

The Friendly Anarchism Podcast

Katherine, Cim, etc.

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About the Podcast

Friendly Anarchism is a podcast hosted by Katherine, a Quaker anarchist who speaks and listens with community about mysticism, radical praxis, theology, empowerment, anti-fascism, and the arts from a leftist Religious Society of Friends perspective. The project covers current events, Quaker practice, anarchist action, and the exciting plethora of relevant discussions that are happening within anarchist, leftist, Christian, and other mystic philosophies.

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FAQs

What does the name “Friendly Anarchism” mean?

“Friendly” is a take on the Religious Society of Friends, which is the full name for those better known as Quakers. Also, one of the goals is to make anarchism more accessible and show another side to anarchists that people may not know as much about.

What are Quakers?

“Quaker” is the nickname for the Religious Society of Friends, a (generally) Christian sect that came into existence in the 1600’s. Quakers are known for being a more radical branch of Christianity due to their mystic beliefs that all people are equal and have equal access to divinity, thereby eschewing traditional church hierarchies. For more information you can visit the resource page here: [Quakers](#)

What is anarchism?

Anarchism is not chaos, but a way of effectively organizing our communities in an egalitarian way without the need for dominance or hierarchical power structures. For more information you can go to the resource page here: [Anarchism](#)

How can you be a Quaker anti-fascist? Aren’t antifa violent and aren’t Quakers peaceful?

The vast majority of antifascist work is nonviolent, and questions about the intersections between peace and violence are not easily answered. I hope you will listen to the podcast if it is a subject you find intriguing!

What about “No Gods, No Masters”? Isn’t Christian anarchism antithetical?

The institution of the Christian church has unquestionably done huge amounts of damage in its various forms and interconnections with colonization, imperialism, white supremacy, patriarchy, and queerphobia. However, since its inception Christianity has also always had an insurgent strain of radicals who vehemently fought all of those. The Christian anarchist argument is that it is not Christ’s message itself, but how it has been weaponized by the hierarchical nature of associated authoritarian institutions that has done damage, just as authority in other spheres is corrupting. This is also a very fraught subject that can’t be fully addressed in a FAQ page, but hopefully you can see the worth in exploring the questions that arise from it!

Principles

Friendly Anarchism is guided by the Quaker SPICES testimonies:

Simplicity

– Keeping the content accessible

Peace

-Eschewing hostility, divisiveness, and derision

Integrity

-Staying honest, checking facts, and being accountable

Community

-Being humble, reaching out, and led by a desire to uplift others

Equality

-Treating all as equal to each other and working to dismantle internal and external hierarchies

Stewardship

-Supporting ecological sustainability and health

Friendly Anarchism also adheres to the St. Paul Principles:

1. Our solidarity will be based on respect for a diversity of tactics and the plans of other groups.
2. The actions and tactics used will be organized to maintain a separation of time or space.
3. Any debates or criticisms will stay internal to the movement, avoiding any public or media denunciations of fellow activists and events.
4. We oppose any state repression of dissent, including surveillance, infiltration, disruption and violence. We agree not to assist law enforcement actions against activists and others.

If you think any of these principles have been violated, you can email friendlyanarchism @ riseup.net (GPG: 0x24DC7A26).

Partners

Friendly Fire Collective
Critical Mediations Podcast Network

Resources

Quakers
Radical Christianity
Anarchism
Antifascism

Podcast Episodes

Season 1

0. How It Started 3.23.17

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Synopsis

Wow, this was a trip to find in the archives. Our first ever recording. A lot of it needs citations so listen critically, but there is a lot of good content (especially from Cimms) that didn't make it into the first official episode so I'm glad to have found it. It's been a long four years and I don't feel the same way about everything any more, but this also sets up my next episode about Judas, militarism, and guilt very nicely. Feels good to step back and remember where this project came from and reflect on everything at the start of this harvest season.

Transcript

(Rough automatic transcript that could do with editing.)

Katherine: Yeah, being recorded, to not be weirded out by it. Ok, so where were we?

Cim: Yeah, so Reza Aslan in writing the *Zealot*, which is great, and he's talking about how the bandits were a political movement, that was the Roman title for this political movement that said, basically, We want this natives, this promise to us is related with Jewish people, this is our land. We're not gonna pay taxes, I can do anything. So when the temple priests come up to Jesus and they're like, Yeah, so should we pay taxes, they're saying, Are you abandoned or you... Are you this group of people... And he says, Well, whose faces on Render unissued render to God that we just got. So he's saying, Sure, give you money to Caesar. That's fine, which this will be fine. But then he says, render to God, that's which is God, which is telling the temple priest, fuck the Romans, like The hell with you all is saying this land is our state, he's saying Israel is a rendering, which is God, which is sensitive to our people. Visit is our... This is given to us by God, so we need to hold this land for God, which is a total difference.

K: Real did not unseen, right after it says... And then they understood that he was talking about them and got mad and like Why... What just happened where you had... I don't... Don't get it.

C: And that's why... Then he leaves the city and he goes to Temple Mount, and that's really interesting at that moment, because then he kinda knows the jig is up, he's like, Alright, the pre... Let them know that I'm saying Israel, for the Israelites, they're gonna come after me. So then he tells his people to go buy swords, he's like... He's like, I told you, you don't need point purses, but if you got... I would go by or... And then they come back and they're like, We've got two swords. And he's like, Well, I don't think it was gonna... Then that night, he's freaking out and he goes up to the top of all, so this is the point that we're already talking about, he goes up to the Mount of Olives and he's losing his shit, he's up there, he's kind of him and he's shaking, and he's silent and yeah, he's also repenting, but also he's scared in a Lukas... Definitely scary, terrifying wedding. And I said, the big Sleater, drops of blood. They were so big, and then he comes back

K: In some interpretations, it was actually blood. Oh, he was possible. Actually.

C: It's not a thing. Did I make that up? I don't know, continuation that I was reading, which then they were implying the beads were as big as dropouts. Really? Set's pretty gross was... He's freaking out, he knows the chicks, you guys, they're gonna come for him and he's gonna die, he knows that's what's coming, and so he goes back to the camp and he wakes up everyone else and he's like, Oh, everyone, make sure that you don't face temptation, which is sort of what you were talking about a second ago, about the temptation of power and having a hundred for that, but also I think Jesus was freaking out 'cause he knows he's gonna die as a eateries are coming back for him. And so he's like, Alright, everyone's while they were sleeping, he's like, No, everybody get up like, Yeah, we really differentiate, they just think they're mid-night and the students shaken with shut off Jesus.

K: But on the other hand, is your Lord and save your... Maybe listen, wakeup worth is part of what I was talking about. I didn't finish about Judas and how he was. In one reading that I've been looking at and really considering that he was actually the best Christian, because Jesus says One of you will be training, he doesn't say a couple of you are gonna... Parade says specifically, one of you are gonna be trained. And then we know for a fact that Peter does... And you're gonna deny me three times. Right. And so it's like, we actually already know who that one is, it's Peter, and if you look back through all of Matthew over and over over again, he's questioning Jesus, He's not believing Jesus, Jesus is getting more and more frustrated with him and to literally on the known all is, this is something that people talk about a lot too, is like, Why did this happen, is that God intercedes and talks directly into the story in a way that doesn't ever happen really in the New Testament, and it's to shut up Peter. He literally us peter off and say, Shut up and listen to Jesus.

K: Out Peter, when God never intercedes, you never comes in talks directly in the New Testament, except for... To shut up Peter. And then again, in that moment when he fronted totally freaking out and he's like, Wait on people up, he says, You can't even give me an hour, he specifically for Peter to stay a week with him. Does Jesus ever ask for anything? No, he really doesn't ask for anything except for you to... For

his works to do good works and to follow him, but on a specific personal level, you don't see him do that, and he was like, I'm really, really, really scared, please stay up with me and he doesn't... And Jesus is basically part program, it's like, Peter, you can't give me an hour of your time. Really? Really? 'cause he knows he's gonna die. He knows he's gonna die. I can sleep through that. Yeah. So in this reading is Peter is the one who betrayed Jesus. Then this means Judas didn't. So then what was Judas is whole deal, right? And how I see it is that if you go through Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, Mark was written first. And then Matthew, and then Luke, and then John, but both Mark and Matthew.

K: Judas is not specifically said by Jesus that you are the devil, that you are, that you are there, your killala, blah, blah. In Matthew, it's very, very different. Actually, how I see it is, Judas has to do what he does in order for price to be crucified, somebody has to do that, it's a role that has to be played, and in order to play that role, what you just have to do is literally sacrifice everything his biggest sacrifice, He sacrifices his life, he sacrifices his honor, and he sacrifices his name, he's been kicked around, he's the most pain person and he sent for the last 2000 years, there's nobody that's been hated on more than just basically, right. But they're at the Last Supper, and Jesus is saying basically, he's talking to both Peter and Judas at the same time saying, No one person is gonna be trained me. And peers like, Oh, it's not gonna be me. It's definitely not gonna be me. And Judas is like, is it me? Are you asking me to do something, I guess is what you're telling me to... Because why would he out of all everybody else, if you like...

K: He's that, and Jesus is like, Yeah. Yeah. And so Judas goes, he gets the silver and we don't hear anything, he doesn't spend it, if he was going to portray Jesus, because he's great, why does he keep all that money in his pocket that was not a small sum at... And he just keeps it. He doesn't do anything with it, and then the last act, he does his kiss as a goodbye. Why it is? Why can't you just be like, If that dude with the long hair on that one right there, it goes up and he kisses, do this good by... And Jesus says basically, and I'll do what you need to do as encouragement juices like when Jesus encourages him, you have... This is what you have to do for me. So I see that kids from Judas to Jesus is one of those heart-breaking possibly in this reading, one of these heart-breaking, fully giving things, and then over and over and over again, Jesus is saying, I don't want your talk, I don't want your bullshit, I want your service, and I want all of it. I want everything, I want everything from you.

K: And I don't want you to talk about it, and you just don't talk about it, you don't hear a word from him ever throughout the entire New Testament, until he asked Jesus, he doesn't question you this year, he doesn't keep asking whether I do... This is the real deal. The only thing he ever says really is, what do you want for me? Is it me if you do this? And he does it and the sacrifice is perfect. So you literally just... Everything, like everything, what else can you go other than your life and to be beaten up by all of everybody forever, and

C: You know what happens with him after that? He kills his son.

K: Okay, yeah, so that's the thing. So you see a one super guilty and Peter versus dudes, Peter feels real bad and sit in self-pity and Christ himself, and then goes on with his life and he was like, Oh, I'm so Amanda do this, kills himself out of grief for Jesus is lost. Iman, who felt that? Oh, and one other thing about you, one other thing, is that even in his last act, he was fulfilling another one of God's prophecies, because they took that he through that silver down, he didn't want it, that he'd been keeping and not spend the browse down. He kills himself and that silver is collected and created, and they use it to make a cemetery for foreigners, that having... This is called the blood fields. It, I forgot the name of it. Something, something, but it was prophecy earlier in the Old Testament that this would be something that happened, and Judas is last act was to fulfill another old Biblical prophecy and in a way that honored some of the people that Jesus love to the best, which were the foreigners which were the people that hadn't had a place to be honored in their burial and in their desk, so I don't know.

K: That's looking pretty good for Judas.

C: It... Well, and the other thing about Peter, you're saying that sort of Jesus is having to possibly help you, one says, You will watch over the gates of heaven, whatever you have the keys, and you think about the depictions of this in the future of Peter's sitting in front of the gates of heaven, deciding the people coming in and out, and others... But the other way to think about that is, Jesus says, You're never gonna make it in Everest outside Heaven for all of eternity. It's kind of about you Toyota.

K: I don't know, I'm still my favorite thing ever, 'cause that's exactly it though, not going up with the Bible is not being told what all of this means from the very beginning, so I'm reading it with fresh is and these things mean something to me in a way that seems obvious when I read it and I read the proteins like, Oh wow, I hadn't... And there's a lot of interesting stuff, but it's also, I think it's interesting to like when I read about him on the Otago, justi seriously interrupts her weapon of the

C: Ever have it never happens. Yeah, use this guy. Got it. Terrifies her sordid to the little... Yeah, 'cause it's so annoyed

K: At God is in, it is all store me in at... And interject this one time, and the one time he injects a shutter up.

C: Got up, and there's another theme in here, and along the lines of Oshawa had about trees bad about him. He's the trail or something. 'cause it's like a snitch, but again and again like Jesus and the whole narrative and the Mason Mideast of the reason Jesus is keeping secret is 'cause he know, 'cause they're in a time of rebellion, there's also... There's food shortages, there's a drought going on, and so crops aren't growing, agriculture, people are being pushed into the same... Much like what we're seeing in Syria today, where display farmers went into the cities and then a popular social uprising of blew up, and so he knows by saying that these messages, the reason why you're speaking in parables was so that the Pharisees wouldn't touch on... It is that the Romans wouldn't just come namely killed Him, so he's quiet for a while and he's a, uh, and that's why he's staying out, not in the city, he spent this verse while

hanging out in these rural areas, in visiting these Tilton... She was pretty serious about security culture at

K: One of my favorite... Not traditional interpretation of the Bible, but Matthew. Why don't we have... You have it where the birth... Here it is. Okay, let me find it. And actually it... 'cause when I read this, I was like, Oh, that's solid advice, Jesus. Do you say So Cheetos disciples before they head out to minister to not fight with cops, because bail is expensive. And I read that as I left really hard, I thought, That's not how that's usually understood it.

C: And also just rename a people, I was like, Simon or whatever the Jesus is renaming these decide he's giving them codenames and whatever shit that's pretty dedicated to decorate. He's like, Let's stay quiet. Don't say where it's... Don't enter my name. That was pretty consistently like keep the... And also the Peter thing about denying the... Denying Jesus repeatedly. It's also like him saying, I'm to keep myself safe. And in terms of Jesus getting, getting arrested and define the rich people in the temple and overturning stuff and whatever, so he's making this big disruption, basically, he then gets arrested and killed and you know that he has this PR team of a letter of 12 people who have been out of spreading best for 2000 years. So that's why we still know it 'cause they had this amazing PR, but in an Road letters and traveled and talked about this dude, and that's the whole predicting, is that one really successful direction transformed our society.

K: Which is like, you know, that's sort of a beautiful thought to beautiful. But where is it? This was me on the radio, we're gonna have to edit it a lot of the swearing a lot that I can't remember. I thought it was in Chapter 5. Oh, this is the debate was the joke is that two-pager is gonna do a radio show, there's gonna be lots of debate

C: About that, how do you... Do Quakers have quiet silence and how do you represent that in a radio which demands in some ways stadia. Discussion, easier knowsl. Another question about the show too, is like how much do we want to... I'm sure that for listeners, if you're listening to a show about friendly Quakers and is the friendly invest, that you either already have an understanding of quicker is... Or that you already have an understanding of anarchism? Or they're interested in me, so how much of an introduction do we need to give to this... I don't know, I feel like a lot entitle

K: Should give a good amount, they should be... 'cause that's one of the inside to talk you about, it actually is like, Who is our audience? Who are we trying to write this for? And how broad of an audience. And I was talking, and I was talking to like a lovely little worships in a car, I prompt, after going and seeing the Messiah, that

C: Guy. Yeah, that make sense. Okay. Music name. Amazing. He donated all that money then to open orphanages. Yeah.

K: Good. Which is like just a toothache, had Reali worship session, and it was fun to tell her, but she was great, obviously, totally accepting. So I wanna explain the total dedication and non-violence and every day, and she's like, I think it's a real gift. And around on opportunity, that used to be both anarchists and Christians, you can draw in more people and it like that's true. If the point I was thinking the point of this

shouldn't be just yourself speak, it should be the try and speak to do do something. Yeah, we're in this space that could bring a lot of people together, and you know, the more I talk about it, the more I find non-violent angina even now, just from talking about before, like how people don't know that these spiritual things speak to them or they don't know that the anarchist speak to them, and so if we can somehow direct this or be cognizant of what is we're trying to talk to, so it doesn't end up, again, just sort of the role tend to just end up in these circle jerks. I don't really wanna do that.

C: I think there's also... Quakers is really different in a religion, I grew up really hating religion, my mom was raised the Irish Catholic, and way back in the day when nuns wore habits and she went to an Irish Catholic elementary school or whatever, like a church school, and it was like, you had to wear socks that would... So you had to have skirts, the wind, so your sock said to be the same color this and that you couldn't wear jeans, you couldn't... It was a big deal that in Chicago and the winter women who work and... And that went on for a long time, and I remember talking about the hypocrisy in the church of people who would go in and be nice and friendly in the church, and then they would go out and fight about parking spaces. It's just like night and day, really, the max is in Latin and no one knows. Protests, reading about early Quaker, and there's just so many critiques of organized religion, about the abuse of religion and having to take commands and other people is... George Box at one point, talks about how he's talking about the uterus and he's like, no matter how much I share this piece of bread, I just can't make myself believe that this is Christ bonuses predicate, I can't just imagine that it's songs on...

C: Not the turns into flesh, but that even that can be the like... No, it's not. This is great, I'm sorry. I do believe it, Sacramento one particular kind of worship, I gonna... An infinite number of ways that we can experience God, and if you can't experience God, then we're worshipping something we can't experience and that's ludicrous, we need to be... To have a direct experience of gotland. If we follow that experience, that we can live an ethical life, which is something that virtually no other theology really says, Every other say log says you're born into sin, you get a die and sense for every emotion and the quick runs are like, No, no, that's bullshit. You do the right thing and you follow you can you leave your conscience like you can live in a... The life...

K: Well, I don't know enough to say that that's not true at all. I don't think that's probably fair question, Quakers don't have a monopoly on ethical corino...

C: No, no, and I'm not saying other face or don't have ethical trajectories and practices and histories, what... That there's this long thing about with Christianity in Catholic and Protestant traditions, that you should always just feel guilty, and that was something that I was just like... I thought that that was dumb, I was like, I'm not gonna live my life feeling guilty when as a he and I, I never read the Bible, I independent any of that sense of guilt, I'm not gonna join a church that's gonna say I should suddenly... Now, start feeling guilty or something that I had never... Ever read before? Just gunmen, whatever. Norris don't buy it.

K: Well, I've always been pulled to spirituality and a couple of times trying to pull, pull into Christianity a little bit, but then always just so repulsed by when there's this is hatred or just the ideas of dogma and to sort of naturally anti-attrition is the authoritarian and so something about it pulled me, but then as everything else, Assisi only beme, I became a quicker because it felt like, Oh, here's this space where ethics and spirituality actually do fit together, and then I'm reading the Bible and I don't know how much... I don't know how much I really believe in the Lord and Savior is again, humming a price again, kind of stuff. Yeah, I don't know. I don't know. So that's complicated, that's a weird... We're all on our own spiritual path, but the point is when I first... When I first got into this, and I'm reading the Bible for the first time, and I'm just kinda shocked like what I'm reading, and it's so different, and I'm just... Trisha Bible, are you meaning? I didn't know any of this, and I was kind of frustrated. This was kept for me because the Bible and Christianity has been so project by the far right, by hatred and all of this just horrible.

K: It's like the Christian Church. The white Christian Corsica were both white. White American Christianity is pretty gross. Most of the time, there's obviously exceptions, but the right has very much dominated the Christian space in this country for a long time, at least as at least since birth of the nation, I think.

C: And there's been this neutrality there, the nation justifying stuff because of Christian than justifying the nation saying, We sport the nation. There's this mutual thing.

K: Well, spirituality is really powerful, it's a powerful, powerful tool. So of course, capitalism and authoritarianism and they're gonna take every power to and use it against the people, so I think that's a big mistake that the left has made was seeing spiritual power over to the right. Absolutely, that was a big mistake. I get what Mark was getting at, but I woke up on that one a little bit, and that's what Alexandria lot of these other anarchists to... Or early anarchists are saying, not that spirituality or that God even is that it's the institution of the church. That was that. And Jesus totally agree. I totally agrees with that, so that was...

C: And that's interesting too, and it's just such an extent that feeling for a long time rents a great diver, maybe I grew up around radical politics and... What do you call? A red, red dirt, you erase the monitor that writes the bigger things at other times to us when there's a larger communes presence, but you just do a normal thing to say it should be that, but I think that's also reflected how people grow up around their politics and so how people are raised around religion and how religion has discussed, if it's done in this hereditary way in which there's no fresh analysis, that's a real... That's a real technician, and I was really turned off by the church because I saw it as this... I saw mainstream Christianity as an impediment to discussions about everything from a person's right to die, and Oregon has right to die legislation that if you're sick, they're terminal and you're gonna be in pain for the rest of your life, you work with your doctor to enliven... I think that's totally just... I think it's totally just... I think

there is no visible justification to say You need to leave the rest of your life suffering and pain, Gould never can condemn that or would never do it to A...

C: And... And so I remember reading... Doris

K: Got her autobiography. I haven't read it, I'm super cited. Which one?

C: One line, the

K: One-on-one, as I love that book that I helped me to reconcile religion and radical... I know, I'm so sorry. That's why I got it 'cause I was really about dry day, and I'm like, Okay, that's what I terrain. Interrupt you, I just got excited.

C: Yeah, at one point I'm gonna... I'm gonna spoil a little bit, but she at one point, she's in a common law matters and Intercity, I have a kid, and she finds herself increasingly pulled towards the message of Jesus, and she starts reading and she's like, Well, blah, blah, this like I get this. I like this, I feel for this. And she comes out of Long socialist tradition, so I get it, I understand the message she's talking about, and suddenly I started thinking about just in terms of this armada message, and in me reading the Bible, we've been taking about this and in leavening it ourselves. There's so much there that I was just it and deny the line to...

K: Absolutely, and it was frustrating, it's like I could have had this earlier in my life because I've actually found it really, really helpful, I found it really hopeful and I really like it, there's a lot there's... There's a lot of richness there. There's a lot of old wisdom, and it's a lot of... It's old. Yeah, there's Emily some out-of-date issues, it's 2000 years old, let's be fair, but there's a lot of really rich wisdom there that I think has been denied, was denied to me because it was coded in this fall, just so gross

C: And R and being used to justify a repression that people used to justify, especially in my lifetime in the fights for the same section, marriage inequality and non-repression and the same time, people like identifying as a Christian, just committing horrendous Aditi. M thinking of right now, in Wyoming right now, Christians gathered this game and beat him and tied into a poll and left him out to the high... That was the thing that happened. And it's like, What do

K: Atherstone ways? They literally winch to

C: Sheeran also, the biblical rapped in bark wire tied to a post that it's just

K: Like what I think... I mean, right now, people think that people... You go look at Trump's Facebook pain or whatever, and it's all was like, Oh, less he was so happy at aitape. And it's like What? The

C: Ostentatious, 'cause it's just like every... Even the more conservative apostles to talk about later, but even the more concern in the passes are still like, he... Fucking the rice. It's

K: Pretty late on that one, but he's definitely pretty saw... Not being into that.

C: Everything, I don't carry money to me, Jesus has answers to all of the questions and concerns about socialism, when he was like, We're gonna feed the people, give me what a fish you got... Will make it work. And the cost is like, really, how can we feed so many people... We just don't have them. Just not enough to go around. He use, don't worry about, I got

K: This. And it's sort of like, we got this and make it happen.

C: And if we believe in the Jesus of the Bible, then we have to say, this is entirely possible, at least the mechanics for feeding people machinations for healing people are within our grasp

K: Well, and also one of the things that I really enjoyed, I listen to a sermon by Tim color where he's talking about gleaning grain when Jesus is on the Sabbath, goes out in Glen grain and the Pharisees come get mad at it and say, You're breaking Sabbath rules, you're not allowed to harvest on Sabbath. And he basically says, Fuck you. These people are hungry. And I'm reading that and I'm like, Oh my God, that's good. No bombshell. That's exactly what we... Oeste, break the law. These people are hungry. Don't tell me that we can't feed these people because you have some stupid law that says... So that doesn't make any sense. And he references David, he goes way back, it's like, Look, this has been a thing for a long time, or people update and see the poor... I'm not the first guy to do this. Yeah, yeah, so it was just another moment where it connected with me, but the anarchism and the Jesus connected on this scale right there, 'cause I just... I was just so in your face. It's just like, No, I hate. And he's just like, No, when you're wrong, I'm not gonna...

C: You're on both politically, as well as legally, as well as moral

K: And just in general, go away trees talking about how the church and the institutions are using an overall for their own benefit and totally warping what it means, so that's another totally calton capitalist governmental practice is to redefine it. Literally, our legal system works is sort of redefine president as you see it, right? And so that's sort of what Jesus is saying is like, you... Yeah, you're redefining precedent to serve your own goals, to serve your own needs and for getting the... Follow the... Not the rule of Bala, the letter of the law on this, you're not following the spirit of Sabbath, you're following the letters a lot because it suits your purposes of impression, and so that's exactly the Libra undress laws. That's what the story I'm leaving. The grain is...

C: Yeah, right, and it's really interesting for me to think about the Jesus who breaks laws because he knows that what he's saying goes against the Pharisees, the Pharisees are considered the religious authority of the time, and yet he's saying... Worry about the Pharisees, worry about what they're gonna do. Worry about what they're gonna say. But the Pharisees, they're not just... They're not just religious people at this time, 'cause they're also the wealthiest people, and descriptions of the faroes time, they have a multi-layer gold guild and turbine with a channel for every direction, it's been gold gilded, long flowing robes as opposed to short hangover trying to save clothes of the wellbeing about them as a religious history, that's like an people and not doing God's will, but also is talking about them in terms of their... They're just overwhelming, and they're keen and just how discussed it is by that, and he goes back to that, just one point where the apostles, they're the cross, they feed people and then they go on their merry way and they cross the lake, and I get to other side of the lake, and they're like, Oh, we're gonna lay down for a night, and then when possession Sheikh...

C: Was that a problem before? And they're like, No, he's like a robbo Roberto. Really gotta worry about it. He tore putting everyone off, and it's like such a month 'cause... And we can take care of ourselves.

K: Basically what look we continue of ourselves, don't worry about us, worry about the government and these corrupt religious officials who are gonna try and come and they don't care if you have retreat, you have rather probably trying to get to...

C: And that's what's for me, that's what's interesting about Jesus's message, that he's challenging so much, both his contemporary, really just not... But also, we can see the pharisees of our own, who are these churches who are just like, you know, these mega churches like, Oh, just give us money, you're just gonna build a better building, we can see the pharisees of our day of pastors who own a billion dollar Jetta is just like the front shiver. It's so... Gowri, don't know. Hillside

K: Theater, and I worked for Scientologists for a lot. Yeah, it was actually kind of fun. They're a little... Anyway, but at one point, during their conference service, I don't know, I don't remember what they called it, the guy on stage, it's literally just yelling at the crowd, Give me your money, give me your money. Give me your money, write a check. Give me your money, give me giving Kennecott, I'm not paraphrasing, just literally yelling into the audience, give me your money, and that people were coming up and really poor looking woman comes up and writes this big check and she's looking at all the buggy and the weird... And we use this... It was so weird. It was a harness thing and... Yeah, and that's just... So church historically have often worked as miniature societies and socialist institutions as the type was like You gave a certain percentage of your money and stuff to the church, and then the church worked as sort of a socialist mini government to sort of help out people who are in need, so that you look out through history, some of the earliest socialism... I'd have to check us historically, but from what I see now, vestiges of it and still sort of the ideology there, is that they had many socialists, localist societies acutely.

K: You know what I mean?

C: And for the first couple of hundred years of Christianity, there really weren't churches as we think of them, there was lots of communes and yet the rings of people, and in some ways that's sort of... A lot of quicker was trying to get back to when they were saying, We are not gonna have to divest, we're not gonna have steeple houses, we're gonna have meeting houses, we're gonna meet where people already live, and we're gonna pray... We're not gonna go out and build our own churches that's dumb, that's a waste money, we're gonna have

K: Just one vent isn't arrived and

C: Work on to gather in our own homes, and so it was really adaptable 'cause they could go anywhere, and it was also like... They also knew that the things that they were challenging at that time were explicitly... Do the list. We're talking about the mid-16 hundreds here. How was still a thing? There were boards and ladies, and then you had to take your hat off and bow and a Maranatha

K: Is that at the VA

C: Stuff, and they take their hotel plan speak and Quakers reviews, they're like, No, you are not better than you, you do not have any earned hierarchy, which... That's when I heard that. That's what I think of anarchist is inherently better if you're gonna have authority, you have bust if that... Here.

K: There is no such thing as authority. Really? Has there's respect authority does not exist in that... Whatn? Anti-authoritarian basically means anti-authority into the entire idea that hierarchies are legitimate in any way, and so you earn respect or you have respect for everybody, and maybe people have what might be called authority to because they know more about something or they have more experience with something, but that is respecting some of his experience and knowledge, it's different than respecting their authorities specifically because... You know what I mean?

C: And there's also a lot about intentions and harm, there's a hierarchy between transits about this about between parents and children. If the child is about to wander industry with his cars, higher role of the parents, does me to pull that child back and that's a legitimate use of authority, and then it's specifically intended to prevent immediate harm, and that is... That's a real thing. And that's a way in which I think Antipas do support Hardin. And there are places in which the posts, which Quakers ask the state to reduce and become smaller, military, stop, don't crush people, respect people's previous, and there's places where Apis actually want the state to increase, they say, We want car production, we want to... It's a ton, there's

K: A lot of different kind of anarchism, but that is the kind of anarchist known Chomsky wanted... He said he was trying to explain how people didn't understand, I was like, Yes, you do bigger government for a better social system in the meantime while you work, or because it's a privilege to say that people in immediate harm and danger don't deserve whatever protection you can get them within the system that you have, yet difficult... That's a difficult for that, that's a... That's a operation that... That's a whole another complicated conversation, but what I think is funny is that, yeah, if you think about the love community and these ideas of these walls, or right at the beginning of Christianity, when Christians were seriously oppressed and sought out and murdered, they really were created very badly, but I know they had these little separate communes and at their things, it's like... And that's the sort of thing that Christians now really pull to and say like, Look, we know oppression 2000 years ago, we totally experienced it, and so that's what they pull and it's like, Oh, so what you're saying is the best part of Phocas, when you were all anarchist.

K: Yeah, so that's when you were pressure actively working against the large governmental religious institutions of the time, living in small local self-sustaining communities.

C: There's this great moment in St. Augustine, the book, Confessions, and his book that's basically trying to convince people and 300 to join... To join the state. And it's funny 'cause at that time, people didn't need silently, everyone read everything about, so everything had to be community understood, which is why the whole opening the paragraph of this book is like, I love... God is the Almighty. Greatest, wonderful.

Fantastic, so that every person reading and head to hear that every person reading is about, which is very consular had to have it open and be back to everything that's around immediately became a guy... Sellers is a body. It's like a small child hijacking a political like that it's gonna give a political speech or something, I don't know, and a small child gets up and is like, look at boats like that.

K: It's a current to... That we may be a little bit less or us, but it's also the whole anarchist thing. So there is, it's just funny, religion is really, really a board and hated in a lot of the anarchist commute, although we are here, and there is a other subset of anarchism that isn't in the same realm of that, I think there's a growing sense of spiritual energy which is what I mean, we're doing this is to speak to that the more that is more that I dealt into it and the more I talk to about it, the more I find more and more people who are really, really interested in this sort of revival, 'cause if you talk about what anarchism really is. It's a very optimistic view of humanity. Totally, totally. And it's a very optimistic... It sits right into the quicker idea of the light within, that we all... We all have a lease, all are connected to Divinity, they're all connected to something that connects all of us as we're all connected to something that connects all of us. I mean, Anand Burman even has to talk about people saying at the same time, Oh, you're all violent doubles, and you also think that we all have to be angels in order for anarchism to work, so there is this a real kind of spiritual underpinning to anarchism.

K: Even if it's in the right, a lot of antiques and we are totally right to condemn religious institutions for the impression and parts of impression, the partly in oppression. But it is really, really interesting, and I'm seeing right now with a lot of people that I know also just revival of this per spirituality and we live in really scary times, there's a lot of real uncertainty in the future, so that makes sense. And I feel like that core, that rounding is really, really important, whether or not it's a Christian or whatever else to the idea of that spiritual grounding, and that's something I find both in Quakerism as well as anarchism, and so to me, they're actually... It's not that they just fit together well, that they're the same thing, they're both sort of grounding in this idea that humans basically a poor injustice and basically have a light with it and on a very basic level, want a peaceful... Just equal, equal world, but then we corrupted by power, were corrupted by this false need for hierarchy that we're told that we need, we're so bent to try and find these systems of oppression, but without those...

K: It would work. It really would work, and I think that's a really beautiful view of how the humidity works and I think it's true. I really think it's true.

C: It's interesting you say that, 'cause a couple of years ago I was at... I went to a quick retreat or whatever, and I was listening to Quakers, they had a meeting house and they were debating about whether or not they should have... They had an insurance policy to ensure their child care workers to offer child care in the meeting considering you, and they're debating about where people had to sign waivers, but what if someone was undocumented and they say, Well, but we really want this insurance policy, what should we go back and forth and maintain, and I was just thinking, What the fuck

do we have an insurance policy on his house, why aren't we meeting in actual houses intimate, this whole... How spend money on this thing? On this institution, what they could use that money for helping people Israel.

K: Those things where it's like we had just plain wines in a rug because we had... 'cause that's what they had. But now it's like you have a really nice plan, really nice wooden Ventura and the whales. Although I have to say, one of the reasons I became a Quaker, 'cause I was in those meeting houses in Philadelphia for the first time back this last summer when I was at the DNC, state... That's another thing. Anyway, I was at... I went to two beautiful bigger meeting houses for the Socialist convergence, for the people's convention, and I just walk into that space and there's something so all beautiful just in those existences, and I really do enjoy that kind of architecture, so I think there is something lost just by meeting... Just in a house. I think there's something really nice about having these sort of spiritual spaces, but there was also something about it where it was really clean, it was really simple, it was nicely designed, beautifully designed, but it also wasn't ostentatious in any way, and really... That really appealed to me.

C: One of the things that I really like about Quakerism is that there is one, and there is this hosted, I'm not gonna dress up and find witches, and there's also this sincerity with that, I'm not gonna be tanith, not gonna lie to you, I'm not gonna bullshit you

K: What's your BA and your

C: Nobu? The same times I went to the sedating and I was thinking about the ionians, I was also... I wrote up a post that was on AENEAS quicker revival. Well, yeah, 'cause I was just thinking of the time water seemed to be failing. The UN program maker meetings. It's just like any tiny, tiny group, it's like there's fewer than 5000 the program at a really... Yeah, that's it. Yeah, it's about the same size that the industrial work is the world of which...

K: And there's some overlap there. So really.

C: I actually, actually... But what's interesting about that, to me is that there's... Both groups have really fundamental roles in shaping United States, they just... One group, how... There's a book that came out a couple years ago, how the Quakers made America that at one time in the United States, a quarter of the US population was Quaker. That's a really... That's a real real thing. Yes, and what happened was that as a result of participation in war and there was all the various splits, people dropped out or were here for meetings, and the purge... They say, by Quakers. Yeah, and then you can't be a part of this meeting if you go and serve in the Civil War, and that was the biggest single loss in line membership was because you had all these people say, we have preached against slavery for generations now, for decade after decade after decade after connected, and here comes the war to say, let's finally put a fucking into it and make it a win in five faced out. Now, for the North East against Lee.

K: That was like for the North, that makes sense. And then they got... For being an wollaton out of their people, mantis is something... We'll talk about this, you talk

about in the violence thinks the idea that makers are strictly, strictly important, all violence and caracal there is this tradition as Quakers deciding to serve in the military for various reasons.

C: And there's another time the military there that... And I wanna look up more details on this, the Quakers also, you still hold a lot of databases and when the US voted to go to war, and I think it was like the War of 1812 might have even been the solution or takes pulled back from local acts and said, basically, we can down the United States. Erikson was a Quaker though. Yeah, well, but he wasn't... He stopped quicker before he... Oh yeah, yeah, he was like... He was buttocks

K: A big old branch of things, there's some very, very different, very fundamental indices, very conservative by sexually, but

C: I think that you're on to some of his idea about reviving quicker, but Quinn really speaks to a lot of

K: Different Bastien things. Yeah, and I've talked to people about it and I'm like, they have all these questions is for about dogma? It's like, Well, no, actually, we don't do that. We don't believe that the word is literally the word necessarily... Your Tony front. And so I tell people that there's actually a few atheists in our meeting and what... Yeah, it's different, it's the idea that you meet people where they're at and go, let you where you're at. Sits, a different thing. I've really... But here's the thing is that I worry about talking to it, I obviously love being quicker as Ben, a huge influence to my well-being in my life, but I really worry about talking about that because the other thing that's so great or Purim is that We don't... Evangelize. So I don't really wanna go down that were awesome, even though outlined

C: Donut, to touch on that, there's a difference we evangelizing and going somewhere and having an honest discussion, 'cause I think it's also... It's kosher waters that... 'cause there's a lot of amazing things and then not talk about it

K: Is, Okay, this is so funny, 'cause that's the same thing that happens to enter it, we're so non-performative in the ally ship sometimes that nobody knows on the burning and the

C: Tristano friend and will hopefully be on a show later, but you're saying there's all these stories about the Quakers do-appeasing amazing things, but they don't ever talk about it, and then maybe they'll write a short article that doesn't... And publishing it anonymously, The Times about a few things about what they did, and it's like I served 17 years shoveling people back and the worth to get abortions in Mexico as an mothers arrest and a lives and all these things. But would never talk about that. I would never say a word.

K: But that's the rat's the true gospel to... That's the two... Is you just saying, Don't talk to... Yeah, a dower of the D. James goes on and on about that Thoth need. But also, that's anything that is in a revolution, we're trying to get other people to also do the... Do do you do that? And that's one of the things that's frustrating for me personally about the whole argument about violence essence, so much time is given to the violent part of anarchist culture, which is not all reflected in all of anarchism is

not all reflected in all... In anarchist theory, and it's only a little part... Well, first of, this is a whole another episode or he's gonna one time on, but you have to discuss the fact that we're talking about Quaker anarchism, people like bakers or prisoner, kids are violent. It's like That's way more complicated than that, and it's just us... It's frustrating to me, frustrated a lot of anarchists, no matter how you feel about anti-violence and non-violence or whatever, that's... Just the double standard, the huge double standard between somebody bombing a black church and killing tons of people, and he likes who says their Christian like anyone a little like, Oh, is it a one little note and then you punch a non...

K: Everybody slips the hell out, so that's another thing I have is I have really strong opinions on whether or not violence should be actually chosen as a method of social change, which we'll talk about, but the point that I'm getting at is that it's more complicated than that, and that deserves a real discussion.

C: And I think that's the first thing when we started talking about the show is the difference between Anakin Quakers and... So I wrote it, I was like, Let's first along a strange relationship between Quakers and anarchists, the stereotype of anarchists like CLAD and black historically bombed through it, more recently, it's Windows, Mastodon, rotational enemies in a state where Quakers are starters like super quiet, constructive community building obedience friendly people who help slaves capes a few sanctuaries to go to the Civil more than now talks about it, that you almost could not find two more unlikely stereotypes and incompatible. There it is. And yet, we know that there are insurers and Quakers who are anarchists, and you know that these histories, histories and stories are contested, they're quakers who are arrested in droves and Anoka super responsible to mutual aid and undergoing in very harrowing circumstances. As he learned in the Spanish Civil War and also provide medical and food aid after a senior

K: Right now at NCIS are doing increase... It's amazing, the refugee work they're doing, of course, right now it's going broken up things they're being attacked and broken up by all sorts of stupid people, but yeah, so there is this strong, strong strain and anarchism, a community, very Christian. I'm gonna make the argument that Atticus are much better Christians and the most Christians, much better actually giving up everything in your life in order to help the poor, actually getting really frustrated in the face of people being so cold in a depression watching oppression happen and not feeling anything about it? That's so frustrating to watch. And the animist feel that, and Quakers felt, early Christians felt that. As far as the humility thing... Oh, well, of course, the big joke being that black bloc is basically playing dress.

C: That's like we issued the fancy fancy were to live simply and so a dress in a clean clothes and very simple closed and so plain dresses either all day or all black, being a simple no tryouts, not patios. And I think that there is... There's something more similar to Quakers, just... They have some overlap here. That quicker... Talk about the direct experience of God. And that this perceives the loyalty to the state or the rich and powerful, they refused value to risk people, and they broke undertow

and the quickest made dearly throughout the centers for this with their immediate to God causes just this contestant of questioning and anarchist ask themselves a lot of the same questions in terms of their personal relationship to power, and as a rule, just like don't accept power relationships as they are just on the grounds and things have always been this way, this was not acceptable to... Internet's

K: Not acceptable, period.

C: And this doesn't mean that Anarchists never agree with any state action or must always seek a state with society, or we were talking about this and there's some finesse there, and there's a lot of arguments about where are we now in relations things, but anyway. But enemies are constantly demanding of the state, and that all power relationships have the ability of willing to justify these, they must have a justifiable reason for their power is this... And this way, ancient Quakers are constantly asking the same question, What is Just because ask this in the moral way, will envisages in the SOW, which... Because divergences, but they're basically asking the same thing and quickest, the right relationship with God that God would have with us in heaven, sounds or marketing like the interest question... Is this power excited? Violent of quorn anyway.

K: Oh, well, the course of things, yeah, absolutely. So quicker are against coercion entirely, and then anecdote is based in the idea that coercion and a society that there is no coercion. So that's the same... That's the same thing. That's the same principle. So I have a penduline here. Pendle pamphlets were just these little pamphlets made by Quakers, the idea being that we don't believe in dogma, so everybody has their own experience with God and can write it down, so we all get to write our own little essays on our experience with spirituality as opposed to just reading, only the Bible is word. Right, have this here one of them, the first second in tired Pendle Hill pamphlets. And so these are back Riddick in the 30s, and they're pretty bad, like radical rate, first one's called cooperation, the very first very first Mendelian, let was called cooperation and cohesion as methods of social change. So that's your Quaker dot. The second one, it's called a religious solution to the social problem, they talk all about authoritarianism, and then the third one is called the value of voluntary simplicity in, and that goes into a lot of real basic anti-capitalist stuff.

K: So what does it mean to not live in a consumer society, what does it mean to live simply? And so the idea of living simply, which is a very, very quick concept, and the idea of what it actually means to be in a non-consumers, non-capitalist society are very mostly related, the idea that you don't need a bunch of just stuff and actually all that stuff is not, do not need it, it's bad for you, or it's bad for your soul. It's bad for society. You know what I mean? What Menashe... All these highlighted stuff that I need to...

C: One of the things that I like is that Quakers asked these questions and anise asking these questions, and they often come towards similar concessions. They do, probably... And it's interesting when you start looking at what are the hot button issues of today, right, within anarchism, they would say prison abolition and opposing

the new Jin proves idea that we're just throwing away people of color or half of the US Prison Systems, people tethers the largest prison system in the world, despite having a population of Donal, China has a billion people and they have less prisons, so there's something really awful going on there, and Quakers also note both of reconciliation, alternative justice and prison reform saying something is really wrong here, is restorative justice. And Anika say, We oppose all orders, and Quakers really fall hard and love thy neighbor of the American principale neighbor in Prentiss. No exceptions, which I kind of think I say slogans. Some resistance has to be at best, a little says Good. And Ankit say, We want a society with Liberty for gender, race, class, ability to want an equal society, and quicker say that God is in all people, which is part of the quick of testimony of Equality, which is one of the five main testimonies.

