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**THERE ARE SERMONS IN STONES, BUT IT DEPENDS
ON HOW GOOD YOUR AIM IS.**

**-ALBERT MELTZER
ANARCHIST PRINT WORKER**

CONTENTS

4
Without Authority/It Could be better
Scott Branson

6
Decolonise Fest
Stephanie Philips

8
Disaster Anarchy (Part 1)
Rihannon Firth

10
Start with a List
She Drew the Gun

12 | 13
Lucy McLauchlan | BEAT13

Liberation **14**
Choose Animality Over Apathy!
Aiyana Goodfellow

Work **16**
This Beautiful Work
La Linterna

Prison **18**
Hostage to Hope
Mickey Taylor

20
Classifieds

22 | 23
The Horrible Glue
Spelling Mistakes Cost Lives

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“Intellectual property is a legally fabricated monopoly, confining culture and science, and violently depriving the poorest and most marginalised from access to critical resources. The fictions of copyright and patent are despotic attempts to monopolise the mind; outrageous constraints on intelligence and creativity; and a destructive protectionist scheme for the profit of power.”



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P22&23 – Spelling Mistakes Cost Lives

Without Authority/It Could be Better

By Scott Branson

How often in your life do you get caught up in some overly complicated process all while knowing it didn't need to be that way? I'm a chronically ill person based in the United States, with a for-profit health care system paid for through private insurance. If I move, or change jobs and hence insurance, I need to spend hours on the phone with doctors, insurance, pharmaceutical companies, and other providers, trying to get authorised for the same treatment that I've been on for over a decade. No worries that messing it up can lead to hospitalisation. The rules of the bureaucracy demand I encounter each level of the hierarchy just to retain my status quo.

From Peter Kropotkin to David Graeber to Crimethinc, writers have made the case that people tend to organise themselves quite well without the imposition of authority, and that we can navigate our worlds without having to defer to the state for our decisions. So, what holds us back from embracing anarchism? We might still be infected with patriotism, and believe that the project of so-called democratic republics is perfectible. The long arc of progress and all that. But even if we acknowledge the ineptitude of government, it takes another step to imagine a stateless society, since we are so engrained to believe the state cares for us.

For some, anarchism is initially seductive – circle-A graffiti or the rebellion of punk – but then, later, they believe they must grow up and out of these childish ideas. People can't be motivated without external compulsion. For others, anarchism is scary. We need that “thin blue line” of police that supposedly protects society against chaos. We are so surrounded with fears about personal safety – all while the state operates through violence – that we cling to the order of the day in fear of change. The idea that it could be better – not worse – doesn't cross our minds. Add to that dystopian realities we experience first-hand or in the movies, it's no wonder people tend to live in the Hobbesian fantasy of war of all against all.

In the end, it doesn't really matter what you think about anarchism, a 19th century political thought developed in Europe – you might still be living anarchistically. So often, there is a disjunction between how we think and how we act. Our conscious mind might prompt us to seek out an authority or a professional to

resolve crises. But faced with daily problems, we solve them on our own or with friends. You don't call your landlord to change a lightbulb, or clean up a spill, for example. If you continue this line of thinking, what does a landlord even do for you beyond taking your money, while you keep up their property?

Do we merely need to dig up the innate anarchism in us buried under dung heaps of state logics and market efficiency? Remove the unnecessary baggage of authoritarian thinking, the wish to be saved, or desire to impose power and hierarchy in your daily relationships? Think about doing things for yourself – or better yet, with the help of your friends and lovers. See how you can show up in your people's lives as a boon, to multiply in your moments of connection the possibility of autonomy.

But what about the things we don't know? Life seems filled with written and unwritten rules, right and wrong ways. Maybe it's my obsessiveness, a firstborn Jewish kid, but I've always tried to get things right, all while imagining I'm doing them wrong. In my head, everyone else knows the correct method, and therefore I should as well. But I don't. So, I have to fake it. And I'm not talking about tasks you actually have to learn some skill in order to accomplish. I mean, just living, organising your life. No one is privy to this internal drama most of the time, an existential crisis of miniscule proportions, building and building.

The other side of this experience has a name – “impostor syndrome” – where you are put into a position of performing a role, perhaps one of some authority, and you feel like you have no idea what you are doing. And yet, everything works out. As a musician and a teacher, I'm quite familiar with this feeling. Being in front of a group of people ready to give you all their attention is a responsibility. That divide between who speaks and listens feels completely arbitrary. There are theories to explain how this works. Jacques Lacan, the French psychoanalyst, called the analyst the ‘subject supposed to know’. It didn't matter whether the analyst could figure out the problems brought to them – the position in itself gave them the power to hold the patient's discourse such that it could lead to some kind of resolution or integration.

As an anarchist, I'm always sensitive to the ways I inhabit these spaces of potential authority, trying to find ways to betray them, rather than to invoke belonging there. In the cases that I bring up – getting things wrong and being presumed right – there is an ethical relation that causes the feeling of misalignment:

there is something that is right, but it's definitely not you. As anarchists, we can start questioning authority by questioning our own authority. I think of this largely as being traitors to the roles we are assumed to play, whether it's whiteness, settler, consumer, worker, a gender, and so on. In our refusals, we open up space for a different way of relating, where we can take hold of the resources available to us, and use them to further collective liberation.

