ADCA: Where the currency is traditional knowledge, where it's traditional, healthy food, where it's traditional goods and communal living.

ADCS: For me those are very anarchist questions. Questions that anarchists struggle with as well. How do we live and operate in ways that don't commodify our relationships and lives.

A!: Part of what you're talking about is the big challenge for me about counterculture… how we usually use the term, sort of describes the failure of this effort.

ADCS: Totally.

A!: But the problem is, on the other side, what you're calling nationalism is a pipe dream.

ADC: Yea.

A!: Most of the people you're sitting and talking with are staring at screens…

ADCA: Exactly…

A!: I mean, you wish that they were a nation that you were devoting your life to, and energy to…

ADC: Right.

ADCS: Well, the nation… I come at this from a very different perspective from hers. We don't agree on everything.

A!: You're the first couple I've ever met who didn't…

ADCA: I know!

ADCS: So, as an anarchist, having a lot of problems with nationalism, having an ugh reaction to it, right? But like, for me the nation is nothing more than an imagined community, in any situation. Even in the US, there's a difference between the US, and the US government, and the nation…

A!: Of course.

ADCS:… and that's something that's con tested. So, for me, looking at this, there is already a nationalism. There already is a Dakota nationalism. It may not be very strong. But it's there, there is already an imagined community, there's already an imagined nation, but it's tied up with US nationalism.

The Fight for Turtle Island

edited by and including Aragorn! in conversation with Alex, Anpao Duto Collective, Corinna, Dan, Danielle, Dominique, Gord, Jason/Jaden, Kevy, Klee, Loretta, Lyn, and Ron

Aragorn!

ADCA: Yea.

A!: Who does it clarify things for, to use that word? Because your second definition is much more explanatory. You're a proponent of indigenous sovereignty.

ADCA: I am a proponent of indigenous sovereignty, which inherently means indigenous nationalism. I feel like the term "sovereignty" is overused to the point that it's totally lost its bite. "Indigenous sovereignty" has come to mean some really bizarre things over the course of the last several years. Legal battles, fishing rights, NICWA [National Indian Child Welfare Association], and treaty stuff, and… which are all useful, don't get me wrong. They're useful campaigns behind which people can mobilize in concrete ways. But what would it mean for us to have a landbase large enough for us to sustain our population?

A!: That's the thing. When you're talking about nationalism for Dakota people, this is a very small set of people you're talking about, contained inside a very large set of people.

ADCA: Right.

A!: So that's why I'm asking the clarifying question.

ADCA: Yea. That's something that I feel like we're all still trying to negotiate: what an actual Dakota nation would mean within the context of a colonial empire.

ADCS: You already have it. The designation of reservations as nations within nations. That's already there. But most of them don't function that way: they func tion as states or local governments.

ADCA: In a best case scenario.

ADCS: Yea. So part of the question is how do we create our own economies that aren't necessarily dependent on western economy, right? It's a very different type of work than I ever thought we'd end up in, but…

ADCA: Right.

ADCS: How do we create an economy that's not dependent on capital?

and tape shop and bought a Sex Pistols tape and listened to it and became an anarchist.

Lyn's friend: Not even punk, an anarchist.

Lyn: [laughs] I decided I was an anarchist.

Anpao Duta Collective

ADCS: Part of it too, there's the idea of anarchism, and anarchy, and being an anarchist. It's a scene, right? If you're not showing up, if you're not a presence, then you're not really part of it anymore. I feel like there's also tons of people who… the ideas resonate with them, but they either don't have an access point or they're not invested in what's primarily a youth culture. My point of checking out was when we started investing energy out here. I was spending all my time up here, and we decided this is where we're going to build roots.

ADCA: Yea, we're running a summer camp for teenagers that's trying to do suicide and substance abuse prevention.

ADCS: It is not an anarchist project.

ADCA: No, no it's not. But it's trying to build and cultivate… and I think about this even long term, I wonder if it's still an anarchist project as much as it is a nationalist project—actively trying to cultivate a healthy, cultural, community, national identity among kids, knowing that in twenty years, that's when I'm expecting the long-term payback on the investment, kids who will then be in positions of education and community power, able to make decisions that actively forward indigenous sovereignty in non-superficial ways.

A!: You use the term "nationalist," which obviously is an extremely loaded word and obviously you use it on purpose—at least partially—to poke that button.

Contents

Lyn: Yea. And from other parts of the world you catch these little internet glimpses and it's like, "oh those people seem to be doing all right." Of course, who knows what it's really like.

A!: For the five seconds of the video.

Lyn: Exactly. That's what I mean, you don't know what it's really like, but it's probably similar re: pros and cons.

But I just don't care anymore. I just honestly don't care. [laughs]

A!: But you do care. You're just caring in a different sense.

Lyn: I care about other things, but I don't care about dismantling the state in the way that I did in the very recent past. I don't even give a shit about it anymore. And I'm unsure that it's even a good idea.

However I still think that anarchist principles are much better than fucking racist, sexist, exploitative hierarchies.

A!: High bar to pass over…

Lyn: They still exist everywhere. So in my foray into the normal world, I was like, "oh my god, this place is more fucked up than the anarchists could even imagine! Holy shit!"

Lyn: I will tell you when I became an anarchist.

A!: Yea!

Lyn: When I was outside of school waiting for a friend and there were these punks with these big charge mohawks and leather jackets with Sex Pistols and other things… what were they using, it was white paint or something…

A!: fuck…

Lyn: …painted all over their leather jackets. And I was like, oh wow that's really kewl and…

A!: They were not cool.

Lyn: They were total dicks. They were assholes. However I then went all the way downtown that weekend to the punk rock record

on the inside of the modern anarchist mind as it was possible to be, they were even bleaker.

Lyn

A!: So when you're thinking about these problems, these are [statist?] problems, what does the anarchist inside your head think?

Lyn: The anarchist inside my head is really demoralized. Honestly I would rather have the state as it is now, than be living in anarchy in any form it could possibly be in at this point in time. I would absolutely be horrified…

A!: …by the history of all the people you've been exposed to through anarchist circles and all the rest. If those people made an anarchist world… Lyn: If we lived…

A!: …it would be a hellscape. [laughter]

Lyn: If some private militia/army gang corporate thing didn't just come and kill us all and we had to somehow live together, I would not enjoy it. I don't think it would be good, at all.

A!: Is this because the people you've met are bad, or incompetent, or just deluded?

Lyn: All of them at various times. I don't know; I suppose the question I'm wondering about myself is do I even believe in… 'cause I've always… up until the last couple of years I've always said, like, "I don't really care about anarchists themselves, I'm an anarchist because I think it's a sound philosophy and practice." And I'm not sure I think… I mean, I still think it is, it's just …

A!: You've seen no evidence. [laughs]

Lyn: I've seen no evidence… well, I've seen bits and pieces of evidence. It's not like everybody's an incompetent fool. I've seen lots of anarchist communities that have, for periods of time, done very well.

A!: Seems like in British Columbia more than most places.

Introduction

A central tension and motivation for this book is to articulate something that is broadly known but not particularly well understood. Everyone agrees that this is a world apparently at war with itself. Country against country, rich against poor, majorities against minorities of all stripes; these conflicts are at the center of many, if not most, of our connections to each other. What we are here calling the fight for Turtle Island is another way of talking about this war while gesturing against the use of war language. Turtle Island is a way to describe North America prior to the discovery[1] and colonization of this land by Europeans. It is a place that physically exists but is largely experienced as a way of thinking about this place in a different time. It is both a place and an idea about a place. I want to go to this place and I want you to come along. I am also already here, so are you.

A fight isn't a war. A war is a brutal, ugly, inhuman thing. It grinds human tissue into paste on behalf of some abstraction like God, State, or just because I told you so. It is not negotiable. It is of the same volcanic family as genocide, hate, and bigotry. The first assertion I'll make in this book is that war, and the thinking associated with war, is a unique kind of perversion that is correlated with the rise of industrialism and centralized state power. At this point we'll make no causal claim, but insist that war is a homonym that refers to qualitatively different kinds of conflict based on the context in which it is articulated. This should require no explana-

[1] It is in fact true that as much as the baby boomers had it easier (financially and competitiveness wise) than the Generation Xers they birthed, and we have it easier than the millennials, that I mostly talked to.

tion but gaining social prestige by touching an enemy with a stick doesn't particularly relate to firebombing a city and annihilating hundreds, if not thousands, of living people.

War thinking is a problem. It is the fruit of a set of problems that we will alternate between calling words like, Civilization, Colonization, The Western Enlightenment, Manifest Destiny, etc. In addition to trying to imagine a post-war way of thinking (about the world) is the fact that, as most of our friends agree, we require something truly epic to happen to this world to live without war. Whether this epic thing is *called* war, or revolution, or the total transformation of values, matters little. To clear the slate, to begin again, to reset the clocks, to return to a tabula rasa where we begin to write our own story rather than rely on the stories we have been told (by Civilization and his crew) seems like an obvious step: not a first principle but a first crisis.

This book was put together with the help of about twenty people. We'll talk a little bit about each of them later but the thing we all share is some involvement in the fight for Turtle Island. The initial idea for this book was to talk about the overlap between native people and the politics of anarchism. Everyone I interviewed for this book I met through the broad anarchist scene (with the exception of my family members Loretta and Ron Yob). Almost everyone, except for myself, came out during our talks rejecting the label "anarchist" or being as involved in anarchist conflicts (conflicts for the heart and soul of what it means to be an anarchist) as they were in anarchist activities themselves.

This, of course, makes sense. Anarchism is a number of things, some of which are actively in conflict, some of which are contradictory, some of which don't deserve the name. But some things you can say for sure. Anarchism was a 19th century ideology expressing a particular analysis of how the fight by the working class should go against the owning class. In that era anarchism was peak

So my point is that I did a lot of things to bring a positive light on native people, because the kids would start to realize, well, I'm native too. All of a sudden you're creating role models… like I'm doing this project around the county where I want to put these sign markers up—they started all these Indian trails— and let these people know that that is their heritage. That they've got stuff to respect. A lot of things I do is to show them what they can do. 'cause they're in a sad state.

You gotta remember that it started out with a group of people just living out in nature, with the animals, like everybody doing what they're supposed to, I mean nature can be violent too… I mean hawks can kill mice, and it's not like everybody's walking around…

A!: … holding hands,…

Ron: Yea. but then the Europeans come in and one of the first things they do is bring in diseases. Then they bring these problems like the Queen of Spain, who offered up bounties for scalping. Indians didn't invent taking scalps.

So the next generation people have to dodge scalpers. Then after that they bring in alcohol. Then after that they start the wars. Then they come and put the kids in boarding schools, cut off their hair, take their language away. Each generation had a new terrible thing to deal with, as well as the old ones. So by this time, these kids… of course their parents aren't going to trust the government. It's been proven they can't.

When my mother was three she was taken away and put in a boarding school. She didn't do anything wrong, they just told her "you can't live with the Indians now, because we are going to teach you to be a non-Indian." So these kids, they haven't recovered from the generations of debilitating hardship. Generational trauma. You wonder why these kids are basket cases: they just kept getting kicked down the hill.

For those who I talked to who had the most direct experience with anarchists, who had directly organized with them, and had been as

Ron: I knew what side I was on, but I knew how unscrupulous the other side was, and how the monster that you're fighting… You can hoot and holler but it's not going to get you anywhere. It's kind of like if you're playing chess with someone. You make some moves on the right side while they're distracted with the other side, and all of a sudden the back door opens up for you or something.

A!: So to bring this back around to being a life-long teacher, what did you see your goal being as a teacher, 'cause the only thing you said was to talk about the kind of work that people found after they finished school. Did you ever have a goal of language, culture…

Ron: That was all part of it. That was all blended right into it. As a teacher I was manager of the classroom, so I had access to a lot of people who would come through town, like [Vernon] Bellecourt, and I'd have him spend a week in the class with me, or Philip Deer, or John Mohawk from the Akwesasne Notes, I had him… he stayed with me for a while too. I'd have them all in my classroom. They'd sit there and have impromptu sessions with the kids.

Those guys… teachings flow from them. They talk and you don't even need to know… and the kids gravitate to them, see…

Here's part of the problem, I figured it out—I never figured this out til a year ago, after I was all done teaching. Like this year, I don't know if they still call them flophouses, but I got a call from one of these houses where people are hanging out, and this caller was giving me a sob story about being broke and it's Christmas, and all these kids were there. I'm a sucker for the kids, you know. So

I went down there and gave them some money, and I know they went and bought food, but I know they also got alcohol at the same time… But, so, these kids they didn't respect police, they didn't respect other teachers, or the counselors or principals, or their aunts and uncles because they were alcoholics, you know? It got to the point where they didn't' respect anybody. When you get to that point you don't even respect yourself.

liberalism,[2] attempting to express the best and highest hopes of humanity, the power of people to change for the better, and of good to triumph over evil. It was a European answer to a European problem. Anarchism also, at that time, did not necessarily care for the values of the natives whose land they were working, blacks whose slavery they were beneficiaries of, or women who were forced to stay largely silent in the political sphere. This was a different time and anarchists were creatures of that time, as they are today.

Later, once the working class had been largely crushed and/or exported, the politics that called itself anarchism could be largely described as peak counter-culture. Hippies, punks, ravers, transhumanists, bicyclists, vegans, and environmentalists all fill the ranks of anarchists today. This is to say that today anarchism is less a political ideology with clear lines and positions on the role of the individual in opposition to the State and Capitalism, and more a political affect reflecting the social and cultural attitudes of individuals. An old school anarchist would refer to this type of anarchist as lifestylist and as politically neutered and be correct to do it![3]

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[2] The Beauty Way — traditional prayer

In beauty I walk
With beauty before me I walk
With beauty behind me I walk
With beauty above me I walk
With beauty around me I walk
It has become beauty again
It has become beauty again
It has become beauty again It has become beauty again Hózhóogonaasháa doo
Shitsijí' hózhóogo naasháa doo
Shikéédéé hózhóogo naasháa doo Shideigi hózhóogo naasháa doo T'áá altso shinaagóó hózhóogo naasháa doo
Hózhó náhásdlíí'
Hózhó náhásdlíí'
Hózhó náhásdlíí'
Hózhó náhásdlíí'

[3] I don't feel old but the anarchist space has been traditionally very young.The average age is near 25, at least until the great recession of 2008. Since

The disconnect between this history and the lifeways of most indigenous people should be apparent. While the vast majority of indigenous people are working class, it is but a small minority that describes themselves this way. Moreover the idea that a proletarian identity would unite people in such quality and vigor as to tear the economic classes asunder sounds ridiculous to a native person, especially one who watched the pan-native arguments over the past fifty years (to little or no end). The lesson of sacrificing one's individual identity to the altar of a shared synthetic identity is hard, but it has been learned. Furthermore, and from my own experience, natives have loved and lived inside the context of subculture, but always as an outsider. There is now an outlier, and newer-to-me, phe nomenon of reservation communities that have taken on metal music (black, hair, punk), but mostly the collision between indigenous people and subculture has left both sides unscathed. I have met "Indian Joe" in at least ten different towns but never one who didn't maintain their outside/mascot form for white/subcultural consumption.

Turtle Island is a place

I don't want to use the term "ambivalence" here but it is worth mentioning as part of an introduction that this book is not intended as a call to action. Of course I would be flattered if it inspired you to act, but a call to action implies a kind of call and response in which the author says "jump" and the reader says "how high?" This is the section that is the hardest to keep away from that kind of logic, because it is about the real place called Turtle Island (loosely the land area named North America or The United States, Canada, and

then, perhaps as a result of how precarious the finances of this generation have been, anarchists have been steadily aging, but I'm still 1520 years older than many of the people I interviewed.

A!: Yea, that's the common stereotype of an anarchist.

Loretta: Yea. I have never studied that form of ideology or whatever you want to call it.

A!: But I started feeding you material pretty early on.

Loretta: Yea. So when I started reading your material I began to see where… this is something that should've been coming a long time ago. If the Indians in this country had adopted that particular ideal, they would've been better off. You need something, a cohesive something, some thing to hold us all together. I used to think it was the commonality of all being native or indigenous people. But it wasn't, because human nature gets in the way, and some people want to have more power than others.

Loretta: anarchy and the '90s, yea. I didn't understand right away what you were talking about. I'm still learning about what it is to be an anarchist. I've given up the idea… well, I haven't given up the idea of blowing up the capital, but… [laughs]

A!: Probably you're not going to be the one to do it.

Loretta: There are several ways of blowing up the capital… A!: Yes.

Loretta: But it [anarchism] was so foreign to me. And especially when Howard [Loretta's late husband]… when I told Howard about what you were doing, he kind of chuckled, like "oh, here we go again, we're going to do something…"

Ron

A!: So are you saying that when you got pulled and jailed, that it changed your attitude as to how to proceed?

Ron: I don't know if it changed it. It might've strengthened it. The attitude was already there. I already knew that I was…

A!: You knew which side you were on?

to do to us. The winds, the storms… Remember I told you the old Unadiaga Indian elder who said, the end of the world as we know it is going to happen when the winds lose control, and people begin to abuse and neglect their children. That would be the end of the world as we know it. Well, hey folks. Look around, it's happening.

I don't like to say this, it's such a defeatist thing to say, but I really don't see it—the movement that you're talking about even within Indian world—making a big change. I didn't think I'd ever feel that, nor did I think I'd ever admit it. But the government has divided up the Indian people again. We could get together. There's always something. World War II, you know. Oh, the Indian Talkers… I think…

I don't know what the statistics are, but every war, the Indians volunteer to go to fight for this country. Because it's "their land." It isn't their country, it's their land. "This is where we came from." And of course white people see it as fighting for our country.

And not too long ago, maybe the '70s, there was a teeny program. Charles Kuralt had a Sunday morning program on CBS. They were talking then about the indigenous people in Hawai'i. So I wrote a letter to him, saying that they are fighting now for the same things that the indigenous people of this continent did. I said, "we're still fighting for ours."

The next Sunday, he read my letter. It was cool. I got phone calls from people around here saying they'd heard him reading it. And the people in Hawai'i are still fighting for theirs, too. The same things, loss of their land, loss of their culture, loss of their traditions, loss of their language: the same damn things we were fighting for. It just goes on and on.

I'm not giving a very bright picture of the future, am I?

A!: What seemed similar about anarchist politics and the politics you saw in the '70s?

Loretta: Well, first of all, my idea of anarchy was a little old man in a black suit and a black cloak, with a round black bomb in his hand with a fuse going.

Mexico) and the specific ways that it is being drilled, coerced, and harangued by Manifest Destiny.

I wish I could just say something as pointed as "Find the closest drilling operation and throw your body at it! Stop it at all costs!" But I can't and I won't. Not only do I doubt that you or even you and your friends are enough to stop your local drilling operation but I am sick and tired of watching older, experienced activists throw other people's bodies into the maw of policing operations with nothing but a DIY legal team to repair the damage. Yes, I would like to stop all resource extraction and put a stop to the petro-economy and all those who profit off of it, dead in their tracks. No, I don't presume that I know how to thread the needle between on the one hand, the ginourmous pickup trucks I see on the reservations, trailer parks, and country roads of Indian Country and on the other hand, the desire to see Mother Earth unmolested.

Turtle Island is a place where I am right now and the best I can do—without raising up an Army of One Mind—is remember, tell stories, and hope to pass the spirit of resistance-to-it on to a new generation. I believe that Turtle Island is so much more powerful than the violence being done to it. that I believe it will con tinue on after Manifest Destiny finishes manifesting and fades from human history. There will be horrific damage and destruction, the quality of life will be less for several generations, and then she will heal. Our task is how to be engaged in the next cycle as its motor and not its roadway.

Turtle Island is no place

When I refer to Turtle Island as a *no place* it is because the land, the earth that I am naming Turtle Island, is in fact somewhere else, in another time. I am not so delusional as to think that because I'd prefer Turtle Island to The US, Canada, and Mexico, that that is enough to make it so. Between here and there are standing armies

(employed by those States) and the apparatus that supports them. There are priests, social workers, teachers, professors, and serious people who devote every waking hour to maintaining the mythology of Manifest Destiny because it is a cheaper way to maintain order than bullets.[4]

As a place that doesn't exist (but did) Turtle Island is the type of *no place* usually referred to as myth. Perhaps this is true, perhaps Turtle Island is merely the fantastic story of a people who have since disappeared, or it is the story I'd prefer to tell about the place I live.

If I live in Turtle Island and not The United States of America, I can differentiate between my life and the life violently imposed upon me. I might be powerless to do much of anything about it but it somehow feels important to assert that I would if I could, not an end-of-themovie inspirational assertion about how We Are Powerful Together, but a personal declaration that I am on the side of a myth vs Manifest Destiny, that I believe in something-like-struggle if not the particulars of a specific fight, that I walk on the back of turtles and not on a spinning globe that'll be discarded as soon as the powerful are ready to leave.

Facts and Story

This is a book of fifteen different answers to the question of how one fights for TI. The way each person frames their answer is about how each is striving to live honestly and fiercely.

The resounding takeaway I had at the end of this project was how rarely peo ple spoke in Manichean language. There was plenty of, *this is how it works for me*, and very little *this is how it should*

[4] Cheaper than bullets isn't just about a genocidal mission by power but a cost-benefit analysis of how to manage a workforce, a body politic, and an obedient citizenry.

problem of such a heavy burden of desiring the total transformation of the world while being powerless and young, confuses most anarchists about how serious we should, and shouldn't, be taking ourselves.

Loretta

Loretta: Anyway. Back to the anarchism. I understand the basics, but I feel like anarchism is this little boat, chugging along in the water, and the big waves are coming and knocking it back. I don't see it going anywhere.

I understand what you're trying to do, and I go along with it. But I don't see the future of it. Because I don't see people in this day and age jumping on your band wagon and saying, "yes, we're going to change things." We may change things in our little neighborhood, but on a large scale? I don't think so. There are too many people like the people who are voting for Trumps, who hinder us.

A!: But of course you could've said the exact same thing about Native issues in the '70s.

Loretta: Absolutely. It's easier to stand outside the fort and wait for your blanket. There's no bloodshed. You don't have to extend yourself and make yourself look like an ass in order to do better. You can stand there just waiting for someone to hand you a blanket. The rest of you fools are out there starving and digging around for roots and berries, you're not gonna get anything.

That isn't just an Indian problem…

A!: No, for sure.

Loretta: It's every person who lives on this earth. And in some countries it's worse. In this country things are going downhill, it used to be a world power; it won'tbe a world power for long. Not the way it's going. So maybe this is the day of the anarchist. Maybe it's the day of… I don't know what. Some cataclysmic thing that's going to change the world. Maybe that's what the earth is trying

In anarchist circles there is often a distinction drawn between anarchy and anarchists. By that distinction one can distance oneself from the idiots, activists, and fools who use the term (anarchist/anarchism) to describe themselves while still describing one's personal preference for a world without coercion (from the State, Economy, and Ownership). One can be for anarchy without being an anarchist.

This distinction points to one of the greatest challenges of anarchism that is also shared with indigenous people, terminology. The words we choose to describe ourselves are not the same terms that the outside world chooses to describe us, by and large. I continue to use the term anarchism because I want to be clear about the political nature of the kind of change that I see necessary in the world but others will naturally use terms like survivance or a return to a better world or being "traditional". While Natives often emphasize the past (usually a time prior to their birth) or just surviving, and see (correctly) that anarchist thinking is either utopian or at least idealistic, then neither the twain shall meet.

