

The sub.Media Collective: Propagating Tactical Media in Anarchist Movement Cultures

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Introduction: Tactical Media in Anarchist Movement Cultures

Tactical media, rooted in anarchist movement cultures¹ aimed at realising social and ecological justice, must foster an interrelated, two-pronged strategy to foment social change from the bottom up. The first element in the strategy involves establishing cultures of resistance, whereby radical socially engaged and engaging media are utilised to attract, educate, and even amuse viewers deliberating within discourse networks regarding events and issues. However, their analysis is not neutral. Resistance cultures must, by their very discourse, be steeped in the value-laden circulation of knowledge, often rhetorical, yet also affectual in their poetic and aesthetic communicative elements, that, when combined, feed into the development of counterpublics and the growth of resistant social imaginaries. That said, resistance, by itself, is not transformational: it can only attempt to stop an opponent from causing harm or changing things for the worse. Therefore, the second part of the strategy is to foster an emergent social infrastructural framework that supports the transformation of discourses into activities. This two-pronged strategy, a variation of ‘dual power’ theory,² is identified by political theorist Richard J.F. Day as structural renewal.³ This is a process that simultaneously challenges the status quo, while constructively building alternatives to it, thus concretely activating projects, activities, and relationships that collectively lead towards empowered social change.⁴ This article

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concentrates on the value-laden content contributing to discourse networks fomented by the anarchist video collective, sub.Media (est. 1994). Over time, their discourse networks have furthered the production of anarchist cultures of resistance and transformation through their development of anarchist counterpublics within a growing anarchist social imaginary.⁵ In the words of historian Peter Marshall, it may be said that “all anarchists reject the legitimacy of external government and of the state, and condemn imposed political authority, hierarchy, and domination.”⁶ To this end, in sub.Media’s stream of audio-visual-narrative communications, their discourse networks are comprised of words, images, and actions in support for resistance, not just for specific struggles, though specific events are highlighted, but for a broader social outlook of opposition against injustice, oppression and exploitation. Rather than being fueled by reaction, their militancy contains the potential to create something new in and of itself. Thus, within a trajectory of structural renewal, sub.Media’s output history and practices activate discourse networks creating counterpublics of resistance while also collectively building infrastructure through which to disseminate their work to transform audiences worldwide. Together, their discourse networks and counterpublics contribute to the socio-cultural development of a specifically anarchist social imaginary: anarchist, as a practical philosophical outlook that is ungoverning and ungovernable; social, as an institutional structure that finds inherence (i.e., a permanent state of indwelling) within society;⁷ and imaginary, for the indeterminate and changing creation of potential forms, ideas and images bridging reality and rationality.⁸

The explosion of anarchist tactical media began in the anti-globalisation era (mid 1990s) with the rise of support for the revolutionary Zapatista Movement. Organising under the slogan ‘The Revolution Will be Digitised,’ anarchists and activists across the globe took direct inspiration from the Zapatistas.⁹ However, media is not something that is ‘out there;’ rather, it produces effects on its viewers so as to literally move them to action.¹⁰ Today, over 30 years later, with instantaneous access available by computer, tablet, and cellphone, we are faced with a variety of new media and digital technologies that have led to the proliferation and fragmentation of information networks

and possibilities for social exchange. Thus emerges the multiplicity of publics existing simultaneously; that is, “a body of strangers united through the circulation of their discourse.”¹¹ In online communities driven by social media, ‘sharing,’ ‘liking,’ and ‘following’ are the nomenclature used to describe the shaping of opinions, popularity, and even identity, at least to the degree they are formed by participation in discourse. However, within a media ecosystem dominated by profitability algorithms, where can activists find politically critical resources online? How do counterpublics gain exposure?

Tactical Media by Design: Introducing the sub.Media Collective

With 30 years of experience producing satirical video, documentary film, and educational shorts, as well as conducting numerous interviews and hosting an array of musicians, the sub.Media collective stands apart for fostering cultures of resistance while building transformative infrastructures. Founded in 1994 by solo producer and activist Frank López, sub.Media, (short for ‘subversive media’) started out with the intent to create mixed music videos, but through the influence of political hip hop, López turned his attention towards making media geared towards social change. By 2011, with the addition of a second member, Heatscore, sub.Media was transformed into a collective of two and within a few years, transitioned into an expanded collective membership. It currently incorporates five members in its artel: a worker-operated craft-based not-for-profit collective structure. It is located in various cities across North America, with one member in Brazil. Keeping only an essential foothold in the mainstream social media environment, where megacorporate platforms have shifted algorithms to master datamining and content throttling, sub.Media has been concentrating on collaborating with other media collectives to build international networks that assemble and maintain the alternative online platforms Kolektiva.Social and Kolektiva.Media. Through this coalition work, the sub.Media collective successfully propagates anarchist video content independently distributed across multiple online portals, fostering communities of resistance and transformation platformed on infrastructure they co-manage.

In this article I will discuss sub.Media's target audiences, specific elements of activist content, and incidents of aesthetic subversion. Tactical media activism, exemplified by sub.Media's video and podcast feeds, is rooted in discourse networks that influence creators and viewers alike in culturally meaningful ways to contribute to the development of anarchist counterpublics associated with a transmission of an anarchist social imaginary. The concept of the discourse network was developed by the cultural theorist Friedrich Kittler to describe the semi-closed reproduction and circulation of textual knowledge, largely through print matter (i.e., books, newspapers, etc.) that was highly copyable and little changing until the impact of art (poetry, to be precise) transformed the discourse entirely.¹² Drawing upon Kittler, political scientist Kathy Ferguson extends discourse networks to encompass their meanings embedded within "layered sites of struggle, where hegemonic understandings are produced, contested, and reproduced."¹³ Understood from this perspective, discourse networks are dynamically interpenetrating, producing knowledge that can potentially challenge the status quo.

Concentrating on the cultural politics of anarchist media production, this article aims, primarily, to demonstrate how sub.Media participates in anarchist discourse networks that feed anarchist counterpublics (in opposition to the dominant discourse of the public sphere) and grow resistant anarchist social imaginaries. Thus, sub.Media's activities proceed tactically as a simultaneous disengagement from and delegitimation of the edifices of hegemonic dominant culture by mixing elements of satire, animation, music, and images from popular film into recombined audio-visual-narratives. As I will demonstrate, sub.Media has developed a following of viewers who value their work for providing reference tools to combat disinformation and to educate through conceptual analysis. In this manner, they cultivate relationships with communities in resistance, and gain trust for sharing accurate knowledge and analysis with viewers sympathetic to their calls to action.

Two of sub.Media's current five members participated in the preliminary interviews for this article, with the third additional founding member, now retired from the collective, also participating. Inter-

viewees are Franklin López, a filmmaker of Puerto Rican heritage,¹⁴ Heatscore, an anarchist propagandist and sometimes ‘video ninja,’¹⁵ and J.R., an anarcho-queer collective member.¹⁶ Privacy is a serious concern in the sub.Media collective: López, the founder (and now alumni-member) is the only person willing to use his legal name. The rest of the collective favour pseudonyms. In a mediascape where challenges to anarchist ideas and social/ecological justice content can get personal, members use aliases to avoid doxing. Still, the sub.Media collective faces a tension between being private individuality and publicness. López, whose inspiration to produce radical videos stems from a combination of his father’s example as a politically active TV producer in Puerto Rico and the urgency of expression in political hip hop, dons a Mexican wrestling mask when speaking to audiences.¹⁷ Heatscore, who is motivated to propagate an anarchist political vision of society through the medium of video, insists on communicating solely through non-commercial encrypted channels, while J.R., who feels compelled and obligated to engage with and confront the state of the world head on, has had his identity ‘blown’ and thus acknowledges he will appear publicly in the mainstream world if necessary.¹⁸

Audiences attracted to the work of sub.Media constitute an affective community opposed to the status quo.¹⁹ However, far from blindly pushing their content into the ether, in driving anarchist and social/ecological justice content into the mediasphere, sub.Media enacts tactical decisions directed at targeted publics for whom they are producing content and exposing audio-visual-narratives. Synthesising the interview responses I received, there are three categories of viewership the sub.Media collective produces video for: new-anarchists, experienced-anarchists, and anarchist-adjacents. For López, the question of audience changed as he gained experience and defined his identity as an anarchist. Initially believing the goal was to “reach millions” and “foment revolution,” López’ early films encompassed a wide range of interests so as to reach a broad socio-cultural audience.²⁰ As his anarchism developed, López decided to target those whom he called “fence sitters,” specifically viewers like him who were disenchanted by the electoral system and thus open to anarchism. He began creating what he calls “gateway drug films” to introduce the

“fence sitters” to anarchist ideas and bring them into the movement.²¹ Plying his trade through the affective seduction of satire and subversive laughter, López’ early approach to content at sub.Media sparked nascent feelings of a community in opposition and associations of sardonic wit with an identification with anarchism, social justice, and outrage. I personally recall around 2009-2010 whenever a new ‘Stimulator’ was released (The Stimulator is the name of the host featured in sub.Media’s first flagship show), word would spread like wildfire across Facebook (in the days before content throttling) and multiple users would post and repost the link to the newest episode, creating a virtual wall of repeat sub.Media postings echoing across the platform’s feed. Amber Day notes that it might seem odd that humourists find authority in speaking to the alienation of everyday life, but satirists, find broader reach in their creation of popular culture texts and widen discourses oppositional to the dominant public’s.²² Continuing this legacy, sub.Media has built video infrastructure to offer more serious introductory conceptual and cultural analysis of anarchist ideas to audiences desiring of educational tools to learn about and explain both theory and praxis. Most notably, this impetus is encapsulated in their “A is for Anarchy” series, an introductory set of video presentations on anarchist concepts such as collective autonomy and direct action. It also provides anarchist analyses of race, class, gender, and violence, among other topics. J.R. discusses this impetus as part of a dual approach to sub.Media’s audience outreach. The first concern is to “making more anarchists.” “Making existing anarchists better” is the second impetus.²³ As for the expression of improvement associated with the second outcome, J.R. identifies sub.Media’s satirical flagship serial programming, “It’s the End of the World As We Know It,” (a.k.a. ‘The Stimulator’), and “System Fail,” (hosted by D-DOS, the automaton) as key in this regard. In these video serials, humour, sarcasm, and decisive wit permeate the anarchist social analysis of contemporary news events, sharpening critical thinking skills and awareness of injustices. ‘The Stimulator,’ or, “It’s the End of the World As We Know It,” ran for 10 years and was hosted by an animated pair of randomly blinking floating eyes with a talking potty mouth contained in red squares (see this issue’s cover image). The show was generally divided into three sections: first, a current affairs video mix analysis: then, a musical interlude: finally, an interview. D-DOS, the robot

host of the newer series “System Fail,” is much less potty-mouthed than the Stimulator, and was ‘upgraded’ midway through the show’s 25 episodes. “System Fail” was a more ‘straight-up’ internationalist news show that highlighted both the absurdities of the far right, as well as world-wide resistance to their machinations. J.R. notes that both trajectories – “making more anarchists” and “making existing anarchists better” – overlap, and that they are goals that sub.Media pursues in the social field of anarchist cultural production through their flagship shows as well as their other films.²⁴ The third category of viewership, anarchist-adjacents, arises from the content of much of their reporting and support of anti-colonial and Indigenous-led frontline activism in North America, which has ensured sub.Media is viewed by Indigenous audiences. According to Heatscore, this work has also caught the attention of some anti-imperialists and anti-racists who are more abolitionist rather than anarchist, but “find common cause with the types of struggles sub.Media broadcasts.”²⁵ Reinforcing this point, López’s strategy was to try to reach people who are already struggling and fighting for the movement. Early on, he saw that there was very little cultural production that spoke to those actively pushing to change society towards egalitarianism along a social/ecological justice trajectory. To this end López deploys the analogy of “preaching to the choir” as a model of ensuring success by strengthening anarchist cultural and social values in narratives designed to keep people interested and engaged in changing the world for the better: “It’s always nice when you have somebody tell you that activism, that protest, that blockade, or that direct action that you did was awesome; [to] celebrate your work, give you a high five – while also showing viewers that such things are possible in the hopes that people will continue fighting.”²⁶ Reciprocally viewing actions and being viewed acting; dialoguing through interviews and the sharing of interviews – all these engagements contribute to the creation of an anarchist resistance culture that inspires social transformation through the mediums of film and video. By creating a discourse network to foster a specifically anarchist counterpublic, one that self-consciously and strategically grows an anarchist imaginary, sub.Media contributes to the production of a social infrastructure sharing anarchist ideas, values, and actions. However, to clarify the meaning behind these terms, it is necessary to unpack them and review their usage in the field of cultural studies.

