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How to do politics like a marginal in 11 easy steps

Anarcholatina Transantifa

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July 2023

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- The group formerly know as “Bash Back”, *I Don’t Bash Back I Shoot First: On Queer Gangs*
- Institute For The Study of Insurgent Warfare, *Nine Theses On Insurgency*
- Mia Mingus’ concept of *pod mapping*
- Basically every communiqué from the EZLN but see especially the *Fourth Declaration of the Lacandona Jungle*
- adrienne maree brown, *We Will Not Cancel Us* ; and *Pleasure Activism*
- Aragorn!, *Toward a non European Anarchism or Why a movement is the last thing that people of color need*
- Margaret Killjoy, (podcast) *Cool People Who Did Cool Stuff: Gay Resistance to Nazis*, 2022-05-30 and 2022-06-01
- Kaneko Fumiko, *A Work of My Own!* (in: *The Prison Memoirs of a Japanese Woman*)
- Sylvia Rivera & Marsha P. Johnson’s interviews, quoted in the zine *Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries: Survival, Revolt, and Queer Antagonist Struggle*

We could not find a group we wanted to be in, so we’re starting our own. This list is a collective chorus of the lacks we felt in our scenes, and how we’re fulfilling them. They do not describe what are our politics; they describe *how* we want to politics.

1. **We don’t do demos.**

We prioritise **organisation** over **mobilisation**. Most of our political energy goes to **building** autonomy from an unjust world, not in perpetual reaction to punctual injustices.

2. **We help one another.**

Our core work is **mutual aid**. Our politics is the tangible, material, bodily politics of the every day. Our politics is to help one another with food, a job, a place to stay, emotional support, collective defence, access to hormones, abortions, handling bureaucracies, childcare, elder care, sickcare, we care.

3. **We will not cancel us.**

We reject **all** police, including the cop in our heads. We are calm and confident in our collective power to protect and heal the targets of harm **while** transforming the patterns of harm in the doer. We build this trust in our power by constant study and practice of transformative justice. We practice how to handle conflict, harm and abuse **before** they happen. We do not kick people out of our group only for them to go harm other people, less equipped to deal with it. We handle our own messes, because we are strong enough to take **collective** responsibility.

4. **We stay together.**

We are **comrades**. We know who is the enemy, and we distinguish internal conflict from the enemy. We strive to

make every comrade feel seen, welcome, and treasured. Our bond is the metal of identity and ethics and shared dreams; our bond is tempered by the fire of the struggle and the pressure of oppression; our bond is stronger than nation, stronger than family, stronger than individual relationships. Our community survives heartbreak.

5. **We build meaning.**

We remind one another of how our lived experiences are part of a larger struggle. We talk of our ancestors and our goals so that we can find ourselves here, between past and future, carrying the torch of rebellion. We look at one another, and we stan.

6. **We are visible.**

When we spot our symbols in another body we feel calmer and safer, we drop the tension of our jaws and breathe with relief, for we know we found someone we can count on. When our enemies see our symbols they tremble, for they know that harm to one will mobilise all.

7. **We occupy territory.**

We do not stay hidden in our concrete cages but take to the streets, we meet visibly in public hangout spots, and in doing so make the public spaces **ours**. Our allies know they are safer in our territory; our enemies shiver and hide their emblems of oppression.

8. **We empower.**

Our meetings do not drain energy; they **energise**. Our meetings are **abundant**: they abound with fun and joy, with music and laughter, with crying and mourning, our voices lilt with emotion, with belief, with life. Our meetings reject the logic of capitalism, of work culture, our

politics is not a second job, our politics is a feast and a party and a rage and a hug in the long night. We **hype**.

9. **We call upon our ancestors.**

We learn the stories of those who came before us in the struggle, those who carried us to where we are. In remembering the dead we bring them to **life** in our bodies, we live the lives that they fought to let us have. We remember our dead in mourning, yes, but also in celebration and **power**, we do not remember them merely for the tragedy of their oppression, but for the joy and freedom of their lives in defiance, fully aware that there are no heroes and that their glory is our glory, that we today in our bodies are nothing but power and glory.

10. **We are reliable.**

Our meetings happen regularly and we can trust ourselves to show up. We know we will show up, because we **want** to show up, we look forward to showing up, because our meetings build up, rather than grind down. We understand the power of ritual, of regularity, of rhythm, because it is in rhythm that we can dance.

11. **We do not take these rules too seriously.**

We will not forget that the human spirit cannot be predicted in words, theories, and systems. We bow to **no** authority, least of all the authority of the dead letter. We will never let an ideology trample a human heart. We are big kids and we can question ourselves.

Inspirations for this text / recommended reading (on a Tor browser)

- Malatesta, *Let Us Be Of Good Cheer!*