Clearly that meeting was the goal of this project. I do believe that anarchists (at least of the type I'm interested in) share a lot with natives in terms of how they think about the world, what kind of footprint they want to leave, who they want to be, and who they want to work with. In return I believe that a lot of natives would benefit from taking anarchists more seriously than they do. Outside the evidence to the contrary (which mostly falls under the category of activism—a topic for a separate project) a living relationship between anarchists and natives would strengthen both and could inspire something amazing.

How can, and should, anarchism be reconciled with native and indigenous values (to the extent to which they are distinct)? It is the task of anarchism to change, transform, and reflect on this question, which means a humility that contradicts the core anarchist principles of autonomy and anti-authoritarianism. Indigenous and anarchist agreed-upon principles are probably different but the dual

work for everyone. These stories are a resounding chorus against "us vs them" thinking and for something I'd call "both/and" thinking.

Yes, there are unavoidable facts: facts about genocide and colonization, facts about displacement and control, facts about the white world that is often times at total odds to the world everyone else lives in… but. There is also something else. Something fantastic that requires one to keep on living, especially when that life is about keeping alive a native life and memories of lifeways.

Caveats

I hate to apologize. I am generally against it as a weak substitute for caring enough to not injure in the first place. But we are strangers and I do injure as a matter of course. I'll explain my motivations and biases here so you understand them. You can choose to forgive them or not, but you should have that power before getting too much further into this text.

One, I have a North American bias. I have traveled in other places and seen through at least a pinprick of other people's experiences, enough to say that I understand how little I understand. I live on Turtle Island, not on the back of an elephant or a hippopotamus. But I recognize that the other way to express what I am saying here is that I am an American, with all the baggage that entails. While I might contain multitudes, they all pay taxes to a nation-state machine that, by its existence and daily actions, is singular. It is the Manifest Destiny I've already cited. It is disinterested in Turtle Island. It is largely what we are fighting.

Second, I am the child of natives, I was raised by natives, I saw myself as a native until I became an adult and was told I was something else. This tension between my face that is usually seen as the face of Manifest Destiny, and every other part of me, is a central theme of any book that would discuss indigeneity and the

fight for Turtle Island. The radical position[5] tends to be that I am a white person who happens to have a mixed race story. I want to abolish that position but that's complicated and—like most complicated positions—in active tension with most of the commonly understood world.

Third, and this is another complicated thing, most of my interview subjects have kind of fallen off the map since our conversations together (two years ago now). They have, either by choice or because of life, not communicated with me much about the text of our discussions. This puts me in a hard situation. I started out thinking this book would be largely complete once the interviews were transcribed. I quickly realized however, that most of the transcripts followed an arc that could be described as "getting-to-know-you conversations with some solid questions in the second half." While I was tempted to print the conversations as they were, it would have been a very long book, and audiences are not necessarily prepared to take the time. This seemed like it needed more of an editorial hand to make a strong book. So instead I have thematically grouped the (solid) questions and largely left the interviewee answers unedited. This isn't exactly how I presented the book to the interviewees, but in lieu of conversation (or answers to emails) this seems the most respectful and contentful option.

I think the topics of race, colonization, and indigeneity are deep and dealt with here with complexity. But conceptually this book should and does beg for more. It is fair to criticize the work that is yet to be done, which is partly why I have been open and transparent about the process.

The first section introduces the interviewees in their own words. Later sections repeat parts of the introductions in the contexts of the varying topics. (Maybe ten paragraphs are repeated in total.)

[5] I mean radical in the sense of the people who yell the loudest and not the people who think the deepest. Which is to say, the more common variety of radical.

Anarchism

The origin of this project was a quest to find and explore the overlap between indigeneity and anarchism. As you are going to see in this section, I found very little hope for anarchism, or any other revolutionary system of transforming the world, in the conversations I had for this project. Russel Means articulated it best in his classic speech "For America to Live, Europe must Die."

When I speak of Europeans or mental Europeans, I'm not allowing for false distinctions. I'm not saying that on the one hand there are the by-products of a few thousand years of genocidal, reactionary, European intellectual development which is bad; and on the other hand there is some new revolutionary intellectual development which is good. I'm referring here to the so-called theories of Marxism and anarchism and 'leftism' in general. I don't believe these theories can be separated from the rest of the European intellectual tradition. It's really just the same old song.

The best that is said by some of the participants, usually the ones with the least amount of direct exposure to recent anarchism is that they understand anarchism to mean the same thing as what Indians are talking about.

Ultimately this is what I believe too but it's going to take some serious creative thinking and excising for us to get to a meaningful consensus.

While there may be some sympathy among these folks for something-likeanarchism, there is very little sympathy for the anarchists who proselytize for The Beautiful Idea in this world. Mostly they are described herein as being out of touch and having paternalistic tendencies if they aren't straight up racist.

nity I have been a part of creating. It is also because of the generosity of my partners, the shared(ish) vision of the people I do projects with, and the fact that I am a little older than most of the people I talked to3. That said it seems like another 3 months would have only improved the conversations. I wish I could have talked to more elders, perhaps a few more hotheads, and more funny people. I have a strong preference for the undercurrent of humor (aka making fun of) that is hard to read in these conversations (on paper), and much clearer face to face.

My name is Aragorn! and I was born in Michigan. My parents were hippies who named me after the Lord of the Rings character. I have added the exclamation point (or bang in hacker parlance) as a distinction and an homage to several aspects of my life (punk & technology). I was raised primarily by my angry/sad Odawa (Anishinaabe) mother who at some point snapped and chased me out of the house. I then walked through the snow and ended up in the white world I live in now. Since then I moved to California, fought Nazis, read books, counter-cultured, got shit jobs, and have been around anarchism ever since.

Around ten years ago I started a publishing project (which produced the book you're holding now) that was intended, on some level, as a way for me to share what I have learned. This is harder than one might think, because I'm not confident that what I've learned will apply to you, or that you'll do anything about it, or that it matters. Not to be maudlin but my confidence in the power of people versus that of the gray world of institutions, power, and authority, has greatly diminished as I've grown older. This story of natives is at the heart of that cynicism and I hope to tell it in the spirit I heard it.

We have survived. We will survive. *They* will fade from our memories.

This is because the points themselves are worth emphasizing, because the speakers didn't get enough time with me to make some points separately, and because the given points just fit well in both contexts. Repetition is necessary and normal in most storytelling, and this book borrows that strength.

There is also a terminology question I'll mention here and dive deeper into throughout the book. The terms *native*, *Native American*, *Indian*, and *indigenous* are all sloppy equivalences. Here I attempt to use them precisely, and the interviewees don't, which is perfect. I use and prefer the term *Indian* as an ironic self-label that keeps in mind the misnomer of naming the residents of this country by the namer's misunderstanding. I find the gallows humor of genocide and colonization a kind of honesty that cuts to the bone. I recognize that not everyone agrees with me on this point. *Native* is a useful and common alternate term. It speaks to place and priority. *Native American* is more precise and mostly refers to how natives framed their pannative identity in the 1970s, but it also includes the name of an Italian. Finally, *indigenous* is more modern, describing something similar to native but sharing it with international indigenous struggles. But that is not how I use the term indigenous in this book. When I refer to indigenous in most of my conversations I am talking about ideas of how to live as a native in this world. How can we be, or return to, an Earth-based way of life? How can we find each other? How do we recreate band society? Do we? What does it mean to *be* after our people have been destroyed (but not)?

While not discussed in this book, my interest is in the tensions between survival and success, local and international priorities, identity and the critique of essentialism. The conversations in this book inspired me to believe that there is more intelligence around these questions in the people who live them every day, but for these conversations to be useful in the fight for Turtle Island they have to be shared with our fellow travelers and those who want

to join the fight but don't have the language for it. This is a book of that language.

ADCS: … in his sleep. He was up in Canada, and he died in his 90s, an old man, having lived a life full of battles. He was never conquered, and he became and stayed a vilified figure.

So like I said, when we started that paper with a group of people, we kind of put it up almost like throwing our colors up, like "this is who we are," and trying to find other people in Dakota communities who were in the same place.

And like I said it was a CrimethIncstyle project… which means we didn't want to put our family names on it, we didn't want to put our personal or traditional names on it, we just wanted to put this out there and see who responded. Partly because there're people who agree with each other but have family beef with each other or there's community beef, or whether you're traditional or not, or whatever it is, so we were essentially like "f all that" let's throw up our colors and see who rallies, right?

Aragorn!

I am introducing myself last because part of me would have loved to have been presented in this book rather than creating it. If I have succeeded, this book will be the introduction for others that I should have received in my late teens to get past some of the questions that haunted me then and now. Sure, these questions are about race, being mixed, and a world of divisions, but mostly they were not ones I needed to grapple with alone. In my adult confidence I can now see that I wasn't running a race. Moreover, I haven't been alone in the confusion and tension of having to answer questions about myself that questioners never ask of themselves.

To accomplish these conversations I travelled to the interviews, to meet people and talk in person, which means I had the luxury to spend three months of my life chasing these stories instead of working a shit job or any other obligation. I had the space to consider these questions, and the search for approximate answers, due to the mutant commu-

A lot of people break up history by war, in different ways, so there's a US/Dakota war, 1862, and then there's Red Cloud's war, and these other wars. But for us it's one long war. There's accounts of that starting even earlier, like in 1858, that there were some people who declared war then. And for us, there's one man…

ADCA: One of our personal heroes…

ADCS: Yea, he's been vilified throughout history. Inkpáduta (Scarlet Point) is his name, and he's vilified because he's seen as this person who committed a massacre of white people in the '50s. He participated in the war of 1862, and he was already an old man at that point, he was probably in his 50s, right? And there's records of him participating in just about every battle from 1862…

ADCA: …from 1858…

ADCS: 1858 was I guess the first attacks, he conducted a lot of raids against traders and when the war of 1862 broke out he was actually part of those wars, and when the US forces drove people into South Dakota, he was part of those battles. And he continued fighting all the way through, he was in some of the last battles like…

ADCA: Battle of Little Big Horn…

ADCS: Actually one of his sons is thought to be the one who killed Custer, because he was the one who got Custer's horse, and traditionally if you killed someone you got his horse. So that is a point of pride…

A!: I imagine it *is* a point of pride! (laughter)

ADCS: … that it was a Dakota man. So he was living among the Lakota. So what's interesting is, in American history, at the time Crazy Horse, Sitting Bull, these guys were vilified, right? They were later either captured or killed, they were either imprisoned or they were executed. So then they become these safe heroes, because they were conquered. So now we can celebrate their prowess. But Inkpáduta was never captured. He died an old man…

ADCA: … a free man.

Glossary

APOC

Anarchist People of Color was an informal attempt to address racial issues in the anarchist space. Part email list and part website, it evolved into a general attitude that few disagreed with but it didn't do much of note.

Pan-nativity

This was a current in 20th century native activism. It grouped all Natives into one culture rather than recognizing individual tribal culture and practices. It has fallen out of favor but still exists as a set of utopian ideas mostly recognized as such.

The Rez

the reservation; usually the one you are most familiar to but possibly the one your family has ties to.

The Left

left wing politics; refers to an antiquated form of politics. In the 18th century the left were those who sat on left side of the French Parliament (and opposed the monarchy) and were generally for egalitarianism. In the US context radicals joke that the left means the left wing of capital since on matters concerning foreign and domestic policy the Democrats (ostensibly the left party) are in lockstep with the right concerning capitalism. The Dems call it neo-liberalism and it means privatization, free trade, and a reduced central government in favor of the private sector. Regardless most conversations about social change center the left as the medium by which it would occur. We would disagree with such an assertion and see it as a waste of time but recognize that there may not be a social

change medium at all. The time of mass politics being radical or liberatory is probably over.

Manifest Destiny

Manifest Destiny is the idea that an enlightened, progressive people deserve the world and damn the consequences. It is the logic that brought Christians to Turtle Island and allows them to think borders should exist. It is the way of seeing that allows for Nation States, immigration, and fallacies like America, Canada, etc.

But yea, so anyway, there's that reference, but there's also a story, it's one of the creation stories, so… like I mentioned there's seven bands, there's seven fires of the (Oceti Sakowin). So, one of them references Podoteh as this site of creation for one of the ocetis, or one of the fires, so for them it's the confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi rivers. That's referenced in a number of different ways as basically the center.

So, when we talk about where that traditional territory would've extended… right now a lot of people, like the furthest east that Dakota people live contemporarily (like within traditional reservation communities)—I think Prairie Island is the furthest east, at this point, and it's on the border of Minnesota and Wisconsin on the Mississippi river. And then you have people as far west as Montana.

A!: Right, it's huge.

ADCS: So if you look at where the center is, then you have to go further east.

ADCA: Food's ready.

ADCS: That's just one idea, but Minnesota Mioche is identified as the homeland, that's how the homeland is defined for the Dakota, who are, you know, more the woodland style, traditionally. A lot of people, when they think of Sioux they think Lakota, which has a very plains culture and style, but for us, some of our ceremonies would have been closer to the ceremonies of Anishanaabe than they would be to the Lakota. So like we have the Wakanachipi, we had permanent settlements that we lived in, participating in different camps, like sugaring camps, berrying camps…That kind of gives you a framework.

A!: Yea, most of that's new information for me. I mostly thought it was all plains.

ADCS: Yea, the eastern part gets overshadowed, and I think a lot of it goes back to, out of the whole Sioux nation, we were the first ones to come in contact, we were the first ones to fight.

ADCS: Right.

A!: … so, Anishanaabe are mostly down the St Lawrence river through Wisconsin, ADCS: …through the great lakes…

A!: through the great lakes, even to northern Minnesota, but are not necessarily known in oral records as being huge travelers, like the Odawa are known for moving around and pushing furs on French people or whatever but not necessarily for going to South Carolina.

ADCS: Right.

A!: But of course to have a set of stories or an understanding of what the world was like pre-contact for me becomes a really dangerous conversation because it is basically owned by anthropologists.

ADCS: It is. So, we reference a lot of oral stories that we hear from people. One story that we've heard elders tell is their first contact with white people, which actually occurred, in the story, on the shores of Lake Superior.

ADCA: Actually it's not specified. It could be Hudson Bay. They're actually not sure.

ADCS: It could be Hudson Bay, but how they reference the body of water is how Lake Superior is referenced today. We think it's Lake Superior, but it could have easily been Hudson Bay…

ADCA: I think it might have been Hudson Bay…

ADCS: There are some… just going back to [baby interrupts]… We also reference oral traditions from other people, like Hauten Oshone have a dance that they say they got from Dakota people, so… , there would have been an alliance between us and them that extended up until 18…

ADCA: …up til the war of 1812.

ADCS: Yea. which Dakota people fought in, and so… For us it's this really fascinating idea, trying to look at what that might have looked like, or how these alliances worked in the past, which gives us an idea of how they could work today, right?

The People

This is a book that results from a Conversation. Of course it has had a hundred little parts but the Conversation is about how we have reconciled the two significant parts of our lives. How we live in both the white world that we grew into (and resist), and the native world we come from. How we have found—in anarchist politics, in native work, in our daily lives—a constant outside to be within. Of course, in this way and others, this story isn't about us at all. Almost everyone talked to in these pages lives in the dusk of the world they'd prefer, and perhaps the dawn of the day that could be. The terms change—for instance most of the interviewees rankle at the term *anarchism*—and the emphases are different in many cases, but the sense from almost everyone, about their lives and their goals, is best summed up by a term from the Anishinaabe author and academic Gerald Vizenor: liminal.

I knew that to truly begin this conversation I'd have to do more than meet people in the middle. I also knew that phone interviews, or Skype talks, or other technologically-mediated mechanisms weren't going to accomplish what I was trying for, so I traveled to each of these interviews, mostly to the towns and cities where these people lived, and often to their homes. I recorded them and when I got home, they were transcribed. Originally I intended only to write supporting text for each interview. I retreated from that position as it became clear to me that, since I had not previously met most of the people I was talking to, most of each conversation was composed of getting-to-know-you exercises as much as of discussions concerning walking between two worlds, anarchism (or the practice of getting to some place worth living), and liminality,

which were questions I hadn't even formally composed to myself, at that point.

Here I give a brief introduction to each of my interview subjects. My intention is to get past their CV or activist resume and get at what I was trying to accomplish in conversation with each person. I feel like I generally had more success with the people who were less polished or who had been interviewed less, conversations that had more potential to escape talking points and the studied answers to the same old questions. On the other hand, the polished interviews establish a baseline of native thought on a number of questions and, more pointedly, are the bleeding edge of radical thought on issues at the time, which have ended up as the baseline for how many of these topics are thought about and expressed now (two years later).

I briefly introduce each to meet their worlds, leadership, and wisdom and, as always, you'll see I'm trying to find the humor, pain, and intelligence too.

Alex

Alex is known to many as part of the Phoenix Arizona hiphop group Shining Soul (http:// www.shiningsoulphx.com/) and also as an educator and husband. I know him as one of the O'odham participants of the DOA (Diné h O'odham Anarchist) bloc of Phoenix AZ. Prior to this interview we had only had a few surface conversations so we were nearly strangers when we met for this conversation.

My name is Alex Soto. To do the quick O'odham 101 synopsis, traditionally speaking O'odham territory is from the Phoenix area all the way to Hermosillo. That's a general understanding of our territory. But within that, as I was mentioning, it's not like we're one O'odham nation. Within that there're various bands of O'odham; that's the best way to describe it.

I'm Tohono O'odham, which translates roughly "people of the desert." Fifty miles south of Phoenix is a town that's now called

places that have Dakota names, there's a Mendota, Michigan, I think there's another place that's a bdote, which for us is a really significant concept, it's where two rivers meet. You see some of these references in Michigan.

So as we mentioned how that would have extended, that would have fluxed, so for example, basically there'd be relatives in North Carolina. So if you look over, there's people who speak a language that is mutually intelligible. If they spoke to us we would understand them, and if we spoke to them they would understand us.

A!: And their story is that, not much before contact…

ADCS: Yea, it was in the 1700s when they were going on a trading expedition, they were going out east, and basically doing this large loop from Minnesota out to a lot of the Great Lakes, over to like, New York, essentially. And then they were going to go down the coast and back up, and that's just the trading route that they were on…

A!: …exploring…

ADCS: It doesn't even seem like they were exploring, that was just their trading route. They were exchanging things, exchanging ideas and information, and they ended up being in North Carolina when settlers were arriving and getting established and basically got stuck there. So there's this community of Dakota people. It gives you an idea of how far not just territory but influence spread.

So there's this talk down in places in Mexico that down there they have catlinite or pipestone, which is one of our sacred stones up here. We have records up here of people having stuff from them that would've been traded up and down the Mississippi…

A!: Like chocolate…

ADCS: Yea. So it's really difficult to quantify what the territory would've been.

A!: that said, traditionally … okay, so… it's strange to have these conversations because i'm sure of the large, dozen or so groups that are scattered throughout the u.s. of whom many peoples are subgroups or related groups…

put it out there, but we needed to do it in a way that could be heard across a lot of divisions that existed. There's like family divisions…

A!: When you say community in this context…

ADCS: there's native…

ADC: …specifically Dakota community

A!: Okay, because the work that you're doing, no one would know if they didn't know. You're not…

ADC: Yes, right

A!:…in the city. You're in the middle of nowhere.

ADCS: Right, right. When we started this we were living in the city but we were also doing a lot of base-building, organizing work in Dakota communities. Part of it was around treaty rights stuff, some of it was around land access, sacred sites. But you know, just a lot of different work. So there was this idea of…

A!: Sorry, just for clarification… I have tons of questions that are…

ADCS: No, sure.

A!: The weird thing about native stuff, right, is like, as soon as you touch a native thing, people assume that you know everything about 500 nations.

ADC: Right. Right!

A!: So, where does the Sioux, how far east does the Sioux go?

ADCA: That depends on who you ask and in what era. The broadest territorial borders that I've heard…

ADCS: Traditional…

ADCA: …Traditional borders, prior to contact, were as far east as

ADCS: …Michigan…

ADCA: …Michigan, as far south as Missouri, as far west as Montana, and as far north as Manitoba. The great Sioux nation was one of the largest political bodies that existed prior to contact.

ADCS: Part of that too is that different people, historians, linguists, look at different markers, for how to define territory, which is a mobile thing. It fluxed, it changed. So in Michigan there're

Casa Grande, which is a border town. South of there is pretty much the Tohono O'odham nation, a federallyrecognized tribal nation. But that's just a portion of our land. Our land goes all the way down to Tucson, Ajo—which is technically off-reservation, but Tucson's an O'odham word—and Mexico all the way to Hermosillo. So the Tohono O'odham are there. Back to Phoenix, north of Casa Grande, that fifty miles I mentioned, that is Akimel O'odham territory, the people of the river, 'cause there's the Gila & Salt rivers there.

So yes, O'odham is the blanket word, it means people, and there's different bands. For example my partner is from those territories; she's Tohono too, but more so up here. So, similar customs, spiritual, ceremonial practices, and language, give or take the dialects.

A!: More or less comprehensible.

Alex: Yea. So we all have the same language, it's just different dialects. So, back to the question, there's that sense of autonomy and respect within that.

As far as the intersection with anarchism… The thing I like about anarchists, when I met them about ten years ago, I liked that they were doing their own autonomous thing. It didn't seem like they were part of some organization… There were acronyms being tossed around but it wasn't some nonprofit group or whatever. They were just saying, "hey, we live here, we want to help."

At the time there was an Akimel O'odham activist outreaching to them at that time—her name was Lori Thomas— for an environmental group fighting an incinerator that was about ten miles south of Phoenix that was polluting the reservation. Their position was, "we're here for mutual support, mutual aid, and doing our part in the city, because these corporations are not from our communities, they're from the outside. Mostly white people, you follow the money…" I just liked that there were no strings attached.

Unless we had an understanding, like a solidarity action or something, where they'd be like, we'd be there to support, and you're welcoming us, we're not trying to step on anybody's toes,

and at least the anarchists here—apparently this is rare across the country—there was an understanding that we're going to start where we're at, we're going to battle capitalism, colonialism, patriarchy, fucking white supremacy, we're going to start here. Why would we latch on to some other demo, I mean, solely, like a lot of the newer anarchists do. They hop on issues thousands of miles away but they can't see what's happening down the block.

To me as an O'odham, if something's happened in Tohono O'odham territory and then you're in Akimel O'odham territory, and you see something else, granted as Tohono O'odham I want to help, but they have to be the ones who organize. Now, as a Tohono O'odham , I can jump in their affairs and vice versa, that can happen, but there needs to be mutual understanding why we're supporting each other, compared to this parachuting in on the rez.

For a long time, I would get a lot of shit because I'm Tohono O'odham living here [ie, not in Tonoha O'odham land], and people would be like, "well you can't speak because you're not from here." Ultimately I did, because I was like, "where is everybody at?" And eventually people did come around, not because I made them, just because finally people stepped up. I didn't come at in a disrespectful way, but it was just that I was even in the conversation. It was challenging, especially being in my early 20s, people were trying to call out your O'odham-ness, your indigeneity, "who the fuck are you to come in here, you live in the city, you're way down there…" And I would respond, "one, I have relatives in Gila River; my great-grandparents are from there, and also this affects us all. And this woman who's from the community asked me to help, so as O'odham I'm gonna help, and not just say, oh I can't because of protocol." So there's a lot of grey area. That's something I forgot to mention, among the O'odham, you got intermarriages, you got relatives all across the place, so, all in all, we're all related.

