

Page One Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 5

The World is Burning

October-November 2019

Policing Public Space

Cop violence over \$2.75

Almost 12 years ago now, on December 31st 2007, BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit) officer Johannes Mehserle shot Oscar Grant in the back on a platform of the Fruitvale Station. While Oscar lay dying, rather than try to save his life, BART and OPD (Oakland Police Department) cops frantically confiscated phones from passengers who had been filming. Luckily, they didn't get all the phones, and the relatively new technology (at the time) of video capable smart phones enabled the world to see what actually happened unlike so many official stories justifying police violence: Oscar lay face down and cuffed on the platform—following a train scuffle he may or may not have been involved in after which several (mostly Black) young men were pulled from a car by BART officers—and appeared to be saying something to Mehserle, who stood above him. Then, without any visual sign of provocation, Mehserle drew his service weapon and shot Grant in the back.*

Grant's tragic murder, and the subsequent lack of accountability for Mehserle, was a spike in a pattern that would only intensify in coming years. While the harassment of young POC folks in Oakland was nothing new, it had been ramping up in the Bay Area at this time. Public transportation lines—especially east/west BART trains—were the corridors by which those who didn't fit in with the designs of gentrifiers came and went to work or play in the spaces they were increasingly getting excluded from. The outraged responses from community members—calls for Mehserle's firing and arrest, arguments for and against 'community policing' or disarming BART cops, weeks of riots and attendant appeals for calm, support for those arrested, etc.—in hindsight mostly failed to see the horrible incident as a part of a concerted effort of selective enclosure of previously common spaces.

In NYC over the last few weeks, video and photographic footage of police violence in and around subway stops and train cars that come dangerously close to the Mehserle/Grant tragedy have been documented. It is of course much clearer now, partially because of recent history in

Oakland, the Lower East Side in Manhattan, Bushwick in Brooklyn, etc., that the violent campaign against young Black and POC bodies in the form of the current 'fare evasion' crackdown is part of a similar strategy of enclosure. 'Gentrification'—itself a gentrified euphemism for forced displacement—doesn't just happen. It is an orchestrated campaign of removing working class and poor people from areas—first neighborhoods, then entire cities—designated as future property for rich and middle class elites. It is glaringly obvious now that the tried and true method of clearing the commons to make way for the next phase of capitalist expansion is ramping up to a newly grotesque level in New York City. And in the historically ensured racialized class/caste system of urban "america," we see the disgusting reality play out as it has in recent days.

The arteries of bus routes and subway lines connecting neighborhoods and boroughs of New York City (or Santiago or Oakland or any city) though arduous and imperfect, are some of the only common spaces we have left. Public transit breaks down—to varying limited extents—the segregation inherent in a capitalist city, as well as somewhat counteracts the economic and cultural marginalization of working class people. This is precisely what is under attack by this city, as evidenced everyday by the quantitatively weaponized and growing numbers of blue uniforms, under-covers, and cameras on almost every subway platform seeking to further enclose these common and restrict their accessibility. As we know, the cops have and will use violence, including murder, to enforce these new enclosures and the exclusion they entail.

This is clearly not about evading subway fares; the increased police presence and security cameras cost far more than would be recouped from a few kids getting ticketed for jumping turnstiles, or even a bunch of folks getting too scared to try. People who are forced to risk getting harassed by cops are not trying to scam the MTA, they are just trying to get where they are going and often don't have the cash or at least don't have much to spare, so wouldn't be paying fares anyway.

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This is about enclosure of public space and forced removal of working class people of color through restriction of transportation in order to make way for hyper-gentrification. It is our duty to defend what's left of common spaces, which begins—and ends—with *everyone's* collective ability to move freely throughout our own cities.

Responses to Grant's murder in Oakland then—including spontaneous mass direct action demanding accountability from BART and OPD; and presently in Santiago, Chile, where huge evasion protests against fare increases have escalated into a nearly full blown uprising, show what can happen when oppressed communities are fed up and utilize their collective power to demand more. More freedom, more common spaces, more abundance. In NYC the popular response has (thus far) been comparatively smaller, but there is momentum building to resist and reclaim that will hopefully only grow in scope and scale. ■

** Full disclosure: Fruitvale Station had once been the author's stop, and Oscar worked at the author's regular grocery store.*



19 yr old Adrian Napier held up at gunpoint by NYPD for hopping the turnstile on October 25, 2019.
"Call my mom" he said.