Whose Discourse?: The Public Sphere vs. Multiple Publics vs. Counter-publics

It is impossible to discuss the concepts of counterpublics, discourse networks, or a resistant anarchist imaginary without first referencing work on the public sphere by a number of cultural theorists, starting with critical theorist Jürgen Habermas, but also drawing from feminist philosopher Nancy Fraser and literary critic Michael Warner. Habermas theorised the existence of a bourgeois public sphere in his exegesis *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*. Here, Habermas codified the public sphere as a singular and separate bourgeois institution apart from the state, yet exercising influence on the state through the critical discourse of public opinion.²⁷ Coming from the tradition of critical theory, Habermas' culture industry model has since been critiqued, with political media theorists such as Amber Day noting that his comparison of an 18th century high-brow culture with (what he considers) low-brow 20th century mass culture cuts an unfair claim. This is because, Amber Day argues, Habermas assumes media producers impose textual meanings onto passive audiences, thus producing a "binary between an idealised sphere of rational debate and a debased one of pure media consumption."²⁸ Habermas' presumption of an overarching, unified public site of social discourse is now largely regarded as a falsehood. What we have, instead, is a social space for the circulation of multiple, parallel, competing publics.²⁹ However, despite this multiplicity, some discourses are nevertheless understood "to stand in for *the* public, to frame their address as the universal discussion of the people."³⁰ Thus, let us not forget political scientist and historian Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (1983), where he established 'the people' are frequently tied to statist discourses by nationalist tropes; they are never 'just people' but assumed to be citizens.³¹

Appropriately, the discourse surrounding the public sphere has not only evolved from its perception as a cultural monolith to one of multiplicities: its socio-cultural purposes have also shifted in value. As Fraser critically notes, the Habermasian public sphere was historically limited in its specificity both by its definition of what constitutes

the public (as opposed to private realm), and in its liberal conceptualisation as a sphere separated from and counteracting an authoritarian state. This idealised separation between the public sphere and the liberal state informs the legal institutional guarantees ensuring free speech, free press, and free assembly, social establishments that have devolved with time into the massaging of public opinion through mass media relations and manufactured public displays and spectacles.³² Moreover, the assumed separation between state and society was always a chimera: circulation of ‘official’ public discourse channels public opinion through mechanisms of state power. Ritualising public agency by structuring platforms of discourse leads to decisions – i.e., voting; thus, Warner remarks, “the only way a public is able to act is through its imaginary coupling with the state.”³³

Thus, according to Fraser, counterpublics, or oppositional publics, arise by virtue of the inherent contradictions, social tensions, exclusions, and ideological limitations marking the hierarchical organisation of publics.³⁴ While Amber Day conceptualises multiple publics as imperfectly overlapping, competing spheres (or Venn diagrams, to be more exact) that jostle for public attention within power differentials to subtly shift cultural norms and assumptions, we can take the conceptualisation deeper with an analysis of counterpublics.³⁵ Counterpublics are more than sub-publics circulating special interests that remain fundamentally aligned with dominant discourses. Fraser notes they are not only oppositional, but also differ by virtue of their awareness of their subordinate status. As such, publics and counterpublics exist in parallel, conflicting relationships.³⁶ According to Fraser, the function of counterpublics is to extend discourse beyond the exclusions fostered by the dominant paradigm, enclosing counterpublics into ‘subaltern communities’ in opposition to the dominant discourse. Fraser’s ‘subaltern communities’ develop alternative discourses capable of articulating, and even inventing, new language to describe experiences of subordination and marginalisation, thus rendering them into knowable, discursive content.³⁷ Ultimately, however, Fraser’s model of subaltern counterpublics runs parallel with dominant public discourse: she argues for the eventual inclusion of excluded subjects, a tactic that renders them only temporarily oppositional. This positioning changes once reform is successful and

counterpublic discourses are mainstreamed. Warner, on the other hand, appears to deny exclusions emanating from public discourse are anything more than a cycle of social projections and recharacterisations, claiming that “public discourse postulates a circulating field of estrangement that it must then struggle to recapture as an addressable entity.”³⁸ There is a reason these dynamics exist, however. Concerned as Warner is in describing oppositional dynamics of public discourse, he does not adequately grapple with the nature of power relations inherent in discourse processes, and never discusses the issue of hegemony.³⁹

Social, Political & Cultural Power Basics: Hegemony 101

Hegemony derives from the Greek word *hegemon*, which refers to the dominance of one city state over another; its modern usage was extensively theorised by the Italian politician and Marxist philosopher, Antonio Gramsci. Hegemony is the entwined political and cultural power of a dominant group (a class, or state) that asserts both material and social control by shaping political, social, and cultural institutions to coerce and gain the consent of the governed.⁴⁰ According to Gramsci, asserting cultural hegemony is the prerequisite to achieving political power.⁴¹ As such, hegemony operates in the intellectual spheres of social life, exercising supremacy both by managing public institutions and social opinion. It assures governing interests’ continued and ongoing political power.⁴² Coming from a position of class analysis, Gramsci theorised the idea of the ‘organic intellectual,’ social agents who express the lives of the proletariat in civil society.⁴³ He also contextualised the development of a ‘historic bloc,’ the combination of a bloc of cultural leaders in civil society and leadership in the economic sphere of production.⁴⁴ The dominant culture, the bourgeoisie, take their hegemonic position for granted. They control vast networks of administrators, cultural producers, politicians, and educators (a.k.a., intellectuals) involved in adjudicating social and cultural norms, as well as the material production of society. Furthermore, their activities are regulated and mediated by the state apparatus through laws and remuneration.⁴⁵ Responding to the hegemonic power of the dominant bourgeois culture is not impossible, however

it requires counter-hegemonic forces to:

...conduct a 'war of position' within civil society to gain ground through processes of moral-intellectual reform that prepare subordinate groups for self-governance by creating post-capitalist sensibilities and values, practical democratic capacities, and a belief in the possibility of a radically transformed future.⁴⁶

Thus, Gramsci considers culture to be a necessary and active component shaping potential opposition to the dominant order. Gramscian civil society, much akin to Habermas' public sphere, is not only a separate creative space for critique, but also for organising.⁴⁷ Furthermore, unlike the Habermasian idealised separation between the public sphere and the state, Gramsci argues hegemonic social forces in power leverage both the public sphere and the state apparatus to their advantage, leaving civil society (i.e., the public sphere) as the sole creative avenue for counter-hegemonic forces to challenge dominating power.⁴⁸ Hegemony and counter-hegemony are interdependent and exist as 'simultaneous double movements' wherein each side shapes and informs the other.⁴⁹ Thus, we can see in Fraser's reformist argument for eventual inclusion of subaltern counterpublics in the dominant discourse an example of hegemony in action: cooptation of opposition into a reformed dominant paradigm, a so-called 'passive revolution' that ultimately furthers consent for the dominant ideology.⁵⁰ Moreover, hegemony operates beyond the discursive and cultural spheres of symbolic representation; it always includes material and social power plays through its operation in managing economic and political consensus.⁵¹

Thus, dominant public spheres, by their very hegemonic nature, will co-opt and recuperate opposition into malleable forms that can be contained within civil society public discourses. I will turn to an outline of discourse networks after addressing the issue of hegemony from an anarchist perspective. Defining the parameters of hegemony vs. counter-hegemony is not to presume anarchists should transpose this authoritarian state-centred theory into a strategy for social conduct – that would be simplistic. As Richard J.F. Day asserts, "hegemo-

ny is a process, not an accomplishment.”⁵² As such, anarchists need to act otherwise when they wield counter-hegemonic discourses. These are not weapons in an anarchist ‘war of position’ asserting control to gain political power, nor are they designed to play a politics of demand for recognition of subordinate communities.⁵³ It is important to break the cycle of seeking to (re)produce the *hegemony of hegemony*. The *hegemony of hegemony* is Day’s label for the assumption that social change can only occur *en masse*, simultaneously, in cyclical shifts of power relations.⁵⁴ Instead, he posits fostering an *affinity for affinity*, a process by which social change can be deeply imbued with “non-universalising, non-hierarchical, non-coercive relationships-based mutual aid and shared ethical commitments.”⁵⁵ Thus, through anarchist values, discourses, and actions, critical *anti*-hegemonic strike points attacking injustices may serve to *hollow out* and delegitimize the edifices of various publics engendered by dominant discourses. As such, anarchist criticality in thought, values, and deeds are keyed to destroy forces of oppression, as well as complacency. This is not done to influence state power, but, grow a movement of affinity for anarchy – or as J.R. quips, “to make new anarchists and make existing anarchists better.”⁵⁶

Frontline of Meaning Making: Discourse Networks

This battlefield of discourses, however, does not come from nowhere. It stems from what Kathy Ferguson calls the “productive work” of meaning making within layered discourse networks.⁵⁷ First theorised by Friedrich Kittler in his 1985 publication *Discourse Networks, 1800/1900*, ‘discourse networks’ initially referred to the repeated dictation, reproduction, and flow of knowledge in texts and instruction.⁵⁸ Writing on early modernism, Kittler describes how the era of growing knowledge circulation, first through manuscript copies in libraries, then through the technological advance of the printing press, gave rise to numerous publicly available commentaries. Their key purpose, Kittler outlines, was put towards developing rhetoric: teachable discourses founded largely in scripture.⁵⁹ However, not all discourse networks are presumed equal, and the emergence of scriptural commentaries, according to Kittler, were nothing more than

“tossing words back and forth” between the ‘Primal Text’ and the infinity of interpretation.⁶⁰ In today’s parlance, one might compare this phenomenon with the discourse networks of newsfeeds in which repetitious bytes of information are reported and re-reported across channels without critical insight or social analysis, often spreading biased assumptions or omitting perspectives. Instead, in the German romantic tradition, Kittler highlights certain authors (Schiller and Goethe) reinvigorated ‘obsolete’ discourse networks, (texts that did not introduce anything new, nor were necessarily understood) with poetry in an attempt to inject humanity into stale content.⁶¹ Significantly, in this poetic framing, Kittler notes how some authors’ texts are widely acknowledged to be ‘heard’ by the reader, and imbued with a “virtual orality” that manifests a spirit (*Geist*).⁶² When discourse networks are ‘heard’ this way by their audiences – whether verbal-textual, visual-narrative, or musical – they gain traction in attracting an affective community.⁶³ In this manner, emotional valences, produced through the aesthetic combinations of multimodal forms of expression, incite viewers’ affectual responses, which may either affirm or repulse them. When affirmed through social actions, such as ‘liking’ or ‘sharing,’ on the most superficial level (as already mentioned), or circulated more intentionally through film screening parties, as sub.Media instituted with their *Trouble* series, the result is the development of diverse media into sites of affinity.

Anarchist political theorist Kathy Ferguson contextualises Kittler’s concept of the discourse network beyond its initial reference to the semi-closed circulation of knowledge into layered significations of media-saturated import in the present. According to Ferguson, discourse networks are contested terrains where challenges to hegemonic assumptions of state and corporate power can take place through the critical production of meaning.⁶⁴ They do “productive work” by providing the material foundations (i.e., printed text, visual media, the body of a speaker, etc.) and delivering semiotic context (i.e., they provide ‘signs’ – words, or images – that are culturally ‘signified’ with meaning), both of which are necessary for the production of discourse.⁶⁵ Most importantly, while more hegemonic discourses tend to be broadly (re)produced, the layered nature of discourse networks means there are ample opportunities to challenge and contest the un-

derstandings they represent through their inherent contradictions.⁶⁶ Finding and leveraging these contradictions is where satire really takes a bite into the hegemony of dominant discourses.⁶⁷ Additionally, not only do audiences overlap within discourse networks: in today's broadcast-saturated world, so too does much media, though it is possible for individuals to become siloed into singular 'discourse network' echo-chambers. As such, discourse networks interweave and feed into the production of publics and counterpublics in ways that are recognisable through participation, because by compounding our speech acts "we are already in some kind of conversation with each other."⁶⁸ Thus, to make sense of multiple publics and counterpublics, a sort of cultural codification develops that allows for the identification of and affiliation with a body of like-minded individuals. This forms a nucleus of the social imaginary that presupposes the capacity to create new institutions constituting society.⁶⁹

Talk to Strangers: Making Sense of Social Imaginaries

All publics and counterpublics consist of imaginary relationships with strangers, *social imaginaries* that connect discourse to a wider background so as to enable sense-making of social practices.⁷⁰ According to critical theorist and ex-Marxist, Cornelius Castoriadis, whose formative work, *The Imaginary Institution of Society* (1987) threw the die upon which the concept of the social imaginary has largely been cast, society cannot be viewed as operating through purely functional systems, including institutions, to fulfill its needs. Firstly, the definition of 'needs' is always shifting in modern capitalist society, and secondly, humanity always outstrips itself by making things and redefining itself.⁷¹ Thus, in Castoriadis' estimation, social imaginaries: 1) are a condition of possibility; 2) are larger than individual phantasies; 3) have underlying patterns (i.e., as represented by a cultural heritage or, as I will argue, an anarchist cultural milieu); 4) are not patterns that can exist in representational form (i.e., should not be confused with symbols); 5) have no precise place of existence; 6) and can only be grasped indirectly/obliquely.⁷² The social world is constituted (lived) and articulated (discoursed) through significations (i.e., text, images, symbols, even food) provided by the imaginary

significations that are caught between the constraints of the ‘real’ and the ‘rational’ unfolding within the socio-historical continuum.⁷³ For Castoriadis, the social imaginary has a singular social cognitive function (along with socialisation of rationality and perception), that has the potential to constitute multiple shifting significations/patterns. As such, what is valued or devalued attains signification in the social imaginary which, in turn, frames the orientation of a society,⁷⁴ or in the case of anarchism, frames the development of social organising principles such as egalitarianism, mutual aid, reciprocity, and empowerment.

Another way to address this potential organisational framework is to speak of the social imaginary from the perspective of a plurality of individuals. One method offered by the moral philosopher Charles Taylor discusses how the complexities of the social imaginary provides a normative and legitimising understanding of “how we all fit together in carrying out (a) common practice.”⁷⁵ Inspired by Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities*, which argues that the birth of the modern state is founded on the rise of nationalist imaginaries, Taylor asserts that the social imaginary “is what enables through making sense of, the practice of society.”⁷⁶ Much broader than a social ‘theory,’ Taylor refers to the development of multiple modernities. First, we have the Western model and then we witness the rise of ‘divergent’ social imaginaries arising from the modernising of multiple non-Western cultures (Castoriadis would identify these as ‘underlying patterns’). In his discussion, a social imaginary forms the root of a new conception of a modern moral order. Thus, the social imaginary stemming from the Western perspective assumed universality with the global spread of natural rights and the doctrine of consent to be governed.⁷⁷ Furthermore, keyed to these notions is the rise of individualism, which engenders a new social morality of mutual benefit “whose functional differentiations are ultimately contingent and whose members are fundamentally equal.”⁷⁸ Most importantly, according to Taylor, the social imaginary shapes society *through practices*.⁷⁹ As such, social imaginaries do not exist ‘out there;’ they are intimately part of common social norms, everyday life, and interactions forging interlocking spheres of coexistence between people.⁸⁰ They encompass the way ‘ordinary’ people *imagine* their

surroundings – and by extension, themselves – through images and stories, while also developing values and expectations that provide a “sense of how things usually go... of how they ought to go, of what missteps would invalidate the practice.”⁸¹ Social practice(s), according to Taylor, could provide individuals with the conceptual framework for something as basic as planning a demonstration,⁸² or as complex as shaping processes undergirding the economy.⁸³ They are dynamic and always evolving. Often, they are improvised, modified, and regenerated from past forms into new forms, encompassing a sense of what is both common and innovative within the space of a social imaginary.⁸⁴