That said, I want to counter that bad feeling of imposter. I want us to give ourselves permission to be wrong, to play around, to experiment and fail, until we get things the way we want. A unique aspect to anarchism, as a liberatory theory, is that it refuses blueprints. We aren't Marxists with a path and a goal. Anarchism is the hewing away of oppressive hierarchies, at the same time as building horizontal structures from the ground, relationships that can be as loosely or tightly knit as we need.

In other words, I'm suggesting we can embody our anarchism in admitting we don't know. Like refusal, this lets us off the hook of expertise, and allows us room to try new things. There is a reason the do-it-yourself ethics of punk lent itself to anarchist thinking. Anyone could try their hand at playing music, making clothes, writing zines, forming other ways of living. And in fact, punk often embraced its wrongness.

Being wrong can be scary, especially if it feels laden with consequences. But keep in mind that being right often means aligning with the oppressive status quo, whether climbing the social or professional ladder, upholding arbitrary laws that criminalise poor and racialised people, or invoking concepts of health that enshrine productivity over the pleasures of life. If we live our anarchism as wrongness, as refusal, as a misfit, we can break with this mentality, where the state trains us to snitch on each other for any sign of deviancy. The truth behind impostor syndrome is indeed a conspiracy, it's the best kept secret: no one knows. Which actually means, we all have the possibility to do it differently.

Scott Branson is a queer and trans writer, translator, teacher, artist, and anarchist organiser, living in Western North Carolina. They are also a frequent co-host on the anarchist podcast The Final Straw Radio.

Their most recent book Practical Anarchism: a Guide for Daily Life is available on Pluto Press.

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Decolonise Fest

By *Stephanie Philips*

There are certain moments, spaces, and ways of being in life that feel like they have always existed. For some it's the self-awareness that comes post-breakup when it's impossible to imagine the person you were in that relationship. For others it could be the new culinary horizons reached when you try a good red wine for the first time and can't conceive of an existence when you didn't savour that taste. For me, the moment that felt like it had always been with me all my life was when we hosted the very first Decolonise Fest back in 2017.

Decolonise Fest is a London-based DIY punk festival dedicated to celebrating people of colour in the punk scene. Over the last six years we've hosted bands such as Glasgow indie pop group Sacred Paws, Brooklyn punk act Proper, and Bristol grime punk artist Grove, held workshops and talks on everything from community activism to the history of the banjo, and created a welcoming space for many punks of colour who often felt homeless no matter where they were. As a Black punk who plays in a Black feminist punk band, Big Joanie, I was well aware that being a person of colour did not make me less of a punk. I also knew that being a punk didn't make me less connected to my heritage or my race. I, like so many other punks of colour, just wanted a space where all of me could co-exist without having to feel like I'm picking a side.

My first foray into punk was as a teenager, downloading mp3 music files from virus loaded websites on my family's home computer. I spent hours trawling through the free download section on the website for Portland, Oregon label Kill Rock Stars (a key force in the early 90s feminist punk scene Riot Grrrl and also my band's current US label) looking for new bands to listen to. Sleater-Kinney led me to Gossip, which helped me discover Le Tigre and Bikini Kill, who introduced me to X-Ray Spex. Each day a new punk idol would be uncovered and all of it felt ready-made for me. As a young Black girl growing up in the Midlands in the early noughties, I rarely felt heard or like my voice mattered. Punk gave me an outlet to vent my frustrations and the anger I often held deep within me about the racism and misogynoir I encountered when I left my front door. To me, punk was a Black expression of rage.

As I grew older and moved to London, started my first punk band, and got more involved in the local DIY punk scene, I still felt the same connection to punk but I rarely felt like the punk scene accepted the whole of me. While many in the scene wore their feminist badges proudly and could wax lyrical about other issues close to their hearts, racism was never

spoken about. I remember being one of a handful of punks of colour around at the time and while I loved my time there, I dreamt of having a space where I didn't feel alone every time I walked into a room. I knew I wasn't the only person of colour whose whole being shifted when they heard a power chord ring out. I just had to find my crowd.

The time came when in 2016 after waiting years for someone else to start something for punks of colour, I decided to see how other people felt. I posted online and asked "if there was a festival for punks of colour tomorrow who would you want to see on stage?". The response I got was overwhelming. People kept sending me more and more requests and the South London venue DIY Space for London (which sadly shut down during the pandemic) asked if I wanted to book the space for this imaginary festival. It was clear so many were crying out for a space like this to exist. So, I arranged an initial meeting for people of colour who were interested in organising an event like this. Around 25 people showed up and we talked about our backgrounds, connections to different punk, indie, and hardcore scenes, and the microaggressions and racism we had encountered in our scenes. We came out of the meeting hours later with a plan and a purpose. Taking inspiration from DIY festivals in the United States for punks of colour like Chicago's Black and Brown Punk Fest, we decided to form a collective and organise the kind of punk event we always wanted to see. Decolonise Fest was born.

When the festival finally came around it was held over three days in June 2017 and featured workshops on intersectional resistance and talks from grassroots activists of colour during the day and bands like doom outfit Divide and Dissolve and London sister duo Skinny Girl Diet. As I and other collective members walked through the crowds that weekend, I remember not being able to move five steps without bumping into someone who wanted to share how excited they were to be in this space. One older Black woman who had been playing in different bands for decades confided that the festival was the first time she felt truly at home in a punk space. Each year, we grew as a festival and a collective and were able to reach new audiences. People came from as far as the Netherlands and America just to attend the festival and be in a space where we could have our culture, our food, our lived experiences and still be our full selves in punk spaces.