Ron: So then I go to university and they tell you that you can take classes online, now; you can study the law, or geology, botany, about the trees, biology, all these things that I already knew, but I knew them from a whole different point of view. So then I learned this technical sense, where all of a sudden they're charting and diagramming things, and calculating this or that about them, and doing this whole scientific approach. So I got to have both approaches. That was just too cool. It was unique.

Anpao Duta Collective

Anpao Duta Collective are a married couple. I originally knew of one of them from their participation in Crimethinc-like projects and their time in prison (look up the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act for the grisly details). This interview, however, was my first exposure to the other half of Anpao Duta Collective. This turned out to be the longest and probably most in-depth interview of this series because we were on close to the same page. Yes, it also helped that they had each other—to finish each others sentences if nothing else—but it was clear from early on in the conversation that these two had thought about many of the same things that have been occupying me. Moreover they weren't theory heads just having conversations, valuable as those can be, but were devoting their lives to the project at hand. In my opinion they are doing some of the most practical and inspirational work I heard about on this trip.

When I moved to the big city I also moved away from any desire for a traditional relationship or family structure. Rebellion was for me either complete or not at all. Spending a day with Anpao Duta Collective disabused me of the necessity of that equation, and even tempted me with the idea that I could have taken some different forks in the road… but that is for a different life. The two voices are here ADCS and ADCA, and when they're talking together, they're ADC.

ADCS: So part of why we started the original project on Anpao Duta… It was a very CrimethInc.-style project, where we wanted… like, there was shit that needed to be said. We needed to say it, to

to have in my back pocket, to show that… 'cause I'd get that card drawn on me every once in a while, so I thought, well I'm gonna steal it. [laughter] First time through I felt like I might not have a degree, but it doesn't matter, a point's a point.

A!: But you knew this was the kind of work you wanted to do. You wanted to help people.

Ron: I don't know if you ever know that, you just do it.

A!: [laughs]

Ron: You don't think you're ever doing anything. It's kind of like when you're at the casino, you don't count the chips til you're out the door and in your car, or something. If you're halfway out the door you might think, oh I better stay a little longer. Or you don't even think about what you're doing, you just keep doing it.

A!: So you get your degree and you go to work for the Grand Rapids board of education.

Ron: I actually worked for them previously to that. I was actually teaching then, but my principal would sign off on the grades, and the credits and stuff. So that rug could've been pulled out from under you real quick, soon as you get a different principal or whatever. So at the time they had the tuition waiver, right? The Indian tuition waiver. I was the very first student at Grand Valley to use it. I knew about it, I knew it was in the works, and then I went and asked them about it. And the Financial Aid guy had never heard of it. He says, "well hook me up with the people, and we'll get the program started." And I hooked him up with the people in Lansing.

At that time credits were free, so I wasn't really taking them for a major or anything; all of a sudden I was just seeing all this stuff I wanted to learn. So I started learning stuff.

There's where it really got good, because I was raised—like I told you, my old aunt raised me, she had me chasing after muskrats, to making me get mushrooms, to getting a certain kind of wood that had been struck by lightning or something. She had all these things I had to do, totally non tech, right? This is just how she lived.

A!: Mmm hmm.

Corinna

Anyone in the Bay Area who pays any attention to Native issues knows Corinna's name. She has been a tireless advocate for Ohlone issues including preservation of the Shellmounds. She is central to annual remembrance of the Emeryville Shellmound in late November. She is also the star of the documentary film Beyond Recognition and has producer credits (and an IMDB profile!) forseveral other films. While Corinna is not an anarchist she collaborates with several (including on the http://protectsogoreate.org/ project, and her documentary film, and she has spoken at several anarchist bookfairs).

Corinna: California Indians are talking a lot about genocide right now because Junipero Serra has been recently canonized. What does that look like. We talk about the mass genocide of California Indians that happened with their first colonizers.

And of course folks in the Bay Area, and generally, don't realize the history of where they're at. That was one of the main reasons that we really needed to do the Shellmound walk, because so much is invisible here.

So I started talking about even Indian people not even knowing that Ohlone people still existed in the bay area, right? And you can't blame them, nobody knew that, right? And even then it was really scary for Ohlone people to come out. People don't realize that the history of California, after the missions closed down and the state of California was created…

My ancestors were enslaved in Mission Dolores in San Francisco, and Mission San Jose in Fremont. So Junipero Serra started the first nine missions with one of the first being Mission Dolores in San Francisco. And of course his idea was to conquer the Indians, to use them as slave labor, and to kill them if they didn't cooperate and become Catholic… to civilize them, but it was really about having free slave labor to create these missions and to look at the land in a different way. I think that that's where we really… it's still true

that Native people look at land in a different way from nonNative people.

Some folks look at land and say, "look, there's all these thousands of acres and the Indians aren't using it, so they don't need it."

While the Indians have been tending to the land for thousands of years, harvesting in ways that get their basket shoots straight, burning stuff off so that the vegetation that they ate came back in a good way, ways that they brought animals in to the land so that it's not destroyed, and how they take care of the acorns and the fish in the area, so there was a natural process of care-taking the land, tenuring the land.

When other people got here they said, "There's all this land and there's so much rich soil," ('cause the natives had been tending it) "that we could put all these orchards up." And that 's exactly what happened; they put these orchards up and kept pigs and goats and all these animals that we know now as food. And giving those foods to my ancestors made them sick, as anybody eating food that they're not used to will get sick, so they got sick and died. The animals came with diseases that folks here had never seen.

A!: If you were going to talk about the stages of genocide of California natives, how would you do that? Was there a stage prior to the founding of the missions? Perhaps with the initial contact with whites?

Corinna: There was contact with other European people who got here before the Spanish. They came, they got what they wanted, and they left. When the Spanish came, they did it specifically to take over the land and to convert the people. They had a specific plan. Indian languages were taken away, their songs and dances were taken away, their religious rites were taken away, their food was taken away.

A!: This is all in the 18th century.

Corinna: Yes, 18th century. So all of those things, the way people lived, women and girls at a certain age were locked inside of bar-

Ron: Shit, I entered the workplace in the 50s.

A!: How so?

Ron: Picking beans. Stuff like that. As a kid, picking fruits, apples, raspberries, asparagus…

A!: So you didn't grow up in Grand Rapids? You grew up where?

Ron: When I was a kid though, you gotta remember, from that street there[gestures], there was nothing.

A!: Really?

Ron: And then down the street…

A!: There were fields right there?

Ron: Farm fields, and then Cedar was a gravel road. That was still a working farm on Fuller there. There were a couple working farms there (this was all the neighborhood I grew up in my teen years).

A!: Crazy…

Ron: … and apple orchards, and the county jail wasn't there, there was a lake there. Emptying into that lake was a stream that used to be full of brook trout.

I was working with natives before the '70s, but I could see the ceiling above me because I wasn't degreed. It seems like when you get into the dominant systems of culture, the higher levels of the pyramid, they start requiring degrees. Like, in Grand Rapids, initially the drug rehab places were actually a bunch of old druggies that saw there was a problem, and they wanted to help out their fellow man, 'cause they went down that path and knew what these people were gonna go through. They started Project Rehab, and stuff. But once they started getting government grants, and started getting licensing and all that bureaucracy, the people with the affection towards their fellow man got lost. It got to be people who went to school to get a degree to…

A!: Professionals

Ron: …professionals to do it. And then all of a sudden, the original people got squished out. Well, I knew I was smart enough that I could compete with the professionals, so I went to get a degree

Ron

Ron is a childhood friend. More than that, he was one of my first mentors and he showed, mostly by example, what growing up and being a native man should look like. This is no small thing; my mother surrounded me with idiots who, to a person, were negative examples of what it was to be a man. Even the natives we had in our lives were mostly around to party and have a place to crash and had no time for the angry precocious child who I must have been.

Ron was the exception. He took me into his educational program (which we'll get into) but as his mother was my most consistent babysitter he was just a solid presence in my life as he was around the house, not having rebelled or abandoned his family like so many of his, and my, generation did.

A!: You're the most mainstream native I know. Most of the natives I know selfdescribe as radicals, and do their politics entirely in the space of radicalism. You've lived your whole life more or less not being a radical. I'm sure people call you a radical, because of the nature of… Ron: I don't buy into a lot of shit.

A!: Right. Ultimately you accepted the terms of the arrangement, for better and for worth, eh?

Ron: It's like the whole thing about, you should never get angry or mad, because… There's two reasons you shouldn't get mad about something you can't do anything about. And if you can do something about it then you shouldn't be upset about it. You don't let those things influence you or send you out in misdirections, you just keep…

A!: But this was a lesson from your parents.

Ron: As much my parents as growing up; the lessons come from more than parents. It comes from everything, bugs and birds and turkeys and earthworms and deer and grass and trees and you combine 'em, but they come from everywhere. They do. They do.

A!: Unlike other people in your generation, you entered the workplace in the early 70s?

racks that had no windows until they were married. And the priest decided who would marry whom. You had to pray at a certain time, you had to eat what you were given, you were whipped constantly, women were raped. People got sexually transmitted diseases that did not exist here in the bay area before this time. And people died. And that's genocide. Killing off people…

They were trying to exterminate the Indian. There was no reason to have us here; we were an inferior race. They called us diggers, here. We were not even human. Not even just in the state of California, in the US, Indians did not get citizenship until 1924. So my great grandparents were not even born with citizenship. It wasn't until 1978 that we had our own right to religion.

So all of this forbidden stuff had to go underground. My particular family survived all of those ways of genocide by pretending to be Mexican. They worked on a ranch in Pleasanton, and survived.

But the interesting thing is that they all intermarried with other Ohlones and other mission indians who were close by.

A!: Yea. And the problem with Alcatraz is that it was sensationalism: it's not "natives exist in daily life" it's "natives exist in a circus."

Corinna: Right. I agree with that. So we decided that what was important after Emeryville [referring to the destruction of another shellmound to build another mall] was such a debacle…

A!: That mall opened in 2003?

Corinna: 2002, I think. We decided to protest it. So we protest it every year…

A!: On black friday…

Corinna: Yea. Funny thing is I didn't even know what black friday was when we started doing it… just, there were a lot of people there shopping after thanksgiving, so "we're gonna go." We started going out there with our kids, and there were only a handful of us. And now it's amazing, folks have started coming out of the woodwork, and know that it's a place to be. I think that's important about the shellmounds; through the years we've brought back the

sacredness of those spaces. That's what the shellmound walks were about.

Danielle

My conversation with Danielle was one of my favorites. It's one of the few conversations where our connection was merely a single person we knew in common, basically saying to me "You have to talk to Danielle" and there were no expectations or even clear idea what we were going to talk about. I hope her brilliance and subtle humor comes through as I really came away from my time with her refreshed and exhilarated.

A!: You're mostly a mother?

Danielle: Yes.

A!: Tell me about that. How old is the first one?

Danielle: My eldest is 13, graduating to high school, then 11, 10, 6, and 5 year old. Yea. Being a mother changed the entire direction of my life. I became less selfish, and I started realizing that the role that I play as a mother effects generations and generations of people.

A!: do you think you'd still be immature, a partying type of person, if you didn't have kids at a young age?

Danielle: yea, definitely. That's my personality. I'm a little bit… Even as a mother I'm still… oftentimes people will think that I'm my kids' sister. Not because I'm acting like a fool, but just because I'm having a lot of fun with my kids and laughing with them. Not being the average mom, waving my finger at them and tsking. I am just, like, enjoying life with them.

A!: Does that [scolding] ever work?

Danielle: I don't think so. [laughs]

A!: I don't think I know of a family relationship where the strict parents actually succeed. Maybe they succeed later though.

am more passionate about anarchism and Indigenous liberation than ever.

I am an Anishnabe anarchist, with an active anarchist critial analysis and practice, working within the criminal justice, child welfare, and mental health system. There is decolonization work being done in all of these feilds … and they are disconnected from land-based struggles… such as idlenomore and anti-pipeline stuff. I'm guessing because radicals don't want to invovle themselves with such institutional oppression… but one thing led to another—curiosity mostly, and i find myself here, and i'm suprised by how radical a lot of people in the system *are. But the thing i see the most glaring is that land struggles and all other aspects of Indigenious sovereingty and law—like child welfare, health care, and prisions… are disconnected almost entirely. Child welfare, health care, and prisions all have to do with* citizenship… *or who gets to be defined as an* Indian *under Canadian law… (Being an* Indian *accords people certain rights within Canada, but more importantly, distinction *from* Canada).*

Canada recognizes the legal distinction of Indigenous peoples as independant from Canada and as legal entities of their own. But what's under dispute is just how distinct and over what? This is happening in courts all over Canada, in disputes over child welfare, fishing rights, border access, school funding, medical care, criminal sentencing… These court cases are about government funding for programs and the autonomy of Indigenous communities to run them… Meanwhile, the land base of these same communities is being ripped out from under them… and turned into corporate profits that same government is the middle man for… while the communities themselves have zero access to the money —unless they sign away what little sovereignty they have left. It's extortion at its finest.

This is the place where the anarchist critique of the state is interesting and important to me as an Indigenous person.

A!: That was 2010.

Lyn: …2010, and then there was something after the Olympics, then there was the Stanley Cup (that wasn't a political event)…

A!: No, but there were a lot of communiques (laughter)

Lyn: However… I realized in my studies of criminology recently that actually sports are a very effective maneuvering to eradicate social anomie in the population. I was like, oooh…

A!: As we suspected! Aha!

Lyn: Everyone always said it was about the patriarchy! They were wrong; I always knew it wasn't about the patriarchy… (Laughing) I knew it was something. Always gotta be something.

So then there was tons of stuff.

A!: Occupy…

Lyn: Occupy, Occupy ruined everything; it was Occupy! I went to the Occupy and it was horrifying and nothing has ever recovered, and any time I've ever attempted to do anything I've been terrified that horrible occupy people will show up. Oh, there was also some native stuff after the Olympics.

A!: Idle No More, or something else?

Lyn: Idle No More was after Occupy. It was Occupy; Occupy ruined it. It was completely horrible.

A!: How?

Lyn: It was just a bunch of fringe-dwelling freaks who don't know anything, who just are on these bizarre emotional identity politics ego trips. It was terrible. It was like ugh, "this is what I fought all night to get home to?!"

Have you seen The Warriors movie? You know at the end when they fight all the way back to Coney Island and they're like disgusted [something blows through their hair?] and the movie ends? [laughter] That's what Occupy was for me.

Lyn's note replying to the manuscript:

A clarification: while I maintain that the anarchist activist scene is irrelavant and boring —I do care about anarchism, and if anything I

Danielle: Yea, I grew up in a very strict home. My mom was very on-my-case about everything. I think it gave me some ideas of standards and boundaries of motherhood. So I always hold myself up to how she was bringing me up. But my mom also went to residential school. So a lot of the things that she taught me, I had to work my entire life to overcome, right? A!: Do you have intact language?

Danielle: No I don't. it's something I'm working on right now. It's really hard because I grew up with an Englishspeaking brain, so to reconstitute my mind so that I'm thinking with Anishinaabemowin, which is my language. I find that language, in the sense of identity, has a whole different meaning than English, which is very noun based, based on naming and owning things, capitalizing the I, whereas Anishinaabemowin is about describing the action of a thing and how it relates to us as people. Most of the time, for example, things like fire or earth, water, air, we talk about how it relates to us as human beings and how we need it to survive, whereas English is very much like, "my water" instead of "the water that gives me life."

A!: That's interesting. How many generations removed was the language?

Danielle: My grandmother was fluent. My mom told me that she remembers listening to her mom speak in the language and understanding what she was saying. She was taken when she was four years old.

That's where a lot of my anger comes from. I'm very angry at the state; I'm very angry at the church. At the same time I feel like that anger isn't… you know, it's good as a motivating factor. It's good to get me off my ass, and get a lot of people off their asses. What are you going to do about it? You gotta do something, but… I think that in the end, that loss motivates me to regain it back, for my kids.

A!: Are there facilities to teach young kids the language?

Danielle: There's some programming here in Hamilton. For example there's daycare centers that teach in the language. But also here in Hamilton, a lot of the Haudenosaunee people will say "it's Haudenosaunee land." And a lot of the Anishinaabe people will say "it's Anishinaabe land." Meanwhile, we're all still distinguishing territory by Canadian standards.

A!: Yep.

Danielle: Instead of… When I identify this territory I do it by our ancestral agreements: the wampums that we made with each other before contact. We had an agreement called The Dish with One Spoon. And it established that this territory was kind of neutral, and we shared it. The dish represented the one territory, and the spoon represented how our nations would use the territory: there's only one spoon, and we're going to use it carefully and be conscious of what we're taking. [The Canadian-US border] literally cut right through Anishinaabe territory, right?

A!: yes.

Danielle: I think they did that on purpose because of the power of our confederacies. They knew that dividing it in half would sever our connections to each other and separate us. Like you were saying, the American side of the Anishinaabe people understand their nationhood differently, and it's because of the education system and what they're taught, where they went to school. Whereas in Canada, the government would like us to subscribe to the Indian Act way of thinking of identity. So they have Indian, Metis, and Inuit. Actually they call us Aboriginal now. Unless we subscribe to those ideas of who we are, then we lose our rights, or blah blah blah.

But when we're talking about identity in terms of Three Fires Confederacy, then that is exactly what I'm all about. I think we need to revive that Confederacy, 'cause that's where our power is. Not only in the sense of power but when we're talking about the Confederacy it's such an intricate balance of governance that doesn't "govern" in the sense of government that we know… I think

Lyn

Lyn is a mystery, even after our conversation, possibly more after our conversation than before. I knew Lyn as someone who had passed through the anarchist space and as I have another project that concerns these shadowwalkers, Lyn was on my mind for that project too. We ended up meeting on this whirlwind trip I did through Vancouver (which is not a town I'm in love with) and I knew that after I met with her, I would have a hard night time motorcycle ride so I was a little distracted during our talk. In addition we met at this park in Vancouver that is, to put it generously, a central social hub for the down-and-out. As the down-and-out in Canada aren't as bad off as they are in the States, this largely looks like a parade of young people performing for each other, middle aged people getting down to their drink and smoke, and elderly people taking a break.

Lyn is a very funny person, which may or may not be clear here. My mistake in this interview was not leaving enough time for us. We really needed six hours to have enough time to talk all the shit we were going to talk, and also touch on the serious topics as part of a natural flow. Lyn was not going to answer straight questions. That was her prerogative but I fear her clarity of thinking might not shine as brightly here as it would have otherwise.

A!: do you think you mostly left [the anarchist scene] because you just couldn't relate to the individuals? Or because you wanted to focus entirely on raising your kid.

Lyn: my kid was grown up by then. No, I was disgusted with the movement and I thought it had absolutely no potential. I didn't think it could do anything or go anywhere. So I just decided to… do something else.

A!: What year was that?

Lyn: What's the last year I did anything… Oh, people kept trying to drag me back in. I don't know because I don't really good concept of time passing… let me think of events…

I was full on in the Olympics…

Loretta: ’55 is when I moved to GR. But until the 60s, that’s when, like you said, I became more aware of what was going on. But what brought it to our attention was the Black movement.

A!: Right.

Loretta: It wasn’t the Indian… So then

I realized that what my dad and uncles had been talking about, this was it here. This was where it was. Then I began to be more aware of it. Then I had children.

I had children to think about, and I be gan to see what was happening. So that’s when I became aware of the movement to affirm the Indians and the Black movement. I was more involved against…

I did a lot of letter writing, a lot of editorial writing to the press, in the early ’60s. So I was really more defending the Black movement than I was the Indian movement. But then in the 60s I met some Indian people, who were not relatives (though they knew my relatives), and I became more involved then with the Indian community in the 60s, through Chet Eagleman and Ruth Eagleman. Because these were people who had been more educated than I was…

A!: And more traveled…

Loretta: … and more traveled. They’d been out west. They’d been reading my letters in the paper, and Ruth read one, and she said to her husband, she told me, “we read a letter in the paper that you wrote about the black movement, but how it affected other minority groups,” and she said “This is someone we have to meet, Chet.” Because Chet was then trying to organize Indians in Grand Rapids.

There was a small group that I didn’t know anything about, who were meet ing and doing things for the Indians in the Grand Rapids area, with some little fingers out in national groups. So that’s when I became involved with the Indians in Grand Rapids and became more and more aware of what was going on in the nation. I knew but I hadn’t become involved in it.

it just gives people the ability to feel like their voices matter. Everyone would feel that their voice mattered.

Even in our own communities though, there needs to be a lot of unlearning. I find that Anishinaabe nationhood, right now, and even the ceremonial circles, or chieftain-ship or whatever, are very patriarchal. We’re forgetting the roles of the women, we’re forgetting about the clan mothers in our communities. We’re forgetting about grandmother knowledge. That is another way that colonialism has impacted our power.

Dan

I didn’t get to spend enough time with Dan but he made a lasting impression on me. For starters he is a motorcycle guy and we met at his place of work in Kingston ON. I had my tires replaced (I was nearly 10,000 miles into my journey when I met him, which is also about the duration of a set of motorcycle tires) and we discussed his perspectives on the Haudenosaunee, Canadian politics, anarchism, and motorcycles.

A!: So, were you raised particularly traditionally?

Dan: No. Both my families were Mohawk. My grandfather was from Ahkwesásne, and my grandmother was from Tyendinaga. Back in the day when you went from Ahkwesásne to Tyendinaga, you had to get a transfer, a band transfer. It was all through the Feds. So when my grandfather came from Ahkwesásne, they told him he had to get a band transfer, and had to change his name. It’s the same language.

So when they told him that [in the Mohawk language] he changed his name to Reen. When he changed his name to Reen, there was no Reen registered in Tyendinaga, no Reen registered in Ahkwesásne, so he lost his status. So when my grandmother married my grandfather, she lost her status because he was considered non-native.

A!: So, a lot of people talk about Oka, as being what really kicked things off in the Canadian context.

Dan: I guess in the mainstream , you could say that. In the 70s, in Tyendinaga I know that the warrior society was started in 73.

A!: Was that inspired by AIM?

Dan: Sure, it was inspired by AIM, and a lot of our guys went down to Wounded Knee. And helped down there.

A!: Oh really! Ah, border crossing was easier back then.

Dan: Yea, border crossing was easy.

Then came Kanyen'kehà:ka right after Wounded Knee, when they took over Mohawk land in upstate New York.

A!: What was the impetus for that?

Dan: They wanted to be on land in their home… when the British and the Americans split, we wanted to be where we were, in our homeland. There were people who wanted sovereignty and rather than trying to get sovereignty through the communities that we lived in, they decided to build a thing of their own, and it remains today, as sovereign.

A!: Really! It was a victory?

Dan: Yea, it was a victory.

A!: It's so rare that it's shocking.

Dan: Oh, Mohawks don't lose. We win. Because we're willing to fight to the death, but we win.

A!: There has to be a traditional story behind this stubbornness.

Dan: It's just the way we are. We make decisions based on the fact of our survival, and how we can win, and that's how we decide. They weren't always 100 percent right, but I believe our ancestors have always looked out for the future generations. But it's in their best interest, all the decisions they've made.

rule… You grew up, not even in a reservation, in pre-reservation; it was families, clans who hung together…

So that's where my knowledge of Indian problems and the solutions to them came from. What you had to do. And that's what the men did when I was growing up, until I moved to Pelston and there people didn't do that; they accepted everything. But still in my mind there was that seed planted by my dad and my uncles.

A!: So in the 1950s when you were in your late teens and early 20s did you experience the huge influx of veterans as being a big benefit for natives?

Loretta: No.

A!: 'Cause a lot of men your age were veterans.