C: And Niki also say, We oppose any of arbitrary authority and quite say, Yeah, follow your conscience, not the law, like the law of the land is not the wall of your content, you have to follow your conscience, whatever that takes you... That opposes the law, and that there's remarkable over that here in Quaker and Interphase philosophy going back centuries, and I think that that's important, and I think that's... For me, I say that Quakers are the anarchists of religious community.

K: Oh, absolutely. It's also this really interesting dynamic that can be hard to explain, it was hard for me to understand at first, all way back in the day when I first started doing anarchist theory and all of these things that people have a hard time understanding is one of the main people criticisms that come about saying, Well, how can you be offer libertarian personal freedom and for Socialist community, at the same time, it's like, well, that's actually been solved by Quakers, the idea that we all have our own specific journey and path and relationship to something bigger, at the same time, that that personal relationship to something bigger is what strengthens our sense of community, and sort of the same underpinnings of what an anarchist society would look like is the idea that it's creating incentives in a sense, is that... What's good for an individual is good for the community and all... So when those incentives line up, it's not a contradiction for your own personal freedom being and having a strong in this fact that ends up being the same thing. And that's something that Quakers have been practicing for a long time. I mean, and more than that, if...

K: This is something that I think a lot of Americans struggle with is, 'cause there's really in a showing of community in the United States that we would say We don't collectively on the idea of the idea of the Manatee living in your own home is apparently... In some ways, antithetical to community, 'cause you're not based around other people, it's a way of shutting off into personal interaction and... So anyways, but one of the things that having lived in co-ops and commune life situations a couple of years, one of the things that I have experienced is that we... That community set a goal and says, This is something that we wanna do, we have a meeting, we plan it out, let's have these actions together. When they go, Well, everyone pours themselves into it, and the project becomes everyone, it's not just a matter of, Oh, my personal real lines up with this is that this project is my will.

C: I will this project too, because we decided it together, and that becomes... Not magical, but incredibly powerful, incredibly driving. And that's something that the idea that everyone should write their interest, I don't... In some ways, I... Alastor doesn't make sense too. When people are working together in a sincere Common Cause, it's both the most beautiful and empowering thing, and simultaneously is also incredibly productive, right. 'cause many hands make it work in math, really quite good for us. So there's that, and I think that that's something... I think that's one of the reasons why social and the struggle in the United States, and why a lot of radiologists have struggled and his them also that... A lot of these ads are predicated, this idea that when you're working together, when the entirety of the dominant deciding they say is set up to say no individual, so you just do this thing and allow your... Whatever you do, you... It's like sometimes there's a... Meiosis is really bad about me in US, there are times the US and US is, okay, is the people we could do four filters to justify a super strong state, and it's like that...

C: Well, it's the only context in which people can come together and find meaning...

K: Well, it's again, a authoritarian using leftist ideology to justify their horrific actions, so the only time you end up with a W or a US is when you can bend that to the will of holding an authoritarian depressant tanegashima the reins to his will. Did you know I just spend on the coin was an anarchist Christian? The fuck, I did not know that. That's amazing.

C: And specifically not the bombs, the right

K: Kind... Better wording, a general kind of a writing about habits. And

C: I think there's something... I was looking for a quote that I remember, but there's... There's something utopian, Anand, that this vision of the possibility of another world pickers, we want this world on earth in the horses supposed to bring heaven down to... Exactly, I have... Ananda, very powerful question is like, Well, how would people of color Bettino should we treat the honor as white religious people, and there's all kinds of privilege, but also the questions about the power relationship with Eden is just crushing and damage when compared to what we do today, in the United States, and the historical relationships with indigenous people and historical relationships with every immigrant community, and also just like conquering in colonialism and violence, ardabil, all the things coming. That's the thing. And one of the things that I need to about crisis, that there's this... Well, back up, so I think the idea of the show, friendly Quakers, it's a nice multiplicity of meanings in

K: A friendly... Amicably anarchist. Friendly anarchism. The friendly anarchists as in the step or what I wish are called. What do you do?

C: I thought, Well, I don't know, I feel like God, you black inferiority lack every

K: Know that one. They're great.

C: Write their band exclamation points in a different position, I... Oh.

K: I didn't know that.

C: Yeah, organises friendly in and is friendly or whatever. It's all the same. But yeah, and I think of the idea of water, that's a early... If it's really been like, right.

K: The name of Baker is an insult.

C: 'cause I was taken from members of the religious society of friends who in who are on trial and they were afraid for the sentence I was about to come down from a judge into the judges mocked was like, You're taking your pointers over there, and that was the name of Stockley, were on attunement and the judges think... Or one of them. In the court, typically. Right.

K: But I'm not that we reclaim that. That's right.

C: Yeah, I like

K: To typical... An hour and 11 minutes. Now I'm gonna get some water Vespasian. Actually, I'm gonna get some... Issuing out, This is integrators, and I go to this turns out, Okay, estate should just do this though... Yeah, much to talk about, and it's really dynamic and organic when we're just talking to just go to a bar and set it up after we had just to make sure that you Heather, the editing out the noise and

C: The tent in the background like that.

K: So it wouldn't be just a lot easier on us too, just as we have this renewed, have a list in formation and is complete information and just have a talk. I think that could be fun. And then sometimes I have people on that actual interviews, a little bit like a... Trying to fill up or... I don't know how else we're gonna do it... Yeah, forehea he horo. I assorter or that... Great. Actually have to get going, Frese.

C: I read one passage, so this is from my past that from Quakers and Nazis about the Quakers in Germany before war, before durnford, but it's the German makers to The for one that are basically no craters insurer at the end of Olathe none. And so quickest showed up and did a bunch of an award as a long history after more would show up and do medical and work, it is to Palestine to... There was a quick Esalen, all of the early camps and what we think of as the UN mandate to help Red and so on came out of Quaker work that was like a... Is there is after the a worker... After the end, Quakers, there was enough QuickTime E-there's 200 Air or something, it was pretty small tree, but they had a quick meeting and just in 1931, in Littler is coming to power ethers, a lot of handy semitism, Navin attacks. And at one point the... There's been... This isn't Cristal at, but there's a big burning, there's the Jewish synagogue was burned and quicker, they wrote the letter, the German Elmer, a letter to them and they said, one part of that, we feel responsible and guilty for this act because we have not done enough to de-contaminate the hateful atmosphere, we therefore ask her forgiveness for what has been done to you, which is on the one hand, a little bit like you're asking from givens is a little here, 'cause you necessarily...

C: But it speaks to the condition that there are so many bad things going and they felt like a responsibility for that, and that's something that I feel today in our world in terms of both a... A tax of Jewish communities that are happening, there's a cemetery that was Rovers, but also just in terms of the US engagement in the world and hustle were now on the 14th anniversary of the invasion of Iraq as operation and the hundreds of thousands of... Sandlin dad was thousand of the US soldiers dead, and just the total deviation of the infrastructure of the road, there's this real question about what is our

collective responsibility to nation as the empire of the world, what we prosopis, and that's something that... As a Quaker and inner fish, I feel just absolutely racking the field that no matter what I do, arrest or not arrest in action or non-action, nothing stops the war, and it just goes on and on line, and I just feel like... I feel, I try, I feel like I still shaken, but something is fundamentally wrong that I cannot stop this thing that it's being done in my name.

K: But that's exactly what's great about Pieris and Quakers and anarchism, is that the idea is that you can't do it alone. That's what community is for speckles to Taranto that. And then we can't just feel guilty, we have to just do stuff... And gills isn't really that helpful. Unfortunately, and Jesus didn't spend a lot of time just feeling bad about... Bad about stuff, just like, Go do stuff. Just go do stuff. Let your action speak. And I don't think I would have enough personally or strength personally to do it without community without God. For me, personally, I need both of those things, and I need the strength and the courage that comes. Different aspects of both of those traditions are tradition and anarchist to be able to do anything, and I feel I'm still just starting to get out there, and I haven't been doing it, unitarianis doing enough, but I think I kind of needed both... I kind of needed to reconnect with a spiritual part of me, and I need to reconnect with truly anarchist political and spiritual stance, 'cause you're kind of the same thing to be able to have enough ability to do this work.

K: So it's hard work. So I hope that what we're doing can help other people see that the strengths and community, and there are people doing this work, and that... Is there secular ethical drive isn't sustaining you... There is this whole other tradition of having a spiritual sustenance available and help available, and that means to... And not everybody needs that. I personally really did need that, it's very hard on me emotionally, I needed that connection with community and with spirituality and with God in order to bolster my strengths to do difficult social justice work, and that has a strong tradition to spiritual work and Christian work also has a very strong role in social justice for centuries and centuries and centuries. It's been really nice for me to to tie into that as well, to find more strength and more precedent and more examples of people being able to take on this kind of really difficult stuff and be good at it and keep it up and not burn out and

C: I feel like that's part of the Intifada bed.

K: There is a deep radical bent... I think Jesus was a radical.

C: Yes. And it's not just like radical, is it gonna do terrible things that may be saying there for centuries, and even Mark notes that he's like, I've read all the capital, but he makes reference to the Christian communities, I'm like stories that sort of... Or some of the ways that we're headed for the slightly better

K: World. Yeah, let me read my passage now that Alexander Berkman, well-known anarchist, immigrant American anarchist. Let's see the... The very well known for having bombed some people in Kitimat proponent for the propaganda of the deed, which is where you do violent acts to show what needs to be done for... To start revolution. But after Russia, he came out thinking very differently about that, that's

again another thing for our non-violence podcast, as Alexander Berkman right before he died, came out very strongly against the idea of violent revolution, he referred the idea of a general strike

C: To two was a really big ask Miss Christian with a lot of mastering. It was basically God and... And talking about the artery intrastate, while also describing a very strong terms, the need for her peaceful action, and the state didn't like him and he wanted to arrest him, but he was just so popular in the elitism thing with them, the Pulsar movement that was being sort of focused around one woman who became the nexus of all of this religious fervor and also a little bit of rebellion, but also demanding, demanding and social in the Soviet era sometimes in a lot of ways that the community is sort of inspiration and also starts... Actinides.

K: It definitely does. There's a long strain of the idea of the Christian thing, a source of inspiration and protection, the liberation theology movement and black liberation theology or... Definitely requires a whole loan, but for now, I wanna read this passage from ABC anarchism by Alexander Berkman, is number per... Well, this is the AK Press reprint of the page number is not gonna be the same in that in the original. But if you're following along, kids, What is anarchism working class series are... And it is page 61. Alright, this very day, institutionalized religion is the Judas of its alleged Savior, it approves of murder and more of which slavery and capitalistic robbery and always stands for the Alan order which crucified the Nazarene, consider Jesus wanted all men to be brothers, to live in peace and goodwill the church upholds inequality, National strife and war. Jesus condemned the riches vipers and oppressors of the poor, the church bow before the rich and accumulates baseball. The Nazarene was born in a manger and remained a pop or all his life, his alleged representatives in spokesman tales, Jesus preached meekness, the princes of the church are hot and purse proud.

K: As did you unto the least of my children in Christ that you do and to me, the church supports the capital system, which in slaves little children and brings them to an early grave, that shall not kill command or the Nazarene, the church of pros of executions and more, Christianity is the greatest hypocrisy on record, and either Christian nations or individuals practice the precepts of Jesus, it is true that if we could follow the precepts of the Nazarene, this would be a different world to live in, there would then be no murder and no war no cheating and lying and proven making there would be neither slave nor master, and we should all live like brothers and peace and harmony, they would either... There would be neither poor or rich, neither crime nor prison, but that would not be with the church wants, it would be what the anarchist wants or orator... Righte, right. Agents kind of Christian wants. Yeah.

C: And I think that's a nice note to end on is that... They're a Quaker in Pinterest that are Quakers existen. And it's good to be too, and we're inspired by so many things that are happening in rise in thorndon in freshwater, a Freedom Party and Franklin re-it, and of course, our own. Yeah, and then Don Trump with every kind of testing that can be set, and I really think that it's inspiring that there is a long history of

resistance, and also that there's some... We can join together in solitary and in just like the most...

K: And I think there's this spot that's so important that's growing, this sort of religious and spiritual... Radical left. Yeah, I meet more and more people who are really interested in this. The more we talk about this, the more... I mean, people who are really, really into this idea, and then there's this mesh, there's this middle, there's this spot that needs to be filled, I'm so excited that we're here talking about it. It's so great.

C: And I'm tired to have, I'm tired of hearing this idea that the Christian Rite, his monopoly on the religion, that's boshin will not see my religious disease in my faith, because there is this other corrupting force, say

K: What I say is that spirituality and religion is something that's also been co-opted and corrupted by capitalism, so it's throwing baby out with the bath water there to say that all religion and all spirituality is the evil, it's another thing that's been just stolen and crushed and co-opted by capitalism and authoritarianism that we need to reclaim that I'm gonna reclaim. I'm doing it right now. We're doing it, we're doing it. Alright. Alright, thank you, friends, friends.

1. Nazis On UO Campus, Cultural Context, And Other Musings 4.20.17

Listen Here

There were nazis on University of Oregon campus today, and since we are in Eugene, we're reporting back and doing some analysis. The conversation developed into a larger discussion about cultural context, media interactions, tactics, and the nature of anarchism. Berkeley and Pepsi both get shout-outs, too.

This was really off the cuff, we wanted to get this out on the day of. There's a lot to talk about concerning methods of social change, martyrdom, etc that deserve more attention.

Referenced:

Report on white nationalists at UO (The rabbi's name is Jack Melul):
www.dailyemerald.com/news/white-nat...e09db4c7f.html

LA Times "How Berkeley became epicenter of violent Trump clashes":
www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me...170416-story.html

Louise Rosealma, mentions her gofundme: "Berkeley brawl protester punched by white supremacist shares her story"
www.mic.com/articles/174404/ber...st-shares-her-story

Nazi Portland cop Mark Kruger (as of this recording still on the force):
www.wweek.com/portland/article-2...o-liked-nazis.html

2. Intro to Quaker Anarchism 5.7.17

Listen Here

Quaker Anarchists talk about how Christ was an anarchist and Christian tradition has deep radical roots.

3. Violence and Nonviolence 5.14.17

Listen Here

Synopsis

We jumped into the debate surrounding violent vs. nonviolent protest tactics, and it led to discussions about the importance of intersectional feminism, sustaining good anti-authoritarian process, the Portland May Day "riots", and more!

Here is a bibliography and reference guide for this episode:

Mothers Day as an anti-war holiday

<http://annapolisvalley.quaker.ca/posts/the-radical-peace-roots-of-mothers-day/>

Gene Sharp - From Dictatorship to Democracy... Gene Sharp has also written voluminously on non-violence including a strategies book with 198 nonviolent tactics which can be taken.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/From_Dictatorship_to_Democracy

Mark & Paul Engler - This is an Uprising

<http://thisisanuprising.org/>

Peter Gelderloos - How Nonviolence Protects The State

http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/381842.How_Nonviolence_Protects_the_State

Shon Meckfessel - Nonviolence Ain't What it Used to be

<https://www.akpress.org/nonviolence-ain-t-what-it-used-to-be.html>

Jonathan Matthew Smucker - Hegemony How-To: A Roadmap for Radicals

<https://www.akpress.org/hegemonyhowto.html>

Michelle Alexander - The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the age of Colorblindness

<http://newjimcrow.com/about>

Audre Lorde - The Uses of Rage

<http://www.blackpast.org/1981-audre-lorde-uses-anger-women-responding-racism>

'Texas Slim' - Hot Lead is Medicine: Thoughts on Whiteness, Privilege, & Violence:

https://akuk.com/index.php?_a=product&product_id=5878

Milo Yiannopoulos - bridge to the far right: <http://www.newyorker.com/news/ryan-lizza/how-alt-right-fellow-traveller-milo-yiannopoulos-cracked-up-the-right>

Seattle Antifascist shot by supporter of Milo Yiannopoulos: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/jan/25/shooting-milo-yiannopoulos-speech-seattle-charges>

Portland Protest May Day - in the news: <http://www.kgw.com/news/politics/may-day-protests-expected-monday-in-portland-across-us/435436532>

It's Going Down communique on Portland May Day Protests: <https://itsgoing-down.org/portland-make-may-day-anarchist/>

Daniel McGowan - served prison time for actions with the Earth Liberation Front (ELF): https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daniel_G._McGowan

Documentary: If a Tree Falls - A Story of the Earth Liberation Front: <http://www.ifatreefallsfilm.com/>

Riots in Greece - Alexandros Grigoropoulos was killed by police and riots ensued: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2008_Greek_riots

Valarie Kaur - Not the Darkness of the Tomb, but the Darkness of the Womb: <http://www.today.com/video/what-if-this-is-not-the-darkness-of-the-tomb-but-the-darkness-of-the-womb-watch-valarie-kaur-s-speech-917892675740>

Vocabulary:

Intersectionality

Socialist Vanguardism

Diversity of Tactics

Tankies: <http://sjwiki.org/wiki/Tankie#.WRnxzMllBnZ>

Insurrectionary Anarchism

Greeks have many words for love: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_words_for_love

Transcript

Katherine: Hello and welcome to friendly anarchism. You're listening to KEPW LPFM 97.3.

Cim: Welcome back.

K: All right so.

C: Welcome back.

K: I am your co-host, Catherine.

C: And I'm the Co host Simran.

K: And we are so happy to have you here with us today and a happy Mother's Day.

C: Happy Mother's Day.

K: So before we start we have a little Jingle for you. Get us in the moon, real fun song by our good friend Woody Guthrie.

C: All right?

Woody Guthrie Song: Let's show these fascists what a couple of hillbillies can do. Well, I'm going to tell you fisis you may be, Umm. In this world are getting organized and found the lose you fascist bound the lose. You buy this as people of every nation

park inside the side marching talking field where a million faces side you sound to lose bound to lose.

K: OK, so that was super fun one of. My favorite things. OK, so again Happy Mother's Day to. However, it is whatever that is that means to. You and we're. Glad you're here. With us and we are going to be talking about violence and non-violence. We're doing the thing.

C: We're doing the thing and this isn't appropriate weekend. Doing it because Mother's Day began originally as a critique of war and militarism, wanting both to be a day of service to for mothers and more privileged business. Helping people who are in less privileged positions, helping people out and also acknowledging the tremendous and terrible wars that have been happening. In Europe, both in following the United States Civil War and. The Franco Prussian War and so it's important that we think about and talk about violence in our lives on a day. On a day. That was originally intended to think about. Think about violence so.

K: So I mean the question always is. So your Quakers and anarchists? So how exactly is that a thing? If Quakers are nonviolent and anarchists believe in sort of this, this diversity of tactics that includes violence, right? So we've been doing a lot of thinking about it and a lot of research about it and a lot of thought. But and sort of the first thing. I want to say about it is the more that I research and the more that I read, the more for me it's so so perfect that this is on Mother's Day because the more that I delve into this topic, the more it keeps coming back down to intersectional feminism for me just over and over again. Intersectional feminism. I'm yeah, so I'm reading. And just sort of starting with all the quote UN quote heavy hitters when it comes to talking about violence or non violence and.

C: Who were some of those people?

K: So I've read Gene Sharp, which is he's known. He's like the father of non violence from dictatorship to democracy. A couple of his other things, Mark and Paul Engler. Wrote a really important new book called. This is an uprising. Where they talk about the history of nonviolent resistance, I read Peter Gelderloos how nonviolence protects the state Sean Mccaskell. Nonviolence ain't what it used to be. Unarmed insurrection and the rhetoric of resistance. Jonathan Matthew Smucker, Road map to hegemony. And what is it that all of these things have in common? Well, I'll tell you, they're pretty much all. White CIS hat men intellectuals who are basically middle class. And some of those things may not be totally true, but overall, all of those things apply and we sort of the thing about this debate is that everybody gets sick of debating it like it's been rehashed and rehashed and rehashed. And everybody gets frustrated and wants to talk about. And if you look at who's dominating the conversation, maybe that's why, like you know, like you know, like honestly, it's been emotionally tiring for me to be doing this research, because no matter how important the books are and how wonderful the information is and like, I'm really, really glad that these things are being said. And I really enjoyed this research in some ways. There is just. Always like, can't get away from this. Sort of like how dare you question my authority like

kind of privileged attitude that seems like. CIS head white middle class men just can't always shake and you're wonderful sins and I'm. Not, you know. And this is exactly. When people jump in the room and say not all says that white. Middle class men Like honestly, if this research has been kind of tiring for me because that attitude is just pervasive in pretty much. All of these. Works and like I need to start doing a better job of making a point of like between reading. White men like making sure I'm going back and like reading a black woman like reading somebody something written by a trans woman or something just to like. Keep myself emotionally steady and sane because those voices have a different take and like have a different attitude that I find incredibly refreshing. So like when we're talking about violence, nonviolence, what needs to happen is having more intersection. And more intersectional feminism all the time. And that's one of the things that I love about anarchism is. That anarchism is. Deeply rooted in intersectional feminism, it's always there. It's always coming up like anarchy. Is like closely connected to black feminism. It's closely closely connected to trans rights. You know, it's been part of feminism forever, basically. No, I didn't write a button like from the very beginning. Mary Wollstonecraft's husband William Godwin was like one of the fathers of anarchism and Mary Wilson Kraft is one of the father. One of the mothers of feminism. So like this goes all the way back and I. I just wish I had more from these other perspectives to bring to this debate, and I need to. I'm going to start doing that and it's like these voices are more buried. You know, like if I if I just said like I want to get all of the. Get all the like top information and it turned out without me really even thinking about it to be all of these white. And now I'm like thinking it's like oh 96 it's like it sucks so you have to like dig a little deeper to get these other voices and it's really important that I go on a personal level. Go do that and so.

C: And it's like who is regarded as like an authority in our societies often to do often has to do with privilege. Who are. Who has access to whiteness? Who has access to white spaces and to have the you know the time and energy to write books to engage in these things? And I'm not saying people shouldn't, it's it. Is important to engage in intellectual pursuits, but. That whiteness can't be the center of all discussions, especially when the way our our society revolves around violence and how how you sort of alluding to this how, how gendered it is, how racist it is, how much violence is applied in different ways to different people. And we see that in all sorts of different metrics, both in terms of like how police as like actors with violence engaged with arrests and prisons and. Like Michelle Alexander's, the new Jim Crow points out that 70% of the US prison population is people of color, and so it it's. I like to bring this up because I think it's dangerous to like go into and talk about and have a discussion about violence without thinking about the ways that it. Affects different communities.

K: Yeah, that's one of the reasons I really enjoyed coming up this debate from an anarchist perspective, because anarchist literature is much more likely to engage in discussions of racism and these binaries. And sort of all of these different voices that should be heard. So like even if the people at the top of this debate that I mentioned

like they are in fact more likely to have even talked to like different people of color and different and then also. the issues. Being brought up like at least that part at least in anarchist. That's part of the conversation. So like I really, I really, really enjoy that, and I wish that this literature was more well known to people that are not anarchists, because I think this book non. Ain't what used to be by Sean. Lifestyle is incredibly an important document. Like the thing I learned a lot from this, I learned a lot from this. It did take me a minute though, to be able to like get past the tone of it. The tone of the. Book like the way that the attitude that it was written from that, I think was definitely.

C: What would you say is like the dominant thesis?

K: The uh, the well I mean.

C: I haven't read the book.

K: It gets past like thing, uh, the dominant thesis is that violence is more complicated. It talks a lot more about. Structural violence and like self-liberation and using violence like, you know, quote UN quote violence as smashing windows and stuff is like an act of self empowerment and those kinds of things. I think it's a great book. There's a lot more to it than that. I mean that that does bring us up to the next problem though. Is semantics like the other thing that's happening is like you're trying. So the first thing is who's doing who's in the debate, and then the second part is like every time it seems like we try and talk about this, you just get caught up on semantics every time like the first thing you have to do is if you're talking about non violence versus violence, you have to define violence and then. That's you don't get past that. Like have you have you? Have you dealt with that?

C: Yeah, I mean I've. I've done a lot of research to think about, like what is, what is violence and what does that mean in the United States. And it's absolutely true. there's this like there's a couple of things going on, one of which is the like cult of militarism around like, well, you know, there's what the military does as violence. And then there's what? Civilians do and. And so we we separate things in all kinds of different ways. You know and like what is it appropriate? You know what is appropriate. Violence in different contexts, you know and really recently with Black Lives Matter. The discussion about like what is what is appropriate protest, you know our our riots, violent are riots are riots appropriate? Is this? Is this a tactic? Is this a legitimate? Yeah ***** and I think that. There's so much you know built into the semantics of like defending or defining that it often loses that part of the discussion. Just like using that as a way of getting away from actually talking about what is the issue here, you know like why are people protesting?

K: Right?

C: Why are people using or not using? Violence and instead moving away from that to discuss, you know, to discuss the tactics, and that's I think that's always been true. If you look at in the civil rights movement. There was a great song that it's. It's not always easy where the singer talks about going into a store and into a segregated shopping store that won't serve people of color and like filling the grocery cart and

leaving it and being like no like this is your problem. Like we're engaging a match of protests and people would always say Oh well. You're you're you're pushing too far. You're pushing too far or. If a civil rights activist was killed, as happened repeatedly, people would say, you know, this sort of like. A lot of white Christian people would say, Oh well, that's too bad that they died. But why are you making such a big deal? Why are you protesting? Why are you doing any? You know, it's like there's no amount of injustice that makes protest OK for some people. And it's like always comes back to the semantic of like what's acceptable. What's appropriate, you know.

K: Right and then this this conversation over tactics and. Over just the semantics of non violence, if you spend the if you that's a great way to derail the. Real conversations, you know. I mean like if you're spending all of your time trying to just define what violence is, then you don't actually talk about what's actually going on.

C: The substance of it.

K: The substance of the problem, so you know that that is a real real issue, and then the other thing about semantics. The conversation goes on for so long and it's so frustrating because violence is just not adequate. The having one word for the nuance of what violence means in our culture at this point. Like you're not, you're literally not actually speaking the same language, cause violence means something different to every single person that you talk to because it goes from it ranges from like seriously, just like the violence of smashing a bug or like eating meat. Or you know, or whatever to like structural violence to, like you know, punching some like.

C: Yeah, yeah.

K: Breaking a window or like punching somebody or like. You know, or like, emotional violence.

C: Sort of, yeah.

K: Emotional violence like hate speech like there is so many different things that can be included in our culture. Even just like angeriness. Like anything, anything that feels. Angry or intense can feel violent, you know, like.

C: And there's and there's a lot of that being. Tied up that's. I think that's really harmful to the movement in some ways in that. You know, I think there's a lot of discussion around. For instance, I hear this a lot in like the non violence discussion community about how. Oh well, you know we we really have to live our values, which is like that's important. You do want to live your values, but then using that to say Oh well, I don't, you know I don't want to feel any anger. I don't want to ever hear any anger. Why are people of color being so angry in the streets? they really need to work on themselves. They really need to calm down and it's like no like that's a.

K: It's not appropriate, right?

C: That's a real problem. And under Lord as a whole. Hazel essay on the uses of rage that, like there are, you know, we don't want to live our lives in rage. But I think that it is. There are important moments when systemic oppression is happening that we do have to recognize that there are places where this is appropriate.

K: I mean our cultural understanding, like our cultural relationship to violence is really messed up and that's something that anarchists really try and are trying to point out to people. Is that how our society understands violence is very, very damaging and screwed up and so like, that's a conversation that needs to be had. That's not really being had. And I really appreciate that, and we need to be just at least having that as part of the discussion. So for instance, like I've done Krav Maga and the idea.

C: What's that?

K: What's that what's krav? Maga Krav Maga is a type of martial arts that is self-defense. So the idea is. But it's like. it's brutal self. Defense because the idea being is like you end. Like you, you make sure that you end it as soon as you can so that it doesn't get prolonged and things don't get worse. You know so, but it's like as within months. Lots of martial arts. The idea is like if you can run away, run away. You know, if you can get out of the situation first, get out of the situation, then if you can't, if you can deescalate, deescalate and if you can't do that then like do. Like long shots, you know like long kicks and that kind of thing to like. Get people out of your space and if you can't do that, if it comes down to a point where you're about to be murdered like you put your hand behind somebody's head and you gouge out. Guys like yeah so. But so here's the here's the hypothetical situation in which I'm. About to get murdered. By somebody.

C: This might be an intense conversation also.

K: Oh yeah, all right, well actually the transmitter is sound so, but that's here's the thing we're talking about. Non violence, violence. It's going to be intense. People should know that you know and like understand that so, but in so in this hypothetical situation, the thing that got shocking, the thing that made you want to like give a warning on the radio. Is not my murder, it's the maiming. Of a murderer. You know what I mean? It's like we've become so desensitized to death that like it's more shocking to us. And if you think about the implications of that, it's like that means a Nazi eyeball gets more deference than a vulnerable person's life.

C: I hear that, but also like explicit description, is like. They can bring up a lot of things.

K: That's I mean, I guess explicit description. Yeah, like I, I get that. I maybe I went a little too far with that but the idea being though is that we are so afraid of talking about the realities of what violence is. I mean like what I said, that's a reality. That is, you know, like that is the real world.

C: Yeah, totally.

K: You know what I? Mean so I. And it and it is more shot like and the point being that it is like it is. You know, like we, I think in this culture it is more acceptable to kill somebody than to name. Them Mm-hmm like it's sort of this real ableist undertone. You know what I mean? And So what? A lot of anarchists. And I guess we're talking about in like in this non violence and stuff. The idea of like what is violence like? We say violence. Is force and pain and damage against a person or a live thing like a you know? I mean like a person? So if you're smashing windows and burning things, it's

not violence because it's not against a soul you know, or you know or like it doesn't. It's not the same. So then what you're doing what they're doing, you know, is kind of like. Trying to show the dichotomy there of being like look you're getting so upset that this is how upset our society gets over a smashed window versus the total lack of empathy for people being shot in the street. You know, and so that's, but here's the here's. The problem with that. Is like the sort of philosophical. Underpinnings of the message of. Like property over people or people over property over people. 's issues often is gets lost like it's sometimes it's a message that's hard to contain in a brick. You know like so. So then if the message isn't getting there. And it's actually sort of not furthering the conversation then it's not where if that's just not working you know what I mean? Like it's that's a problem. So how do you bring up these conversations? You know, how do you? How do you get these messages across in a way that will get people to listen to the message? Because if people don't listen to the message, then what's the message for? I mean the other part of this though, is saying that the idea is not just the message, but also the idea of self-liberation, that people who have been so disempowered by a system. Like taking that physical action against an against just a window. That's an oppressive system. That's like breaking a rule. That's something is like a very empowering experience for people. But you know, I don't know if there's other ways to empower people that doesn't risk you being jailed, you know.

C: You know, I mean, and I think you know every context is a little bit different. There's a. There's a scene that came out a couple years ago called Hot lettuce medicine and it's thesis is basically that like yeah, you can be feel this liberation by firing your gun and you know I think that I mean. Having fired several guns like, I mean, I can see how someone might think that, but you know, for me, like I feel on some level. Sort of like. Intrinsic sort of like drawback from violence, like when I hear violence is happening I like, I cringe. You know it's like something that like I, I want to pull away from like that's not a society that I desire in which like lots of violence is happening but also. You know there's this sort of like violence that happens in or around protests. That's one thing, and if all of the attention is on that rather than like talking about what's happening like that, can't be a focus without talking about what that came from, you know.

K: Right, and then I mean, and that's the other thing is then when there are, when there is violence and protest that can also derail the conversation. You know, I mean, because end up even if it's not fair, often a a violent act within a protest situation. Will draw all of the media. Will negate anything that the message of the main protest was trying to get across. You know and will even like, quell the Quell participation like for future, for future discussions that are, you know, these large scale protests that are like supposed to sort of be discussions about these. Issues, you know. What I mean?

C: I mean, and I think also, you know there's I hear me now again this thing saying, well, you know the media is going to misrepresent what we say anyways all the time. Why should we care what they say and. You know? it's interesting because in. In Seattle, when there was a Miley Innopolis came to speak and he's this, you know,

far right. Sort of tool who his I mean his like. His purpose is to is to make a bridge between what is, what is the like far right fascism and sort of like more mainstream conservatism. Through talking about like popular media, he really like tried to get people through, like Gamergate and like move them towards the alt right? He's this like bridge figure who recently lost favor and popular society because it came out that he was that he like repeatedly, and like, vociferously, endorsed pedophilia. And you know, but like, it wasn't that like he was OK with Nazis. It wasn't that he was OK with white supremacy or this like so-called alt, right? Like that wasn't a problem. It wasn't until he like came out as a pedophile. You know, and like vociferously like on multiple in multiple venues, on TV and on radio, and those clips were like put together that it that he was like. Finally, kind of shut down, but like it anyway. He was.

K: Ethnic cleansing wasn't enough.

C: Yeah like that's not a problem, you know and at the same time like there. So he was speaking at this event. In Seattle and a. anti-fascist protests was happening and one of Milo Yiannopoulos's supporters pulled out a like brought a gun to the rally and shot one of the protesters and the first like thing. The first like news articles I saw and like comments were like Oh well, did the protester deserve it? What was the protester? Doing what like this person just got shot like what are you talking about? You know? Well exactly, but it's like that's where the media focus is. You know, so like there, there is a real thing that, like even if you're doing, even if you are, you know, ostensibly nonviolent, and like, not not harming or not engaging in physical violence. And you are harmed like the state can still be like you know or popular media and popular narratives can still be like. You know you're still. At fault, you know, so I mean, it's. It's not easy.

K: However, however, it is really what the community at large what the narrative is, what the dominant narrative is, is really important and like reclaiming that narrative is a large part of the work, because the idea of societal change is that society's societal values have changed and that will be reflected in the narratives that we tell ourselves, and that we tell each other about. These issues, So what people think of us matters. It really does matter, you know, like we have to regain control of those narratives. And like right now it the violence and the sort of like outright hostility is really damaging our ability to sort of take back those narratives. About us what anarchism really is which is about love and cooperation and protection and self-defense. You know of community. When I was talking about this with somebody at our meeting this morning, I was describing how anarchists, what this what this place comes from is just like really like fierce love and wanting to protect self like defend. And protect vulnerable people. And I told him this, this is Jim and. He's amazing and he said you sound like a lion. He sounds like a lioness you know and you sound like a Mama bear. You know, like the idea is like but. Like a lioness will do what it takes to protect that cub so la Mama bear and that like intensity is really important. And this brings me back to the intersectional feminism and how feminism is so important for this discussion, because this is the stuff that feminists talk about is the discussions that we need to be having. Like when you're

talking about. Violence versus non violence. That's a strong binary. And as we know if we talk to our trans women. And you know, talk to our trans community. They are on the forefront of breaking binaries. And like we have to be able to break this binary to have like a constructive conversation about different tactics as opposed to just putting everything. Trying to just shove everything into this binary. Of non violence versus violence. And then if you talk about like. Issues of consent and coercion. This is one of my problems. Sort of. This is one of my fears and dangers about about. Sort of this like smashing Windows, writing types of things is issues of consent with the rest of community like we're talking about Portland, the Mayday riot and riots in Portland. There I feel like there is an. Issue of consent there. When or when anybody sort of brings up and starts smashing windows and stuff at these or larger scale protests. Is it can up the ante and escalate a situation? Create a higher level of danger without consent of everybody else. At that protest. Who are not like maybe the people involved are totally willing to take those risks, but that has not. Been okayed by everybody else involved in that space, you know I mean and another sort of a the problem. Another one of these problems here is. UM? Like centering sort of the problem of like centering the kind of talk a little bit about like sometimes these these things will center the conversation and that is difficult. And then we we're fighting these narratives. I see, sort of. Well, let's let's go back a second like I feel like a lot of these problems that. Having are not even actually about like morality or tactics like. If you talk. About these violence and these things you know, smashing windows and stuff. I think a lot of people anarchists would be surprised at that. How much people honestly don't even necessarily care if it's if you read behind. If you read if you read behind. Between the lines of an article that I read about the Mayday riots riots.

C: Quote UN quote there.

K: Oh yeah, I'm hand coding. Nobody actually cared about the corporate windows, no, but like nobody actually cared. The only one that they cared about was when the small business got their window smashed, because that's actually an economic punishment on that business owner. Cause those are expensive and like that guy did not deserve to be punished in that way. So but the idea being that like nobody actually cared about. The corporate stuff and like people are ***** at capitalism right now and like there's I don't think that the problem here, but so one of the main problems happening is not about the violence or the whatever. It's about bad process and like I think oftentimes things just come down to process and process work and good process versus bad process like good. Collaborative, cooperative process gets good results. Bad process gets bad results, you know. And so If we're having good cooperative process within communities as a whole, and everybody at the table, and you get good stuff going on, I was really, really impressed. With the black block in Minneapolis. Oh, that was so cool. So like they came together with community and sort of like ran fascists out of the capital.

C: And then they did it this interesting way, right?

K: Like they yeah, they, I mean so like it was with a lots of different types of people and like a full range of people from their community. And it was. But they also were, you know, they were in full black block at the at the. But they were there as part of community and not as a separate entity with of community. And like one of the issues I've been having. With the with what happened in Portland on May Day is that there's been no accountability from Black Block about the part that they took and what happened. And it's like I would love to see. Their account, their actual account. And it's sort of like. I'm I have access as an anarchist. Things that I follow I know more about what happened than most people and I am I mostly agree with everything that they did and the fact that it was the cost who definitely escalated that situation and made it very, very dangerous. It was not. Black block like. But however we should know better than to pick fights with cops and around around people that are vulnerable around the elderly around children. You know, I mean like the way that the cops reacted was way overblown, and there's no way for us to have known that it was going to be that bad that they were going to react like that, like that. That was like insanely terrible and like. So, but the point being is that after that point there was an opportunity to, in a cooperative like open dialogue, way for black block to have sort of maybe come out with a statement that. Says look this is what? Really happened, we worked. We worked cooperatively. We were working cooperatively with the whole protest. They asked us to be at the back. We were at the back then the cops started compressing us into space. This is how I understand it from the things that I've seen. So if this is it incorrectly, please e-mail us and let us know. Right now we're at staff@kpw.org. But they were getting they were getting right and that. The cops were. Really kind of like helping escalate this situation. Then there was some playful rock throwing. There's hilarious photo of like a black block hand hand trying to. Hand a Pepsi. You know, and like, that's you know what I mean, like? OK, like what? But then they come, you're you're like, these are lines of cops in full riot gear like you can't take a few stones and like you don't want to be offered Pepsi. OK, like they're reaction was insane to that right? And so then so you know, this could said of that and then said. Once the cops. Did what they did and became a super dangerous and created the Super dangerous situation. Black Block was setting up barricades. Black Block was protecting people. Blacklock was making sure that people who were vulnerable could get out of this situation that the cops had created and like that is. That's great, nobody knows that the only the only thing I've seen about that was an article written for it's going down. But the tone of the article was so defensive and hostile, and Rick wouldn't take any. Any like accountability for the fact that you know you like you did pick a fight with authoritarian cops? You know what I mean at a rally that was about not that you know what I mean in a different space. And then even even if that's not true, even if that's not fair, the idea of like working cooperatively if you're getting if we're getting. If we're getting criticism from the outside community like, why not just like smooth that over and say like here's what happened. If anything we did compounded the situation. That's not was not our intent, and like on a personal level. Like I'm

saying all these things and I'm being so critical because this has directly affected my life like. And I feel like I have a real I. I have a right to bring up this to bring up this criticism because my life has gotten as an anarchist organizer like as trying to do community organizing like it made my life harder. I'm having to expend more energy and time as emotional energy. I'm just trying to convince people. And safe, you know that you know just trying to like breakthrough the barrier of this bad PR. So you know and it so it. It literally makes my life harder and more dangerous and more frustrating. And you know, like so I really want and I want to be opening these dialogues and I'm trying really hard right now to like, come from like a loving. Like my my own process like we should always be checking in with our own process, right? So like I want to. Be coming from like a. Loving cooperative place. Because I totally do understand like I feel like if you don't want to light stuff on fire right now, maybe you're not. Paying attention to like what's going. On but on the other hand, it's really hard to come into that space.

C: Yeah, yeah.

K: Like in a loving manner with good process when the feedback I get is so hostile, you know.

C: Yeah, and you know for me and I gave up for a long time using using the identity benefits. For that reason it was just like I can't. I can't say this like it's because as soon as I say like I'm an anarchist, everyone just shuts. Town, you know, I can't talk about hey, you know, let's go hang out because then other people say, well, I don't want to hang out with. I don't want to hang out with these anarchists. You know? You know, folks are sort of middle of the road and it's like it. It becomes a real hindrance to doing any kind of community organizing, and that's a problem that's a problem.

K: That's the thing that's because I understand we have something super important to bring to the table. Really playing and right now people are more open to it than ever before. They're like, oh, like, we're. Falling into fascism like what are these anti fascists doing like?

C: Yeah, yeah, what does this mean?

K: You should find out what does this mean, you know? So, like there's this opportunity here to really like, reach out and like engage with the community and become sort of normalized, which would be super helpful and sort of this like large scale neighborhood organizing, organizing that we're trying to do and also. As far as process goes. It's really important for us to be checking each other when we start seeing bad process, because if we're not checking in with each other when we see bad process, we are actually complicit in the problem. So like I'm, you know, reading about working in cooperative groups and all these things like we were all raised. In an authoritarian, violent culture. You know what I mean? Like that's what? We know and like what anarchists are trying to do is get rid of authoritarianism in all forms and that includes within ourselves. So like anarchists, cooperative process is beautiful because it says like we are trying to make sure that all authoritarianism is not in this process. We get all of it out. But because we are all raised in this society. It sneaks in and it sneaks into all of

us in. Lots of different ways. So this isn't just on black block or anarchists or whatever like this bad process. And this, like sneaking authoritarianism is everywhere right now and like you know it's like another way that it shows up in lots of different ways. It can be not speaking up, you know that can be a way of like bending to operate.

C: The silence of our friends.

K: Right so and then also it can be trying to like sort of sometimes a lot of times working with liberals, they'll come in and try and instill a hierarchy and put themselves at the top. Like that's an authoritarian way of trying to become do community process. You know what I mean? So it's like.

C: We were you. Know we we talked about this the other day when we were sort of preparing for the show that. You know, in some ways, on the one hand, like yes, like Black Block has played an important tactical role in different contexts and responses to different situations. But you know, this isn't like all black boxes, but that's like not what we're saying.

K: No, absolutely not, absolutely not.

C: But on the other hand, like. If you know if people think look we're going to start something and we're going to show everyone else how to do it, but we're not accountable to them. I mean, that sounds like anarchists trying to be like old school socialist vanguards, you know, like are you a vanguardist? Are you trying to tell the community what they're going to do? Are you going to say you're going to do this whether you like it or not? Like, no like that's not acceptable.

K: I mean, I don't think it's necessarily that, but there is this sort of false idea that they can be. Like in the situation that we're in now, I don't think it's possible to separate. You know, like well, we do our thing. You do your thing, but it doesn't really work like that. Everything that all of us are doing are affecting each other right now. You know what I mean? Like it's so that's so. I think this could be our strength though because. Authoritarians on the right. Their process is to try and step on each other to gain more power and to get at the top. Of the system and they actually have infighting, and so one of the things that the left keeps saying is like we don't want to be infighting, we don't want to be infighting, and I. Heard that that was that. The Democrats ran on, but I also also I hear that from anarchists.

C: Right?

