anarchist thought out in Louisville. A friend of mine has a radical library in the back of his record shop. Another friend of mine does escorting at the abortion clinic. There are people who, although they are not a part of visible anarchist organizations, take part in radical actions that adhere to anarchist principles.

Athens, GA

There is actually someone who has gone around town and tagged "No war but class War" in every retail/restaurant bathroom in town. We have yet to meet this invisible comrade but it's refreshing to see small disruptions like that. There is a large homeless and working class population here. I think it's only a matter of time before these everyday thoughts in everyone's imaginations manifest themselves into actions of resistance.

There's seems to be a large proportion of disenfranchised youth here, we always pass by skate boarders and kids doing graffiti or just fighting off their boredom in some way. I think eventually those kids are going to set off some cool shit. We have seen some of our pamphlets distributed around town and people definitely seek us out which is really cool.

Tucson, AZ

The work we do helps people survive/circumvent state controls and gives them more autonomy over their own lives. The value of our work is apparent in the lives of the families we've helped to reunite, the travelers who made it to their destination and didn't die prematurely, the friends who finally won their asylum cases after years of detention and heartache. At its best the work we do creates a symbiotic solidarity. Helping others survive the labyrinth of controls makes it easier for me to live on the border. At its worst... it's not enough, you know?

We all bring our own emotional needs to the work we do and shit gets

Minneapolis, MN

I guess this is a difficult question for me because it's hard to say anything that comes close to definitive. I already discussed anarchist interventions in social movements (or lack thereof) although that is certainly not the only form anarchy can take. To me, there honestly isn't much of a visible or tangible presence of anarchist politics in the Twin Cities—although I say this as someone who hasn't been around for a while. Hopefully a renewed interest in revolutionary action via recent events will contribute to this being less and less the case.

British Columbia, CAN

The most significant ways I see anarchist values manifest here is in mutual aid and trade based economies. So many people come here and learn skills. Life changing skills. And often we learn these skills from each other. We teach because someone taught us and we want to pass knowledge down the lines. Learning from elders plays a huge role in this knowledge exchange.

In a small town I feel there is more emotional accountability in relationships, at least it seems to be that way here. There are only as many people in the valley we live in as an urban high school, so it's easy to get to know people. The impressions you make and how you get to know someone will last, because you are very likely to see them again.

Modesto, CA

When we started organizing as anarchists around 2003, we sought to follow the examples of the anarchy franchises we saw, like FNB or Critical Mass. We got burned out on these projects over time but learned a lot of lessons from them on how to organize a variety of things and also deal with bureaucratic groups that sought to demonize us.

British Columbia, CAN

Lots of folks I know here have experienced these moments. We swap stories from the street regularly. I think out here that energy manifests in different ways.

Sometimes people leave to go to cities, and come back with rich stories. Sometimes we are the landing spot for activists dealing with burnout. Many of us are healing from burnout and came here wanting to create something that feels tangible and long lasting with our efforts. I think that is why so many of us build things and grow food. Also this community throws wicked dance parties.

There is a way that revelry and play, especially in the party culture, are alive here that I rarely felt in the city except for certain moments in the streets.

Modesto, CA

Modesto Anarcho was not a "street fighting" organization. It made little sense for our small group to try and build militant power to break windows or riot for hours, which the police would come down hard on, focusing on a select group of "leaders" which happened occasionally. We had to find other ways of being militant.

Louisville, KY

There's definitely a sense of fascination regarding these movements that take to the streets. Of course those kinds of actions have never been realized in the streets of Louisville, at least not on the level it's been realized in larger cities, but it's something that we take note of in our free time, between friends, via the internet.

Athens, GA

We hope to eventually see people in the streets and mobilizing here one day. It's very possible, but since this is such a progressive town, there's not really as much outrage. There definitely should be. There will be.

We just think that maybe Athens has been overrun with pacifist, social democratic ideas for so long that it's going to take some time to agitate that situation. People are starting to see that the smiley face democracy isn't working entirely and a lot of those people have gotten involved in our collective.

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Tucson, AZ

Outside of a small circle, I'm not sure if anyone reads those manifestos here. Personally, I got politicized during the anti-globalization era and went to a number of summits. When I got older I went back to my home country, learned about resistance there, lived in squats. So I've had my share of time in the streets. Those are memories that I cherish, moments that gave me the strength to identify as an anarchist, brought me hope and renewed my joy. Those also moments that happened in very specific political contexts.

I cannot look at the fetishization of certain tactics without wondering where all the context went. I think the emergence of black bloc came in some ways from the momentum and sacrifices of decades worth of struggles against the dictatorships of the mid-20th century. The struggles in Spain and Italy that influenced the autonomous in Germany that shifted things like the anti-roads movement in the UK which influenced Reclaim the Streets which mixed with the punk scene and helped create the tendrils and initial beginnings of the anarchist resurgence in the US. It's important to consider the context in which these things emerged and also to be honest about their limitations. It doesn't make sense to me to build an ideology or identity around the heightened effectiveness of certain kinds of tactics. Sometimes blocking up works well, but with the emergence of the surveillance state and image recognition technology-sometimes it just provides a false sense of security and anonymity.

It makes me happy when people kick off, and that happens here sometimes. But, it's not the whole picture. I guess I don't necessarily need to read manifestos about taking the streets. I want people to tell me about what they do the other 95% of the time. Tell me about how you sort out housing, who heals you when you are sick and what you tell your kids about cops and going to prison. Those are the things I've been trying to work through lately.

Evansville, IN - Second Perspective

Asking those comrades if we can somehow support them, phone trees, money, lit-distribution.

Minneapolis, MN - Second Perspective

The reactions vary, although the gist of it is that there is usually support and often enthusiasm for what is happening. Some anarchists have been getting together for regular discussions about topics of interest to anarchists and anti-authoritarians here, a lot of which have been focused on anarchy in other parts of the country and world. These discussions have often focused heavily on analyses and critiques of what seems effective and strategic, as well as ineffective and non-strategic, in these events and happenings. The discussions have also included a lot of frustration for the current political climate in Minneapolis not being ripe for revolt.

How do folks create manifestations of anarchist politics, tactics or values in your town?

Evansville, IN

Well, I've just started working with other people in Evansville on projects, and, of those people, there's just one anarchist. But maybe more soon, like I was saying. So I can't really speak to this. Values wise: there does seem to be a hands-on-no-cops approach to violence. And my friend has really laid out the red-carpet for me (with time, energy, and resources) because I'm a "comrade.". And I don't respect property ownership and I really respect anarchist solidarity, so I'm open with whatever I have. I'm not into charity, but we have each other's backs, or sincerely mean to.