Finally, emphasising the potential to undertake collective agency through the symbolic matrix enabled by social imaginaries, communications and cultural studies philosopher Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar pinpoints their imaginative world-making potential.⁸⁵ He synthesises five key ideas regarding social imaginaries (referenced in plural), the first being that they are ways of understanding society that then become social entities mediating collective life.⁸⁶ They perform this function through first person subjectivities that make possible common practices that are transmitted through the embedded *habitus* of a people, as well as through stories, symbols, and other methods of cultural dispersions.⁸⁷ First theorised by the sociologist and public intellectual Pierre Bourdieu, the *habitus* is embodied socialised subjectivity. In individuals it is formed by *dispositions*; internalised, habitual ways of being. On a broader scale, it is the embodiment of social conditions informing the development and acquisition of preference structures developed in tandem with perceptions and responses to ideas/experiences/events that occur in objective reality.⁸⁸ By virtue of carrying meaning in texts or stories, social imaginaries hold a double purpose: they exist as understandings in cultural reality and as identity markers to help individuals culturally situate their subjectivities.⁸⁹ The second key idea Gaonkar relates regarding social imaginaries is founded on the inherent relations between strangers that is made possible through the circulation of mass media. This is also a key idea related to a public, wherein strangers are united and treated as belonging by the organisation of discourses addressing individuals who identify with their participation in a given discourse.⁹⁰

As Warner relates, such an indirect and unspecifiable social relationship of commonality requires constant imagining.⁹¹ Third, Gaonkar notes, is the nationalist rhetoric of identifying individuals/people with a historical unfolding of time, with the fourth key idea building off the nationalist trope as a dominant paradigm whereby third-person objectifications feed into subordinate forms of social imaginaries (i.e., ethnic groups, ‘the mainstream,’ ‘the market,’ etc. – essentially what Castoriadis calls ‘patterns’).⁹² The fifth, and final key idea associated with Gaonkar’s account of social imaginaries is that they often appear during moments of secular temporality, existing within a spectacular timeframe of social rupture or spectacle, which modern societies attempt to contain, but which anarchists like the sub.Media collective, and I shall return to this point at the end, attempt to valorise and contain.⁹³

Given the above-mentioned definitions of the social imaginary, I now turn to the type of social pattern constituting an ‘anarchist imaginary.’ Identifiable in many instances as symbols, images, texts, practices, values, and variant cultural milieus, this anarchist imaginary is knowable, intuitable, and often remarkable, but also unfixed, evolving and dynamic. Often misrepresented as subcultural, anarchism is not clique-driven, but a participatory social-engaged force – it is not a static subordinate sphere incorporated within a social system, but a critical perspective/movement that manifests materially through embodied transformation to change reality. Flowing through friends, families, and strangers, the anarchist imaginary is transmitted intimately, locally, transnationally, and across history through time. Constantly configuring ways to attack what it opposes, it is not a negation, but a presence that sets anarchism in motion, collectively imagining what change to concretely enact.⁹⁴ Practices fostering values of egalitarianism, resistance, mutual aid, non-coercion, defiance, and freedom, to name a few, is the glue that binds coexisting social bonds and feeds into the cultural and political development that loosely constitutes and articulates an anarchist social imaginary.

In this mix, the content sub.Media produces is generatively developing a resistance culture. We have a particular pattern of the anarchist imaginary that is both symbolic and agential and is associated

with the first of the two primary strategies of structural renewal. The purpose of nurturing resistance culture is to counteract, to engage in an entanglement with power undergirding the battlefield of the dominant ideological, social, and cultural discourses spanning both the political and economic spheres. In this manner, by nurturing resistance culture, sub.Media does aim to conduct a ‘war of position’ against hegemonic forces. Their purpose is to foster anarchist values through delegitimising, anti-hegemonic means, rather than asserting power-over in a counter-hegemonic contest. Using the tools of documentary video, video editing, interviewing, and narration, sub.Media mobilises patterns of the resistant anarchist imaginary via the internet. Broadcasting and sharing it on alternative media platforms, networks, and through its content, sub.Media activates the socio-cultural dimensions of informal education and social justice, and affectively elicits concern, empathy, derision, and outrage. I now turn to a representational analysis of three videos selected by sub.Media members Franklin López, J.R., and Heatscore. Each were selected as exemplary of their best intentions as media activists.

END:CIV (2011)



Figure One: *END:CIV* Title Animation, screenshot (0:35)

Refusing to shy away from the harsh reality that marks contemporary industrial capitalist existence, Franklin López, director, videographer, and producer of *END:CIV* draws upon the voices of prominent authors, activists, and journalists, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, to illustrate four premises (distilled from twenty) marking civilisation. These premises were drawn from the work of Derek Jensen, author of the two volume publication *Endgame* (2006).⁹⁵ They are, in short:

1. Civilisation, especially industrial civilisation, can never be sustainable.
2. Traditional communities do not voluntarily give up resources, nor allow their landbase to be damaged for resource extraction; those that want the resources will destroy traditional communities to get them.
3. Industrial civilisation requires, and would collapse very quickly without persistent and widespread violence.
4. The culture (of industrial civilisation) as a whole and most of its members are insane, driven by a death urge, an urge to destroy life.

The film's main thesis rests on the assertion that cultural norms and behaviours contributing to peak oil and climate catastrophe are leading humanity towards apocalypse – and the best remedy, not just for humanity, but for all planetary life – is to organise a force stop to resource extraction to ensure there will be tracts of survivable land and water for those who come after the inevitable system-crash. Though Jensen's *Endgame* serves as the scaffolding for López' filmic narrative structure, the content driving the film, produced from a wealth of subject-interviews illustrated with video montage, backdrops of historical, news, and industry footage (b-rolls), elevates *END:CIV* beyond being a mere illustration of Jensen's ideas. *END:CIV* encapsulates one of the most radical environmental anarchist discourses on the movement to this day, with many of its points still relevant over a decade later.

The film, overall, systematically demonstrates the length and breadth global industrial capitalism takes to exploit resources, the negative consequences it has on communities and society at large, as well as the quagmire of false solutions that clearly have only supported perpetuating the status quo. From factory farming to massive over-fishing, clearcutting old growth forests and extracting bitumen from tarsands, López conducts an in-depth analysis of the destructive nature of industrial capitalism by featuring interviews and public talks by Derrick Jensen, as well as a lengthy roster of authors. These include Lierre Kieth (*The Vegetarian Myth*, 2009; co-author of *Deep Green Resistance*,⁹⁶ 2011), Waziyatawin (Wahpetunwan Dakota; *What Does Justice Look Like? The Struggle for Liberation in Dakota Homeland*, 2008), Aric McBay (co-author of *Deep Green Resistance*, 2011; author *Full Spectrum Resistance*, 2019), James Howard Kunstler (*The Long Emergency*, 2005), Dr. Michael Becker (contributor, *Igniting a Revolution*, 2006) John Zerzan (*Twilight of the Machines*, 2008), Stephanie McMillan (co-author of *As the World Burns*), Gord Hill (Kwakwaka'wakw; *500 Years of Indigenous Resistance Comic Book*, 2010/2021), and Peter Gelderloos (*How Nonviolence Protects the State*, 2007/2018/2021). Activist voices include Quatsinas (Nuxalk Nation – whose memory the film is dedicated to), as well as Zoe Blunt, Shusli (Karuk Tribe), George Poitras (Mikisew Cree First Nation), Captain Paul Watson (Sea Shepard Society), Mike Mercredi (Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation), and Rod Coronado (Former ALF activist). Journalists and fact-finders getting air-play include Dru Oja Jay (Dominion Newspaper Cooperative), Macdonald Stainsby (oilssandstruth.org), Maya Rolbin-Ghomie (dominionpaper.ca), Harjap Grewal (No One Is Illegal), Shannon Walsh (Director, *H₂Oil*), as well as unnamed mainstream news announcers. In short, clearly, the breath of interviewees who took part in the production of *END:-CIV* demonstrates the arguments that moved López to create his film are synthesised from a wide community of experts, both theoretical, and on the ground, and cannot be ascribed to Derrick Jensen alone.

Formally, the video production asserts its arguments using two interrelated styles of multimodal presentation: 1) pure video/audio montage sequencing, and 2) interviews that fade away from the headshot to blend the audio with representative video backgrounds.

For the rest of my analysis, I will review an example of each of these multimodalities, the first being the initial three-minute video montage sequence opening the feature presentation (duration 0:00-3:10), and the second contained in the sequence titled Figure V (duration 59:26-1:10:02), a subsection within the sequence outlined in Premise IV. As previously mentioned, Premise IV is as follows: “The culture (of industrial civilisation) as a whole and most of its members are insane, driven by a death urge, an urge to destroy life.”⁹⁷ Whereas the previous three premises are illustrated with straightforward accounts of resource extraction industries (Premise I), the history of colonialism (Premise II), and a video montage of ecological devastation and violence (Premise III), Premise IV, through the underlying illustrative Figures numbered IV and V, is about taking action in response to the cultural death urge. In Figure IV, López debunks accepted historical accounts on the efficacy of nonviolent resistance. Then, in Figure V, using a series of interviews and images I will outline shortly, he discusses the value of militancy in social resistance. The closing sequence, Figure VI, ends the film with an illustrated rhetorical narration by Jensen. This article addresses the opening video montage sequence, Figure V in Premise IV, as well as the closing of the film featured in Figure VI.

Of the two types of video montages López utilises in his work, the first, which I am labeling ‘pure video/audio montage sequencing’ (exemplified by the opening three-minute sequence) is strategically placed within the documentary to visually communicate an objective truth inherent to industrial civilisation’s violence. The opening video montage scans a retro Pacman video game sitting in a corner. A male figure drops a quarter into the machine, and selects ‘single player.’ Up pops the title, *End Civ* (in Pacman font) and an animated Pacman takes over the frame, eating animated trees from right to left (Figure One). As pumping music begins to play, the word “Ready” appears, and the animated game display occupies the screen, superimposed over images of factory slaughterhouses, tuna fishing, oil-well pumps, and smoke stacks. A voice explains, “People often say that there’s a war against nature, and that this is a third world war.”⁹⁸ Overlaying the mix of Pacman game animation and atrocities against nature we hear a range of speakers whose ideas are introduced in this opening

sequence. Each of the speakers share aspects of John Zerzan's foundational claim that civilisation is destroying nature at an accelerating rate, while also intensifying techno-culture.⁹⁹ Imagery reinforcing this apocalyptic outlook includes the deaths of megafauna species such as eagles, and seals, massive plastic waste dumps on the ocean, suffering fish, industrial equipment felling trees and a digital countdown clock. Keyed to this thesis, according to interviewee Aric McBay, humanity faces two pressure points in the near future: peak oil energy collapse and catastrophic runaway climate change.¹⁰⁰



Figure Two: We should be acting a lot more urgently, screenshot (1:51)

Leading up to and immediately underlining this point is a montage of videos including the sunrise over a hot savannah, atom-bomb explosions, a clock ticking down, playing the Pacman video game labyrinth, burning forests, satellite imagery of a hurricane in the Gulf of Mexico (Figure Two), a red truck driving in a flood, and finally, a crowd of people in dusty streets wearing protective face coverings. Significantly, when viewed separately the images appear isolated and distinct, but when combined, they paint a larger picture of the consequences of industrial civilisation left unchecked. This 'shock and awe' representational approach may be regarded as an anarchist tactic of delegitimation, a type of cultural intervention defined by political

scientist Uri Gordon as directed against hierarchical and unjust institutions of dominant society that simultaneously calls for their abolition.¹⁰¹ The fast-paced visual-narrative in this sub-sequence imparts a sense of urgency in the viewer by saturating the scene with examples of likely outcomes associated with the pending climate emergency, while pointing the finger at the causes. Combined with the driving musical beats, the visual rawness and speed of deployment is calculated to elicit a heightened emotional affect of outrage in the viewer. The sequence ends with a warning from MacBay about how those in power will assert their might with much blunter force under conditions of peak oil shortage.¹⁰² This statement is reinforced by an unknown voice listing the alterations climate catastrophe will wreck on the environment: “the climate is changing, the wind, the current, the storm patterns, snow pack, snow melt, flooding, droughts...” Cue visual animation to Pacman bumping into a ghost, and the words “GAME OVER” flash on screen.¹⁰³ End opening sequence.

The analogy of the single player game is a telling metaphor that speaks to the limitations of individualism that *END:CIV* is both caught up in and paradoxically undermines throughout the documentary. The single player manipulates the figure of Pacman through a labyrinth strewn with shiny consumables, eating his way across the screen. This is telling in much as it echoes resource extraction industries, which gobble up material, and shoppers, who gobble up goods. Juxtaposing the Pacman game play with images of consumer waste and ecological destruction reinforces the metaphor of individualistic societies blindly driving planetary life into a death trap, much like Pacman’s run-in with the ghost. Repeatedly, the film argues individualistic ‘green’ consumer choices will not save the planet from destruction, because the challenges extend beyond any individual, scaling upwards to a systemic, global crisis. Similarly, Gordon has discussed how elites has successfully rebranded ecological calamities into technological or managerial problems. Thus, environmental crises such as floods, extinctions, and famines are normalised, while regulations (marketable debt mechanisms) are introduced to measure emissions or capture gasses and touted as ‘green’ solutions.¹⁰⁴ In this vein, the film also points out that singular attempts to stave off peak oil or climate catastrophe through the purchase of solar panels

and other alternative energy sources (one wonders how López would have shredded the Tesla had it been available back in 2011) are also deemed insufficient to stop the inevitable crash. Throughout the film, López hammers it home: there will be a crash, and no amount of green capitalism or alternative energy markets will stop it. Moreover, in the opening sequence MacBay's warning of growing societal oppression signals there are pressurised forces looming in humanity's future. As we shall explore, these forces are framed within a narrative of militant resistance. Notably, the opening sequence ends without any respite or hope, because for single player one, the game is 'over.' However, after this point, the documentary's argumentation begins in earnest.

