



“If you’re going to be generous and honest, you have to be criminal”
- member of Solvgnen

The Anarchist history of SantaCon

Santacon's predecessor was a demonstration by the Danish anarchist guerilla theater group, Solvognen, which staged actions to rebel against exploitation and control by the bougeoisie. In 1974, Solvognen’s carefully planned, participatory, and fun “Santa’s Army” demonstration escalated over four days. Day 1 was a standard Danish Christmas parade - 35 Danish people joyously marched down the streets of Copenhagen, pulling a 30-foot tall goose, waving Danish flags, singing carols, and handing out hot drinks. Day 2’s performance became political -- the Santas broke into a General Motors factory and sang carols calling out corporate greed. On the fourth day, the Santas attacked Copenhagen’s Labor Court with rakes and sickles and made speeches about the unemployment crisis from a crane. They then sneaked into a major department store, changed into their Santa gear, and graciously announced to shoppers that, in the holiday spirit, everything was free. The surprised and gleeful crowd began to take items from the shelves. Police then arrived to arrest the Santas and beat them in the street, while children cried and some adults tried to get the police to stop. A photograph of cops beating a Santa was published in every Danish newspaper. The group later said that Santa Army was a comment on the “bourgeoisie terror on Christmas and unemployment in the wake of the oil crisis.”

In 1994, the Cacophony Society, "a randomly gathered network of individuals united in the pursuit of experiences beyond the pale of mainstream society" (i.e. group of San Franciscan surrealist artists), got together for a joyful anti-consumerist subversion of typical Christmas expectations. At the first "Cheap Suits Santas" as they called it, 35 Santas got into a snowball fight, marched into a local hotel shouting “ho, ho, ho,”, made speeches from a street lamp, flooded Macy’s shouting "Charge it!", flipped people off, crashed Christmas parties, and went to a strip club. Members staged a hanging of Santa as a protest of the "middle class hypocrisy" of the holiday. At a time when a kind, generous image of Santa was being used to sell tons of products, Cheap Suit Santas subverted the wholesomeness of this figure and mocked commercialism at its core.

Though Solvognen only did their Santa action once (“We have one rule – never do anything twice.”), the more spontaneous version of the Santa gathering became an annual ritual. The event, known variously as Santarchy, Santa Rampage, the Red Menace, and Santapalooza, expanded to other cities primarily through very early internet adopters, coming to New York in 1998. Over the years, as SantaCon expanded to hundreds of cities and thousands of attendees, it lost any semblance of its political foundation and instead became the absurd fratty drunk free-for-all we know today. The image of Santa has been thoroughly corrupted by the event.

What lessons can we learn from the dominant cultures cooption of radical traditions? What opportunities does Christmas provide those of us interested in autonomy?

On the night before Christmas, we'll all be about
While the people are sleeping, we'll realize our clout
We'll expropriate goods from the stores, 'coz that's fair
And distribute them widely, to those who need care.
- Pyotr Kropotkin

◦ DECEMBER CALENDAR ◦



- Wed Dec 4:** Icarus Project Radical Mental Health Workshop series: Explorations in Personal Transformation and Collective Liberation - 7pm at Bluestockings Bookstore (172 Allen St, MH)
- RAM Support Thru the Walls (letter writing) for David Easley - 7pm at The Base (1302 Myrtle Ave, BK)
- alQaws Benefit Show x NYC to Support Palestinian Queers - 6pm at The Peoples Forum (320 West 37th Street, MH)
- Thurs Dec 5:** No New Jails NYC Exhibit Opening: The Art and Design of a Movement - 11am thru Jan 15, 2020 at MORUS (155 Ave C MH)
- Fri Dec 6:** Grapple Den Blacklight Wrestling Party: with Predator vs Krampus - 8pm at 3FS Midtown (38 W 32nd St, 14th Fl, Suite 1406 MH)
- Sat Dec 7:** Benefit for Roots Unbound (alternative to incarceration gardening program) Feat. Kaleidoscope, Exit Order, Nandas, and Sister Anne - 8pm at Purgatory (675 Central Ave, BK)
- Wed Dec 11:** LGBTQ Self-Defense Class - 6pm at Brooklyn Community Pride Center (1360 Fulton St, BK)
- Fri Dec 13:** Metropolitan Anarchist Coordinating Council (MACC) General Assembly - 7pm at Verso Books (20 Jay St #1010, BK)
- Sun Dec 15:** SecuriTEA Time: FeministCyberSelfDefense - 1pm at Bluestockings Bookstore (172 Allen St, MH)
- Thurs Dec 19:** Screening of Nae Pasaran, The story of Scottish workers who refused to build Chilean plane parts during pinochet’s dictatorship, with Cosmos Brigada 171 and Socialist Rifle Association - 7pm at East River Bar
- Tues Dec 31:** New Years Eve Noise Demo in solidarity with incarcerated people - Time and Date to be determined