Photo courtesy of the Free Thought Project

David Gilbert on *Treyf* podcast

*David turned 75 on October 6! This anti-imperialist freedom fighter has been in prison since 1981 for his involvement in the Brinks case, an action in solidarity with the Black Liberation Army. Below is an excerpt from an interview that he did earlier this year on the *Treyf*, a radical jewish podcast.*

You can find the full interview at treyfpodcast.com

"Racial scapegoating was always central to US politics and especially after the advances of the '60s—that was Nixon's whole Southern Strategy. But it's at a high pitch now. So there's a greater danger of fascism because of a combination of

frustrations from whites who feel they got screwed by neoliberalism, and the way that's being mobilized. In a way, it's easier for people to take out their frustration on someone who's weaker than them. You can get some satisfaction by stomping on immigrants whereas if you take on the banks and corporations and the military and the government, you end up in here.

So there's a range of frustrations. And the economy and environmental catastrophe is going to get a lot worse, so those frustrations are going to get worse. Which means there's a real danger of fascism. Which was always there. The ruling class probably would prefer to rule by passivity and manipulation, but if push comes to shove, they prefer fascism which is still pro-corporate, while socialism would wipe them out as a class. That's capitalism's fallback if things unravel.

So fascism is more of a danger, and antifascism is more on the agenda. But there's a trap there. As righteous as it is to oppose fascism, to shout them down and have them go back into the woodwork, we don't want to get locked into this boxing match between the far left and the far right. Because the main enemy is capitalism: the broad ruling class who's creating the economic conditions fanning all these frustrations. And if it's the extreme left and extreme right having boxing matches, most people aren't going to sympathize or care.

We need to be coming out with an economic program that speaks to some of these frustrations. It's tricky to do because there's a history of white union organizing that sold out people of color, that consolidated white privileges. But there are ways to do it that ally with the people who are most oppressed [and often] have struggles that are leading around this, like Justice for Janitors or the 15 dollar minimum wage or environmental justice.

So I like it whenever the fascists are shouted down or surrounded by so many counter-demonstrators that they go back. But our main job is to oppose imperialism, oppose capitalism, and develop a program that gets at least some sectors of white workers—as strong as the tradition and history of white supremacy is—to see that their interests really lie with allying with people of color and people in the Global South." ■

Write David:

*David Gilbert #83A6158
3040 Wende Road
Alden, NY 14004*

Antifascist David Campbell Begins 18 Month Sentence at Rikers

NYC based antifascist was taken into custody on October 23rd, 2019. Below is part of his statement:

"I have a confession to make: I'm an antifascist, and I'm going to jail for it. It's a long, complicated story. In a nutshell, I was arrested at a protest against the alt-right in NYC last year. A brawl broke out, and I got caught up in it. A cop tackled me from behind, broke my leg, and lied about it. Tabloids smeared me as a thug and the DA charged me with gang assault, a vague and draconian law. It legally makes any group of 3 or more people engaged in a fight a gang, and makes them all legally responsible for each others' actions, and carries a 3.5 year mandatory minimum. If I go to trial and lose, I do at least 3.5 years in an upstate prison, with Nazi gangs and inmates serving decades, and then at least 5 years parole. The Manhattan DA wants desperately to shoehorn me into the Antifa Bogeyman category and make an example of me. They can probably do it. My superb lawyers at NDS Harlem and the other dozen lawyers I consulted all agreed: short of going to trial and rolling the dice, there's nothing I can do. The Manhattan DA simply doesn't want to let this go. My lawyers generally put my odds at trial around 50-50 *at best*. I took a terrible plea to cut my losses." ■

Read more at freedavidcampbell.com

Write David:

*David Campbell #3101900657
12 Lower Ward
Eric M. Taylor Center
10-10 Hazen Street
East Elmhurst, NY 11370*

Prison Letters

Below is a letter from Kuwasi Balagoon, a revolutionary New Afrikan anarchist. Kuwasi was a former member of the Black Panther Party and later the Black Liberation Army. He died in prison on December 13, 1986.

Tonight, i am up eating peanut butter sandwiches, just putting the stale bread over steaming water, when for years i automatically threw it out and fed it to the birds (this being one of the few times the birds might be better off for it). i think that waste and bourgeois thinking really affects how we operate, both in terms of perceiving strong points and weak points and effectiveness, when it comes to acting after we make our observations. In Vietnam, GIs had to burn, bury, and grind the stuff that they sent to the dumps, because the Cong would use the tin cans, wire, bottles, and whatever else against them. They can't do that here because they're always encouraging people to consume more and make more waste.