Loretta: Yes. Not all of them.

A!: They were a little older.

Loretta: They were older. When I was growing up, my five uncles went into the service. But they were not thought of particularly as "Indian men going," because I was living in a community primarily of white people, they were just "men from Pelston going."

A!: This was after your grandmother passed?

Loretta: No, no, this was before; we're talking WWII.

In 1940 I went to live with my grandmother. That took me out of Harbor Springs, where I lived in Indian Town, and into a community of mainly white people: there were two Indian families in the town. That's where I lived. The In dians I grew up with between 1940 and 1951 were family Indians. They were content with what they lived in. In *my* mind… *I* had a different attitude about it. Then when I went to Detroit, I was out of the Indian community completely. It was only family. It wasn't until the 1950s, when I left Detroit and came to Grand Rapids, and began to see Indian people in an urban setting that was unlike Detroit, because it's a smaller town… There were more Indians in Grand Rapids—a few of them were relatives, but not as many as I used to live with. There I began to see… A!: This was the 60s?

Rapids area were not that confrontational nor did they appreciate that kind of action.

We were more the… what they used to call the Blanket Indians. The ones who stood around the fort with their free blankets. So around here, there were more Blanket Indians. I had a different outlook, because when I was growing up my father and my uncle and their friends were involved in early protests against local governments and the US government and their handling of Indians in those days—in the 30s. Of course that was all pushed aside because of WWII.

A!: Oooh.

Loretta: And because then there was a different cause to fight for. It was a united front against Germany and the Axis powers.

But before that they were active locally in Harbor Springs, in Petoskey, Emmet county, that part of Michigan. There were other groups throughout the state but this was the… they called themselves the Odawa Council for… something or another. I can't remember what it was, jeez my mind is going.

Anyway, I saw early on what they were fighting for and why, because I lived in that little Indian town in Harbor Springs, where things were not nice and rosy, not that wonderful place where all the Indians live in a happy happy land.

A!: Was there still a legacy of the fed government coming by and dropping off sacks of flour…?

Loretta: No no, no no no, that was a general welfare kind of thing. You were on the fringes, but anything that the state, or the town, or the county did for other people, you got it but you had to fight for it.

So that's where my ideas came from. Then when I moved to my grandmother's, of course there was a different kind of Indian community there. They were more joined together by religion, by the Catholic Church, by relationships, because there are mainly families. My family lived there, different from the family group in Harbor Springs. But we're very clannish, you know, Indians as a

Dominique

Dominique is a close friend. He lives in the neighborhood and over the decade we've known each other he has become closer with each passing year. We have a lot of things in common. We are both Anishinabee and from the Great Lakes region. We both come out of punk rock (although he is still involved and my connection is historical). We have both been engaged with the Long Haul (a long running infoshop in Berkeley CA) for many years.

More than this though we share considerable political interests. Dominique just finished university so our discussion here centered around the coals he retrieved from Mount Olympus, because I hunger for the benefit of heat and light. Dominique has clearly fallen in love with Gerald Vizenor and it is infectious.

Dominique: Well I think that i'm in a position in the middle in some ways, where usually people are coming strongly from one side or the other, either as an anarchist or a Native American. Within the tension between post left and identitarian positions—I'm like an illegitimate child. I'm someone who stays aware of what comes out of native theory but I'm also interested in reading anarchist writers. So as far as identities go, I would present myself as a reader with bruises, that would be my role for today.

A!: Obviously a lot of my goal in these interviews is to present a long-form version of a talk with a native person who the general reader will never have this talk with. The goal was not to infantilizing/celebrating natives just because they exist, or in a series of talking points ("I'm an activist who's done prison work in Minnesota, and I've had these successes…"). My idea was to talk to native people who have an interest in anti-authoritarian politics broadly and contextualize the politics for and with them. You're an interesting person to talk to because the previous two people I interviewed for *Black Seed* have serious activist pedigrees. And that hasn't been your schtick.

Dominique: I guess I could say who my family is, how I grew up, with connections to native radicalism, or talk about being a prison convict, even though I wasn't a political prisoner, but a lot of times in anti-authoritarian circles, that's considered an authentic identity. But I'm not really concerned with presenting authenticity. I would like to think that I'm not an activist but I have been involved in doing things with other anarchists for a long time, for better or worse.

A!: But that's you responding to activist as a swear word in certain anarchist circles or even the…

Dominique: The term has some negative connotations. Activism as the obligation to sacrifice yourself for the cause, to stay busy until judgment comes. That doesn't work for me, but I still exist in a world where actions occur.

A!: …opposite of a swear word. In other words it's almost a meaningless signifier.

Dominique: With the idea of reading in the context of green anarchist perspectives, I would agree with a lot of critiques of anthropology and say that it's a lot more stimulating to me to directly talk to native people, as opposed to through a second source, but that you can also look at indigeneity through literature, and that's maybe a more respectful way to go about it.

I was born in a time when people conspicuously cared about these issues. My mom is a non-indian who is still involved with native solidarity work so it's… it's a personal thing. I grew up on military bases, so it was kind of like I didn't know I was native until later. I mean, I got the "you're native" but I didn't understand what that meant.

After going and meeting older relatives, going to the reservation, it was kind of like a therapeutic ritual. So what gets transmitted… is the stories. The stories that people tell you is, I guess, the link where it's not merely genetic, you know? it's not an abstraction, it's the actual people in stories… that's what I got. So it's important to me…

want to share their cultural knowledge of course, for good reason, 'cause it has just been exploited and abused and people just misuse or distort it and take different parts that are convenient for them when they have an answer that resonates for them at the time. And then they…

A!: It's called "picking and choosing"…

K- I think through my experience, that's why I picked on Sedona really quickly.

We have people like James Arthur Ray who is selling Sun Dances for like $10,000 and you know, there are people who were ultimately killed by his hand through his application, his interpretation of sweat lodges, the "Spiritual Warrior Retreat" in very clear quotation marks and that's an extreme but that is what we see. This exploitation continues. So, yeah maybe some time along the way he asked those questions and people gave him answers. I don't know but, his application is a problem.

Loretta

Loretta is my Aunt. She was a major part of how I was raised, since my mother and I lived in the house Loretta left behind when she moved her family to the country (where she continues to live today). That first house is where my earliest memories are, and an incalculable amount of my understanding my place in the world came from sitting at a table with her and my mother explaining to me how the world worked (even if, from the outside, it looked like just talking shit). Loretta is my closest living relative and I honor her as best I can.

A!: When did you first hear about AIM?

L: I first heard about AIM… I'm trying to remember what incident they came out for, to defend Indians. I can't remember what incident it was. I think it was probably Wounded Knee in the 70s. I had heard of Russell Banks and Means, but I had heard of them in a negative kind of way, because the Indians around here in the Grand

sponsibility in that relationship I think where we people expect it, you know just different expectations about that.

I can maybe speak from experience to people I have known who have come to some kind of spiritual understanding but again that's deeply personal on some levels. Of course we have culture, it's a social cohesion, for how we understand our relationship to each other and to the land, there's an anthropological definition of that and there's our own definition or understanding of that, what that term means and how we again understand our relationship to each other and the land.

That discussion about spirituality can't happen without a discussion about culture and what that means and there is context to that, I think there is a violent context that we have to come terms with when we start talking about those things. There is a lot of trauma that we have to address through that discussion as well.

I always—in the past when I would answer that question, when I think I was in a different place than today—for Diné people we have Hózhóogo which is "beauty-way" or better defined, a way of health and harmony. Beauty is sort of this fetish as well, that anthropologists are like, "here is a great definition." They sort of latched on to it, but it's more, it's deeper than that. You know when we as Diné people understand that foundation and philosophy, for our identity and our relation to each other through Hozho or through our clan system, our relationship systems, that extend not just to people but to our natural environment, to other beings. You can't just say "here's what this spirituality means and I'll give it to you."

There is this whole deeper understanding of what our ceremonial practices are, for us to restore health and harmony with our mind, our body, our spirit, and our soul, even within that. So the problem that we are faced with a lot is when we say that to people. it seems rather convenient just to take it and just to do what they want.

That's exploitation, to me; it's just abusive to the process that we carried forward. There're a lot of indigenous people who don't

A!: It wasn't stories about some mythological figure, it was the stories about the lives of actual people around you that were mythological…? like, larger than life…

Dominique: I'm just trying to make a point about whats left of an unbroken culture, which is already sort of a paradox. Genocide affected more than just material conditions but there are still pieces of story and ceremony. Like you hear about Nanabush and the fact that storytelling still happens… so it leads me to question materialism in a different way and wonder what it means to accept atheism. I connect the stories with people and personalities.

Post-left anarchists and indigenous radicals find it hard to talk to each other. I don't consider Ojibwa to be an abstraction. When Stirner talks about Ludwig not being a generic Ludwig when you're speaking of a person; that's something I keep in mind when I talk about Anishinabe—it's not just the idea of an Indian, it's a real people who I've seen in uniqueness…

Gord

Gord, also known as ZigZag, almost doesn't need an introduction here. He is an artist whose striking style has been seen in in multiple places, including notably his own projects Warrior and 500 Years of Indigenous Resistance, as well as the cover of this book. I was very struck by the Warrior comics when I came upon them. Comics are an effective storytelling device and by fusing his strong visual style to strong stories he became very influential to the West Coast Insurrectionary anarchist space. (It didn't hurt that the anarchist Quiver distro produced and gave away untold thousands of copies of Warrior)

Since Gord and I didn't know each other prior to this meeting this conversation was a bit more formal than I would have liked but, as age, culture, and experience peers, I feel we kind of missed each other. It would have been better for us to meet each other ten years earlier

when we each had a bit more slack in our worldview. So there wasn't as much play as I would have liked. Instead we had a perfectly fine interview and exposition of Gord's ideas about What Is to Be Done.

Gord: Yea, I was into punk rock. I was actually in the military before I was into punk rock. We'd just moved to Vancouver—me and my mom—and I was in the reserve. I'd be downtown and listening to punk rock, one of my cousins was really into it, he had a mohawk and everything, and we'd go to shows. I started listening to the lyrics and that changed my perception of the world, I guess, in terms of politics and what the military's role is. So I left the military, got more into punk rock, started publishing zines. And my girlfriend at the time was an anarchist so that got me exposed to the more indepth anarchist thinking, not just punk rock lyrics.

So I got into anarchism at that point and I was organizing with the anarchists here in the city. There was a really vibrant movement here, but it was dying off by the time I was getting active in it. Like Open Road and all this stuff, but they'd suffered all this repression and helter skelter from the direct action, Squamish 5 arrests and repression and stuff. So I was getting into that. But then Oka 1990 happened.

Up until that point I hadn't really been too interested in my indigenous ancestry, I mean, I'd lived on reserves; when I grew up I lived on reserves.

A!: Were you a single-parent child?

Gord: Yea, by the time I was 5 or 6 years old, they'd separated and then my father passed away three years later maybe.

A!: So you were being dragged around, basically.

Gord: Oh we moved around a lot, because my mom lost her status when she married my father

A!: Ohhh

Gord: So we couldn't get housing on reserve, couldn't get any…

A!: So that's fascinating. In Canada you can lose your status by marriage.

A!: Describe the border, the difference between a major American freeway into Mexico, vs crossing on tribal lands.

Kevy: On tribal lands there are traditional routes, dirt roads that lead in to northern Sonora and that go into other villages in Sonora.

A!: So is there no border patrol presence at all?

Kevy: There is border patrol presence, but not just the border patrol but also the federales, the police, and also unknown militia groups as well as the cartel.

Klee

Klee feels like an old friend at this point but we've only known each other about five years.

Klee is a Diné activist, artist, silversmith, and lately filmmaker. He is currently traveling around the country showing his movie Power Lines. In Flagstaff, where he lives, he was among the organizers of the Fire on the Mountain event, the Taala Hoghan Infoshop, Indigenous Action Media, Outta Your Backpack Media Project, Flagstaff Activist Network, and the Save the Peaks Coalition.

I like him despite his activist resume.

Mostly we get along on the level of giving each other a hard time. I'm not sure he has many people outside his close circle who give him a hard time but all of us need it. I'm continually surprised at his generosity both in time and resources and am happy any time I can spend six hours in Flagstaff with him.

He also happened to be the first interview I did in this series, which originally we were going to build on in a kind of summary interview at the end of my big road trip. As it turns out that recording was nearly indecipherable as both of us were sleep-deprived and in a very silly head space when we talked. Luckily the evidence of such tomfoolery has been destroyed.

Klee: So for me [spirituality] brings up those questions like, is that an answer we can give because then we assume a kind of re-

Now I'm able to use my strengths to help others. Especially during the time we live at right now, everything is so distorted, everything is so disoriented. People feel so lost, have no ways or means to communicate. I've been able to do that through my art, my music. I've been able to share and also listen to others, to create this dialog, that's definitely a darker positivity, you know, a darker positivity that's much needed. I've been involved, been part of the circle with other anarchists, who are Mexicano, Black, Anglos, you know, white, being involved with issues, like the border issues.

My aunties, my uncles, my grandparents, have always been involved with the border issues. I've learned through them to carry this torch. When I was young the majority of the ideas that they had—I understand now, years later—were very insurrectionary. Smash, demolish, destroy borders, destroy the root. My relatives, and not just my relatives but our people, they say that you can't divide the water, you can't divide the land, you can't split the animals. You can't stop people from moving, because they have that freedom, that right. The freedom to liberate themselves, to move freely wherever they want.

A!: How do you express this as an O'odham person. In other words, we would say, as Anishnaabe, that the Great Spirit expected us to travel freely.

Kevy: What we say, or how it was passed to me, was Tenatagum, which means the mystery. The mystery is in our surroundings, it's what's ahead of us. It's also in back of us, it's like a creep. or, the best way I've been told is that the mystery is like a dark cloud, that's waiting to get you, its mouth watering for your flesh. [laughs] I take that way of describing it very seriously because it's so true. Tenategum gives us, not freedom, but our inherent right to move freely across the land, across the jevuḍ, meaning the earth.

Gord: Yea, this was a common thing. It was part of breaking down the family, the social organization of indigenous nations. It was assimilation. When a woman married a non-native she lost her status, but when a native man married a non-native, their children got status. So it was this patriarchal thing going on.

A!: So what's the difference… Sorry, I don't know the Canadian side of the line that well, I'm Ottawa from the US side.

Gord: Yep.

A!: What's the difference between status and, what do we call it, registration, I guess is what we call it in the US.

Gord: They're probably the same thing. Status is someone who's recognized as a member of a band under the Indian act. Then there's like… like…

A!: Is there a blood quantum?

Gord: No. No there's no… it goes by your family lineage, basically. But in the early to mid 80s there was a court case. So now a lot of people who lost their status because their mom married a non-native, they can now get their status back.

A!: Huh, ok.

Gord: And I'm gonna do that, shortly. But anyway, at that point, I hadn't really taken a lot of interest in my native ancestry and that. But after Oka, that was a big awakening for, you know, a lot of people in the country here, a lot of native people. It instilled a lot of pride in the resistance that was manifesting itself. That was something that attracted me to anarchism, the militancy around radical ideas — well I came from a military background, right? [laughs] so as soon as I saw natives with guns, I was like, "that's cool! I support that." That made me respect my people a lot more. So after that I started to focus on native struggles more. I started publishing a magazine around that time. It was called Otokan which means "strength from our ancestry" and I published about three or four newspapers.

Then I started getting into spiritual ceremonies, and by that time, 1995, I was mostly focused on indigenous struggles and that's

when Gustafsen Lake happened, the standoff at Ts'peten. I was actually born there, and then we moved back down to the coast. So that had a lot of resonance for me. I did solidarity work down here with them. Then a native youth movement started here, so I was more involved in native stuff and that's all I was doing for quite a few years, until I was living up in Beluga in 1999 and we came down for the WTO protest in Seattle.

That kind of reinspired me about anarchist stuff. Then I went to Quebec City in the summer of 2001. But I'd always go back to the indigenous stuff because for me, it's more what I'm about.

A!: And… do you feel like you're surrounded by peers, in terms of that, or do you feel like you're more of an outsider, who has an outside take?

Gord: Well, in indigenous communities for the most part, if you're a radical, if you're a warrior type—depending on the community—most communities you're going to be ostracized a little bit 'cause you have radical views of the world, and a lot of communities and small reserves and that, there's a strong conformist attitude, that's part of the oppression of living on reserves, living under a band council that dictates all the things that are going to happen on that reserve. So in general, yea, but we do have a movement, and those are my peers. There's a lot of dysfunction in the movement, but that's still generally where I feel most comfortable…

Jason [Jaden]

Jason and I have a history that goes way back to the mid/early nineties. They probably don't belong in this book (as they acknowledge) as most of the topics here were interesting to them in those years and they have moved on. I include this conversation not because their story is especially compelling on its own, but because part of the story of genocided peoples are these kinds of lingering ques-

I kept on thinking about Kevy through this process. While I'd been around him a few times, I was brought to tears by him at the Fire on the Mountain event in Flagstaff a few years back when he sang an honoring song to some of the elders who were presenting. It felt like the touch of humanity that I really wanted reflected in my discussions and, as you'll see, that Kevy brings to every interaction you have with him.

Kevy: I am O'odham, Tohono O'odham, and Pipash. Akimel O'odham means river people, Tohono O'odham means desert people. Pipash means river too, but the Pipash people come from the Yuman tribe. Places like Yuma, Parker, White River, and pretty much around the Colorado River. So they're known as the Colorado River tribes. The Pipash came here to settle. They were chased out by the other tribes.

I've lived here pretty much all my life. I've lived in Gila River community.

My family is from here…

At the same time, I see the good that people are doing. I've been able to learn from other people, through their actions, through their direct actions, that you can't harness chaos but you can harness it enough so it becomes good chaos, good destruction.

Good destruction needs to happen more, to make change, so we can move forward, so we can make ourselves, and not just ourselves but the generations, so they can carry that torch, and that light for others. Even if the light at the end of the fucking tunnel is dark. Still these kids, you know, it's like huddling underneath the moonlight, when they feel alone and they got nobody there for them…

It's like my elders always said, the sun, the tash, is vibrant, and it gives you energy. The moon, mother moon, gives you loving and unconditional nurturing and care to sleep good. It's like someone singing lullabies. My grandparents always told me that. They always gave us these reminders.

J: It was called "Self Determination on the Pale-Face Reservation: the Melungeon re-emergence in Central Appalachia" or something like that.

A!: but the more successful project… that is, I've seen that paper but not engaged with it that much. The more successful project you did, which you did not that long afterwards, was the non-western anarchisms piece.

J: Yea, Non-Western Anarchisms. Well, with that one I guess I was always interested in how things that seemed to be already-existing, dominant things, such as whiteness, are very often not just what they seem to be. So things that are labeled as being inherently white, like anarchism, or labeled that way by many people on the left, they want to relegate it to only that population… And similarly with Southerners, I thought, there's this entire history that is not brought up and is not understood, with huge divisions between the upper-kind-of-central Appalachians vs the rest of the South and vs the North. There was a group called the Melungeon Marauders that fought both the South and the North. So just groups like that. Then when I moved on to nonwestern anarchisms, it was kind of a similar thing because I was trying to figure out if the historiography was really true, is it really a primarily white history? I really don't think so.

Kevy

Kevy is a treat. I went back to Phoenix specifically to interview Kevy because I was so hungry for his take on so many native issues. During an earlier pass at this manuscript I was really struck with how frequently the interviews was dominated by an understanding of ourselves as warriors that to me felt out of kilter from reality. Moreover it seemed like a rotten framing to so many of our problems; as if they are mainly or at all solvable through war-thinking. I tried to change this language but was largely rebuffed.

tions: of the process of invisibilizing; of how disappearance happens both quickly and over generations; of the relationship to romanticization and disappearance. The great-grandmother who was a Cherokee princess is both a ludicrous stereotype, and in rare cases, semi-true. The conversation with them highlights these interacting conflicts.

Note: J transitioned after our interview.

J: Basically, yea, I was like 18 or 19 and to me there's always been… in my fam ily we always had an oral history of being part native. Now there are DNA tests so you can prove it even if you can't find yourself on the rolls. I went through a very long process of trying to document my heritage and its relation to rolls and connections to various removals, and that sort of thing.

A!: Was this as a college experience?

J: Yea it was my first college experience, but it was really about my family, based on our oral history and the physical appearance of many of my family members in Kentucky, in the mountains; so oral history, physical appearance… Most of these people were pretty integrated into white society, but that was very much the case for almost all mixed people in that area at that time except for the eastern band of Cherokees. There are a couple tribes up there that are explicitly identified as native that are white, black, and native.

A!: The term used there is…

J: Melungeon. The word melungeon has a specific history. It's kind of similar to métis, in a way. There's all these different people pulling at the word from dif ferent directions. There are some people who insist that Melungeons are people who are really just mixed black and white, so they're basically discounting or downplaying the native part. There are other people who say "oh, there were a few Sephardic Jews, there were a few middle eastern people, in the mix in certain threads…" I could not come up with a full understanding of…

A!: Accounting…

J: Yea, a full accounting of how exactly to understand this group. There's a guy named James Nickens who strongly identified with

the native interpretation of what Melungeons are and what Melungeon history is.

A!: And you didn't follow his line because…?

J: No, I did. At the time I did, and I tried to connect it to Métis in Canada and Mestizos in Mexico. My take on it was that there is no way that there are Métis in Canada and Mestizos in Mexico with nothing comparable in the US. That's obviously not true.

A!: There's also the Gone to Croatan story that… [Gone to Croatan is an in fluential anarchist book of essay including the title essay about the diaspora of a particular tri-racial group that wandered the midwest]

J: Yea, yea, exactly.

A!:… That's connected, right?

J: Yea, and I had come across that history not that long before. And then I realized that they were talking about stories that were basically from the region of the upper south—the Appalachian area—and it was basically the same story. Not the same people, but the same story, more or less. A similar story that repeated all throughout the South.

A!: Give me a flavor of the oral stories you heard. Was this like grandparents' generation?

J: Yea, my great-grandma and my grandma.

A!: So these are hill people… J: Yea, totally.

A!: They're not book smart.

J: No.

A!: Were they even literate?

J: They had bibles. [laughs]

A!: So they could read the one book. The only book that matters. And… what did they say?

J: Basically… it wasn't like the history was intact.

A!: It wasn't a complete story but you had fragments.

J: Yea, fragments. Basically what happened was, all of these groups, which were called tri-racial isolates by anthropologists. As soon as the state of Virginia, for example, would pass a law that

allowed their land to be taken by coal mines, they would move to another state. They would move to the next state over.

There were places, like around Harlan Kentucky, the famous place of the Harlan County, USA film…

A!: I hear more about it because of Unforgiven. [laughs]

J: Yea. But if you were living there at the time, when one of these laws would be passed, you'd just pick up and move from the western part of Virginia to the eastern part of Kentucky. You'd just move like, twenty miles away.

A!: But this is sort of jumping ahead five to ten years from our experience. What it sounds like is that at some point you wanted to reconnect to your family's past. To put a point on it, your experience of me and this thing that I wrote was… what?

J: Basically, I think this happens a lot with people who have mixed ancestry. People get like, "well, if people are going to doubt my identity, then… it shores up my identity to doubt someone else's." I don't remember exactly what I said to you, but I definitely regret what I said. It had something to do with appearance. I was very untrained in appearance, in how appearance connects to ancestry in terms of indigeneity, because even though I had these family members, many of whom had darker skin, dark hair, and what appeared to me to be pretty native-looking features, I hadn't started that research at that point.