WEEKLY/BIWEEKLY EVENTS

- Mondays** Books through Bars - send books to incarcerated people. Every Mon. at 7:30 pm @ Freebird books (123 Columbia St., BK)
- Tuesdays** NYC Anarchist Black Cross - write letters to incarcerated people and enjoy a free vegan dinner. Every other Tues. Oct 1, 15, and 29 at 7 pm at The Base (1302 Myrtle Ave, BK)
- Wednesdays** Times up - free bike repair open workshop. Every Wed. at 6:30-8:30 @ 99 South 6th St (BK) // Books through Bars - send books to incarcerated people. Most Wed. at 7 pm @ Freebird books at 123 Columbia St. (BK)
- Saturdays** The Base open library hours. Every Sat. 2-6 pm @ The Base (1302 Myrtle, BK) // Food Not Bombs Brooklyn - sharing free vegan food with others. Every Sat. at 3 p.m. at the northwest corner of Von King (Tompkins) park (Lafayette and Marcy, BK) // Club A kitchen - food & harm reduction distro. Every Sat. at 4 pm @ Myrtle Broadway, BK // Trans boxing, \$10-20 sliding scale. Every Sat at 4 pm @ Overthrow (9 Bleecker St, MH) // Times up - free bike repair open workshop. Every Sat. at 6:30-8:30 @ 99 South 6th St, BK)
- Sundays** Food Not Bombs Manhattan - sharing free vegan food with others. Every Sun., cook at the Catholic Worker (36 E 1st St, MH) at 1pm, and serve at Tompkins Square Park (MH) at 4:15pm. // Books through Bars - send books to incarcerated people. Every Sun. at 2 pm @ Freebird books (123 Columbia St., BK) //



nyc antifascist
incarcerated on
rikers island

how to
support
david
campbell

www.freedavidcampbell.com

donate

donate money to fill his commissary, fund letter writing events, pay to send him clothes and books, pay his bills while he's away and help support him financially when he gets out.

to donate, click the donate button at freedavidcampbell.com for one-time donations or to set up recurring monthly donations

write

receiving and writing letters is one of the few ways david will be able to connect with comrades and the people he loves. some of things he cares about and books he's reading can be found on his support website, as well as instructions for sending packages.

write to him at:
david campbell #3101900657
eric m. taylor center (EMTC)
10-10 hazen street
east elmhurst, ny 11370

visit

seeing friends in person will be an important part of keeping david connected to the world outside of prison.

because he can only receive two visits a week (of up to three people each visit), we're coordinating visits with each other. email visit@freedavidcampbell.com for a link to the shared calendar.



Unfare NYC is a way to help each other avoid encounters with police in the subway and on buses. DM or @ us when you spot cops – especially those doing fare enforcement or hiding by turnstiles. The more detail you can include, the better.
[@unfarenyc](https://twitter.com/unfarenyc)

An excerpt from

Trust for action; motivations, intimacy and accountability

Trust is crucial to taking risks together and moving on our goals. Trust is not the same as friendship. Trust is extremely rare (and it should be). You are not entitled to anyone’s trust, and no one is entitled to yours.

Affirmative trust

Accountability is a foundation of trust. Trusting people is not as a lack of red flags or transgressions, but rather is a process of building a relationship. Trust doesn’t come from a friend never doing anything hurtful, sketchy or stupid. It comes from their reaction to criticism and actions going forward. A friend listening to your feelings and incorporating and acting on them into their life builds a tremendous amount of trust. It is crucial to check friends who do things that make you feel unsafe, weird or otherwise strange. If you can really trust someone, they will listen and react sensitively. A cop or someone trying to manipulate will be less likely to act in an accommodating way. Most people have internalized horrible things; most of us were socialized by foul constructs and hierarchies. When these issues rear their head, we should not be surprised. Rather we should understand moments of hurt as inevitable and opportunities to

show commitment to each other. An accidental transgression in a friendship, for me, is crucial part of vetting – perhaps my version of being jumped into a gang. It opens space to demonstrate the commitments, emotional fortitude, and maturity that I consider crucial to deep trust.

Trust vs security culture

Sometimes a lack of trust has stopped people from communicating, coordinating and getting together. To solve this issue, some people have asked, “how do we build trust?” This is the wrong question.

The function of spokes councils, coordinating meetings, debriefs and coalitions is to connect groups and individuals who don’t know each other. The notion that you could trust someone who you barely know or have never met shows a fundamental misunderstanding of concepts of trust. Instead we should ask - how can people who don’t know each other work together without *having* to trust each other?

The answer is good security culture, good tactics, and a little bit of forethought. For example, you can have a spokes council and all agree to roll in separate affinity groups to a march. You and your affinity group could plan an action that requires more numbers than you have; before the march kicks off, you could tip other affinity groups the least information possible (risk level, number of people

needed, and relevant scouting information) to allow them to safely act in an informed way. If you want to organize a debrief of an action, reach out by saying it’s a meeting for people who want to share thoughts about the action, not a meet up for people who were there. At the meet up, ask that people don’t use names and don’t say things which implicate anyone. Discuss the action in generalities, without naming yourself or anyone else as a participant (ex. “I heard people pushed through a police line with umbrellas”, not “it was great when we pushed through that police line and I am so glad Janice brought those umbrellas”).