On the other end, i think that making the most of everything is exemplified pretty well by working in a collective setting and living in a co-op, and it seems like it would be an easy thing to found an anarchist food co-op somewhere in Toronto. As time goes on, anti-imperialist anarchism will prove to be the only anarchism, since others will need to make alterations. We should push the idea of collectives and federations, while continuing to support anti-imperialist struggle with the aim of not merely building a real movement that really supports armed struggle but an actual infrastructure. ■

January 22, 1984

Antifascist Gage Halupowski Begins Nearly 6 Year Sentence in Oregon

Portland based antifascist is in transit to begin a nearly 6 year sentence in Oregon state prison

From Antifa Sacramento:

Gage was arrested at a counter demonstration against a far-right rally in Portland, Oregon on June 29th, 2019 and had been locked up at the local county jail since that day with a high bail. Then on November 1st Gage accepted a non-cooperation plea deal, pled guilty to an assault charge, and was sentenced to nearly 6 years in prison. At this point he is still in the county jail, and that's most likely where he'll be for another couple weeks before he gets moved to a state prison. Once Gage gets moved to a state prison in Oregon we'll be sure to update his address accordingly so he can still get the letters and solidarity cards he deserves. Check out the contact info for the two local anti-fascist crews in Portland for more information on ways to support Gage or other anti-fascists in Portland facing serious charges. ■

Check [@Antifasac_](https://twitter.com/Antifasac_) on twitter for an updated address

Calls for Support

Chelsea Manning: Chelsea is still in federal custody for refusing to testify in front of a grand jury. She has currently accrued over \$125,000 in fines. Write her a letter of support and donate <xychelsea.is>

Chelsea Elizabeth Manning A0181426
William G. Truesdale Adult Detention Center
2001 Mill Road Alexandria, VA 22314

Eric King: On August 29, 2019 anarchist prisoner EK entered a “non-guilty” plea for a charge of assaulting a correctional officer. He is sitting in Englewood awaiting trial. You can write him here:

Eric King #27090045
FCI Englewood
9595 West Quincy Avenue
Littleton, CO 80123

Jalil Muntaqim: Urge Governor Cuomo to grant Jalil’s application to Commute the Sentence to Time Served. You must refer to Jalil as: Anthony Bottom, 77A4283, Sullivan Correctional Facility, Fallsburg NY 12733-0116.

Call: (518) 474-8390; Tweet: @NYGovCuomo Write: The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of the State of New York
Executive Chamber
State Capital Building
Albany, NY 12224
<freejalil.com for more info>

Jeremy Hammond: Jeremy, an anarchist and hacktivist political prisoner was meant to head to a halfway house this December. However, in August, he was summoned to appear before a grand jury in Virginia which he has resisted. It is believed to be the one that is currently imprisoning Chelsea Manning. You can write him here:

Jeremy Hammond, A0182888
William G. Truesdale Adult Detention Center
2001 Mill Road
Alexandria, VA 22314

Russell “Maroon” Shoatz: In August, Maroon underwent surgery and had an extended stay in the prison infirmary. From Maroon:

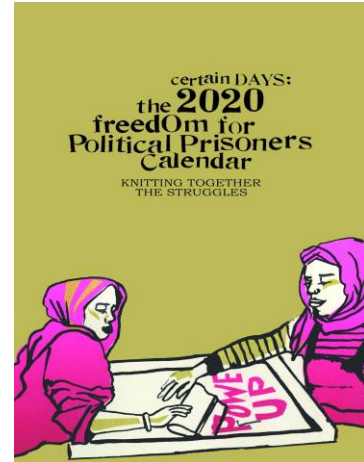
“As a political prisoner and fighter for over 50 years, I’ve now reached a point where those close to me are can no longer shoulder the things they’re called on to do without broader community support.”

Donate here: <https://bit.ly/2klYrAM>
Smart Communications
PADOC/SCI Fayette
Russell Shoats AF3855
PO Box 33028
St. Petersburg FL, 33733

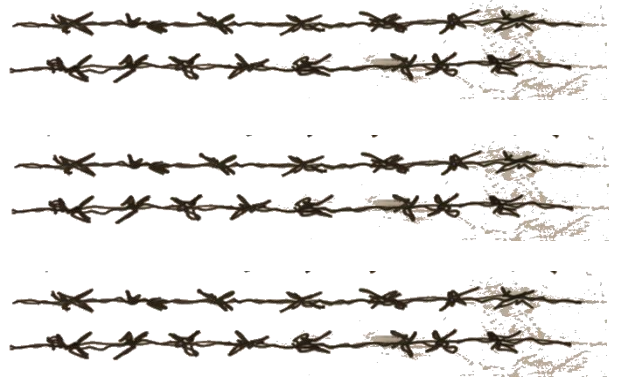
Certain Days: 2020 Freedom for Political Prisoners Calendar

On sale now!

Now in its 19th year of publication, the *Certain Days: Freedom for Political Prisoners Calendar* is required reading for radicals, leftists, and all who support political prisoners and advocate the end of mass incarceration. All proceeds support prisoners and grassroots organizations.



Purchase one from Page One or at NYC ABC biweekly political prisoner letter writing night.
More info at nycabc.wordpress.com
Order in bulk at burningbooks.com



Page One Collective focuses on spreading the word/s of and about political prisoners past and present. Our name comes from the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) justification for rejecting a letter sent to a U.S. held political prisoner: “Page one calls for solidarity”

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