Today, Decolonise Fest is still thriving with the aim to inspire more people of colour who enter our events to feel celebrated, to know they have a community, and to be radicalised enough to leave our festival, go home and want to make change in their own local communities. We've inspired many bands to form for our festival, including the grime punk duo Bob Vylan who played our 2018 line up. Since then, they went on to support Aussie rockers Amyl and the Sniffers and won the first Alternative Act Award at the Mobo Awards. The new award was created after another Decolonise Fest alumni band Nova Twins wrote an open letter asking for better representation of alternative genres at the award show which showcases the breadth of Black British music talent.

The closed-off scene that I came of age in no longer exists in the same way. Punks are having more conversations about things that make them uncomfortable, line-ups are slowly getting more diverse, and a whole army of bands of colour now exist compared to a decade ago. For us at Decolonise Fest, we've been one part of a wider movement that pushed the music industry to reckon with its many failings and carved out a space for new ideas to develop. Although this moment in time still feels like the beginning of a more seismic shift, we can't wait to see what else is in store and who else wants to join us for the ride.

Stephanie Philips is a guitarist and vocalist in Big Joanie, music journalist, author of the non-fiction book *Why Solange Matters*, and a co-founder of Decolonise Fest.

bigjoanie.com
decolonisefest.co.uk



Disaster Anarchy (Part One)

By Rhiannon Firth

Climate change means that the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events is increasing, while increasing global interconnectedness and the destruction of ecosystems mean that pandemics are set to become an ongoing feature in the story of humanity. The decline and collapse of the oil economy, industrial civilisation and associated structures of governance take shape in neoliberalism and the decline of comprehensive welfare states and healthcare. We can no longer rely on our governments to support us – if we ever could: this was never a surety for the most precarious, marginalised and mobile humans.

Climate change and pandemics unequally impact on the least well-off. Disasters have never been a wholly ‘natural’ phenomenon, since settlements built in the most risk-prone areas have tended to be populated by the poor, while the rich can afford to be more selective in where they build and live, to move more easily if needed, and to insure their livelihoods and lifestyles. Government policies and mainstream media discourse also unequally impact the least well-off. During the COVID-19 pandemic, lockdown was moralised in media and mainstream discourse through catchy slogans like ‘stay safe, stay home’, ignoring the fact that the homeless, and those subject to domestic abuse, don’t have ‘safe homes’ to go to. Disaster response is often securitised and militarised in racist ways; after Hurricane Katrina in the USA in 2005, Black communities were subject to the most repressive policing, while media described white people ‘finding’ food for their families but portrayed Black people as ‘looting’ in captions under photos of almost identical scenes (save for the colour of the protagonists’ skin).¹

The story is not all doom and gloom. Decentralised, anarchist-inspired mutual-aid disaster relief efforts have arisen after nearly every major natural disaster in the United States since Katrina. Occupy Sandy grew out of Occupy Wall Street to mobilise relief for Hurricane Sandy in 2012, and was widely acknowledged to have organised relief more effectively than federal agencies or NGOs. There was Direct-Action Bike Squad, which organised a bike team to Puerto Rico to deliver supplies to the mountainous regions after Hurricane Maria in 2017. Several anarchist and autonomous groups arose in response to Hurricanes Florence and Michael in 2018, and in the same year several self-organised neighbourhood groups emerged and organised relief alongside leftist groups including Food Not Bombs and the Houston Anarchist Black Cross after Hurricane Harvey. In late 2017, activists involved in some of these groups set up the grassroots direct-action network Mutual Aid Disaster Relief, which

provides training materials and workshops for activists and communities throughout the US on organising disaster-relief based on anarchist ethics and organising principles. Anarchist-inspired, autonomous and non-hierarchical movements have also mobilised disaster-relief efforts in other countries, for example the self-managed autonomous brigades in Mexico after 2017 earthquakes, a grassroots village solidarity network in Indonesia after the 2004 tsunamis, anarchist responses to Typhoon Yolanda in the Philippines in 2013, and self-management and direct action against the militarisation of disaster zones after earthquakes in Italy in 2012 and 2009. Decentralised mass movement for disaster relief is new to the UK, which has historically been spared from major ‘natural disasters’, but the nationwide visibility of ‘mutual aid’ in the wake of COVID-19 was unparalleled, and the term ‘mutual aid’ – originally popularised by the anarchist Peter Kropotkin – entered everyday parlance and mainstream media (it was even used in Conservative government reports).

This echoes back to the 1940s-50s, when the terminology ‘post-disaster utopia’ was used by conservatives to describe a period where people would put aside differences and ‘roll up their sleeves’ to selflessly help others during war efforts and disaster recovery. This ethos continues to the present day in the aftermath of hurricanes and pandemics, as governments laud community action to justify neoliberal rollback of welfare. During the Covid-19 crisis, we witnessed the irony of ‘mutual aid’ – an anarchist concept – being mobilised by the neoliberal state in support of a rapid return to the capitalist ‘new normal’.

My book argues that despite these attempted co-optations, mutual aid and other disaster utopias prefigure values beyond the crises of capitalism. Disaster utopias problematise the orientation of utopia towards intention and the future. Nobody wishes for a disaster, yet they produce affects such as desire and hope for change, and the formation of grassroots infrastructures and technologies.