Infiltration

We have to communicate and organize in ways that make us resilient to snitches and infiltration. If we only get together if we are 100% sure we aren’t infiltrated, our organizing will be very slow. Instead we can use practices that keep people safe regardless of trust levels. Never talk about anything illegal you or anyone else has done or wants to do. Be aware of what questions you ask, and don’t ask for details or names of people. Give people space and let them come to you, don’t push folks, be sensitive and change the topic if someone seems uncomfortable. Actively try to avoid knowing about others’ criminal activity. If you see people you recognize at an action but you are not in their affinity group, give them space, and don’t follow them or watch they are doing.



THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

On December 4th, 1969 prominent black panther Fred Hampton was executed in his bed by cook county police under orders from the FBI.. An FBI informant in the house was instrumental in the plan, giving the feds detailed floorplans of the house and drugging Fred Hampton so he was not able to wake up when the cops raided.

On December 8th, 2008 a large Christmas tree was set ablaze in Syntagma Square Athens during the rioting that followed the police murder of 15 year old Alexis Grigoropoulos. This was towards the beginning of the Greek insurrection that would help spark the worldwide wave of insurrection from 2008-2012.

On December 13, 2013 autonomous rebels torched a massive coca-cola sponsored Christmas tree on a major avenue in Mexico City. This attack came in the context of a day of mobilization against a transit fare hike and capitalism. As a comrade in Mexico City stated “The symbolic burning of the tree from Coca-Cola wasn’t just meant as an attack against the symbol of North American capitalism, but also as an attack against the culture of consumerism, an attack against religious traditions imposed by those who believe they’re the owners of the world, an attack on patriarchy, against power and all religious and moral authority.

On December 16 2014, a person in a santa suit robbed a bank in San Fransisco in broad daylight using SantaCon as a cover and has not been found to this day

On December 25 1837, at Lake Okeechobee, The Seminole nation (made up of African and Native American people who settled in Florida) defeated a much larger contingent of the US Army that was trying to break indigenous resistance and return escaped slaves to slavery.

On December 27 1831, the Christmas rebellion broke out in Jamaica as 60,000 of the islands 300,000 slaves rose up against their oppressors. The rebellion lasted 10 days and was a major factor in the British Empire beginning the abolition of slavery 2 years later.

The holiday season can be rough on us all, but especially folks spending this time behind bars, physically isolated from family and community. This winter we would urge you to look out for friends, comrades, and even strangers who are spending the season incarcerated. Write a letter, send a card, put some money on somebodies commissary, put up bail, do what you can to help someone get through.

EVADE AND DESTROY: Lessons from the Nov 22nd FTP march



On Nov 22, the second FTP march went down in the predominately black neighborhood of Harlem NY with an important distinction from the previous action: hundreds of organized cops emboldened by newly appointed police commissioner and long time sack of shit Dermot Shea. An even greater number of people took to the streets to express their frustration and hatred for the NYPD and the MTA than the action called for weeks earlier. Even so, for some protesters, the number of arrests (58) has had an intimidating effect. This is the type of precision tactic that Shea is known for. Organizers from Decolonize this Place have placed invaluable emphasis on disseminating information on police tactics and risk assessment prior to both events. While preparedness is crucial, so too is remembering that our hatred stems from the very idea that certain ordained individuals are able to act with impunity in our law burdened society. They will always do whatever necessary to terrorize, divide us, and crush our movements, all under the guise of upholding the laws they avoid. So we must not give in or cop out, be driven by fear; we must not leave the streets!

For those stranded by indecision, swept up by delirious force, knocked down by the state or terrified at the sight of fallen comrades - tighten up and take care of each other. This is only the beginning. Remember some of the lessons we learned on the streets. 1) The NYPD uses bikes as weapons and barricades; when our bodies were loose or separated and our lines thin, cops thrust and threw bikes at protesters to knock them to the ground and advance lines around them. 2) Isolation leads to arrest. The intersection at the base of the bridge to the Bronx is where several arrests happened and the largest wedge was driven between us. While both groups remained organized and accomplished a lot that night, the chaos and panic of the division ceded space to our enemies to target folx who were trying to hold the street without enough backing. 3) We lost ground hesitating. Hesitation is hard to avoid, but having clear intentions can help reduce it. Both actions have brought a lot of people into the streets who haven't engaged with the struggle in this way before. Following these shared experiences we can look back at the (incomplete) range of repression possible from the reactionary cops. Understanding what could happen can allow us to (together!) run thru worst case scenarios ahead of time, and run thru our responses so we are mentally prepared to make split second decisions. 4) The coalition has been incredibly supportive of, and called for, a diversity of tactics. A turnstile was cut clean off that night! We cannot win by marching alone, and we must prepare for escalation if we are to advance. We do not have the same tools; we don't wield badges or the privileges allotted by them; we aren't going to arrest our enemies and put them in their jails. So how can we bring the heat, evade, and destroy the systems of oppression we oppose?