K: I hear like don't say anything bad about black bloc ever because it's it causes division, you know. I mean, it's like that sounds the same to me, you know. And but, but because we're not authoritarians, we're anti authoritarians. I see us not as infighting. I see us as struggling with cooperative process, but like that difference in mindset, makes all of the difference. But that means that we all do need to be continuously trying to keep keep the focus of. We're struggling with cooperative process. That means that we have to keep. Reminding ourselves and each other what cooperative process requires. And right now we're going from workshopping, small cooperate. To a global movement, like anybody who's worked in a cooperative environment can hear, that's like that's a big ask like somebody. So like anything, so we're going to. We're going to

get through this. And we're going to survive this. Through process work like, that's how I feel about it. And at the end we're fighting for our lives. You know we're fighting for lives right now, and what Black bloc and anarchists in general are saying is like if you're fighting for your life, you look at every tool in your toolbox.

C: Sure, sure.

K: You're going to mean like you look at every single tool in your toolbox, and I'm saying I say agreed you have to start there, like if we're starting the conversation like already. That's that process to start the conversation already having next. Ideas you know what I mean? And even if you come to an idea, that is what you thought it was in the 1st place, like even if we came to the idea, like yes, complete complete nonviolence all the time, it's like it's if the process is bad. The outcome is going to be bad if people aren't on the table with you. You know what I mean? And that's also like we have to. I was I. Was thinking today like I got this ministry that was. We talk a lot about unification and unifying the left and keeping us from fracturing, but we already are in Umm. You know, if we can hear what everybody is saying, we're already in unity because we all have the. Same goals like we all don't want authoritarianism. We all want to survive on this planet like we all want the human race to continue. We don't want a future, you know so, but what needs to happen is listening to what everybody else is saying. So one of the problems here is that. Anarchists and even like violent anarchists have something really important to say that is not being heard. And like we have to hear what they're saying, we have to hear that yes, it's worse than you than you're willing to admit. Right now, authoritarianism is scary, our world is violent, like we have, you know. I mean, there is going to be physical confrontation, you know. I mean there is going to be a certain type of you know. And this and. That this already exists. You know people don't want. To hear that. But in your hand, people don't want to hear that because it's being. Not being expressed well, you know what I mean? Like if you're coming to a conversation in a place of like total defensiveness and hostility, it doesn't matter if you're right. Nobody wants to hear it.

C: I mean, and you know there are some real differences in the communities, right? Like there are tankies. There are people who you know like justify any kind of like Stalinist crush, the other people snatchy smash, you know all the face but also you know there are I'm going to bring up to two sort of critiques.

K: Oh yeah, yeah.

C: One of which is that, and this is out of this is out of Minnesota. There was this group people got together and one person saying you know like look if you're if you're sort of like an insurrectos anarchist. Like if you're like I'm going to smash things and that's going to show people you know the great way. That's where I'm going to find liberation in the streets you know, and taking space. Is the only way to do it like yes like holding space and having like and having like roots in a neighborhood and knowing that like this is in fact your space and your like fundamentally tied to it. You have a relationship to place like that's important, but. Then like just going and like picking fights and breaking things and like getting arrested and then being like alright

now everyone jump on my go fund me you know and everyone is expected to just like show up and support you and like donate tons of money to your campaign and your legal costs. Well, good for you. But now like what about every other community organization that was doing things before you went? Out and got like Smashy smashy and you know now like there's less money available in this community to do a like a ton of other projects. You know, cuz like all of the emotional energy, all the physical energy all the time, the money and resources then is suddenly being spent all around you. And that's. Like, frankly, like that's not constructive, you know.

K: Well, I mean actually like I saw Daniel McGowan speak and he was an amazing speaker and I don't. If you don't know who Dan McGowan is he's he's like a for sure. Like certified anarchist. Who's jailed for?

C: He was part of the Earth Liberation Front and was involved in the a series of bombing campaigns.

K: Yeah, yeah.

C: There's a great documentary on it. If a tree falls.

K: Well, I so I saw him speak recently and he said that he was really he wanted to go to Washington DC but he didn't want to burden the community with any legal costs that might happen if he specifically was jailed. And I thought that was really a nice thing to say. And I also think that without with through all this you know, say it we are struggling with process. And anybody who's not an. Artist or even many owners who are listening, know that this is a conversation. This is an ongoing conversation with within the anarchist community, and that this is not something that like I just thought of, and we're bringing up. It's something that everybody is really discussing, and because they're very smart and I guess they're very savvy and like I've been really impressed, like even people I've met. Who are much more ***** than me? Who like are like, are very, very generally open to dialogue. If I, if it's if it's sort of a thing. So like it's. It's hard when I am dealing with sort of like hostility because I know that that a lot of anarchists really are trying to are seeing these problems also and are trying to work on a way to within our community ourselves. Kind of collaborative come to this, but I don't want to see that. Conversation end up that the decision is to quell dissent and that the decision is if you don't like it, that's where you're not involved. You can't be involved, or you're not a real anarchist, right?

C: Or you're not a real anarchist.

K: You know what I mean? So like that's kind of because that's bad process. You know, so like it feels it kind of feel. I feel like a little bit of this like real like unhappiness feeling when I'm told that like. Like how dare you not? Appreciate us putting our ourselves on the line for you. And that feels really. Unhealthy to me, that's a really unhealthy dynamic, especially if it wasn't something I consented to. You know what I mean? So that's it's just a difficult dynamic, but if we continue again like I just really think that the key here is good process and that everybody does have something to bring to the table. And the other thing about like if nobody wants to hear you because you're being loud and like making it difficult for other people to. Do what they're

doing. On the other hand. And everybody else like sort of like on the nonviolent side too. Sometimes that person in the room that's being really loud and really obnoxious, and you don't want to deal with. They're not being heard, So what other recourse do they have other than becoming louder? You know, I mean, so it's like, even if they're hard to hear. And so it goes on. It's both sides. It's both sides, needs to fix process like we have to be hearing what? It is that they're trying to say.

C: Yeah, and I wanted to bring up like a second critique, and this one is from New York. This is a couple years ago. There's a there's a major protest in Riot and I think this was maybe tied to occupy and I don't remember exactly, but the idea was that here are all these people that are like working in these, you know otherwise awful. You know multinational corporations. You know your McDonald's. Walmarts your your targets and everything else and. Here come these protesters and smashing windows, and these are people who are broke. You know these are poor people in living in poor communities who like can barely make it. And you know you're showing up and like trashing their workplaces. You know, and like, it's not the fact that like that, the place is being destroyed. But it's like you're also like attacking the work of these, like people who are here. And the specific argument critique was saying like look. A lot of people live in like places where the like. The extraordinary violence that's happening with regard to in particular, like shootings and things. One person is telling the story that protesters came up and went to go smash a window and the like, the crashing and the hitting of it. Just like sent multiple of their coworkers working in a working in a Starbucks, like scattering to the floor and terrified for their lives, not because they were afraid of protesters, not because they couldn't have class solidarity or something. But no, because like this is really scary. Because here's an attacker you're like you're as a protester. Like attacking this institution, this corporation, and like that's legit, but like then you turn around and like there are people in there, you know that are having that are dealing with the consequences of what you're saying. And I don't care about like all this, management is stressed because of whatever. And window like that doesn't bother me, but like there are like there are people you know who are part of your communities. You know who are harmed by these actions and like. You know? We we got to think about that too. You know, like there's, there's real harm to you know to our people, to our side. You know that comes out of this as well. In addition to like the big like meta conversation about like can we can we talk about anarchism? Is this like? Is this a defensible conversation are we? Are we really spreading like the message of anarchism? About a, you know another world that's possible and sort of prefigurative notions you know is that really what's coming out of this? Not that like people can't protest like there are lots of places in context. You know where someone has just been killed or just you know been murdered by police and like you, you just got to respond, you know. And that's. Artists, and that's important. But we can't have the response to everything that happens in our society. Be just like riots and like, yes, like Mayday has a particular history and you know the origins of Mayday in the United States and Chicago, and like rounding up and murdering anarchists like there's

extraordinary violence on the part of the state in there. But it's also it's also a day of immigrants rights. It's also a day of Labor rights. It's also a day of, you know, like changing of seasons. There's a there's so much tied up in the like I really love the idea of Mayday. There's like so much like fantastic history and intersectional things going on there. But also like it doesn't belong, only to anarchists.

K: And then the. A lot of times people you know there's conversations about like. Well, here's where it worked. Here's what we're here to talk about. Like the riots in Greece when that very young anarchist was shot and. Or, you know, talk about. Haiti was talk about these things. It's like if you look. I feel like if you really dug in the difference there would not be tactics necessarily. It'd be processes that everybody in those. Communities was on the same page about how they were doing something. You know what I mean like that? With that, like, the whole community came together. So in the end, if we're sort of like saying, well, these this violent act is OK because of Haiti, it's like that's not. That's disingenuous to say, like, well, violence works sometimes so therefore. Dance works here. It's like it's a context and the way that those decisions were come to are very, very important and the other so you're talking about like the fear creating the community is that authoritarian regimes thrive on fear. Their they love fear they want fear to be happening because that keeps people indoors that keeps that keeps people from wanting to participate. That keeps people from rising up against them.

C: And it justifies funding the authoritarian state.

K: Right, and so like the so like if we're doing everything that we do that I heard from one beautiful anarchist. the cornerstones of the revolution are self-defense and self-liberation and causing fear. Even if it's a personal self. Liberation of being able to empower yourself by breaking a capitalist, helping break the capital state by throwing a brick through window. What the implications of like the self-liberation abilities of the community at large. Creating an atmosphere of fear, you know. So like what is the balance there of like personal responsibility of like you know, sort of like individualist anarchism of like having making sure that you. Like have our liberated and empowered versus sort of whether or not that's helping the community at large become empowered enough to rise up all together. And I mean so like that's you know. So fear is a fear is really, really dangerous. We need the opposite of. Fear you know what? I mean so like. You know, kind of coming back to this sort of intersectional feminism and coming back to the idea that this. Is Mother's Day. And why that's still so important to like? Always be always concentrating on intersectional feminism and everything we do is like a basic revolutionary value that we're working from. Would love to see like I'm worried about. Sort of, this twisted gender gendered dynamic where you end up with our society being so messed up. You've got like women seen as weak and having the strength and you've also got this like toxic masculinity. You know, so like the way that we're gonna part, the way we're going to fix this is making sure that. We're fixing our. Are sort of like dynamics on that front. Front because I do see a real toxic masculinity element, especially when you look at the semantics of the situation. When you're talking about

like the metaphors where you. Losing our war. And like sometimes, it's like glorification of pain, like glorification of murder, even and like this. Sort of like just real like hatred and all these things like. It really feels like a toxic masculinity to me. And then on the other side you've got this like sort of like repression and like devaluation of feminine power. And like so. So the I saw what changed my life as Valerie cower as an amazing woman, lawyer and activist in New York. She's sick and she gave a. She gave a speech on New Year's Day. I posted it on our Facebook page friendly anarchism. I pinned it to the top because it changed my life. Where she's speaking about that maybe this darkness isn't the darkness of the tomb, but the darkness of the womb, and that we're laboring to bring in a new society, and like how we do that, is, we breathe, and we push, and we breathe, and we push. And that if we don't push, we die. You know that Labor is an act of focused love and. You know, is this like and that instead of sort of focusing on war and destruction, it's this like and labor is painful. Labor is hard, labor is long, and it's also violent in its own right. You know, it's also bloody. It's also dangerous. You know what I mean, but then just it makes all the difference to sort of embrace this language and this like. Understanding of this as sort of like. A real like. Stopping devaluing women and stopping making sure that toxic toxic masculinity is not injecting itself into our into our birthing room. You know, and like, that's how we'll do it. You know, if we can all just like focus in on like the steely strength of love and creation. And instead of destruction, you know, and sort of like in this binary that we have of violence. Non violence that is like a damaging binary. You know, so like we have to break through those we have to break through those. But sometimes that takes a new language. So like the semantics of violence versus nonviolence is no longer helpful to us. And sort of all of. That nuance, and that's another thing. That ***** feminism and intersectional feminists are wonderful at is understanding nuance because they have. If you talk to a black trans woman like their understanding of identity and the way of moving through the world and like sort of juggling all these different types of oppression. Gives a real depth of like nuance that we really need in this conversation. You know what I mean?

C: And you know also, like. When thinking about like violence like there's just. There's so many things going on, like when they think about like the Greek phrases for like there's five different Greek meanings of love different, like different phrases that all like would translate in English into into just like the word love, but have fundamentally different meanings. You know, we think about violence. There's just like all different kinds. We were sort of alluding to this earlier that there's direct violence. It's sort of like you know, if you punch someone, but there's also indirect violence, harassment, microaggressions threats and intimidation, and. Then there's these sort of like larger institutional things. Institutional violence, structural violence. But there's also like passive violence and things that happen by non action, like right? Like how many states neglect communities, right? Like the federal government not taking action on Flint means that people are going to be sick like that's a kind of violence. They're not

doing something to make someone sick. They already did something. And now by not acting, people are going. To be sick.

K: Right so then, sort of this like peaceful nonviolent. This non action is complicit in continuing structural violence and is, and is incredibly dangerous to all of those communities that are dealing that are being murdered and abused on a daily basis because of inaction. You know what I mean? So like that, yeah, that's a great point.

C: I think it's important that, like individuals like violence can be carried out either by individuals or through community organizations through cities through economic corporations, through national governments and the potential to cause harm isn't limited to like just one of these organizations like there's so many different like sources of potential harm in our lives. That that's sort of like the big picture here is like, I think when like talking about the riots and anarchism and black bloc. It's like they're like there are. Big things that are happening and. You know, and it's not like you can, just you know, just remove the state or just remove corporations like you can have. You could in theory have a corporation list state that is still extremely violent or a stateless society which has corporations which is violent right when we think of like the Wild West or corporate domination in the Amazon. Or we think of like mobs like stateless violence through economic means. And you know, but also like wherever the state is not present, oftentimes there are militaries or paramilitaries, or like hired police forces or gun thugs, you know which, which are somewhat analogous to our police, right? Like here at the state, just like hires people to do the same jobs of like. Economic and like social status quo will.

K: Yeah, so I mean the idea here is that overall this is a difficult, complicated subject. We're dealing with a very difficult, complicated world. You know, like and the way that we're going to get through this as a movement together. Everybody because now we're in this together. Whether we like it or not, everything that all of us do affects everybody else. All of everything we do and everything we don't do affects everybody else, right? So, but we can do it like I really feel like our strength is in an understanding of anarchic. Cooperative process. And we're learning that. And I see lots and lots of good things happening within that within our own anarchist community and within communities before. And I see like this beautiful interfacing happening between anarchists and other communities and it's very exciting. And I'm very excited to be a part of it. And I think that we really, really do have a shot at bringing it. This is our moment. We really can. Another world really is possible and we're getting there. We just keep these open dialogues with each other. Keep coming at these conversations from a place of love and desire to understand and desire to work together in a cooperative way that we're going to. Be fine.

C: And I think that's something that both Quakers and anarchists share is is, you know, both can envision a better world where the draconian repression that we see through the state and through economic institutions is both unnecessary and the better methods of governing our society are possible, like that's available to us. And that they're you know despite these like big things that are happening in the world,

that. You know the sort of structural and institutional violence you know? I think it's worth asking ourselves what are we doing to get there? What are the what are our ways of arriving at the goals that we want? And there may be places for violence, there may be necessary places, but there it's also important for us to ask. How are we getting there and what does this world? Look like.

K: You know the intention. The intention behind something, the process behind something, intention behind something is everything. You know, that's really it's great, and I think I think we're going to be OK and. It's 4:00 o'clock so.

C: Hey oh, there's an hour.

K: There we go. We did. We talked for an hour. We've really enjoyed talking with you. Well, I guess we're talking to each. Other at you. Kind of hopefully opening these dialogues between us and everybody. And please, you can come like our. Facebook page at friendly anarchism. We also have a Twitter that's at friend anarchism. You can e-mail us. We'd love to hear from you at friendlyanarchism@protonmail.com that is an encrypted e-mail. So, just in case, that's something that you care about and thank you so much for listening. You've been listening to KEPW LPFM 97.3 Eugene Homegrown Radio.

C: Thank you so much again for joining us. This is friendly anarchism.

4. Quaker Racism with Friend Sharon Smith 5.21.17

Listen Here

We spoke with Friend Sharon Smith, expert on racism within the Quaker community and author of this article: www.friendsjournal.org/witness-quaker-racism/

It ended up being such an amazing conversation that it went an hour and a half overtime!

Apologies for the sound quality.

5. Guns, False Discipleship, and Unions with Lonnie Douglas 5.27.17

Listen Here

Today we had Lonnie Douglas, the Chair for the Eugene Springfield Solidarity Network (ESSN), ex-military, gun-totin' progressive white guy union organizer. We talk about fake Christians, abortion, guns, Redneck Revolt, Marxism, racism, anti-capitalism, union organizing, anti-globalization, the timber industry, Earth First!, Bernie, Revolution, true Anarchy, and buttless chaps.

6. Black Working Class Communism and Revolutionary Families with Candice 6.3.17

Listen Here

7. All Life Is Meeting, Quaker Silence, and Self-Care with Ilene Cummings 6.25.17

Listen Here

8. Skinheads, Smashing the Fash, and the Original French Antifa 7.2.17

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9. Gender Nihilism, Transmisogyny, and Liberation with Nors & Nathan 7.9.17

Listen Here

9. Remastered: Gender Nihilism With Nors & Nathan

Listen Here

10. Community Antifascism, Free Speech, and Loving Your Neighbor with Greg Williams 7.15.17

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**11. Doxxing, Propaganda, and Liberals With
Daryle Lamont Jenkins 7.22.17**

Listen Here

**12. Unionizing Care Work, Intersectional
Feminism, & Zombies with Jhansie Turner 7.29.17**

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**13. Abuse, White Fragility, and Walking Humbly
with Warren Light 8.5.17**

Listen Here

**14. Science Fiction, Crowdfunding, and Media
Repression with Joan Haran 8.12.17**

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**15. Libertarian Municipalism, Anti-Statism, And
Radicalization with DemSocs 8.19.17**

Listen Here

**16. Women Warriors, Taking Space, and Fitness
8.26.17**

Listen Here

17. Allyship, FTP, And Give People Money with Aneka 9.3.17

Listen Here

17. Remastered: Allyship, FTP, And Give People Money with Aneka

Listen Here

18. Protest Art, Climate Catastrophe, and Planting Seeds Of Change with Plaedo 9.5.17

Listen Here

19. Queerphobia, Division, and Capitalism In the Quaker Church with Jane 9.23.17

Listen Here

20. Christian Marxism, Tankies, and The Historical Jesus with Christian Chiakulas 10.1.17

Listen Here

21. Protest Theater, Communal Energy, And Embracing Chaos with Michael Najjar 10.7.17

Listen Here

22. Antifa - Eugene Weekly's full interview with Katherine 10.19.17

Listen Here

23. Quaker Bible Study, Standing Rock, and Thoughts & Prayers with Adam Wiese 11.14.17

Listen Here

24. Anarchist Jesus, Rebuilding Radical Christianity, and Hope with Hye Sung 12.15.17

Listen Here

Katherine: Hello! This is Katherine, welcome to Friendly Anarchism. Do you want to go ahead and introduce yourself?

Hye: Hi, I'm Hye Sung.

K: Alright, Hye Sung. I have you on because you have this fantastic blog. Do you want to talk about it a little bit? What do you write and why do you have the blog?

H: It's hyesungfrancis.com, so it's just my name. Honestly, I first started it because I was fundraising when I was doing the Quaker voluntary service.

K: Nice.

H: Yeah, I did a fellowship with them and I needed to make money so I just did updates on where I was at, what was happening, and then it became a blog about me reflecting on what Quakerism means to me and my experiences with Quakerism. Now it's a lot of spiritual/political reflections and what I would see as prophetic words. Not to say I'm a prophet or anything, but things I feel like the Society of Friends and the church kind of needs to hear, and some things I feel like spirit is putting on my heart.

K: I love that, I love the radical honesty of your blog. It's hard to put that out there, there's a lot of pushback, you know?

H: Mmhmm.

K: I've definitely had a few problems. My meeting is pretty good and there some really loving and wonderful people, but there is definitely some pushback from the liberal sect against anything more radical, and I've heard it's even worse on the east coast, right?

H: It is. I know that for a fact, yep.

K: Totally. Because you're in Philadelphia?

H: I am in Philadelphia, yeah. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting territory.

K: Mmhmm. So i mean that's one of the oldest, most well established Quaker meetings, yeah?

H: It is, it's rich and full of Quaker history here. There's Hick Street and stuff, you just see all these Quaker landmarks all over the place. I mean like William Penn, there's a huge statue of him atop of our city hall, so..yeah, it's Quaker country. But not really, because everyone's like, oh wait, you're a Quaker? Those exist still? So...

K: Yeah. [laughs]

H: Yeah. That's still an issue here.

K: Even in Philadelphia.

H: Even in Philadelphia. [laughs]

K: But with that sort of embedded culture comes problematic stuff, right? Because it's so old and it has so much tradition sometimes that tradition can become dogmatic, and there is a lot of problematic stuff in the Quaker church. I had another podcast episode with Jane who's awesome, and she was talking about all this problematic capitalist stuff too, and there's also some real racist undertones? Like all of those churches were basically built with slave money, weren't they? Do you know about that?

H: Yes, yes. Also going to the capitalist thing there is this notion, I mean at Earlham even, there's some kind of program about ethical capitalism or something?

K: Oh no.

H: And that's definitely an idea that people have, is that they always cite the second generation of Quakers who are all business people and had good business practices, and say 'look! We can do this and it can be ethical!' Even though, like not really, but.. that's cool that you think that..

K: I feel maybe for a second they're kind of like community credit unions but then... any kind of system like that inevitably became corrupt, you know what I mean?

H: I mean, it's always tangled up with – I mean, it's capitalism so..

K: Right. One of the things I like about your blog and one of the things you talk about a lot in your blog is your sort of difficult, or rich, complicated relationship with Quakerism.

H: There's something in me that still for some reason identifies so much with the experiences of early Friends that I still feel like a convinced Friend, and for some reason I can't let go of that. Not yet at least. Something in me feels like that's what I am, but yes, institutional Quakerism is just something I don't feel called to really deal with. [laughs]

K: Absolutely. I think there was a meme going around for a second, I think I got it from you actually, that said "make Quakerism militant again."

H: Uh huh. Yeah.

K: I totes agree. I totes agree. When we look at the Bible, when we look at Jesus, when we actually read what he is saying just straight up without any of this institutionalized bullshit, he was militant as hell, man.

H: I mean yeah, he was saying that empire is false authority, like the whole idea that when he says ‘render unto Caesar what’s Caesar’s and render unto God what’s God’s’, nothing belongs to Caesar! That’s the point!

K: Yeah. [laughs]

H: It’s a call to revolution, bring it all back to God’s kingdom, our kindom, you know?

K: And I’ve noticed in liberal or progressive Christianity there’s this tendency to look at the New Testament and, even if we’re understanding Jesus as man, and understanding that means he has this character development as a human and has all those human characteristics of moving through life and learning, people just concentrate fully on the very beginning, and then the very end. It’s like ‘nice Jesus, nice Jesus, flip flip flip flip dead Jesus’, and it’s like let’s back the fuck up for a second, there’s this whole intermediary section in there that we can’t just ignore out of the New Testament about when he’s flipping tables and shit, you know what I mean?

H: Yeah. No, exactly. And yeah, that’s kind of the frustrating thing with progressive Christian circles in general. I always go back to this, and I think a lot of us Christian anarchists who are revolutionary kinds of Christians always go back to this because it’s a topic that always comes up, but just the black and white definition of what violence is and what that means, and how tightly they hold on to that at the expense of like, people.

K: Right.

H: Like at the expense of people’s well being. It’s really disturbing. It just doesn’t, it seems to lack empathy and it genuinely kind of scares me, I don’t like it.

K: There is violence inherent in this idea of nonviolence within a state structure. If you’re still talking about working within a state structure, states are inherently based on violence. All a lot of these liberals and progressives are doing is outsourcing their violence. I get to keep my hands clean and be nonviolent, but I’m going to call the cops on you and the cops are going to beat and/or kill you. That’s so violent!

H: And that’s the thing, I don’t even think that every person is called to destructive or violent actions whatever that even really means, but I do think Christians, out of empathy and out of love, should support a diversity of tactics. It doesn’t mean that they have to engage in these actions but support others knowing that they’re doing what they can to build a better world, you know? I mean at least.

K: In my opinion, all of Jesus’ actions still fall within a nonviolent revolutionary framework because he’s not calling for a violent uprising against the state, it’s not how he did it. Which I think is really, really smart and that’s what we need to be doing. But he also didn’t call for passivity, you know?

H: Yes.

K: Like he also wasn’t going around shaking hands with the centurions and stuff, you know what I mean?

H: No, exactly. No I agree. So yeah. Jesus was Murray Bookchin.

[Both laugh]

K: No, I don't think Jesus was Murray Bookchin, I would say Jesus is antifa, you know? I see it as this really brilliant book that's showing you how to slowly escalate in the dangerous nature of your tactics. It starts super super tame. Just service. Just straight up service. And then he starts taking direct actions by being more confrontational, with the gleaning of the grain, and then being more confrontational about healing the guy in the church when he's not supposed to. That was incredibly confrontational and pissed people off. He continues to escalate until people get the message. We're no longer in the very beginning of the new testament at this point. Society has escalated past the point of where this sort of early early Jesus right of the mountain is the appropriate response. And I think he would agree. There's a reason that he escalated.

H: I think so too. If your ministry is actually doing what it's supposed to do and your church is doing what it's supposed to do, it's more and more of a threat to the status quo, to the state and the powers that be, so yeah, the tactics will get more extreme.

K: Exactly.

H: And as they should.

K: People are sort of like, well he ended up in court but he ended up in court by being nonviolent. He ended up in court for assaulting bankers. So the idea of just hold hands and sing and then you get arrested, that's just showing how oppressive our state is, it's not showing that means you got to court the same way Jesus did.

H: I mean honestly there is this notion or this idea that I haven't really teased out or wrestled through so much, but I have talked about it a little, this idea that Jesus's life was one of a failed revolutionary, and that's not a bad thing. It's actually supposed to speak to us and say for the revolution, for building a new world, are you willing to die this terrible death where everyone abandons you? But I think more than that we can have hope as a community, as the church that we're not doing this alone. Jesus died a lone insurrectionist, but we are the body of Christ, we're a people that could do that together.

K: I find the New Testament so comforting because he's saying look, if you're going to be a basically moral person living under an oppressive state it's going to suck. You're going to lose friends, you're going to end up in court, you're going to get jailed, you're going to get beaten, you're possibly going to get killed, but your reward is in heaven. What do you get? What do you get for being a basically moral person? You don't get shit. You get to possibly die and suffer. You know what I mean? But like congratu-fuckin-lations, you managed to live with some sort of basic core values, and living under an oppressive state that means potentially giving up everything to hold on to those moral values.

H: Exactly, and I think the fact that Jesus, when he was on the cross was like, 'okay God, you're gone, you're not here, you've forsaken me'. There's this amount of doubt that he experiences even in the garden of Gethsemane, and there's an element of nihilism that's necessary in following Jesus. Like, you know what? Even if everything

falls to shit, even if everything fails, I'm going to go kicking, I'm gonna die you know, screaming. Because it's worth it. Because people are worth it. Just in case that might be the seed of the kingdom to build a church. That's worth it.

K: Yeah absolutely, I mean, he seemed like a failed revolutionary, right? But he was one of the most effective organizers in history in completely changing the way that humanity considers its relationship to wealth and power. It was really revolutionary, and he forever changed the world even if eventually, as is sort of typical of humanity, we are always having to fight against authoritarianism, we're always having to fight against wanting to conglomerate power, and so yes, the church ended up falling prey to those same human..

H: And he warned us that would happen!

K: Exactly! Like he said, be super careful with wealth and power, it's going to fuck us over. It's like, yeah man, I wish we'd been listening to Jesus a little bit because he would have been like fuck capitalism, fuck the state! That's going to be what takes you, that's what's going to ruin humanity, and he's absolutely right.

H: Yeah. I mean he said there's going to come a day where there's gonna be a separation of the sheeps and the goats, and there's a false church that's going to basically be the world. And that's real, and I think in late capitalism we're seeing it so fully and so embodied.

K: Yeah, right? Absolutely. I know! It's like, it's like he knew what was going on. It's like he was prophetic. [laughs]

H: Well look at that.

K: Yeah, look at that. And as far as when you called yourself a prophet, as mystics we believe in prophecy, we believe that everybody can be prophetic, if not "prophets", right? Which I think is sort of a very anarchist thing. Anarchists have been screaming and yelling since the 1800's 'hey! This is a bad plan! This is a bad plan, this is going to end super badly. Can we not?' So it's like if people had been listening to Jesus, and if people has also been listening to anarchists, we would not be so fucked right now, you know what I mean?

H: You have a point.

K: It's really pretty frustrating. I believe that anarchists are also mystics. My view is that there are people in society that are more sensitive and, so basically, don't listen to your mystics at your own peril. You have mystics and they're important and don't ignore them, you know what I mean? They know what's up. So.

H: Yep. It's true. I mean I I.. yeah. I agree.

[Both laugh]

H: When it comes to the whole prophetic thing, before I became a Quaker I became a Christian in more of an evangelical way when I was sixteen years old. Though I wasn't in a church, I just started reading the Bible and having God feelings and stuff and it was weird, it was scary, and I did not want it but it was such a classic coming to Christ story. I had this overwhelming sense of love, and that has stuck with me. I'm queer and an anarchist and in so many ways don't, didn't fit into this idea of what

a Christian would be, but still it stuck on me and I can't get rid of it because it has given me such new vision of this world, and honestly mysticism is so vital to my revolutionary praxis personally. That's where I gain my vision and hope to keep going because without it it's really scary. Without being immersed in a greater vision and in the actual experience of the spirit.. for me at least it's a sustaining thing, you know?

K: Yeah, absolutely. I think I would have a really hard time doing this work without a strong spiritual practice, and for me it's Christian, but I feel like it's important for everybody, even if it'll embody in a bunch of different ways. Centering, keeping perspective about the larger universe, keeping humble, and learning to control our fear is something that we all need to do, especially as mystics. When I look at anarchists I see all of these mystics that don't have that and are just freaking out and having a really really hard time, because we specifically really really need to do that practice because we're so sensitive and empathetic and that's hard. That's really hard, you know?

H: Yep.

K: Anybody that's paying this much attention and willing to give up so much for the oppressed... that takes a huge amount of empathy, but empathy also takes a huge amount of spiritual strength.

H: I mean honestly that's why like the church... is a thing. When I started having those God feelings and stuff it was very pentecostal charismatic, and it was scary to me, and I had the experience of being laid out on the floor, shaking, and speaking in tongues and things. That was a part of my experience, but while that was physically happening, that weird stuff, it was an experience of having my empathy stretched. But I didn't have a church or anything, and I still don't, and it's actually kind of hard when if I'm sustaining that and feeding that because we're supposed to be doing that corporately.

K: That's true, yeah.

H: That's supposed to be not just something we do alone, we're supposed to be heartbroken as a people, and therefore do actions as a people.

K: Aww.. I love that. It's easy as mystics and as anarchists to fall into the idea of exceptionalism that we're special, and I kind of just fell into that a little bit, but the idea is it's learnable, everybody, every human has the capacity for empathy but it has to be actively practiced and learned.

H: Exactly

K: I think it's harder for some people than others, you know?

H: Yeah. The spirit is poured out on all flesh, so.

K: Yeah, totally.

H: That's that.

[Both laugh]

K: That's that! We have a light within us all, right? We all have a light within. But that light can be real real dim. It seems like there's a lot of people with just so little empathy of any kind, you know?

H: Yeah.

K: In going back to Jesus's prophetic vision and Jesus's understanding of where empathy comes from, it is destroyed by wealth and power, so it's not really humanity's basic instinct, basic core is not unempathetic, it's just the fact that we're just continuously soaked in wealth and power in a way that is absolutely corrupting to our souls.

H: Even nice religious people. A lot of my struggle with Quakerism is just liberal religion as a thing. Like I'm glad you have a Black Lives Matter banner in front of your church and every so often you do something nice, but there's nothing really radically generous, radically hospitable, really living out the whole apostolic thing, you know?

K: Yeah, I hear Christians say give 'til it hurts, right? But then they mean that's like 10% of their income. Jesus said give 'til it hurts, like literally you're being beaten by the state.

H: Take up your cross. yeah, exactly.

K: You're going to give until it hurts as in you might get killed, you're going to get humiliated in court give until it hurts.

H: Exactly, yes! I said this to a Quaker like a year ago, I don't want to go to church where I don't know that people around me are willing to die for me. And they were taken back by that. I'm like wait, this is basic stuff! We have to lay our lives down for one another, that's essential to being a comrade in Christ.

K: That's the thing, I hear all of these people, all these Christians talk about how hard it is to be Christian, and it's like, you're damn right! It's fucking terrifying. It's so hard to be moral but then not being completely comfortable, not being willing to give up anything and just staying completely comfortable in themselves and in their privileged lives and it's like you are not uncomfortable, you are not hitting the streets, living in poverty, beaten by Romans uncomfortable, you know what I mean?

H: I work at a church actually, and it's a pretty big liberal church. I don't work as a communications director, like a family pastor or something, I'm just a custodian. But so I'm there late at night cleaning and stuff and since we're in downtown or center city in Philadelphia, at least once a week I talk to somebody who lives on the street or comes to the church because they have a need. A week ago someone came in asking for a holy person to deal with this demon that they think is in their apartment, but last night someone came in and was like, 'hi, I'm really cold and I need help, and can you please just let me in' and this and that. I didn't do probably the best thing, I let him in for a few minutes and I gave him some crackers and an extra blanket but at first I did say like 'ah, I don't know what I can do for you' and he said to me, 'then what's the point of this church?' And I was like aaa! You're right! What is the point?? What is the point?? I don't know if there is one. It's a club! It's just a social thing, and maybe they think it kind of strengthens their moral impulse, but if it's not stretching their moral impulse to be completely yielded to those in need to the suffering then there is no point.

K: Here's the problem that I've noticed to though, is that really empathetic people tend in this sort of system, in this sort of super shitty, corruptive system that we're in is the idea of 'give everything', then you end up with really extractive behaviors taking advantage of those people, So it's like how do we give everything without end up being taken advantage of and being abused?

H: Honestly I think that goes back to why we have each other. As a spirit filled community we're not just doing these things alone, we're not just deciding to give up our own resources but our resources as a people and listening to spirit and discerning what that means and what that looks like, because when you're by yourself it's kind of reckless a lot of times.

K: Yeah, totally. And individualistic. One person being drained is not the way.

H: And it's not helpful a lot of time.

K: It's not. And it's when resources are unequal, it's just hard. Especially when anarchists are so often so poor and we're working with the poor. Some of the most empathetic people are the poorest and have the least resources, and so then it's just a difficult situation trying to live these values under such an oppressive capitalist system where there are in fact limits. There are rules that we're having to live under and having to try and contend with at the same time as living a moral life. I've seen more and more talk about the super importance of radical solidarity. The only way that we're going to get through this is through radical, radical solidarity and creating those bonds and creating that community, and it is so hard. I feel like in the anarchist movement right now our basic tenet of how to deal with difficult people is to exile them.

H: Yeah. Excommunicate them, yeah, that sort of thing. It's true.

K: As Christians how do we contend with that? I was thinking about [Peter] recently.

H: Oh?

K: I was just contemplating on [Peter] and what is [Peter]'s story? Because he's so annoying, right? He's just continuously doubting Jesus. He's continuously talking back, he's continuously just arrogant. And everyone's just like 'please listen', Jesus keeps saying 'please just listen, [Peter]. Just trust. Trust a little bit. But he keeps him close. Jesus keeps [Peter] even closer to him. The difficult obnoxious guy is kept even closer to Jesus and it's like how do we do that with our nutsacks? Our people who are terrible and difficult. There's a lesson in there too, and in the end [Peter] is humbled and he becomes a super important part of the development of the early church. He was one of the most difficult people, most difficult disciples and when he was humbled he ended up one of the most important, and I think we have to remember that when we're dealing with difficult people.

H: Exactly, and I think that's a role Christians can play in a revolutionary movement. Being a pastoral element to all of it. I think my friend once said that the job of the church in the end times – and when we say end times like in a like eschatological like revolutionary sense, like birthing a new world, a new world being built and the old being destroyed – the job of the church is to be a doula in the end times, to live

with the people of the world and guide her and support her as they're birthing a new society. And so I think that there's a certain sense of a grounding, a pastoral calling or vocation that the church should be taking up.

K: You know I've definitely felt that. I think part of this podcast, I didn't really realize it when I started but thinking about more of it lately, especially after I slowed down just a little bit and was able to catch my breath, is that it is a little bit of a ministry, you know? But the ministry isn't just to try and get people to come to Christ, that's not what I'm doing at all, but it's sort of trying to bring that calm of God and that joy that I get from God into the world and try and be a place of peace and spiritual rest for the people around me and that's a lot of hard work. This is a Quaker-y thing I hear a lot, the most revolutionary thing you can do is be at peace in a difficult world and those vibes emanate out to the people around you.

H: I think that's something that we can have and discern from a materialist perspective and it can be hard to see a way forward, and the faith and hope that we have and vision of God's kingdom and how that is an emerging thing and we believe that. We think that's necessary, that stuff is contagious. I really believe that vision is contagious.

K: I think so too, and I also think the prophetic element is helpful for me because then if you look at the Bible it says that basically like, this is exactly what's going to happen, wealth and power is going to be destructive and take down humans, but then we come out the other side. So I have to believe in that prophetic vision that it gets real shitty, which we see coming, I mean if we're going to be honest with ourselves this is going to be rough right now, you know what I mean? But then we do come out the other side. There's a specific psalm that I wish I had looked up and I can't remember which one it is, but it basically describes in pretty intensively specific language what I see as climate change. You know everyone says you can pull whatever you want out of the Bible and that's true, and I'm deciding for my own mental spiritual health that this is what's helpful for me.

H: Why not.

K: It talks about literally the earth melting and the mountains being enveloped by the sea. But then it also talks about God being there to help her, the river Jordan, and in this case I'm interpreting that as nature, you know, the most important nature in the water? And then it says kingdoms fall and then there is war and then we come out the other side. I find that very comforting.

H: I think that's basically also the Book of Revelation. It's like, yeah, things are going to get real, real shitty, but you have to hold on and you have to believe and be hopeful and fight for this new world and you'll get it. Maybe you won't, but somebody will and that's worth it, that's worth empire crumbling.

K: Yeah, that's kind of the fun thing about anarchists. Everyone's freaking out about the end of the empire and we're like woo! Let's do it. Into it.

[Both laugh]

H: Yeah, exactly.

K: So that's kind of comforting too. Other people are really upset about it, it's like no man, it's going to suck really bad but it does actually need to happen for the good of humanity. For me personally I need multiple different things to keep me going sometimes, so sometimes it's like the hope and faith that there will be a new world but then also, even if there's not, it's just the basic fact that to be a basically moral human being this is what you need to do. Just like on a daily basis if you're living under oppression and people are suffering so badly, that whatever cost it is you need to help them. So with those two things combined it really is grounding, it's really necessary for me to stay in this because it gets so fucking scary.

H: Mmhmm.

K: It gets so scary.

H: No, it does. And you know what? It's going to get worse.

K: Yeah, I know, I know.

H: Thank God.

K: Everyone's just sort of bracing like 'aaaa.. oh god..' Pick your apocalypse right now. It's pretty bad. But then what do you do about it?

H: I think that the frustrating thing too is as people who have revolutionary impulses and see capitalism for what it is, it's like why don't other people see that the world is ending? I walk through center city on the way to work and I just.. I hate it! I hate this is constantly a thing, I'm like why don't you.. why are you laughing? Things are bad, why are you so happy? Why are you shopping right now? I mean I'm always going back to this, and I say this as a person who is not currently in a local spiritual community, is like that's why I need church. That's why I need the people of God, to encourage me and give me hope and vision and remind me that there is a way forward.

K: I'm hoping we can rebuild a more radical Christian movement because I feel like I need it, and it sounds like you need it, and I think the world needs it. It makes me think of when people break windows and things. When you talk about how badly capitalism needs to be dismantled, the breaking of one window is such a mild.. It's mild. When you're talking about this entire fucking system that is destroying... and rules the entire world, one symbolic act..but it's one of those things too though, where it's like, we're fighting fear. Everybody. Y'know it's not just us. Everybody kind of knows somewhere in the back of their head that everything is going very badly. But people will just not let go. Will just not let go of our world as it is right now until it's going to be forcibly taken. Under what circumstances? And how do we as spiritual people and how do we as humans continue to fight anyway? Because it's important. If you're hopeless then definitely nothing good is going to .. then we're definitely not going to survive, so you might as well work for the like one millionth ... even if it's as bad as bad can possibly be it only makes sense to fight our asses off even if it's a sliver of a chance, than to just give up hope on everything. That's hard though.

H: I mean yeah, that's taking up a cross. That's difficult. I've been seeing some things kind of recently about a Christian left and I'm like, where is it then? I keep hearing about it but where is it? I see Christian liberals I guess. And I dunno, more

polite versions of white supremacy, which is what I kind of consider Quakerism a lot of ways. At least in America. Or the states. I have been gaining a little more hope with your podcast, and actually, do you know the podcast the Magnificast?

K: No..

H: Oh, it's a Christian leftist podcast where they talk about theory and Christianity, like Marxism. And it's awesome, it's really great. They talk about Fidel and his views on religion, and the kind of dialogue he's had with theologians before and some stuff is kind of obscure and can get a bit heady, but they're both good God loving people and I dunno, it's great. Knowing that there are other people who are listening to these sort of things, there is something brewing. I'm a pretty directionless person, like I don't know what to do with my life, but something I've always had since I became a Christian is I know that this church I read about in the book of Acts- I want that to be a thing. The world needs that to be a thing. So I want to give my life to that and to building that and I think there are other people who are starting to have those feelings, and that's hopeful to me. I think I've told you before in a message or something, there actually is a Quaker-ish gathering for Quaker-ish radicals and just more broadly mystical radicals and anti-state anti-capitalist gathering in May in Philly.

K: Yeah totally, that's badass.

H: I hope that we can get some like minds together and brew this together, brew what is a way forward for people who are Christian and also just experience that. It'd be nice to have that good holy spirit stuff but with people who you actually know have good politics.

K: Yeah, totally, totally. I never want to get that feeling where I feel like I'm getting a vocal ministry and it's like wait, am I gonna like piss people off? That's a horrible feeling.

H: Yeah, I hate that that's something we have to do sometimes but..

K: That's an awful feeling. Like I said my meeting was – at least the early one was – was really pretty radical and they're wonderful, so I think there's hope there and I'm seeing a lot of people, even sort of progressive podcasters saying there's sort of a revival of a need for God and a need for spirit, and I think that's totally true. When you talk about really hard times it makes sense. Like you said, there's a reason that humans have religion. Because being a human has been pretty shitty pretty much the whole time in one way or another, so we've always needed religion, religion as in community and in spiritual grounding.

H: I think mysticism is such a human thing. It's like tapping into your humanity. It brings you into the experience of divinity, so for me speaking in tongues is such an incarnational thing because it's so human. You're just kind of doing these goofy things and you're yielding to it and yielding to this sense of love. And it looks so absurd, and it can even feel kind of human, but it can at least bring you into the sense of presence. And I think it does strengthen your moral impulse or your empathetic impulse. I think that mysticism actually is, I don't know, I don't think it's as wacky or kind of magical as it's often made to be. I think it's just a very human thing. We need to tap into who

we are, into our emotions, and deal with stirring within us, and also tap into this.. I think like unitarians call it this interconnected web of being.