On the other hand, government and others (particularly the moralising discourse of the social democratic left and the NGO-complex) try to co-opt and de-radicalise them. There is a whole discourse, originally academic, but seeping into mainstream media and frequently adopted by NGO professionals, of ‘social capital’. Social action, rather than being seen as something valuable on its own terms, is re-cast as a form of ‘capital’ to be mobilised in the interest of a return to the ‘normality’ – or the even more terrifying ‘new normal’ – of capitalism-as-usual. Social capital

theory emphasises how local-level participation is vital in building ‘resilience’ and that top-down processes fail in emergencies because they’re not responsive and flexible enough. It sounds radical and progressive because it valorises the grassroots, but the grassroots is not valued on its own terms but in terms of the value it has for capitalism/capitalists (ultimately, profit). This discourse encourages NGOs and grassroots to absorb former state functions, with the expectation of co-operation with the state (e.g., funding with conditions attached). The role of state is technocratic: to impose cohesion.

When society and the state are seen as complementary and mutually supporting, this means that only the sections of ‘civil society’ that are legible to the state and which it can capitalise upon and control are seen as ‘social capital’. Other social forces are a threat to be controlled, securitised, and criminalized – through recuperation or repression. This often causes splits within movements – for example during COVID-19 there were calls from middle class and liberal-centrist participants ‘not to politicise mutual aid’, refusing to acknowledge their own politics, or the anarchist history of mutual aid.

Two concepts that feature heavily in my book are repression and co-optation. Repression refers to the action of subduing someone or something by force. Co-optation means subsuming outsiders into the elite/mainstream in order to manage opposition and maintain stability (synonymous with ‘recuperation’). In my book, through analysis of government policies after Occupy Sandy and COVID-19, I show how the co-optation and de-politicisation of mutual aid movements – into merely ‘helping’ movements that keep the wheels of capitalism rolling after a disaster – was purposeful. The political consensus that future pandemics will be dealt with through top-down restrictions and authoritarian measures rather than redistribution and community-based alternatives remains unchallenged. The economic projections are similarly dire: rising energy and living costs, resource wars, and millions dispossessed and excluded from the securities required for the ‘good life’.

Does this mean, therefore, that mutual aid movements are doomed to failure? I will explore this more in Part 2, in the next issue.

¹ <https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/hurricane-katrina-looters/>

Rhiannon Firth is the author of *Disaster Anarchy: Mutual Aid and Radical Action* (Pluto Press).

It is available from the publisher with 30% discount using code FIRTH30. It is also available for free, open access at: library.open.org/handle/20.500.12657/57974



Start With a List Entitled Want and Have

By **Louisa Roach**

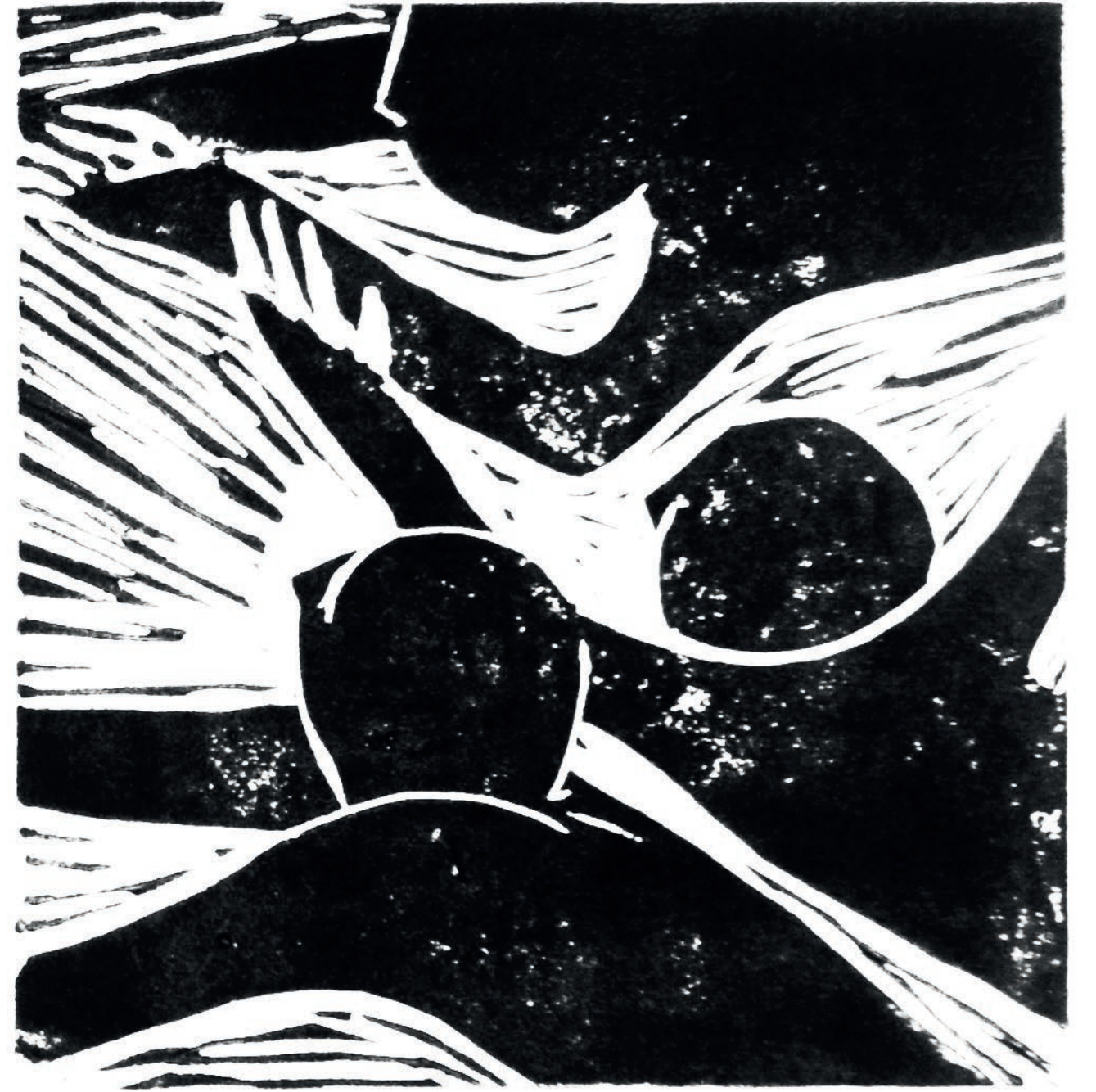
Got my voice
got my words
got all I've been shown
got a relationship with my experience
got me when I'm alone
got music flowing through my home, or wherever I roam
got John, I've got Joni, got Nina Simone.
got grown like a misshapen rose from cracks in concrete
got a rebellion that's as irresistible as dancing to the beat
got a protest to be at,
got a picket line to hold,
got collective struggle
got pure fucking gold
in my community,
got people fighting battles for me
on the page, and on the stage, the courtroom, classroom and the screen
got people fighting for rights, fighting for minds, for unpolluted waters and skies,
got people fighting for lives, from inside
a crumbling NHS
and in cold, cold waters on the coasts of this ancient isle
I've got beautiful lands to trespass upon
got a right to roam as much as anyone
got a landscape that nobody can own
got brandalism subverting the passive flow,
got friends for life and some that just came for a season,
some blessings, some lessons, some divine cosmic reasons,
got a mind that thinks thoughts, and I'm mindful of the thoughts that I think
I'm aware of their transient nature
careful not to sink to them lows,
cos thou knows
I've got wounds that are still healing
got back from the brink
got scars, got bars, got freedom within
I've got birth and fire between thighs
I've got pure ecstatic joy condensed and crystallised
into a moment and if at that moment right then I look into my lover's eyes
I've got a love that rises in me
and it bonds and it ties us
in a timeless dance of souls
infinite and sublime
but not confined
cos true love liberates
it doesn't bind.
got psychedelic nourishment
got gifts from the stars
got a life that I can turn into a work of art
got a vision of a better world
got ideas above me station,
just want the universal emancipation of humankind from oppression and exploitation
got nothing to take with me
got nothing left when it's all gone
got rock bottom to get up from
got a million books to read
if I could just finish one