A!: That's an intellectual sort of answer.

J: Yea.

Honestly, as far as I can tell my experience of indigeneity is completely different from yours. It seems like you really grew up in a community that actually identified as indigenous. That's totally different. In my family it was treated as ancestry and just something in the past, not something that is a current reality. So yea, at that time—2002 is when I started that research project—at that time I did want to connect with it. Especially when I heard about the Melungeons, there was sort of this resurgence happening…

A!: So this project that you did ended up in a paper called…

Aragorn!
The Fight for Turtle Island
edited by and including Aragorn! in conversation with Alex,
Anpao Duto Collective, Corinna, Dan, Danielle, Dominique, Gord,
Jason/Jaden, Kevy, Klee, Loretta, Lyn, and Ron
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theanarchistlibrary.org

ADCA: I would say that there's also another thing that it's really tied up with, and it's something that I'm coming across, bizarrely, with the elders in the community here, and I have no idea where it comes from… This idea that… Upper Sioux or Pezihutazizi Oyate is like "Yellow Medicine," right? and I'm hearing this a lot, the Yellow Medicine Nation. "We are the Yellow Medicine Nation." I'm like, that in no way makes any kind of historical, social, or political sense, but it's this idea that's being cultivated.

What Exactly Are We Fighting: Race

The fight for Turtle Island is a fight about the physical impacts of Colonization, Borders, Reservations, Poverty, and ultimately how these constraints perpetuate themselves through racism. Racism is a set of rules and values inflicted on a population by a force capable of maintaining its mythologies—usually by violence and the threat of violence. Some refer to this force in the modern ideological regime as Whiteness or White People but that presupposes a unity that is dubious at best. Perhaps the social order of capitalism is a better description of this force but the toxic way that Marxism exists as the only intelligent way to express an opposition to capitalism makes this a challenge also. Why would we join a fight where we want to see both sides lose? Why use their terms to describe the regime of racism, when the terminology itself is part and parcel of that regime?

For natives on Turtle Island these White, Manifest Destiny, and even Marx ist myths cross the boundary with reality through the classification of "Indianness" by measurement of blood purity, aka blood quantum. This measurement limits benefits, recognition, and civil rights by the Federal Government by gauging the percentage of ancestors who are documented as full-blood Native Americans. This is a strange way to define us when our love is not constrained by tribe, gender, or ritual, and neither are our relations.

For our interview subjects the boundaries and liminality of these racial categories define daily life. To an extent we are fighting the racial domination of the existing social order, but we

are also fighting the ways that mythology is tricky and inculcated in us.

For some of these excerpts I'll provide context for clarity.

Anpao Duta Collective

ADCS: Yea. That's where, like, even the question of APOC… That's one reason why personally I never identified with it, because I look white. And for the most part, for most of my life I identified as white. And there's still ways in which I do identify as having white skin privilege, and being able to pass. Most places I go I get read as white, which is a pretty fair assumption. It's also a much more complicated thing, it's a story that's not very easy to tell, or… it's a complicated process…

Aragorn!: It's why I did it last.

ADCA: It's a good question.

ADCS: No, yea. A completely fair one. You get this too [to ADCA], sometimes you get read as white.

ADCA: It depends on the type of earrings I'm wearing.

ADCS: Yea, there's ways you signify being Dakota. The complications for me is… identifying. Cause I don't necessarily identify as Native American either. I think that's a very ethnic identity. I have trouble identifying as that.

A!: Interesting.

ADCS: And I feel like that's changed. And people's identities do change. Especially for mixed people. Even some of my ancestors, they would identify as white at some times and not at others. They did something new, right?

I could go through and give you a short… It's one of those things where it's not very academic. I feel like a lot of the work we're doing, even though I come from an academic background, a lot of the work we do is academic in some ways, but we work really hard to connect the dots, the behind-the-scenes stuff, the spiritual realm.

So in 2005, it would've been, basically I knew a woman who was doing solidarity work in six nations, and she said I should come up. She was this anarchist punk kid I was hanging out with. So I went up there and very much saw myself as the white ally. There were like, at home the family stories or whatever, but they didn't have much relevance to me beyond some really superficial ways, maybe.

So I'm up there, and part of what happened… I hate to use this language but it felt like a spiritual awakening. And in a very literal sense what ended up happening was there was one night where I had a dream. I was sleeping in one of the occupied homes that the Mohawks had taken over, and I talked to one of the folks about the crazy dream I had, and they're like, well, you need to go talk to these other people about this. I was like, am I in trouble? What happened? They said, no, just go tell them what you told me. So I went and talked to one of the people who was doing security; I said, you know I had this dream last night that this situation happened, and he goes, yea, we have three grandmas who each had that same dream last night.

So it was kind of through that, and having these weird connections spiritually, with dreams or whatever, just realizing that there's more to them than whatever… I think that was the first point in my life where I realized how real that actually was. That there is something there. It's hard to explain, but…

So one of the women basically took me under her wing and adopted me as a son up there. I went back up—cause that was during the summer and there was a bunch of conflict that was happening on the site—so I went back up again in January, the following year. At that point things had pretty much resolved, there wasn't much conflict with the authorities, with the police, I was just doing pretty standard security kind of shit.

And I was spending time with this woman, and her whole thing… like at that point I was ready to just go live up there. That was what I was going to do. And I was told by my mom up there, "no, you're going to go home. You're going to go back, you're

my own incorrect thesis is a minor point. This book is about Ron, Klee, Lyn, Danielle, Kevy, et al… and my hope/desire that they are remembered.

going to find out who your people are, that's what you're going to do. You can't come back here until you can speak the language, until you can do this or that." It was a very clear, "as much as we'd love to have you here, you need to go back and do this."

So I took that to heart. I came back, and I had no idea where to go. No idea what to do. And when I came back… I was actually given a pipe up there, just a traditional pipe. And knowing that this is a really big responsibility, this is a lot, and I'm feeling, I can't do it. I figured they were giving it to me to find someone to give it to. They never gave me any instruction, it was just like, "take this and find out what to do with it." So I thought, "well, I need to find someone to give this to." 'cause I couldn't properly take care of it. And it was around this time that I had this dream about this man, who sat me down and showed me how to use the pipe. And at that point, I was like, "I need to find this person and give the pipe to them," cause that's why I had this dream. A couple weeks later, I was at an AIM event, a movie showing about Wounded Knee and there were a bunch of Wounded Knee guys there, and there was one guy in the audience who I saw, and it was clear that he was the guy in my dream. So I wanted to go talk to him. So I went up to him afterwards, and I said, "This is going to sound really new-agey, hokey, and stupid or whatever, but I had this dream and you were in it, and I have this pipe I was given and I think i'm supposed to give it to you." He was like, "Oh, yea, well, just come meet me down here. We'll figure this out." So I went down probably about a week later, and sat down with him. I said, "so I was given this pipe, there's a story behind it, I'm supposed to give this to you." And then he just kind of launched into this explanation, "This is how you take care of it, this is how you use it, I'm going to show you how…" and as he was doing it (I was talking to her [ADCA] about it), the dream and the reality synced up almost verbatim. And I realized, maybe this is what I'm supposed to be doing. So, long story short, it turns out this guy is a distant relative. So it was this weird moment of, shit, this is what's happening here… and just kind of following it,

playing it out. And that's where the idea of going back to language, going back to… learning and immersing yourself in it. So that's how I wind up here. Even early on, dreams I had of her or our son, how things play out… and having faith in that. That there is this other time or place that exists, and learning to surrender to that at times.

ADCA: And also, like, to bring it more back to your question [about ADCS presenting as white], real practically, it's totally come up. [laughter] ADCS: Yes!

ADCA: It comes up all the time, but it's also something I think you're very careful about, because lack of… lack of enrollment, like minimal blood quantum, those types of things, but also being very conscientious about the way that identity can be interpreted, identifying as a descendant, politically, socially, "I am a descendant of these people." But it's something I think… it's a big deal I think with a lot of the kids we work with. We have several kids who look like him, blondhaired, blue-eyed.

ADCS: Who are enrolled…

ADCA: …who are enrolled. But this real concept of identity, like, they're made fun of at different native events for being white, and asked what they're doing there. So having this real conversation about what that is and what it looks like, and also traditional concepts of relatives and identity, like, if somebody was adopted in, it didn't matter what somebody looked like. If they were down, they're Dakota. So really trying to structure in that perspective with our kids and the kind of communities we cultivate. We don't care what your blood quantum is, we care, "Are you down? Are you willing to throw down for your nation. Are you willing to work and cultivate this aspect of what it means to be Dakota, are you willing to help kill Iya?" If that's the case, I don't care.

ADCS: It's interesting, often times the conflict comes up more with white folks, than it does with…

ADCA: [big sigh] A!: Of course.

ADCS: I feel like that's more often where it is. Which is fine. I don't really take any of it personally. I don't take a lot of things

As this fight is many-fold it can seem complicated but I'd like to believe it is not. The first part is a physical fight against the existing order, though it doesn't look like a fight (largely because a fight can be lost, and usually is). The fight for Turtle Island requires non-participation. Grumpy, hostile, non-verbal, non-consent to every possible thing that Manifest Destiny wants us to do. Never consent. Absolutely do not participate in all the ways in which the land is converted into its opposite. I don't want to play a dialectical game here but the fight in Berkeley (2018) is a perfect example of how to fight for Turtle Island. On the one hand the story can be told that the Ohlone fight for the remnants of a shellmound (buried beneath a parking lot) is just another NIMBY struggle against the tide of a gentrification that has been long since victorious in a crappy neighborhood. On the other it is the futile fight against Manifest Destiny and a glorious example of what Turtle Island is. The Emeryville shellmound is both a mere physical place and the spiritual idea of that place. The fight for it is both an inscrutable hostility against (capitalist) logic, logistics, and (state) power, and the clarity to understand that love for land is a multi-generational spiritual project.

But finally I find that I am not capable of participating in what I saw as indigenous life. I do not live among Anishnaabe people and in fact chose to move/live in California, which is very much not-Michigan. Activists in the native space make slightly more sense to me, but that is not saying much. My isolation from the native life I visited while compiling this book (and see on social media) is deep. I am an urban biracial person who sees activism as a poor version of direct action (and a good version of Christian Missionary work). I'd rather learn a language that hasn't been spoken in 100 years than have another talk about blood quantum. I'd rather do than talk about doing.

Do not confuse all of this with ambivalence. I am a kind of outsider, as is common for mixed people, but am convinced that my role is to help people clarify their project to such a frequency and amplitude that it is unmistakable. For this book that means that

gives great political consequence to every individual activity and choice—weaponizing the personal is political—and individuating social life. This is why Anarchism tends to not bear the scrutiny of common sense or any kind of traditional wisdom. Anarchism has become a hot mess, especially in the era where personal choice has collided with social media.

Native America, as a group of disparate peoples, as a set of tentative values, and as an ethnicity, relates to anarchists problems but with the addition of five hundred years of repression, genocide, and self-awareness, rather than just the past 50 (or 150 if you are being generous). The difference is that while many, if not most, anarchists pass through their anarchist identity (and onto others more similar to their upbringing) for native people there is no exit. Or if there is, it is a self-aware participation in the selfrepression and genocide of a people (or the self) by working within the system of jobs and conformity, to sets of cultural values that are decidedly not Native.

That is some sort of overview of what we wanted to test by trying to have new kinds of conversations with people who I knew or thought I knew or wanted to know.

It seems important to talk a little about the physical framing of the interviews. It was important to me, and to the process, to physically travel, to be with these folks in person while talking about this stuff. Traveling to them for these conversations was almost as important as the conversations themselves. The fact that I did this by motorcycle was important to me at least, and said—without words—a lot of what I wanted to say to the people who I visited. After the trip was over—the trip of thousands of miles in which I was over and over explaining and defending anarchists to people as something that go beyond its own origin story in European, Enlightenment, Progressive thought—my motorcycle was vandalized by these same anarchists.

There is a political project to be distilled from this book, it is that we are in the fight for Turtle Island. It is actually happening.

personally [chuckles], I guess. So it's one of those things where if people don't recognize me, that's fine. That's why I was talking about that backing. That backing is all I really care about. Am I part of a community. That's what I think is an essential part of an indigenous identity, is that connection to community, and relatives, and land.

A!: And you feel that.

ADCS: At least I feel so more than ever before.

A!: Because it's in doing the work that you have the feeling.

ADCS: Yeaaa… Partly doing the work, partly living in a community, and developing those ties and relationships, and also being adopted by a number of different families. And that's part of feeling a much stronger sense of being specifically Dakota, not necessarily a pan-native identity.

A!: Sure.

ADCS: You know what I mean?

A!: [chuckles] Absolutely.

ADCS: Yea. And it brings up interesting conversations like [ADCA] mentioned too, with our young kids, like, how do we traditionally think of identity, and that's where language comes in, and world view, and our connection. Cause there are plenty of people who are full blood, but identify as Americans, and didn't give a shit about Dakota culture.

Ron

A!: but, again, just to be pointed, you're using the language very loosely, which I appreciate hearing but a lot of times when these conversations come up in white society, they come up in terms of blood quantum and a mathematical calculation as to whether or not the natives are really natives… Ron: [chuckles]

A!: … and you're not talking that way at all.

Ron: When my mother would … There's a lot of… they call 'em "wannabes". But it's funny because my mother—she didn't realize that she did this—she would call them Anishnaabe, and the wannabes, she called them Indians. And she could decipher who was who.

A!: Interesting.

Ron: Yea, it was, it was. The way she referred to certain people… but part of what you're talking about… Blood quantum is a whole big tangled web. You can't get Indian health care unless you have a card. And the tuition waiver, you have to have a certain blood quantum for that. That's a state program. The health care is a federal program. And there are city programs… They tried to let you self-identify, but they got caught at it in the last few years.

They did that because their grants would be based on enrollments. So they'd pad their counts as much as they possibly could. Gosh, you don't even want me to go there with the Grand Rapids schools 'cause they did some really terrible things. Not just to Indians, but to bilingual …

A!: But you must have seen a real change in what it meant to be a native over the years. For instance, to talk about myself, I didn't know that I was a white person until I was a teenager. Because I totally lived in this world that you're describing. My mother was… there was just… there was no doubt of who I was. But then as a teenager I learned that I wasn't who I was, that I was someone else.

Ron: Yea.

A!: I mean, of course there was mixing before, but it seems like since the 70s there's been this radical change. For instance now, you must meet a lot of young Indian kids who are also Mexican or Black, Ron: Yes.

A!: …and that barely existed before the 70s.

Ron: Not so much, no. I'm not sure about the question.

In Conclusion

I started this book while also considering putting together a journal that attempted the same kind of fusion. We have now done six issues of *Black Seed*, which we are calling a Green Anarchist magazine with an Indigenous orientation (two of the three editors are of native extraction). The journal included far less-edited versions of some of these interviews and is available for free from Little Black Cart.

The original thesis of this book went something like this: The difference between an indigenous and anarchist perspective only requires some sort of keystone or translation guide; the two perspectives have so much in common that the only work is mapping the geography. But as the saying goes the map is not the territory. Clearly many, if not most, anarchists are happily married to Enlightenment thought and believe that the problem is not the production of widgets but how the widgets are produced. Similarly many indigenous people are not exactly on board with the kind of total social and material transformation alluded to by an anti-civilization, green anarchist perspective.

To put this another way, I was wrong in my initial thesis and in face of that wrongness I am questioning both my anarchism and my relationship to indigeneity.

To state the obvious, anarchism has an identity problem. Anarchism is a very simple political ideology. It demands that (individual and social) freedom is in direct conflict with authoritarian systems like the State and Capitalism. Anarchists then tend to equivocate and try to replace those authoritarian systems in smaller, friendlier ways. It also does a strange puritan turn and

of course why that's impossible is the American consumer is not going to accept that this is something they can't buy. Even if the consumption we're talking about is of an ideology.

Klee: For some reason what you are saying reminds of this discussion around the apocalypse that I have been having with friends (you know because things seem very apocalyptic and so forth). Through my research it became clear (and this is even Christians saying this) that Christianity is linear, with this Genesis, with the Christ sacrifice or whatever, coming of Christ's sacrifice and then judgment day. Ultimately the logical conclusion of Christianity is apocalypse, or judgment day, you know, as opposed to looking at it from an indigenous perspective— which is cyclical, you know; we are part of an ongoing process.

So I don't see a beginning and end to it, I see it as an ongoing process.. I don't see it like, "Oh, here's victory over here, here's a goal, I can see a way to achieve something that we want to accomplish which is liberation of our lands, the thriving, the cultural vitality of our people and hopefully abolishing these systems of oppression that are built up and reinforced through colonization."

But at this point, and I don't want it to be interpreted as being abstract, 'cause it's not, it's anything but abstract, it's very clear in relation to the system, it's is an ongoing process. To some degree I think that is part of the western mentality; it's like linear thought, how change is gonna come about.

When we look at the multi-generational projects, with the seven generation concepts (even from other indigenous nations, certainly it's pan-indigenous right now that it can be interpreted very easily with other indigenous nations) in relation to the core of our practices is to ensure that cultural knowledge is transmited and maintains its relevance or vitality.

So for me that's part of it, thinking in that way that we are part of a cyclical way of being. It's not saying we are going to sit on our hands and wait for shit to change, it's about doing the best we can now.

A!: Just asking about how racial identification changed over the years. Did you ever have a problem finding enough people to fill your classes?

Ron: Oh no.

A!: So you were always turning people away?

Ron: I never turned anyone away, actually. It was always adequate… it's kind of like, sometimes I can't figure out how many they can seat in the concert hall; they seem to pack it just right all the time. The room was always just… I never had to recruit people, and I never had to turn anyone away. It'd always run about 3540 people. And you gotta remember with the kids I had, they were in transit…

A!: Yea, most of them weren't there every day.

Ron: Yea, so they'd go to Mount Pleasant

(an Indian Reservation in central Michigan) for two or three weeks, a month, even a couple months sometimes. And then they'd come back.

Ron: That's funny. I told you my aunt raised me. When I was a little kid in the 50s, she'd always tell me to be nice to black people. "Be nice to black people." Because at that time, people weren't nice to black people. She would always tell me to respect the black people, and make friends with them. She said, "because some day the black race is going to save the Indian race."

A!: Huh. Interesting.

Ron: She said that in the 1950s. That was obviously pre-civil rights movement. Pre-Martin Luther King, Rap Brown, before the Black Panthers, before any of that. See, natives are usually about 2% of the population, and that ain't enough to make anybody…

A!: notice …

Ron: notice. But the black people were more…

A!: Like 20%…

Ron:… and when the civil rights movement came along, and when the cup floweth over, it flows on to other people, so the movement was not just for black people, but for lots of people. So after the movement in 68, when was AIM formed? 68? 69? So all of a sudden, they can ride the tail of that.

Previous to that, it was different. People would stop you just for being in the wrong part of town, Hollywood had Indians being lying, stinking thieves, so the non-Indian kids would feel justified in beating up Indian kids—they had just got done seeing Will Rogers or John Wayne or whoever.

Then the Indians learned to—whether it be their ceremonies or gatherings or anything—they kept them low key. Everything happened, but it wasn't in the open. You'd get ridiculed or shut down. It wasn't legal to do it [harass us], but it might as well have been. They could just kick the shit out of Indians on the street if they wanted to, and no one would do anything about it.

Alex

Alex: To start, our ancestors are the

Huhugam, who are now called the Hohokam. You see that word all around town, in advertisements, or freeways. But Huhugam translates to "the people who are no longer here." They're the ones who were first in this area way back when; the ones who built the canal system. SRP, the people now who control the water companies, all they did in the early 1900s was just dig up the preexisting canals that the Huhugam made thousands of years ago when this was a thriving area, a center of 50,000 people.

So, they built this canal system.

In our stories, they disappeared for reasons that change depending on who you talk to… from what I understand they got greedy. They lived outside of their means and broke tradition and eventually there are stories behind those people vanishing because they

of those people would it take days to develop a relationship with, before they would say it? 'Cause if that is the only option then if you point me to the right person, I am willing to do it.

Klee: Yeah, so how it could be done is establishing a network. But folks need to have a demonstrated sense that it's not just some exploitative work or something that's hostile. 'Cause like I said… we have a lot of shit lessons.

It's part of the reason a lot of native folks don't go to the Bay Area Anarchist Book Fair. We have a lot of shit lessons. It's part of the reason why a lot of O'odham folks outside of Phoenix don't engage with radical folks. I know some communities where people have only gotten hostility. So there is not a good relationship.

Starting in the Southwest, like you said, there is this strong cultural base, and part of the history of that unfortunately is because a lot of the colonizers… I mean we fought off the Spanish for 350 years but a lot of the colonizers rushed past us for the gold in California. Honestly, looking at some of the sacred sites areas…

Like I said, part of the reason people are so aggressively fighting for sacred sites and a lot of them are young people, is because one, they are in areas where there is still an intact relationship, so it meets some of the criteria that you established before. And two, those folks understand the risk and they are engaging on multiple fronts. I think maybe hitting some of those places or just reaching out to people… Just focusing on the project first, your audience, again. Just to hear it a little more clearly.

A!: What I identify with that (I guess I want to talk through why it's impossible) is that basically you are saying that anyone who wants to take this project [decolonization or indigeneity] seriously basically has to commit to multi-generations.

In other words, indigeneity, whatever that means, will require that kind of time span. It's not going to happen in your lifetime. So

late academic voice and just making sure that people feel comfortable engaging and that it's not just gonna be some type of hostile place for them.

When I started doing media work it was partly out of just the frustration with folks just sticking this lens and exotifying, essentializing, and picking off the things they felt were sexy for other people to pay atention to, without dealing with the full range of who we are in all our contradictions and conflicts as indigenous folks.

Maybe establishing this doesn't have to be that explicit but… trying to develop that relationship. You want to dissuade the cultural pimps to some degree and you want to get the heart of this discourse/discussion cause it sounds like part of the objective is to amplify indigenous voices into the larger anarchist milieu, to assert another direction or, you know, just another option for folks to embrace their fghts.

I guess that's like my initial reaction when I heard. What does indigeneity mean for other folks who are not indigenous to this area. There might be some people who want to engage in that discussion. Like I said before, I don't know how interested I am in focusing on that as much as just drawing some boundaries, and saying "hey, maybe this is a good place for you all to focus your fight" and making sure people aren't just (for lack of better terms) Zapatista-fying all these external struggles. Like saying "Oh wait, right, here we are on Tongvan [Indigenous folks of LA area] land, maybe we should build a relationship with them and maybe it is going to take a lot longer than we want and maybe they don't have the articulated position that's convenient for us to just transpose their politics and our politics interchangeably."

A!: But I guess, that's talking about fighting with people on the ground. You're answering that question already with what you're doing here. It's not exactly what I am asking. How many people do you know who are confident to say something challenging, how many of those people could say it in print vs face-toface, how many

were not living in balance. Then the O'odham came, because the Natakum, which is the creator, wiped them [the Huhugam] off the earth, because they were bad, they got corrupted, and then the O'odham emerged and we were taught how to live in the desert more simply.

So the O'odham came, and, like I said, the Tohono O'odham have a point of origin—where some of these stories are—in Mexico, but if you talk to the people up here, it's somewhere down the road somewhere… But the stories are the same. That's the thing, the O'odham stories are always generally the same, just the landscape changes.

