

Editorial

And here we are again.

More words on more pages. Information, if we're lucky, to be passively consumed and, assuming our already troubled minds can handle it, digested and spat out the other end. But these words are not supposed to reside next to those of the academics, a realm that fundamentally ostracises itself from the very life it writes the rules for. It is not the intention for these words to lie dormant, spread across t-shirts and stickers that give an impression of quantity, but qualitatively only serve to further atomise the (sub)cultural, economic and racial ghettos that inhabit our city, as well as every other.

Ideas, rejection and rebellion must not be reduced to another consumer choice. Freedom will never be found in 'ethical' produce, D.I.Y concerts or alternative leisure time activities. They must not be a lifestyle choice but a *way of living now*, without delay. Indeed, the very

scenes that are so vocal on subjects of resistance have commodified themselves through alternative attempts at marketing for the masses. How could a music compilation documenting the themes and ideas supposedly relevant to the social turbulence of May, 1968 in France, produced and distributed according to the demands of capitalist economics ever contribute to the real war, here on our doorstep, that is being waged day after day?

As more and more individuals and groups, formalised or not, are advocating the tightness of community, of local economics, of direct democracy, the horizon looks like nothing but a reformed existent. Production and commerce, prisons and borders, nations and wars will always morph and adapt to the demands of their consumers as long as some fundamental principles remain, for it is easy to miss the forest by looking for the trees.

And maybe this brings us to the motives of the fourth edition of this periodical. We write this with random intention, as many messages in many bottles of which maybe one will wash upon the shores of another mind. *From Here On In* has no intention of guiding the way towards the exploited classes' total liberation, for not only are we far from capable of it, to suggest that our choices of action are correct would not only be arrogant, but more than likely end up becoming the enemy of the future. Instead, we hope to find common grounds for criticism, discussion and experimentation with others that have similar hatreds and desires.

As a piece of graffiti on a wall in Athens said during the December 2008 insurrection:

Fuck May '68, Fight Now!

Green (wash)
Bristol's
capital (ism)

***Welcome to Bristol, the newly announced
European Green Capital of 2015!***

For a long time now, the Bristol Green Capital Partnership (BGCP) has been organising with the supposed aim of creating “a low carbon city with a high quality of life for all”. With 'Action Groups' ranging in topics from 'Business' to 'New Economy', and 'Communications' to 'Inclusion & Community', the BGCP gives the impression of working across the board to create a genuinely carbon neutral city that provides for all, built on an economy that is “a centre of excellence in green technology, where waste is minimised, and resources are used respectfully and sourced locally wherever possible”.

And what? We have to ask. Whilst these days very few will deny that the world is in the process of environmental collapse, it is a minuscule proportion that would argue that the fundamental reason for this is the Capitalist economy we are forced to submit to. Groups from all corners of the political spectrum are calling for governmental reform on climate change, and the grand, media-generating theatres of discussion such as the Conference of Parties (COP) annual convergences would give the impression that this is happening, but reforms benefits are discriminate.

When one gets down to the facts of Bristol's new found glory, it becomes clear that its new eco-knighthood is little more than an advertisement for increased investment and subsequent profit, for as the State of the City 2013 report says, “Not only will it attract inward investment and visitors to the city, but it will reinforce our reputation as a leading sustainable city in the UK and Europe.” There is talk of £400m going into transport schemes, £300m into energy proficiency, £140m provided by the European Investment Bank (EIB) going into retrofitting public buildings and £11.6m plans to build a 'green business park' in Filwood, South Bristol, as part of a larger regeneration of the area.

Financial investment does not exist as a benevolent act.

Already operating are two wind turbines in the Avonmouth port area, constructed and managed by Wessex Water, the chairman for whom – Colin Skellett - is a local capitalist (also being chairman of the West of England Local Enterprise partnership, chair of Bath Hotel and Spa Limited and a director of Business West) and member of the elitist Society of Merchant Venturers.

Financial investment does not exist as a benevolent act. Millions of pounds are not being thrown around for love of the environment. The EIB, Wessex Water and other investors will be expecting large returns on their money; money which will never reach those who laboured in their interests or are forced to consume the products of such provision. After meeting with David Cameron, Bristol's supposedly independent mayor, George Ferguson tells us that this new Green Capital status will create 17 000 new jobs. This constant democratic chatter of work is presented to us as an improvement, as something we should be pleased about, but the reality is that it, again, only serves the employers and managers of business. Constantly caught in the struggle to financially survive, we end up forgetting the brutality of a life based on the sale of creative energy to fill another's coffers.

Whilst capitalist relations constantly change and develop, the basic principles remain the same. It is the aim of capital to constantly profit, and this comes at the expense of the worker, and of course the environment. As those whose labour manipulates and creates value, it is our economic and subsequent social exploitation that creates the power relations we experience on a daily basis. These relations exist equally in the well known lords of energy provision such as British Gas and EDF, just as they do in the self-proclaimed ethical corporations such as Ecotricity. To supplement this, the activities of firms such as Ecotricity, whose net assets in 2012 amounted to £56m, demonstrate that their efforts to provide 'green' energy exist in a vacuum. Their founder, Dale Vince, now owns a vast amount of property in Stroud, Gloucestershire, and beyond, both commercial and otherwise, as

well as having secured contracts with notorious state-sponsored murderers, G4S. And if one looks back to the second edition of *From Here On In*, the activities of Becoming Green - a roofing and environmental fitting company - their exploitation of Welsh prisoners may come as a surprise.