I've got a history of feminist thought to lean upon
I've got sisterhood, got self-love, and that's an act of resistance in a system that
persistently inhibits your uncommon brilliance,
I've got resilience
I've got NO, when I refuse
got seeds and pollens, and flowers that bloom
got the cosmos, the moon, the sun, the planets
got those celestial mechanics that pull the tide across the granite
so I've got the crest of the next wave to ride
got to think about them waves while I surf my mind
got the salt of tears when I'm close to the divine
got hopes for a time
when our next rulers aren't chosen from a pool of clueless private schoolers,
incubated from real lives
got critiques of the whole capitalist charade
got Fisher, got Graeber got Marx
got a paradigm to shift
cos endless growth means death to all of this
got kindness and that's what makes the world go round
got nature when I'm feeling down
cos sometimes I for-got
that's its pure medicine
for these dark times that we're living in
got memory that winds, light as breath and heavy as regret,
I've got some of them, don't we all
got myself connected but the writings not on the wall
I'm the universe experiencing itself in human form
and I came her for the laughs
got a sense of humour so I know my shadow is with me
and I know my unconscious has got questions still to give me
got this incredible mind body system I've incarnated into
and whenever it's time to talk things through
I've got the kettle on, do you want a brew?

She Drew the Gun are a band from Wirral, England, fronted by singer/songwriter Louisa Roach.

shedrewthegun.com





Choose Animality Over Apathy!

By Aiyana Goodfellow

What does it mean to be direct? To direct our anger, our love, our pain. In British society, we are encouraged to dismiss the truths inside of us, to repress them for the sake of civility, to be ‘acceptable’. Keep calm, carry on. But being calm in a world that profits from death, exploits our labour, and burns our planet, is another kind of violence in itself. We look back at historical examples of genocide, enslavement, war, and fascism imagining a version of ourselves in these former times. We would have been the “good people”, speaking up and speaking out. We would have marched with Dr. King and sheltered Jewish people in our homes. We all like to think we would be on the right side of history – but the truth is, similar violence occurs today. And what are we doing about it? To be calm and carry on with the illusion of normality, is to be direction-less, floating through the monotony of capitalistic life. Those of us on the margins struggling to survive cannot be so apathetic. For some, direction and action are choices; for others, necessities of survival.

One such community who must bite back to survive are nonhuman animals. Other animals are usually dismissed as beings with personhood, let alone people who experience systemic violence through the removal of said personhood. Personhood does not belong to human-animals, but all of us. Personhood is not defined by humanity, or a proximity to it, but through the virtue of existence. Humans are animals. You are an animal.