So, we were here. Then, around the mid or late 1500s, the Spanish came. They were coming from the south, going through Mexico, so there was first contact. Of course it was missionaries, and they wanted to set up shop, so the O'odham have been dealing with the

Spanish for over five hundred years now, four hundred fifty years anyway. They started setting up missions in what would be northern Sonora.

I'm really bad at remembering this date, but early to mid 1600s we had a lot of rebellions, 'cause when they came up here they were brutal. They would enslave us, abuse in a lot of ways. They built all these missions and forced us into slave labor; they would do all the things you hear about, but there were a couple of occasions when we'd kick them out. We destroyed their missions. They were gone for fifty, sixty years, but of course as you know, there are so many people coming, they just kept coming back.

A!: Where were they based out of?

Alex: Central Mexico. The Yaquis, who are our cousin tribe, south of us, they went through the same experience. They had their own rebellions, as many as we did.

Out of that, we're dealing with Spain, then Mexico became its own nation state. Under Mexico's control they would treat us like shit, but we still maintained our own practices and culture. So the thing that changed is the introduction of Catholicism, which is still

very prevalent now. As I understand it, some O'odham just took in for survival, while they also tried to keep their connection with the culture. Some were like "fuck this, this is bullshit."

Others, and this is interesting, were more, "well, there's some medicine in the gist of the stories, and we'll pull what we want and still do our own thing." So, for example if something came up, you might go see a medicine man and get blessed in our way, or go do that rosary thing, and this and that.

I don't know; there's this weird thing called Sonoran Catholicism, where all the tribes intermingle the two. Like on the rez now, particularly the Tohono O'odham rez, it's really prevalent. You see all this church stuff, you're like "what the fuck?"…

A!: Interesting.

Alex: …and other times it's like, oh back to traditional harvesting, and giving offerings, and…

A!: But it's always been Catholics? It hasn't been any of the other, like, the weird Native American Church, or any of the other denominations?

Alex: It's always been Catholics up to the past sixty, seventy years, when Presbyterians, Baptists, all these denominations started coming in, just like anywhere else.

So, fast forward to 1848. That's when the WS [?] becomes a player out here through their expansion. They had the war with Mexico for the territories and they pretty much got Mexico up to the Gila River up here. The O'odham weren't mentioned in any of the deals; there's no treaties out here. Just the war between the US and Mexico. That was the point they agreed on.

Then four years later the US did the

Gadsden Purchase to get the current boundaries. That's why the O'odham are technically divided by this international line.

Like I said there was no consultation, no one told us anything. But it didn't exactly mean anything at the time because there weren't a lot of them out here, or a way to enforce it. Around the 1900s, people used to travel from that side to this side, like

I see in Arizona, from three very different cultural groups. Represented by some strong individuals, but… Kevy: Funny. [musing]

A!: I don't want to name it to ruin it, but I give it a lot more credit than maybe you give it yourself.

Kevy: Yea [laughs] That's awesome. It's interesting. I was really blown away by the amount of responses that we got. It got a very strong, strong response. Whereas

in the past, me and several other friends, we'd be approached by non profts, NGOs types, who are also native people as well, or indigenous people, I should say, who tried quite hard to coerce us into their agenda, talking about how they needed us. We're like, "No. we're not going to get paid for this." Why would we want to be paid activists? We're not the type of people to connect with police, or liberal types, or politcian types. We defy that, we reject that, you know.

Klee

A!: [talking about *Black Seed* paper] Yeah, so my suspicion is that what that is going to have to look like is me doing a lot of interviews. We are talking about a green anarchist publication, but I really would like it to look like a Green Anarchism that doesn't exist yet, that I would like to create… I think you and I have a bit of a sense as to what that would look like, so how to do this correctly… Because first of all, I have to say, if you look at today vs. ten years ago there's a hell of a lot more people to talk to. I mean it's unbelievable. It's really unbelievable how many more people there are who have come into the nearly-anarchist space.

How would you do it if you were me?

Klee: I know how I wouldn't do it, unfortunately that is a lot of my initial response. I think part of it is just being on the ground with folks and connecting with folks who are on the front lines and being open to a sense that not everybody's gonna have the articu-

A!: Let me share the experience I had. So at the Fire on the Mountain conference, that happened in Flagstaff, these two women who had never done anything politcal before, they spoke out as members of the DOA bloc. And it was… like… it was so touching. Kevy: Ohhh yea. Yep.

A!: They had their first… politcal—for lack of better language—experience, where they were pulling each other from under the hooves of a cop horse, and it was… Like, obviously I know what the communique said, and I know the political discourse around the DOA bloc, but I imagine the people who are touched by it, it must have been this deep thing, and I guess that's more my queston.

Kevy: Oh. No, oh my gosh, yea. It was…

[pause]

A!: Do you know those two young women?

Kevy: Kitty Yellowhair is one of my best friends. She's awesome. Really awesome. An anarchist Diné woman, very strong, very powerful. The other young woman I'm not sure I remember; it's been a long time. I remember the discussion, but… I was trying to remember who else was sitting there.

But the DOA bloc, it brought some very radical, radicalizing change. It brought this new breath of fresh air. And the calling itself was so fucking intense. This siren, echoing, in a very dissonant place. It rumbled the ground, it brought so much power and strength. And also determinaton that all of us brought together and each of us brought something powerful and special to this bloc. The combinaton of not just O'odham and Diné culture, but also the anarchist way of life, and the ant-authoritarianism, it spoke very loudly.

A!: There's a way… We could talk about the DOA bloc as being a treaty of a type… Kevy: Right.

A!: … for a future world. I mean, not to overstate the case. But like, you all have relatonships here that are very surprising, and this bloc is a way to describe these very friendly relatonships that

for school or work or whatever, and it wasn't a big deal. Then in the 60s, 70s, they're creeping… there were more people coming to Arizona and then in the 80s and 90s, that's when you start seeing everything we're seeing now.

A!: So a lot of the natives I've talked to for these interviews have essentially disassociated from anarchists. And, by the way, I'm less interested in POC perspectives than in native perspectives. It's my bias, but I tend to find that POC doesn't mean anything, in the way that pan-native sometimes doesn't mean anything.

Alex: Yea.

A!: Like, by and large a lot of Latino people don't have much in common with a lot of Black people, don't have much in common with a lot of Asian people, don't have a lot in common in with Middle Eastern people… but that terminology has come into vogue… whatever, I don't need to explain that to you.

Alex: Did I mention the immigration groups that were here that were posturing as indigenous…? First of all they were mostly Mexican, undocumented, or whatever buzzword you want to use.

Which, I get they have their stake in the struggle. But they wanted to have the native edge, the cred, where it goes into this pan-indigenous thing. I'm like, wait a minute, if we're in a native to native conversation, why the fuck aren't you listening to other natives, like Tohono O'odham, saying that; what you're advocating for is militarization of my land. And you're native?! Oh, you're Mexican then, because you have the power to get the vote, but then you want to have the credibility of the native, because you want to have the ceremonial aura around you. Like, oh, we're doing the work on the ground, we're starting where we're at, oh, but you're not listening to the actual people you're fucking over. And personally speaking they're like, oh, we've been to your places, these places on the rez, and blah blah blah. And I'm like, then you've fucking seen it for yourself and you're still getting behind politicians or policies that are fucking us over.

I mean, I guess I'm just really talking about the migrant justice movement, because as far as the Black movement, and others, it's a whole other story. But that was always something that was hard.

We're not just fighting the white racists, or educating the parachuter white allies, but we also have this bind with people who look like me, and I'm half Mexican, by the way. But they don't want to hear what I'm saying because it's complicated.

That was always supposed to be the reason with that group Puente, they were like "we're on the ground doing the work, and then these anarchists come and fuck everything up…" And I'm saying, "wait a minute, the only reason we're with the anarchists is because we tried to talk to you, and you blatantly chose settler colonialism in all your responses to us, so… the only ones who have our backs here are the white anarchists." Why is that?

You'd think that the other people who look like me would be with us, why is it that, not up front, but behind closed doors, even your own membership is questioning what the fuck is going on. Oh wait, you're following the money, following the grant; you want to build the capacity, like the Bay, or Detroit, or New York. So that's why I keep mentioning that, because that was always a part of the puzzle here. To this day it's still fucked up, which we can talk about later.

Corinna

A!: Sounds like you're now talking about
Natives who would've lived closer to the
Sierras, while obviously San Francisco and the bay were already a different environment, with cities, etc. but also it is where the missions were.

Corinna: right. Yea, there weren't missions up there, they were all on the coast. It was still illegal to be Indian, even though you were in San Francisco or Oakland, so people could still kill you and

and then drove the things, and it looked like, hey, we could drive this so easy, 18 miles, it's nothing, right? We could do this no big deal [laughter], but walking every step of that with all these people behind us, really counting on us to have food at the end of the day, counting on a floor to sleep on, that's an accomplice.

I appreciate the people who help me sit at the table and be an equal, that's an ally. That's somebody who says, your work is bomb, and people need to hear this, and I want you to share this with other people… but it's not the same as having someone who does that work with you like that.

An accomplice is more rare. I have a cousin, who grew up with me and helped me raise my kids, she's my accomplice in that part of my life. I have a friend who went to all of our events, every single thing, and was kind of like my shadow to make sure nobody messed with me, until her health got bad, she is an accomplice, and we raised our kids together too, so it's like that. So I have those folks. Wounded Knee [a person], who has gone out of his comfort zone on all that kind of stuff and who drove all over the world, all over the country, talking to people about Segora Te and why it's important, he's an accomplice. Fred, who lit the fire, and teaches us, someone who prays with my kids in the sweat lodge.

I have lots of friends who are not native, and they do great work, and they support us, but on the weekends I don't see 'em. So there's different kinds of relationships.

Kevy

A!: Talk to me about your sense of the DOA bloc, what it did well, and what it could've done, but hasn't. Kevy: the DOA bloc is the Diné, O'odham, and Anarchist anti-authoritarian bloc. It has brought some really good positive dark chaos, positive destruction. It brought a good message, and not just a message but… I'm not going to say unification, but we came together as an amazing group.

foundation stuff. I've had people who were at Segora Te with us, who provided herbal stuff, supplies, who said that they want to be this next step, this next journey, where we're going with this…

Because I think all folks came away wanting that community, loving that community, wanting to be a part of something like that. I haven't utilized folks in a way that probably I should. People have come to me, but I think that… for me, there hasn't been enough conversation to move this forward in a way that I feel comfortable with. Part of me is afraid to do this; what is it gonna look like? How is it gonna change my life?

A!: Are you gonna jeopardize what you have…

Corinna: Yea… yea. I guess that's it. sometimes you get scared when you're trying to do those kinds of things. Folks who are my allies are the ones who have walked with me from the beginning and haven't left and want to stay and offer help and also know when to back off and let me do what I gotta do. Who bring me information, so I can use that for the work. And are willing to stay on the line with us. And I saw a lot of people who were ready to do that, at Segora Te. I really have a lot of respect for and honor those people.

Accomplices. I don't know. I think of my friend Johnella, who has been there and created IPOC with me, as my accomplice. She is the one that… we dreamed this stuff together. She's gone off to school, but is still working on this land trust. We live in different places, she lives out in the country mostly and I live out here in the city still but we're still dreaming those ideas together, we both have that relationship with the land, because we're both native, we're both mothers and grandmothers, and we've gone through all these years of work, doing this stuff, and we trust each other. For me that's what an accomplice is, somebody who I would lay my life down for, who I trust. So Johnella, I trusted her before, she was the one who came up with the idea of these walks. I had no idea what a walk was like. I had no idea. I trusted her. We sat down at that little cafe down the street with the maps and wrote it all out,

get a bounty… this was the case anywhere in the state of California. They were trying to exterminate the Indian. There was no reason to have us here; we were an inferior race. They called us diggers, here. We were not even human.

Not even just in the state of California, in the US; Indians did not get citizenship until 1924. So my great grandparents were not even born with citizenship. It wasn't until 1978 that we had our own right to religion.

So all of this forbidden stuff had to go underground. My particular family survived all of those ways of genocide by pretending to be Mexican. They worked on a ranch in Pleasanton, and survived. But the interesting thing is that they all intermarried with other Ohlones and other mission Indians who were close by. A!: There was still some language.

Corinna: There was still language. My great grandfather was one of the last speakers of Chochenyo language. This crazy… JP Harrington, and he was absolutely nuts. (I think the ancestors had something to do with it.) But he went… not just California languages but all these languages in Mexico, he'd seen all these languages disappearing and he just went and wrote notes and had people talking to wax cylinders and recorded them and got all of this information and that's how we're bringing our language back. Because he did that with my great grandfather.

It's really amazing that those things happened. Nels Nelson who worked in Berkeley in 1909 knew then, over a hundred years ago, that all these shellmounds were going to be desecrated or removed, and he made a map of them, ov er a hundred years ago, and that's what we used for the shell mound walks.

It's not just Ohlone people who were invisibilized, all Native people were invisibilized in the Bay Area for a while, even after Alcatraz and stuff. They kind of went away, you know?

Corinna: Yea. I often think that. It all needs to change. People need to figure that out sooner than later. So I'm thankful that my ancestors hid in the way they did. And I'm thankful that whoever the crazy people were in the past, they wrote down stuff and left those clues so I could find those things.

I think having a voice in today's society allows the next generation to pop up and say, "hey! I've got something to offer too, and we're still here." I think hiding is a good way to survive; like you say, people do it all over the world. They hide in different kinds of ways. I think sometimes we're just tired of hiding.

Danielle

Danielle: I always identify by Anishinaabe, and I always encourage people to start using that word when they're talking about who I am, or the nation, but indigenous is second best, I guess, yea.

A!: It's funny to talk through this stuff.

There're some people who have pretty slick lines about it.

While my preference is indigenous, my second choice is Indian because I like how brutal it is.

Do you have intact language?

Danielle: No I don't. It's something I'm working on right now. It's really hard—because I grew up with an English-speaking brain—to reconstitute my mind so that I'm thinking with Anishinaabemowin, which is my language. I find that language in the sense of identity, has a whole different meaning than English, which is very noun based, based on naming and owning things, capitalizing the I, whereas Anishinaabemowin is about describing the action of a thing and how it relates to us as people. Most of the times, for example, things like fire or earth, water, air, we talk about how it relates to us as human beings and how we need it to survive, whereas English is very much like, "my water" instead of "the water that gives me life."

Corinna

Corinna: I do have something… One of the things I really want to talk to people about is coming back to the land in a way that nourishes them, and feel whole again. I was talking to people over the weekend and they were saying, "Oh yea, there's parks in the bay area and stuff" and I said, "Yea, but do you know there's kids living in the flatlands of Oakland who never get to the hills of Oakland and never are able to see that, and wouldn't it be nice to have a plot of land in the middle of east oakland bottoms that kids could go to and feel safe in and have ceremony there. People could come and share food." Because people are so stuck in these boxes that are apartments, that have no land attached to them and don't know where they come from, and don't know where they're going. We need to become interdependent again, and that's part of the dream of the land trust, for people to become human again.

A!: So the last question I have for you is one I brought up earlier and you may not have any particular thoughts about it, but… it's the idea of what makes a good ally; who have been people you've worked with who you've enjoyed working with, and what do you think of the accomplice vs ally that is sort of the flavor of the month terminology. It's the new decolonize…

Corinna: Yes, the new decolonize…

[laughter] I think that… gosh it's hard to say.

A!: To approach it from a different direction: most of this bureaucratic nonsense that you're trying to do, are you mostly doing it with other natives or are you getting much help from people who are not native? And what have your collaborations looked like. 'Cause it sounds like a lot of what you're doing has native people as the driving force, but I'm sure that's not entirely true, especially financially.

Corinna: Mm hmm. Well, we had a small two year grant from a foundation to start the land trust. We got one year of funding and don't know if we'll get the second year, which is what I hate about

Danielle: For me personally, because I'm an urban indigenous woman I could identify as an indigena anarchist and live my life as such. But in unpacking that I have realized that I'm colonized; I'm a colonized woman still. Even ways that I deal with my children, in terms of discipline for example… spanking, yelling, putting you in a room, these kinds of things, that's how I disciplined my children for the greater part of their lives. Then the more I got into ceremony, the more I learned from my elders, the more I learned from the grandmothers, I learned how do it differently, much more like a gentle redirectioning… If my kids were getting into something, instead of yelling at them to get out of there, I can say "Hey, let's go outside, there's things we can do out here…"

So, that kind of work. Acknowledging that maybe I wasn't disciplining my kids in the best ways, which is pretty hard to accept. Or people might say that me getting an education at McMaster, they might say "you're not really hard core like these other people, going to the ivory tower." So, yea, people might think that was not a good idea, but it was a good idea for me. I got to learn about who I was, I got to learn about power structures, and I created an analysis to understand why I'm here and what good I can do while I'm here. But it's also very easy to just fall into the role of indigena anarchist and identify as that, being very broad based, but the sense of self is lost.

I think that that's a really huge issue that no one talks about. The self. We're always engaged on collectiveness, which is very important, but the identity of our selves is lost. And I believe that's where our power comes from, knowing who we are and where we come from and our connection to the land. Polynesian cultures have this concept of mana, this power you have that is based in your identity, not a power that can be seen, but felt.

A!: That's very provocative. In anarchist circles there are a lot of anarchists who agree with what you said 100%. Mostly to the exclusion of everything else [laughter]. [There is repetition in this section. See Introduction.]

Instead of… When I identify this territory I do it by our ancestral agreements: the wampum's that we made with each other before contact. We had an agreement called The Dish with One Spoon. And it established that this territory was kind of neutral, and we shared it.

The dish represented the one territory, and the spoon represented how our nations would use the territory: there's only one spoon, and we're going to use it carefully and be conscious of what we're taking.

A!: You're going to have to forgive me my ignorance, because of course I'm Anishinaabe also.

Danielle: Right.

A!: But first, I think what it means here in Canada is very different from what it means in the US, and I don't know why that's the case. All I know is the three fires…

Danielle: Right.

A!:… which are Chippewa, Oddawa, Potawatomi, so… tell me more.

Danielle: Okay. I'm actually from Grand River, Ontario, so there's Sault Saint Marie, Ontario, and Sault Saint Marie, Michigan, right?

A!: Yea, our tribal headquarters is in Sault Saint Marie.

Danielle: Exactly. And I think the border did a lot of damage to us. It literally cut right through Anishinaabe territory, right?

A!: Yes.

Danielle: I think they did that on purpose because of the power of our confederacies. They knew that dividing it in half would sever our connections to each other and separate us.

Like you were saying, the American side of the Anishinaabe people understand their nationhood differently, and it's because of the education system and what they're taught, where they went to school. Whereas in Canada, the government would like us to subscribe the Indian Act thinking of identity. So they have Indian, Metis, and Inuit. Actually they call us Aboriginal now. Unless we

subscribe to those ideas of who we are then, we lose our rights, or blah blah blah.

But when we're talking about identity in terms of Three Fires Confederacy, then that is exactly what I'm all about. I think we need to revive that Confederacy, cause that's where our power is. Not only in the sense of power but when we're talking about the Confederacy it's such an intricate balance of governance that doesn't "govern" in the sense of government that we know… I think it just gives people the ability to feel like their voices matter. Everyone would feel that their voice mattered.

Even in our own communities though, there needs to be a lot of unlearning. I find that Anishinaabe nationhood, right now, and even the ceremonial circles, or chieftain-ship or whatever, are very patriarchal. We're forgetting the roles of the women, we're forgetting of the clan mothers in our communities. We're forgetting about grandmother knowledge. That is another way that colonialism has impacted our power. [These three paragraphs are repeated from Danielle's introduction but merit repeating because of the density of what's being said here]

Dan

A!: Where does status come in to your daily life? Like, where does it matter?

Dan: It matters for membership in the band, and for living on the reserve.

A!: You can't live on the reserve unless you're in the band?

Dan: You can live there, but not own land on the reserve. So you can't have property, and you can't build.

A!: What else? Are they health consequences…

Dan: There's benefit consequences, like for taxes, and stuff like that, which doesn't really matter to me. I barely ever use my band

Danielle

A!: I guess I'm trying to find a language to talk about this hard problem, but it could be that young men are always going to be young men. That's actually something that's hard for anarchists.

An anarchist says, these value systems, these essentialized value systems are not true, they're chosen. And a lot of anarchists interrogate that a lot, especially in the context of gender.

Danielle: I think that what indigenous peoples need to do the most right now is drop their egos, and start to work as communities. And remember the roles we had as people working together in community towards a common cause. Cause we're kind of seeing ourselves through this eurocentric lens still. We're trying to decolonize ourselves, but…

Ultimately our subconscious' have been programmed to understand our identities and our thoughts and our ideas through this eurocentric lens. So I always understand it as work that has to start with the individual, because if we're not willing to undo these ideas in our own minds first, then there's no way it's going to happen on a collective level. So we might have these issues where we want to go on the land and be on the front lines to stop this industrialization, but there's also a lot of work that needs to be undone on an individual level.

For me it goes individual, family, clan, nation. That's how it works. And unless we're willing to engage in that hard work individually, it's not going to happen collectively. And that individual work is really tough. You're facing, like,

"Oh, I did learn that I was this kind of person, but actually I'm that other kind." And that conflict a lot of times will just make people not want to engage. Instead of putting all that passion into themselves, they'll put it into their communities, and it's not that that's bad work, but it would be more effective if it were done on an individual level first.

A!: What's an example?

A!: I realize that. But I'm just curious. Did they ask for the help that they got in 2006 or whenever?

Dan: I think they did, not realizing what they were going to get.

A!: Ok.

Dan: But even when we were with that coalition, we said, you know, we can open up the asylum. [laughs]

But that's one thing that Tyendinaga has never done, is put a call out for help. We've never said, come to our territory and help us fight the cops, or….

A!: Are the most of the lands, like… where does the federal power end.

Dan: It doesn't end, in general. There's a lot of people in the community who still believe in it.

A!: Tell me about the second band council, the traditional band council. Is it just in your space or…?

Dan: No, it's everywhere, in every Mohawk community; every Six Nations community, there's traditionals, there's people who follow the band council. I'm not sure what they call it in the States, I guess, tribal council.

A!: No, this is a lot more rare in the States. But yea, what you're calling band council is called the tribal council in the States.

Dan: Yea. That's what it is. Traditionalism in our governing bodies, it's in every community, it's just not as much at the fore, it's not as [something power?] that we have …

A!: But you do have a second long house.

Dan: Yea, we have two long houses. There's actually two or three long houses in every community. Different views, different things, there should be at least three in every Mohawk community, one for each clan. That's coming, but hasn't come yet.

A!: One more generation?

Dan: Yea. It took five hundred years to whittle us down. But we survived, and it's not going to take five hundred years to get us back.

card for tax purposes. It's a number from the Feds; it's something I don't want to follow.

A!: Yea.

Dan: But mostly it's what [mutual friend] was talking about: the tight knit community. It's hard to get in there if you're not a member of the band, especially before the 90s or… 1985 was when that rule changed. A lot of native people think Canada switched from traditionalism to this council thing, so they [the Feds] can say that if you weren't a member of the band, then you weren't an Indian any more.

A!: My grandfather was Canadian Odawa, which didn't count as US Odawa [laughs].

Dan: Yea. That's right. It's ridiculous. And I really find it funny how, I come back to the reserve in '91, I was 17 at the time, and jumped right into traditionalism, into ceremonies and stuff like that. What I find really funny is how native people don't rise up, and become the people, and gain our rightful place in society that we are supposed to have. There's a few who do, but as a whole…

Dominique

Dominique: Nanabush is an important Ojibwa character in story telling, usually credited with creating the world, but sometimes seen as a prankster. I would say to people reading this, don't go read a book that's like "Folklore from All Around the World". Because it's not really about that. Nanabush is something that's indescribable and dangerous. They are someone playful who breaks taboos, they wouldn't fit in with a christian society. he's not civilized.