We in no way profess to be environmental experts, far less scientists, but the reality of this environmental collapse that is happening all around us seems, undeniably, to be directly proportional to industrial production and endless economic growth. A 'greener' world is certainly desirable, but in the context of a continued capitalism it is irrelevant. The multi-million pound market that has grown from the demands of liberal consumers is built on exactly the same principles as the 'unethical' industries that these same consumers and political groups advocate against. Electric cars and wind turbines are not built in harmony with the subtle ecosystems that sustain the planet, nor are emissions trading and green energy provision in any way designed to benefit those producing them or the consumers they are sold to. Capitalism is simply morphing to profit from a crisis of its own making, but all the time exploiting those who are forced into work simply in order to survive: and this happens everywhere, all the time.

To address the issue of climate change (or whatever one chooses to call it), we must analyse and attack the processes of capitalist production *and* exploitation in the understanding that the two are synonymous. Bristol may have been voted the green capital of Europe, but the results of this clearly gear towards increased investment and subsequent profit for those already in power. We may be offered freely installed loft insulation and central heating systems to make our small, damp houses marginally more desirable, but when energy prices are constantly rising due to standard inflation and conflict within capitalist interests, the benefit is difficult to ascertain.

Millions of pounds are not being thrown around for love of the environment.

“ I am told by those responsible for my continued detention that unless I acknowledge and accept the total authority of the prison system over me then I will remain here until death. So the price for my release is total and abject surrender of the very thing that has provided me with the strength to survive the last three decades of my imprisonment – my personal and political integrity. I must effectively die as a principled and thinking human being before I am granted physical freedom. That I cannot and will not do. ”

-John Bowden



Neo-liberalism and Prisons

The following article was written by our friend, John Bowden, currently serving what was supposed to be a ten-year prison sentence. However, due to his refusal to ever conform to the brutal demands of the British prison system, John is currently in his 34th year behind bars.

Neo-liberalism, an ideology and concept usually associated with a particularly ruthless brand of free-market economics, has now reached into the very core services of the state and institutions that were once considered strictly off limits to financial speculators and entrepreneurs: the NHS, the prison system and the criminal justice system. Neo-liberalism doesn't just involve a massive shift of economic power and wealth to an already extremely powerful and wealthy social group, but also a fundamental shift in the philosophy and policy of organisations like the welfare and criminal justice systems, both of whose 'clients' are now increasingly lumped together as an undifferentiated mass of the 'undeserving poor' or an always potentially criminal 'underclass' requiring an equal degree of punitive supervision, surveillance and 'management'. For the poor the welfare state is becoming increasingly like a carceral state.

The change of philosophy and policy as far as the criminal justice system is concerned is especially reflected in the treatment of those subject to judicial supervision orders and conditions of parole, and the changing role of probation officers and criminal justice social workers from a 'client centred' and rehabilitative approach to one far more focused on strict supervision and 'public protection'.

Occupations that were once guided to a certain extent by the rehabilitative ideal have now become little more than an extension of the police and prison system and abandoning any vision of positively reforming and socially reintegrating the 'offender' now instead prioritize punishment, social isolation and stringent supervision. This replacement of the rehabilitation model with a more managerialist one enforcing ever more 'robust' and invasive conditions of parole and supervision renders it's subjects increasingly less as prisoners being returned to freedom and more ones waiting to be returned to prison for technical breaches of licence conditions. As with all things neo-liberal the increased focus on the strict supervision and surveillance of ex-prisoners and 'offenders' draws it's inspiration from the U.S. and it's parole officer system with a total emphasis on the straight-forward policing of parolees. It's also a form of supervision increasingly extended into the lives of the poor generally, especially those dependent on welfare and state benefit, the social group from which prisoners are disproportionately drawn. In an age of economic deregulation the marginality and inequality of the poor has increased to such an extent that they are now almost demonised and subjected to the same penal-like supervision as ex-convicts.

Tory politicians and the media now stigmatise with a zest benefit claimants as 'scroungers', 'shirkers' and potential criminals, and this stigmatisation and marginalisation is applied most viciously to poor single mothers who are now typecast not as poor but as deviant and a problem group who should be socially excluded and shamed, just like ex-prisoners. The steady increase of the female

prisoner population is undoubtedly a symptom of this criminalisation of poor claimant-dependant women and their increasing relegation to the margins of society.

Again, this virtual criminalisation of benefit claimants who 'want something for nothing' draws it's inspiration from the U.S. where the transformation from welfare to 'workfare' (forcing the unemployed to 'earn' their benefits by participating in cheap labour programmes) and the increasing change from welfare state to penal state in it's treatment of the poor took place over twenty years ago.