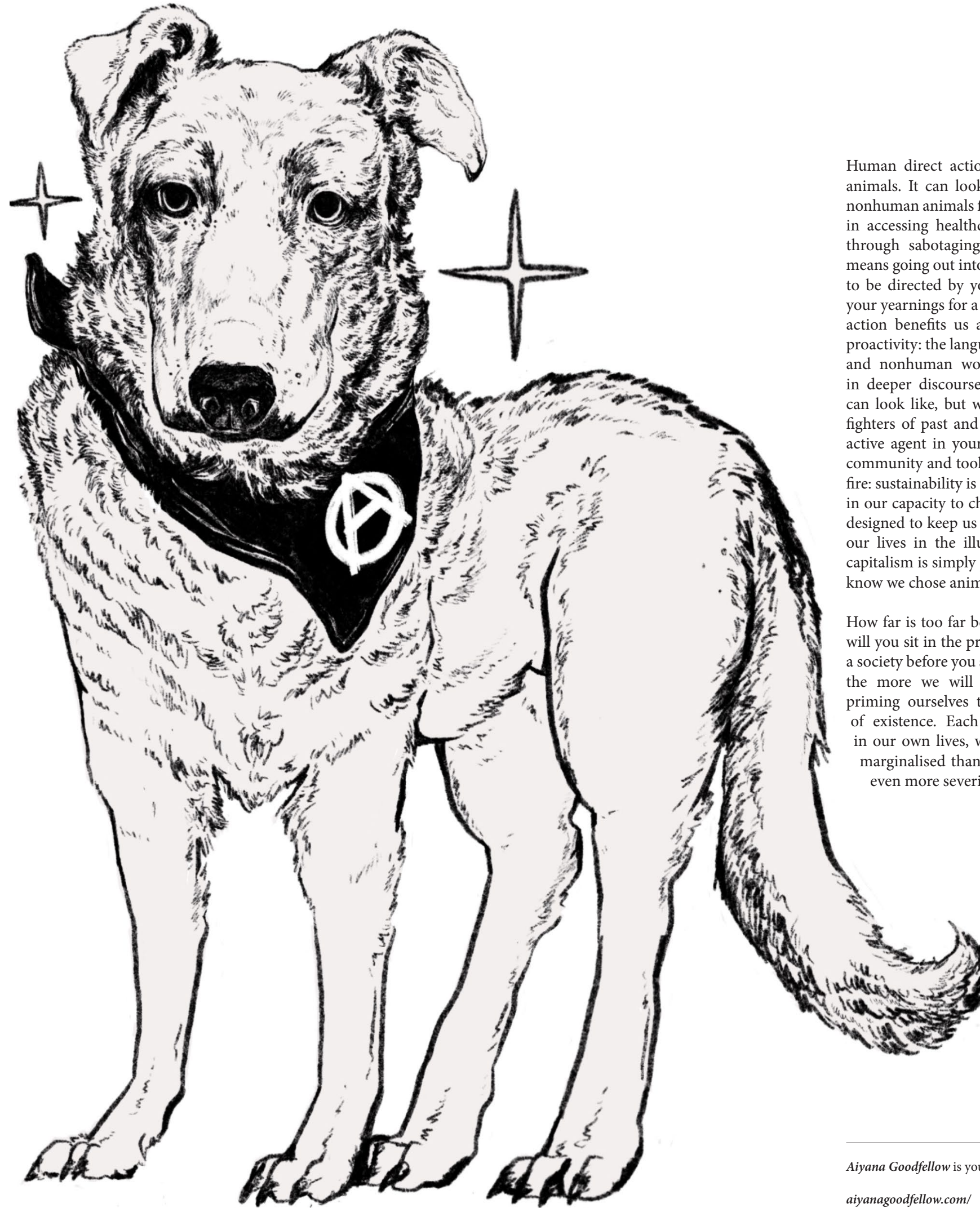
Their lives are often spent in physical or metaphorical cages, as our so-called property through pethood, in zoos and aquariums as entertainment, or perhaps their bloody bodies simply sit as fodder on our plates. Human supremacy maintains a world that centres a human need and experience, disregarding the lives of other animals as important or valuable beyond the benefit of humans. In my book, *Radical Companionship: Rejecting Pethood & Embracing Our Multispecies World* I define ‘speciesism’ – the oppression of nonhuman animals – as “actively rejecting the ideology of human supremacy, the interpersonal violence of ownership-based human-to-animal relationships, and the institutional, deliberate colonisation, degradation and exploitation of nonhuman animals.”

Whilst overall the majority of us don’t even have a base-level understanding of these concepts and the realities of speciesist violence, education alone will not save us. Awareness is not, by itself, a means of freedom. Most of us know on some simple level that nonhuman animals are exploited by humans on mass scales, many might even disagree with the treatment of nonhumans, but how many of us take action and put the effort in to change? How many of us are aware of the violence in the world right now, yet choose to ignore it? We are all – if not already – closer to being homeless than being billionaires. Similarly, we are closer to animality than we are to the idealised controlling version of humanity we are taught to emulate. The animals we are, the versions of ourselves we are taught to repress, resist, fight, and feel in connection to the world. Those small moments when you admire a flock of birds in the sky, the way you grieved your first “pet”, or the feeling it gives you to see animals in their natural environments are evidence of our inherent animality. Will you break the monotony of capitalist humanity? Will you choose animal action over apathy?