In *Baedan* journal , they say they want to become feral—they're talking about wanting to approach life wildly. I can relate to that. I think that these queer nihilist identities have something in common with the person of undetermined race…

A!: How so?

Dominique: Since we can't fit in, in either place. so we're in this strange position, but maybe that's not a bad thing.

Dominique: Part of what I'm saying is that I'm not interested in mass movements… I don't think that the idea of an American Indian movement makes sense for me and neither, by extension, does APOC politics… I think that politics could be something you use in a small group, direct relationships.

I believe all of our language is politicized, and that's related to a criticism of native radicals—that comes from a native perspective. These radicals in camo don't automatically represent traditions (I would say) and they're speaking for elders as if the elders can't talk for themselves. This can also apply to Tribal Councils.

That is one part of the story of why I would reject politics. Vizenor's critique of communism has more to do with the communists he encounters than with historical materialism. The radicals he sees selling papers in Minneapolis would never laugh because their struggle was so grave. If I have to give up laughter for politics, I choose laughter.

Vizenor uses the term cross bloods for mixed race Indians; it means that you're part of two worlds and don't really walk in either one of them. The scruffy rez dog mongrel comes to mind. There are some native science fiction writers who talk about Metis identity, and frame it as "we have louis riel as our messiah figure, and mixed blood people are feral and wild." I don't know if I necessarily live up to that…

A!: It would be nice…

Dominique: Liminality means that things don't have to be this or that, I guess. But it's not necessarily a synthesis either. The two

Dan: …and still the people look at it and wonder, is this positive, what is it… I guess my question for anarchists is what is it that they want? I know what I want, as a native person. I know I want to gain my rightful place in society, have my sovereignty, have a government based on the people, based on our laws and traditions.

But the relationship between natives and anarchists is a good one. We can come together and fight the forces that keep us down. We could make a lot of things from that and really work with it. The other thing about native culture, everyone's so worried about blood quantum, but anyone can join. Anyone can come under the great law of peace as long as you're willing to abide by the great law of peace. It's really a natural law. It's common sense.

Treat people the way you want to be treated, and treat nature, mother earth, the way that you want to be treated. It's common sense, right? And that's pretty much our great law. It's not all about politics and the details of how we make that work with our people, but that's pretty much it; it's all about common sense.

A!: But it does seem like, if you didn't have the personal relationships that you have, this would have been a more difficult… you might have looked more askew at anarchists, if you hadn't found people you got along with. I think a lot of communities, there might be one or two people who have personal relationships with the natives they're trying to work with, or whatever, but in general, cliques happen.

Dan: Right.

A!: And in those cases it does feel more like charity work, and less like a meeting of real people, you know?

Dan: Right. I think one thing Tyendinaga has never done, is ask for outside help.

A!: Really?!

Dan: We've never asked for it. We can handle it. People come and offer to help, but we've never put the call out. Ever.

A!: Did Six Nations…?

Dan: Six Nations is not part of Canada.

my most Indian of childhood experiences as eating cold fry bread for breakfast and shouting (to deaf and broke ears) for McDonald's for lunch. I remember that, once it became clear that I wasn't going to be allowed to register with my tribe, that those benefits would not be mine, the next batch of mail I received was from the US Navy, attempting to recruit me for duty on nuclear submarines. Finding where I belong in this confusion is also the fight for Turtle Island.

Dan

Dan: Yea, in 2006 we took over a quarry that was under land claim. The land claim had gone into negotiation and the government recognized that it was a legitimate claim, and the band council had recognized that, yea, it's Mohawk and we're going to fight for it. So this quarry was operating within the land claim. We said, how can you take our land away, truck by truck?

A!: Ah.

Dan: …while it is still being negotiated!

So we went in and shut the quarry down. And these crazy white people started showing up, you know, anarchists wanting to help, and support. So I was wondering what the hell they were about. But I met some good friends.

A!: Natives are one of the few places where anarchists have intervened and it's been a net positive. 'Cause of course, so often… let's say in the context of Black Lives Matter, mostly anarchists are not wanted in any way, shape, or form.

Dan: Right.

A!: Maybe this is partly because that culture is a lot bigger, it doesn't perceive that it needs outside help, whereas having white people… I mean obviously there's a tradition of white liberals coming in to support natives, but that hasn't almost ever been a positive. [laughs]

sides might not ever be reconciled. It opens a space for questioning the value of identity altogether.

A!: It's nice that liminal evokes a twilight area where things are indistinguishable from each other, and could be a whole bunch of things.

Dominique: I was recently reading an HP Lovecraft story called "the Mound" that is basically about a haunted Indian burial ground.

A!: …I'm sure HP dealt with this with total sensitivity…

Dominique: Of course… well the narrator is an ethnologist studying people in Oklahoma. I guess when we talk about queerness, it's like it can mean you don't want to reproduce, that you can't get married, that you're not a normal part of society, so you're in the shadows. and I like that idea—you could apply it to liminal people.

But in the Lovecraft story, it's one of the only times that he vividly describes the cthulhuian underworld, and he could be describing modern American cities. I mean, everything is covered in slime, or whatever, but to the point, this is Lovecraft looking in shadows, and looking at ambiguity as something that's a complete terror. So I'm thinking about shadows not being horrifying, but also that being horrified is not necessarily something to avoid.

Dominique: Things are going on now that are political, and it's not really interesting to me but, a lot of Minnesota tribes are changing how they measure away from blood quantum and to descendency. Currently there is a percentage of blood required to become a tribal member. They want to change it so that you can enroll if you have a distant ancestor.

It has to do with resources really.

You could make a connection between tribal organizations preoccupation with funding and the relationship of native radicals to

white activists; there's already an imbalance but… people need the help.

Native solidarity activists are always going to be talking about how much they hate the allies, but they are always going to invite them to come back.

Self determination in the case of the Red Lake Ojibwa means living by themselves and practicing traditions. It doesn't need a defense, they're doing it, they don't need help from academics in the cities. Environmentalists are always going to want to talk to natives, really, so that's why I feel like I have something different to say. Maybe I 'm just offering another fictitious image?

A!: Does Vizenor use the term "simulation"? Obviously I know about Baudrillard using that word…

Dominique: He does draw on Baudrillard, so—if people aren't familiar with the concept—it refers to the making of a map that is 1:1 in scale, where the representation replaces the actual thing. It's easy see that none of the shit on TV about Indians is real.

Representation is an enemy so I'm not positing that there's a right representation. Every movie… it's a mythical thing, it's not real. Its just spectacle. Vizenor is saying that the real thing is the Ojibwa spirit of survival, we lose something when we learn to identify with the Image. I don't know if there's a real thing under everything, I guess.

Jason/Jaden

A!: before we go down that path… can you speak a little more about your ideas of whiteness?

J: Whiteness?

A!: Yea, you use that term, where does it come from for you?

J: Probably Noel Ignatiev…

A!: So straight *Race Traitor* line?

J: *Race Traitor*, yea. I used to read *Race*

Traitor a lot in the 90s, and was pretty convinced by it. Now I'm not so sure. Again, the shift to continental philosophy… Deleuze and Guattari's *Thousand Plateaus* has a chapter on the face, which

the fight for Turtle Island requires, and these are not the skillsets of most warrior personalities.

The fight for Turtle Island requires accomplices. I hate to repeat the themes of Klee Benally's great essay "Accomplices not Allies" (you can read this easily available text on your own), so I'll emphasize some points different from Klee's. Natives are a very small percentage of the population (2% is a generous estimate and includes people like me),

which means, thinking on the scale of goal-oriented politics, we need friends. The process of making friends is difficult and draining. An accomplice would be a friend who doesn't require all that much work. An accomplice is a person who runs to your aid because you are in need and not because they need to be convinced of your project. This lines up well to the desires of activists who often, and frequently, are in need (of bodies, at the very least).

This is to say that accomplices are an ideal. Especially as defined in Klee's essay, there is an assumed crisis that accomplices are part of the solution to. While that crisis is real, I think this model requires a larger framework than the call-and-response of activism (which is all about attacking the problem *now*). The problems—of development, of resource extraction, of cities set on top of the places where people used to live sustainably, of civilization—are huge. They aren't in the category of "one more push and they are solved." Put another way, an accomplice who could help with these problems is one who lives with us. A real accomplice is one who is making a full and developed commitment to the land and people on it. They are in the process of decolonizing, or becoming indigenous.

This means not that they are attending all the workshops and wearing the right attire but something bigger, deeper, and more-or-less impossible.

The fight for Turtle Island is one that has to thread the needle between this need for impossible accomplices and the possible but perhaps fatal maintenance of cultural and social values on a body of people being pulled in complex and difficult directions. I remember

This fight for Turtle Island isn't epic. It is local, NIMBY-ish, and crafted towards the kind of selfie culture we live in. And that is because the fight for Turtle Island isn't a campaign, a war, or zero sum game. It is a manifestation of the kind of familial politics that native people have translated into "white person language" in such a way that it has a chance of success in this particular world. It is also the rejection of this kind of translation (as politics, as "white person thinking", as becoming your own enemy, etc.).

The fight for Turtle Island is teaching your children to speak a language from your ancestors, from the past, one that you don't even speak that well yourself because the State spent generations beating it out of your ancestors. It is eating food that hearkens back to processed food rations (given to natives who behaved themselves and so received provisions from the forts), government queues, food stamps, and trying to grind the native plants from your area that were used to create a diet prior to contact with Manifest Destiny. Finally it is remembering your culture together in all the different bizarre ways we do things under the banner of pow-wow. Dancing, singing, camping, in gymnasiums, halls, and under American flags and around the capitalist trinket trade. We yearn to remember and to forget the surreality that shapes how we are together.

The fight for Turtle Island is about preserving culture after it has been annihilated. I won't push too hard on this concept here but… There has been a genocide in this land. A people were defeated and their culture was destroyed. There were survivors but they mostly had to bend their knee and genuflect to the flag of the people who destroyed them. To the extent to which there is a native culture today it is after that humiliation and defeat. Part of the tragedy of the fight for Turtle Island is admitting that fighting per se has little to do with the goals of the fight at all. Memory, ritual, children, have much more to do with the fight. Persuasion in the face of TV, screen culture, and the ease of the dominant is much more what

I think is really interesting and argues that really the way that race works is not through a constitutive outside, not through this thing that is outside and then… that white people know that they're white because they know they're not this other minority group or whatever.

So it's not that, actually everything is inclusive.

Racial liberalism is based on inclusion, but a hierarchical form of inclusion. Anything that varies from what they call the white man face is at degrees of remove but is still internal to whiteness, basically, so there is no outside-towhiteness, unless whiteness were to be exploded.

A!: That's interesting.

J: It's kind of similar to Ignatiev in a way, in a weird way, not exactly, but… So for me, I liked Ignatiev because he had a historical, social constructivist argument about race and whiteness, that whiteness doesn't really exist, per se. It does in terms of social structures and power, but those are all changeable things. As far as I understand it.

Kevy

A!: I use the term Indian. Do you mostly use the word "native"?

Kevy: Interesting. In the past… talking to people, especially milagahn (metagon), you know, whites, 'cause they always say, well I'm native too, to this country. And I'm like, no you're not, get out of here, you're from Europe. You come from the continent. But then when I encounter Indian people, Indian people are like, no, you come from India. They talk about the mass movement of people coming to this land.

A!: The Bering Strait…

Kevy: Yea, yea, the Bering Strait. So there's a lot of… but for one, I identify as O'odham.

A!: So you say O'odham, you don't say Indigenous or Native or Indian.

Kevy: It depends on who I'm talking to. Frequently they'll say "Native American," and you know Native American can mean anything. It's just a trip. So when I say indigenous people of this territory, or the indigenous people of the original lands, I wanna say O'odham land, or O'odham territory, or first nations people, or aboriginal.

Anpao Duta Collective

ADCA: So specifically about nationalism and people worrying about that term and not liking that term, I feel like there are ways that anarchist politics both really have the power to help inform fantastic, really progressive things and also don't help at all. One of the ways that I come up against it in my midwifery work is around gender, and the way anarchist communities conceive of gender specifically and the radical gender movement. What I've seen specifically in Native communities more broadly is that anarchists' understandings of gender are informing native ideas of gender in ways that take away our ability to actually reimagine radical gender identity from an anti-colonial, traditional standpoint.

A!: Sorry, outside of jargon, what are you talking about?

ADCS: [laughs]

ADCA: I'm talking… I'm talking about a lot of things. One of the rebellions in anarchist circles is trying to do away with the gender dichotomy.

A!: We're all equal. We all should do the same thing.

ADCA: We're all equal… I hate that word.

I hate that "being equal."

So… framing it as this rebellion from this dichotomized gender system, where you have now the gender spectrum or people who are allegedly off the spectrum, which don't really…

The Fight for Turtle Island

The fight for Turtle Island is fought in quiet and subtle ways. You'll see it teased by each of the interviewees in various ways but I'll attempt to summarize by laying bare a conversation and a set of strategies. And the reason I dare to do this, even though enemies distant and close may be paying attention, is that most of the ways that Turtle Island is being fought for are also accomplishing another, equally—if not more—important task. I'm using productive language here because I know that some of my audience requires evidence that quiet, slow, and "on the dl" isn't the same as apathy, fatalism, and do-nothingism. And of course it both is and isn't.

The fight for Turtle Island is a local struggle that works with other localities aesthetically rather than in a networked, coherent way, or with any particular solidarity. Take our local struggle against building on the West Berkeley Shellmound—which is by no means a pure fight as the land is more of a former shellmound and is covered in asphalt. It is a classic no-growth fight, where the anti-colonial nature of defending the memory of pre-contact society is put into direct conflict with a developer/owner who desires building a six story housing complex and two story parking garage where the last remains of the shellmound are currently (under a parking lot). Boring (from an anarchist perspective), doomed to failure (from a fatalist perspective), outgunned and outmatched, but still inspiring, beautiful, and an interesting example of how to reach across social and cultural lines in service of something worth doing (and— as of this writing—having some success, as the developer recently backed out).

While the Ojibwa compromise is "there's science, but we can still tell our stories, which are not invalidated."

There is also an obvious indigenous influence on French theory going in the other direction, in the form of Pierre Clastres' war machines, Situationist potlatch, and so forth. We could also reach the conclusions of animism using objectoriented ontology—the idea that humans are not the center of the universe. But I wouldn't say it's postmodern. Not an easy answer I guess.

A!: I would say that calling this postmodern is basically name-calling, and is really a complaint about not knowing what to do, and wanting to be told what to do.

Dominique: I think the way that the question is asked already limits how we can answer it. I'm not convinced that we can have the right ideas, and then go forth and change the world. I think I'm part of the world. and the world changes me.

I don't think that we have special consciousness that we can bestow on other people. Or that there's a way forward.

And maybe that there's not a way backward either. My only answer is that it's complicated. If the idea is decolonization (that is, understanding native people), be cautious when someone tells you that they have the answer, that they know the right approach for working with native people. Skip the anti-oppression workshops. There's not one way because there's not one native society. So there's not an easy solution.

If you want to learn from Indians, consider caring about the people close to you right now. Try to get to the point that what you're doing is revolutionary, without waiting for some kind of break.

A!: So you're saying that's the anarchist work…

ADCA: This is the anarchist, radical…

ADCS: Well, it's the queer…

ADCA: the queer… radical queer communities. So the way that's kind of informing indigenous identity now, you have the idea of the two spirit, which is actually specific to one nation, which happened to monopolize the conversation…

A!: …to get a movie…

ADCA: … and get a movie. But people like the Diné, who have a five gender system, or us. We have a four gender system, a system that isn't dichotomous at all. But people don't know that, so when people who are struggling with the gender dichotomy that they've been brought up with, there's an automatic default to this radical queer analysis vs an anti-colonial or decolonized position that would potentially reflect better their actual position within their specific communities. It's something that we talk about a lot and it's one of my pet peeves.

ADCS: And I don't think there's an easy answer to it either. It's a very complicated question. There're probably better people to speak on it, who are more affected by it than we are.

ADCA: Exactly.

ADCS: The way we fall into it is… the ways that our partnership works doesn't fit into very clearcut traditional lines either.

ADCA: Exactly.

ADCS: So for me coming at this… our traditional gender system wasn't even a system at all, it wasn't about gender, it was about roles. It was primarily about partnerships and these partnerships were to basically help balance, to have a balanced household. So for us, Autumn for example doesn't fit the traditional concept of the Dakota woman, or the Dakota winyan. She is much closer to bedoka the woman who goes out and does war…

ADCA: The female who does the work of a man…

ADCS: The woman who hunts, but also, you know, raises a kid. We have an equal influence on our child's life, and in the household,

doing chores, right. Likewise, I hunt, I do these male activities, like the idea of michashwe, who wouldn't do some of those things, but yet I do those things because I think it's important to revitalize those things, whether it's man's work or woman's work.

So, it's a conversation that we have. And also, how can queer politics inform traditional identity.

ADCA: Right, both how can it, and how can that happen without us getting swallowed up…

ADCS: …And also how can it inform us without everything being reduced to that single metric. Like, people did have traditional roles and what was the purpose behind that. To me it seems like the purpose was for balance…

ADCA: Exactly, and the question seems to me partly about equality vs egalitarianism.

A!: I actually want to trouble this just to hear your thoughts…

ADCS: Sure.

ADCA: Absolutely.

A!: I see a great deal of the problem here being connected to the fact that the only role that men can assume falls in the category of warrior.

ADC: Right.

ADCS: We had the winkte (winyanktehca), which has been reduced to just mean someone who's homosexual. But that's not really accurate.

The winkte was a feminized man who either dressed as a woman or performed a woman's role. So historically it had to do less with a sexual relationship, but rather who you would develop a domestic partnership with. So again, balance. There is someone who hunts, and someone who processes those things at home.

There's the wichasha, the man who hunts and the winyan who processes, but the wichasha can also marry a winkte because a winkte is also someone who processes and owns those things. Likewise a winyan bedokan, a woman who fulfills men's roles (in quotation marks) could partner with a winyan or a winkte. But a winyan

could just ask someone not to be racist, and they'll be just like "oh yea, you're right. What was I thinking?" It's not about winning moral arguments.

When it comes to headdress, it's possible people on your reservation did wear headdresses during the time when that attracted tourism. I've seen old pictures at Red Lake with men in headdresses, and it shows… it's not always about calling other people out.

I also see how much we've been affected by these images as well. They had to wear headdresses because that's what people thought natives did. You have to give up anything left of the Ojibwa to become an Indian.

A!: This is a big topic of conversation in my family because we were involved in putting on powwows in the area. Of course a traditional powwow would be acorns and raccoons, it wouldn't be flashy at all. It would look like woodland stuff, which is drab and dark colors, no yellow feathers or spears… [laughter]… and tomahawks and all that nonsense. So of course that wouldn't bring any of the white people with deep pockets who will spend $500 on a necklace. Or, you'd get people for the cool baskets, but…

Dominique: I think what you're describing also applies to native radicals. You have to present yourself as a native to non-natives, so you're going to have to simulate. To me that's humiliating.

[laughter]

A!: What we're talking about are complex deep problems that are not solvable, and those kind of questions tend to get called post modern. So how is the direction you are taking this conversation in, not postmodern?

Dominique: By default it is postmodern, but it's not coming from France. One sort of becomes postmodern if you're living in this society with cultural schizophrenia. You could line up these categories, like multi-centeredness vs centralization, there are certain concepts that line up with postmodernism, like the postmodern premise that there are many stories, not one central truth.

A!: I guess that an appropriate question that I'm supposed to ask you is what does decolonization mean to you, but I find that difficult because it seems like a robot question. I don't even personally know what decolonization means for myself so I wouldn't ask the question but…

Dominique: When people ask me that question my answer is "a lot of burning." That is the only thing that makes sense to me if you want to use that as a metaphor. In *The Witch of Going Snake* it says "*Throw away your guns and your steel knives and pots. Kill your cats. Destroy everything you have that came from the white man.*"

I don't know where to begin to make that separation. I don't know what is colonized inside of myself. It all seems pretty damaged. Maybe that is what is radical. I can say to natives in the city, "you can't go home and find the answer there." Just like, me leaving rural areas and coming to the city didn't change everything; there's no place to go.

A!: Right. This reminds me of watching natives who I respect get all hot under the collar about the feather headdresses that the sexy people are wearing to concerts… I totally accept that this is the same thing as wearing blackface or whatever; and privileged people do that. That's almost the definition of privilege, that you get to wear the scalps of your enemies around your neck or whatever [laughter].

I guess there's a liberal thing at the heart of this that says "yes, colonization happened, yes there are horrific class differences, yes, racism by some definition is at the heart of the American engine… and we should hide it"?! In other words the fight against the headdress isn't the fight. Not at all. But a lot of people get so wound up about these being the fights.

And especially the headdress… I mean, it's not my culture… this is not the universal sign of Natives.

Anyways, something of a sidebar, sorry…

Dominique: No, that is something that I think about, I question what kind of understanding of racism includes the idea that you

bedokan and a wichasha would never hook up, it just wouldn't happen. And that's kind of where we are.

ADCA: Right.

ADCS: That's how we both identify.

ADCA: But to more address the point that you're raising… (a different point from ours) it's because we are a highly militarized warrior culture. Everybody fought at some point or another. It was really about the order that people are put on the lines. So you have the wichasha and the winyan bodanka, these are the active warriors. One of the other primary fighters though would've been the winkte, whose job it is, if everyone else is gone, and you get attacked, these are your warriors. These are the ones who step up.

ADCS: It would be like the transwomen, at that point, who would step up.

ADCA: And that was their role. Then it would go to the women. To address the problem of warrior as a specifically masculine role.

A!: You're also basically pressed against the problem of postmodernism vs traditionalism.

ADCS: Right.

A!: So on the one hand you're talking about the way things were, some of those stories we know because of oral tradition, some we only know because of anthropology, and then we're talking about what does the future hold. And what's our order of operation because of course in general when we're talking about colonization or decolonization, we're talking about how do we throw the master off our back much more than we're talking about…

Lyn

A!: How do you think your job would be different if you weren't so focused on indigenous people? Do you think it would be much more miserable? Would it be worth it?

Lyn: Well, because native people are nicer. I mean, I don't usually use the term "white" but it just seems apt once in a while in lieu of saying a whole bunch of other words… white people are fucking rude, and they're assholes all the time. I prefer to work with native people. [laughs] Even rude, asshole native people are nicer than rude, asshole white people. [laughter]

came, the Jesuits or whoever, did a pretty good job of "all you gotta do is change the name!"

Dominique: Yea, I always like to listen to elders but I've never been very good at hearing what they tell me. [laughter] I've heard traditional people say that the pipe and the cross are same thing.

A!: Fuuuuck.

Dominique: That the smoke brings our prayers up to the great Spirit, I don't think they're the same thing. But, if our pre-contact ancestors were interchangeable with the monotheists we would have to rebel against them too.

A!: For me the point is that 1. native

America is not one thing. Different tribes have different ways in which they wore these values. For me the disturbing part of the story is that my people—who at some point in the geopolitical story were given this choice of, convert or walk to Oklahoma—were really ok with the conversion (relatively few Ottawa from Michigan walked to Oklahoma)…

In other words the way they wore their version of the great spirit ended up being—in their own minds—okay with Catholics. And for me, someone who wants to believe that my predecessors were ready to fuck shit up… Well, they really weren't.