Within the prison system itself, apart from its growing privatisation, the neo-liberal approach has jettisoned completely any pretence of rehabilitation and replaced it instead with the bureaucratic, managerialist model of box-ticking, exemplified by offence-related courses managed by prison-hired psychologists and which statistically have no appreciable effect on re-offending rates. As far as most prisoners are concerned offence-related courses represent little more than obedience tests and just a necessary prerequisite for parole or transfer to lower-security institutions. 'Telling them what they want to hear' is a strategy accepted and agreed on by both prisoners and those administering the courses. There is of course a huge social and existential divide between the prisoners who attend these courses and those managing them, usually middle class psychologists and trainee psychologists who have little or no concept of the social conditions and circumstances that shaped the 'offending behaviour' of most prisoners, and so they apply a crude form of moral behaviourism to prisoners criminal and anti-social behaviour (apart from that of financial capitalists of course) that has nothing to do with social deprivation and extreme disadvantage, and everything to do with defective moral choice-making, rather like that of poor single mothers 'scrounging off the state'.

The prison-industrial complex, the finished product of neo-liberalism in the field or market of criminal justice, is not just reducible to prison privatisation, it also shapes and influences a set of institutions, practises and ideologies based on fear, punishment and control, as exemplified by the American experience.

In the U.S. there are over 2.3 million people in prison, and more than twice as many people under direct state supervision, and virtually all are from a well-defined social group: the poorest and most dependent on social welfare and assistance. This mass criminalisation of the poor is beginning to find expression here in the U.K. With a popularised contempt of welfare recipients and the urban 'underclass', and a growing consensus that penal policy should replace welfare policy as a means of dealing with them. Through a slavish imitation of the U.S. criminal justice system Britain now has the highest imprisonment rate, the most overcrowded prisons, the severest sentencing practises, and is one of the worst abusers of prisoners human rights in Europe.

As the social democratic model that characterised Britain since 1945 continues to fracture and break in the face of unrelenting U.S. style neo-liberalism the welfare state will be replaced by the penal state and the treatment of the poor will resemble a sort of punitive containment supervised by parole officers in everything but name.

You can write to John at:

John Bowden 6729
HMP Shotts



A GLIMPSE OF SPACE IN TIME

21-year-old Alex Haigh became the first person imprisoned for squatting in a residential property since the implementation of the squatting ban on September 1st, 2012. Arrested by police at a flat in Pimlico, central London on September 2nd, Haigh served a three month prison sentence for the “crime” of needing somewhere to live.

Squatting – the act of occupying a disused property without the landowners consent – had previously been a civil matter, meaning that it was an issue to be resolved between the landlord and the occupants. But as of the beginning of September, 2012, squatting in a residential property became illegal, obliging the police to remove individuals who do not have permission from the owner to stay.

The role of property in this society stems from the very heart of its economic foundations. With strictly mediated conditions of value and exchange, private ownership of commodities¹ creates the basis of the relationships we experience everyday. With regards to housing, the concept of a home has been capitalised upon to the point where living conditions are only understood in relation to an objective value i.e. what one can afford to pay in rent or a mortgage. But it would seem tunnel-visioned, when discussing the exploitation we experience through housing situations, to only talk of domestic property, or more broadly, real estate. In analysing the role private property plays within this society, we must also look into the use of physical space *as a whole*.

Everywhere we stand, look, walk, or whatever else, exists as a space dictated by capital; that being a space designed to further

the agenda of value proliferation. To talk of Bristol, from the more obvious commercial streets of Broadmead to the apparently calm grasses of Eastville Park, the lines, paths, pavements and roads have all been laid by the logic of investment and, subsequently, profit. Now, profit may not always be financial, for the interests that a city council has in creating a green space clearly do not entail money, rather the pacification of an areas inhabitants.

Even the squats and self-proclaimed autonomous spaces that once seemed to line Stokes Croft were not exempt from this logic, for they are defined by the space they're in. Shop fronts and town houses alike, the limitations placed upon us by our residential dwellings - our architectural servitude to capital - creates a mentality of submission; the attitude of 'be happy with what you've got', or 'keep calm and carry on'.

Those in power are constantly transforming space to serve their own ends. From new roads to motorway expansions, green area developments and the conversion of houses into flats, we find ourselves sat in traffic, having to travel further just to smell what could maybe be called fresh air, and sitting in dingy bedsits that used to be a four-bedroom house with some communal space. There is no intention to give space back to us, for to do so would grant us some creative expression, which production requires in the form of our commodified labour, to realise the ultimate end of capital. We must constantly be distracted: checking the time, submitting to the bureaucratic demands of the benefits system, drooling at the spectacular wars being fought in our name and selling our souls, for if we don't we might stop to think, and production will fall.