The second, and most ubiquitous style of multimodal presentation utilised in *END:CIV* is the stylistic cutting away of headshot interviews to blend the speakers' audio with representative video backgrounds. Full appreciation of this style requires visual, cultural, and historical literacy, combined with familiarity with the authors'/speakers' intellectual contributions to the anarchist and activist milieu. *END:CIV* is divided into sequential Roman numeral 'Premises,' and the example video interview sequences I shall examine illustrate 'Figure V' in 'Premise IV.' López frames Premise IV taking his cue from Jensen: "The culture as a whole and most of its members are insane. The culture is driven by a death urge, an urge to destroy life."¹⁰⁵ Expanding on this premise in Figure V, the illustration begins with a video capture of an Al Gore presentation filled with charts and graphs. Gore represents the 'political will' to save the climate. This is a position Jensen demolishes by stating solutions that assume industrial society is primary and the ecosystem a dependant variable should be reversed: "It should be: we need to do whatever it takes to save life on the planet."¹⁰⁶ Thus, waging militant resistance against industrial capitalism emerges as a call to protect the earth for future generations. This is the logical conclusion of the film's narration. Two of the most verbally and dynamically powerful visual-narratives in this sequence of interviews showcase the ideas of activist scholar Waziyatawin (Wahpetunwan Dakota) and author and activist Gord Hill (Kwakwaka'wakw). In this manner, Figure V picks up the thread from Premise II, which asserts: "Traditional communities do not

often voluntarily give up or sell the resources on which their communities are based until their communities have been destroyed. They do not willingly allow their landbases to be damaged so that other resources can be extracted (i.e., gold, oil, timber). It follows that those who want the resources will do what they can to destroy traditional communities.”¹⁰⁷ López weaves the main thesis of Premise II into Premise IV to express the urgency to resist industrial civilisation’s assault on Indigenous peoples in the pathway of polluting and destructive resource extraction.



Figure Three: Waziyatawin, screenshots (1:01:36-1:01:53)

One of two significant sequences that visually/verbally combine to produce a multimodality of mediums arguing for this position is the ‘Fuck Patience’ sequence. Speaking to the need to resist colonialism, and its corollary, industrial capitalism, and to do so outside of the limitations imposed by rights-based, state-adjudicated politics of demand,¹⁰⁸ Wahpetunwan Dakota scholar and activist Waziyatawin asserts:

Most Indigenous populations who maintain [video: Indigenous people washing laundry on a giant pipe in an urban slum setting] a sense of a traditional world-view [video: juxtaposed with a luxury poolside water-park] know that the way of life that a Settler society has imposed on this land is unsustainable. [video:

focus on Waziyatawin] Yet, there's been a sense that we really need to kind of wait until it collapses, [video: thickly filled three-tracked highway with cars] or wait until they're done doing, [video: rusty car graveyard] or they've reached their limit and they can't [video: logging trucks being stacked with timber] continue the way that they've been going on, and be patient. Fuck patience! [graphic font all caps, blinking: FUCK PATIENCE].¹⁰⁹ Fade to black.

Here Waziyatawin is challenging complacency with the status quo. She is addressing the film's viewers, evoking them to become 'ignited' with a passion to fight, to resist colonial capitalism in the present, to not wait passively for 'the end' to come to pass. The videos selected by López to amplify Waziyatawin's message reinforce the injustices of ecological racism wrought by colonial-capitalism and the wasteful overproduction of goods and exploitation of resources deemed necessary by a culture/system that refuses limits. This reinforces the concluding epitaph, "Fuck Patience," (Figure Three) we cannot wait for Settler society to reign itself in.

Further radicalising this discourse, Kwakwaka'wakw author and activist Gord Hill narrates the second sequence, in which the power of armed confrontation is montaged with an exemplary instance of a militant level of activism:

[video: Mohawk Warriors (1990) driving a golf cart wearing bandanas over their lower faces] You cannot just simply ask the state for these reforms, or for any kinds of gains or concessions. [video: Mohawk woman with two officers in fatigues at the Oka blockade] You have to *force* them to do it. [video: Mohawk woman vigorously pushes one of the officers (woman's push timed to coincide with the word *force*)] And that's the power of disruption. [video: Mohawk woman keeps pushing the officer out of the area]"¹¹⁰



Figure Four: You have to *force* them to do it, screenshot (1:02:50)

Following Hill's statements López inserts historical audio-visual news footage from two sources reporting on the Oka Crisis Standoff, a.k.a. The Kanesatake Resistance (July 11, 1990-September 26, 1990):

Announcer one: "It was a bloody day at the local Mohawk Indian [sic] community in Oka, Quebec, near Montreal. [video: Mohawk woman keeps pushing the officer out of the area into the barb wire. Scene switches to officers in heavy riot gear carrying semi-automatic guns next to a fence] Provincial police in riot gear stormed the barricades the Mohawks had set up. [video: line of police cars with cops in vests many carrying long-guns on a road using the cars as shields; barricade in distance] There were clouds of teargas, a hail of bullets [video: woman Indigenous warrior in fatigues and a bandana in the forest carrying a semi-automatic gun] and in the midst of battle a policeman was killed. All this because of a dispute [video: Indigenous man with bandana over face carrying a long-gun] over a piece of forest the Indians [sic] claim is theirs, [video: shot of a golf course parking lot

next to a green where (White) people are putting] a forest town council wants to bulldoze [video: shot of golfers on the green pans backwards to show graves in a deep forest glade] to expand the local golf course.”¹¹¹

Announcer two: [video: Mohawk man standing on a barricade of cars holding gun aloft triumphantly] “Police retreated as abruptly as they’d attacked [video: heavy loader crushing cars on the side of a road] leaving behind their cruisers. They also left a heavy front-end loader which the Mohawks immediately put to their own use. [video: panning shot of upside-down crushed police cruiser] The police cruisers, crushed and useless, became barricades themselves. [video: shot pans out further to show the full crushed cruiser barricade]¹¹²

Finally, López ends this sequence with historical documentary footage of an Indigenous woman warrior inside the barricade (Figure Five) who explains, “We treat these trees and the land like our mother. These people are raping our mother. What would you do if they raped your mother?”¹¹³

This woman’s anger shouts across time to express her strong sense of urgency. She took action to protect the trees she cares about, a level of militancy that the viewer, hopefully, will sympathise with, and perhaps replicate.

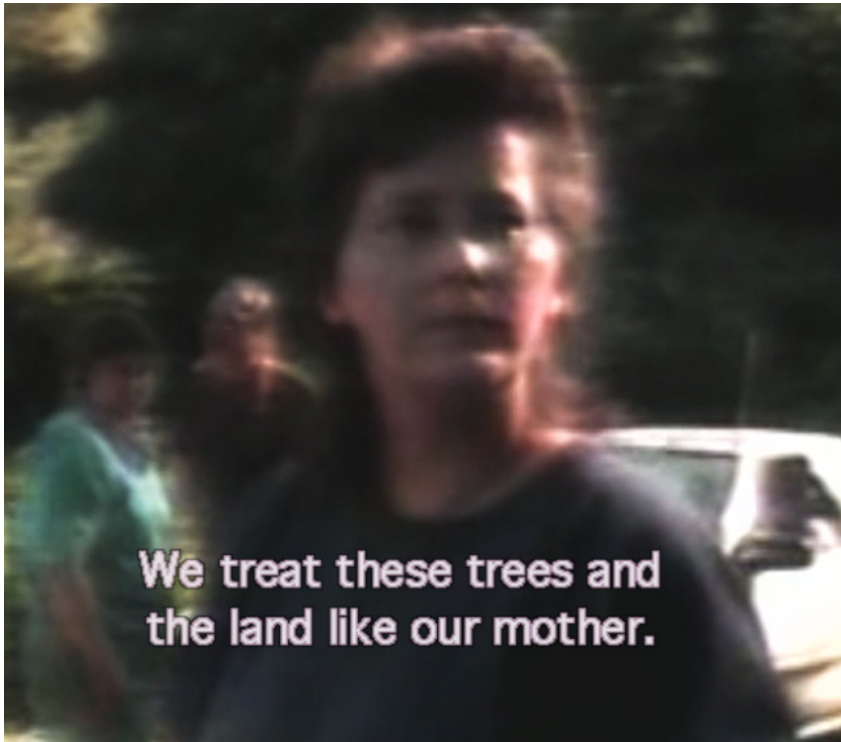


Figure Five: We treat these trees and the land like our mother, screenshot (1:03:35)

López' decision to repeat the power of urgency to protect traditional lifeways in nature through the words of two Indigenous women twenty years apart is no accident. This strategic scripting is an anti-hegemonic discourse by way of aesthetic intervention, a radicalised version of Kittler's 'poetic framing' that allows texts to be 'heard' and imbued with a 'virtual orality.'¹¹⁴ The echo of outrage reverberating between these two women, moreover, not only expresses their distinct, yet similar Indigenous worldviews – first Waziyatawin's assertion that Settler society is unsustainable, then the unnamed Mohawk woman's powerful assertion of the familial/spiritual motivation behind protecting the trees – it also produces an affective resonance for viewers. With this connection, or *Geist*, they catch a glimpse of the Indigenous anger concerning the colonial-driven destruction that has impacted Indigenous lifeways for over five hundred years.

The connection is real, but it is also a social imaginary generating patterns of cultural reality that helps viewers, virtual strangers, realise, subjectively, that both of these women are warriors in their communities. As such, the movement cultures/counterdiscourses situating this defiant social imaginary is that of militant Indigenous resistance to colonialism.

Introducing viewers to the history of the Oka Crisis Standoff, López foregrounds a successful example of Indigenous resistance, thus demonstrating the very real possibility this level of militancy could be repeated in the future.¹¹⁵ Encouraging political resistance movements to form is a clear subtext of Figure V: and they can be grounded in the knowledge obtained from the film's illustrative figures and premises. The process is clear: first viewers are educated to realise there is a pending global environmental crisis that has social ramifications for survivability; then they learn there are powerful systemic opponents in power who benefit from exacerbating the crisis. Undergirding this knowledge is a strong assertion that individual consumer choices and political party politics will not alleviate the problem. Figure V's purpose is to posit what we can do, answering the question 'how to respond?' Figure V showcases fighting back tactically by becoming more diverse and more militant in one's actions.

At the time this film was produced, 2009 into 2011, a significant debate in anarchist activist circles centred around whether movements should favour 'nonviolent,' or (what was deemed) 'violent' tactics. In *END:CIV*, we learn in Figure IV use of nonviolent approaches alone were historically insufficient to force the powers that be into changing their course of action. Instead, the viewer is provided with compelling evidence that a *diversity of tactics* is necessary to compel social change from below. In other words, to stop ongoing injustice from continuing requires *all* tactics working together to attack oppression from *all* sides.

Just as López offers the Oka standoff as the example of a successfully disruptive resistance movement to reinforce the message of Gord Hill, so he draws on the history of anarchists fighting fascists in Spain to reinforce the views of author Peter Gelderloos. According to Gelderloos:

[video: American Congress standing in applause with Obama at the podium] It's really important to recognise that no struggle is done [video: panning arial shot of the American White House] that there's not any possibility of any lasting victory as long as the state still exists, but we can definitely see in the histories of struggle, small gains have been won, [video: Peter Gelderloos interviewed] and ways in which we've empowered ourselves by the use of all tactics, and I think it's not even important to really say if a particular tactic is violent or not [video: historical footage of Spanish Revolutionary CNT/FAI anarchists waving, some holding guns] because this is just kind of [video: more Spanish Revolutionary CNT/FAI anarchists; a woman with fist raised, men carrying guns and all behind a moving truck] a moral category meant to restrict action. I think it's more important to look at which tactics can be empowering, [video: more Spanish Revolutionary CNT/FAI anarchists riding on the back of a truck in a crowded street with fists and a gun raised in victory] and liberating, and useful.¹¹⁶

What is empowering? This question is left open in the film. Much of the narrative is devoted to debating violent vs. nonviolent tactics and the term 'empowering' serves as a 'beacon' to transcend the binary created by this seemingly endless debate. Empowering for whom? Clearly, the answer is to empower resistance, but for resistance to happen, one needs the will to fight – 'militancy.' Throughout *END:-CIV* militant values are assumed as a given, and learning from past resistance movements is keyed to this level of commitment. Militancy is a personal quality that connotes a 'fighting spirit,' as Gord Hill explains:

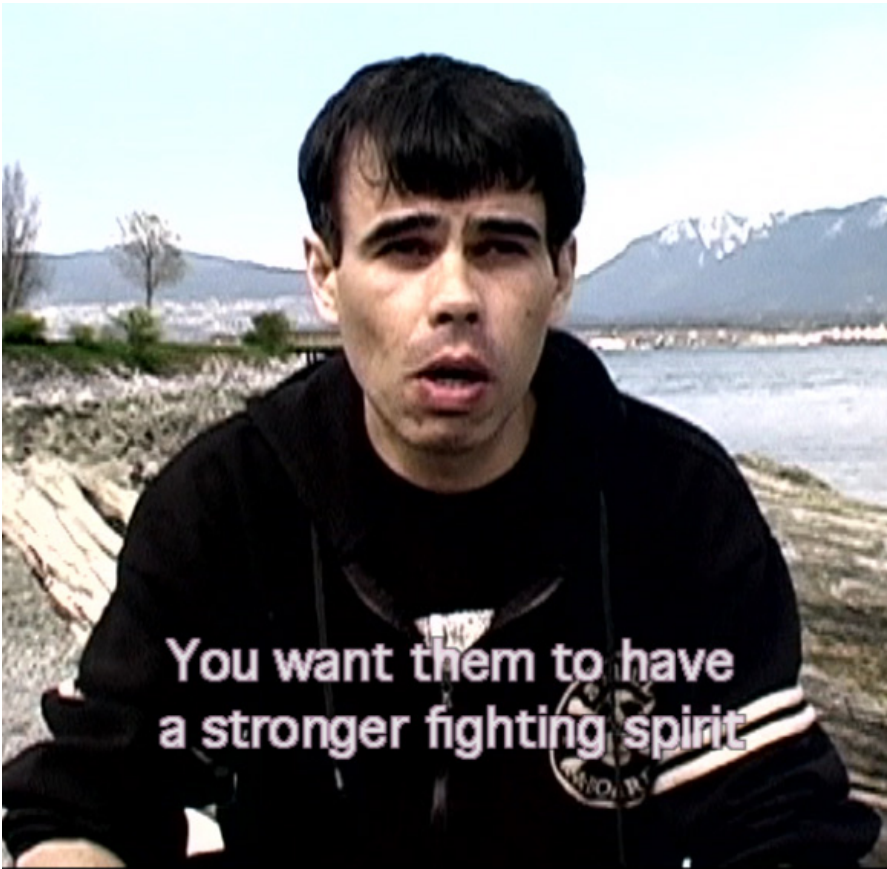


Figure Six: Gord Hill, You want them to have a stronger fighting spirit, screenshot (1:08:43)

[video: Gord Hill speaking on a beach] When you enter a period of social conflict what you don't want is people promoting nonviolence because that's going to disarm the people. It's going to disarm the people in the face of an aggressive enemy, and in the face of hard social conditions. You want them to have a stronger fighting spirit because without a *fighting spirit*, you lack the will to resist.¹¹⁷

Militancy is an intensity of commitment, characterised by the refusal to give up or allow distractions to get in the way of goals aligned with the destruction of oppressive forces. Society engenders militancy

with masculinist associative traits, but in truth, it is embodied in all genders. As such, it is marked by degrees of toughness and self-sacrifice driven by an ethos of caring and support towards others and the world around us. However, one significant aspect of militancy left unmentioned in *END:CIV* is dealing with trauma and how communities of resistance sustain themselves and remain resilient. Focusing on illustrations of victory using triumphant images of Spanish anarchists certainly reinforces the value of concentrating on empowering tactics, but it comes at the omission of grappling with consequences.