K: I never really thought of speaking in tongues in that way, as an act of liberation, as an act of just like letting go of social convention for that moment.

H: Exactly.

K: That's really interesting, that's a really interesting take on it because we definitely need more liberation, and I think movement and sound are really important parts of that. I think of Emma Goldman, 'if you can't dance your revolution isn't one I want to be a part of'? I butchered that quote, but you know what I'm talking about. I feel very strongly that we need more dancing and we need more singing, and I'm not seeing enough of that in the movement right now. We lost the labor songs kind of thing, like we have these sort of chants but we don't have music, you know what I mean? We need liberatory sound and movement, so in the one sense is like the same sort of expression as speaking in tongues only on a larger more liberatory revolutionary scale.

H: I agree. And I mean for me a spiritual community I would like to be a part of would be charismatic or pentecostal in that sense. Or I would like it to be, just because it's that kind of space where anything can happen.. It's like an unprogrammed meeting except you're not bound by white supremacy and those conventions of the white liberal people, you know? Where people are weeping and tapping into their actual humanity and being free from, like you said, social conventions and stuff. I think that is so necessary, that worship that uses your body.

K: What you're describing right now – have you ever been to a Black church?

H: Yeah, I used to be a part of a more diverse charismatic church where somebody next to you could be laughing, the person beside you could be shaking, and then somebody else at the altar is weeping, but everybody is just free to experience what they need to experience. And not only that, but somehow it all kind of comes together. It's weird, there's even a practice in some charismatic churches called 'singing in tongues', or 'singing in the spirit' and people are all kind of doing these different things and yet it all still harmonizes together. it's like we're all doing what we need to do, but ultimately we're a corporate body. We're building something bigger we're connecting to something bigger.

K: We can all have separate expressions of that but it when it's all still rooted in this spirit.

H: Yes, exactly. First Corinthians 12.

K: One of the Pendle Hill pamphlets that I have, one of the very early ones by Howard Brinton is 'The Religious Solution to the Societal Problem'. If you haven't read that pamphlet it's great. And basically, he describes in that pamphlet how there are a few different ways forward, and how humans act, and the best solution basically is to have a society that's really rooted in spirit. That's how you do it, because people will fall into authoritarianism because people need something to follow, people will follow a strongman if they don't have spiritual guidance to follow. Again, it's hard to translate this into contemporary anarchist praxis because there is a very strong anti-religious

sentiment, but I don't think it's necessarily an anti-spiritual sentiment. But then the difficulty though, is there's also a reason for religion because you're talking about that corporate body and those community structures and religion is a way to tie together and have certain ways of experiencing spirituality in a corporal sense. We talk about individual spirituality and everything, but there is a place for an organized religion, an organizational structure of community coming together for spiritual practice.

H: I think so, and I think you can have a non-hierarchical idea of God, and I think if our theology at all keeps our loyalty to God from serving those who are suffering I think that our theology is wrong. I think ultimately our love for God and our worship of God is shown in how we serve the suffering and how we love people. I don't think it has to be this weird hierarchical thing. I think actually the church is called to embody the person of Christ, but also to live into this kingdom that we already believe in and to manifest it presently. So a church isn't so much of an organization as it is just a gathering of people trying to live into this world that they believe in, and it's a prefigurative politics in that way they are citizens not of this world, so they're going to act like it, and they're going to live that way, and those people who are going to live that way are going to find each other. And I think we are! [laughs]

K: I think we are too! And that's exactly what drew me to Quakerism specifically, is this non-hierarchical spiritual community. I think that is really, really important and really powerful because as long as we stay rooted not just in spirit, but in the idea that everybody is basically equal and have no right to determine somebody else's experience and relationship to God.

H: That isn't to say people don't have certain gifts and callings, but yes, if the church is to be anything it should be non-hierarchical. If we really believe in this kingdom of God then that's essential.

K: The idea of Jesus as king and lord – if you look at how Jesus did it, is he had a crown of thorns..

H: Exactly.

K: He wasn't immersing himself in the actual sort of societal structures of what it means to be a king or leader, he was making fun of it. He was tearing that idea down. People taking literally him being king, that's what the crown of thorns was. He was sort of an anti-king, you know what I mean?

H: Exactly. He's going to dethrone all kings and he he started with himself, ultimately. And I think that says a lot.

K: Giving up your power.. that's one of the questions of our movement though, is when you have powerful charismatic personalities that can so easily become authoritarian in these movements.. it's really hard to empower people, and you still end up with a lot of responsibilities and power being in just a few hands of the really dedicated competent organizers. I would consider myself one of them. I find people coming to me for that kind of thing it's like, how do I continue to always practice trying to be humble and trying to give up that power and sort of dethrone myself? I know lots of really dedicated amazing organizers who have the same thing. As anarchists I love it,

it's so beautiful, people not saying 'oh, it's awesome that I have all this power and people are coming to me', everyone's saying 'I need other people to claim their own power and to help and be equals in this organizing space'. Power to the people, and in anarchist organizing trying to continuously break down unspoken hierarchies. It's that practice of Jesus's humility and staying humble. It is constantly part of Jesus's practice, because he was a super important, charismatic guy and he took extra steps all the time to stay humble and try and empower others and to, like you said, dethrone himself. That's a really important example. That's one of the reasons I'm a follower of his.

H: I think that for anarchists that's a thing that should be essential to their organizing and to their view of leadership. And I mean and for all the white boys out there..

K: Yes.

H: You better hear this. You better listen. [laughs]

K: Yes. Yes. Oh god, I was just thinking the same thing. Anybody with any privilege but specifically white men need to be constantly giving up their power. Constantly, just as an active practice, giving up their power.

H: Anyone who has any sort of like privilege is kind of blinded by it in some sense, and needs to really be aware of constantly practicing being aware of it and being aware of what that looks like and how that is manifesting. Definitely.

K: Have you had a hard time with that? With white guys?

H: I mean, doesn't everyone who's organizing right now? It's just like, I'm glad you are such a good anarchist and you've read all these books and know all these theorists and stuff, and I'm glad you're constantly telling me how I'm wrong or ideologically inconsistent but can you stop screaming and taking up all this space?

K: And I was just thinking about how it seems like all of our really well known intellectuals are all middle class white cis het men. You know? They're doing important work but Mark Bray, Shon Meckfessel, Spencer Sunshine, David Graeber, all of the best known anarchist intellectuals are people of privilege. [EDIT: This is unverified conjecture, I should not have assumed anything about these folks. It was said in general frustration at perceived disenfranchisement] And that's a shame, but the other hand I think that's sort of what happens because with privilege comes safety and it's really, it's really scary and unsafe to be somebody that doesn't have that privilege to try and speak out.

H: They can say dangerous things because not much will happen. The idea of church is so cool because yes, we're all in this together and we're all actually struggling, because I think if you're doing the Christian thing right you're going to be struggling, you're going to be suffering, and so it's also forfeiting your privileges too at the cross, surrendering those things. Everyone's taking up a cross together and also mindfully. I think Jesus does have the preferentially, the option for the poor or whatever liberation theology people say. The church's job is to lift up the oppressed, to give them a voice, to be holding them up and blessing them and doing what it takes because they most

fully embody the image of God. For me, my Christianity is essential to my organizing because of that revelation I've had through my experience of Christ.

K: Yeah. I mean, I wasn't really able to jump back into activism fully until I found Christ again. Oh, I say again, that's so interesting that I just said 'again' as if it was there before. [laughs]

H: Were you raised a Christian?

K: No, no I wasn't, so I don't know where that came from. I'll contemplate that on Sunday.

H: Oh, I thought you were going to say in therapy.

[Both laugh]

K: Or therapy. All sort of same deal, actually, you know what I mean, like therapy, mental health, spiritual health is therapy. Before we had therapists we had church, you know?

H: I'll take both.

[Both laugh]

K: I'll take whatever you got.

H: I need both, absolutely.

[Both laugh]

K: Christ and cat memes, that's what keeps me going.

H: Oh yeah. For me, something like that. I would add some dairy in there too to be honest, but yeah. All those things sustain me.

K: I definitely didn't eat a pint of ice cream last night, that didn't happen...

[Both laugh]

H: Same... I didn't eat pistachio gelato before bed...

K: Shut the fuck up, I had pistachio honey ice cream.

H: Oh, that's lovely!

K: Were we both eating pistachio before this interview? That's amazing.

H: I think that's called... the holy spirit.

K: I think that is. Embodied through the body of pistachio ice cream.

H: Yes, exactly. Before I end up going, is it okay if I mention that retreat again?

K: Totally, go for it.

H: It's called the Friendly Fire retreat, and it's this group of Quaker-ish, mostly anarchist but just kind of broadly leftist folks. We have this little mini organization, it's really barely an organization, we just talk to each other and have connected at several points and are putting together this retreat. There's ten of us or so, and it's in May. It will be outside Philadelphia and we don't have basically anything on the internet because we're those kinds of organizers, but we do have an email. That's friendlyfireinfo@protonmail.com. We will be doing direct action as well, we will be marching on May Day and we'll be praying and worshipping and kind of doing the whole mystical thing, but also just connecting and building and hoping to build a larger movement together. Not just with Quakers, but with anyone who is mystically inclined or has a radical revolutionary Christian idea.

K: That's wonderful, I'm really excited for that. I think there's a lot of us lonely and separated finding Christ or finding God or needing a spiritual practice and radical organizing space and just being lonely.

H: We're wandering but we'll find each other. And I'm really hopeful, I hope we're not the only thing doing something like this, or at least I hope it sparks more things like that to happen.

K: I think we need to connect more deeply with prisoners, with the black community, and unfortunately there's overlap there, obviously because of our structures of oppression, but I think Black organizers and spiritual spaces is really important for us to morally be helping support them better. I've noticed in anarchist circles it is kind of fun, you know, I was doing prison letter writing and there's a guy to write to who's Christian and all the other anarchists were like, 'I don't know how to talk Jesus..' and I was like hand that one over to the Quaker, I'm happy to talk Jesus with this prisoner, you know what I mean? So I'm hoping that we can open our doors more to communities of color and how important Christianity and spiritual practice in general has been to those communities.

H: Because if it's not for all of us, especially those who are oppressed the most, then it's not a real revolution.

K: Right. Exactly.

H: And I think prison abolition is also essential to the gospel of Christ. In Luke 4, in Jesus's little mission statement when he's reciting Isaiah in the temple he says, 'the spirit of the Lord is on me and to proclaim good news to the poor, to proclaim freedom for the prisoners'. I do think it's always been an essential part of the gospel. In Acts the prison doors fling wide open. God did that.

K: There's a reason that early Quakers, when we were the most radical, were so fixated and spent so much time on prison abolition and abolishing slavery. That's sort of my focus now, I'm starting to focus more and more on prison abolition, and it's very fulfilling so far. I'm looking into the Alternatives to Violence Project, which looks really cool.

H: You're such a Quaker.

K: I know, right?? I'm just becoming more Quaker-y every damn day, it's crazy.

[Both laugh]

H: Oh god, you're going to make lentil casseroles soon..

K: Oh no, hang on, hold the phone. I've never heard of it, it sounds super gross, that is not going to happen.

[Both laugh]

H: Okay good. You're going to be knitting during meetings soon, I'll say that.

K: Oh.. well.. [laughs]

H: You're already there, oh god. Lord have mercy.

K: Lord have mercy.

H: That's awesome though. Good for you. I'm proud.

K: Aw, thanks. I'm really excited about your projects and what you're doing! Stay on the line, but I'm just going to say I wish you all the best in your spiritual journey and hope that you can find a spiritual home. Maybe we can help create one.

H: Yeah! I would really like that. And I'm glad that we've been connecting, and again it gives me hope that something bigger and better is happening. Thank God.

K: Right? Literally. Thank Jesus. Okay, well, you've been listening to Friendly Anarchism, I have a facebook page and a twitter. Thank you so much for being on the show!

H: Thank you, have a good day.

K: Have a good day!

25. The Direct Action Study Bible: Joint Episode with the Magnificast 12.20.17

Listen Here

26. Asexuality, Decolonizing Judaism, and Dual Power with Daniel 12.31.17

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27. Conflict Resolution, Dance, And True Prosperity with S 1.8.18

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29. By What Authority Doest Thou These Things - Unfinished

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30. No Nazis In Knox, Police Violence, and Mental Fortitude with Molly

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31. Affinity Groups, Cognitive Euphony, And Acting From Good Faith with Isaac

Listen Here

31.5 The Spiritual Radical Left, Burn-out, and Disability with the Young Quaker Podcast 3.19.18

Listen Here

I'm back! I never released this episode during the first season because I wasn't ready to talk about all of this. However, my personal backstory with "mental illness" and finding god is an important precursor to the second season, where we're going to delve more into neurodivergence, disability, and ableism.

Show notes

I spoke with Jessica Hubbard-Bailey about being religious in a lefty household, the radical spiritual revival, pain caused by Christianity, the creation of white slaveholder evangelism, finding spirituality and Quakerism, carving out space for spiritual leftists, the benefits of having a person of faith in your affinity group, inner peace as a service to community, burn-out culture, the danger of spreading anxiety and fear, gender-coding of work, our personal stories of disability, productivity as worth, lithium, Jesus' love of the sick, John the Baptist, letting people exist instead of trying to fix you, being held in the light, wheelchairs are freedom, and the social model of disability.

Time stamps

7:05: It gets mentioned a few times throughout the show, so I want to clarify that the idea that the right has "co-opted" Jesus is often used as a cop-out and an excuse folks use to evade holding christianity accountable for all the damage it has done.

9:26: Article removed from Forbes on the destruction of amerikan liberation christianity: www.politicalorphans.com/the-article-...is-so-cruel/

16:05: I speak lovingly about the Quaker meeting houses in Philadelphia (which are beautiful) but I have since found out were in part built using money from the slavery trade. I had not learned yet at the time this was recorded about the messy and disturbing relationship between Quakerism, slavery, and whiteness. More on that subject: www.friendsjournal.org/slavery-in-th...quaker-world/

26:00: Ironic erasure of the existing spiritual radical left communities by assuming whiteness of the "radical left", my apologies!

30:16: Affinity groups can be formed for any reason, not just by type of work. These days I prefer groups of 4-6. More info on affinity group organizing: www.sproutdistro.com/catalog/zines/...oups-essential

35:58: Did I use they/them pronouns for god? Why yes I did *foreshadowing*

38:15: I use the word "healthy" a few times throughout the show, which can have ableist undertones. More on ableist language: www.disabilityandrepresentation.com/2013/09...nguage/

39:12: Mutual Aid Disaster Relief has an incredible list of resources about mental/emotional/trauma/wellness care: mutualaiddisasterrelief.org/health-wellness/

39:28: I heavily blamed myself for my burn-out but more was going on..

51:48 : The term "differently abled" is widely understood as ableist, please forgive me as I was struggling to understand and express my own experience

55:23: Some feel that the phrase "hold you in the light" upholds the racist linguistic dichotomy of light/dark and prefer other variations such as "hold you in god's chocolate"

57:20: I learned about Juniper the Holy Fool from Mark Van Steenwyk's Deep Roots Podcast: www.markvans.info/deep-roots-podca...-the-holy-fools/

57:15: *foreshadowing* - Also I meant to say "uncarved" block

59:30: I was 30 years old before hearing about the social model of disability vs. the medical model. Quick intro: www.youtube.com/watch?v=MdzbyJq58Ws

Transcript

Katherine: Hello, this is Katherine, welcome to Friendly Anarchism. Can you go ahead and introduce yourself?

Jessica: Hi, my name is Jessica Hubbard-Bailey. I am the host of The Young Quaker Podcast, which is a podcast about younger Quakers in the UK, and general Quaker person.

K: Yeah, I am so excited to have you on! It's fun to meet another Quaker podcaster. Sort of a niche market, isn't it?

J: Yeah. It's great, it's really niche actually [laughter]

K: Have you had any problems gaining any listenership or...?

J: We're still a little podcast at the moment. We're kind of a baby podcast, but I'm really happy with how it's grown. It's growing quite organically, and especially because a lot of the things that we're talking about are maybe more geared towards British Quakers, I've been really pleasantly surprised how many downloads we've had... We just hit our 1000 downloads mark and that was really exciting.

K: Oh, congratulations! That's great.

J: And our fifth episode is coming out soon, so. Yeah, it's really exciting. And my favorite thing about it has just been meeting other people, getting to talk to them. Yeah, it's been great.

K: That's really good. I've been doing this podcast for just shy of a year now, and I think I just passed 16,000 downloads, and that was really exciting, it's been growing really slowly, but pretty steadily, and so that's really exciting. I'm super excited to meet another podcaster, especially a Quaker podcaster, like I said, it's pretty niche, but I've been really happily surprised with sort of... I've been reaching, I think, a pretty broad audience, especially a lot of anarchists because I do a lot of anarchist content, in fact, actually, I do mostly more anarchist content, and I've been slower about learning about Quakerism because I'm a convinced Friend. I've only been a Quaker for less than two years at this point, so I know much more about anarchism than I do about being a Quaker. So were you a convinced friend or were you raised in a Quaker church or meeting?

J: I'm a convinced Friend basically, I was raised by atheist parents, but I'm hoping that you guys could teach me some more about anarchism, because I feel like I know more about Quakerism, even though I guess my parents... Especially one of them. So I was raised by lesbians, very lefty household, frequently on marches from the age of zero. I think they were really keen to give us that kind of social justice upbringing to really instill in us how important it was to fight for people who weren't as privileged as we were, and also to fight for ourselves because sometimes we're those unprivileged people and it's really important to, I guess, value yourself in that way, and I think they were surprised when I started becoming more kind of spiritual, because for them, the church as a kind of institution was such an oppressive force for them, particularly one of my mothers, she was the daughter of a bishop, and he was a super big deal and I think really struggled that two out of his four kids turned out to be gay, which was maybe a little [unintelligible] there, from God in any way. But yeah, she struggled slightly to begin with, with me finding faith just because to her, it was one of these incredibly oppressive institutions, but I think Quakerism was actually... it was a more palatable way to be religious then, so it's like you said, with being able to re-[cuts out] British friends don't actually believe in God and things like that, so it's really... It's maybe perhaps a more spiritual and mystic and religious in the kind of conventional sense, quite a lot of the

time, and it's able to appeal to a broader range of people for that reason. I think partly because no one tells you what to believe. And I think that's part of thing that really attracted me to it in the first place. But yeah, I think it's interesting because I think sometimes I struggle with a more traditional language just because that was the language of my mom's oppressors. It's been an interesting foray into Quakerism. But what I've found is actually another family, and that's been so valuable and so amazing, especially the young Quaker community, I feel like they've really rallied around each other to support each other in recent years, and really wanting to make change and do exciting things, and change things not just in the world, but within Quakerism. Like you're saying before, you need to be constantly learning and constantly changing things to make progress and to move forward and to move with what we need to be doing at the time that we're living in.

K: Yeah, I think there is a little bit of a more radical spiritual revival happening right now that we're probably a part of. I think throughout history there have been these sort of radical revival or uprisings more than occasionally. Regularly, that's the word I was looking for. So it's pretty fun to be a part of that because I'm seeing it sort of popping up a lot of places, and I'm seeing a lot of interest from people that probably would never have thought that they would be interested, just like me. I also grew up in an atheist household, who my parents had had a really hard time in the church themselves, and my dad actually got kicked out of his house when he was 16 because their Bishop told them... he had questioned whether or not God existed. And his parents are really worried and went to the Bishop, and the Bishop said he's gonna taint your household basically, and kicked him out. He's been amazingly supportive though I'm really lucky, but it's definitely been hard. It's definitely been a trip. Especially in the leftist community there is a lot of pain surrounding Christianity specifically, because it has been so, I would say, taken over, co-opted by this really really conservative and oppressive way of looking at the Bible and Biblical teachings.

J: I talked a little bit about this on the podcast that's about to come out about this idea of canon Jesus and fanon Jesus, and the idea that canon Jesus is this radical socialist far-left guy who is tearing down barriers and so anti-capitalist and anti-state and anti-imperialist and all of those awesome things, and then fanon Jesus is this weird co-opted white Jesus who somehow is white, which I really don't get, who seems to stand for the right to bear arms and the right to tell people, No, you shouldn't have sex with that sort of a person...

K: Or at all...

J: Yeah, exactly. So I think you're right, that we are part of this new radical movement, to take back canon Jesus slightly to kind of reclaim him and be like, No, no, this is what he stood for. And he would not be sitting here and voting Donald Trump into the house and senate... That would not be happening. It's scary in some ways that it's gone this far, like it's had to take this much of an extreme political divide for... I'm not sure to call it an uprising because that sounds like a revolution. But I guess, I mean this huge wave of response that I think we're seeing all around the

world, of especially young people, but I guess left-wing, more radical people in general, standing up and saying... No, enough is enough. This isn't right. And not in our name. Not in our country's name, not in Jesus' name is this happening.

K: I just had a really interesting article about the roots of this super oppressive racist religiosity in america, and how there was a very loving Jesus, very accepting Jesus. And then I got tied in... the church took over or was led by wealthy land owners and slave owners, and it turned into this thing where if you were a radical person of faith and you were speaking up against slavery, then you would be killed or run out of town, basically. And that's how they created this hegemony of protecting slavery by dampening and shutting down radical people of faith, and that sort of continued on through the centuries until we are here now, where there still is this very, very strong current of deep racism, even fascism within a lot of these white evangelical churches. So the roots of this... I found that a really fascinating article, and it was interesting 'cause it was originally published in Forbes and then got taken down, so... Yeah, Forbes took it down. The editor wrote this little thing about it being like, This is not representative and is painting with a wide brush, blah blah, blah. And it was a very well-researched article. Isn't that interesting?

J: That is so interesting, and yeah, to be published in such a wide-reaching magazine like Forbes, which is, I guess fairly mainstream even... It sends a real message that such a mainstream publication like Forbes would post something like that or publish something like that and then redact it, that's almost more strong than not publishing anything like that in the first place... Gosh, yeah. That sounds super interesting, will you send me the link?

K: Of course, I'll put it in the notes. I always put anything I reference into the notes for the episode.

J: I'd be super Interested to read that.

K: Because it was taken down, it's now republished on the author's personal blog with the note from the editor when he wrote the editor saying, why did you take this down? So it's a really cool... It's fun.

J: It's really cool.

K: How did you get pulled into Quakerism?

J: I think I maybe always felt spiritual, but never really known what it was, I kind of... I guess I was spiritual in the kind of hippie way, like when you go to the ocean and you look at the ocean and you're like, Oh my God, this is so sublime and surreal, and I'm having this bodily experience looking at this vast vast thing that I can't even comprehend. And I guess that for me is religious. Now I would be able to mark that as a religious experience, but at the time I just thought I was a bit of a weirdo. As I got older, I found that I wanted to explore that more and possibly... I think this is really cringey, but falling in love maybe brought me to God a little more as well. I met my husband six years ago now, or five years ago. We got together and it was like seeing everything that could be good in the world and it really changed me as a person, I think, because I was going through a really tough time, my early 20s and

late teens, my mental health was really poor, and I had a lot of problems in my life and falling in love was like this new birth for me, where I could move past a lot of what happened and process it and also start to love myself, and it was through loving myself that I began loving God, and that sounds really cringey, but I think it's true. And I think he felt the same. And we both were like, You know what, we'd really like to find a home, a kind of spiritual home, and put this somewhere and do something with this, and hopefully make something good out of it. So we went, I think both us have heard of the Quakers? My granny on one of my mum's side was a Quaker for a little bit because she was really... She was super involved in anti-apartheid stuff when she was growing up and leads an amnesty thing, and she was like a big campaigner, and I think it really appealed to activist nature doing the Quaker thing, so I heard of Quakers that way. And I was like, my granny's a cool lady. She would go to a cool church. We just went to our first meeting and was like, Yeah, we're home. This feels like home. Although I think Quakerism as an institution has a lot of things to learn and a way to go in terms of inclusivity and representation and stuff like that, I think out of all the spiritual homes that we could have made for ourselves, it feels like the right one you know? It's given me so much, I think, and also the world feels really scary sometimes, and having somewhere like that, like Meeting For Worship where you can go and be quiet for an hour a week... it's very healing for me, and I think... I really appreciate that. In a big way. How did you come to be a Friend?

K: I found the Quakers via a Quaker meeting house when I was at the... I went to the Democratic National Convention back... Oh, back in the day before I started to really re-radicalized 'cause it was pretty radical back in my teens, and then I had just sort of... going to the university and working more electoral politics. I helped with the Obama campaign, and then I helped with the Bernie campaign and then got more re-radicalized. I was still anarchist but felt like I could work sort of within possibly, which I now think is just very funny [laughter]. So when I was in Philadelphia, the two outside the DNC radical things I went to, which was the People's Convention and the Socialist Convergence, were both held in Quaker meeting houses. And I remember walking into a Quaker meeting house and being like, This is such a still, calm, simple, beautiful space. I feel better just being in this space and meeting some Quakers while I was there, and I was like, Wow, these are also still, calm, beautiful people, and I was having major anxiety problems, which I'm not totally over or anything, but it was like... whatever they've got going on, I want a piece of that. [laughter] So I was like, Well, I'm gonna check it out. I never thought about going to a church, that seems kind of strange for me, but I did have sort of spiritual feelings when I was younger, I'd gone to church with some friends and sort of... I kind of enjoyed it but felt bad about it, because of the athiest upbringing I shouldn't be liking this... it's weird, I don't know, there's all of these reasons that this is an oppressive horrible structure I can't engage in. But then I went to a meeting and I had, I guess we would call a religious experience, like 'god feelings' [laughter]... it was incredibly transforming for me this first meeting. It had been silent the whole time, and I was like... I don't really know

what was going on. I had done a little bit of research, but I didn't really understand what that meant, 'silent corporeal worship'. And then one of the elders of the meeting stood up and gave... I'm getting choked up, it was so powerful... gave a vocal ministry that felt directed right at me, you know what I mean? And it wasn't, but he just talked about being in World War II and being at a time when the world felt like it was gonna end and it was so scary, and how spirituality and how the message of Jesus Christ helped him through that time and having the Quaker community... and there were some other just really poetic things that he said that really spoke to me and I just... I basically had a breakdown. I'd been holding all this stuff in and I just started sobbing in meeting. I'm just an openly emotional person in general. One of the reasons I really enjoy being a Quaker is because it's been very, very helpful for me to help regulate my emotions and regulate how I interact with the world. I have a far way to go still, but I'm a much calmer, more loving, kind, person, doing all of this weekly and daily practice now in learning how to keep perspective by refocusing on God and learning how to stay in a place of being loving and being kind and being humble. Do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God. That message has been so powerful in my life. How activists talk about leading with love is very important, and it feels like that has been incredibly important in keeping me able to stay forward and move forward. And it's coming to a place where I realized that places where I had decided and actively worked to lead with love in the past, even over a year ago, are now coming to fruition here. Every time you leave with love, you're planting a seed that will grow into something even if you have no idea when, even if it's years and years later. So it's been wonderful for me. But it's so interesting to hear you talking about it earlier, and I can hear that you're sort of uncomfortable and bashful and have a hard time saying Christ Jesus 'cause I feel the same way, 'cause it's so weird because I still have a very hard time talking about being Christian, and I think one of the reasons that my podcast has skewed very heavily anarchist a lot of the time is because there's just not as much interest in the message of Christ on the left. And there's a lot of hostility, open hostility. I get attacked basically daily on my Facebook page by anarchists. I'll get a fascist once or twice a week, but I get beat on almost daily by anarchists if I ever post God stuff. So it's like some days I'm not really posting any kind of God stuff. I have to say that I've also been very happy to also have been finding a lot more support than I might have expected as well, 'cause the hostility is forefront, the hostility is a stronger voice than the people who have been coming out of the woodwork to show me a lot of support. I just posted a picture I took of myself where I was reading a little book that says on the cover, it says, Keep Calm and Trust God, and the comments kinda went nuts and there are a lot of people being like, It's a great photo, but I don't give me that God crap, blah blah blah. But then there were a lot of people who came in on my defense too, which was really lovely and heartening to see, so it's just really wonderful to feel like I have a connection with you and that same kind of... We're kind of living in this bizarre place, it's sort of really uncomfortable in our current society trying to balance that radicalism with this weird co-opted Christianity thing.

J: Yeah, I think it is hard because I think actually a lot of those people who are gonna be resistant to religious ideas and religious thinking are people who have been hurt by religion or people's co-opted version of that religion, and I can really understand that and I can sympathize that actually organized religion in general, possibly has been more of a force for bad and good throughout the entire history of the world. But I think as well, I have such a strong, I guess, feeling in my heart that kind of overrides my logical brain that says, Oh, Christians hate gay people or Christians think this and that, that kinda says, No, this is your home and this... I have a strong feeling in my heart that this is my home and this is my spiritual place of nourishment and stuff and... Yeah, it is a little embarrassing sometimes, non-religious moms and friends and stuff because they don't get it in the same way, and I have to respect that as well, because I think for them, it's something painful. But I kind of wish I could tell everyone about Canon Jesus sometimes to be like, No, he's not like that, I swear! You can be religious and cool, and...

K: I have a meme to send you... [laughter] Have you seen the meme with the kid with the trumpet, like following the girl with her hands on her ears? It's one of those memes that has been going around, people change the wording. It just says like 'me, meeting somebody new: I'm not that kind of Christian! etc. I wear a cross, but I wear it under my shirt. And that's fine, 'cause it's for me, it's not trying to proclaim anything for other people.

J: And it's not even like I want to convert anyone or anything weird like that, I just wanna be like, Oh, they're are spiritual people out there who support you and love you and want to fight your battles too.

K: Yeah, yeah. And that's kind of what exactly what we're doing though, isn't it? ... And it's that desire to just explain who we are and where we're coming from... we're both podcasters, right? [laughter] Which I think is a really nice way to do it, 'cause I don't feel like it's evangelizing. I don't wanna evangelize, I'm not saying this is a path for everybody, but I do wanna carve out space for where I'm at, 'cause there isn't a lot of space for that and there's other people who feel the same way. So it's felt like there's a need, and I think there is a need, we don't wanna... Anarchists and leftists in general don't wanna talk about it necessarily in spiritual terms, but there is sort of a gap, there's sort of a deep pain that a lot of people are feeling that I think could be alleviated by a spiritual practice, even if it's not... it doesn't matter if it's institutionally religious or anything like that, but some kind of deeper, deeper faith in something larger I think has been so grounding for me, and the thing is I understand what people want to evangelize, 'cause it's like, I see that you're in pain, and I know how I could maybe help, but... you know what I mean? I don't want to evangelize but I also just wanna be like, This is a thing you might wanna think about it 'cause it's been incredibly great. You look at other people doing social justice work... I look at communities of color specifically too doing social justice work where there's a deep tradition of this spiritual grounding in the work they do, and it's like, these are people working under really severe oppressive conditions. Look at the slaves and look

at Sojourner Truth. And they found their spiritual grounding and often specifically Christian grounding to be incredibly necessary to be able to do that work. So I think it's a shame that the radical left has excised that in general.

J: I really agree, and I think... Especially for young people as well. And I think it's maybe slightly different in Britain to the states, but correct me if I'm wrong, but I feel like there's more of a cultural heritage of spirituality in the states being just more of a... Just more of a thing. I feel like in Britain, you are definitely in the minority if you go to any kind of church or temple or mosque, or whatever, and it's more of a kind of... It's definitely an older person thing, you don't have the same kind of big charismatic evangelical churches here in the same way. Obviously they do exist, but they are smaller than you don't have those kind of big super churches in the South and all of that. And it's quite a kind of isolated community now, I would say, in terms of... And I think that's partly a chosen thing, but lots of those communities have chosen to stay within those religious groups, and that's their community and they don't venture out into other other groups, I guess. But in Britain, it still very much feels like... I guess maybe this is a new thing because actually probably a few years ago, everyone would have been a Christian, but yeah, it still feels like you're this tiny little island of people. And when I talk about the podcast being a baby, I think we have 200 listeners per episode or something like that, and it's probably all of the young Quakers in Britain [laughter], we're so small, but I'm really happy that I think Quakers in particular have been able to make links and relationships and connections with people and groups like anarchists, groups like activists in general, and to have that melding of spiritual and political, I think that's really important, and I think it's really good that we can have both and that people can be either or both. I think that's really important. And I do believe in the idea of the separation of church and state and all of that, although possibly... We shouldn't have the state at all [laughter]. I think there's something to be said for being around people who are not like you, being around people with diversity of ideas, being around people with diversity of spiritual experience... I talk about this a lot in terms of the podcast. I love that some Quakers are super Christian and love Jesus and pray to God in a very traditional sense and all of that, and I love that some Quakers are like... I experience God is more of a force, maybe, or like a wind going through the trees also, do you know what I mean? I love that we have such different ideas spiritually, I think that's so powerful. I think diversity is something that can only make us stronger. It can only make us question our own beliefs and either get stronger in them or change them to make them better. I don't think there's any kind of weakness in difference ever.

K: Exactly. It's true, I think the anarchist monoculture against spirituality is very damaging. Any kind of monoculture is bad. Carving out space for people who are spiritual is like... that's most of the world... I think it's more than 90% of people on this planet consider themselves a person of faith, and so it's like we're already a small group. Do we want to be even smaller? [laughter] We look at affinity groups... do you know about affinity groups? How affinity group organizing works? So an affinity group

is that a small group of people can make a lot of change, and they come together around an 'affinity', so something that everybody wants to do. A type of work or a type of goal that people have to work together on, and you work... Affinity groups can be anywhere from two to 16 people, I think, in my experience, about eight people as ideal. Jesus's affinity group was 13, right? [laughter] Which is another totally great size for an affinity group. So affinity group organizing creates these really intimate little groups that can learn to be... That can really know each other and work... and be able to be very flexible with how they do things because it's a smaller group and it's a lot easier to get consensus if you're working within a small group, right? [pause] Forgot where I was going with this... [laughter] Why did I start this...

J: We were talking about how monoculture is bad

K: Oh yeah yeah yeah, monoculture. So yeah, you look at affinity groups in art and in story telling, you've got Robin Hood had the little affinity group, right? You talk about any sci-fi and there's gonna be a little affinity group that's on a ship, and these are all examples of little affinity groups and they almost always have a spiritual person, you know what I mean? There's always, there's always somebody because there's a role that needs to be played by a person of faith who does... Who does the death rituals, and who does the marriages, and who does even like prayer, leading people in prayer, getting people to calm down and be together in a space before something... A big action before something happens. For guidance, you know? You can talk about pastoral faith and people need... I think generally speaking, a person in the church has been historically a therapist, right? So there's a lot of roles that a person of faith have historically within our arts played that's been very important to the functioning of these affinity groups, and I think there's a reason for that. So I think it's something that anarchists and other leftist groups should consider, is that having somebody as faith in your affinity group could be very healthy.

J: And they bring a different kind of strength, they bring a different vibe. Just like everyone brings something to the table, and actually spirituality and religion can bring a lot of... Like you were saying, grounding. Strength, calm, kind of collectiveness. I think a lot of what makes religion so grounding is that you do things as a community. And obviously, that's less common in Quakerism because we don't have sacraments and rituals that we have to carry out in the same way, but we still come together to meet. Even that language 'meeting', it's about being together, and it's about communing and having a covenant between you all in that moment. It's about connection, I guess. And I think that people of faith really can bring that to groups, they can bring that sense of community and communal being. I found it really helpful, that it's really added something special to my life, even if still I find it a little difficult and embarrassing sometimes!

K: I know, I do too. One of the Quaker things is inward state and outward action are component parts of a single whole... That's a Howard Brinton quote, it's one of my favorites. You can't bring peace to the world until you bring peace to yourself and this focus on personal individual inner piece as well, and that having an inner piece,

just walking through the world in a peaceful state and ripples out to help create peace in the world, and I first thought that was very individualistic and sort of selfish, like you just focus on yourself all the time? How is that helpful? I've found that if I'm doing a good job focusing on my spiritual practice and regaining connection to the Source, and then it does help. Becoming a person that is calm in a space can be very helpful, even just the act of being at peace yourself around when people are having a hard time finding that. It's like I have a hard time finding that. So it seems like for me, it seems like the further I get into activism and the more it's like, wow, the idea that me working on my own inward state, my own peace being central to my work is absolutely true and needs more specific attention. The further that I get into it, it's like I need to be spending more time 'cause if I'm going to be a source for calm, then I really do need to be able to continue to connect into that Source. I talk about God as the Source, 'cause I find them to be a well of love that I can pull from to fill my own spirit and find my own light, and then I pull from that source, then hopefully get it out to others. Sort of like a vessel of God's grace, is old school language for what that is.

J: Yeah, and I think as well, and I'm sure you've spoken about this before, that kind of activist burn out thing that can happen. It's so easy to just run yourself dry trying to desperately to make a difference, and organize things, and go on marches and that actually emotionally... So draining and so exhausting! You need to have that well to dip back into for yourself, not just for other people, because how on earth are you gonna make any kind of difference when you're just burning out so quickly? I think it's just super important to have some kind of resource to feed yourself, to nourish yourself as well as... Because you can't do any good to your community or the people you're fighting for if you're totally exhausted and emotionally exhausted. This world, I feel like living in this world right now is emotionally exhausting.

K: Yep. Just every day you wake up and it's like, Wow, everything is super fucked. Awesome. [laughter]

J: Right? You need something. Or I need something anyway to just keep me grounded and keep me feeling okay and keep me feeling a little bit nourished. I feel like we are plants living in this incredibly hostile terrain currently. For me, God is the rain that comes down and just keeps me going in the next few days, the next few weeks, the next few months, however long it takes for that to end.

K: I like that. I think it's really a shame that burnout has been really normalized in culture. Like, Oh yeah, you're gonna burn out. That's just how it is. Everybody burns out. It shouldn't be that way. We should be working in a way that is sustaining, and in a way that is healthy, and I think that it can be that way. I think it really can be, and I think we need to change the paradigm that being an activist means you're running yourself into the ground. You know what I mean? I don't think it needs to be that way. I think one of the nice things about being a Quaker is that sometimes you need to slow down to speed up. You have to take moments... you have to take time to stop. To just stop. To sit in silence. To do nothing, and if you don't do that... That's work.

The spiritual work, the self-care work, the doing absolutely nothing work of being at peace in yourself is actually activist work. It's not like a separate piece of it. That is part of being an activist and bringing peace to the world, is in fact taking that time to do self-care, to doing less. A friend of mine just went to a training from the Mutual Aid Disaster Relief folks who are really cool. And one of the things they said is, 'do less, do better' was one of their maxims, which I think is brilliant. I've been thinking about that one a lot. Do less, do better, 'cause I definitely have been like, I'm gonna be part of five collectives! That's fine. [laughter] No worries. At one point, last summer, I was like, I was the... I don't need to list all the shit I was doing ...way too much, I was way over doing it, and I burned out. And you know what, it's the same ripple effect of when you're at peace, that ripples out. When you are not at peace, it also ripples out and there is like... It's not just as an individual damaging to yourself, 'cause we're living within communities, we're living within... We're working with other people. If you are burning out, you were damaging, you're actively damaging other people too, so I think for a lot of us who are really empathetic to think of it in those terms, it's like it's not just about your own personal health, it's about the health of your community, for you to be healthy and working from a place of love and calm and humility.

J: And I think it's so easy to actually put your mental health second when you're trying to help other people's mental health or help other people's welfare, because it always seems more important. It always seems more important than how you feel on the day or how you've been feeling for months. It's that thing that you said...that will affect other people as well, if you go to a march or something, and you yourself are feeling incredibly emotionally vulnerable, incredibly anxious, paranoid, whatever, you are gonna be bringing those vibes to that march and to... And possibly endangering people, if you're feeling anxious and paranoid and upset. That could create that kind of feeling and you know how that riles police, you know, anxiety, paranoia, they will take any excuse to attack people. I feel like there should be more of a focus within activist spaces for mental health, looking after your mental health and keeping yourself safe and keeping other people safe, and creating more of a supportive community where it's not like, 'who's done more than who to help these people', or like, 'I've been on how many matches, how many matches have you been on'? And that kind of thing, and more about How can I support you so that you can do as much as you can for the community or that kind of thing. But it's hard, it's really hard, and it's so easy to put your own emotional well-being last.

K: I think this comes back around to staying humble and believing that lots of people have a lot to bring to the table, and diversity is a good thing, 'cause that means bringing in more people. If you believe that diversity is a good thing, if you really believe to stay humble, that we need help, that means widening out our reach to more community and bringing more people to the table, and that's also solving the problem of... Could help solve the problem of burnout because more hands make light work, which is another Quaker thing to say, right? Many hands make light work, is that the correct way of saying that? Yeah, exactly. So that's another Quaker thing, it's

like... That's true, but that means more vulnerability, that means meeting more people, and so it's like... And that kind of affects just the basic paradigms of how we organize as anarchists because we are targeted by the state, so there is a level of security risk involved in everything that we do, so it's like, how do you balance... So then you end up with people feeling like they have to do everything and driving ourselves into the ground because it's like, well, there's so much work that needs to be done and we have to do it. Well, we just stay humble, 'cause no, we don't have to do it, we can teach more people, we can spend more time with education, we can spend more time with training, we can spend more time with community outreach, with recruitment. We need to be focusing on those things too, not just the work, 'cause again, that is the work. Spiritual, inner health, community outreach, training and education, those are all as equally important as actual work, which is like... see?? I even just said that, I just said, actual work. It's so embedded in our culture.

J: It really is, and I wonder if that is part of a capitalist ideology itself, that idea that the kind of hard grueling emotionally difficult labor is the actual work and then the education, the community care... that's kind of traditionally coded more feminine anyway, whether that's less valuable. It's amazing how it just seeps into everything that idea about masculine work and feminine work, and how one thing is real work and another thing is not real, and part of it is not real because women have been working two jobs for thousands of years, in that they've been doing the housework and up the children and organizing the household and all of that, and possibly a paying job as well, and they're not paid for one of these jobs, so it's automatically... It's not valued the same, and female-dominated workforces like education, health care, social care, they're automatically less valued because they're paid less. That's our currency now. That's what makes the world turn and all of that... Money is the most important thing in capitalism's eyes. So if someone's paid less, they're worth less.

K: We're only worth our productivity, so like if our self-worth is coming from how much we're getting done, that is inherently capitalistic. On the other hand, the world is falling apart and there's a lot of work to do, so it's hard to say like, I need to take some time off when it's like, Yeah, but if I take time off, I'm the person doing this important work...

J: Again, we're still using those ideas. 'Take time off', well no because actually that kind of emotional labor that you're doing for yourself, that's still labor, that's still work. And we still think of it as indulgent somehow and not productive. I think it was really interesting... So when I turned 19, I became disabled. And all of a sudden I was like, Oh my God. So I was raised in a very leftist way, learned to be critical of people in power, learned to be critical of follow the money, all of that kind of stuff, but becoming disabled really made me look at capitalism in a totally different way, because all of a sudden I was like, Wow, I'm too sick to work. I'm no longer... I can't contribute to the state, I can't contribute to the economy, and therefore the thing that my entire value as a human being is based off of being a commodity to society is nothing, and I'm less than nothing because I'm actually a burden on that society. I need healthcare. I need

social benefits. That really shook me, I think, to suddenly be part of a community that was so, I guess hated in some ways by the state because you're this... You're this burden, you're not only unproductive, you're like anti-productive because you're taking and you're not giving anything back. Supposedly.