Currently we are experiencing a landlord's market, meaning that the economic tensions of supply and demand currently reside

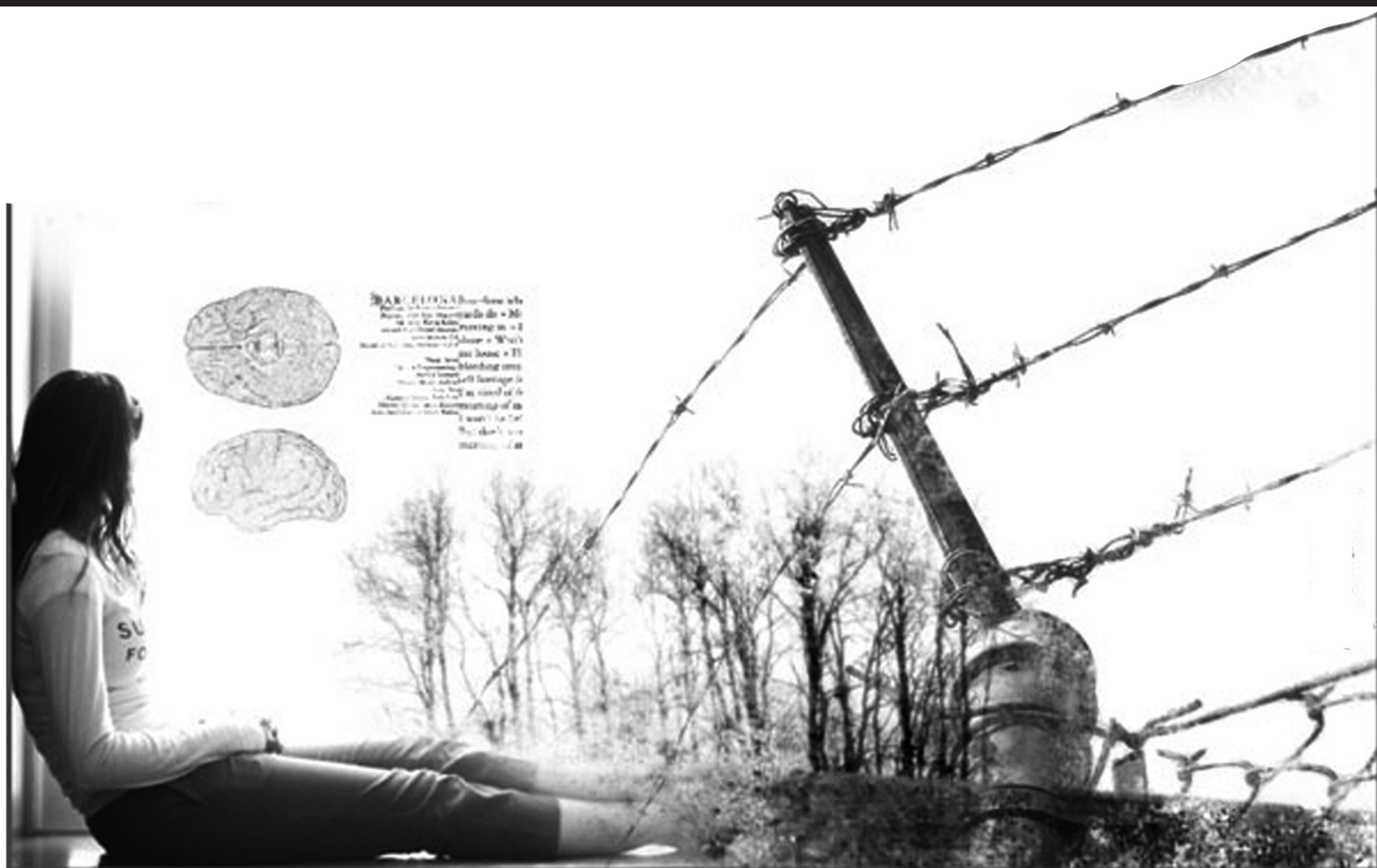
in the hands of those that supply. Anyone that has viewed a residence in recent years may well be familiar with the 'cram 'em all in and sell it to the highest bidder' circus that seems to be commonplace. Our lives, outside of work just as much as in, are items we have to buy. Any landlord, be they a housing association, property tycoon or individual has the power to sell us our happiness: our relaxation in our supposedly free time.

In 2012, Bristol had 19 000 people waiting to be housed. At the mercy of the City Council or property owner alike, there were, and probably continue to be 19 000 marks, crosses, dots and digits waiting to be crossed off. In housing, just as in the rest of life, people – living human beings – are reduced to statistics. Authorities will talk of homelessness, unemployment or low-income families as though they hurdles waiting to be jumped. The fact that they are actually people with hopes, grievances, dreams and regrets is of no interest to those in those in power, just as it is of no interest to the landlord who is looking for a substantial return on his investment. Aside from the confined, damp nature

of the dwellings we often find ourselves huddled in, the hoops one must jump through to even end up there are humiliating taunts towards our enforced submission within the society.