The only element dating this film is Derrick Jensen himself. His narrative style centres on taking pot-shots at aspects of civilisation using manipulative hyperbole. *END:CIV* concludes with a monologue in which Jensen fantasises about a foreign Nazi/fascist¹¹⁸ incursion onto American soil. The invading fascists undermine American political structures, pollute and destroy the environment, and force the inhabitants to fight to protect the land. Simplistic at best, this narrative mobilises an externalised fascist boogeyman for emotional effect when the real culprit in the recent history of wanton global exploitation of natural resources and destruction of Indigenous lifeways has been neoliberalism. As such, by externalising a fascist enemy supposedly invading to destroy America, Jensen is promoting a xenophobic pseudo-nationalistic discourse to encapsulate the fight he sees looming in the future. The fight is not between a mythical redux of German National Socialism or Italian Fascism vs. good 'ol' home-grown America (and we all know America produces its own fascists). It is between anti-colonial/decolonised and anti-capitalist forces opposing landowners, industry, and the state. It is a fight that is both localised and transcends national boundaries.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not address the millenarianism permeating *END:CIV*. Undoubtedly, we are living in the 'end times' but what needs to be understood is that the 'end' will not be punctuated by one cataclysmic event like a worldwide flood (though sea levels are certainly rising), or a nuclear holocaust (although, it is within the realm of the possible). 'The end' is an ongoing series of artificially induced natural disasters caused by humans who have irrevocably altered the environment for the sake of greed, apathy, and convenience.

In this vein, *END:CIV* demonstrates systemic destruction of natural habitats and Indigenous lands and health at the hands of industrial capitalism and state power is a catastrophe. The YouTube posting of *END:CIV* includes an additional subtitle to reinforce the main point: *END:CIV: Resist or Die*. This is the message. Embrace your own ‘fighting spirit’ in defence of the life principle. Enact a twofold practice of structural renewal: cause a disruption to kickstart transformation.

Trouble Series (2017-2020)

Sub.Media’s *Trouble*, which ran from 2017 to 2020 was a monthly, thirty-minute, low-budget documentary series designed to be watched by groups and focused in depth on relevant anarchist topics. In a way, according to López, *Trouble* was sub.Media’s most ambitious project.¹¹⁹ Its parameters were codified when sub.Media was a collective of two, (López and Heatscore), and sustained over the course of collective expansion to five members.¹²⁰ The *Trouble* series followed a unique dissemination model. The series was designed to circumvent mainstream social media’s corporate throttling of sub.Media’s online content. It involved the development of international subscribing collectives, which paid a minimal fee (\$10/month) to receive advance screening copies and an informational package containing sets of questions to help facilitate discussion.¹²¹ *Trouble* episodes were brainstormed at sub.Media collective meetings to determine what topics excited the creators and who they could interview. Specifically, states J.R., *Trouble* was utilised as a direct educational resource for anarchist communities to delve deeper into topics of importance by identifying subjects they cared about and wanted to engage with.¹²² Learning about social struggles, systemic problems, and philosophical perspectives gives viewers the opportunity to participate by engaging as self-directed groups in shared discourse. Heatscore recalls “there was something kind of tangible about these in-person discussions that was being lost in our subsummation to social media and all of our individual screens.”¹²³ The screenings were worldwide thanks to the help of numerous translators, who provide subtitles for sub.Media’s videos in numerous non-English languages, (the most ubiquitous

being Brazilian Portuguese). In a way, being in direct contact with multiple communities of resistance, sub.Media creates not just oppositional discourses, they have established reciprocal publics. These reciprocal publics (viewers) not only see themselves in the subjects under discussion: their discourse also generate activities attuned to the subjects. For example, J.R. tells the story of a subscribing collective squat in Scandinavia, which, after screening a *Trouble* documentary on defending territory, decided to skip the discussion questions and (successfully) expand their territorial foothold instead.¹²⁴ The video became a moment where discourse led to actionable results. This form of ‘learning on the ground,’ is as far from Habermas’ vision of a passive public as it gets. It exemplifies how sub.Media’s videos directly influence viewers’ political and strategic development.

By sharing screentime with so many strangers across the globe, sub.Media’s videos are indicative of an anarchist social imaginary. They draw viewers into co-existence as social subjectivities enacting anarchist practices (such as mutual aid and direct action) infused by events of social resistance and rupture. Events and discourses relayed by sub.Media on screen are aesthetically constituted so as to build an affective community of strangers who find affinity with the subjects’ presentation and critical content. In this manner, following Richard Day’s *affinity for affinity* model of social contagion, sub.Media’s videos offer an anti-hegemonic antidote to the dominant discourse. By building affinity, they break with accepted paradigms of power and control by challenging their credibility and authority, and by offering solutions that do not replicate the systems of power being undermined.

As a tactical media video collective, sub.Media frequently (re)presents the ideas, experiences, and knowledge associated with fomenting movement cultures of resistance and transformation. Two examples from the *Trouble* series can be understood to exemplify the intentions of the other two sub.Media members. J.R. identified a later production, *Trouble #17: Mad Worlds: Redefining Sanity Through Struggle* (2019) as a documentary with the most resonant impact for him, and Heatscore directed me to focus on the visuals and messaging found in an earlier feature, *Trouble #6: Adapt and Destroy: Counterinsur-*

gency and Social War (2017). As befits all of sub.Media's productions, both episodes represent and enact a 'fighting spirit.'



Figure Seven: *Mad Worlds: Redefining Sanity Through Struggle* Titlepage, screenshot (0:11)

Turning first to *Trouble #17: Mad Worlds: Redefining Sanity Through Struggle* (2019), J.R. recalls that at the time they produced the show, he and the sub.Media collective felt more mainstream 'leftist' communities were not treating the issue of mental health with any nuance, "so the choices that we made around the narratives were to interview people who were anarchist and mental health organisers."¹²⁵ *Mad Worlds'* main argument is that the roots of mental health, even factoring in biological-based, medical support systems, is predominantly determined by social circumstances. The episode critically unpacks the hegemonic discourse of capitalist medical individualism and posits collective and social frameworks for understanding mental health and unwellness, including moments of crisis. The visual-narrative begins looking out from inside a vehicle driving along a derelict, tree-lined road littered with rusted out/burned transport trucks and destroyed cars, as it swerves to and fro amidst the wreckage (Figure Seven).¹²⁶ This visual of driving through the remains of a post-industrial/war-torn landscape foreshadows the video narrative's emphasis. Mental unwellness needs to be assessed through the critical lens of

its social context [the surrounding wreckage] that shapes individual lives [the impacted road], including lives that are pathologised.¹²⁷ The next scene hones in on the documentary’s target audience: anarchists [masked White male, wearing all black, carrying black/red flags]; anti-authoritarians [slightly femme-appearing person in a t-shirt and toque speaking on a megaphone]; and radicals of all stripes [bearded Black man wearing a ‘Black Guns’ hoodie and baseball cap].¹²⁸



Figure Eight: Anarchists, Anti-Authoritarians, and Radicals, screenshot (0:15)

Admittedly, J.R. notes, during the course of producing the video, some imagery did appear stereotypical: but if it did, it was because they were trying to speak to stigmas – a credible and challenging task to take on. The opening sequence, as such, didactically bridges anarchist with typical anarchist-adjacent and radical identities because the content is relevant to everyone in left-leaning communities of resistance. As J.R. explains, “Basically, the story or the narrative arc is that anarchist communities need to figure out and centre and respond to institutionalisation and the violence of institutionalisation. And they also need to pay more than lip-service to the existence of mental unwellness and insanity within anarchist communities, especially burnout/suicide/crisis.”¹²⁹ More importantly, the episode is valuable because it provides community organisers with a social systemic

analysis and collective-care orientation. It is a much-needed antidote to individualised notions of institutional pathologies and personal ‘self-care.’ Ambitious in scope, this episode encompasses both general notions of mental unwellness that have been medicalised and capitalised, as well as traumas faced by members of marginalised communities, and it references acute mental health crises. As such, metaphorically looking at the wreckage of society while driving down the road, *Mad Worlds*, bridges an overarching narrative with seven accounts of the socialised mental health dynamics that arise from the unique pressures activists face due to confronting the system. These are also disproportionately systemic in the lives of marginalised groups, such as refugees, Blacks and Indigenous communities, where effects from poor mental health supports are often fatal.

Clearly a topic that could expand beyond thirty minutes, *Mad Worlds* features insights from a variety of mental health workers and advocates. They are, in order of appearance: Idil (Community Organiser), Marta (Refugee Support Worker), Nakuset (Native Women’s Shelter), J.R. (Anarchist), Sasha Altman-Dubrul (Co-Founder: Icarus Project); Taren (Psychological Emancipation for Revolutionary Abolition - PERA); Mango (Critical Psychiatrist). Overall, the documentary’s prime focus takes an anti-psychiatry, anti-hospitalisation stance, with the exception of over a minute and a half during which four speakers acknowledge that it is important for individuals to determine what wellness looks like for themselves, including using medications.¹³⁰ *Mad Worlds* is critical of the institutionalisation and capitalisation of psychiatry, because within the framework of medicalised capitalism, ‘designer drugs’ are produced to be overprescribed and society is increasingly ‘sick.’ One funny trope recontextualized to make this argument hit home is *Mad Worlds*’ inversion of the 1980s fried egg as a ‘brain on drugs’ meme. As the narrator explains, “the psychiatric and pharmaceutical industries [video: pills poured into a left hand from a bottle held in the right] both extract incredible profit in their supposed pursuit [video: right hand cracking an egg into a hot oiled frying pan] over mental wellness.”¹³¹ By inverting this well known Reagan era ‘don’t do drugs’ meme to associate a fried egg with more ‘acceptable’ pharmaceutical industry-grade pills, (notably, only two brand name pills are identified later in the video – Prosaic

and Zoloff) the documentary demonstrates the socially constructed nature of the drug industry and denormalises the changes it produces in the brains of those who use its products to achieve stability.



Figure Nine: Fried Egg ‘Brain on Drugs’ Meme, screenshot (2:03)

However, other visual references to drug use in the episode, unlike the fried egg metaphor, are depicted naturalistically and represented almost sympathetically as coping mechanisms, even though they too effect physiological and emotional changes on their users’ brains. For example, in *Mad Worlds* we see frank imagery of illicit drug use including needles, a liquid cooking in a spoon using a lighter, a young Indigenous woman smoking a cigarette, and a male youth smoking marijuana from a homemade plastic pop-bottle bong. The message is clear: using drugs is a fact of regular life – a form of social coping pain management – and the results obtained from pharmaceuticals should be treated as dubious because they are embedded in system of capitalist, governmental, and scientific production. By inverting the fried egg symbolism, *Mad Worlds* celebrates the struggle against capitalism – and doing so with minimal supports that the healthcare system, which is suspect, can offer. As such, this episode challenges the injustices imbedded in the institutionalisation of the psych-health/pharma system. It reveals clinical psychiatry is founded in human experimentation and that it played a key role in structuring

eugenics policies in the early 20th century. Furthermore, the episode outlines the carceral nature of hospitalisation practices when dealing with mental health crises, and especially medical noncompliance. Finally, it emphasises the importance of retaining the social knowledge that building authentic systems of support can only be created through the active development of peer networks. To this end, solutions encourage viewers to turn to peer support models based on a transformative justice/community accountability approach to handle crisis situations. In this manner, critical psychiatrist Mango acknowledges some individuals can make informed choices along a model of ‘true consent’ to take pharmaceuticals.¹³² Similarly J.R discusses how developing networks of support are crucial to alleviate a crisis.¹³³ Both solutions are seen as positive approaches towards sustaining balance in relationships.



Figure Ten: Stigma and Control, screenshot (1:25)

Perhaps the most resounding issue in the topic of mental unwellness is the social role that stigma plays in the discourse. Significantly, when the topic of stigma surfaces, the language shifts from narrating mental health happening to ‘others,’ to using first-person plural (i.e., it happens to ‘us’), and the narrator explains how mainstream society “stigmatises and fears *us*, [video: two large male guards, one Black, one White, shove a smaller unshaven bald White man in a

hospital gown backwards into a cell] controlling *us*, and locking *us* up.” (Figure Ten)¹³⁴ Shifting the narrator’s voice from using language of ‘them’ to ‘us’ transforms her voice into a *self-identified* self-advocate, albeit, one who speaks perfectly rationally. Through this carceral imagery, *Mad Worlds* argues the psychiatric healthcare system causes harm, and by using the inclusive language of ‘us’ (not ‘them’) in the narrative, the viewer colludes in the identity of someone with negative social experiences of mental health unwellness. This narrative factor, combined with the image of a small person being locked up, undoubtedly extends viewers’ perspectives towards greater personal empathy. This is important, because the next argument returns to the broader societal scope, in which we learn about the millions who fall through the cracks and the consequences they face. The list includes losing work, difficulty socialising/organising due to anxiety, or paranoia, or “an inability to maintain relationships, using risky coping mechanisms, or relying on the toxic mental health system for your very survival.”¹³⁵ Yet, this perspective shift does not merely compare the individual to the social; it encompasses mental health as a shared sociality. It is best encapsulated by community organiser Idil (Figure Eleven), who says:

So I see mental health not just as something that belongs to a person [video: shoed feet walking the pavement; scene switches to a golden lucky Chinese waving cat statue] or lives in a person [video: animation of a hand-drawn eye, blinking] but rather sort of [video: blond woman in a white frock in a room with large eyes drawn in the walls, all blinking] a response to the condition that is around us [video: close up of blond woman who is wary and afraid] that causes us to hurt in this world.”¹³⁶



Figure Eleven: Idil, “Causes us to hurt...” screenshots (5:41)

Thus, *Mad Worlds* socialises the individual perspective of the viewer. This process begins with the attribution of an empathy/identification relationship to stigma, which visually demonstrates that no one is ever really alone; that we are each impacted by our surrounding social environment.