To do so, we must understand action as a concept in the context of liberation movements. Actions are born from the choices we make in alignment with our goals of freedom and the behaviours that happen as a result. Action is a verb, requiring us to be actively making differences in our communities. Direct action is the combination of authentically expressing our need for freedom and taking steps to achieve this. Direct action is a necessary response to systems without care or a conscience, who take peaceful protest as a weakness. The animal liberation movement has always been, and should always be, a direct action movement. Animals of all other species fight for autonomy every day, resisting death in slaughterhouses, running from farms, attacking ‘trainers’ (read: captors) in circuses, zoos, water parks, and more. Before humans ever decided to form the Animal Liberation Front, Hunt Saboteurs, or other groups, nonhumans were carrying out their own forms of direct action. Every pull on a leash, every bite, every scratch, every sting... is a person telling us they are here.

“Delete the idea of the passive animal from your mind – animals are alive and fight to be so every single day.”

— *Radical Companionship: Rejecting Pethood & Embracing Our Multispecies World*



Human direct action is solidarity with nonhuman animals. It can look like assisting the liberation of nonhuman animals from capture, supporting animals in accessing healthcare, protecting hunted animals through sabotaging hunts and so much more. It means going out into the world and allowing yourself to be directed by your anger, your love, your pain, your yearnings for a better way to live. Because direct action benefits us all. This is a fight that requires proactivity: the language barriers between the human and nonhuman worlds prevent us from engaging in deeper discourse about what the best solidarity can look like, but we can draw on human freedom fighters of past and present to help us learn. Be an active agent in your understanding of society. Find community and tools to feed your joy as well as your fire: sustainability is survival. Most essentially, believe in our capacity to change the world. The systems are designed to keep us afraid and hesitant but spending our lives in the illusion of safety and the grey of capitalism is simply prolonged death. Isn't it better to know we chose animality over apathy?

How far is too far before you take action? How long will you sit in the pressure cooker of violence we call a society before you scream? The longer we sit calmly, the more we will find familiarity in oppression, priming ourselves to accept even worse standards of existence. Each time we accept the cruelty in our own lives, we fail to protect someone more marginalised than us, experiencing this cruelty in even more severity.

Aiyana Goodfellow is young author, organiser, and multidisciplinary artist based in London, UK.

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This Beautiful Work

By La Linterna

La Linterna (The Lantern), is a letterpress printing workshop based in Cali, Colombia, which was established in 1934. Today it is run by master printers Jaime García (59), Olmedo Franco (57) and Héctor Otalvaro (55).

It is dedicated to artisan printing of posters using linoleum engraving and the use of movable types. Each poster is an authentic work of art that represents the craft of printing and handcrafted engraving.

Their workshop in the San Antonio neighbourhood of Cali, Colombia is home to several classic printing machines, including the Heidelberg typographical printing press (Germany, manufactured between 1923 and 1985), Marinoni typographical press (Paris, 1870), Babcock Letterpress (New York, 1890) and the AB Dick Printer (US, Manufactured between 1960-1986).

In 2016, the workshop was facing financial crisis. When the bosses at La Linterna stopped paying their employees, the workers took-over and now run the presses themselves.

What happened when the workers took the power over La Linterna?

The boss, he wanted to send all the machines to the junkyard – but we received the whole studio from him as a payment of compensation for our whole lives. Before, we were adrift, we barely had money to buy paper, ink and pay the utilities to be able to work. Later, our life changed because we started to receive the money that we hadn't in a long time for our homes.

As an employee, you do everything that your boss tells you and when you're independent everything belongs to you, you determine how you work. That means, before, we loved the arts and right now, being the owners, we are much more passionate about what we do. Doing something of your own means not being an employee who obeys orders and if there are options to be better, you decide how to make them because being the owner you don't have to repress yourself, and you can change stuff.

We started that new task, we took a lot of risks, and La Linterna surfaced like a Phoenix from the ashes. In that moment it stopped being commercial and we started working on an artistic and cultural level. It got more famous on a cultural level because we had been working with the designers that normally have a very big ego and never meet up; and here, La Linterna became a centre to which they can come, where they can meet and talk. Before that, they didn't have such a place to gather. People from Mexico, as well from Colombia and from all over the world come and meet the printing house and to share with us.

What are the politics of your printing press?

Here we make publicity for the people who need it in accordance with what we can, because we can't stick a knife to ourselves. We have to survive. The government can shut us down, they don't care about closing a business and the people who live from that have to find another thing to do. That's why we make publicity but with caution.

Nevertheless, we are with the less fortunate because we all come from the bottom. Everyone who is here, we all come from the bottom and we are in the fight of social classes, the one that has always marked Colombia.

It is politics focused on culture, on our values, costumes, sayings, music, folklore, food, race and brotherhood, on showing the world that there is so much variety in Colombia, a lot of good things outside from the political war.

When there are social problems, for instance during the strikes, we sympathised with the side that was against a government, which had been an oppressor for years and had exploited us without a care for the people and also against a youth that doesn't know where to go, even if they study and make an effort, they don't have any guarantees and continue to live badly. We are with them. La Linterna didn't make any posters of its own, we are not creators but printers because we have the means, the machines, so that messages go viral on the street. A message says more than a thousand words. And exactly that is what we did without charging.



Also, women came saying that they were feminists and wanted to make a poster in favour of the strikes, they wanted to print pamphlets, they went to the demonstrations and gave them away or pasted them on the streets. That means, we were a vehicle between people who know how to and can express themselves and also in the massification of the messages on the streets, to help the people to wake up.

What is your advice for workers that are in a crisis and don't see a way out?

So, one as a worker, works for a pay check, and I believe that we were just being rented – and now, as owners, we fell more in love with this art because it being something of your own, makes it about being better and wanting for everything to come out better.