Given the endless searching, forms and legal confirmations, not to mention the amounts of money to hand over involved in the 'legitimate' quests of housing ourselves, there must be an alternative to satisfy us now, as well as attack the infrastructures that enforce our conformity to it. Living for free is obviously desirable, but the oversight of many who advocate is distracting. Nothing is free. Every material thing we encounter has been the product of this Capitalist economy, the waste of which cannot be celebrated for it becomes nothing but crumbs fallen from the masters' table. Currently, to create a system of free production and exchange would only fall into history's trap, so we must look elsewhere. Objective perfection is impossible, but to try and take back our lives now we must challenge the systems that render us obedient.

1. Commodity – any item, material or otherwise, engaging in a process of exchange based on the value of item(s) involved.



The following claim was found on the website: 325.nostate.net on Jan. 10, 2014. Whilst we claim no direct affinity to the FAI (Informal Anarchist Federation) we feel their analyses of the role of technology in this society and subsequent actions against it very much worth mentioning.

Attack against Bristol office of Vinci, Life Sciences Centre constructors by FAI (UK)
Action report censored by the pacifist-judiciary of Indymedia UK:

We think that anyone serious about confronting domination as it stands today will sooner or later come to the questions of science and technology. It's clear how both have an increasingly vital role to the ruling order by creating, managing and spreading control within society and over the rest of an earth we're falsely separated from. By investigating the development of these powers in the region and who makes it possible, we came to Vinci.

In the U.K, the French multinational energy and construction giant Vinci carry out specialist construction services for the police, Ministry of Defence and prisons, earthworks for motorways, railways and quarrying, power stations, offshore rigs and nuclear new-builds, as well as shopping centres and the like. Worldwide this corporation and its subsidiaries are active in many fields: dam building, private security, airports, uranium mines; these scum have no problem with inflicting carnage on the earth and us as part of it, raising an industrial cage around us both figuratively and literally, and feeding off the labour of their workforce while the bosses line their pockets and move on to the next contract.

In these respects we attack Vinci anyway, but one of our main motives for targeting them is because they're responsible for building the new Biological Life Sciences Centre soon to open at the University of Bristol.

We set off an explosive at Vinci's offices at Vantage business park, north of Bristol, at approximately 3:45 yesterday morning (6th January). It was placed with the aim of cutting off power lines, scorching the exterior and starting a fire inside. We considered the resident company in the next-door part of the unit a worthy secondary target in any damages (Whitehead, another construction and building servicing group who do commissioned work for Vinci).

A £54 million facility, the Biological Life Sciences Centre will offer courses for "the next generation of biologists" as well as current specialists, aiming to improve collaboration with the university's

Philippines, and others like us also won't be accomplices to these developments or their agents through inaction. It's necessary to attack the new wave of so-called 'life' science facilities at the root (those who design them, those who construct them) not just criticize the more well-known products of their research: because to these institutions all knowledge becomes another opportunity for control and exploitation, so extending the scope of a system that's in reality annihilating and artificialising life in all it's beauty.

Abroad, plant and animal die-offs as well as increased allergies and intolerances are already being attributed to G.M. With the bio-tech industry nonchalantly unleashing its monsters, especially across lands in the global south where patented G.M seeds that must be re-bought yearly exert a stranglehold, it many take generations to show some of their effects on infinitely complex webs of life that evolved over millions of years. That is, before civilised cultures began intensively manipulating them, today even down to the nano-scale. With the like of synthetic biology we're moving fast into a future where even lifeforms "in nature" are the products of laboratory experiments, and nothing remains that isn't engineered somewhere along the line by a human-centred system of scientific totalitarianism.

For obvious reasons as people turning against laws and domination in more than words we also stand against new policing and identification controls enabled by more forensics, biometrics etc. and the introduction of their common use in the information-age social prison (mobile fingerprinting, facial recognition systems, D.N.A swabs etc. – they didn't stop us yet though...).

This isn't Vinci's only U.K venture into this lucrative field either. They've also undertaken future expansions in science, technology and engineering departments at Swansea University. They've commissioned Whitehead for the job too, their neighbours at Vantage business park, who are now also marked by our attack. This will be the result for as long as society steps in line to realise the fantasies of a despotic science, reaching for their dreams which are our nightmares.

So what about the 'benefits' that these hi-tech institutions want to sell us, founded as they are on massive energy consumption and resource extraction, on the authority of a specialist caste's somehow-unreproachable meddling with our environments, and on the domestication of wild spaces and the torture of other animals? They promise us advances in (human) health, food and technology, fostering the illusion that science can fix all the damage incurred by the dominant ways of living. They expect us to forget how many of the diseases, disorders and cancers are directly caused by the same industrial output, globalised mass society, psychologically and physically unhealthy habitats and toxic workplaces of a culture which goes toward these labs and more in the first place. They expect us to forget that agri-monoculture production led to an anti-nutritious diet of

nanotechnology centre and just across from the Medical School's genetic engineering, vivisection and animal breeding labs. The world capitalist system sees advances in fields like this as key to the next round of discovery, enclosure and wealth creation. As the area around Bristol and Bath houses the biggest hi-tech design cluster in the world after America's Silicon Valley, this "revolution" is happening on our doorsteps, "with Bristol being an exciting and ideal place to carry out research over the coming years." (This is in the words of Professor Gary Foster, whose work at the University of Bristol in genetic-modification and other biotechnologies feeds the noxious pharmaceutical industry such as GlaxoSmithKline. The university breeds genetically-altered mice, for example, then morbidly subjects these living creatures to extensive nerve damage and hand the results to drug companies.)