Moreover, we get the impression stigma is dangerous, especially when intersecting with anarchist and activist organising. Three out of the eight interviewees in this episode masked/blurred their faces and had their voices modulated. This bespeaks to the power of mental health stigma and to the potential danger they face speaking publicly about mental unwellness when working within marginalised and anarchist communities. Interestingly, as the video montages develop into different scenes illustrating the concepts of living under mental and emotional duress, the voice modulations create a disembodied sound filter, which lends an unreal quality to the associated visual imagery. For example, the sequence with Taren has an almost ethereal quality due to the audio’s reverb effect. At one point, Taren {voice altered with reverb} states:

Since mental health is primarily influenced by social factors [video: black and white shot of a woman running across a rooftop to a corner section on the edge to look down] There’s no way to really solve it [video: interview with Taren wearing a pink bandana and a hoodie (identified as a member of Psychological Emancipation for Revolutionary Abolition - PERA)] without changing the social condition that we’re in. [video: black and white shot of a gender non-conforming person seated wearing a dark jacket looking away,

then turns to look to the camera] What we see it as is being able to use [video: sequence of black and white shots of a woman with very long hair, hands in fists, performing marshal arts fighting forms] your psychological to help fight against the repression that comes towards you [video: in colour, panning shot of a sparse office space with two dummy torsos, one with projected images on it, the other with a stethoscope. Light shines from a cabinet] We need to figure out ways to increase our [video: panning shot moves over the desk to reveal a shrine to photograph of an unknown man with Russian texts strewn across the desk] ability to fight against the forces that are helping making us mentally ill, [video: in colour: lone woman standing in a warehouse filled with pallets of consumables (i.e., Costco) panning outward to create a single point perspective illusion] as it were.¹³⁷

Here we see the personal, individual aspects of mental health represented through black and white filmic techniques, a way to depict an interiority and moody emotive qualities. However, when the subject changes to represent a systemically oppressive social fabric, represented by a Russian research doctor's office and a capitalist shopping warehouse, the video is rendered in colour, which is less contemplative, and more brutally real.

Introducing the arguments in the episode, *Mad Worlds* feature an animation of a brain scan morphing into Rorschach diagrams to represent the socially constructed nature of psychological categorisation and psychiatry medicines. Through narration, this representation assumes a social struggle perspective on health that is critical of the scientific experimental model that isolates for variables by bracketing out the majority of human experience to make a drug work according to the desired neurological effect. As such, *Mad Worlds* criticises the individualistic, diagnostic model of health, looking instead towards a transformative community vision of socialised support. It ends on a note of hope that combines resilience and resistance. Offering a solutions-based framework, in the film, J.R. looks to transformative justice and community accountability peer support models, as well as models of crisis intervention, to propose developing foundations for community mental health supports. Incidentally, during the research interview J.R. disclosed *Mad Worlds* is mandatory viewing for new

people volunteering to support those in crisis as part of a New York peer mental health response group.¹³⁸ *Mad Worlds* ends with a visual representation of global and Indigenous mass movements, combined with Nakuset's words:

[video: arial view of a crossroad with a shanty/tent community in a desert region] "There are so many different issues [video: crowded street filled with Black people in a tropical region] that face us. [video: the view from inside a vehicle onto a crowd of young Indigenous people on a road in North America] Sometimes it can be overwhelming, [video: two Black people on a motorbike on a dirt road going over a bridge in a hot climate] but if you keep moving forward, [video: a large group of Black people crossing a river carrying items in a tropical tree-filled landscape] and you keep addressing these issues [video: group of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people at a protest; some waving Mohawk flags] and keep trying to find those solutions, [video: Black sandaled feet stepping over barbed wire on a dirt path] it brings hope to others." [video: masked demo participant holding a red smoke-bomb aloft in a street] [final video: four police vehicles set alight on the side of the road during the 2013 Mi'kmaq uprising at Elsipogtog, in New Brunswick, Canada]¹³⁹

In the final sequence, the images reinforce the global contexts that the subject of mental health and wellness spans, but instead of representing sick individuals in isolation, a common trope in Western views on mental health, we see non-Western and Indigenous social groups going about their collective daily lives. These non-Western examples model how to find hope by building shared communities with a fighting spirit that overcome challenges [stepping over barbed wire] and celebrate victories [Elsipogtog] in the social war that is ongoing. Thus, *Mad Worlds'* audio-visual-narrative contextualises resistance as part of the fabric of the type of social transformation they envision with the establishment of truly socialised community mental health care.



Figure Twelve: Elsipogtog, 2013, screenshot (29:59)

Possibilities for life free from state or capital underlines the messaging throughout sub.Media's audio-visual-narratives, but, as they demonstrate, enacting social transformation requires simultaneously fomenting resistance to the status quo. To this end, explicitly undergirding the work of the sub.Media collective is the premise that the state is conducting an ongoing and pre-emptive social war against anarchists, leftists, and radicals. As such, their work is intended to disrupt the dominant hegemonic narrative normalising 'business as usual.' Mobilising an anti-hegemonic anarchist lens and carefully choosing topics, sub.Media educates viewers on a number of social justice concerns and related histories so as to build communities and counter the negative effects of repression. In *Mad Worlds*, social war is identified as the underlying factor informing state violence enacted towards those experiencing mental unwellness, the carceral nature of mental health institutions, and the creation of mental unwellness in communities deprived of social, economic, and health support systems. These injustices are particularly salient in BIPOC and migrant communities, as they are disproportionately undersupported and overpoliced.



Figure Thirteen: *Trouble #6* Titlepage, with Narrator, screenshot (0:04)

However, perhaps the *Trouble* episode that most directly confronts the brutality of state power and its history of repression is *Trouble #6: Adapt and Destroy: Counterinsurgency and Social War* (2017). Recommended by Heatscore, *Adapt and Destroy* “gets to the essence of what the state is and therefore almost inflectively, is about what anarchists are opposed to from a very self-aware perspective – like actually understanding your roles and dynamics of conflict, and understanding the state as a proponent of perpetual social war against people.”¹⁴⁰ The opening begins with the voice of a narrator, embodied by a masked South Asian man, who claims his name is not important (Figure Thirteen). This feature, an element of the earliest *Trouble* episodes, offers a sort of ‘everyman’ trope to the sequence, allowing viewers to identify with a human ‘Trouble-maker’ who guides the narrative script. This dramatic persona downplaying individualist identity markers is impactful. He makes his claim of anonymity while involved in a movement that encompasses untold numbers of strangers connected by the social imaginary of resistant anarchist movement culture. Significantly, this persona is a person of colour, a valuable identity for viewers to see represented in anarchist movement cultures typecast as ‘White.’ Most importantly, his body language emphasises expressions of resistance in an identifiable subjectivity that culturally situates his defiance when he punctuates key points in

the script. Unfortunately, however, wearing a mask disassociates his spoken words from his mouth and the resulting visuals often appear clumsy. Staged in an earlier phase of *Trouble's* series production, the embodied 'Trouble-maker' was removed from later incarnations of the series. Thus, *Mad Worlds* features a narrator that speaks directly within the scene on-screen, like a 'voice-in-the-head.' Comparatively speaking, *Mad Worlds'* embedded style of narration is disembodied, somewhat more omniscient-seeming, and, as a result, this and later episodes are less self-consciously didactic and much more streamlined in presentation.



Figure Fourteen: Example Insurgents, screenshots (0:15-0:16)

The first images deployed in *Adapt and Destroy's* opening sequence depict a scene of rupture, beginning with a cluster of German riot police slowly backing away from (mostly masked) Black Bloc anarchists in an urban landscape drowning in tear gas. The narrator states: "Insurgencies, are by their very nature, chaotic events. They are attacks on the dominate order waged by [video refocuses: a crowd of bandanaed rioters behind a piece of graffitied (ACAB) plywood; street signs are in German] determined and mobilised groups of people intent on uprooting [video shift: scene of Indigenous Amazonian warriors in regalia, paint, and headdresses carrying weapons] and destroying the established power structure by any means necessary." (Figure Fourteen)¹⁴¹ At this point the visual-narrative turns to describe power elites, which are embodied by the American President Barak Obama at a military award ceremony. The narrative explains that to those in power insurgencies are terrifying and to be avoided at all costs, yet it also concludes the state's power is fragile and fallible. Thus begins the finely tuned education of the target audience of

Adapt and Destroy: emergent revolutionaries. Interviews conducted for this episode include, in order of appearance, Gord Hill (Author: *500 Years of Indigenous Resistance*), Lorenzo Kom'boa Ervin (Black Autonomy Foundation), Dawn Paley (Author: *Drug War Capitalism*), Kristian Williams (Author: *Our Enemies in Blue*), Jonina Ervin (Black Autonomy Foundation), and Peter Gelderloos (Author: *The Failure of Nonviolence*). Anarchists have always been at the forefront of critiques of state power and coercion and pointedly referencing a visual example of the Zapatistas, the narrator asserts, "anarchists are not alone in rejecting the illegitimacy of the state."¹⁴² This episode draws its trajectory from the formation of the modern state apparatus to its development of enforcement techniques rooted in colonial and imperial land seizures and slave holdings. It continues its historical arc of social war through the history of uprisings and repression from the 1960s, 70s, and 80s into the present-day imperialist battlefield known as the 'war on drugs.' It ends on a note of preparation and self-education, encouraging revolutionary viewers to gain knowledge of counterinsurgency tactics, such as surveillance and other forms of intelligence gathering. Additionally, *Adapt and Destroy* advises learning about various forms of repression (i.e., attempts by the state to punish and isolate threats to their authority) and recuperation (i.e., co-optation of movements by redirecting them to non-threatening outcomes, a.k.a., passive revolution).¹⁴³ In the current social environment, we are informed this form of situational knowledge is necessary due to the growing surge of Alt-Right and fascist ideologies. The following two examples of audio/visual-narratives demonstrate the tactical purposes to which sub.Media puts their video editing skills, impacting significantly upon the storyline to create an aesthetic 'punch' within the script.

Social war is enacted by the state on the population as a form of total war, that, according to Gord Hill, utilises "political, economic, military, cultural, ideological, and psychological measures."¹⁴⁴ Furthermore, Dawn Paley states:

A huge part of counterinsurgency is about hearts and minds [video: Donald Trump in a line with medical workers carrying first aid kits being photographed on

random smartphones] that's what they say, but really, it's [video: looking through a spiked iron fence onto cars on a street] but it's not about actually offering people services [video: two Black women and a child in a colourful stroller walk on the sidewalk on front of the iron fence] or providing them with a better life [video Black baby in a carrier in foreground, Black woman on couch in background]; It's about saying that's what you are doing [video: riot police (American) with batons attack a crowd of young people in an open space; vigorous attacks and aggressive hits] and repressing people to the point that their silence becomes consent for whatever kind of rule [video: on protester is taken down by two officers and dragged on the ground] you decide is appropriate in that moment as the state, or as the elite ruler. [video: Sami person in red leggings has their red hat ripped off by a guard wearing a Slavic fur hat and they resist and keep holding on to their red hat] it's all about fear, it's about managing through fear" [video: Sami person in red leggings keeps their hat but is horse-whipped by a second officer]

{public speech by Donald Trump: "and when you see these thugs being thrown into the back of a paddy wagon [video: Four White cops escort a cuffed Black man from a truck to the window of another police vehicle] you just see them thrown in *rough* [video at the word *rough*: cop smashes the Black man's face into the vehicle's window so hard the window cracks] I said 'Please don't be too nice'} [video: applause with Trump standing in front of a phalanx of white-gloved uniformed White cops all smirking. Trump smirks and turns his back to the camera to nod to the cops.]¹⁴⁵



Figure Fifteen: Thrown in *Rough*, screenshot (7:07)

Enacted on all levels of society, the underlying existence of social war is reinforced by sub.Media's framing of a visual narrative that juxtaposes Trump's speech with the real 'thugs' in the picture, the cops who smash a window with a Black man's face (Figure Fifteen). Further jarring the scene is not just the overt evidence of police brutality. The narrative sequencing demonstrates the forces of state power not only applaud such acts of violence (with kid gloves on), they know full well such occurrences are commonplace and are sadistically amused by this knowledge. It is clear that social war could only be conducted through the 'rule of law,' a fact that *Adapt and Destroy* emphasises again and again through multiple shots of riots, protests, and the most visible face of state repression, the police.