K: Oh, I feel that so hard as someone who has struggled a lot with chronic mental illness. It can be very hard to hold down a job. At one point when I was on lithium... and the thing about lithium is you need monthly blood draws, you have to get your lithium levels checked monthly because it can break down... Lithium can damage your kidneys pretty badly because it's a salt, so you have to have monthly blood draws. Also to tackle some mental health problems that are really serious, weekly therapy. And then checking on your medicine and getting your medicines right is a psychiatrist every two weeks. So look at what I'm talking about there. I'm talking about four plus two plus one...that's seven doctors visits a month, right? When we're talking about trying to have a shitty 40 hour a week job, and then you're working within a state structure where I had to try and get all that done within normal work hours, because that's when the doctors were open... the same time as I was trying to work in a office job, how do you ask for seven times off in a month?

J: It's impossible, you can't.

K: You can't, right? Like you just totally can't... I never called myself disabled because I feel like not under capitalism, I would be functional, you know? If I didn't have to have the stress of having to conform to that work schedule because my other skills were not valued by capitalism. I'm an artist. I've always kind of felt uncomfortable with the word disabled, but if you look at my life and how I was so severely affected with my ability to hold down a job, or stay in school, or have relationship or whatever, all of these things, it's like... Yeah, yeah, and it's like.. I have found that the church has been incredibly helpful to me being able to come to terms with that part of myself. Something that bothers me about this really heavy anti-Christian sentiment is the fact that there's something inherently ablest in that for me, because Jesus's message was one of not only accepting or being tolerant of people with mental health problems and people with physical disability or serious health issues, it was one of rising them up, you know what I mean? The person who baptized Jesus was a guy who ran around in a loincloth in the woods eating bugs, and would come into town just to disrupt City Council meetings to yell about trees. That's who John the Baptist was, and Jesus was like... This guy is the bomb! He's awesome! [laughter] It's like... that is such a powerful message. That's one that I'm not getting from most of society. It's like mental illness. It's like you're broken. You know what I mean? Like there's something wrong with you. And the church has said, No. If you see things, if you hear voices, if you have a hard time, maybe you have a demon that can be excised, maybe you're a prophet. Maybe you have something very important to add to the world. So that's an incredibly powerful message. That's incredibly powerful, and there's nowhere in our society that lifts up the differently abled like that does.

J: I think that's such an interesting point actually, because I've never really thought of it that way, but you're right, and I remember so distinctly in my first Quaker meeting we all sat around, we were all silent. I came out of this spiritual experience and everyone started having tea and coffee, and one of the first things that someone turned to me and said was, Oh, so you're new... Hi, what's your name? What do you do? And that question, as I'm sure you'll know, you just dread it if you don't have a job. Because you think God... Now, I have to reveal this fact that I'm this horrible burden on all of you taxpayers or whatever, and I said, Oh, you know, I, I'm ill... I'm sick, I'm disabled, I'm not working. And she just looked at me and she said, and there's absolutely nothing wrong with that. And I was like, Oh my God! I felt so affirmed. And it was such a simple thing to say. But she just looked at me and she said, And there's absolutely nothing wrong with that.

K: I'm tearing up right now, 'cause I had such a powerful experience similarly in the Quakers, 'cause it's like... yeah, I was pretty out of whack when I found Quakerdom and the people were so accepting. One of the things that people seem to wanna do a lot is to fix it. They wanna help fix you... You know what I mean? And just give advice, or like, I don't know, whatever... But Quakers, they just listened. They just existed in space with me and let me exist as who I was at that moment, and it was incredibly refreshing. I've never had someone just sit... other than a therapist, and a therapist is being paid to be there. And so to just sit and be with you and be like... Yeah, it does suck. I don't know what to do. I don't have any answers. You know what I mean? It's a seeking faith. It's like, I don't know, I don't know, but it's not like.. 'I can't help you! I'm so desperate, I'm scared, I don't know how to fix you... I don't know how to fix it...' Quakers were just like... I don't know, it sucks. [laughter] And it was lovely. It was so great. I really, really love that. Powerful.

J: I think that is part of the inherent Quaker culture of listening rather than speaking. That listening comes first, and actually none of us really know anything, so it helps sometimes to zip it and to listen and to take time to just be. And I think that I definitely relate to your experience of just feeling held. Just feeling held in the Quaker community and people allowing me to be who I was without trying to say, Oh, you know, Have you tried yoga or... my friend's brother's dog's sister's aunt went on this special diet and then they were cured! And you're like, Well, okay...[laughter]

K: Eat more kale, you'll be fine! You just need some sunshine! Yeah, sunshine doesn't cure bipolar disorder, thanks though. [laughter] I love that language. I think the language we use is really telling and really important, 'cause I would say, 'I'll pray for you', that means I'm gonna ask a higher authority to fix you, but 'I'm gonna hold you in the light', that just means exactly as it sounds, I'm just gonna hold you in a beautiful place and be humble and hope that... And that's it. No anything else. I'm just gonna hold you in the light. That's a beautiful thing to say and to feel that isn't... There's no pressure... there's no disappointment in that, 'cause if you pray and then nothing happens, that's so sad, but you can't be disappointed by somebody just wanting to hold you and love you and give you light.

J: Yeah, and it's so fundamentally loving. You're right about the idea of prayer sometimes being like, I'm gonna fix you, and you see this a little with... So Stephen Hawking's death recently and the coverage with that in terms of people have been like, Oh he's finally free of his wheelchair, he can go to heaven free of his disability! And you're like, Oh fucking God.

K: Shut your face. Shut your tweeter face. [laughter]

J: Problematic. Awful. You just think... he doesn't need to be free of his wheelchair because wheelchairs are freeing. Wheelchairs are freedom. As someone who is a wheelchair user I can attest to the fact that my wheelchair gives me so much freedom. It's opened so many doors! Yeah, it stops me from doing stuff, but that's not the wheelchair, that's the way that society is designed.

K: Exactly, exactly. So I look at these older societies and Christian societies and how being differently, being mentally different, having that neurodiversity isn't seen as... it's just a different... You're just different, you know what I mean? The whole idea of the Holy Fool, Juniper and St. Francis who are just these like.. the idea of being simple, even being tied to like, Well, you're stupid, it's like, No, you're simple, you're just like, You're the Taoist uncarved block. Talking about people who are maybe on the autistic spectrum or something. It's like, you're not, there's nothing wrong with you. You're just a different type of person that has lots of different things to say. I should explain what I meant by Juniper. Juniper was a Holy Fool that lived with St. Francis of Assisi. From the stories I would assume that... it sounds to me like he's probably somebody who's on what we would call the autistic spectrum, he was just incredibly honest and it was incredibly freeing, and he was a lovely, lovely, wonderful person, and they never talked to... it was just like it just... And obviously, this is not entirely true, I'm cherry-picking the parts that make me feel better. There's obviously been horrible things done to people with disabilities and mental differences throughout history, but I'm just comparing some of the stories that I've heard from those versus where I'm living at right now where my life is like... I can't let... there's not a convent or something, maybe there is... Just go and like, but without being totally... I don't know... I'm babbling, I just... I don't know, Do you kind of see what I'm getting at though? There feels like there's a place for it in the church, that there's not necessarily... especially under capitalism and the way that our state is structured.

J: Yeah, and I think you're definitely encouraged to feel if you have a disability, whether that's a kind of mental illness or not, and I think I would count mental illness as disability, especially if it impacts your life and impacts your job and your relationships and all of those other things... You're not seen as part of society, you've seen as this drain, and what I really got a lot of strength from was discovering about the social model of disability, and I don't know if you use it in the States as much, but the social model says if you're disabled or mentally ill, I am disabled by my environment because it was not appropriately designed to enable me to do things rather than...

K: No, I haven't really heard that. I like that.

J: Yeah, so the medical model puts the emphasis on the impairment being the thing that stops you from doing things, and the social model says, culture and the inaccessible environment is responsible for my inability to do things. I can't climb up a flight of stairs, but that's the stairs fall, not mine. There should be a fucking lift. [laughter] Or, you can't hold down a 40-hour job maybe sometimes, not because of your mental health, it's because there's no job that allows you to do that and look after yourself, and that's an empowering thing, that's an empowering thing to learn to put that responsibility back on to the environment, to the state, to the culture, and it's the reason that stops you from doing stuff.

K: That's changeable without shame. **J:** Right!

K: You can change that. I like that. Well, we're at an hour. Is there anything else you'd like to talk about?

J: No, I think we covered quite a lot!

K: Actually, yeah. Perfect. Well, thank you so much for being on! It's been lovely to talk to you.

J: Thank you for having me. I really enjoyed it.

K: Okay, cool. Yay! That was lovely. I think that was a beautiful conversation, I don't even know that... I don't even know that you were disabled, that was such a lovely thing to talk about with somebody... You know, that was perfect.

J: Yeah, I'm actually, I'm pretty lucky that my disability is mostly invisible until you see a big wheelchair and then you're like, Oh..

K: I mean same, my mental health problems are invisible...

J: Right. Exactly, exactly.

K: Except their not. But they are.

J: It's really similar. But yeah, yeah, no, it was really lovely to come on and talk to you. I love the podcast, so much!

K: Thank you! I love yours too.

J: I really wanna bring it to Britain. I feel like some of the Quakers here could do with some radicalizing and also just in general, it's so great to make connections and meet new people and stuff. So it's really, really great. And I really appreciate everything that you do. Because I know that it's fucking hard work to put a podcast together!

K: Yeah! Wow, yeah. That's one of the things I was doing when I was talking about working too hard, as I was doing this every week by myself, and it's like that... And you're doing weekly, right? Or no, you're doing...I don't know.

J: We're doing monthly and that's enough work!

K: So I'm doing every two weeks now 'cause I had that mental breakdown, I was like, maybe I should do this not every week, 'cause I'm also doing 5000 other things. Terrible idea. So I'm gonna actually... I got invited to be on the interview with Hye Sung with the Magnificast that we're recording tomorrow, so instead of this weekend, I'm gonna play this podcast episode in the two weeks later.

J: So you've got something in the bank, that's really nice. Good feeling.

K: Yeah, cool. And maybe 'cause it was sort of generic... we didn't talk about current events at all or anything, then I might keep it in the bank for if I'm having a hard time and can't get it together, some week.

J: Oh definitely, absolutely. Release it... use it as your mental health week episode.

K: Perfect, that makes perfect sense.

J: Right, exactly.

K: Alright, thank you, my dear. Alright. Well, hopefully we'll talk again soon.

J: Thanks for having me!

32. Seeking Faiths, May Day, And Self-Criticism with Matti

Listen Here

33. Syndicalism, Witchcraft, and Mutual Aid with Sophia Weber

Listen Here

34. "We're Brokenhearted: Understanding Fierce Love in Anarchist Organizing" - NAASN Montréal

Listen Here

Synopsis

Last week I spoke at the North American Anarchist Studies Network conference in so-called Montreal on the topic "We're Brokenhearted: Understanding Fierce Love in Anarchist Organizing" using lessons from historical anarchic christian mystic movements. There was a great discussion afterwards included in the audio.

Thank you to NAASN for having me! You can support them and the work they do here: www.youcaring.com/naasn2018-117925..._cp_01%20ucaring



2018 CONFERENCE

JUNE 1, 2, 3

10AM ~ 6PM

@ CÉDA, 2515 RUE DELISLE

LIONEL-GROULX METRO

TIOHTIÀ:KE ("MONTREAL, CANADA")

FREE

THE NORTH AMERICAN ANARCHIST STUDIES NETWORK builds liberation through shared knowledge + research. NAASN's annual conference is held around Turtle Island, "North America," and consists of talks, workshops and events. Join us this year in Little Burgundy at le CÉDA (Centre d'éducation aux adultes de la Petite-Bourgogne et Saint-Henri)

ACCESSIBILITY: Inclusion and safety are important to us; everyone is welcome. Everything is wheelchair accessible & free -- pay if you want. Vegan lunch, child-minding, bus tickets on-site. All bodies/genders/orientations welcome. Please support our efforts to create a scent/allergen-reduced, respectful environment where we can all be our imperfect selves! Further accessibility info: <http://naasn.org/2018en>

VOLUNTEERS + TRANSLATORS: We need more helpers on the ground -- is this you? Email naasn2018@riseup.net Most urgent: simultaneous/whisper translation (French/English/Spanish/ASL/LSQ).

Speaker Notes

Posted on **June 1, 2018**

Personal intro

My name is Katherine, and I am the host of the podcast Friendly Anarchism (friendly as in the Religious Society of Friends, which is the full name of the Quakers) where I talk to community members and activists to work through questions about the movement and spirituality. The project has been going for over a year now and I've gained a lot of insight through that work as well as personal study and experience. As a practicing Quaker mystic and anarchist I am challenged by my very existence to examine the intersections and cross pollinations between the two.

I often have a hard time with self care. I'm in the struggle with y'all and looking for answers! I also see an overall need in the community. Many others are seeing the same need, and it's a conversation happening all over if not necessarily from a spiritual angle. Seeing a need for better self and community care and stronger solidarity are hot topics, and I believe the two are indelibly connected. A spiritual framework has been somewhat neglected and may be helpful in this regard.

I'm going to talk mostly about christian traditions & personal experience with anarchist organizing for a few different reasons, which include the wisdom of speaking from your own personal experience, and I also want to avoid any orientalism. There's a wealth of knowledge we can pull from concerning radical christianity and as a white person from my own ancestral traditions. I'll speak about the notion of christian anarchism shortly.

Why heartbreak?

Heartbreak is more than just disappointment or sadness, it's an existential crisis that throws everything into doubt, yourself, your relationship to the world, and larger truths such as justice. As anarchists we're walking existential crises, putting everything we have on this line, even risking our freedom and our lives for a world we suspect may be irrevocably broken. Especially as a black-on-black/black flag anarchist there is a real nihilist-individualist streak to the work that can lend itself to despair and hedonism.

We do hard emotional work to save a world against overwhelming odds.

Heartbreak is only possible from fierce love. We love the world, why else would we fight for it? And the world keeps letting us down

We love each other, and we keep letting each other down. We're still struggling with radical solidarity

We push ourselves so hard and we let ourselves down

There's something missing from our conversations, which is the idea of spiritual health. Existential questions are more spiritual in nature than simply questions of self-care or solidarity, because heartbreak is larger than any single action or situation and we are living in that state perpetually due to the very nature of the work. I'm going

to attempt to reframe the conversation in this way so we possibly gain some insight from the practices of past spirit-led revolutionaries.

Anarchist Christianity

Need to talk about the elephant in the room, the very idea of christian anarchism

Quote from Radical Christian Writings: *“Throughout Christian history – and particularly at times of crisis and social upheaval – there have emerged writings which, reflecting the values of the Kingdom, have engaged in searching critiques of the political order and promoted change in social and economic relations, most commonly by advocating or enacting equality of wealth, power, gender, or status.”*

As anarchists reject the marxist elitist notions that christianity itself is useless and all those that adhere to it are simply unenlightened. Christianity has been and remains a comfort and source of revolutionary power to a lot of people, myself included. Examples include Sojourner Truth, Ernesto Cardenal, and Dorothy Day, among many others

If we truly believe in the strength of diversity we need to make space for spiritual and theological discussions in the movement, and not always, but there can be a racist and ableist underbelly to the unexamined rejection of christianity as christian traditions are often especially important to communities of color and the disabled.

Anarchism is itself a kind of faith. To quote David Graeber on anarchism, *“We are talking less about a body of theory than about an attitude, or perhaps one might even say a faith: the rejection of certain types of social relations, the confidence that certain others would be much better ones on which to build a livable society, the belief that such a society could actually exist.”*

How does a personal spiritual practice help with a larger revolutionary movement?

A quote from Quaker writer Howard Brinton: *“For Friends the most important consideration is not the right action in itself but a right inward state out of which right action will arise. Given the right inward state right action is inevitable. Inward state and outward action are component parts of a single whole.”*

Everything we do is affected by how we’re feeling. Another Quaker maxim, *“you cannot bring peace to the world without bringing peace to yourself”* Spiritual health is not secondary to our struggle but is in fact the struggle itself because when we are at peace it shows in all of our actions, in the work we do, and in the strength and durability of our relations with others.

Conversely, when we are not at peace the same thing happens. It ripples out. We don’t do spiritual work just for ourselves, it’s for the people around us, and for our communities. Spiritual health has largely been a conversation about an individual, but there are important conversations about communal spiritual health and strength. There’s a reason organized religion exists, and as we know, organization does not have to denote hierarchical even if that has been the prevailing paradigm.

What is the connection between anarchism and mysticism?

Both anarchists and mystics believe everyone has or should have equal access to power. Anarchists are speaking primarily of political power, while mystics are speaking primarily of spiritual power, but it's the same core belief out of which arises similar dedication to the equalization of that power by uplifting the oppressed. This is the definition of social justice, and some things never change. Mystics have faced the same state and systemic oppression that anarchists face today and so have throughout history tried many different ways of coping, evading, and confronting that reality.

I believe that white anarchism is in many ways a subconscious continuation of christian mystic traditions. It would take more than a couple generations to shed the societal accoutrement associated with a way of life, and that's okay, there's a lot of good stuff there that got thrown out with the rejection of the institutions of the church at the advent of modern anarchist theory in the 1800's. While Christianity has been a source of genocide, colonialism, and patriarchy, there has also always been a fun lesser known rebellious side which wasn't the dominant strain. Mark Van Steenwyk, from the Center for Prophetic Imagination wrote a text called "That Holy Anarchist: Reflections on Christianity and Anarchism" in which he says *"We would be wise to ground our anarchism in a real mysticism-one that embraces a sort of divine wildness that can empower us to love in an unloving world. One that gives us a glimpse of a reality that we can't yet see. That mysticism can be linked to anarchism makes sense: mystics often reject the notion that access to God is mediated."*

Unlike other strains of radicalism such as communism, anarchists tend to work in the shadows, both literally and figuratively. A lot of what we do never sees the light of day, even large above ground projects have a tendency to be largely ignored by society as a whole. We often are actively hiding our work from the population at large to avoid the gaze of the state. A lot of our work isn't even necessarily materially tangible but in changing processes, redefining ethics, and changing the way we think about the world. I found an interesting parallel in David Graeber "Fragments Of An Anarchist Anthropology" speaking about indigenous mystic societies that went through large scale social change toward egalitarianism, *"A lot of the ideological work, in fact, of making a revolution was conducted precisely in the spectral night world of sorcerers and witches; in redefinitions of the moral implications of different forms of magical power. But this only underlines how these spectral zones are always the fulcrum of the moral imagination, a kind of creative reservoir, too, of potential revolutionary change. It's precisely from these invisible spaces – invisible most of all, to power – whence the potential for insurrection, and the extraordinary social creativity that seems to emerge out of nowhere in revolutionary moments actually comes."* This goes back to the spiritual mystic belief in the importance of inward state in the creation of outward action, we're just talking about a change in scale from individual to societal hidden inward state.

Strategies

Here are some ideas gleaned from past Christian movements. Many (if not all) of these are also connected to some very problematic and oppressive histories, but I'm bringing them forward to consider where they stem from and if there is revolutionary potential there, maybe we can adapt or revamp some of these strategies in our own work moving forward.

Having faith

Faith in our vision, faith in each other, also living in the mindset of what Richard Rohr, a Franciscan monk calls "trustful surrender".

'Falling upwards', Accepting uncertainty, the more that you let go of the false notion of control the more you open yourself up to gain

This makes us very vulnerable. But, this brings us back to solidarity because truly strong and durable connections with each other are created through radical vulnerability with each other. Sociologist Brene Brown talks about this.

Faith is another way to say Trust, I have faith in you, I trust you, I have faith in God, I trust the universe. From 'Joyful Militancy' – *"A crucial component of joyful militancy is a collective capacity to build, maintain, and repair trust."* Kelsey Cham C.: *"Probably one of the best ways to break down the walls of the system is to break down the walls around each other first, and I think the only way we can break down those walls is with trust."* A leap into the dark like that is Faith.

Keeping Sabbath – Going to Church

Need to slow down to speed up

Going to church is about taking dedicated time for individual and communal spiritual health, and it is revolutionary work.

It was seen as so important to the functioning of society that it was given an entire day out of the week. That's a lot of time. Is one out of every seven things we do dedicated to our spiritual and emotional health? Maybe it should be. Maybe we should strive to take a day of reflection and rest every week to help make our work sustainable.

(Quote from Cindy Milstein "Solidarity, as Weapon and Practice, versus Killer Cops and White Supremacy", which is actually from an older version than the one on her website which I found in a zine called "Revolutionary Solidarity: A Critical Reader for Accomplices", but I think it's a great quote and I'm curious why it was removed) *"Yes, maybe we need to "stop" to better self-organize. So that we can do deeper, sustained jail and court support as follow-up to arrests. So that we can strategize on how to really shut down this system, in myriad ways, and practice, at the same time, new ways of being and living, a new society that makes this old one truly look as brutal as it is and ultimately makes it history...Most important, though, we need to "stop" to better enact revolutionary solidarity as a verb, our best weapon, a living practice as we*

struggle toward better having each other's backs when our backs all look quite different from each other – as they should.”

Sabbath was about building and sustaining community. Whatever disagreements there are between people, everyone comes together to refocus on something bigger than themselves and solidify the values held by everyone in the group. Everyone takes a breath.

Monasticism and separated communities

As a movement I think we are good at creating communities and understanding their strengths in care and basic necessities-holding goods in common, prefigurative living & workshopping new ways of moving through the world. Monasteries and intentional communities are examples of this.

“In the monasteries, they still live as in the early Church. And who dies of hunger there? Who has not found enough to eat there? Yet the men of our times fear living that way more than they fear falling into the sea! Why have we not tried it? We would fear it less. What a good act that would be! If a few of the faithful, hardly eight thousand dared in the face of a whole world, where they have nothing but enemies, to make a courageous attempt to live in common, without any outside help, how much more could we do it today, now that there are Christians throughout the whole world? Would there remain one single Gentile? Not one. I believe. We would attract them all and win them to us.” – Rosa Luxemburg, Socialism And The Churches 1905

The Beguines and Beghards – The Beguines were a movement starting in the 14th century Europe were christian women who felt led to lead a life of service and contemplation. Some of them lived together in Beguinages but didn't take vows like monks, and association with the movement was voluntary. They lived societally in a space difficult for many to understand, neither necessarily religious or lay. They worked non-hierarchically and had no leaders. They deserve their own talk because they were an incredibly successful movement we could learn a lot from. They were distinct without necessarily being physically isolated from the rest of the world.

Many new societal experiments during the reformation, including Quakers

Celibacy/separation by gender

It doesn't have to mean taking vows in can just be living with a very intentional relationship to sex. Can be temporary like the Beguines

Separating by gender can subvert gender dynamics and power structures. Men: I'm not going to define myself by my virility or ability to dominate women, and for women: I'm not going to give up my life and bodily autonomy to a man

Relationships, in one, getting in one, breakups, other people's drama, all takes a lot of time and energy that could be spent on the revolution. Can you imagine how much we would get done if we weren't dealing with romantic entanglements?

There are already some projects separating by gender/nongender and I'd love to learn more about how those are going

Baptism

The mystic traditions actually don't generally have any kind of baptism rites, but other strands of radical faith movements do and I think it is worth looking at.

Maybe not specific rites, but there is an intentionality to joining these radical communities and learning how to live a different kind of life. From *Radical Christian Writings*: *“Conversion involved a different style of life with values at odds with mainstream culture. It meant belonging to a group where elite values and goods were widely shared and were the hallmark of the community: wisdom, religiosity, wealth and power, which had been the preserve of the few, were now available to all through the divine spirit.”*

I think this is an area that could use some development in our movement. Right now there are signifiers of those that have been adopted into the movement, such as language, security culture, ways of dressing, ways of eating, but they are not explicit or widely understood, which makes the movement largely inaccessible to those interested in joining. The process and rites of baptism was a way to introduce and train newcomers, although there is the danger of becoming a way of excluding people from what was originally supposed to be a democratic access to all. But again, I think we are already doing this without recognizing it as such. How does this translate to the wider “community” of anarchist organizing as opposed to smaller physical intentional communities? Possibly seeing our affinity groups as communities?

Silent Contemplation – study and meditation

Existential crises take a lot of processing and unwinding of the mind. Staying centered and calm in the face of terrible things takes a lot of work and practice. One of the ways of doing this is to get out of negative mind loops, not by trying to shame yourself or numb yourself, but by filling your mind with other things.

Listening – there is a lot to hear

To silence

To the world

To each other, (Worship share)

Biblical phrases or zen koans

Queries/Questions

Studying

Daydreaming

Embracing the apocalypse

If we're going to talk about keeping perspective and ruminating on the world, we're going to need to talk about the apocalypse. How do mysticism and anarchism reframe the apocalypse as a source of inspiration instead of one of a paralyzing dread?

It's interesting because there are two strains of apocalyptic christian theory akin to the debate between communism and anarchism: From *Radical Christian Writings*: *“There emerges in Christian history a clear difference between those who pore over the detail of texts like Revelation in order to be able to map out the narrative of the end of the world, and those who are inspired by the apocalyptic texts to see their own visions and to offer a prophetic challenge*

to the communities of their day..The former group of interpreters tend to use Revelation to point forward, the latter find in its words an empowering conviction for the present moment of crisis, the Kairos. The coming reign of God is not merely an article of faith for the future but is in some sense already present, either in the life of the prophetic group, called to implement or proclaim, or as a phenomenon within the historical process which demands a response and interpretation, what is known as “reading the signs of the times.”

There is an anarchist nihilism that I think can be healthy. I found this quote in an article called “We fight because we like it: Maintaining our morale against seemingly insurmountable odds” – which is ironically very anti-christian but it struck a very christian chord with me. *“For me, accepting that my actions cannot derive their meaning from some future goal is intertwined with the process of coming to terms with my mortality. Recognizing death as inevitable, I don’t hurry any faster towards it...We may be defeated by our enemies, we are certainly doomed to become dust ourselves... In this regard, my ability to believe in the possibility of change—not as something to occur in the future, but as something I can pursue right now—is a fundamental part of my power to live fully, to maintain a healthy relationship to my own agency. This is different from believing in a millenarian vision of revolution. It is not a prediction about the future, such as a scientist might make, but rather a decision about how to relate to myself and my own capabilities.”*

Remaining in the present

Keeping perspective allows us to lay aside the worries of tomorrow and yesterday and live in this moment. Taoist saying from Lao Tzu: *“If you are depressed you are living in the past. If you are anxious you are living in the future. If you are at peace you are living in the present.”*

Matthew 6:34 “Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.”

Another quote from we fight because we like it: *“from our lived experiences of anarchy and freedom—we can extrapolate a vision of the future that is not a reiteration of Christian eschatology but rather a dimension of how we conduct ourselves in the present. We may or may not live to experience anarchy on a scale greater than our hard-won friendships, love affairs, projects, and uprisings. But in the meantime, the vision of that possibility can anchor and orient us in the present, informing our actions, the way a mariner navigates across the sea by the stars. Regardless of what happens tomorrow, when we are able to imagine a utopia, that utopia can gain traction on reality by enabling us to take actions we would otherwise not be capable of. The reality content of a future utopia is determined by the actions it enables us to take today.”*

Gratitude & Love

Loving the world, each other, and ourselves for themselves, for them (without wanting a reward)

Forgiveness. Forgive the world, and each other, and ourselves for our failings

Gratitude. Live in a space of wonder at the gifts we have been given

Franciscans thank flowers

Thank you to NAASN, thank you to everyone who came, and please check out my project at www.friendlyanarchism.org, the podcast on any app, and support my work on patreon!

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Posted in **Anarchism, Blog, Christianity** | **1 Reply**

Transcript

(This is an automatic transcript that could do with some error correcting.)

Katherine: OK hi everybody, my name is Katherine. I am the host of a podcast called Friendly Anarchism where we talk about theology and anarchism. Because I am a Quaker and so I'm really excited that I got invited here today. It's called friendly anarchism because the full name for Quakers is the religious Society of friends. So yeah, and I made a lot of insights through that work. As well as we'll study experience so as a quicker Mystic and interface, I'm challenged by my very existence to examine the cross pollinations and intersections between theology and anarchism I often. A hard time with self-care and community care, and I think that's pretty endemic to our movement. Is having a difficult having a difficult time approaching new subjects and is something that I see a lot of conversation about and I encourage everybody to search out for the search. Those conversations and those people out that are having these discussions. I'm just going just showing. One side of it that I feel like hasn't been discussed as much,

which is the spiritual angle. So a spiritual framework has been somewhat neglected, so I wanted to sort of bring that into the conversation. Sue, I'm going to be talking primarily about Christian mysticism because that is my own experience. There are other Mystic traditions that are definitely worth looking into as well. The first one that comes into mind is Daoism. Daoism is very Mystic, so that's something to interests you. This is a subject that interests you encourage. You to look into those. As well, but I'll be so speaking from my own experience, which I think is a good way to go about. A lot of these conversions. Yeah yeah, so why heartbreak? Because heartbreak is an existential crisis. Heartbreak goes beyond just sort of the single moment or a single. A single act heartbreak is something that throws everything into doubt yourself. Your relationship with the world, your relationship with others, and even concepts. Larger concepts like justice gets thrown into the wind when you are heartbroken and it's in its nature existential. And when I feel like as anarchists we are sort of walking existential crises because we work really hard to put everything on the line, including our freedom into our lives. For a world that we sort of think a lot of the time is sort of irrevocably. Broken, so that is by. Itself, a conflict of interest. That can really tear us up. Sort of. I'm especially as sort of a black on black anarchist with a real Niles St. and I think that that runs through there. Is this nihilism that runs through anarchist, but that I think can be seen in a positive light as well. So I'm. Going to talk about that. So we're heartbroken too, because we just work really, really hard. We push ourselves very hard and we're doing a lot of hard emotional work in order to save the world. And that sets the stage for having heartbreaking Ness and for having a depth of existential crisis that can really bring us down. One of the things about heartbreaking that comes from a place of. Love, I think in the. End that what we do comes from a deep place of love. All of this work is because we love the world. We love our communities or we love we're passionate about the idea of anarchism. And so when you reframe the conversation to say like we're here. Because we have a lot of love to give, it shows that that's why we feel this heartbreak is well when that love is not returned or when that love feels. Like we are letting ourselves down when we work too hard or and or when we let each other down as a movement. We're still really struggling with radical solidarity and a lot of that comes from having a lot of love and having it. There's something more heartbreaking about it when someone that you love. Rather than someone that you don't care about. So, so I think there is something missing from our conversation, which is the idea of spiritual health. I think it's essential questions are more spiritual in nature because heartbreak is larger than that so. So I want to talk about the elephant in the room a little bit, which is Christian anarchism that's not totally in our movement as much, so I'm trying to carve out space for that and for myself as well. And for the movement there is a rising movement of faith. Based organizing and introduced Christianity. So I have a quote here from a book called. Radical Christian writings of reader. Throughout Christian history, and particularly at times of crisis and social upheaval, there have emerged writings which reflecting the values of the capital paid Kingdom, have engaged in searching critiques of the political order and promoted social

change and economic and change in economic relations, most commonly by advocating or enacting. I think, as atheists, our resistance to Christianity and Christian anarchism can be a real problem. We need to reject. Sort of an elitist notion that Christianity itself is useless and that everyone who appears to it or unenlightened because Christianity has been and remains a comfort and source of revolutionary. Power to a lot of people, myself included examples. Of course, include people like Sojourner, Truth, Arnesto, Cardinals, working day and many others, especially people who are not famous. If we truly believe in the strength of diversity, we need to be making space in the movement for spiritual and theological discussions, and also not always. But there can sometimes be a little bit of a racist or able to undertone to the unexamined rejection of Christianity as Christian traditions are especially important often to community. Color and to the disabled. So, animism itself is the kind of thing as well. To quote, David Graeber. So what I did is I just. I put all of. These quotes up on the slides so you can read them. As I as I read them. Out loud like that helps with quotes, so the quote did great because then we were talking less about the body theory than about an attitude or perhaps. One might even say a faith. The rejection of certain types of social relations. The confidence that certain others would be much better ones on which to build a little whole society and to believe that this society. Could actually exist. So the question though is how does a personal spiritual practice help with the larger revolutionary movement? Here's one of my favorite quotes ever. From a writer, Quaker writer named Howard writing was written in 1942 for friends.

To the next. The most important consideration is not the right action in itself, but a right inward state out of which right action will arise given the right inward state, right? Action is another inland state and outward action are component parts of the single hole. So everything we do is affected by how we're feeling. Another quicker Maxim is you cannot bring peace to the world without bringing peace to yourself and the spiritual health is not secondary to your struggle, but is in fact the struggle itself. Because when we are at. Peace it shows in all of our actions and the. Work that we. Do and in the strength and durability of our connections. With others Conversely, when you're not. At peace to. Save inhabitants and ripples outwards. We don't do spiritual work, just. For ourselves, but. Also, for the people around us and. For our communities. Spiritual health has largely been a conversation about individual work, but there are important conversations about communal spiritual health as well, and the strength in that. There is reasons sociological and personal and societal reasons that organized religion exist. But as we know it and this organized doesn't have to mean hierarchical there can be. Organized ways of bringing community together in this way. Despite the prevailing paradigm of hierarchical religion. So what is the connection specifically between the Mystic tradition and anarchism? Both anarchists and Mystics believe everyone has or should have equal access to power, and the cases are speaking primarily of political power, while Mystics are speaking primarily. Of spiritual power, but in the same it's the same core belief, out of which arises similar dedication to the equalization of the power by uplifting the aircraft. This is the definition of social

justice and somethings never change. Mystics have faced the same state and systemic oppression and entered his face today. So has throughout history tried many different ways of coping, evading and confronting that reality. I believe that white anarchism is in many ways a continuation of Christian Mystic traditions. It takes more than a couple of generations to shed. This is societal accoutrement. Associated with the way. Of life. And that's fine because there's a lot of really good stuff there that we can be looking for looking toward for enlightenment. On these subjects. So there's a. Lot that got thrown out with the rejection of the institutions of the church and the at during the modern anarchist theory and the 1800s. While Christianity has been a source of genocide, colonialism and patriarchy, there has also always been a fun, lesser known or rebellious side, which wasn't the dominant strain mark. And steenwick from the Center for Prophetic imagination. Rotax called that holy anarchist reflections on Christianity and anarchism in which he says. We would be wise to ground our eyes because our realism, one that graces the sort of divine wildness that can empower us to love and unloving world one that gives us a glimpse of the reality that we can't yet see, that mysticism can understand links to anarchism. Makes sense. Mystics often reject the notion that access their God is needed. So unlike other strains of radicalism. Just communism. Anarchists tend to work in the shadows, both both literally and figuratively. A lot of what we do never sees the light of day, even large above ground projects have a tendency to be often ignored by society as a whole. We often are actively hiding our work from the population at large to avoid the gains. Of the state. And a lot of our work isn't even necessarily materially tangible, but in changing processes, redefining ethics and changing the. Way we think about. The world I found. An interesting parallel. In days of gravers, fragments of an antihistamine apology where he was speaking about indigenous Mystic societies that went through large scale social change toward egalitarianism. A lot of the ideological work, in fact of making revolution, was conducted precisely in the spectral night world of sorcerers and witches, and redefinitions of the moral implications of different forms of magical power. But this only. Underlines how these spectral zones are always the fulcrum. Of the moral. Imagination a kind of creative reservoir to a potential revolutionary. Is precisely it's when these invisible spaces invisible. Most of all the power. Once the potential for insurrection and the extraordinary social creativity that seems to emerge out of nowhere in revolutionary moments, actually comes. I believe that these invisible spaces are akin to anarchist spaces and sort of small communal and affinity group type projects that we. Do as I notice. So and it also goes back to the spiritual Mystic belief and the importance of inward state and the creation of outward state. But we're changing from an individual scale to a societal scale of an inward state of these small projects, to the outward state of society during the revolutionary movement. So I want to talk about some strategies that have arisen from past Christian movements. And many, if not all of these are also connect. This is some very problematic and oppressive histories, but I'm bringing them forward to consider where they stem from and if there is revolutionary potential there, maybe we can adapt or revamp some of these

strategies in our own work moving forward. So the first one that I have here is the most well known and seems the most simple, but it's often actually the very hardest. Which is just having. And that is having faith in our vision, having faith in each other and also living in the mindset, what with the Franciscan monk who's in Mystic named named Richard Rohr. He calls a trustful surrender or falling upwards where the more that you give. Up, the more that you gain and it's about accepting uncertainty and sort of that's living in that faithful space. And the more that you sort of give up a false notion that you have control than that giving up controls or having faith in the world can bring a lot of power. But this makes us very vulnerable. Doing that, having that faith being that openness is a very vulnerable space to bring in. But this brings us back to solidarity and the problems we have with solidarity when we don't show that vulnerability, and we're not willing. To go there at all because. Truly strong and durable connections with each other are created through radical vulnerability with each other. There's been a lot of sort of work on this, including by sociologist Brené Brown, and we talk also about the book joyful militancy, which is a great book who talks that talks a lot about the need for this radical vulnerability, which is another word for having faith. That something good can come of your actions or pump from the space that you're in. So one of the quotes from joyful militancy. A crucial component of joyful militancy is a collective capacity to build, maintain and repair trust. Trust is just another word for faith. Another quote book. It's a better book is. Probably one of the best. Ways to breakdown the walls of the system is to breakdown the walls around each other first, and I think the only way we can breakdown those walls is with. A leap into the dark like that is the definition of faith. So the next one that is also very familiar to us is keeping Sabbath or going to church. We need to be slowing down in order to be able to speed up. Going to church is about taking dedicated time for individual and communal spiritual health, and it's revolutionary work. It was seen as so important to the functioning of society that it was given an entire day out of the week and I have to wonder, are we? Is every is one out of every seven things that we're doing simply about our spiritual and emotional health. Like maybe it should be. And maybe we need to be thinking about taking that time for both individual and communal communal health. On that taking it that seriously, and taking putting that. Going into it, where an entire day of the week is spent only on keeping making our movements more sustainable through. This sort of. Group spiritual practice where we come together. Here's a quote from Cindy Milstein. It was in a really awesome essay called Solidarity as Weapon and Practice versus Killer cops and white supremacy, and this quote is actually from an older version that's gone on our website. It's a great quote. I'm not sure why she took. It down, which is pretty bad, but. Maybe yes, maybe we need to stop to better self organize so that we can do deeper sustained jail and court support as followed through arrests so that we can strategize on how to. Really shut down the. System in great ways and practice at the same time. New ways of being living a new society that makes this old one truly look as brutal as it is and ultimately. Makes it history most important, though we need to stop to better enact revolutionary

solidarity as a verb. Our best weapon, a living practice as we struggle toward better having each other's back when backs all look quite different from each other as they should. So Sabbath was not just about. Spiritual practice it's also about building and sustaining community. Whatever disagreements there are between people, everyone comes together to refocus on something bigger than themselves and to solidify the values held by everyone in that group. Because everyone takes a breath. For the next one is monasticism and separate communities. As a movement I think we are good at creating communities and understanding their strengths in taking care of basic necessities, holding goods in common and prefigurative living and workshopping. New ways of. Moving through the world, monasteries and intentional communities are an example of this. Here's a quote from Rosa Luxemburg, which was interesting to have a filing. She wrote an essay called Socialism in the churches in 1905. In the monasteries they still live as in the early church and who dies of hunger there who has not found enough to eat there yet. The men of our times fear living that way more than they fear falling in the feed. Why have we not tried it? We would fear it. Less what a good act that would be if a few of the faithful, hardly 8000. Dared in the face. Of the whole world. Where they have nothing but enemies to make a courageous. Tend to live in common without any outside help. How much more can we? Do today now that there are Christians. Throughout the whole world. Would there remain 1? Single Gentile, not one. I believe we would attract them all to us and win, so if you sort. There's a. Change out Christianity towards anarchism. If we're talking about. Trying to make. A movement that is larger and brings in more people then this is something we can look at is how did these monastic societies bring people in and how did they keep those communities going in this way? Some of my favorite. Examples of this are the big names in the bed cards, and unfortunately I don't have. I didn't have enough time to really do the sort of in-depth research that I wanted to do on them, but I'll just introduce them a little bit so that I think that this is one example of many of these different communities that we could look to and do more research into to see how they did things. To see how we can take some of those practices into ourselves so that the games were a movement starting in 14th century in Europe and they were Christian women who got led to leave a life of service and. Inflation, some of them live together in the geniuses, but they didn't take vows like monks and association with the communities was totally voluntary. They live societally in a space difficult for me to understand because it was another neither totally religious. It was also not lay. It was sort, it was functioned. Spiritually but not, but outside of the institutions of the church. So they have worked non hierarchically and they had no leaders. Which is really interesting, and they also sometimes lived in separate communities, but also sometimes live within other communities and with larger places and within cities. So they became a really, really popular movement and it went really, really well for them. And so their successes. I think there's some lessons there in how they were able to be spiritual, but not be isolated. And be spiritual while still being in a world that was in some ways sometimes. Hostile to that. There were a lot of other societal

experimentation going on, especially during the Reformation, with little communities trying to pop up their own little utopias. And I think we could be doing more research into those, and I hope to do more research into what drove these radical Christian populations into these communities. What worked about them? What didn't work? Welcome and why. So the next one, if you're going to bring up. Manassas is going to talk about celibacy. Because that was the thing that happened. Now I'm stay with me. I'm not saying that everybody should be celibate, but I think we do have. We could have some communication we should could have some conversations about intentional relationships to sex and relation and how we relate to each other on a romantic level. There are people in. The movement and. In the world that are not comfortable with sex, that are they're asexual or aromantic, or even just have for whatever reason and. There needs to. Be space for. That in the movement. And seeing even possibility, possibly as. On upside, because you get a lot done when you're not worried about relevant relationships, so you can be, you could have very successful. We could have very successful movements if in if they're with the help of people who decide. Put all of their energy and time into revolutionary. Struggles instead of sort of earthly ones with each other. There are some great projects that separate by gender, non gender as well, and I think that's something interesting to look at. For instance the beginnings there was they were all all women and then there was the man. Counterpart counterpart called the Bad Cards and the interesting thing about celibacy 2 is it sort of. Upended the patriarchal structure. In some ways, it upheld it when it was talking about, sort of like the dirtiness of sex or that kind of shaming. But there was also an underbelt. There was also like a revolutionary undertone to it where men were saying I'm not going to be defined by my virility or my ability to dominate women, and women were saying that I'm not going to give up my bodily autonomy. To a man. So there's something interesting to be looking. Into in that. The next one is baptism. So mystery traditions actually don't usually have baptism rights, but other strands of radical faith movements do, and I think. It's worth looking at. So, being an anarchist and anarchism is a way of life and it can be a very different way of life than society as a whole. And it's good to I think, understand that that's a reality that we live in so. Conversion this is from radical fishing rights and conversion involved a different style of life with values that odds with mainstream culture. It meant belonging to a group where elite values and goods were widely shared and were the hallmark of the community. Wisdom, religiosity, wealth and power, which had been the preserve of the few, were now available to all through the Divine Spirit, and I think this is something that could really do some development in our movement. Right now there are signifiers or those that have been really. Adopted into the movement. Such as language security, culture, ways of dressing, ways of heating, but they're not explicit or widely understood, which can make the movement largely inaccessible to those who are interested in join. So the process and the rights of baptism was a way to introduce and train newcomers, and there's always, there's a. Danger between the. Way of excluding people from what was originally supposed to be a democratic access

and bringing people in. I think we are already doing this without recognizing. It is as if we're already excluding people and we already have rights and rituals that people are not being given any chance to understand or know about. And I think that having some kind of way of training people into what is understood as a very different way of life is something that would be incredibly helpful to a lot of folks who would help us grow the movement. If there was a clear pathway into becoming an anarchist. OK, the next one is silent contemplation, study and meditation and existential crises take a lot of processing and unwinding of the mind, staying centered and calm in the face of terrible things takes a lot of work and craft. One of the ways of doing this is to get out of negative mind loops, not by trying to shame yourself or done yourself, but by filling your mind with other things. So for instance, as a Quaker we listen is a really important part of our practice. We listen to each other and we listen to silence itself and you listen to the world. There's a lot to hear. Other ways of doing this are biblical phrases. People would meditate on an interesting biblical phrase, or if you talk about that, was again or Buddhism Zen cones, just little little interesting videos that can you can think about for ever, basically questions and queries, understanding that sometimes there aren't answers. And then just asking questions and thinking about questions is is totally valid. And studying, you know, people would study theology and study the Bible. And maybe we could be studying spirituality or spending time really digging into what our relationship to the universe and is. And what is that existential crisis that we're feeling and give it some time. Some space. So this one is really interesting. This next one when I was doing my research, I found it which is embracing the apocalypse. Because if you're talking about keeping perspective and you're talking about a relationship to the universe, we're in a situation right now where we're going to have to talk about the apocalypse and the idea of like the. And this is something that's run through radical theory, basically forever. Anyway, is the idea of the revolution, which can be seen. It's a type of apocalyptic future where everything changes and everything collapses or everything. Thing is different from the way. That it was before. So how do mysticism and anarchism reframe the apocalypse as a source of inspiration instead of one of paralyzing dread? It's interesting because there are two strains of apocalyptic Christian theory akin to the debate between communism and anarchism. Their emergence in Christian history. A clear difference between those who pour over details of texts like revelation in order to be able to map out the narrative of the end of the world and those who were inspired. By the apocalyptic texts to see their own visions and offer prophetic challenge to the communities of their day. The former group. Of interpreters tend to use revelation to point forward the latter and finding its words and empowering conviction for the present moment of crisis that Kairos the coming reign of God is not merely an article of faith for the future, but is in some sense. Already present either in the life of the prophetic group called implement or proclaim, or the phenomenon within the historical process which demands a response and interpretation. And what is known as reading the sign of the times? I think there is an antithesis nihilism. That could be. Healthy in this way. I

found this quote in an article called We Fight. Because we like. It maintaining our morale against seemingly insurmountable odds. It was published by Crime Think, so it's ironic because this essay was pretty. It was very anti. But it really stuck a really it's. Christian tone with me because it was talking about this sort of apocalyptic future. It says for me it's something that my actions cannot derive their meaning from some future goal is entwined, intertwined with the process of coming to terms with my mortality, recognizing death is inevitable. I don't hurry any faster towards it. We may be defeated by our enemies. We are certainly doomed to become dust ourselves in this regard. May ability to believe in the possibility. Change not as something to occur in the future, but as something I can pursue. Right now is a fundamental part of my power to live fully to maintain a healthy relationship. Find on agency. This is different from believing and knowing marrying vision of revolution. It is not a prediction about the future such as the science meaning, but around the decision about how to relate to myself and my own. Capabilities they mentioned in there remaining in the present, which is something that's in a lot. Of our literature, especially the mindfulness. And I think it is really important. It's been something that's been reiterated over and over and over again throughout history, and it's been. It's in Mystic tests. As well so from loud zu Dallas, it says if you were depressed we were living in the past. If you are anxious, we were living in the future. If you were. If you were living in the present and this is nasty 634. Take therefore no thought for tomorrow, for tomorrow she'll take thought for the things that itself sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. So there was another really great quote out of that essay. I really like that essay, which is it's probably most antichristian. I read. From our lived experiences of energy and freedom, we can extrapolate a vision of the future that is not a reiteration of Christian eschatology. Agree, but rather dimension of how we conduct ourselves in the present. We may or may not live to experience and be on a scale greater than our hard won friendships, love, affairs, projects and uprisings. But in the meantime. The vision of that possibility can anchor Orient us in the present, informing our actions the way a Mariner navigates across the sea by the stars, regardless of what happens tomorrow. When we are able to imagine a utopia, that Utopia can gain traction on reality by enabling us to take actions. We would otherwise not be capable. The reality content of a future utopia is determined by the actions you take today. Something really stressed by is the idea of gratitude of being living in thankfulness, and that is something that has been shown. To be a great way of living and a great way of maintaining morale is just to live in a place of gratitude. And thank you and thanks. So prayer is a way of taking time every day to give thanks for everything you have and it keeps you in that space of and it. Keeps you in. A mindful space of gratitude, which is very healthy to do and and. It's about there's a there's a heading. This is on love as well in Christianity. And sort of ties back to what we're talking about. Heartbreak is that love can? We can have that love move us forward in a positive direction instead of having it break. Yes, because instead of having all of these expectations about the world, it's like living in gratitude for the things that we have and loving each other in our brokenness and loving

the world and its brokenness and loving ourselves and our imperfection. Which brings us to forgiveness. So forgiveness is obviously another really big. Part of Christian faith saying that you're forgiving so for us to live in forgiveness and gratitude is to forgive the world and to forgive each other when we mess up and to forgive ourselves for not being perfect. So if we stay in this. Mindset of living in love. Living in gratitude and living in forgiveness. Maybe we can find some peace and from that peace, our inward selves will project outwards into all of our actions and create stronger communities and create a stronger movement. As a whole. I guess this opens up two questions. Do would people prefer I sign on? Yeah, OK, cool. Any questions time?