Dominique: For sure. This is related to where you draw the line in the situation that we're in presently. I would like to consider Christianity as something that I know doesn't work for me as a tool. The idea that natives lived a natural, edenic existence that got fucked up but there is a way we could get back there, sounds pretty Christian, but of course my Rez is Catholic, and I don't know if the world views match up necessarily, but colonization wasn't always one-sided, and that's part of the dilemma… that there was an exchange.

And how can we leave our ancestors with agency, if you want to call it that. They were humans who were reacting, and that's sort of how I approach anarchism, because it's mostly a non-native thing, but I like to think that I can use it and not become a European.

it's pan-indigenous right now—that it can be interpreted very easily with other indigenous nations in relation to the core of our practices to ensure that cultural knowledge is transmitted and maintains its relevance or vitality.

So for me that's part of it, thinking in that way that we are part of a cyclical way of being. It's not saying we are going to sit on our hands and wait for shit to change; it's about doing the best we can now.

Dominique

Dominique: When you're talking about decolonization, the problem is… where do you draw the line. What tools are you going to use to decide what things were like before, or who we were before as Ojibwa people.

You have to use experts, like ethnologists, for information. Christian missionaries for indigenous Hymn and Bible translations. Looking backwards can be problematic for the colonized. Political optimists use the child to represent the future. Natives are often times expected to look back on a lost utopia. We're supposed to already be dead. That's sort of my reaction to some primitive yearnings, that seem to say "here's the point that we need to rewind to." I think the drawbacks may be close to those of other utopias.

A!: I heard a disturbing story from one of my elders recently. They basically said that the Ottawa (related to Ojibwa but not quite), that the Ottawa had a pretty fixed notion of the great spirit, that it was basically an origin story of a great spirit that created but was indifferent. But the great spirit was always referred to, so when the Catholics came, it was a seamless transition.

This obviously makes me very uncomfortable because it means that my people were Ok with the Christians when they came! because the world views just weren't that different. and whoever

Indigeneity & Decolonization

This chapter is distinct from the chapter on what we are fighting because indigeneity has a different and perhaps broader definition today than when indigenous people (vs civilized ones) were the only people to roam the earth (or this continent). This chapter also has a different take on a central issue because here we assume that race does not exist, that race is a frame of mind and a way to separate us and make us mistrust each other. It only exists insofar as those in power have determined that our difference from one another is important but not in any important biological, sociological, or ethical way.

Race is an expression of power-over and is the lingua franca of how a State controls a population. On the other hand we are all indigenous, but perhaps ignorant of what that means or how it could have meaning in our lives. We are all from some place and this chapter makes some furtive attempts to contextualize indigeneity as a type of Rosetta Stone, a bridge to reconciling life in this world and remembering another world—the world of spirits, our relations—that still exists.

This is a forced definition of course because (as already noted) there is a certain sloppiness in terminology in native circles. I ask most interviewees about what terms they use to self identify, and they run the gamut for all the reasons one can imagine, including habit, family, or specifically political reasons.

Language and terminology are the kinds of concerns that are an additional, usually silent, burden on native people but also on those who'd like to imagine a different world without all this (imagine a

hand waving over the entirely of our genocidal, massifying, and dying-ofoverheating world).

Against decolonization generally The term *decolonize* has taken on a certain kind of popularity in leftist[1] circles. Like many words it has always had a positive sense, denoting something we can do against the mega-machine, against colonization. It has also had a sub-cultural character, a meaning of *very small things we could do against something very large*: eating a local grain; speaking a few terms from a people who, for generations, have been all but disappeared; even acknowledging original owners of the land we are standing on. All these seem like meager gruel when the owners of this world drive by in Teslas, drink $4 cups of coffee, and eat a selection of foods delivered to them from around the world.

Of course I think that a transformation of our daily lives is necessary. To be successful, the fight for Turtle Island would entail a total transformation. But decolonization, as articulated in most contexts, seemed like an extremely partial and backwards way to attempt that change. Moreover people started using decolonization terminology in goofy contexts, making it an embarrassing way to talk about something serious. At its peak (about four to five years ago) I saw decolonize yoga, decolonize prisons, and decolonize your mind, all offered as if they were as easy to accomplish as changing one's accessories. This trivialized the idea.

Finally (perhaps this dates me), part of my understanding of decolonization was as a description of post-revolutionary change after many of the countries in Africa rejected European colonial rule. A variety of countries were colonies in the traditional sense of the term (ruled by a foreign power that then retreated) and decolonization was the process of extracting this foreign rule economically, culturally (usually linguistically), and politically. The tenor of decolonization in the post-Occupy moment has gestured in this direction—but more as brain-candy than in any serious effort to-

[1]

Klee

A!: What I identify with that I really like (but I guess I want to talk through why it's impossible), is that you are more or less saying that anyone who wants to take this project seriously basically has to make a multi-generational commitment. In other words, indigeneity, whatever that means, will require that kind of time. It's not going to happen in your lifetime. So of course why that's impossible is, the American consumer is not going to accept that they can't buy something. Even an ideology.

Klee: For some reason what you are saying reminds of this discussion around the apocalypse that I have been having with friends, you know because things seem very apocalyptic and so forth. Through my research it became clear—and even Christians are saying this—that Christianity is linear, with this Genesis, with the Christ sacrifice or whatever, coming of Christ's sacrifice, and then judgment day.

Ultimately the logical conclusion of

Christianity is apocalypse, or judgment you know, so looking at it from an indigenous perspective it is cyclical. So we are part of an ongoing process.

So I don't see a beginning and end to it. I don't see it like, oh here's victory over here, you know, here's a goal, I can see a way to achieve something that we want to accomplish which is liberation of our lands, the thriving, the cultural vitality of our people and I hope abolishing these systems of oppression that are built up and reinforced through colonization.

But at this point—and I don't want it to be interpreted as being abstract, cause it's not, it's anything but abstract, it's very clear in relation to the system—it's is an ongoing process. To some degree I think that is part of the western mentality, it's like linear thought, how it's gonna come about.

When we look at multi-generational projects, with the seven generation concepts even from other indigenous nations—certainly

ADCA: And reconstructing for the kids and for ourselves and for a lot of people, what that imagined community looks like and how far it extends across artificial colonial borders, certainly. And also the actual structure vs the traditional structure vs the desired structure of that nation.

The current structure being the reservation systems in which people from multiple different fires are stuck in these little places, the traditional being the traditional fire structure, and then what we can imagine for ourselves…

ADCS: Especially in the context of the current colonial situation.

ADCA: Right. How do we dream big.

ADCS: We can't necessarily go back, but how do we be informed by that, how do we create something that's much more akin to how we were.

And that's where the idea of the stateless nation comes up, which for us is a very powerful idea.

ADCA: And that's the part we do agree on: the nation without a state.

ADCS: Right, and not conflating those two ideas, nation and state, 'cause that happens so often.

ADCA: And I feel like when people get upset about the word nationalism, that's where the conflation is. Loyalty to the nation vs loyalty to the nation-state. And of course I agree, loyalty to the nationstate is terrible.

ADCS: It's also about how much ethnicity has been conflated with race. And that's part of what has happened to indigenous peoples historically in the US, there has been an active attempt through military and bureaucratic means to turn people from identifying as nations to identifying as ethnicities. That's an ongoing effort, however you want to call it. I usually use the word "ethnification." There's a pretty clear process, primarily through bureaucratic means, bureaucratic genocide.

wards the post-colonization decolonization that would be necessary here and now.

Of course we don't live postcolonially. We are (by the broadest definition in the US context) still colonized. Our oppressors are still in their mansions, running their game, and deciding on every material aspect of our lives. We still speak English, we import a great deal of our food, and it mostly comes to us pre-packaged and prepared. We cook by boiling water and running the microwave. Our lives are mostly homogeneous, and unrelated to where we are from. We could literally be living in the same locality as our ancestors and have more in common with someone who plays the same video game as we do than with our neighbors and family. We both stand on the earth and are influenced by her whispers, and at the same time are deaf to the land itself.

In its most perverted form, decolonization was owned by a particularly egregious form of solitary boyscout-ism called rewilding. Rewilding is an attempt to answer the question "What is to be done?" but asked in a way that is entirely about technics and hardly at all about how existentially broken we are, at the heart of all our other problems. Just as decolonization (that is, declaring ourselves enlightened and the problem over) isn't a great way to cure the problems of daily life, rewilding (as curing deer hides and walking barefoot) doesn't solve many problems. Not a great answer, unless the question is "what's your eco-hobby?"

For Decolonization in its Specifics That said, I have had a turn of heart. When I interviewed Gord I wanted to hear his interrogations of the same questions that I had about post-Occupy decolonization terminology and practices, and I kept throwing softball critiques of decolonization, hoping that Gord would engage. He refused. He stayed on message and I walked away from the encounter feeling like Gord was either being obstinate or sticking to talking points as a way of silencing criticism, something I'm used to from others, or maybe that he read me as a critical white person who he

didn't want to engage on that level. Reading over the transcription later, I reexamined my own biases.

Fundamentally the reason that I was against decolonization language was because I didn't trust the authors of it. Like with a lot of Internet culture (especially of the confessional variety like blogs, tumblr, and whatnot), the story we are told is just a story. Stories are great and I often want to hear all of them but the conflation of stories with political action or any version of "here is my story, *this is what you should do with it*" makes me uncomfortable. I want to hear your story without the burden of how you think I should interpret it. I want to establish a relationship with you and your story either before the shortsell, or without it.

Gord demonstrated that the process of decolonization is his project, one that he is working on for himself rather than as something he is selling (in either the ideological or economic marketplaces). Yes, he is advocating that others do the same, but on rereading I took away a really different understanding than when I was pushing against him in person. Sure, Gord is not interested in troubling decolonization (what in the hell did I expect?) but he did make the case for why not: his child.

I have resolved this question in the past by utilizing an even clumsier term to speak to the problem/solution I was looking for. Indigeneity—defined as an imagined, culturally specific set of practices related to the people and land of a biome—seemed worth defending. But the first question asked when one says indigenous is "who decides?," which is a hard question (especially in the urban West). Obviously decolonization has the same problem, but at least it provides answers (and partially the ridiculousness of Decolonize Yoga is informative here). Indigenous politics suffers from the brutal reality that genocide has made the problems of natives' existence a small one, because they are mostly dead and gone. Indigeneity is an attempt to make the problem of natives existential, which decolonize has done a better job of. At the same time, decolonize demonstrates it is the wrong problem in the first place. The

Anpao Duta Collective

ADCS: And through that I became clear that no, this [ADCA] is the person I want to be with, and this is the situation in which I want to be, and come hell or high water, that's what I'm going to put my energy towards. And a huge part of our relationship—relationship in the broader sense of the word—has really been wrapped up in and focused on the idea of radical indigeneity, from specifically a radical, nationalist, Dakota idea. Having this place of primacy both in our lives individually but also together. It's a focus that both of us have decided to throw what weight and energy we have, behind.

ADCA: So there's this idea and then one of the things that's important for all of us, all of the people doing youth work, including some of the elders, is that kids know what fire they originally come from, in the confederation of fires.

But I'm having this really interesting problem… I hear kids introduce themselves but they'll identify… this is weird, there's a girl who identifies as "whahetua" and "isanti". Isanti denotes four of the seven council fires. It's a linguistic term and a geographical location term. It refers to the four bands who lived primarily in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan.

So she's identifying, and she's being told by an elder, this one elder in particular, to identify in that way. Where her fire is now on par with the reservation that is located in Nebraska. And that's a very dangerous idea in my opinion if you're actually talking about the cultivation of Dakota—not "yellow medicine nation" but Dakota—identity.

ADCS: So that's where identity… it's realizing that with all these different communities, we're all still one nation, but separate. And for example the Lakota struggles are just as much ours, so that's going back to that imagined community.

a colonized woman still. Even ways that I deal with my children, in terms of discipline for example… spanking, yelling, putting you in a room, these kinds of things, that's how I disciplined my children for the greater part of their lives.

Then the more I got into ceremony, the more I learned from my elders, the more I learned from the grandmothers, I learned how do it differently, much more like a gentle redirecting…

If my kids are getting into something, instead of yelling at them to get out of there, I can say "hey, let's go outside, there's things we can do out here…" So, that kind of work. Acknowledging that maybe I wasn't disciplining my kids in the best ways, which is pretty hard to accept.

Or people might say that me getting an education at McMaster, they might say "you're not really hard core like these other people, going to the ivory tower." So, yea, people might think that was not a good idea, but it was a good idea for me. I got to learn about who I was, I got to learn about power structures, and I created an analysis to understand why I'm here and what good I can do while I'm here.

But it's also very easy to just fall into the role of indigena anarchist and identify as that, it means being very broad based, but the sense of self is lost.

I think that that's a really huge issue that no one talks about. The self. We're always engaged on collectiveness, which is very important, but the identity of our selves is lost. And I believe that's where our power comes from, knowing who we are and where we come from and our connection to the land. Polynesian cultures have this concept of mana, this power you have that is based in your identity, not a power that can be seen, but felt.

A!: That's very provocative. In anarchist circles there are a lot of anarchists who agree with what you said 100%. Mostly to the exclusion of everything else [laughter].

problem is still that the State has power over native people and Capitalism is largely how it is experienced.

The issue of indigeneity is one of power. As long as indigenous people, ideas, and ways of life are being repressed, they remain a forlorn expression of powerlessness and not the seed that could flower into an entire new, and old, way of living. As it stands, the kudzu of Civilization won't allow any more growth as it's taken the nutrients, space, light, and mind-share from everything that came before. How do we clear the kudzu, while maintaining the conceptual space that would be required for something truly different to grow?

Gord

Gord: In Canada the anarchists are more influenced by indigenous struggles and they're gonna do more political organizing and political analysis about anti-colonial resistance than in the US.

Decolonization, I think… anarchists are decolonizing from the empire. It's just that it's not as a nation, as a people, it's as individuals who are also coming from highly dysfunctional communities. So they're banding together… This punk hippie aesthetic is maybe part of the decolonization, like "I'm not gonna wear the same clothing as you, I'm gonna wear my punk rock-style attire, whatever"… The black bloc, eating out of dumpsters, squatting houses, living communally, that's decolonizing, but for the most part they're not family units, right? They're constructed communities, mostly in urban areas, sometimes you have these communal living situations in the countryside…

With indigenous people it's gonna be different, right? There's decolonizing like, "I'm not gonna eat that crap processed food, I'm going to eat my traditional foods." That's decolonizing. "I'm gonna go out on the land and learn how to construct shelters and make fires and relearn these skills," that's indigenous decolonizing. I'm

gonna learn my songs, dances, carvings, and stuff from my ancestors. That's indigenous decolonizing. As a nation we're going to assert our sovereignty over our territory. That's indigenous decolonizing. The anarchists are not anywhere around those kinds of concepts. They're breaking away from empire and trying to construct communities within it, so it's a very different dynamic that's going on. And that's where the cultural stuff starts to come in. The anarchists are creating a culture from the wreckage of the empire, or whatever. Indigenous people have a culture, we just have to revive it, relearn it, so those are big differences.

In Canada and in the northwest, some anarchists are learning primitive skills as well, and I think that's a big part of decolonizing. 'Cause anarchists, who are predominantly white, euro-American, euro-Canadian, whatever… their ancestors were indigenous, tribal people. So bushcrafting is in a sense a way of decolonizing, going back to the land. All people come from the land. All people were tribal peoples at one time.

A!: Does this definition start to lose the power of the terminology, though?

Gord: What terminology?

A!: Decolonization; in other words if everyone can do it, then…

Gord: I don't think it loses power, I think it's good to expand the concept of decolonization. Is decolonization only for indigenous people? I don't think so. Everybody needs to decolonize, because everybody's been colonized. You know, western Europe was colonized by the Romans. You know, aside from small pockets of resistance, maybe.

A!: So you're more or less saying that you think that for both individuals and groups, decolonization is the path out of the current system. You think that there are some breaking points…

Gord: Decolonizing's gotta be a fundamental part of a revolutionary resistance movement. The revolutionaries, like in the 50s and 60s, the Che Guevaras and that, they didn't talk about decolonization, they talked about the new revolutionary human being,

taking the name away from them. You're undermining the whole thing that they feel like they're building.

Danielle

Danielle: I think that what indigenous peoples need to do the most right now is drop their egos, and start to work as communities. And remember the roles we had as people working together in community towards a common cause. 'Cause we're kind of seeing ourselves through this Eurocentric lens still. We're trying to decolonize ourselves, but… Ultimately our subconsciouses have been programmed to understand our identities and our thoughts and our ideas through this Eurocentric lens. So I always understand it as work that has to start with the individual, because if we're not willing to undo these ideas in our own minds first, then there's no way it's going to happen on a collective level. So we might have these issues where we want to go on the land and be on the front lines to stop this industrialization, but there's also a lot of work that needs to be undone on an individual level.

For me it goes individual, family, clan, nation. That's how it works. And unless we're willing to engage in that hard work individually, it's not going to happen collectively.

And that individual work is really tough. You're facing, like, "oh, I did learn that I was this kind of person, but actually I'm that other kind." And that internal conflict a lot of times will just make people not want to engage. Instead of putting all that passion into themselves, they'll put it into their communities, and it's not that that's bad work, but it would be more effective if it were done on an individual level first.

A!: What's an example?

Danielle: For me personally, because I'm an urban indigenous woman I could identify as an indigena anarchist and live my life as such. But in unpacking that I have realized that I'm colonized; I'm

ing they're crazy if they just had a better understanding of their history. Because a lot of it's hidden, of course. The government… the educational system doesn't teach you this stuff.

Gord: Yea, it's weird. The idea of decolonizing, I'm sure it's … It's in the black liberation stuff but I don't see it too much.

A!: The Black Panther writing was clearer about this, right.

Gord: That's why I was saying I wouldn't poo poo anyone talking about decolonizing because everyone needs to do it. They have a tribal ancestry. All people do, white people too. So they can pursue decolonization, just like there are peoples in Europe who fought against their owners. They have some things to be proud of.

The weird thing is that in Europe it's the right wing that claims that ancestry, so the left wing doesn't want anything to do with it. In Europe it gets weirder. When you go to Europe, the white people are much more grounded, they have a much better sense of self, better sense of history, they have more class consciousness. But when it comes to the tribal thing a lot of them have no clue, except the right wing, which invokes Odin or whatever, and their tribal history, their tribal lineage.

But like I was saying, the politics in the US. are very black-centric, especially for anarchists and the left in general. I mean when the talk is about race, or anti-racism, etc. So I can see how it would get weird with the decolonize thing. But it's an interesting critique of "occupy" because they're challenging the idea of occupation as being a good thing, something to pursue, to do more of. But it's context too: Occupy Wall Street is clearer, what the goal was, but then radical natives come along and are like "we don't like this, let's expand this to 'decolonize' and then all the people who invested in Occupy, they're not gonna like that because you're

which we can interpret as saying "you gotta decolonize from empire." That's what they talked about. We can't be the imperialist, we can't be the capitalist. We must be something new. They were… in their utopian vision, their thing was "we'll create the new human being!" But the real human being was here already, for tens of thousands of years before empire and colonialism existed, there were real human beings. That's the indigenous peoples all around the world, living their lives. So the concept of decolonization needs to be expanded: everybody needs to decolonize.

A!: What have been some of the clearest success stories of decolonization for you? In other words, perhaps, there are people who can do it on the weekends, … what does success look like to you?

Gord: Sure. Well, language is one… for a lot of indigenous peoples it's hard to learn the language. Nowadays, the children in elementary school, there's a language program, so they're learning the language, and they know more than their parents know. 'Cause a lot of people lost their language.

A!: Which people are you talking about? Because I'm sure that's not true of all nations, right?

Gord: It's pretty wide-spread here.

A!: Oh wow.

Gord: In Canada there's a very strong language revival thing going on. Mostly for children, since adults have a harder time, and there's not a very practical use… I'm not going to go around speaking Kwak'wala because there's not many Kwak'wala speakers around me. Language, which is one aspect of culture, some people say it's vital, but I think it's just one aspect of it, and I think overall, the whole culture thing, the Kwakiutl culture, it will never be the same as it was before colonization. So much has been lost.

But the thing is that culture comes from the land. The root word of culture is actually "from the land." That's why indigenous cultures are all similar even though they're all different. Because it depends on the land that they're in. On the west coast we have a very distinct culture…

But I'm not that concerned about the details, like language or whatever, because as your decolonization process continues, and you're on the land, you're gonna get culture. Traditional culture will be revived, one way or another. If there's a systemic collapse of society, of western civilization, and everybody's going back to the land because that's how they have to survive, then their culture's gonna come back. I'm not so worried about that. I'm more thinking in terms of survival. What do we need to survive, as people. Because the system can't last forever.

So what do we need to know? What are the priorities of survival? Shelter, fire, water, food. I don't put language at the top of that. My decolonization journey… I'm just saying language isn't the most important thing for me. I want to learn other traditional skills to survive because western civilization cannot sustain itself.

Decolonization is a process. You can't stand up and say "I'm a decolonized person." Until the colonial system is dismantled, eradicated, done away with, there will always be this colonial structure that we have to live in. So no one can ever get out and say, "well, I'm decolonized now. It's all good." Even if they know their language fluently. I mean, you can find fluent language speakers here on the coast. They know their language, they know a lot about their culture, but they're complete sellouts because they're capitalists, right? They have no analysis of capitalism. They have a good analysis of colonialism, but not of capitalism. They know their language but they're sellouts. That just shows that knowing your language doesn't make you a decolonized person. Knowing how to carve masks doesn't make you decolonized. It's a part of the process, but there's no end to it until the colonial system is gone and you have the ability of generations living on the land, relearning their traditional cultures or learning a culture from that land.

A!: How do you raise a decolonized child?

Gord: There are many different ways to approach it. One is, don't put them in the education system, teach them yourself, 'cause

they're just gonna get… that's a big part of colonization, the indoctrination of the school system.

A!: Sure. So for you the clock is ticking on when you need to be out of the city, right?

Gord: In a sense. To get her out of the city definitely would be a good thing, so yea there is that imperative to get her out. Those things, plus also feeding her well, not processed foods, that's an important part of a good life style, that's how you make a healthy person.

A!: She's still nursing now, so you've got some time.

Gord: Yea. And she can be exposed to our traditional culture back in our communities, that's an important part of decolonizing. You know native kids who grow up in the city have very little exposure to indigenous culture…

A lot of people, a lot of natives will end up in prison, and that's the first time they get exposed to their culture in a serious way. They'll go to sweat lodge ceremonies, they'll have pipe ceremonies inside the prisons, here in Canada anyway, they'll learn carving…

There are lots of things you can learn in prison, and one of them that some natives learn is cultural stuff. Politics as well.

Native children, our daughter, will always be colonized to some extent because we're colonized, we're gonna raise her… but we're gonna try our best to make her as decolonized as possible, so that when she's more conscious as an individual, she can proceed and be better equipped than we were. It took a long time to get to the idea of decolonization, or even that colonization occurred here, what the impacts of that were. That's why history's so important, it explains to you how you came to be where you are now, as a person, as a family, as a community, as a people. Without that understanding it's so confusing, why people are so messed up, for example. Why are they drinking all the time, why are they alcoholics, why are they drug addicts. Well, a lot of it is through colonization. The impact of colonization, that's what makes people dysfunctional. There probably would be a lot fewer people running around think-