One of the main thrusts of this drive is synthetic biology, a disturbing practice using the latest technology for "rewriting and rebuilding natural systems to provide engineered surrogates." In 2012 a conference at the University of Bristol stated that synthetic biology "could become a driving force of the national economy," and the government have declared it a top research priority. The European Union has now awarded £3.3 million to the University of Bristol just to create "public awareness" promoting the practice.

The logic of these kind of sciences has, as its primary goal, attempted control over everything. They reduce knowledge, that might be more deeply gained in wild relationships of interaction and interdependence, to a detached universe of obsessive measurement and objectification, arrogantly separating parts from the whole that gives them meaning as if everything were merely a machine to dismantle. This scientific tradition is closely tied up with the worldview that emerged during the early formation of commercial capitalism, which sought and still seeks to adapt lifeforms to the drive for profits, justify the domination and destruction of the living world, and implement a macho uber-rationalism scornful of everything fragile and organic on which all species depend. Right now, plant and animal genes are broken down and optimised in labs so they suit productive standards and to create new private property through patents. Where we might see the unique leaves, seeds, bodies and minds of ourselves and our fellow creatures, this science (if not necessarily each scientist, the results are the same) just sees lifeless objects to pick apart, study and sacrifice on the altar of economic usefulness to their paymasters who reap the benefits from this sick and sickening society.

"Newton's law of gravity, Galileo's law of inertia, the laws of thermodynamics, etc. come across as mathematical constructs of the human mind that are imposed on the universe, just as their technological results — the industrial system of capitalism — was an imposition of this rationalized worldview into the daily lives of the exploited classes."

-Wolfgang Iser

For instance we can see the current push for genetically-modified (G.M) food in the U.K by the media, industry and government, for which these research institutions play an important part: such as advances in biotechnology for crops thanks to the Long Ashton Research Station run by the University of Bristol in the past. Scientists like Gary Foster are well aware of the dangers from G.M genes "leaking into the natural world" (again, his own words) but apparently the money and prestige from their mastery are worth more than our insignificant lives. A decade ago the first wave of G.M trials was slowed here by sustained pressure and crop-trashing; today sabotage continues from Holland to the

manipulated short-term energising/comfort food at an escalating cost to the land, while diverse wild plant and animals species we used to coexist with get wiped out by the system's endless expansion and pollution. (Vinci's works being a prime example.) They expect us to forget how it's precisely the advances in complex technological systems that generate our dependence on their designers and manufacturers, alienation from ourselves as well as the earth as a whole and each other at the personal level, and increased efficiency in achieving the goals of society's rulers: profit and power, through misery and exploitation, pushing the planetary ecology toward collapse.

In short the sickness is civilisation itself, including its false solutions to its chronic problems steadily impoverishing survival for human and non-human populations alike, an unacceptable transgression on our intent to live freely.

Choosing direct action over despair we declare our part in a low-intensity urban war in its early stages across Bristol against the many faces of the system, with stones, paint or fire and with the plans, debates and daily refusals; sometimes almost imperceptible, sometimes devastating. In Britain's ugly cities and intensively-managed countryside a determined minority of rebels and wilderness-lovers sporadically take the offensive: some striking anonymously, some forming one-off action groups, and some having tested the open proposal of the Informal Anarchist Federation; not only in the south-west but Nottingham, Cambridge, London and now Glasgow.

Everything is at stake to us and we ourselves have no time to waste. Toward recovering our own volition and finding affinities for rebellion, our methods shall include intractable conflict without pause or negotiation: and much more besides, breaking with this miserable civil order with a wide variety of experiments and the full scope of our imaginations. Destruction is just another indispensable side of creation (and vice versa) not an opposite, we're now sure of that. Our insurgency would be justified as an end in itself in the face of this life we're raised into, but it's beyond only being reactive. It acts to solidify that we're already taking back in our face-to-face encounters and in our minds. It allows potential space for new and stronger relationships chosen by aware individuals mindful of all lifeforms, through actively weakening the current modes. Until some point of breakdown where whatever comes next is out of any society-wide control and reasoning, and so beyond society. Liberation can mean nothing less; tending toward the wild.

The international and internal battleground between anarchy and domination holds both losses and gains, of which some are known and some unknown to us. With this in mind we start the new year by celebrating the release of Braulio Duran (an unrepentant eco-anarchist who was held by the Mexican State) last October, albeit into the wider prison-society. When we discover solidarity with a locked-up comrade through their attitude and words, it doesn't diminish when they get 'out'; it just creates more grounds to keep fighting toward our mutual goals. Still 'inside', we remember the total-liberationist Adrian Gonzales and anarchist bandits of the Kozani case as well as Babis Tsilianidis; and Marco Camenisch, denied parole once again. Respect to the Mi'kmaq Warriors engaging the Canadian State/petro-industry aggressors in incendiary clashes, a renewed phase of indigenous militancy, and to the ones consistently defending both Khimki forest and the land of Notre-Dames-Des-Landes from Vinci's developments. A raised fist above the prison walls for Nicola Gai and Alfredo Cospito aka F.A.I./F.R.I Olga Nucleus, until cellblocks are rubble and jailers are ash.