FEEDBACK #1 I'm so excited that you're here and that you presented on this. I'm upset that my friend is not here. Who will be joining us tomorrow, but like we're the only alternative religion. You know that and also has you know, throughout the circles and I was trying to get him to come and present on. We made a joke that like hold on somehow. It was just like a. A spin on the no gods you know sticker slogan, whatever they were also used to. So it's not really question, just thank you and I'm sure you're aware that yeah, there are people that have spiritual beliefs that yeah, feel silenced and. Alienated in anarchist circles and I'm just very happy here, yeah?

FEEDBACK #2 I kind of relate, it's quite interesting to see a lot of old class and like it's not, it's always about. There's not much faith in that sense, like it's always about. We need to do this thing. It would give us like this thing in the future, so doing something interesting. And yeah, I think it's a big problem. Somewhere around like express and like feel. Like there's nothing. I feel like we often avoiding to have this kind. Of existential discussion because it's not. Something to talk about. But like we all know this request and like when it comes to talking about like what could happen like talk. About the future like. So yeah, it's kind of refreshing. Yeah, this kind of discussion.

QUESTIONER #1 I grew up in. A lot of circles and I feel like my. Energy directly, kind of descended from. The way I grew up. But the people I grew up. With my parents. Who raised me, Christians. We got to see that. Connection at all. So I was really curious like you grew up in a world that, like mentioned anarchism, Quakerism. Or is that something you were developed? Overtime or like how you're like other communities. Around you and spiritual little. Kind of like feel like that.

KATHERINE: So it's interesting because I was an anarchist. First I'm should I use this? I use it. OK, I was an anarchist. First I was an anarchist as a teenager and then I kind of got lost and liberal. For a minute, I think when people did and then I came back around to it, sort of in Trump era and so I was refinding anarchism at the same time as I was feeling. Kind of empty. And I went to the Democratic National Convention to protest Hillary Clinton being. Elected or whatever it's called as the Democratic candidate. And when I was there, the People's Convention and the Socialist convergence were both held in Quaker Meetinghouse. So I was going to those spaces and they felt really beautiful. I was I was raised atheist. I was just raised without anything and so in these spaces it felt so. Calm and like I was such a wreck

at that moment in life I just like was such a hard time I think for everybody in a lot of ways. And I found a lot of peace there, and so I started looking into it and so that was in the summer of 20. 16 So I'm still just shy of two years of being a Quaker, and it's been hard. There hasn't been space for it, really. In the anarchist movement that's been really hard on me. And there's also, you know, just on a personal level with my family. Tries to be supportive, but they're atheist and it's still like kind of weird, you know, so I find myself in this weird space where it's. Like I can't really. They and then, like Quakers, are often like older and more liberal, so they're not as radical. A lot of Times and so it's like it's been this like awkward space that I've been living in and like not really being accepted into anarchist circles like not really being accepted into spiritual circles. But there is. Kind of a growing radical Christian movement that is really exciting to be a part of where there's other people that are finding this space being like. No Jesus's message is incredibly rare. Incredibly revolutionary and like that space is being carved out, but it's still in the works and it's still fairly new as far as a movement right now.

QUESTIONER #2: I found it really interesting, like when I visited Eastern Europe the first time because religion was so impressed by the like the soviet state and a lot of other gifts there really. Spiritual traditions, I mean I'm an. Atheist, but I find that. Like, really kind of interesting in Arabic where. Where you have people that have like because that. Like repression, were so to. Repression of religion, that those. Really good traditions we're handling with their really spirit and and spirit of kind of like their anarchism. That they have they. Thought that was kind of like.

KATHERINE: Yeah, so like maybe there's specifically American preservatives or north northern. Anarchism is more anti religious than than other strains of animals in other parts of the world that are really just going to look into. If there is. More faith accepting anarchist anarchism in other. Parts of the world. And the movement. And I think there's more and more like. For everyone that's been a jerk about it, there's. Somebody who's like. Really, so it's it's I I don't need it. Think about it because there's been a lot of support.

QUESTIONER 3: One of the things that seems sort of fundamentals. And ISM and. Like what do you call? This modern period. One of the things that seems fundamental there is coming into a materialist interpretation of history. Or do you need a logical interpretation of history. I'm wondering if these are commitments that every anarchist holds? Or if there is space for a more like spiritual anarchists would be viewed as a spiritual force. That's kind of trying to. Burst out into the world for are we still committed even if we're going to create space for spirituality, but we still committed to materialist analysis and production, et cetera.

KATHERINE: Yeah, sure, I think that's really interesting. I think that's when it gets to attention that exists between Communism and anarchism. That there's sort of always been there because materials approach is more accepted. I think. Still right now, as a communist, more communist type of approach to the. World and that's because anarchism itself has ties, is more tied to sort of Mystic traditions.

So, I think the revival of that Mystic tradition and Centering of anarchist. Thought in theory is an important move away from a materialist. View that can be kind of cold and sort of post enlightenment.

I think I think one of the a great book to read is David Graeber's fragments of an anarchist ontology where he talks about the falseness of the Enlightenment and the idea of revolution as being a clean break. Instead of that, there can be a real colonized aspect to that, because we're still saying that there's something about white people, colonizers changed everything and there was no history before it or everybody before that is primitive is and so, like that's not exactly about materialism. The materialism kind of came out of that sort of colonized post enlightenment framework, so I think that we should look at history as continuous and as more complicated than just a materialist view because I think there's something very human about spirituality that's always been written off, like I don't think I don't think humans do things just for material reasons.

QUESTIONER 4: Maybe it's like not as like their positive comparison, but like I found in my experience and artistic and other bridges. And this is not like the. I'm not talking about like the post. No, it's it's like close. Like there's when it comes out like like this kind of thing, where like. It's not just about. Like really understanding it, but really about like what you should do. What you should do. Granted to this either like Purity. Like default man like. Even like self sacrifice like to be. I don't know the word in English is when, like you, sacrifice yourself. But I think sometimes it's like. In the not really healthy way so. There's so much to sleep. Stop playing even in like 8 years. There's a lot of like religious behaviour, even if there's no faith.

KATHERINE: Yeah, I agree, I think that's part of why I see anarchism now as a continuation of this sort of radical Christianity, because I think the Mystic Christianity is the best of us. But there is a lot to be seen. From, for instance, the Puritans. We even still use the word purity culture when we're talking about the Puritans and they. Say that like. Holier than thou you know, and self-righteous behavior. So if we're if we're not separating ourselves from these past traditions, we can look and see. What's good and what's bad about how these paths separated Christian communities and societies did things and so? Seeing, yeah, so that's sort of like Uber holier than thou religiosity that was endemic, and we don't like about old Christianity. We are still performing those same those same things now because we're the same religious type people. Just without the faith. And it's a good point.

Anything else?

QUESTIONER 5: Do you have a question you want to ask us, like the audience. Is that weird?

KATHERINE: A question to ask you. Everybody has their own story with their connections to faith. Do you? I don't know, I'm just interested what people thought about this presentation I guess.

QUESTIONER 6: I appreciate, uh. Talk about forgiveness, for we were just talking. You know? About like so for. Just this for like. And advance, say like what

I? Was sort of getting involved in some of this stuff. It would seem like. Everything is like a pitfall or like things like that. And it would be like a disaster, awesome drama or something and that there was never. I just realized at some point that I'd never heard. From my life. Say or dismiss. And like synonym to that around and. So that's what I've. Just been like OK we should like forgive each other.

KATHERINE: I think that comes back to the idea of clear expectations to like when you're talking about these societies that there was a there was an actual conversation moment where it's like, or baptism rights or taking vows, or something. Where it's like there's clear rules. That are understand by everyone is in the community and we don't really have that. So we have all the rules but no clear it's not ever clear, you know. So like that causes a lot of. I've personally had some real problems where it's like things that I thought were obvious were not obvious to the other party that I said, well, this is obviously how you have to do this. It's totally rude to not do it like this and then they had the same problem with me about something totally different like. Well, obviously this is not OK for you to be doing things this way. Like that is not obvious to me at all, so like and we probably. I don't know if you'll be able to replicate that on like a larger scale for like the movement as a whole, but maybe just within our little communities or within our affinity groups. We can have some clear expectations. For people to help keep that sort of like those missteps from happening, it's. Like, well, you. Know the rules now so we can forgive you if you mess up, but. Like it's understood that you should. Be doing these things, you know.

QUESTIONER 7: Have you read the book 'The Parable of the Sower'?

KATHERINE: The Parable of the Sower? No.

QUESTIONER 7: Basically, like the path, we're going down, right? Parable of the star. The book that is selling first. I don't know if I'm saying that right? It's about like a 16 year old girl growing up in. A gated community, and. Uh, most of hypothetic world. And her father. Is a preacher. And basically the outside world is falling into chaos. It's becoming more and more likely that. So there.

Well, basically it's an amazing book and. I made a lot of connections to. It in the conversation. What I could mention is just. What you talked about with? Apocalypse, you know, and. It's basically the protagonist. She has sort of like. She invents her own religion or she calls it like discovers her own. Religion that becomes sort of. Be like people, we call it a. Cult or something? But basically she. From the community of the. And that's based around this religion.

And it's just really interesting for me to think about. Sort of like in making parallels to anarchism like. Is it about changing the world or like being able to survive the apocalypse together and create our own communities rather than trying to change everyone else, I don't know if that makes sense, but yeah 'Parable of the Sword'.

KATHERINE: I would say that we should remember that this is not the first of all. That humanity it's been ***** to be a human. Basically the whole. It's been shifting to be. A human, basically the entire time, and so we're not the first people to go through that. What seems like the end of the world and is a lot of these faith communities or

people that made it through those times is through that faith community and through these. Small groups that held on to each other and held on to a vision and held on. To living in. Because in the moment, and that's how they did it. So I think like there is something there to look at. How did they manage? How did these other groups manage to get through these hard times? You know?

QUESTIONER 8: Thank you. Thanks, thank you very much for your contribution. Your presentation gives us some. Way to think how people like that. And will be here. We're expecting congressional command investment.

KATHERINE: Thank you.

QUESTIONER 9: I just watched a little workshop, I really appreciate what some of the snippets. That I got around running it. And the this idea that you just said about faith. Kind of carrying people forward through. A couple Of different situations. Where they would be in the sense that when. We are analyst. We are also aspirational and it is an aspirational and I'm very dedicated atheist. He's also. A Jew and also. Ruminating about, there was a workshop I. Don't know if. Anyone was here at the. Anarchist there last. Week, but it was Torah and anarchy. Yeah it was. It was you, were you there?

AUDIANCE MEMBER: No, but [inaudable].

QUESTIONER 9: Yeah, but we all go wow. Mind-blowing, very right at the end, and it was. A really interesting. Workshop even just in sharing that space with. These issues and I. Feel like as a. Person who is very invested in. Trying to reconfigure. Constitute things. That are better than *****. I feel like. So for example within. Within Jewishness there's this kind of identity that's. Carrying people through with. Many trials. And tribulations. But at the same. Time as a person. As an atheist Jew and pro Palestinian but. Being alienated to try. To be. Part of that community and. It's really like. Yeah so. I think. Example, we should not allow religious Zionist Jews or Zionist Jews. Or religious Jews to have a monopoly on inducting? People into today's. Like conversion is a thing that they. Run and they get to. Decide who swells the ranks and that's not OK because I. Would farm with her. That I feel like because I. Feel so much more insanity. For example, was doing like this. It makes far more. Sense to me. To say, hey why? Don't you come? Twitch let's let's. Just do it. So we have like. A food for us.

KATHERINE: I think we need to do that too. Is that this is not regulate so tightly. Who gets to me and gets or who really? I guess you know so. I mean, that's it's often not. Really that explicit. But there is, I feel like I've experienced myself, sort of like there's things that are expected. To be sort. Acceptable, as in this is in sort of the world as an anarchist, and anarchy can be so big and so beautiful and have so many different types of people in it. And it can also be very elitist and very closed off. So like if we can sort of try and. Be our better selves. You know? And maybe not let the people. Who want to regulate it so? Tightly do that, you know.

QUESTIONER 10: Yeah, I mean just to echo what what you? Just said is. Like everybody speaks to me because from my experience and I've. I've been an anarchist

for a long time and I'm an anarchist publisher now. But like. And so, like socially among people in areas cannabis gathers for. Me always that's there. Like I can't. I can't stand, you know. It was like. Elitism and stuff like that that you were getting it through. And so yeah, I took I. Got a lot of like for me it's. Like from what you were saying. There's just so much. There I could just talk hours. But yeah, I appreciate you saying like. I think that's a that's something. That that people need to pay. Attention to, but I think for a lot of people it's from. My own experience like. It is like trying to consider the truth instead. You know what I mean in a lunchroom? And I don't like that. Yeah, maybe that's not really funny, but that's. I connected to this thing but also. So yeah.

KATHERINE: I think it'd be interesting. I was thinking of like making a quiz that's like has all these questions is like what kind of anarchist are you? And then the answer is like you're a Puritan. You're quicker that hard, you know you're a big game, so something like that. But yeah, no, you're right like it can't. It can't really feel like the. Cool kids versus the not cool kids. And that's a really depressing way of. Living, and that's heart it's. Heartbreaking is what it is. That sort of isolation. It isolates people and that breaks your heart. It breaks my heart. I've definitely had my heart broken by other anarchists.

QUESTIONER 11: Thank you from the first from from the 1st. Like to thank. Everybody, because usually. There's two things without talking about one. So you have some questions. To share people. I think. On the 2nd. Hand I would like to point that everything I read I would feel sympathizing with most of it. From the I can approach. That's really good, but institutionalized. The church has been horrible. Many Catholics or Christians they don't really understand their books and they really follow the instructions. On the 3rd. Side, I would say they're actually contemporary and historically there have been so many fistral or indigenous communities with a very rich spiritual life. For him, forgiveness is stopped being an option because that means that we're the creation of operation and control and say. Share in the real practice many anarchist ideas like for example were transversally taking decisions together, not their article for the organization. As long as they are not taking leadership. So that someone is good at. Something while this person is taking. What different in school and the decisions taken and I would say that in this Community is there in many moments than we are. They're just the time that right now with emotional struggles over the things happening in Java themselves, they will have to take some action that can go against Utopia. Directly, so we should open the talk about the practical reality practical objective here. That you will feel in your heart that you have a very tolerant diety means. That you have to be. Very tolerant with the tolerate ideas because if not there will be no toilets for anyone. So I would say. Something similar regarding on the use of violence and I'm just. I'm having some thought in my. And I'm just going to say that I. And the other. Just wanted to share with everyone.

KATHERINE: OK, that was a really good point about predators being used as a weapon of oppression. Yeah, that's really something to think about. Like what Liz's

forgiveness mean to each other and whatever you're forcing other people to that. And forgive them when they shouldn't have to. Do that. Yeah, that's something to keep in mind for sure.

QUESTIONER 12: Yeah, it's one of the it's that's. Really interesting you. That's the way that so kind. Of Johnson's an animal. Spirituality especially and other traditions from the world can work. The framework that we've done. The earlier call and I would. Just give. Like small?

KATHERINE: Yeah I would say the resistance to spiritual discussion, or to any sort of religiousness and anarchism. Is pretty deeply colonized view of things because it's sort of separate. It sort of says that spirituality is not real and when we say spirituality and spirit. They're not real. You're throwing out tons of like indigenous spirituality. You're throwing out tons. You know things that are not just Christian. You know you can't. It's sort of like. I get the feeling sometimes that like indigenous Mystic traditions are seen as like OK, they can do that, but it's not real and like as a Christian Mystic as a white Mystic. I'm saying, like I believe in. Mysticism, like it's real. You know what I mean? So like when I feel thrown out I feel like that's that's an indication that or not just from not Christianity. Spirituality experiments and education of people are not actually believing in the reality of these spiritual traditions of other communities.

QUESTIONER 13: When you were talking about. The like kind of aren't even showing me coming to this report. I was also reminded of like the Millenarians and the like 1000 years ago. When, like there was this kind of the world would end. People, kind of. Basically taking among themselves to create community and like underground networks throughout the that industry world like how hard others. There's like a bunch of really great resources, stuff like relevant for the. Throughout the revolutionary everyday life. There is one called. The movement to the free spirit, which is about. This career I think that's called the brother the brother experience and about like the traditions of. Christian, which I guess of this time was synonymous with Catholic mysticism. I grew up in that time, an Irish Catholic. Family and so. A lot of the and like enforcing that I think of like about that how? How much when it's jammed out of your throat you have a category flex to it and then how much that slug but also. Trying to acknowledge the kind of. Real effect that it has on people's lives and how liberating it can be? It's a challenge for me, but also feels important too.

KATHERINE: Thank you.

KATHERINE (voice over): For more information about friendly anarchism you can visit my website www.friendlyanarchism.org where there are articles, resources on Quakers, radical Christianity, anarchism and antifascism. A link to the store and more. A big shout out to my patrons. Your support means a lot if you aren't a patron and you would like to help keep the show. Boeving you can go to www.patreon.com/friendlyanarchism and for just \$1.00 a month get access to patron only content like unedited versions of the show and outtakes. Friendly anarchism is part of the Critical Mediations podcast network, along with other great leftist podcasts like the Mag-

nificat season of the ***** Revolutionary Left Radio. And others I'm also part of theology corner, which is a project that explores different facets of Christianity. For more on radical Christianity, you can also check out the friendly Fire collective at www.friendlyfirecollective.wordpress.com. Don't forget to subscribe and leave a good review for me. On iTunes Hope. You enjoyed the show. Thanks for listening and see. You next time?

35. Community Antifascism and Free Speech with Greg Williams of the IWW

Listen Here

Originally aired 7/15/17.

Greg Williams is a Christian anarchist organizer and author I was very pleased to be able to speak with! We spoke about above ground community antifascist mass mobilization, how hate speech shuts down free speech, cops, solidarity, loving your neighbor, and more :)

Referenced: "Free Speech and Love of Enemies: Anti-Fascism Theologically Understood" by Greg Williams www.jesusradicals.com/blog/free-speech-theologically-understood

So, I actually confused two articles. This one from Crimethinc: crimethinc.com/2017/07/10/dear-community-zone-in-hamburg

and this one from It's Going Down: itsgoingdown.org/made-large-scale-mass-mobilization-medium-twitter

Referenced: "Fragments of an Anarchist Anthropology" by David Graeber

For more information about the rally in Portland on August 4th you can go here: www.facebook.com/events/239298920131113/

Season 2

1. Essay: I Want Peace On Earth, So I Left The Quakers And Became Antifa

Listen Here

Read Here

By Katherine

Quakers are known for their commitment to nonviolence, and antifa are known for their acceptance of violence. Why seek peace by leaving pacifism?

My political and spiritual awakenings coincided with the 2016 election, when I went with Sanders supporters to the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia. I was in turmoil. It was a very emotional moment as many of us watched terrified at the moment our country chose fascism over socialism, fear over hope. For many that moment came later in November, but for us that summer the signs were all around that a Clinton nomination meant a Trump presidency, and we were grieving. We felt in our bones that this election was a turning point in history, the moment to come together as a nation and really tackle climate change in a meaningful way, give my generation some relief from debt and poverty, to be given some sign that our country cares about us at all. It was all slipping through our fingers.

In Philadelphia there were a number of radical events that coincided with the DNC, including the People's Convention and the Socialist Convergence which were both held in Quaker meeting houses. I'd never heard of Quakers. Maybe I didn't pay enough attention in history class, because Quakers are actually very important to the American story, but to me any vague recollection I had of them was of some weird religious sect that had as much relevance to my atheist science-loving world as magic or fairy tales. I walked into these spaces and felt a sense of beauty and calm and gentleness that was a great relief and refuge from the upheaval outside as the streets raged with protests, anger, fear, and uncertainty.

The clean walls and simple pews exuded a patience and quietness that soothed me as years of silent worship resonated through the very air and soaked into my skin at the touch of the cold polished wood in the summer heat. Later in the week outside the convention center is the first time I ever masked up, as someone I assume was an anarchist handed me a bandana during a Black liberation protest that I joined. I liked it. I'd been very insulated in my previous life as a graduate student raised in a

red state. It was the most Black people I had ever been around, and they exposed a story about America I hadn't heard and of which was shamefully only dimly aware. There was obviously more to the American story than I had been led to believe in my sheltered white middle class life.

When I got back home I decided to learn more about Quakers and more about racial justice, and was impressed to find out there was overlap. Kismet! I read about how Quakers were abolitionists, and helped with the underground railroad, and were fighting for equality for women a hundred years before it was cool. I learned how they were jailed and persecuted for following their values that all people are equal in the eyes of God. Quakers have done so much good work towards peace and equality through the years led by spirit and love, and I was impressed. I decided to go to a Meeting For Worship, unsure what to expect. I definitely didn't expect the intensity of the conversion experience that I had. An elderly member rose out of silence and spoke directly to my condition with such clarity and wisdom I was struck down in tears and shock, so full of divine light it felt like it emanated from my body when I walked out of the meeting house that day. I felt I had been held in a love and acceptance and understanding unlike any I had ever experienced.

I started attending MFW regularly while my activism morphed from Bernie into anarchy, my disillusionment with the system completed by my attempts to work within the toxic environment of the Democratic Party as a Sanders devotee (even though I voted for Hillary), and the deep annoyance I felt with the Hillary supporters surprise at the election results when we'd been screaming into the wind about it since April. I pulled out a book I'd been given a decade prior, the ABC of Anarchism by Alexander Berkman, where he perfectly described in an uncanny prescience for 1929 the Sanders phenomenon of the lone socialist and how we will never win a liberated world through those means.

With the election of Trump I started researching how to fight fascism, and along with everyone else discovered "antifa", a small movement that had been diligently cataloguing the rise in white nationalism for a decade or more. I was feeling pretty clever for knowing about Trump 6 months prior, but they'd foreseen it years ago? Why hadn't anyone listened to them? I started researching them and found them to be nothing short of brilliant. I was enamored with their careful, diligent, thoughtful work, their multi-faceted, creative, and most importantly effective direct action at a time when everyone was running around with their hair on fire bemoaning what to do. This, this is what to do. I devoured everything I could find on antifa, and started attending their counter actions.

My concurrent love affair with Quakerism and antifascism was rough from the beginning. At first, I took a hard line stance against violence of any kind, including against property, a stance which put me at odds with the radicals. I stood in support of the radicals nonetheless, which put me at odds with many Quakers. Then Richard Spencer got punched in the face. I couldn't articulate it at the time, but I knew it was a good thing. I looked around for insight on the disconnect between my stated

values of nonviolence and my gut instinct that he definitely deserved to get clocked. A lot of people were talking about it, and it became clear that there was also a disconnect between white liberal interpretations and critiques of the event and the general widespread joyous reaction from BIPOC. This put another wedge in my framework, because shouldn't we be listening to BIPOC about this? Why were so many more BIPOC than white people seemingly "pro-violence"?

I got "Non-Violence Ain't What It Used To Be" by Shon Meckfessel, as it had been praised by Black Lives Matter organizers and learned more about the purpose and efficacy of property damage. And what's this, MLK is more complicated than I thought? "Riot is the language of the unheard", I hadn't heard about that or about how his work later in life was moving towards more alignment with the militant wing of the Black liberation movement. I also started getting more involved with antifa but was met with resistance from them as unsurprisingly my self-righteousness was met with hostility, which left me feeling confused and depleted so I returned gratefully to MFW on Sundays to renew my spirit and re-center on compassion, love, and humility before God. This was all turning out more complicated than the easy nonviolence narrative I had been fed.

Despite media hype, there is a lot of room for nonviolent action in antifascist work. In fact, the vast majority of it has nothing to do with violence. Exposing white nationalists, calling in to get them fired, documenting their growth and variety, and even physically protesting is mostly confrontation without violent intervention. Antifascism is self-defense. There was plenty for me to do as a pacifist as I worked on art, clowning, research, education, and community empowerment. While this was all true, there was also something else that was attracting me to the work as well; an un-examined penchant for violence that I wasn't expressing but pulled me like a moth to flame. Both of my grandfathers were in the military, meting out extreme violence in the name of patriotism and national honor and safety. They were both very good at it. They were also both Christians.

As a Quaker, I've searched Jesus' teachings for help concerning my questions about violence and social change. His journey seems to mirror my own. The progressive and liberal Church leans heavily on early Jesus, who preaches nonviolence in the Beatitudes, but there's another Jesus, an angry Jesus, a violent Jesus, who comes with a sword and whips bankers and is full of rage. A Jesus who tried nonviolence, who appealed to the best of human nature and was left forsaken, frustrated, impotent, and alone. As I've worked for change I have also felt the frustration He felt, the recalcitrance of the system, the dismissal, sidelining, and arrogance of power. I felt kinship with the Jesus who cursed the fig tree, a rich man's possession, out of anger. I have felt forsaken by God in the face of capitalist domination and I too wondered if I was on the right path. There seemed to be clear biblical precedent for at least some looting and property damage. By gleaning the grain he broke rules to feed the hungry, and in his attack on the temple he destroyed property to bring attention to a problem. This isn't the

normal interpretation but it's as valid as any, even more so once you strip away the imperialism and antisemitism that has been laid over his words across the centuries.

Throughout the years I have taken this question back to MFW and always found an ability to tie back down to the current running through all of existence of God's love, and that still, small voice that tells me to view the world with openness and acceptance and patience. I cherished the time in worship to sink down into that which is pure, which wasn't an answer as much as an approach to a question, but nonetheless has guided my life for which I am grateful to this day. Despite that, I began slowly pulling away the more I learned about riots and other obscured important mechanisms of social change, and as I witnessed and experienced state and non-state fascist violence first hand. Much lofty theory about social change is deeply divorced from the realities of on the ground struggle. Anarchism is decried as too utopian to be realistic, but I think liberalism is much more deluded about the realities of this world. It's clear that hard-line pacifism is asking many people to quietly die.

The rampant liberalism of the Quakers was starting to get to me. The more I became immersed in social justice history and research the more Quakers began popping up in less flattering arenas than my original impression. There was an article about the early roots of capitalism... and then as one of the architects of the Palmer Raids ... and then I found out that those beautiful meeting houses that had so inspired me were built with blood money gotten from Quakers indulging in the slave trade. As it turns out Penn wasn't such a benevolent colonizer after all, as if there could ever have been such a thing. Many of these things seemed forgivable enough if you squinted and tried to weasel out of accountability by claiming "historical context", but for me the nail in the coffin was solitary confinement, which is nothing short of legalized torture created by Quakers that continues to this day. That Quakers are not working to atone for that every day by fighting to stop the practice of it was too much for me. Most Quakers despite espousing against violence don't even seem to be involved in the more visible fight against the death penalty. That I was in Quaker meetings for 4 years without hearing the names Troy Davis or Rodney Reed is shameful and a clear sign that the ideologies of peace only stretch as far as the edges of the racial caste system. The fight for abolition marches on while the Quakers seem to have mostly dropped off the map.

I started feeling uncomfortable in worship. I'd leave in a bad mood, or feeling sick and drained for no discernible reason. I became sullen, detached. I started being more aware of the tension caused by my presence as an open antifascist, an undercurrent of being unwelcome. Not from everyone, far from it, and there were many people that were glad to have me who would quietly give me support and encouragement. But there was also silence and acceptance when someone would speak well of cops the day after another brutal murder. I started speaking less frequently, then going less frequently. I was having a harder and harder time finding God in that space.

God is in the street. I've had the privilege of being on the front lines with other radical Quakers, and God is there. I've held hands and endured while fascists tried to intimidate and mock us while we stood in solidarity with immigrants and protected

their event. We yelled at cops and blocked fascist's paths with banners. We marched and sang. We provided protection, and food, and water. We treated injuries and got people home safe. God is there.

Part of being a Quaker is learning how to listen to silence and all the volumes spoken with in it, and I realized that in the same meeting the silence was serving vastly different functions for different people. For those really in the struggle, under direct threat and blown around by the tumult of the world, the silence is a salve and a place of refuge in the storm. This is true for everyone to some degree, but I learned slowly of another more insidious function; of being a space to re-assert a shared delusion of comfort and safety built out of privilege and abject denial of how deeply authoritarian the amerikan government already was, how far gone we already were. This was comfort not from accessing God's love to gain strength for the fight, but of repressing reality, rejecting discomfort, creating a shared social contract that inaction is equal to action, that by petitioning and praying we can keep the demons at bay, that the situation isn't as dire as it is, and that the constructed reality of middle class liberal whiteness is the same as peace. None of this is true. Life in the United States of Amerikkka is deeply, deeply violent.

It would be unfair to put the blame all on the Quakers for the violence present in those spaces meant for peace and worship. The truth is that the status quo is the problem. Being here in amerika, or really any colonial project, is to be enmeshed in a web of imperialism, police violence, eugenics, and genocide. Any space which claims neutrality without acknowledging that reality is implicitly violent. The only places free from this implicit violence are the spaces where those systems are challenged, which then become spaces of explicit violence as the system reasserts its dominance and crushes resistance. There is no space in amerika which is free from violence and there never has been. It is the fabric of which the white supremacist, imperialist, settler colonialist project is woven.

Throughout these last few years I've studied violence, not just theoretically, but also in my body. Knowing I would eventually be joining the black bloc I started training in self defense and martial arts. It felt good, but also dangerous. It felt deeply emotional and also very powerful, tapping into a well of strength and a part of my personality I was very disconnected from. It scared me a little bit even as it fascinated me. I don't know if it's because I'm white, or American, or from a military family, or simply human, but I have a capacity for violence that shocked me and had been up to that point entirely hidden or repressed. I'm an artist, a student, a low wage worker, and a teacher. Before my leading to fight fascism, violence was not part of my life.

Many antifascists have a personal history with intimate knowledge of violence; childhood abuse or bullying or gangs. Using that language and skill set to fight back makes sense as we all use the tools available to us to help as we can. At first glance it made no sense for me, and was in many ways deeply naive as I started confronting murderers with very limited real world experience. So what drew me to this form of resistance? The resistance needs artists and teachers and care givers, why did I feel so compelled

to be on the front lines? It's the same part of my soul that drew me to God. There was a void, a something that shifted whenever I tried to look at it, a truth about the world and myself and my place in it that was hiding from me and I needed to root it out, I needed to grab it and stop it from evading me, this power and desire to understand myself and the world I inhabit.

At first I was scared and ashamed of those feelings of enjoying learning strikes and kicks and of this new found side to myself. I didn't want to unleash something terrible into myself and my life. But that is what holds us all back, the fear injected into good people that we can't use our power. There was more to me than even I was aware of, a broader set of life paths that I could have been put on in different circumstances, other realities untested, and possibly a brilliance and strength suppressed. As it turns out, I'm entirely decent at martial arts. I trained in dance as a kid and that knowledge of my body and awareness of the space it occupies was extremely helpful. There's also a brutality and rawness to my anger that I learned to channel. I feel comfortable in combat situations, at home under threat, and invigorated by the opportunity to protect and help in crisis. I never would have found my own strength if I hadn't also learned defense. I would have made a great imperialist soldier like my grandfathers if I had chosen that path. In lieu of participating in state violence I am proud to be able to provide safety for the vulnerable in my own way. Being confident and well-trained provides a meaningful threat that is very effective at preventing violence, as any bouncer can tell you.

The more I learned about Quakers the more the facade began to slide. We all have complicated histories and no long standing institution has come away from the slings and arrows unscathed, but it feels like Quakerism in particular is deeply enmeshed with the forces of domination and narratives of pacification which have directly led to the horror of late stage capitalism devouring our beautiful world. This destruction is guided by the hand and work of the early reformers and American religious entrepreneurs that built the infrastructure and provided the theological justifications for the ideologies that poison us to the very day; individual responsibility, personal worth being tied to how productive and hard working you are, the nobility of suffering, whiteness...

At first glance, and what I saw originally, was a very anti-capitalist bent in Quakerism. One of the main testimonies is "simplicity", which for the true believers is an anti-materialist sentiment, and yet there are many Quakers that have amassed a lot of wealth. As far as I can tell, for many the testimony has become nothing more than an aesthetic. It is understandable that early Quakers could miss the ties between capitalism and violence... or is it? Capitalism from the start was tied to the slave trade. But even if you were to make that argument, you have to be willfully blind to not see the ties between capitalism and violence now. If you are going to purport to be anti-violence you must also be anti-capitalist. Most proud capitalists do not claim to also be anti-violence and are openly imperialist and more than happy to cheer on the military violence of the state that 'opens up new markets'. Quakers are supposedly anti-war, but many don't seem to have made the connection between war, resource

extraction, capitalism, and the state. Many have, but not enough for any coordinated, meaningful direct action against capital, even within their own congregations.

If you're going to be against violence you must be against the state. The state is itself defined by a monopoly on violence, which it uses continuously to retain its perceived legitimacy. There is a type of "peace" within the heart of empire, but it is built on the threat of violence made potent by routine actual violence to those deemed expendable or a threat (Black people, disabled people, dissidents). By not contesting the dominance of the state do liberals quietly concede that they believe in the innate violence of humanity? Do they see the only options as state violence or chaos? How did people who believe that God is in us all fall into such a cynical belief in the lack of humanity's capacity for true peace, one not brokered by a police gun? Quakers believe that the way to stop the cycle of violence is through personal eschewal of it, that if everyone was peaceful in spirit, then violence would stop. For me this means rejecting statecraft and the hold it has on our minds. Kill the cop in your head. Abolishing the police and the state are anti-violence struggles.

But as it turns out, I don't entirely reject violence. Peace doesn't come easy. MLK may have accidentally done a disservice by saying history bends towards justice, for by doing so he crafted a feeling of inevitability that many people have come to equate with neutrality and complacency in the face of harm. This erases all the immeasurable amount of work and struggle that occurs daily to maintain even the thin modicum of stability some enjoy. Until the acceptance of domination and hierarchy is gone, peace will remain an active struggle, not a passive baseline. As long as greed and power are incentivized the forces of evil must be diligently fought back all the time. Until authoritarian values are fully uprooted from humanity the natural stasis of the human condition will not be one of equity and justice, and when we abdicate the fight all that happens is we allow injustice to flourish unchecked.

I've learned that some of the violence hidden in me was the same violence that permeates the nation and the world, for I have also been indoctrinated by capitalism built on exploitation, destruction and anti-Blackness. As I have worked to root out that abusiveness in myself at the same time as I try and root it out of the world, I have found my personal calling to not be in physical confrontation but in mutual aid work and other forms of humanitarian aid. I still cherish the lessons of inner peace I learned as a Quaker and don't want to be a violent person, which is a choice each of us makes every day. As a settler I am especially cognizant of the danger in wielding violence as a continuation of destructive systems, but some days the choices differ, and some days there are no good choices. Some days you have to fight to survive, and I stand with every victim of violence and oppression that has made the choice to use violence themselves as necessary, and I cannot possibly hold to any ideology that would abandon or condemn Bresha Meadows or CeCe McDonald. I believe in a peaceful god, but not a timid one. It is not peaceful to stand aside and let white nationalists murder the vulnerable. It is not righteous to trust in any broken system that is complicit in genocide and war.

During the US Civil War there was a rupture in the Quakers between who would pick up a weapon to fight for Black liberation and the end of slavery, and those who would hide behind a pacifist ideology that upheld their comfort. When that question is asked of me I will stand and fight to the best of my ability, side by side with the oppressed whom Jesus most loved. We must defend ourselves to survive, and together we will push through the horror of this fascist late capitalist moment to a better world. To be a peace-loving person is to be horrified with the American project from its inception to the present day and every step along the way (Quakers included). My loyalty is to bringing peace to earth, not to any single church or nation. I truly believe that humanity can live in peace, but we're going to have to fight for it.

2. Pandemic, Karens, And Systemic Fascism with Candice Part 1

Listen Here

Synopsis

Candice is an economist, housing services specialist, communist, and mom who is brilliant. We spoke about Covid-19, how at-risk people are pushed to the front lines, shitty bosses, the injustice system, the roots of fascism, how important it is to listen to marginalized people, and much more. Transcript: friendlyanarchism.medium.com/transcript...ac0c841177 Notes: -Candice is in a league of her own and her experience is not legal advice.

- According to the wikipedia timeline of the Covid-19 outbreak: "A September 2020 review noted "The possibility that the COVID-19 infection had already spread to Europe at the end of last year is now indicated by abundant, even if partially circumstantial, evidence", including pneumonia case numbers and radiology in France and Italy in November and December"

-RIP David Graeber :(

Music by Kylo Ren kyloren.bandcamp.com/

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Transcript

Katherine: Hello and welcome to Friendly Anarchism. This is Katherine, would you like to introduce yourself?

Candice: Yeah, I'm Candice.

K: Hi Candice! Welcome back, I'm so glad to have you here. Your episode in the last season was one of my favorite episodes, and it's a privilege and honor to have you back on the show with me. How are you doing? How is the pandemic treating you?

C: It's really boring. [laughter] No, so let's see...how are things going? Well, it's a privilege and an honor to have you as a friend, kato. I'm working from home, home schooling the teenagers and a four-year-old now, and just try to stay... Not too bored, try to stay sane and un-bored and healthy. My partner is working in a local grocery market, so we do have some risk factor. He's an essential worker, and as you can hear, I always have children around.

K: I love your kids, I miss your kids.

C: You know how to draw circles. She's really good at it.

K: I'm sure, she's brilliant. Yeah, I just had a run in with having a... There was a covid outbreak at the job I had in a warehouse. It's terrifying.

C: So are you not working there now...?

K: No, I quit, I quit. I was like, I'm just not getting paid enough to deal with this because they were not taking it seriously, and even the supervisors weren't masking properly, and it's just a whole horrible... I just did not feel safe. And at the moment I'm okay, so I can find another job with the same company in a different place, so I'm not totally hard up or anything, so...

C: Yeah, they have a responsibility to make sure that they keep a safe environment for you, and there's no shade on you for quitting. In fact, I encourage anybody who's working in an environment that's not protecting their safety with regards to covid or other pandemics or anything related to work place safety, to just go ahead and part ways with that company.

K: Yeah, it's so hard when it feels like there's a scarcity of work, it's pretty a scary thing to do.