People who are self-employed have to fight to achieve their goals. For the people, even if they are not typographers, whatever they do, if they love what they do, they have to fight till the end to see what happens. Because sometimes there comes change and if you're at that moment, people can remake themselves and continue their journey and get out of that crisis. The important thing is that you love what you do very much.

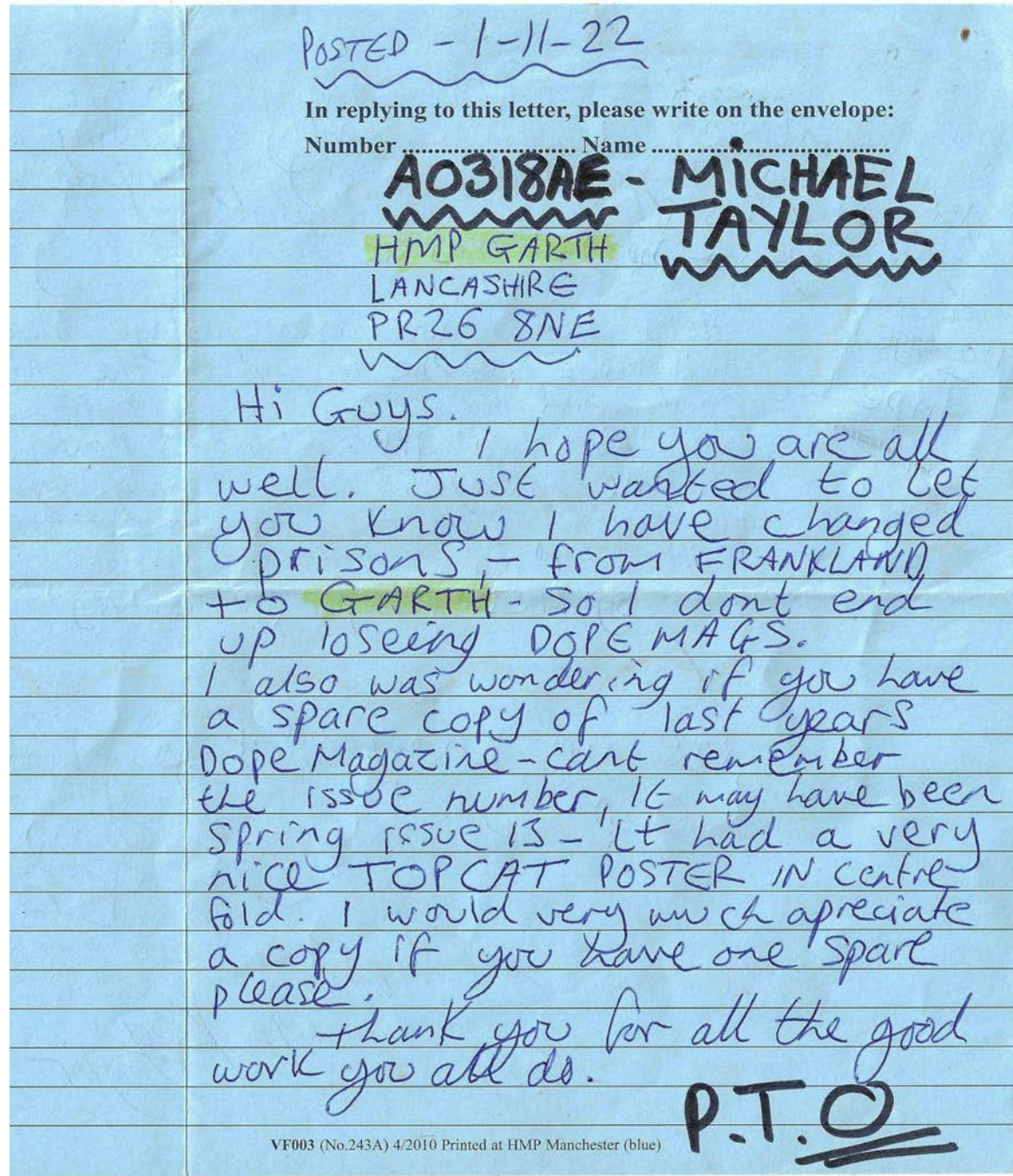
The moral of the story is to be persistent and to fight. Fight for what you have fought for so much. And that's the message for the youth: look at our sacrifices and our achievements, so that when it's their turn, they don't let themselves be defeated. They continue with the same struggle. They are strong and continue with this beautiful work.

lalinternacali.com



Hostage to Hope

By Mickey Taylor



.... Continued.

Not sure if you are familiar with the i.p.p prison sentence? I am currently serving one myself having been in prison almost 11 years (since Feb 2012) My sentence was abolished in Dec 2012 yet thousands still remain incarcerated on it. I write something that may fit your magazine (Dope) if you are interested? it goes — :

TITLE:
 Hostage
 To
 Hope

↑

Hello. I am a government hostage, pleased to meet you. Will there ever be an end to the unlawful and inhumane continued incarceration, torture, and degradation of the now "Abolished" IPP sentence? How is it legal for the government to take hostages? Or is it only legal if you're the one who makes the rules? if so, then are we not living in a democracy of hypocrisy? Food for thought
 by Mickey Taylor (IPP Prisoner)

let me know what you think of it, it would mean alot.
 Keep up the good work peeps
 Be Safe.

Thanks
 Mickey Taylor

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