On a sadder note, 2013 ended with the anarchist Sebastian O'versluij being fatally shot in Santiago while trying to collectively

*“ Everything
is at stake to
us and we
ourselves
have no time
to waste ”*

seize back some of what the banks extract every day from the exploited. Neither a victim or a martyr, we simply see someone who didn't bow their head and accept the system's rules, and we are glad to have such people as comrades. Even within this nonsensical, resigned and cynical modern culture, every action demands a reaction. When they kill one of the resisters, our enemies must pay in any way. This is how our struggle leaves behind empty gestures and keeps the dead from falling into oblivion. Blackened offices won't replace split blood, but they signal that same social war isn't finished, and our grief births rage.

**Informal Anarchist Federation (F.A.I) Insurgents:
Bristol North**

The following text is a complete reproduction of "A Set of Ungovernable People: The Kingswood Colliers in the 18th Century", written in the 1970s by a Kingswood local history group. Not only interesting as a brief glimpse into the Bristol area's vast history, the text also gives inspiring insights into the methods of struggle used against the ruling order, as well as the recuperative effects religion undoubtedly plays in diverting peoples' attention from the reality of daily life.

Neither Fearing God nor Regarding Man

During the period referred to in the text, Kingswood Chase consisted of around 3,400 acres covering four Parishes; St. Philip and Jacob, Bitton, Stapleton and Mangotsfield. From the beginning of the 18th Century the Chase was divided into four private 'liberties'. These 'liberties' were controlled by four powerful families; the Chesters, the Berkleys, the Newtons and the Players, who leased out the coal mining rights to master collier.

A Set of Ungovernable People: The Kingswood Colliers in the 18th Century

In the 18th century, the colliers of Kingswood had a reputation for independence, if not downright unruliness. The Methodist leader, John Wesley, who first came in contact with the Kingswood district in March 1739, wrote later that year of the notoriety of its miners; "Few persons have lived long in the West of England who have not heard of the colliers of Kingswood: a people famous, from the beginning hitherto, for neither

fearing God nor regarding man". This reputation was justly earned. During the reign of George II (1727 – 1760), the colliers were involved in numerous incidents of protest. On several occasions the city of Bristol was thrown into turmoil by their activities. And as a result of their collective actions, troops and the local authorities were often kept busy in the defence of the law.

Bristol was heavily dependent on Kingswood for fuel, both for domestic and industrial uses. About 70 coal pits, most of them small undertakings, were being worked in the later 17th century. Population was growing fairly rapidly, largely because migrants were attracted by the easy availability of land and the prospects of industrial employment. Most people in Kingswood probably depended on coal for a living, either as actual miners or as "horsedriers" - that is, drivers of the horses that carried coal to Bristol



Lawless and Independent

What about Kingswood's reputed "lawlessness"? There were complaints in the 17th century about its squatter inhabitants. It was said in 1667 that large numbers of cottagers were settling in the forest "without leave... and generally live there without government or conformity". Their independence became more pronounced in the 18th century. It often proved impossible to enforce the law in Kingswood. The colliers commonly behaved more or less as they pleased, with little fear of punishment. So strong was their reputation that, in 1726-27, when there were major industrial disputes in the Wiltshire woollen towns, some of the rioting weavers had been sent "to invite the Kingswood colliers to their assistance."

The “riots” were attempts to remind the authorities of their duties and to set matters right.

Turnpike Riots

The colliers were especially active in resisting the imposition of the turnpike tolls. This resistance began in 1727, with the destruction of some newly-erected toll-gates, and persisted on and off until the mid 18th century. While the colliers were clearly unhappy about these new taxes, there were other grievances that fuelled their actions. They objected to the power given to the turnpike trustees to remove furze and heath from any common lands, for road repairs, without paying for them. Their concern was for the preservation of their commons and the sustenance derived from them; furze bushes, for example, were useful not only for firing, but also for pasturage and shelter for livestock. The colliers also alleged that the bad condition of the local roads was partly a consequence of the abuse of these roads by the local landowners (most of whom were now turnpike trustees) and their tenants. Turnpikes were particularly intended to facilitate wheeled traffic, and objective of little interest to the colliers, whose main concern was the carriage of coal by horse. Thus they objected to paying out for other men's ease of travel.

Perhaps the colliers' main complaint was that the poor roads resulted from the failure of the magistrates to enforce the existing laws for road repair. These men of substance were accused of having neglected to act properly in accordance with the responsibility that was vested in them as justices. As the colliers put it in a letter of 1727, “by the Omission of your Duty, and your Carelessness and Over sight, you have lost your Honourable Magistracy, and brought your self under the reproach of a Turnpike.” The colliers did not see themselves as rebels, but as loyal Englishmen. Their complaint was against local authorities that had not lived up to the people's expectations. The “riots” were attempts to remind the authorities of their duties and to set matters right.