C: True.

K: So I understand why people can't... And once you have a structural analysis of our society and you see just how bad it is, it's hard to not feel like just so bitter and angry about having anybody forced to work right now, like nobody should have to be working right now.

K (voice-over): Or in fact that we should ever have to work... To quote from David Graeber's piece, 'To Save The World, We're Going To Have To Stop Working'... "The system makes no sense. It's also destroying the planet. If we don't break ourselves of this addiction quickly, we will leave our children and grandchildren to face catastrophes on a scale which will make the current pandemic seem trivial. If this isn't obvious, the main reason is we're constantly encouraged to look at social problems as if they were

questions of personal morality ... All this work, all the carbon we're pouring into the atmosphere must somehow be the result of our consumerism, but this is just wrong... it's not our pleasures that are destroying the world, it's our Puritanism, our feeling that we have to suffer in order to deserve those pleasures. If we want to save the world, we're going to have to stop working."

C: I've been tele-working since day one, so I'm one of the privileged few. I guess they say I have a white collar job, but I work on social services, so... I don't know what you call that. You call that a red collar? I don't know. But that said, it's been really just... Even that is really challenging because the nature of the work really does lean on me being able to work with people directly, and the phone is just not a sufficient way to do that, and so... and why should anybody have to work under these circumstances? We figured out, I guess I would say that there's... Like we established that there's an essential labor force, right? And that the definition of that has been morphing since day one, to the extent that now essential labor includes retail workers and stores, to the extent that it includes... What was the one that I heard the other day? I was like, Yeah, that's essential [sarcasm]. I can't remember what it was, but it was... It was just pretty far off from what I would consider like hospital workers, food production distribution network workers, I think that people can't live without...

K: Yeah. It's like the system has decided that capitalism itself is essential, it's tied to the economy, that there's no other way to have an economy, so therefore that's why malls are open, 'cause malls are somehow essential... It's like do people really need to be in malls? But by our current systems logic apparently, that's ... like malls are still open in Los Angeles when the morgues are full.

C: It's good because we have to keep those malls active, we wanna make sure that the buildings stay maintained so that they can serve as secondary morgues.. No, I'm joking, but really, you know it's like... Yeah, you've said it very succinctly, and I'd just like to add on to that is just like capitalism itself has embedded Essentialism and it's importance to the extent that we believe that there's a such thing called 'the economy', and we believe that it will crash if consumer goods aren't being distributed and purchased and sold. And that may very well be the case, but if anybody transparently and without bias looks at the question of essentiality, what is essential and what isn't, any thinking person would have to question the value of needing more... I don't know, I bought this silk robe. Needing more silk robes. So I myself am of course guilty of participating in that consumer model, I just don't know that there's any risk of that ever changing any time soon.

K: At the beginning of the pandemic, it was taken very seriously. For a second, there was a moment of panic where everyone was shutting everything down and freaking out when the pandemic had come over and was affecting rich people the most because that's who had it, the people who were flying around internationally. The business class folks were the ones who had it and everyone freaked out, and at some point it settled a little bit, and the numbers came back and realized the people who were dying the most commonly were black and brown folks, were poor folks. And when those

numbers came in, all of a sudden, a lot of the system itself seem to relax. It seemed a pretty direct correlation, it was pretty disturbing, and that sort of happened I think right before George Floyd got killed and all of that popped off. Do you think that the pandemic itself and the connection between the burgeoning deaths of Black community are related to the uprising over the summer?

C: I mean, I hadn't looked at it through that lens, I definitely looked at the way... Or the fact that black and brown folks were dying at a higher rate and contracting covid at a higher rate, and I just sort of looked at it like, well we tend to live in more concentrated households and more concentrated areas, rely more on public transportation, rely more on jobs that are less individualized and more team-oriented, that we tend to be exposed to, have always been exposed to the worst chemicals or pathogens or whatever that the public has to offer, just by the nature of the kinds of jobs that we are offered and accept. And yes, there was a moment of time when the US recognized covid was here... I say it that way because I think it was here. I know it was here before it was actually identified in China, and just 'cause if I didn't have covid in 2019 in November, in December, I don't know what that was, but y'all ever watch out 'cause I was sick for two months and everybody in my family and everybody in my office and everybody in my husband's work place, and we all got sick with respiratory viruses that could not be diagnosed, so...

K: Oh wow.

C: Yeah, and there's people who still have long-term effects from it, and that's here on the West Coast, and the reason I say that I think that it happened here on the west coast back then is because we have this lovely phenomenon of things called tent cities, which are essentially shanty towns of people who have been pushed out of housing by landlords and ownership and the overburden cost, and then the barriers, like the hurdles of societal perfection that you have to like secure in order to be able to rent a place to live. Even the worst place. And then I work directly on the front lines of that, of that, so my interaction with folks who are sick was just really common, and I was always kind of willing to put myself in that position, not knowing that there was something that was coming that was this serious.

K: Right.

C: And I was always sick, and so it was never a question of like when I was working with people in the office, it was never a question of when I would be exposed to something that could be potentially deadly, I was just always sick, and so I was careful to wash my hands a lot. And people just thought I always calling it a lot until everybody in my office got sick. And I come to this point because even myself as a well-educated high-skilled worker, but who is also a Black woman here in the United States... My job is supposed to be pretty creative and autonomous, and I'm supposed to be able to do some project development, but essentially they just want me to be like the mammy of people who can't find housing here in one of the worst housing markets in the country, and... So even my highly educated, high-skilled labor position puts me at the front lines of pathogens that other people don't want to be exposed to, so...

Yeah, I correlate that with this beautiful memory that I have pretty much on a weekly basis of the rich bitches who I fucking work with, excuse my French [laughter] who are like executives who are fucking d*mb as fuck [laughter]. Or maybe they're not d*mb, they're smart in a professional way, but that means that people die because of that. So they're compliant and they're smart and they're professional, and they have all the social cues, and they might even be classically pretty by a white male gaze standard, so all of those factors that put them in a position to earn two and sometimes three times more annually than I do with a very different skill set, and sometimes terrible grave outcomes for the people who we serve. Those folks, the fear in their eyes when having to be, when encountering, interacting with even me, you know? Somebody who makes a middle class income. Somebody who is clean, who has a beautiful, or had a beautiful office that smelled nice. [laughter] And just the, the cognitive dissonance in their brain, which is like they're talking to each other very closely, and I can see and observe that from a distance, but the second one of us gets close to each other, the second one of us gets close to them, you know the fear that washes over their faces was a fucking glorious, beautiful thing. [laughter] I was like, Yes, come get my poor people germs all over you. I've already gotten you sick. [laughter]. So it's something that I reflect on pretty much weekly, and it's not that I would want to give somebody covid, 'cause it's a horrible thing and it could kill somebody, but it's just a reality that even then they were worried that their white middle-aged security was gonna be threatened by the presence of my Black perceived un-healthiest and filth, and I just felt the punk rocker in me really just really, really embraced that moment.

K: The idea of being feared or having people be afraid of you, I've run into that sometimes, and it's such a weird... I remember one time I was a little weird kid, I remember this one time I was at a dance thing and this little girl, this little blonde girl was trying to be nice to me. I was like eight years old, and she was like, 'Oh, what's that in your hair, it looks so nice...' and I was like, 'Oh, it's natural..', it's like I just didn't have washed hair... I just had greasy hair, and she took a second and she looked to me and then she went like, 'Aaaa!' and just ran away.

C: Meanwhile she stripped her scalp of all of its natural oils. You have to pay for that in thousands of dollars of hair treatments, probably starting right about now. [laughter]

K: Yeah, probably. I don't know what's happened to her. She's probably doing just fine. I just remember distinctly the look on her face when it changed from like, 'I'm gonna be such a good person and be so nice to this weird girl', to stoop down and be kind, and just me just being... Not into it. And her realization that I was more than she could handle, and just ran away screaming.

C: You didn't want her charitable kindness, you didn't want her kind around you in the first place.

K: And I wasn't going to pretend, I wasn't gonna be like, Oh, it's some gel from the store, it's mousse, blah, blah, blah, blah, it's just like I'm just dirty and gross.

That's why you're over here talking down to me. Let's just admit that that's what's happening, you know? [laughter]

C: Well, I think that there's a lot to be said about people probably like her, who were probably powerful and like you said, doing just fine in a lot of ways, now embracing this diversity and equity stuff and inclusion that everybody is touting as the next wave in professional America. First of all, why is this just now the wave? It's those same bitches that make that the game, I'm sorry, those same people that make that the game. It's a passion that I have for this, I'm just expressing my passion. But then it's also... It's also like, we're going to pay you lip service, we're going to pay for prior sins and errors to the extent that we have to demonstrate for the most part in order to not be called racist, to not be called... Classism isn't even a thing that they're thinking about right now.

K: How is that possible? Like you work with un-housed people... How are they not thinking about that?

C: They're not thinking about classism or ableism, man... And those are big ones. And me saying ableism has gotten me in hot water, I mean, it just... It's a factor of they're so far behind the curve on so many things, but that doesn't really matter to the bottom line, and so kinda start going back around to your very first question about, did you notice that the concern and fear of covid and the way that our various sectors of the economy shut down around the time that we thought that, Oh my gosh, this is just a fast global pandemic, and it's threatening like the uber rich and Tom Hanks has it, and oh my God... Next month, a month later, when we know that it's mostly Black and brown folks who are contracting and natives as well, which is on reservations, which I haven't had a chance to look at the data, but I just wonder what the correlation with that between that and casinos is because I'm trying to figure out how something... I guess it just takes one person and a pathogen like that can go on to a reservation and be so devastating. The devastating part is easy to understand. How it got there in the first place is a little bit more difficult, right? In my experience being from the Midwest and experiencing Midwestern reservations, like maybe it's a little different elsewhere, but the transference of people is just not as fluid as I would expect. To me, it needs to need to be so damaging. But once again, we're talking about people who are living in concentrated environments, people who don't have the resources to solve quarantine within their house away from their family, people who will be doing the physical labor that is required to make sure that essential things are taken care of, are then hopping on a subway, hopping on a train, hoppin'... wherever, into some sort of public transit going to an apartment complex, how often are the doors knobs ... how often are the hallways cleaned... And so I could see in my mind that why it would spread so quickly in those environments, but I had not considered your question, which is, did you notice that as soon as we knew that it was mostly killing Black and brown folks, that society seemed to ease up on the standards a little? I didn't think about it that way.

K: I noticed it, it was pretty disturbing. And it is just continued colonialism, isn't it?

K (voice-over): From BYU about the covid epidemic and how it's affecting native and indigenous peoples: "While older people are more likely to die from covid-19 than younger generations, native and indigenous people of all ages have been disproportionately affected by Covid-19. American Indian and Alaska Native people are four times more likely than Caucasian people to be hospitalized due to Covid-19. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, to quote from Bleu Adams, co-founder of 'Protect Native Elders' and member of the Navajo nation, "they were telling people to wash your hands, try to sanitize, etcetera, and we knew that the Navajo Nation was going to struggle because around 40% of households don't even have running water" she said. "We're the size of West Virginia, and we have 13 grocery stores, so that means the first of the month, when a lot of families get their money, they go to the stores, which creates huge crowds."

K: It's so ironic when you're talking about them being afraid of you being dirty and contagious and scary, when it's like, well, again, it's like...

C: I wash my booty.

K: ... it was the rich white people flying around that are the ones that are bringing it to all these places, it's probably some rich white person that went to a casino and the people who are literally, they're spreading it are then turning around being like, we're so scared of you.

C: Yeah, you poor people stay away from us.

K: But you're the ones...[laughter]

C: Oh no, I mean, my husband and I, my partner, I were both cooks, we were both sous-chefs and cooks, and we did catering work for a lot of years, so we know how not to cross-contaminate. I've always watched my hands after the bathroom, I can't tell you how many of these richer people I've seen go out of the bathroom without washing their hands. My four-year-old just said 'Me too, I always wash my hands.'

K: [Laughter] She's smarter than a lot of these folks.

C: [Laughter] Yeah, we had to re-teach people to wash their hands and people are still refusing to do it. That's the shitty thing. My partner works on the front lines, and he's always having to teach, to tell people that they need to wear a mask into the very small, very neighborhood-centric store and that they should watch their hands, and people want to fight him about it.

K: Whyyy?

C: I know, it's a point of frustration and that he lives with on a regular basis.

K: That is super frustrating: I just wonder about our survival instinct sometimes, or our ability to survive and our resilience, cultural resilience. What haven't we I don't know I'm going with this ... Let's talk about resilience and white people.

C: Well, it's a community thing.

K: Yeah, let's talk about Karens, 'cause we're talking about resilience, we're talking about people being able to manage difficult situations with grace, so the opposite of that is of your quintessential Karen type.

C: Right.

K: Like something difficult happens, like you can't get your hamburger made right or whatever, something that's not perfect happens, and there's just this epic meltdown of massive proportions that seems super disconnected from the reality. We talked about that the last time we talked, and I've just been thinking a lot about that. Like, what on earth is going on there? Because you had mentioned trauma, and I think that's part of it, but I don't... I think that's a very forgiving...

C: I was more forgiving before, and I've had this long-held theory that a lot of it is actually childhood lead exposure.

K (voice-over): A research team from Duke University has "determined that participants exposed to higher levels of lead as children were described as having more difficult adult personalities by family members and friends. Specifically, they found that study members with greater lead exposure were rated as more neurotic, less agreeable, less conscientious, than they're less exposed peers."

C: If we look at the generation who currently inhabits that Karen model; that attitude of self-righteous, self-entitlement, and anger and an inability to cope in those scenarios, they also seem to correlate with a group of people who didn't benefit from the lead paint and the lead mitigation laws that weren't enforced until the late 70s.

K: I think that's part of it, but I have come up with a new theory that I wanted to run past you. See what you thought. Because the Karens are not just the boomers too, though, it gets younger. I've had my own Karen-y type feelings and moments at times, which I'm conscious of, but I can feel the Karen in me, and I'm like, where is this coming from... And I have this theory that specifically white women, our power derives from proximity to white men, not from specifically our power and the proximity to white men is about what can we do for white men and how are we useful to white men? And so when you see Karens, it's often women of an age who are leaving their ability to birth children, you're getting older and you're losing your value to white men.

C: Oh sure.

K: I listened to somebody talking about how misogyny affects white women and Black women differently, and the way that misogyny affects white women is that white women are infantilized.

C: Totally. And children too, it's the same thing with adultism and children. Yeah.

K: So I have this theory that these women are literally acting like children to try and regain some of that power of male protection of white male violence and protection, which is only meant for children, 'cause the focus is actually on children, so that's a theory... I'm just throwing that out there. Because it's like, Oh, you're acting like you're during the literal tantrum, like a child, you're literally infantilizing yourself,

because your only sense of safety and self-protection comes from getting a white man to care about you and to protect you.

C: I would say that that's a workable theory, I mean, and I wouldn't would even classify as your only sense of self-protection, there's a lot to be said about the different various waves of white feminism and ways that they have changed that dialogue and that dynamic for the better among white women. I do not like white feminism, for instance, but I don't throw it out wholesale, because there are some things that have impacted... I will even say whiter-skinned women in general across the board, that has been beneficial to the plight of women at large. That said... Yeah, I mean, there's the proximity to white maleness that empowers white women, there's just like I mentioned earlier, like the value of women under white male gaze, so it's something you were touching on there, which is like, what can they do for them? It's like, how can they be appreciated for them. If we think about everybody as a commodified individual, which is a lot of the ways I think about it, we all have a different value. As a Black woman, the white feminist labor movement of women, that movement that was like, 'Let's go into the workforce'... We were all... I just imagine my Elders and ancestors being like, 'Where were y'all at? We've been working this whole time. We were doing your work, okay?' [laughter] Like did you forget about us?

K: You want to take over the laundry and the child-care? Go for it.

C: And the cooking, and the nursing. We talk about the power dynamics and the hierarchies of humanity, and the way our society breaks down and the imposed hierarchy of white maleness over everybody else, the proximity to that gives us power. And I would say that white women have been shrieking like banshees since they became white women, quite frankly. If we really think about it, or since even before that, since they were fucking monarchy back in Europe. And probably women with proximity to the power, the higher levels of the power dynamics in hierarchies have always been kind of shitty and... So we think about suburban white women, we think about everybody with their little fiefdoms, you know landlords and they're in the suburbs and they've got a picket fence or they've got a McMansion or whatever, so they believe that they are somehow part of the capitalist power structure, and some of them are! But very many, the vast majority of them are not. And pulling that curtain off as you age, as you experience the world, your fucking cognitive dissonance is being challenged and people tend to freak out when their cognitive dissonances are challenged.

K: That's right.

C: And I just also look at it like a sense of entitlement. I look at it very much like I'm rubber and you're glue [laughter]. Being a leftist, being vocal, being young, being Black, being all of those things... a lot of the public discourse in the previous decade has been like, 'Oh, these entitled socialists... Oh, these entitled millennials', and it's just like, we're the furthest thing from actually being entitled or having this opinion of self-entitlement. We don't think that we're gonna get shit from the world. We don't think that anything is happening for us, but they do believe, and it's almost in a dualistic sense, like if you do the right things, you'll get everything. And then

when you get to that point, you realize that it's not quite so simple, and that can be really devastating for folks not to say that they get a pass for acting like jerks when they get there, the rest of us have been out here living in this shit this whole time, we've been telling you. You didn't wanna listen until you got there. So, sorry, Karen, but I wish they would. I think that in a lot of ways the public discourse about Karens has really helped significantly because it is now totally frowned upon to frivolously call the cops on people of color, and that is a huge deal. I've gone through my whole life worrying about that shit. Like, I'm not doing anything wrong, but you never know what somebody is gonna think I'm doing, or maybe I'm dirty and will give them covid or whatever. [laughter]

K: Yeah, what has changed over the last year? So you've noticed some tangible changes in your life?

C: First of all, nobody expects us to go anywhere, so it's kind of been shitty. I've never had social anxiety, but now when I think about going to the grocery store, I'm just like, Oh no!

K: Because it literally could kill you... Yep, it's terrifying.

C: Yeah, that and I've been enclaved in my house, so it's just very hard to break out of that norm.

K: Let's talk about how there's different laws for different people in this society. I was a little bit naive coming into this project. Coming into activism in general, my thought was, 'Well, it's really interesting to have a show that's about somebody who is actually an active activist, and can talk about what's really going on on the ground. I think that's worthwhile.

C: It is.

K: And I still believe that's why the show is still up there, but there is... I do have a lot of fear cause it's like my feeling was like, 'Okay, well, I just won't do anything illegal and it'll be fine', but now I've been out there. It's like, Oh, that's not how it works. Like illegal is an extremely mutable category that actually... Everything is kind of illegal... There's laws all over the place that you're just in a web all the time, and they just get to choose when to pull the strings on who. It's not about what is illegal, what actions are illegal, it's about who is being criminalized.

C: It's about who you aggravate.

K: Right. It's about being part of a criminalized population.

C: Yeah, it is, and I'm definitely familiar with being part of a criminalized population. I'm also familiar with being able to be on the other end of things, and I know what the laws are and where the line lies, at least to the extent that I've generally been able to argue myself out of trouble. But not everybody has that background legal education that I have, not everybody has a desire to argue as much as I do [laughter] I have this amazingly polite approach to it though, I just ask a lot of questions until somebody is really essentially trapped in their own lies, but not everybody knows to do that. And if you don't know to do that, and if you don't know what the laws are, and if you don't... And if you're going into things naively just thinking you're doing the

right things, you're very, very likely to get caught up and get in trouble and even killed, and that's the scary thing. It's like the laws don't protect you from getting killed, they do protect you from... Well, I'm trying to think of something, they protect you from... The laws are created supposedly to protect us from ourselves and to protect other members of society from damages created by us or other people, but what it really is about is who has the financial or monetary or economic power to subvert the laws. So that's the biggest thing, is just about money, and then who has the identity-based position to get the benefit of the doubt given the legal framework that we have. So there's laws about everything, right? And one of the biggest ones that we're taught in school is In America, you're innocent until proven guilty. And I just say, prove that. Show me an instance...

K: Yeah, that's not true at all.

C: ... when that's true, and they almost can never... 'they'... whoever... 'the powers that be'... I haven't really had anybody be able to show me an instance where that was true for a person of color.

K (voice-over): Legally this is known as the presumption of innocence, but the Equal Justice Initiative talks about how for Black Americans, there is instead, a presumption of guilt. "The presumption that people of color are dangerous and guilty is so deeply entrenched that studies have found that support for harsh criminal justice policies correlated with how many African-Americans they believe were in prison. The more Black people they believed were incarcerated, the more they supported aggressive policing tactics and excessively punitive sentencing laws.

C: Or for a poor person.

K: What is it, 95% of people take plea deals? That's like... if 95% of people are taking a plea deal with saying, which means that they're saying that they're guilty about whatever it was that they got pulled in for in order to avoid jail time, you really think that that's... that our police force is doing that good of a job, that every single one of those people is guilty for everything they're being pulled in for, that 95% of people are legitimately guilty, if they're taking a plea to get out of it, I just don't think that's true.

C: Have you personally ever been through the plea deal experience?

K: Yeah, I had to take a plea deal.

C: Yeah, so I've taken one for traffic violations or whatever, and I honestly did that tongue-in-cheek was just like, Yeah, you guys I'll plead to whatever is least expensive, 'cause that's less on my credit later on when you go to collect the money that I'm never gonna give you. But I'm an asshole. [laughter] but most people aren't assholes like me, most people aren't going around like 'I'm just gonna subvert the system and say Fuck it, and if I have to I'll move' [laughter]... Most people aren't doing that. I have been through that scenario and basically the lingo, the jargon, the intimidation that they use... they stick you in a room with a prosecutor if you're not represented by a lawyer, which I really haven't been, and that prosecutor operates in the space of duality where they're like Hey, it's this or this. And I'm like, But what about the truth? And they're

like, Doesn't matter, the truth is really hard for you to prove, but it's really easy for me to make this really painful for you while you're trying to get to the truth, so... Trials are expensive. Getting a lawyer, if you get a public defender, which they'll offer you if it's a jail-able offense, like that person is overworked, and a lot of them... I know a lot of public defenders. They are really people who actually give a shit about their defendants, but they do resent people who frivolously go to trial for things that are kind of minor because they have people who are going to potentially go to jail for a long time, life or have some other super negative consequence, then they're trying to represent well, and every time they have to represent somebody who "frivolously" goes to trial and requests a public defender, that takes away time from that. So there's all of these moving parts and mechanisms, and essentially, from the very first time I ever went to court, understood wholeheartedly that like, Oh okay, this is a mill for poor people, and it is a mill to create... And it creates this constant downward pressure on working class and poor people to essentially just comply with whatever seems to be the most minimally harmful thing, and a lot of times that's a plea bargain, and they'll say, Oh, fines and it'll blow over... People who aren't doing the calculation of how this is gonna impact their future "job prospects" or whatever, or like how this is gonna impact their housing prospects. Which it shouldn't, by the way. Or how this is gonna impact just their legitimacy over time. What if you fall in love with somebody whose family really cares about them and gets a private investigator and finds out you plead to a minor offense and then you lose the love of your life? I mean that's how serious this shit is... I think that that's more serious to me than a fuckin' job.

K (voice-over): From an article by Emily Yaffe for The Atlantic Magazine in September 2017 titled 'Innocence Is Irrelevant': "Ideally, plea bargains work like this, defendants for whom there is clear evidence of guilt, accept responsibility for their actions. In exchange they get leniency, a time-consuming and costly trial is avoided in everyone benefits, but in recent decades, American legislators have criminalized so many behaviors that police are arresting millions of people annually, almost 11 million in 2015, the most recent year for which figures are available. Taking to trial even a significant proportion of those who are charged would grind proceedings to a halt. According to Stefanos Bibas, a professor of law and criminology at the University of Pennsylvania law school, the criminal justice system has become a capacious onerous machinery that sweeps everyone in, and plea bargains with their swift finality are what keep that machinery running smoothly. Because of plea bargains the system can quickly handle the criminal cases of millions of Americans each year involving everything from petty violations to violent crimes, but plea bargains make it easy for prosecutors to convict defendants who may not be guilty, who don't present a danger to society, or who's crime may primarily be a matter of suffering from poverty, mental illness, or addiction. And plea bargains are intrinsically tied up with race, of course, especially in our era of mass incarceration.

K: I did lose a job because of my... I was on probation. I got a year of probation and I lost the job after they did the background check and I... What's the word I'm looking for? I countered it?

C: Oh, you appealed.

K: That's it. Yeah, thank you. I appealed and they eventually did give me my job back and then I quit. [laughter]

C: Like Ha Ha Ha Ha I win, fuck you.

K: Well, I didn't want to work for them, and the appeal process took a long time, I had had to find a new job in the meantime anyway, so by the time I got my job back through the appeal process, I'd already... It wasn't working in my life anymore. But it's like it was a whole draining thing, and then you have to go through your life with people and be like... Okay.. it's just really...

C: Yeah, I was arrested for something I never thought I could be arrested for... I was literally like, this is your story. I was literally arrested for something that I was doing the right thing.

K: Yeah, but that doesn't matter. The right thing is not the point.

C: No, it's the legal thing.

K: It's the legal thing. Yeah, and right now we're looking at a point... I got arrested for anti-fascism, and now we're looking at a point right now where we just started a democratic... We have a New Democrat as a president, and the legal system is maneuvering to take over anti-fascism, kind of, like they're talking about... There was cops that had to actually fight white supremacists at the capital on the 6th, and that one cop got a huge amount of praise from liberal spheres for fighting back fascists and whatever. So it's like the state legitimacy sort of relies on their ability to counter this particular type of problem, which is the white extremists, like white supremacist extremism. But in order for the state to regain its legitimacy, that means it needs to take that back from the people who were doing it, so everyone... I think a lot of people are expecting an FBI pivot and crack down on the anti-fascist left who was doing that, and so I'm sort of right in this moment right now and being like, Okay, so what's gonna happen if laws are not real or like if people are scared of the word 'anarchist', are scared of the word 'anti-fascist' and...I don't know, I'm just wondering if they're gonna... A lot of people are wondering if that's gonna... I put my name on this and I'm proud of that.

C: If there's going to be a legal crackdown? Well, I think that this Democratic administration is gonna have a whole lot of unraveling to do in terms of the weird web of draconian and also state-based draconian laws that were allowed to take hold during that last administration, which is a confusing web, right? And also so many of the people who were criminalized during that administration for anti-fascism stuff, a lot of it was federal, but most of it, the vast majority would have been under local and state jurisdictions, and so navigating how to provide guidance in those scenarios when for basically the last two and a half years, or especially in the last year, the guidance was, throw the book at them. And a lot of people did take... I know people who took

plea bargains under those circumstances to things like misdemeanor rioting, all they did was walk with a group of people. But it was like, Well, okay, we'll give you this plea bargain, but there won't any fine and there won't be any jail time it'll just be on your record, and it's like, Yeah, but certain employers or schools or whatever are gonna look at that and take that more seriously than others, you know? How does a landlord look at rioting on your criminal record? That's really important to me. From my lens, in the world that I live in, it's like it's really hard to get a place to live if you have anything recent on your criminal record.

K: Yeah.

C: I don't know, I didn't have a driver's license for 10 years. I lost an entire career for fucking with the state basically. Just refusing to pay them any money. I could have paid them the money, but I just didn't want to. [laughter] Because legitimately, I didn't cost them anything... That was my argument every time I went to court. What has this cost you? Why are you saying I have to pay 500? I haven't harmed anyone. I haven't done anything wrong. All I've done is being poor and Black in my neighborhood, when for whatever reason, y'all seem to think that you can take and extract fines for profit out of the poor part of town, when I happen to work on the rich part of town, and those mother fuckers do cocaine in their cars and drive 80 miles an hour. Pull those people over, they can afford to pay the fines! We can't, so you're just creating more and more destitution, more and more desperate poverty in those scenarios, creating... essentially ghettoizing people who are working hard to get out of the ghetto.

K: Right. But the people with the nice cars doing the cocaine, the rich folks, they have lawyers and they'll cause a fuss and then it'll be a whole pain in the ass, and so it's like if you're just like a cop and it's something you wanna deal with that's easy, it's just like, let's take the easy way out. So how do you make it hard and also not make it worth it? I have been struggling with the idea... I have a whole lot of impostor syndrome about being an anarchist, about being anti-fascist. I'm kind of the generic almost, like the cheap off-brand anti-fascist.

C: I like that. You're Private Label. [laughter]

K: I'm like the Kroger version.

C: You're Great Value, bitch. [laughter]

K: I just don't know if the FBI cares about my impostor syndrome. I don't think I've done anything illegal, but you get so paranoid when it's like there's just so many laws out there once you start realizing. I saw a cop went to talk before Congress about the fact that it's like you can't even drive a block without breaking laws, it's impossible, there's literally so many laws on the books, but you can't even drive a block without doing illegal stuff. It's like wild, we live in such a highly tightly controlled society, so litigious.

C: I'm confused, so what do you mean you can't even drive a block without breaking a law? I'm confused by that.

K: I should find that article. But he went to speak before Congress saying there's so many laws on the books that you're always doing something illegal basically.

K (voice-over): I cannot right now find the article talking about the cop who spoke before Congress about it being impossible to drive a block without breaking a law. I did find an article from the Chicago Tribune right after Eric Garner was killed, written December 4th, 2014 by Steven Carter. In it he says, “The legal scholar Douglas Husak, in his excellent 2009 book, “Over Criminalization, the limits of the criminal law”, points out that federal law alone includes more than 3000 crimes, fewer than half of which found in the federal criminal code. The rest are scattered through other statutes. A citizen who wants to abide by the law has no quick and easy way to find out what the law actually is, a violation of the traditional principle that the state cannot punish without fair notice. In addition to these statutes, he writes an astonishing 300,000 or more federal regulations may be enforceable through criminal punishment in the discretion of an administrative agency. Nobody knows the number for sure. Husak cites estimates that more than 70% of American adults have committed a crime that could lead to imprisonment. He quotes the legal scholar William Stands to the effect that we are moving towards a world in which the law on the books makes everyone a felon. Does this seem too dramatic? Husak points to study suggesting that more than half of young people download music illegally from the internet. That’s been a federal crime for almost 20 years, these kids in theory could all go to prison.”

C: Oh yeah, I’ve made that argument and I was like, and who writes the fucking laws? You know what I mean? Especially municipal ones that are just really, really hard to follow. So getting back to that, so driving a block and you can’t even avoid breaking a law, that was an argument I made once in court.

K: Really? Did it work?

C: No. [laughter] But it was fun. [laughter] Basically, I was just like, who writes the laws? You guys. Who enforces them? You guys. Who sets the schedule of fines? You guys. Who do they ask? Not us.

K: I think more people are starting to be aware of it. It’s just been so blatant lately, just with the... Especially with police is the most obvious is like all police are completely above the law apparently? it’s just like... Even average white people are being like, Oh man, that’s pretty... That was really blatant.

C: Yeah, no, and it had to be on CNN before white people would believe us. And the whole time we’re sitting here... I like to think back to that Dave Chappelle comedy special where he’s just like, ‘Pleease believe me!!’ [laughter] I was just like, no, it really is happening. We’ve been saying this for a long time. I was in a meeting, I was in a Zoom meeting the other day with some folks who were like all butt hurt about the siege on the capital on January 6th, which I have a favorite meme moment I wanna share at the end of this...Like they were all sad about it, and at the end of that meeting I put in the chat, I was like... So I just wanna let you all know that I’ve been talking about this for 12 years. I’ve been talking about fascism as a problem that is burgeoning in America for 12 years, I’ve been admonished by Harvard political scientists. I’ve been admonished by people left and right who said, Oh, that is hyperbole. Oh, that is just reaching. And I’m like, No, this started with the Tea Party, prototypical textbook

beginning of a fascist movement. I was in Kansas, I saw it, I confronted it in person, I was there, okay? And I've been saying it, and people have been saying, I'm stupid about that for a really long time. Now mother fuckers. Now, what do you think? Can I just say, Look, it is important to listen to marginalized people. It's important. So we've been saying this for the whole time, policing for-profit is a fucking problem. And it's been a problem since the reconstruction of the United States. We've been saying this for a long time. Over policing of Black and brown and indigenous bodies has been a problem in the United States ever since police became a thing in the United States. And until it's on CNN or until Rachel Maddow talks about it on MSNBC, the vast majority of white people don't believe us about this shit, and I'm telling you it here. It's real. So stop fucking waiting for Rachel Maddow to get the story. It's too late once it makes it to the news, okay? Listen to Black and brown people, listen to indigenous folks, which requires you to step out of your comfort zone, it requires you... Which I don't even know why just being surrounded by white people is your comfort zone anyways, that seems fucking ridiculous to me.

But it requires people to look at other people, people who look like me, people who have hair that is textured like mine and bodies that are shaped like mine, and not just look at us in ways that we could be more like you. It requires you to look at us in ways that we are another human being walking on this earth, having experiences, and by all fucking means having more colorful experiences, getting at the deeper raw-er aspects of the fucking issues that we actually face, and then hearing us and not admonishing us and assuming that we just need to do a little more assimilation in order to get past that. It's never gonna fucking work. Henry Louis Gates Jr., one of the most celebrated and well-respected professors of history in this country, was arrested trying to break into his own house that he had lived in for 15 years or something like that, because he was locked out of his house. This man can tell you what seven generations prior of your family, where they're from, and the story of their life and the context of the history around that story of their life, and fucking his neighbors called the cops on him because he was a Black man breaking into his own house. If y'all can't listen to us, y'all white people, can't listen to us and can't hear us and can't bare witness to that, then I don't give a fuck if you're a hardcore anarchist versus the Katherine model, the private label generic anarchist. Like, Fuck ya, quite frankly. And also you're gonna miss out... You're gonna miss out on these opportunities, and I think the reason that you have this impostor syndrome feeling in a lot of ways is because so much about whiteness, even white leftism is about social cues, and it's about the stylistic-ness of it, and it's about being special, it's about being famous, it's about being notable, and having somebody quote you and have it, and it's like, Dude, that is cool and all, but your fucking status doesn't help me not die. It doesn't help me face fucking police brutality or just... And I think about the spectrum of police brutality as just over-policing of Black communities, to the extent that they're stealing hundreds of dollars from Black households every month for just petty bullshit that we didn't even... you know? So yeah, so I've been a really adamant abolitionist for a really long time, like

policing abolitionist, and I've had recently white people who claimed to speak for the Black Lives Matter movement who claim to represent and support us admonish me and tell me that they have a better plan for police accountability, than the lingo that I'm using, and the approach that I take, which is, Fuck the police. [laughter]

K: I think your approach pretty much sums it up and is a very... I can't believe... I mean I can believe that people are... Ugh. That makes me mad, I'm sorry.

C: Yeah, like rich fucking 20-year-old white girls being like, 'No, I have a really important political voice, and it's really important that you change the language around, so it's not so confrontational', like bitch get the fuck out of my face! You know? Shit, I'm sorry, I didn't mean to yell. [laughter]

K: You can yell all you want, that is fine. [laughter]

C: Yeah get the fuck out of my face with that bullshit. [laughter]

K: We're in a really dangerous moment right now with anti-fascism, in the fact that there is becoming a liberal version of anti-fascism. For me what it meant to be anti-fascist...

C: Everyday.

K: ...was to understand the whole structure, like that's why I'm an anarchist too, it's like to understand is that fascism is coming out of a broken system, the whole structure is really violent, really fucked up, right?

C: Yaasss.

K: But there's this other thing that's happening where anti-fascist can also be seen as just the bare minimum or like 'I'm against just literal Nazis, just don't be a literal Nazi, and then everything else is fine', and so there are people that are pivoting towards with a Democratic President, now they're now pivoting towards liberal anti-fascism that aligns itself with the police state.

C: Yep. There's a reason why the left is why we on the left, communists in particular, and I'm not saying we're all perfect 'cause we're not, but have had litmus tests for people who we organize with, have had bare minimum fucking like interviews and surveys and vetting and just all of those parts that come into it, 'cause we're not... I'm not here to organize with you, if the only thing you fucking care about is not having Nazis siege the capital, like fuck the capital too. The state, the whole systems, all of these hierarchies, they are completely devoid of value to me. We need a revolution, we need a fundamental change in the status quo, the systems and the powers that be and the structures within the status quo have perpetuated colonialism, violence, fucking ... pandemics, just completely subverting the whole purpose of what it is to be a biological human. In every way that they could commodify us, they have, and they have stolen from us our fucking... our generic capacity and essence of life! They've taken us and stripped us, alienated us so to the extent from our labor, they've alienated us from nature! They have alienated us so far that they have people living in shanty towns, tent cities on the street, and they're telling them they can't live there. Where the fuck are they supposed to go?? So the whole system that we have that is creating all of these social ills is the problem, and if people don't understand that that is a function

of fascism, that Hitler based his entire fucking Third Reich off of the US model of slavery, and for wage slavery as well, then they don't have the right to wear the banner of anti-fascism.

K (voice-over): Okay, so we're gonna need to stop there. There will be a part two which I will be releasing shortly. Thank you so much for listening. Candice is amazing. I'm really excited about the next part as well. If you like what you're hearing and would like to support my work, I have a Ko-Fi for one time donations, I also have a Patreon, both under the name Friendly Anarchism, you can look me up there. I do need some help covering costs for hosting and for the transcripts. I know it's a tough time for everybody right now, but every little bit helps! Opening and closing music by Kylo Ren from Eugene, Oregon off their album 'Decadence', their track 'Towards a Creative Nothing'. Thank you to my current patrons, I really appreciate it!

3. Everyday Antifascism, Celebrity, And Making Something New with Candice Part 2

Listen Here

Synopsis

"Let's do something that they can't even imagine."

Part 2 of my conversation with my friend Candice who is an economist, communist, mother, and all around rad lady. We spoke about everyday antifascism, being a disabled and limited radical activist, taking care of each other, and more.

Notes:

- I just want to note that the inclusion of liberals, while a part of a popular front strategy, is playing with fire. I much prefer radicalizing/working with people who are apolitical
- I should have mentioned fascist creep in the form of "gender critical" dialogue. Transphobia is a major source of reactionary rightwing garbage right now
- I was a little hard on Portland, it's a big place with a big scene and so obviously not everyone involved has all the ego about it. A couple really good antifascist/activist resources coming out of that area are the podcasts "It Did Happen Here" and "Rural Roots Rising"
- Many Q-anoners are in fact very dangerous, I had in mind one particular memory
- Greasy hair does not actually protect you from Covid-19.

Music by Kylo Ren www.kyloren.bandcamp.com/
Support my work here! ko-fi.com/friendlyanarchism
or www.patreon.com/friendlyanarchism

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Transcript

Katherine (voiceover): Hello and welcome to Friendly Anarchism. This is Katherine. This is part two of my conversation with my friend Candice, who is an economist and a communist and a mother, and an all-around amazing lady. So let's go ahead and jump on in.

Katherine: Alright, so where were we? We were talking about liberal anti-fascists.

Candice: Ugh.

K: That's a thing now. You mentioned everyday anti-fascism. How I understand 'everyday anti-fascism' is not necessarily liberal anti-fascism.

C: Yeah, totally.

K: From Mark Bray's book, he describes everyday anti-fascism... Oh, wait, that's the wrong quote... This is how he describes liberal anti-fascism, He says, 'Many people

ascribe to a kind of liberal anti-fascism whether they know it or not. By liberal anti-fascism I mean a faith in the inherent power of the public sphere to filter out fascist ideas and the institutions of government to forestall the advancement of fascist politics.’

C: Right, so, I agree with that wholeheartedly. And that is definitely what I’m thinking about when I talk about liberal anti-fascism. But what I meant by mentioning everyday anti-fascism was just that it kind of tends to attract people who believe that the systems that exist still function in that regard, and it doesn’t give them a pass, I wouldn’t say, but it just frames the context of what anti-fascism and particularly the buzzword Antifa stand for, which is just like that everybody should functionally be against fascism and invites or welcomes people who are, for whatever reason, not gonna be in the streets, active anti-fascists, but who hold those beliefs, and even if they hold those beliefs within a systemic context of still being the job of government to resolve those conflicts, those folks are also welcomed into the fray of anti-fascism. First of all, I have so much mad respect for some of the people who have been spokespeople or who have really promoted the concept of everyday anti-fascism because of the fluidity of their rhetoric around the subject, and it’s not just a fluidity, but it was like the foresight and the vision to be like, ‘We need to be inclusive for people who might hold those liberal anti-fascist beliefs’, basically the antithesis of that, and you don’t even have to be the antithesis, but anything outside of inclusiveness of those folks is going to forward the agenda of fascism, if it has an agenda.

K: Right, yeah. And then when this book came out, when “Antifa” by Mark Bray came out with the term ‘everyday anti-fascism’ included in it, that was at a moment in 2017 was I really was unclear if anti-fascism was a societal value that we still hold as a consensus in this society, you know people were like, ‘Maybe fascism is a thing that we wanna do’, and so it was really important to push at that moment, push back on the encroachment of fascism into even liberal spheres.

K (voiceover): Now, clearly, this is still a problem. A lot of people like to think that defeating Trump means that we’ve defeated fascism, but we have entered a climate change era that is going to continue to be marked by more and more destabilization, so unfortunately, the need to fight fascist creep is as urgent as ever and will continue to be. Now, I’m not going to go into too much detail right now, but I just wanted to point out and direct you towards some resources about common forms of fascist creep that I’m seeing right now, the first being an emphasis on a fear about population growth. First of all, global birth rates are in decline and have been for decades, also, individuals are not equally responsible for the climate crisis, and by focusing on population, you obscure how the climate crisis is being driven heavily by unjust resource distribution, capitalism, colonialism, and militarism.

Next is wanting to blame all of our problems on a small secret cabal of evil actors, this is based on anti-Semitic tropes, so this is stuff like the illuminati or the ‘media elites’ or all that q-anon garbage. The third one is talk about purity versus degeneracy, so this is showing up a lot in natural food movements and farming movements, where you start seeing rhetoric about the pure traditional country side versus the degenerate dirty city.

These things are often coded that the city is queer and black and the countryside is pure and white, even if it's not being said out loud. Same thing with food and organic food movements. The original German Nazis were heavily involved in environmentalist movements and a lot of that stuff still exists today. The last one I'm gonna mention real quick is class reductionism, this happens a lot on the left, especially sort of Marxists and people in the Communist milieu will want to reduce everything to a class analysis, which often supersedes for them a race analysis, but just remember that you cannot understand our economic system without understanding systemic racism, you can't understand climate change without understanding white nationalism.

Okay, so that's just a really quick rundown, I've created a list of links on articles for all of those separate topics, if you are interested, check them out in the show notes... Okay. Back to Candice.

C: They're looking at ways like, how can I vote, and march, and carry a sign and buy stickers and do whatever, that is really low barrier, just below educating myself a little bit more to say the right things and do the right things, and those unfortunately are the people who will get ahead. Those, unfortunately, are the people who get to be part of think tanks because they have a palatable message for the powers-that-be. They're not saying, 'Hey, you guys, we're putting you on notice powers-that-be.'

K: I think that there's an important discussion around how people conflate intensity of work versus quality of work versus the baseline politics that go into the work because people are unclear about some of those things sometimes. For instance, you can do very low intensity work with a really good politic, and that's a way to include a lot of people that can't be out in the street, are disabled, or there's many reasons why people can't be doing really intensive high risk work, right? But they can still do work that has a really radical politic at a low intensity, and that's still better than people doing high intensity work with a bad politic.