A second memorable moment in *Adapt and Destroy* occurs during the historicization of the American police. Heatscore identifies this particular sequence as a key synthesis of audio, visual, and narrative that encapsulates the barbaric cruelty undergirding the institution of today's 'best and finest.' The sequence begins with the narrator describing the militarised police force's role as the enforcer of White supremacy in Black communities, and traces their origins to earlier institutions of social control – slave patrols:

[video: Klansmen are riding horses in the night holding torches over a ridge] {Song KRS-One ‘The Sound of da Police:’ Whoop! Whoop!} [video: Klansmen riding horses with torches closer in the dark] {Song KRS-One ‘The Sound of da Police:’ That’s the sound of the police!} [video: Klansmen riding horses at night carrying torches seen in a row from the side] {Song KRS-One ‘The Sound of da Police:’ Whoop! Whoop! That’s the sound of the beast!}¹⁴⁶

The video continues to show slaves picking cotton in fields while overseers crack whips in the background. The scene shifts to a hanging with White men ‘in charge’ while author Kristian Williams provides an overview of the historical nature of slave patrols and their evolution into policing units during the rise of urban industrialisation in the modern era. At the end of the educational video montage, the voice of KRS-One is foregrounded again as the historic figure of a mounted overseer repeatedly flashes in comparison with an image of a modern-day mounted police officer:

{Song KRS-One ‘The Sound of da Police:’ Overseer [*flash; historical overseer] Overseer [*flash; modern cop] Overseer [*flash; historical overseer] Overseer [*flash; modern cop] Overseer [*flash; historical overseer] Overseer/Officer [*multi-flashes] Officer [*flash; modern cop with a baton lounging on car] Yeah, Officer from [*flash; historical overseer] Overseer. You need a little clarity? Check the similarity.} [video: Two White officers pushing a Black man to the pavement; switch to a historic drama depicting two White men dragging a Black man on the ground.] {KRS-One song ends with a record scratch [video flashes of police pepper spraying seated protesters and beating up people.]}¹⁴⁷



Figure Sixteen: Overseer to Officer, *Flash* Past into Present, screenshots (10:01-02)

Drawing from the iconic lyrics of rap artist KRS-One's song, 'The Sound of da Police,' released in 1993, *Adapt and Destroy* weaves film from historical period dramas, B-rolls of officers mounted on patrol, (Figure Sixteen) and cop satire movie clips, blended with eyewitness camera footage of police manhandling Black men to produce a visual narrative that punctuates the audio sequencing. In between the visual-lyrical shots represented by KRS-One's rap, an educational social-historical narrative is delivered by Kristian Williams, author of *Our Enemies in Blue*. This narrative is illustrated with a backdrop of docudrama scenes interspersed with historical photographs and caricature drawings of African faces in fear for their lives under the slave regime. All too clearly, we see how this legacy of slavery continues to this day through the social framework of White supremacy. Book-ending the historical narrative with KRS-One's rap is significantly appropriate, as he is an insurgent artist who tells the story of the drug wars that were/are waged on Black communities. *Adapt and Destroy* presents the 'War on Drugs,' announced by President Nixon in 1971 and utilised by countless American Presidents, as a ruse to support imperialist expansion and domestic state terrorism. Rebranding the 'War on Drugs' for what it is, 'Chemical Warfare,' Jonina Ervin and Lorenzo Kom'boa Ervin of the Black Autonomy Federation discuss how the state operatives (police, F.B.I., etc.) channeled hard drugs into Black and Latino communities of colour. According to the Lorenzo Kom'boa Ervin, this mode of 'Chemical Warfare' was a counterinsurgency tactic designed to 'put down' revolutionary movements like the Black Panther Party while providing a convenient pretext to invest in

and expand paramilitary policing.¹⁴⁸ In fact, the ‘War on Drugs’ came upon the heels of perhaps the most famous illegal federal counter-insurgency program of the 20th century, COINTELPRO (Counter Intelligence Program). COINTELPRO was a program of intense surveillance, sabotage, and assassination that targeted, infiltrated, and took out members of radical organisations deemed subversive to the state. It ended when activists stumbled across documents, which they leaked to the press. Launching the ‘War on Drugs’ only two months after COINTELPRO was disbanded redirected the state’s counter-insurgent efforts in a new ‘legal’ direction.¹⁴⁹ Currently, *Adapt and Destroy* explains millions are spent in the U.S. each year legally keeping tabs on people, mapping networks, and probing vulnerabilities to analyse, assess, infiltrate, recuperate, and neutralise activists. Much of this activity is done under the guise of the Patriot Act, and subsequent 21st century privacy/security legislation. Compounding this social war, police forces ready themselves by utilising a two-pronged combination of riot suppression training and community policing. To build a culture of resistance and transformation in the face of social war and state power is daunting, but *Adapt and Destroy* offers some compelling visual-narratives to provide direction and conclude the episode.



Figure Seventeen: ‘Leftists’ in the Streets and ‘Everyday’ People Watching, screenshots (27:41- 27:47)

In the final chapter of *Adapt and Destroy* each of the interviewees note the invaluable role gaining knowledge from past struggles and historical social conditions plays in understanding the present-day situations we collectively face in opposition to racism/White supremacy, inequality, and injustices perpetrated by state power. Direction for resistance is founded, predominately, on relationship building.

On one hand, threats to defend against are illustrated in the bodies of Proud Boys wearing home-made body armour, brandishing shields and weapons bearing fascist insignia, and in the presidential power embodied by Donald Trump. On the other, Jonina Ervin and Lorenzo Kom'boa Ervin argue that fighting fascism will require relationship building with everybody in communities, not just 'leftists,' a statement that is illustrated by 'everyday' people of colour sitting outside.¹⁵⁰ (Figure Seventeen) Dawn Paley asserts it is vital to withhold information – to not cooperate – especially if someone is facing criminalisation. Most importantly, she advises viewers to keep relationships between friends, comrades, and neighbours strong. This sequence is illustrated didactically by someone giving two middle fingers to cops, a person in a holding cell, friends helping each other with bike stuff, and neighbours looking into a baby carriage. One of the most dramatically illustrated sequences, however, is the tactical advice on insurgent movement politics given by Kristian Williams, who says:

Looking at the situation from the adversary's perspective, [video: tiny tightrope walker suspended high above a city walking between high-rise towers] their authority is, in some ways, very fragile. And from their perspective [video: shot of the tightrope walker looking down onto his feet and the cable and down to the city far below] the crucial thing they need to maintain [video: Black man hugging a cop in riot gear, who is holding a beer bottle upside down by its neck while other riot cops watch] is the sense of legitimacy, the sense that the population trusts [video: uniformed cops wearing helmets in a line shaking hands with protesters carrying placards walking by] them, the sense that the population supports them, the sense that [video: arial view of crowds in square formations in an open space, moving around in sequence] when they issue demands that people will respond. And [video: Olympic wrestling match in progress] we can *reverse engineer* that [video (at *reverse engineer*): wrestling opponent is flipped over and thrown down

to mat] and see [video of Kristian Williams' interview] from what they feel they need to protect, where they're fragile. [Jamaican appearing Black protester gauging and verbally engaging a line of riot cops] And that sense of legitimacy seems to be something that popular movements [video: Black woman in sunglasses holding a sign of outrage at the death of Michael Brown Jr.] are very good at damaging even with far fewer resources. [video: crowd of protesters] And so, the good news with all this is that the place [video: militarised police with an armoured vehicle throwing a flash grenade at night] where they feel themselves most vulnerable [video: crowd of protesters at night; scene shifts to a hand drawn sign on cardboard stating "I Can't Breathe"] is actually the thing we are best positioned to hurt, which is their sense of public support.¹⁵¹



Figure Eighteen: *Reverse Engineer* State Legitimacy, screenshots (28:48- 29:11)

The simultaneity of the words *reverse engineer* with the image of the successful wrestling countermove reinforces the fact that militancy is far from powerless in its scope of attack. (Figure Eighteen) Just knowing the opponent's points of vulnerability is a position from which to attack, and the attack need not be 'violent.' It can be calculated to target the legitimacy of state power by withdrawing support and cooperation with state actors. Simultaneously, following the strategy of structural renewal, revolutionaries can strengthen our own networks of support and community. Overall, the prime strategy of anarchist resistance communicated is the refusal to be governed.

However, what is also hinted at, is that there is little demarcation between resistance to an oppressive dominant power and self-defence against its machinations.

Both *Mad Worlds* and *Adapt and Destroy* draw upon the anarchist axiom of state manipulated social war as the key concept underlying the audio-visual-narrative, but each episode has its distinct stylistic approach related to this adage. They excel at audio-visual-narrative sequencing, but each episode features different stylistic emphasis. The primary difference between them depends upon the level of foregrounding that is embedded in the content. With subtext themes of strength and survival, image sequencing representing the issues discussed in *Mad Worlds* is broad and almost cinematic. Visual content is reinforced with slower soundscape techno beats, that grow somewhat darker in tone, especially when the narrative is graver in subject. Most of the images throughout the documentary present variations of despair and subjugation alongside images of hope and resilience, and they flow seamlessly, in what could be called a 'painterly' manner. The only video clip demonstrating an explicitly 'fighting spirit' appears in the final scene showcasing four cop cars burning at Elsipogtog. This is in contrast to *Adapt and Destroy*, an episode entirely focused on empowering viewers' 'fighting spirit' in the face of social war by informing them of its history, its ramifications for social movements, and how to resist, or counter it. Comparatively speaking, *Adapt and Destroy* could be described as more 'punchy', with faster visual cuts tied together with techno-orchestratic musical beats shifting tempo as the narrative progresses. As already described, this episode also highlights specific words in the visual-narrative by timing movement with utterances (*rough* and *reverse engineer*). This video tactic, metaphorically, is another form of 'punching' using audio-visual-narrative to create aesthetic emphasis that can be 'heard' by viewers in the Kittlerian sense, sensitising them to the subject of social war and its impact on their subjectivities. In this manner, through their respective audio-visual-narrative techniques, both videos, *Adapt and Destroy*, and *Mad Worlds*, underline the important need to educate oneself and remain attentive to the forms social war takes within the anarchist imaginary and in the landscape of everyone's lives.

Conclusion: On Rupture and Reciprocal Publics

In the battlefield of discourses, revolutionary anti-hegemonic counterpublics feed into the transmission of an anarchist imaginary that no bourgeois public sphere will tolerate. Framing its oppositional and transformative methodology within a reciprocal public that generates activity from social discourse, sub.Media's style of remixed interview documentaries evolves anarchist resistance cultures through impactful aesthetic audio-visual-narrative sequences. Circulating tactical video activism, the three documentaries under discussion, *End:CIV*, *Mad Worlds*, and *Adapt and Destroy* exemplify sub.Media's intent to educate and inspire social action.

A key feature in sub.Media's audio-visual-narrative output is the celebration of social movements that create ruptures in the status quo. Evocative of Gaonkar's fifth point discussing social imaginaries, rupture transcends time.¹⁵² By immortalising moments of rupture and defiance in their video remixes, the sub.Media collective not only elevates their social-historic roots (i.e., the Mohawk woman pushing the militarised police onto the barricade outside of Oka, Quebec), and present current struggles (i.e., the Sami person retaining their red hat while being attacked by a cop) they recontextualize these events, fixing them into an 'eternalised present' to emulate and admire.

Furthermore, sub.Media's dissemination model establishes a reciprocal public through community discussion networks. In this manner, their films' production and output fulfills the strategy of structural renewal. Producing resistant content is but one phase in the process of video creation; disseminating the media towards transformative ends is the next phase. As I have mentioned, although they simultaneously maximise content on mainstream platforms, sub.Media is part of a growing movement of socially conscious, anarchist, and radical individuals transferring their collective discourses to independent servers such as the Kolektiva.Social located in the Mastadon Fediverse and Kolektiva.Media, an independent video streaming service used to spread dissident information. There, they further the anti-hegemonic circulation of an anarchist social imaginary through global discourse networks. These networks contribute to fomenting collective agency,

inspired, in part, by sub.Media's video enactments of resistance to injustices that potentially also provoke social transformation. Sub.Media's participation in this virtual discursive infrastructure propagates engagement as part of a digital anarchist movement culture. And, as the *Trouble* viewing subscription collectives attest, they also form an emergent social infrastructural framework to support the transformation of discourse into activism. It is here where activists can find politically critical resources and engage with anarchist and anti-authoritarian counterpublics they find common cause with. Thus, through sub.Media's revolutionary videos, we see an affectual-driven anti-hegemonic practice of affinity building that simultaneously bridges anarchist social subjectivities while seeking practical ways to decouple from the state.

Notes

1 Dara Greenwald, Josh MacPhee, and (New York Exit Art Gallery N.Y.), eds., *Signs of Change: Social Movement Cultures 1960s to Now* (Oakland, Calif. : New York: AK Press ; Exit Art, 2010).and (New York Exit Art Gallery N.Y. Greenwald and MacPhee identify the production of visual and media culture within social movement cultures of the late 20th century into the 21st as both a practice of communicating and doing actions. They discuss the challenges of the legacies of social movement cultures being controlled by institutions that are not public, and how they are working to alter that fact – thus they would later cofound, with many others, the Interference Archive in Brooklyn.

2 Brian A. Dominick, “An Introduction to Dual Power Strategy,” *Left Liberty*, September 13, 2018, <https://web.archive.org/web/20180913110400/http://left-liberty.net/?p=265>; Brian A. Dominick, “From Here to PARE-CON: Thoughts on Strategy for Economic Revolution,” in *Real Utopia: Participatory Society for the 21st Century*, ed. Chris Spannos (Oakland, CA: AK Press, 2008), 380–95. Reference to ‘dual power’ was first coined by V.I. Lenin in regards to the tension between the simultaneous existence of the Russian Provisional Government and the first Soviet, especially in July 1917. Post Soviet socialist and anarchist usage of the term tends to draw their references to dual power as the construction of institutions that will render the old regime useless borrowing heavily from the 1908 preamble to the I.W.W. constitution in which it is proclaimed the workers will make “the new world from out of the shell of the old.”

3 Richard J. F. Day, *Gramsci Is Dead: Anarchist Currents in the Newest Social Movements* (London; Ann Arbor, MI: Toronto: Pluto Press; Between the Lines, 2005). Day favours ‘structural renewal’ based upon its usage by Martin Buber, who coined the term originally as an “organically constructive planning element that aims at restructuring society.”

4 Day, *Gramsci Is Dead*, 124. Rather than utilise the term ‘dual power,’ Day takes his reference to structural renewal from Gustav Landauer, who said new institutions must be created *alongside*, rather than from *inside* established state and corporate forms. Thus, structural renewal is both a negative and a positive force, differing from all previous models of revolutionary activity sees living in the world, and changing it by creating alternatives is more effective than preparing for an ecstatic revolutionary moment of rupture.

5 In this article I am drawing upon and analysing work on discourse networks, publics/counterpublics, and social imaginaries developed by the theorists: Kathy E. Ferguson, *Emma Goldman: Political Thinking in the*

Streets, 20th Century Political Thinkers (Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2011), <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uvic/detail.action?docID=669791>; Friedrich Kittler, *Discourse Networks, 1800/1900*, trans. Michael Metteer and Chris Cullens (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992); Nancy Fraser, “Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy,” *Social Text*, no. 25/26 (1990): 56–80, <https://doi.org/10.2307/466240>; Michael Warner, “Publics and Counterpublics,” *Public Culture* 14, no. 1 (January 1, 2002): 49–90, <https://doi.org/10.1215/08992363-14-1-49>; Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar, “Toward New Imaginaries: An Introduction,” *Public Culture* 14, no. 1 (2002): 1–19, <https://doi.org/10.1215/08992363-14-1-1>; Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London ; New York: Verso, 1983); and Cornelius Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, trans. Kathleen Blamey (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1987).

6 Peter Marshall, *Demanding the Impossible: A History of Anarchism* (London; New York; Toronto; Sydney: Harper Perennial, 2008), 3.