C: Absolutely. Yeah, it's really important for me that we recognize the work of people who aren't necessarily able to be in the forefront or who maybe don't want to be or are doing really important radical work in the background, because if they did it in the front lines, if they did it in the scope of the public, they would be at even more risk than they are by doing it in the background, and a lot of times that work is carried by marginalized people, disabled people, people who can't present in front of cameras and who can't march for whatever reason. Time constraints or physically. This year, to me, was such a natural experiment in all of that with the BLM movements that happened. I'm 36 and I'm a radical, and I'm an anarcho-communist. So if you think about the arc of time that I existed within as an active radical as a young person with more freedom and fewer constraints, was always about being in the streets, and there's a whole lot of self-work and self-understanding and recognition that has to happen for the person going through that change of life, because now I'm not as able to be in a public sphere, march, do those things, like I have severe asthma, and this year it was covid, and I have all these kids and everybody wants to margin 6 PM, I think we've talked about this before. It's just like I have to be cooking dinner at that time, I just

got off work an hour ago. Or God forbid, it's a Saturday, and I'm just kicking my feet up and that should be my prerogative because while I respect and appreciate people who have a liberal agenda and those values who are marching in the streets trying to do the work, trying to forward the movement, trying to get the revolutionary shit going, some of them, and some of them are just like, 'Can we ask government to do right us...' Whatever spectrum of those values that were in place at that moment in time, they created a public image of what was happening. I think the thing that I'm really thankful for with the societal evolution that we're experiencing now is that we have social media, we have the internet, we have public forums that are open source, open access, and people can share their values and their ideas and connect with each other broadly and while those spaces can absolutely be toxic as fuck and... Oh my God, they're so annoying [laughter] But no, it's like... So a lot of that work is being done by people who are behind the scenes, and that is real work. We're writing actual policies that dismantle existing policies, we're making sure that there's food and child care for people who are able, we're making sure that there's a next step, a next path. I now have to place myself within that group because I just don't have the time... Or space, or risk tolerance at this point to be in that confrontational marching around thing, and honestly, now after covid, I'm working on my physicality because I don't even have the physical capacity to do that.

K: Yeah, I'm having the same... I'm the same problems and the same issues. After my arrest, I got really, really sick and is one of the reasons I stopped the podcast, and I'm still struggling with a lot of physical and mental symptoms, and I'm just not able to be out there doing that kind of thing.

C: Shit hurts.

K: Yeah, I'm getting old. I'm 33, which is kinda on the edge, people are still out there, being radical as fuck all the way up... I mean grannies are out there. I just personally, I'm not able to do that. Podcasting is not my favorite form of activism, but it's what is available to me to be able to do from home, and it's sort of the set of skills I have, I like ideas and stuff, and I appreciate people who are out there doing the good crime, [laughter] but I just can't do it. I just am not able to do that. I really appreciate the abolitionist movement in groups like Critical Resistance who have a framework of understanding that there's stuff people can do that is abolitionists and low intensity, as opposed to reformist.

C: Yes! Way to bring it home.

K: You can still do things that are working towards abolition even if it's not burning down prisons, and I really like that. I think that that's something that the more that we understand anti-fascism as a part of a larger abolitionist framework, the better for everybody.

C: Right. You're so fuckin' smart.

K: [laughter] Well I learned from the best. That's why I'm doing this podcast, there's lots of different kinds of smart, and I'm much more this kind of smart than street smart. [laughter]

C: This podcast has a longitudinal impact.

K: I hope so. I mean...

C: I'm not just juicing you up like legit, you're doing something that's gonna last. It's a digital file now, it can continue on. People at the very least will know that they're not alone.

K: I have seen the problem of the celebrity-type atmosphere thing that people get into and getting into this stuff for clout and all of that stuff. So I struggle with that, but one thing that I've learned too though, is that it's really powerful to have a voice, and I'm the kind of person also... I realized I didn't really know this until I got arrested actually, but there has been a downward pressure on me... what was that?

C: Oh, honey, yeah, of course. You're a fucking working class person, you're a disabled person, you're a queer person.

K: [Laughter] Yeah, I know, but I just...

C: You're oppressed!

K: It's like when people come out as gay and everyone is like, 'Yeah, obviously, you're gay'. I didn't realize that I was visibly disabled. I didn't know until I got into jail, and everybody in there was just like me [choking up].

C: Oh. Well those are our people.

K: Yeah, yes, yes. And I just, I didn't know that I had a people and I didn't know that...

C: But you did know at some point because you were always fighting for them before you ever met them.

K: That's true, that's true. Some part of me knew, but it didn't really hit home until I walked into that jail and I was like, saw people moving the same way as me...

C: Mm. Yeah. Just awkward? We're just awkward.

K: [Laughs] Awkward, yeah!

C: You know what though? Think about that. We could have met in jail.

K: If I do go to jail or whatever, then I'll fight it. I can't think of whatever stupid shit people would try and put me in jail for, but man, our government puts people in jail for STUPID shit. [laughs]

C: Well, I think you're pretty well out of the scope of danger for the moment...

K: Yeah, I think so too.

C: You never know, they're always changing the rules.

K: They're always changing the rules, and I'm doing this thing where I'm being mouthy again...

K (voiceover): Candice is being really patient with me, here I am displaying some white fragility, because as a white person in America this is the first time that I've really personally experienced that sort of fear about my government. It's one thing to know it intellectually, like my generation, millennials, we grew up with Abu Ghraib, with Guantanamo Bay. We know our government is capable of horrible evil shit. None of that was hidden, that stuff is from when I was in middle school and high school, but it's a whole other thing to kind of feel the state clamping down on you, and I'm

just sharing this vulnerability in this podcast right now, 'cause I hope that hearing that fear in my voice and from me, in that paranoia that gets caused when you realize really what this monster is, this carceral state that we have, just the heaviness of that. That's my solidarity with criminalized populations, because really just... It's horrifically cruel. If you want just a continuous run down about the atrocities our government perpetuates all the time, you can follow Alec Karakatsanis on Twitter @equalityalec, he's the founder and executive director of the Civil Rights Corp. Or also, another good Twitter account is Jailhouse Lawyers Speak. That's @jaillawspeak on Twitter and just constant barrage of horrific cruelty of the Prison Industrial Complex and of this American government. It's scary, man. Me and people like me are just doing our best to try and survive and make this a livable world and make it a fair and just world, and it shouldn't be this scary to do that, but... That is what it is. That is what it is.

K: [laughter] Well people keep trying to shut me up and that makes me annoyed, it makes me want to not do that, and it's worked... I shut up for a minute 'cause it was just too much, 'cause it's too hard is... [choking up] There's a reason that this podcast has been really hard, and you mentioned earlier, you're talking about celebrity, about status and I've been struggling with this show in particular, with my role as a host on a podcast, and what that means to be somebody who is taken from versus somebody who's helping... I got to a point where it feels like the desire for the system to commodify me or you or anybody is so deeply embedded. To be a public figure, is to be somebody who then becomes commodified too... And I can feel that and I feel really uncomfortable with... I don't know, I just really, really..

C: That feeling is really important. Because once you become a public figure, once you put your work out there, then you start to become the property of the public, right? But I will say this, when you're adding to the discourse and the larger school of knowledge and body of work that's out there about these issues and really doing so in a very accessible, revealing way, especially from an afab lens, from that raised femme gender lens, which is so often dominated and dictated by tankies and fucking... Dudes. [laughs] That that is worth it. It's worth the risk, but then, of course, with every risk that you take, you have to find ways to mitigate it, and so it goes back around to like, Who do you want yourself to be, how do you want yourself to be commodified. I think you've done a really good job of taking a step back when it just became too much, and that's totally respectable, and it's also like a demonstration project in what you mean when you say community care, what you mean when we talk about activist burnout and all of those pieces. People look at me and they go like, 'Oh, you never burn out', and I'm like, you don't really know, actually.

K: Right.

C: Because I always find ways to stay busy... I have to stay busy defacto, as a fact of my life. Part of the fact that I'm like, I'm a mom and I have to work and all these other things, but I often also just grab onto projects that are a little lower barrier for me to stay active so that I can continue and it's not because I wanna be a public figure or a public commodity, it's 'cause I just wanna keep my momentum up.

K: Right.

C: But people look at that and they do... They do look at that and they do try to define it for you, and it's really hard to keep ahold of that.

K: Well, and all of these issues, all these issues are tying into things and finding out about myself and about re-evaluating my own life and my own way of being in the world. And it's like, How much of this do I wanna do publicly? How much of this is useful to people, and it's useful for me to find community and useful for me to create community, and how much of it is like... I'm just really struggling with that balance. You lose...

C: You lose status points, it's like nobody's gonna protect you if they find out all of the lower status things about you, they're just like, Hey, let's protect somebody we think is more important.

K: This is somebody that is trash, we can just throw this person out and not care about this person, and that's a thing that's happened to me in activist spaces, or it's like You think I'm one way, and then you meet me and you see that I move and talk a little bit differently than you thought I would, or I look differently than you thought I would, and I can just see the status get lost... and it's so painful and doing that in a...

C: Yeah, so those aren't fucking activist spaces that we care about.

K: [laughter] That's right.

C: Those are the wrong activist spaces.

K: Yeah. *sigh*.

C: No, honey, it's fine. You're a thing of beauty, and that a lot of people are just so caught up in their own belief and internalized abuse from society about what the truth is, that they don't know how to behave properly in those scenarios to really be able to just take people as they are and meet them where they're at requires you kind of being in a subverted position in a lot of ways.

K: I think it's interesting that I reached for Christianity at that point too, when I felt like I was going to be doing something more dangerous with my life, I reached back to my ancestors and see what they did. My whole family is Christian.

C: You Sankofa'd. [laughter]

K: I what?

C: Sankofa. It's like the original symbol of the heart, like the African symbol with doves or... I don't know, my partner's the artist, not me. But it's like this circle-y... it's a mythological bird. There we go. Reaching back for an egg on its tail. It's an African symbol in the style of... what people? [indistinct voice] The Akan. Yep. It's something that all humans do. It's a theme that's repeated throughout most of our ancient ancestral knowledge.

K: Hmm. That's interesting.

C: So we were talking about this before. So yeah, you reached back to your ancestors and were trying to do something...

K: It was like how did they find strength and how did they deal with the world when it's difficult? I've had some crises of faith while I've been on hiatus. I've kind of

come back around to deciding that faith is a practice and a choice, you know? That it's like even if every moment of the day I don't believe in God, the choice to be a person who lives in faith, is useful to me to be able to survive.

C: Yeah. Fo sho.

K: And when we're talking about these hierarchies, there is something that was very strong about the way that the Christian tradition subverted the existing social hierarchy to say 'Actually the wealthy are the least important people, that the refugees and those hated by the government are the most important people'. And I didn't have a lot of exposure to the Bible when I was a kid, but my mom did read the Christmas story at Christmas every year and that's a really beautiful powerful story.

C: No room at the inn.

K: No room at the inn. This refugee family living in poverty is being turned away from everybody, just hated by society, under risk from a totalitarian government.

C: Mmhmm.

K: That this person, this woman is the most important person in the world... she's the Mother of God. That is a really powerful subversion of the social hierarchy in a way that I think is just such a good story that it's really lasted and it's still really powerful, and I still really believe that, and I still really love that image. And how you imagine your God is like if you imagine your God as the least of these, as the person that's most hated by society, how does that change the way you move through the world? How does that change who you care about? Who am I trying to impress, right?

C: Exactly.

K: What would the woman who can't find a room at the inn, the poorest person, what is this brown woman that's living in poverty, what did she think about my actions instead of thinking about what are the people in power who can hurt me, like what do they think...

C: Or even like, what is the super cool hipster who started a blog page that talks about anti-fascism and is a well-known organizer, what do they think about my actions.

K: Right.

K [voiceover]: This is definitely a sub-tweet, but not towards any blog. Actually the only anti-fascist blog I know about is the threewayfight, and that's a great blog, you should totally check it out.

C: Yeah, yeah. None of those people are important. The people who are most important are the people who are the stakeholders, right? The people who are the stakeholders matter in the decisions that you make. So I would say if the work that you're doing is supported by those people, then great, if it's not, then stop doing it. And really, the really, really difficult piece of that is like, I'm a leftist, I'm very often considered part of the stakeholder category because of all of my particular marginalized identity-related things, and those two identities leftism and being marginalized don't always interact well in terms of being able to say definitively yes or no, I agree with this, and be of a spokesperson for other marginalized people, particularly people of color,

because we don't all agree. [laughter] And so with the Black Lives Matter movement, something that you were involved in.

K: I personally owe so much to Black women, just in my personal life. I don't think I could ever make up for it.

C: Well, and we're not asking you to do that because I think that in a lot of ways, what we're just asking for is for you to within your capacity, within the safety of your person, support us and support our voices, and I see you doing that. So I don't know, there's a whole lot of white activists around who will frequently grand stand and are still to this day, even after all of the dialogue and all of the discussion around what it means to be an ally and what it takes to be an effective ally will still like for instance, try to center themselves and their version of the dialogue that they think will be more acceptable to the powers that be, and that is the problem that is the fucking problem that I have been facing for weeks now and for years, but really encountering it for weeks is because these people know that I'm right, the powers that be. They've encountered and dealt with me long enough to know that if I say something, it's right. In terms of what needs to happen, what is to be done? What should we be doing? That's the right thing. And they're having a really difficult time confronting their own cognitive dissonance and their own positionality of wanting to and having the power to resist that progress that I'm saying that we need to be taking. And that's just from a lens of progress, that's not from a revolutionary lines, and so I appreciate you making the space where I can say that and they're being other people who will listen to this and say, yeah, that is a lens I haven't really considered. And that is a fact in factor of like, Oh shit, we should be listening to Black women, we should be listening to people who have not just lived experience, but also a fucking education, that's the thing that they often forget about me and they wanna put me in the lived experience category, 'they'-the powers that be in my life currently, but I have a background degree in Economics [laughter]. I have been as a child to four countries, like I spoke different languages, I worked in kitchens, I've worked for my whole life. People will still relegate me to entry-level labor or experience for the work that I do, and it's like mother fuckers I've been working for 22 years. And if you think that none of that work experience that I have, none of that life experience that I have, none of it... And it's the same with you. It's like, if you don't think that my lens on ableism or my lens on gender or the way that I walk and move and experience the world matters, then... Fuck ya, As my sister Jackie would say. [laughter] Fuck ya then. And her! She's been all over this world, she speaks three languages, she fucking has a multiple, multiple skill sets and still makes not enough money to live on because she's from another country and has an accent and she's Black. So we have a whole lot of work to do. This new Democratic administration is like posing as being like, 'This is how we're gonna fix America.' Like motherfuckers, unless you're talking about a complete revolution, we ain't fixing America and the AOCs of the world and whatever, who dilute our message and take a lot of flack for it... I give her credit for fucking being publicly socialist, right?

K: Mmhmm.

C: And taking flack for that, and on January 6, I was legitimately worried for her. I was actually thinking, Oh shit, fucking Rashida Tlaib, my girl. Omar and like AOC, those women were at risk. Those were the people they wanted to kill, you know? And so I give them credit where credit is due. But also, Bitch stop talking about my message! Because you don't have it. [laughter] You don't have it. You're not revolutionary. Y'all are liberals. Although Ilhan Omar is kinda, she's kind of... I fangirl her. I don't know if she's just quietly not saying things? She very infrequently pisses me off because she just does things that makes sense. But she doesn't do them in a way to be like, 'This is the way it means', just like AOC is like 'this is what it means', and I was like, Oh, we needed a hot girl to fucking tell us some bullshit. [laughter] How about listening to some ugly motherfuckers, you know? 'Cause if you're ugly you got the worst of fucking society. That's the thing, and I'm like, you could be an ugly white man, really ugly, and probably be having way worse experiences than me. But that's not saying that's a fucking blanket thing, you could be an ugly white man and still be very high in the power structure.

K: That's what the Nazis went after me for was for being ugly in my mug shot.

C: Oh yeah?

K: Because they knew that's a societal weakness

C: Yeah. It hurts women.

K: You're less likely to be cared about and listened to and have any sort of power to change anything if you're ugly.

C: I don't know, one of my favorite rappers is Trinidad James which he is trash by the way, but I love him. He has a song called 'Ugly', and... my partner is going 'Yeah, yeah, quote Trinidad James!' [laughter] because the song is called 'Ugly' and the song goes 'God made you ugly bitch, you ugly. That's okay. If my baby come out ugly I'll still love it.' [laughter]

[matching clip from the song plays]

C: I'm just like, exactly motherfucker! [laughter] So what if you ugly, you can always put on fancy clothes.

K: It really is all about confidence, and it's like... That's what I'm trying to build up. It took a lot of chutzpah to be like, Okay, I'm gonna be an open anarchist in the middle of the fucking fascist uprising. [laughter]

C: Sure!

K: Sure! And it's like now we have Democrats and still sort of got some blue MAGA stuff going on, and it's like I'm just like, Oh man, can I get enough chutzpah to do this again? It was such a fight that first season was like... I just was fighting all... it was so hard, man. I was just fighting all the time, and it's just doing that again makes me feel so tired.

C: I don't think that's the next thing to do, honey.

K: What, the show?

C: Oh, the show? Yeah, do the show. Fuck yeah. But if you're thinking like this is draining you, then by all means don't do it because you've put your fucking life on the line for this movement, and I just want you around for your wisdom.

K: I'm having a really hard time deciding if the amount of risk is worth the amount of gain or if I'm actually safer having more celebrity and having more people around me, 'cause I was reading this book, *The Seven Necessary Sins For Women And Girls* by Mona Eltahawy, and one of the things she talks about is how celebrity has saved her ass. We're told as women to be quiet and to be small and to not make any fuss, but it actually...

C: So they can use us?

K: That's one thing I was told, I was told that basically just like I was doing this for attention and that's all that mattered, and it's like, I don't even understand your hierarchies, it's definitely not why I was doing the show. And maybe it would make more sense for me to actually try and get some of the celebrity stuff and do that thing, even if it costs some things it's like, well, I'm getting commodified anyway! I just almost got covid at my stupid ass job, so it's like my body is on the line.

C: I would say that's hella riskier.

K: I know! So it's like, why am I doing that?? When maybe I could just...

C: Yeah, this show being called *Friendly Anarchism*, you're maintaining that friendly lens and that care and concern and inquisitive based lens... I'm sorry some of your guests, current company included [laughter] are probably not upholding that as well, but they can come for me. Pull up, bitch. [laughter]

K: But maybe I should be doing that too. Am I leaning into whiteness by making myself small and kind and friendly to appease... so mean people aren't mean to me 'cause I seem innocent and nice, is that actually... Is that actually a weakness?

C: I think you're just doing you.

K: Yeah.

C: And I think that that's reasonable for anybody to expect of anybody, in fact, if we could just get to that point, if we could just get to a point where we let people be them, do them... And people didn't have to have all of this self-doubt around whether or not it was the right thing, we would find that within a couple of generations it would just be the right thing. Yeah, I don't know, I mean, that's my fucking theory is generally people want to be "good", you know? The very fucking small incidents of people within our society who actually desire to be fucked up, that is more prevalent now because the model is be fucked up. The model is to exploit... The model is to do damage, and so by you existing the way that you do, like the very...

K: Oh no!

C: That was weird as fuck!

K: What happened?

C: My laptop went to sleep.

K: Oh. [laughter] Oh technology.

C: Oh technology. If I'm just not touching you, then you just must go to sleep. No, so getting back to it, dude honestly, just be you. Being kind is such a revolutionary fucking act in this world anymore [laughter].

K: You really get the shit beaten out of you for it, people really are mean about it.

C: People are fucking assholes, [laughter] that's why it's a revolutionary act to be kind. And you've never cowered away from a fucking nazi fight. So as a kind person who still steps up and is willing to punch a nazi, or has been in the past and maybe isn't anymore because of the physical toll that takes on people.

K: The trauma is real.

C: The trauma is real. If punching nazis is a requirement for American citizenship in the... Well, in the new Turtle Island revolutionary society that I would create in my dreams, like only doing it one time is mandatory in anybody's lifetime. [laughter]

K: Well there's a reason that Taoists and monks and people that preach non-violence also do martial arts because if you're just nice you just get smashed. So it's like, Well, I wanna be nice, and in order for me to be nice I have to be able to defend myself.

C: Yeah, you gotta be a no-bullshit type of person.

K: I know, it's like, I wanna be kind. That's what I want, I wanna be kind, I wanna be nice, I wanna be non-violent, but there are people out there that see that and they see that as weakness, it's like, well, I also know how to hurt you, I definitely do not want to, but I just need you to know that I do know how to do that, so that I can continue to be a kind person.

C: Yes, and for a time there, you put yourself on the front lines of that fucking conflict and that struggle, that literally put you in the cross-hairs of cops and nazis, sic: The same thing. [laughter] So there's a difference between you and me, right? You're a nice person who went out looking for a fight, and I'm a nice person, a really nice person, who often has the fight brought to me, just as part of my existence. Be kind to everyone, but when people have gotten their fill or they're use out of me, than they decide to mistreat me and have had multiple scenarios where I've had to fuck somebody up, you know, and I never trained to fight or whatever, I just somehow inherently knew how to use this big body of mine to fuck motherfuckers up. [laughter] And then that becomes a stereotype, and it's like that Black women are violent, Black women are angry, and it's like No, society abuses us to the extent... and they're okay with it... Including men. White men. Big white men with guns. Cops, ie, Sandra Bland, ie all of us who have been abused in that situation. In a sense we're forced to take on that defense training.

K: And what's happening with me is as I'm going through this journey of finding myself and not hiding so much about my queerness and my disability, it's like the fight is coming to me more. That's the price I pay for being more open about who I am, and I can see that in this happening in my life, just physically in the world, and that's why I'm sort of retiring from being out on the front and stuff. Taking care of myself in a world that's more openly hostile and violent to me for being more openly who I am means that I have a whole lot less spoons at the end of the day. I have a whole lot

less energy to be doing other... So I feel for folks that can't be out there, and I just happen to have already built this platform and put a lot of time and a lot of energy and money and pain into it, and it's a successful show. I did the numbers, and it's actually just literally a successful podcast, so I'm proud of that and it's... I wanna be able to use that platform.

C: It has a lot more value to me, honey, honestly then fucking any ass protest any day. I'll just say it, I don't go, I don't march in the streets. I don't go. You know why? Because it's like a moment in time that happens and we record it and it's in the news or whatever, and it often can be like... Whereas this podcast very much claims and makes its own definition and is saying what it is through it being that. Marching down the street with a bunch of people who all have different ideas about what you're trying to accomplish, more often than not is usually distilled down to a few palatable talking points for the public, which then become the fucking point and the fucking presence and the premise of that whole thing. And so what you've just done is something... It is a fucking exercise in commodification of your efforts, and it's like misappropriation in a lot of ways, and then it makes space for fucking dumb asses to come in and try to tell me that they have a better messaging on what we should do with cops when they've automatically through their privilege, their white, female privilege and youth and wealth, and all of these things been thrust into these positions of legitimacy and power when they haven't really had any lived experience dealing.

K: Right. And my focus hasn't been protests, 'cause in a lot of ways, a protest is itself asking something of power, and I'm not interested in that.

C: Exactly.

K: I would go as security for people that were protesting because...

C: You don't want people to get hurt.

K: 'Cause I don't want people to get hurt, but the actual act of protesting can raise awareness and has a lot of good things and can build community.

C: I agree.

K: But what is more important is just taking care of people. We're in a crisis moment, the state is failing, we're in the middle of a pandemic, we have to...

C: Do something that tangibly makes the situation better versus like just do something where you're asking... I said a bunch of times, and definitely a pretty unpopular person about town now, especially among Black activists about town, because a lot of them are liberals, to be honest [laughter]. And so in that unpopularity, I have said multiple, multiple times like how many more times are you all gonna go and yell at an empty building of people who have the power to create change that you want, but they won't and they haven't and they aren't even present and often, they're sending the cops after you for just doing that, and you haven't even done anything confronting them directly.

K: Right!

C: Like you're putting yourself at risk for a very, very low return. The economist in me says, Fuck that, let's just pull our money and buy some land and fucking create

a real revolutionary enclave that sits aside the fucking sick society that we live in as an example of what can be possible.

K: Yeah, just [getting] people's material needs met is such a difficult thing to do, and the fight will come to you. That's what you're saying about when you're just trying to survive, we're trying to save the lives with people who are being killed, but not by just fascists, but the entire system that is eugenic-based, where if you don't make it far enough up the ladder, you just get to fucking die??

C: Yep.

K: You just fucking die if you can't climb this bullshit ladder that has all of these requirements that are like super ablest, super racist, super classist. So for some people, you never have a chance to get up the ladder, and so your choice, if somebody isn't attending to your material needs, you're just gonna die. That kind of work feel so much more revolutionary and more important to me than trying to put yourself in front of a line of cops to get your ass beaten and possibly your life ruined in order to ask people who don't care about you at all to change policies that change very little.

C: People who don't think it's 'feasible'. God, my least favorite word. People who don't think it's feasible to fucking care enough about your life to actually use their power that they have to enact change to actually do it. Yeah, yeah, that is... That is not who I'm interested in talking to.

K: Yeah, if the system is trying to kill people through poverty then alleviating poverty and getting people housed and getting people stuff to live is an act of resistance against that, right?

C: Yeah, help people squat. If you wanna be a revolutionary and you wanna counter-act the State and you're pissed about the way things are going, help people squat. Don't fucking make a sign and go yell at a court house that's closed, quite frankly, it's just stupid.

K: We have so many empty houses and so many people without housing... It's just absurd.

C: Yeah. I mean, if you're listening to this from the rest of the country or from the other parts of the world, America is Fucked Up. So I like memes a lot because I feel like they're a super low barrier way to convey something that people really can understand at an accessible level, and also imagery is really good, and I saw a meme, it was like... For lack of a better term, a Native Chief saying, when y'all got here, when white settlers got here, they said that we lived in teepees and that made us savages, but when we lived in teepees, there was no such thing as homeless. Now we go on the streets and we see people living in tents, which you know, they're not even allowed to be in, and now you have a thing called homelessness.

K: Right.

C: And it was just... I was like, I don't know, I'm paraphrasing poorly. It was probably something like, there was never homelessness when we lived in teepees, it was that short [laughter]. So just like, motherfucker, this is real. And if you talk to

fucking people who are living in a tent, a lot of those people are just like you. You are one injury away from not being able to work.

K: Yeah, the other thing I was seeing a lot, is there's just a lot of lateral violence happening in a way that I don't feel like is really that helpful.

C: What do you mean?

K: Like... we're in a different world. People are romanticizing the way fascism was working in Europe in the 30s, and that's not really how fascism really functions here now. Coming face-to-face with some of these fascists, it's like... I don't think punching you in the face is gonna solve this problem. You're a Q-anon-er and you are not in the same reality that we are in right now.

C: Oh yeah, honey.

K: And it's like, You are not a physical threat to me at all, you're just a sad human, and we can solve this problem. I don't think that this approach is gonna solve this problem. We need new ways of fixing this. You're definitely a threat and you're a problem but this in-the-street thing that's happening is not solving this issue. You know what I mean? Like we live in a different world than 100 years ago.

C: Yeah, I guess I would say I got a pretty good tickle a couple of years ago when all those Santa Barbara anti-fascists were going around to the fascist rallies that were happening in the parks and fucking people up. I thought that was funny and I got to tickle out of it. I didn't think that that was gonna become the model that people thought was the true legitimate way to fight fascism in America, and I think that what that does is it fosters an environment that makes it unsafe for the people who are truly affected by fascism to be part of the public discourse, right? What it does is it still provokes and promotes this space for white males, particularly white able-bodied males to be centered in the struggle, which they have the most work to do, I will agree, but what it does is it creates a false space... I'm most concerned because I have young black males as sons to be like, 'Oh, this is our chance', and then they're the ones getting fucked up, arrested, and killed in those environments. The Kyle, whatever his fucking name is in Wisconsin...

K: Rittenhouse.

C: ... or shooting antifascists. So the thing that I've been telling people the most is pick and choose your battles. If you have the energy and the drive to fight and you're fighting for people and you're fighting for our right to exist in peace and egalitarianism. If you're fighting for that, then put that energy towards something tangible, something material that will make a difference in the lives of the people who... Yourself and everybody in your community that you're trying to say 'Let's take a step away from this despotic capitalism and fucking bullshit eugenicist hierarchy and lets create spaces of resilience. Let's not try to use our energy to tear down systems that have consistently throughout history used bigger, more powerful guns, the law, the fucking carceral system to oppress us. Let's do something that they can't even imagine.

K: Something new. Reminding myself why I wanted to do the second season, 'cause I think the anti-fascist discourse right now has been pretty heavily centered on Portland,

and it's not a coincidence that the whitest city in the entire nation is taking up so much space in anti-fascist discourse, right?

C: We know this, the South the ones out there holding it the fuck down. I see you, I see out there folks! Y'all's my people.

K: I've done anti-fascism... this is gonna get real controversial, I'm not gonna make any friends, but this is what we're talking about, Who am I focusing on? Am I focusing on who's popular or am I focusing on who needs to be uplifted in this conversation? I'm gonna say that since I've done this work all over the country now, Portland thinks it's the best at it right now, and it's not... It's not. The fact that you have these really visible, huge, violent battles that are causing all of this propaganda opportunities for the fascist right, and so many people have been fighting fascism in a way that doesn't make the press. People in rural areas, abolitionists that know how to quell a thing before it even becomes a thing, that kind of stuff is not getting enough credit for holding fascism at bay for the last four years. A lot of the problems that we have have come out of Portland. There's history there, and there's reasons why it's a specifically much more difficult place to fight fascism, and I'm not saying that it doesn't have a lot to add to the conversation, but the fact that it's dominating the conversation right now... who knows about fascism? Rural Black people. [laughter] So it's not a problem for people who have a lot of experience... but it's also the fact that the discourse is so heavily talking about urban areas right now is a problem. A lot of the fascism problems right now are happening in rural areas. What Portland has offer is very different from what a lot of people have to deal with it, so again, it's not like tearing down what Portland saying, it's just saying that it shouldn't have such a huge cultural influence and such a centrality in all of the discourse.

C: Well, I think we really have to hold the fucking mass media to task on that, right? They like a juicy story, they like a pretty background scenario. And the other thing is there's so much hyperbole, there's so much exaggeration about the level of conflict that's happening in Portland to the extent that when you look at the actual geographic area of where things are going down, it doesn't even equate to 16 city blocks, and that is a really, really sprawly city. A city that I love, don't get me wrong. Even though it's the whitest city in America it's got a lot of juice to it, and especially if you live in Oregon, like I do, it's got a lot of jazz to it compared to the rest of Oregon [laughter]. But denying that discourse of what it means to be rural and Black, we're denying the fact that my people are out there. I so strongly resonate with Appalachia because that's poor people just doing the fight because they know better, and it's white activists a lot of it... A lot of folks out there doing the struggle and fucking working on the fucking human struggle out there are white activists, but they don't forget where they came from. They don't posture supremacy in the same experience that I've had in other places, where everybody's posturing to be famous, to be notable for what they do. They're out there really meeting each other's mutual fucking needs, because the proximity for not surviving is so much closer when you're that poor. And so my experience out here has been very much like I've met a lot of super teched

out, like decked out fucking anti-fascists who will talk over me in spaces, and they're like 25-year-old white dudes talking about their importance, and I'm just like, Okay, I don't have to be fucking important, I can just leave. But what does that really do for the grander discourse? What does it do for moving forward real anti-racism or real anti-fascism? It doesn't. It doesn't do shit. That's racism.

K: I think it makes sense for a lot of white people to be drawn to anti-fascism because it's like other white people are kind of our problem that we need to deal with, like... That makes sense to me, but it does become problematic if we haven't done our own homework to really strip down our own biases, and then those get permeated out through our praxis.

C: Yeah, I don't know, I don't wanna like just shit on white activists 'cause I do like I said I always get a tickle out of anarchists all fucking blocked up, going and fucking with Democrats or whatever, like I do, I get a kick out of it, but it's not the movement.

K [voiceover]: To be clear, not all anarchists are white, obviously. And not everybody in bloc is white either. There was other context that I needed to edit out because I didn't have time for it... That's not what Candice was meaning.

C: It's not the movement that is the problem, it's the media, and you creating other alternative media that really talks about and explores this discourse around it is really important. So, I hope that you have the spoons to maintain the struggle on this and to keep it going. But if you don't, I'm not gonna hold it against you because I know that you'll have the spoons to do other things because you're never gonna give it up. You're like, what's his name? Rick, what's his name? You're like rick rolling us. (sings) Never gonna give it up. [laughter] You're like Rick Astley. You're never going to give up the struggle.

[clip of "Never going to give you up" by Rick Astley plays]

K: Well, that's just a great compliment. [laughter]

C: So I know you'll never give it up, just like I will never give it up. The way it looks to other people might be different, and who gives a fuck what those other people think. Unless they are people who are direct stakeholders, who fucking are impacted by the work that you're doing. So as long as that work doesn't hurt those folks and as long as it's aligned with the fucking goals and values that they have, then by all means do it. Until you're satisfied.

K: Alright. [laughter] I appreciate you so much, I love talking to you. And we've been talking for another... I think this is gonna be multiple episodes.

C: Two hours again! [laughter]

K: We can't just have a conversation! [laughter] There's just so much to say! And I just love talking to you.

C: So I love you. Dearly.

K: I love you too, and I love your kids and I love your family. And hope I can come...

C: Come stay with us. We're not dirty. We already had covid and gave it to all the rich people in our lives. [laughter]

K: I'm kinda, I'm kind of greasy. My hair is kinda greasy, but...

C: I mean that probably protects you from covid, my hair's greasy too, bitch.

K: It's healthy is what it is, it's healthy.

C: It's healthy. We put grease in our hair, and y'all trying to get rid of it. I'm just like What is going on? [laughter] I've never understood that, but anyways. [laughter] My white girlfriends would be like 'my hair's all greasy', and I'm like, Yeah, what's the problem? [laughter] Oh, I don't know. Yeah, you're rad, Kat. I miss you.

K: I miss you too. I will post this and consider my options and what I wanna work on, 'cause the idea of celebrity freaks me the fuck out, it's terrifying. We'll see what I decide to do. [laughter]

C: No, make us famous. We'll be famous. We don't give a fuck.

K: Alright.

C: Make us famous and then we'll be targets, but then as soon as we're targets, we'll be like, GoFundMe. [laughter]

K: Y'all know how to do this, you have figured this out. I'm still figuring this out. So I'm just like famous and in danger, but poor... How did I do that?

C: What? Dude as soon as you're in danger, I'll make you a fucking 'give me your money' and GoFundMe page. Okay?

K: Okay. I feel better.

C: Alright, I love you.

K: I love you too.

C: Reparations.

[partner's voice from background]: Reparations!

K [voiceover]: Okay, well, I actually do have to put this on a miniature hiatus again, just because life is fucking hard, and just keeping my white and liberal friends and family from becoming fascists as well as keeping my marginalized radical friends from dying, it's like... And me, myself! Taking care of myself too is a lot of work right now, you guys... So I'm kind of focusing on that and some other projects and just gonna be considering what do with this thing that I made, 'cause I really like it, but... I don't know, we'll see. Anyway, I have a Patreon and ko-fi and would still love support on that because I do still have the hosting costs and the production cost to make up for. So thank you to my current patrons for that! The intro and outro music is done by the band Kylo Ren from their track 'Towards a creative nothing' off the album Decadence. Thank you for listening. I hope that you're doing all right and take care of each other. Alright...bye. For now.

Extra

KEPW Open Waves interview with Katherine 4.26.17

Listen Here

Hold Please 9.16.17

Listen Here

The Magnificast interview with the Friendly Fire Collective

Listen Here

Come All Pandemic Workers

Listen Here

Disassociate

Listen Here

Checking In

Listen Here

The Blog

Letter to my cat Harold

Posted on **April 24, 2018**

My friend watched my cat while I was gone for a few days and I came home to this, Harold must have forgotten to throw it out!

[image description: handwritten note that says:

Harold,

Explain to me why when I opened the door, three cats come running out? Cats out the front door, out the back door and I caught two going out the back window! This is not a Flop House. It's not a party house! Makes it hard to say, All Cats Are Beautiful! I won't tell your mother about this but, I would clean up!!! Love You Harold!]

Posted in **Blog** | **Leave a reply**

YPJ in charcoal

Posted on **April 16, 2018**

I'm not a great writer, but I started a blog anyway. Maybe I'll just post pictures of stuff I draw? It's more my game. -Katherine

Posted in **Art, Blog** | Tagged **#ypj** | **Leave a reply**

Messiah College Abolitionists

Posted on **April 13, 2018**

I just got contacted by someone with the Messiah College Abolitionists about a campaign they are running to stop the college from using prison labor. It's so exciting to see other Christians taking a stand against injustice! Here's their statement:

"THE HYPOCRISY OF IT ALL

As a Christian College, we don't we that we are upholding the mission and identity of what Messiah preaches and tries to personify.

By forming a contract to save the College money, Messiah is supporting an industry that is so deeply tied to the racial oppression and injustice in this country. For a Christian College, that strongly identifies with and preaches the notion of reconciliation and fighting injustice, feigning ignorance on this topic is heartbreaking to those that are witnessing this happen.

Why is it that no one knows that this happened, when Messiah is usually so proud to announce new partnerships? Claiming ignorance due to never having to face the issue of incarceration injustice before is understandable because of the white privilege that provides the ability to be blind to it. But claiming ignorance when the school

HAROLD,

EXPLAIN TO ME WHY WHEN
I OPENED THE DOOR, THREE
CATS COME RUNNING OUT?

CATS OUT THE FRONT DOOR,
OUT THE BACK DOOR AND I
CAUGHT TWO GOING OUT THE BACK
WINDOW!

THIS IS NOT A FIOP HOUSE.
IT'S NOT A PARTY HOUSE!

WHAT I SAW HERE TODAY,
MAKES IT HARD TO SAY,

ALL CATS ARE BEAUTIFUL!

I WON'T TELL YOUR MOTHER
ABOUT THIS BUT, I WOULD CLEAN
UP!!!

LOVE YOU HAROLD!





made no action to inform the students, parents, donors, and community that they were doing this, is not right.

Messiah preaches a message of wanting to be a diverse and multicultural and multi-ethnic campus. But by doing this action, you are slowly shutting that door on non-white students, families, and communities. Imagine if a student, that falls under the racially and marginally oppressed umbrella, attending Messiah College found out about this, would it make them feel safe knowing that their school is full of hypocrisy.

Part of the Mission Statement for this school is that “We don’t just serve because it’s the “right thing to do”; we serve because God calls us to open our hearts to the poor and needy and to work for justice wherever injustice prevails.” So how can these actions be reconciled?”

<https://www.messiahcollegeabolitionists.org/>

Posted in **Blog, Christianity** | **Leave a reply**

Philadelphia & General Strike

Posted on **April 12, 2018**

Had a wonderful time in Philly over the last few days with my Friendly Fire Collective co-conspirator Hye Sung. Got a lot of the details for the retreat banged out, feeling good about it. Went and visited the site of the retreat and it is beautiful! I hope we get good weather, but it’s cabins so it won’t totally matter if we don’t. It was fun to do the detail stuff and actually go out there, it’s for real happening! I should have gotten a picture with us together, but it slipped my mind. Too busy busy. We did manage to have some fun too, we got some drinks and some Ethiopian food. I don’t know how they make that sponge bread stuff, but it’s delicious. There’s a few more details from the IWW about May Day, they’re calling for a general strike and for everyone to wear red bandanas, so look for those! I guess last year Philly was in the middle of a teacher’s strike and May Day was huge, we’ll see what happens this year. It’s going to be good, strikes are in the air right now. You can read their statement here: <http://phillyiww.org/2018/04/08/may-1st-general-strike/> Just keepin’ at it right now, trying to get all the ducks in all the rows, like an organizer does. Even an anarchist organizer.

Posted in **Blog** | **Leave a reply**

Exciting upgrades to FA!

Posted on **March 29, 2018**

Hi all! I’m excited to announce a number of new developments to the Friendly Anarchism project, including a store with some swag for sale, a Patreon donation page

GENERAL.



STRIKE!



100 Century Building
TRADE UNION CENTRAL
International Industrial Workers of the World

Industrial Workers of the World iww.org

so I can keep this project going, a blog so I can start doing some writing as well, a phone number, a mailing address, and, of course, this website! Thank you so much to everyone who has been so supportive of this project! It means a lot to me and all of the positive feedback has been incredibly uplifting and given me the drive to keep on keepin' on. God bless!

-Katherine



[image description: Square black canvas patch. Handwritten in white puffy paint "Do Justice, Love Kindness, Walk Humbly – Friendly Anarchism". The A in walk is a red anarchy symbol. There is also a black puffy paint flag and two black hearts.]

Posted in Updates | [Leave a reply](#)

An Anarchist Argument for Gun Control

Posted on March 17, 2018



by Katherine

[image description: White-on-black graphic with a red border. A circle with three guns creating an A making an anarchy symbol]

This post is in response to the #MarchForOurLives youth liberation and anti-violence movement as well as an article I read, which can be found here: <https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/observations/why-are-white-men-stockpiling-guns/>

This is a very thought provoking article which brings up many issues near to my heart, especially as a Quaker. I have also been getting some very negative reactions from leftists concerning recent Friendly Anarchism posts which showed support for gun control and the student walk outs. Here are some of my thoughts:

I do a lot of contemplation on the interconnectedness between power and violence. I work towards a world with neither, and to me guns are a physical embodiment of both. I don't like guns. Power is corrupting, and there is nothing more powerful than being able to kill or control another soul with such ease. I think the power felt in holding a firearm is a poor substitute for the sense of control that comes from a practiced strength of spirit. The article mentions that for the men studied "faith seems to reduce their attachment to guns." This isn't to say that religion is the answer, but we can use a spiritual framework to help us consider deeper truths about why we are violent and how that shapes our interactions with the tools therein.

I say I work towards a world with no power, but it may be more accurate to say "all power". The ideal world is one where we are released from the bondage of the chains of capital and hierarchy and no person can be kept from accessing their Source of love and light. It is from this inner state of deep peace and empowerment that we can create an outward state of anarchic political equality. This is the ideal, but this is unfortunately not the current reality. We do not all have equal access to power, and every individual or community has the right to reclaim that power how they see fit. I have read many inspiring stories of how guns have helped disempowered women, trans folk, POC, and others reclaim some of the strength of spirit that had been taken from them.

I also believe very much in harm reduction and the willingness to use any means necessary to achieve peace. There is a direct causal link between gun control and the reduction of gun violence. I also worry that revolutionaries fall prey to the narrative in which we need guns because a good guy with a gun could have stopped massacres/start the revolution, when we see that the large majority of incidents deterred by gun control are domestic violence and suicide. We are, and/or work with, marginalized people in very stressful situations, and while some of us worry about the need for weaponry during a still largely hypothetical revolutionary scenario, people are dying right now.

I don't think electoral solutions will ever be able to truly solve our problems, but I don't believe that the right to bear arms is more important in this moment than the right for kids to feel safe at school, for women to feel safe at home, and for us to be more safe from ourselves when we're alone in a dark moment. I am an anarchist, and I support gun control. This puts me in direct conflict with some people I really enjoy and have a lot of respect for, but I know that as a movement there is the paradigm of respecting a diversity of tactics and I think we can and should coexist while also

having these conversations.
-Katherine

A critique of his ideas & actions.



Katherine, Cim, etc.
The Friendly Anarchism Podcast
2017-2022

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