7 Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, 112. Unlike Marxism, which ideologically attempts to dominate the social imaginary through misrepresenting history, Castoriadis notes that the ground of the social is inherence, not dependence, as an existence between freedom and alienation, where both exist in relation to the subject.

8 Castoriadis, 3.

9 Siva Vaidyanathan, *The Anarchist in the Library: How the Clash between Freedom and Control Is Hacking the Real World and Crashing the System* (New York: Basic Books, 2004), 162.

10 Antonio López, *The Media Ecosystem: What Ecology Can Teach Us about Responsible Media Practice* (Berkley, CA: Evolver Editions, 2012).

11 Warner, “Publics and Counterpublics,” 59.

12 Kittler, *Discourse Networks, 1800/1900*.

13 Ferguson, *Emma Goldman*, 23.

14 Kimberly Croswell Interviews with Frank López:10-21-2020 and 04-08-2021.

15 Kimberly Croswell Interview with Heatscore: 11-11-2020.

16 Kimberly Croswell Interview with J.R.:10-09-2020.

17 Kimberly Croswell Interview with Frank López:10-21-2020.

18 Kimberly Croswell Interview with Heatscore: 11-11-2020.; Kimberly Croswell Interview with J.R.:10-09-2020.

19 Amber Day, *Satire and Dissent: Interventions in Contemporary Political Debate* (Bloomington, US: Indiana University Press, 2011), 23.

20 Kimberly Croswell Interview with Frank López:10-21-2020.

21 Kimberly Croswell Interview with Frank López:10-21-2020.

- 22 Amber Day, *Satire and Dissent: Interventions in Contemporary Political Debate* (Bloomington, UNITED STATES: Indiana University Press, 2011), 11.
- 23 Kimberly Croswell Interview with J.R.:10-09-2020.
- 24 Kimberly Croswell Interview with J.R.:10-09-2020.
- 25 Kimberly Croswell Interview with Heatscore: 11-11-2020.
- 26 Kimberly Croswell Interview with Frank López:10-21-2020.
- 27 Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Bürger and Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1992).
- 28 Day, *Satire and Dissent*, 17.
- 29 Fraser, “Rethinking the Public Sphere”; Warner, “Publics and Counterpublics.”
- 30 Warner, “Publics and Counterpublics,” 84.
- 31 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 7, 44-45.
- 32 Fraser, “Rethinking the Public Sphere,” 59.
- 33 Warner, “Publics and Counterpublics,” 89.
- 34 Fraser, “Rethinking the Public Sphere,” 59.
- 35 Day, *Satire and Dissent*, 16. The assumption that all publics are competing publics does not accurately encapsulate the oppositional, conflicting nature of dissenting voices vying for power. It is an argument that by assumption of competition recuperates challenges and conflict into hegemonic dominant discourse.
- 36 Fraser, “Rethinking the Public Sphere,” 61.
- 37 Fraser, “Rethinking the Public Sphere,” 67. Specifically, Fraser discusses how feminist women have invented new language to discuss oppression, such as sexism, the double shift, sexual harassment, marital, date, and acquaintance rape.
- 38 Warner, “Publics and Counterpublics,” 81.
- 39 Warner, “Publics and Counterpublics,” 81. Warner’s lack of a hegemonic basis in his analysis of publics/counterpublics leaves them unanchored; changes perceived in social discourses are therefore conceived of as nothing more than “social mutation.”
- 40 Hagai Katz, “Gramsci, Hegemony, and Global Civil Society Networks,” *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations* 17, no. 4 (December 12, 2006): 335, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11266-006-9022-4>.
- 41 Leszek Kolakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism, Book 3: The Breakdown* (Oxford, U.K.: Oxford University Press, 1978), 241. Gramsci believed the working class could gain political power if they achieved cultural power first.

- 42 Kolakowski, 242.
- 43 Kolakowski, 240.
- 44 William K. Carroll and R. S. Ratner, "Social Movements and Counter-Hegemony: Lessons from the Field," *New Proposals: Journal of Marxism and Interdisciplinary Inquiry* 4, no. 1 (August 9, 2010): 8.
- 45 Carroll and Ratner, 8.
- 46 Carroll and Ratner, 8.
- 47 Carroll and Ratner, 8.; Katz, "Gramsci, Hegemony, and Global Civil Society Networks," 334.
- 48 Carroll and Ratner, "Social Movements and Counter-Hegemony," 8.; Katz, "Gramsci, Hegemony, and Global Civil Society Networks, 334."
- 49 Katz, "Gramsci, Hegemony, and Global Civil Society Networks," 336.
- 50 Katz, 335.
- 51 Katz, 335.
- 52 Day, *Gramsci Is Dead*, 6.
- 53 Day, 14-15.
- 54 Day, 8.
- 55 Day, 9.
- 56 Kimberly Crosswell Interview with J.R.:10-09-2020.
- 57 Ferguson, *Emma Goldman*, 23.
- 58 Kittler, *Discourse Networks, 1800/1900*, 4.
- 59 Kittler, 10.
- 60 Kittler, 10.
- 61 Kittler, 4.
- 62 Kittler, 5.
- 63 Day, *Satire and Dissent*, 23.
- 64 Ferguson, 23.
- 65 Ferguson, *Emma Goldman*, 23.
- 66 Ferguson, *Emma Goldman*, 23.
- 67 Day, *Satire and Dissent*, 97-98. For example A. Day discusses the important value of an activate public viewership watching *The Daily Show*, a parodic 'fake news' broadcast that has become a 'filter' through which may viewers come to understand 'real news.' Strangely, though A. Day discusses counterpublics and dominant discourses at length, she does not use the 'h' word: hegemony.
- 68 C. Taylor, "Modern Social Imaginaries," *Public Culture* 14, no. 1 (January 1, 2002): 108.
- 69 Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, 133.
- 70 Taylor, "Modern Social Imaginaries," 106.
- 71 Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, 135.
- 72 Castoriadis, 143.

- 73 Castoriadis, 146.
74 Castoriadis, 150.
75 Taylor, “Modern Social Imaginaries,” 106.
76 Taylor, 91.
77 Taylor, 92-93.
78 Taylor, 99.
79 Taylor, 91.
80 Taylor, 105.
81 Taylor, 106.
82 Taylor, 108.
83 Taylor, 111.
84 Taylor, 111.
85 Gaonkar, “Toward New Imaginaries: An Introduction,” 1.
86 Gaonkar, 4.
87 Gaonkar, 4.
88 Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 3rd Edition, vol. 16, Cambridge Studies in Social Anthropology (Cambridge University Press, 1977), 214.
89 Gaonkar, “Toward New Imaginaries: An Introduction,” 4.
90 Warner, “Publics and Counterpublics,” 56.
91 Warner, 56.
92 Gaonkar, 5.
93 Gaonkar, 5.
94 Uri Gordon, “Prefigurative Politics between Ethical Practice and Absent Promise,” *Political Studies* 66, no. 2 (May 1, 2018): 521–37.
95 Franklin López, *END:CIV*, DVD (sub.Media, 2011), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aRPjEA56VoE>.
96 Though beyond the scope of this article, one historical context that should be noted is the dissolution of the co-authoring triumvirate Jensen, Kieth, and McBay, who had collaborated on *Deep Green Resistance*. They split due to their differences of position on trans exclusionary radical feminist (T.E.R.F.) politics with Jensen and Kieth on the exclusionary side and McBay disagreeing with them. The split occurred during the world tour of *END:CIV* and impacted upon its reception, although the film’s content, at the time the interviews were taken, has nothing to do with trans exclusionary politics. Even so, the anti-civilisation movement was forced to contend with its incipient trans-misogyny at this juncture. Arguably, it was at this point when, the movement’s inability to do so ultimately lead to its withering away in popularity within the anarchist milieu, a demise that was coupled with the broadscale rejection of its cult of leadership model that had been cultivated by Derrick Jensen.
97 *END:CIV*, (42:10).
98 *END:CIV*, (0:52). Unknown speaker.

- 99 *END:CIV*, (1:07). John Zerzan interviewed.
- 100 *END:CIV*, (2:03). Aric MacBay interviewed.
- 101 Uri Gordon, “Dark Tidings: Anarchist Politics in the Age of Collapse,” in *Contemporary Anarchist Studies: An Introductory Anthology of Anarchy in the Academy*, ed. Randall Amster et al. (London ; New York: Routledge, 2009), 253.
- 102 *END:CIV*, (2:48). Aric MacBay interviewed. See also Gordon, “Dark Tidings: Anarchist Politics in the Age of Collapse,” regarding the hegemonic strategy of recuperation in the state’s ever increasing attempts to tighten social controls during moments of collapse, including the ongoing ecological chaos.
- 103 *END:CIV*, (3:06).
- 104 Gordon, “Dark Tidings: Anarchist Politics in the Age of Collapse,” 251-252.
- 105 *END:CIV*, (42:40). Premise IV distilled from Derreck Jensen’s book *Endgame Vols 1&2*
- 106 *END:CIV*, (1:00:32). Derrick Jensen speaking.
- 107 *END:CIV* (18:09). Premise II distilled from Derreck Jensen’s book *Endgame Vols 1&2*
- 108 Day, *Gramsci Is Dead*, 14-15.
- 109 *END:CIV* (1:01:53). Waziyatawin interviewed.
- 110 *END:CIV*, (1:02:53). Gord Hill interviewed.
- 111 *END:CIV*, (1:03:23). CBC TV News Audio Footage, 1990.
- 112 *END:CIV*, (1:03:32). Unknown News Audio, 1990.
- 113 *END:CIV*, (1:03:42). I have not discovered the name of this woman who speaks.
- 114 Kittler, 5.
- 115 At the time *END:CIV* was in production in 2010, and touring in 2011-2012, Indigenous resistance was heating up in Wet’suwet’en territories in the Unist’ot’en clan, where clan members and activists erected a barrier to reclaim and enact hereditary law of ‘Free Prior and Informed Consent.’ The Unist’ot’en camp would expand and block the pathway of multiple bitumen and frack-gas pipeline projects that were consequentially scrapped. Currently, as of 2020-2023, only one frack-gas pipeline project belonging to Coastal Gas Link continues to encroach on Wet’suwet’en territories, and as the fight continues, the forces against the Wet’suwet’en have become more militarized and corrupt.
- 116 López, *END:CIV*, (1:04:44). Peter Gelderloos interview.
- 117 López, *END:CIV*, (1:08:49). Gord Hill interview. Emphasis added.
- 118 López, *END:CIV*, (1:10:31). Jensen tries to inject economic theory into the analysis by citing Mussolini’s definition of fascism as ‘corporatism,’ the

merger of state and corporations, and asserts the sham of so-called democratic elections under corporatism. This is technically accurate, but it also requires situating it within a historical socio-political context. For example, if corporatism was such an issue for Jensen, why does he never once mention state-sponsored capitalist-communist China? Instead, he conflates Mussolini's fascism with Hitler's and takes the economic theory out of context to serve his emotional biases.

119 Kimberly Croswell Interview with Frank López:10-21-2020.

120 Kimberly Croswell Interview with Frank López:10-21-2020.

121 Kimberly Croswell Interview with Heatscore: 11-11-2020.

122 Kimberly Croswell Interview with J.R.:10-09-2020.

123 Kimberly Croswell Interview with Heatscore: 11-11-2020.

124 Kimberly Croswell Interview with J.R.:10-09-2020.

125 Kimberly Croswell Interview with J.R.:10-09-2020.

126 *Trouble #17 - Mad Worlds: Redefining Sanity Through Struggle*, Streaming video, Trouble (sub.Media, 2019), <https://sub.media/trouble-17-mad-worlds>, (0:04).

127 *Trouble #17 - Mad Worlds: Redefining Sanity Through Struggle*, (0:11).

128 *Trouble #17 - Mad Worlds: Redefining Sanity Through Struggle*, (0:15).

129 Kimberly Croswell Interview with J.R.:10-09-2020.

130 *Trouble #17 - Mad Worlds: Redefining Sanity Through Struggle*, (21:45-23:12).

131 *Trouble #17 - Mad Worlds: Redefining Sanity Through Struggle*, (2:04).

132 *Trouble #17 - Mad Worlds: Redefining Sanity Through Struggle*, (23:12).

133 *Trouble #17 - Mad Worlds: Redefining Sanity Through Struggle*, (28:20).

134 *Trouble #17 - Mad Worlds: Redefining Sanity Through Struggle*, (1:26). Emphasis added.

135 *Trouble #17 - Mad Worlds: Redefining Sanity Through Struggle*, (1:55).

136 *Trouble #17 - Mad Worlds: Redefining Sanity Through Struggle*, (5:42).

137 *Trouble #17 - Mad Worlds: Redefining Sanity Through Struggle*, (5:27).

138 Kimberly Croswell Interview with J.R.:10-09-2020.

139 *Trouble #17 - Mad Worlds: Redefining Sanity Through Struggle* (29:59).

140 Kimberly Croswell Interview with Heatscore: 11-11-2020.

- 141 *Trouble #6 - Adapt and Destroy: Counterinsurgency and Social War*, Streaming video, Trouble (sub.Media, 2017), <https://sub.media/trouble-6-adapt-and-destroy/>, (0:15).
- 142 *Trouble #6 - Adapt and Destroy: Counterinsurgency and Social War* (1:01).
- 143 *Trouble #6 - Adapt and Destroy: Counterinsurgency and Social War* (13:01-13:29). Peter Gelderloos interviewed.
- 144 *Trouble #6 - Adapt and Destroy: Counterinsurgency and Social War* (6:32).
- 145 *Trouble #6 - Adapt and Destroy: Counterinsurgency and Social War*, (7:15).
- 146 *Trouble #6 - Adapt and Destroy: Counterinsurgency and Social War*, (8:50).
- 147 *Trouble #6 - Adapt and Destroy: Counterinsurgency and Social War*, (9:59-10:08).
- 148 *Trouble #6 - Adapt and Destroy: Counterinsurgency and Social War*, (16:49-18:26).
- 149 *Trouble #6 - Adapt and Destroy: Counterinsurgency and Social War*, (15:37-16:35).
- 150 *Trouble #6 - Adapt and Destroy: Counterinsurgency and Social War*, (27:07-28:26).
- 151 *Trouble #6 - Adapt and Destroy: Counterinsurgency and Social War*, (29:12).
- 152 Gaonkar, 5.