These authorities did not take kindly to such popular interventions in the cosy world of oligarchical rule. They sought support from London. They brought in soldiers. They prosecuted selected colliers, usually without success. They petitioned Parliament to get much tougher penalties for destroying turnpikes. But the colliers remained defiant and gentlemen complained of their “Insolences”. “The License these Rioters have Taken”, wrote two prominent landowners and magistrates in 1731, William Blaithwaite and Sir William Codrington, “makes it difficult to execute any process or warrant of the Law at present”. Because of the colliers' actions, turnpike roads made little headway in the Kingswood region for over two decades.

Strikes and Disputes

These were not the only collective actions in which the colliers were involved. In 1738 they were involved in a major industrial dispute: the large mine-owners tried to impose a 25% wage reduction and the miners responded with vigorous demonstrations and a brief general strike. In 1709, 1740 and 1753 the colliers rose to protest against the high prices of grain. Their actions were intended to secure a “just prices” - prices which, in their view, could only be attained by a proper regulation of food markets.

While these actions varied in character, they were by no means always disorderly. In September 1740, for example, during a season of sharply rising prices, the colliers marched to the Council House in Bristol, along with some weavers, colliers' wives “and Abundance of other Women” in order to negotiate with the authorities. A delegation was admitted to speak with the mayor, and an elderly man represented their grievances, saying:

“That they came with no Intent to hurt any Man, but for the good of their Country; that for his Part, he had good Bread, good Cheese, and good fat Beef enough; but that there were Hundreds of poor Families starving round him; and therefore demanded Redress to their Grievances, by having Corn allowed them at 6s. per Bushel.”

The Mayor was pleased to return them this answer: “Gentlemen, I'll take care that you shall Have Justice done you.”


The colliers then left the city.

The Colliers and the Governing Class

What can be said about the “politics” of the Kingswood colliers and their relations with the governing class? It is clear that the Gloucestershire magistrates were in a weak position to manage the colliers. There were few gentlemen in the Kingswood area, and the local justices were confronted with an expanding population of relatively “undisciplined” industrial workers. Paternalism was weekly implanted in Kingswood. Many of the miners worked their pits (just as the coal drivers conducted their trade) in an independent or semi-independent manner, and the landlords and coal proprietors had as yet little control over their everyday behaviour.

Bristol's View of the Colliers

The colliers were much feared by the city dwellers. Kingswood was near Bristol but beyond its jurisdictional control; it was alien territory, a potential threat to the city's tranquillity. As the mayor, writing in May 1753, said of the colliers, “the place they come from is very populous, and has in it a great Number of Under Ground Workmen, who are but little known and on that account very desperate fellows”. For the most part Bristol was content to



“ What about
Kingswood's reputed
“lawlessness”?

*There were complaints
in the 17th century about
its squatter inhabitants.
It was said in 1667
that large numbers of
cottagers were settling
in the forest “without
leave... and generally live
there without government
or conformity ”*

keep the colliers at bay, to exclude them from the city itself. It seldom attempted to extend its authority into the colliers' own territory. Similarly, the colliers were usually cautious about exercising their muscle within the city: except for the food riots of 1753, they always confined their actions in Bristol to processions, demonstrations, and negotiations for the redress of their grievances. They certainly were not inclined to invade the city on whim. The relationship between Bristol and Kingswood was a rather delicate one in which neither side normally violated the other's territory.

How the Colliers saw Authority

The Kingswood colliers, like most 18th century labouring people, had a clear set of ideas concerning how authority should be properly exercised. They held specific expectations as to the duties and responsibilities of those entrusted with enforcing the law, and these expectations sometimes differed from those of the authorities themselves. Moreover, they felt few inhibitions about taking direct action in defence of their view of what was legitimate and lawful behaviour. Their public encounters with the law occurred, of course, mostly at times of "crisis": when the food supply was threatened, and when popular liberties were challenged. The colliers took the position that the authorities should be held accountable for certain actions (or inaction). Their various protests and risings may be seen, in part, as attempts to change public policies. They employed supplications, threats, demonstrations of power, and collective attacks on objectionable targets in an attempt to attain their ends. Sometimes they won concessions, on other occasions the authorities stood firm. While it was often possible to contain the colliers' power, for many years it was not possible to accomplish much more.

Influence of Methodism

The history of the Kingswood colliers from the 1760s is a different tale. Kingswood played a major role in the early history of Methodism, though it is difficult to assess with confidence the actual impact of Methodism on the colliers. John Wesley himself was confident in pointing to the social transformations that he thought



were taking place: in 1768 he observed that "no Indians are more savage than were the colliers of Kingswood, many of whom are now a humane, hospitable people full of love to God and man; quiet, diligent in business; in every state content; every way adorning the Gospel of God their Saviour". While the Methodist leaders probably exaggerated the success of their early ministry, there is no doubt that in the long run Methodism became well established in Kingswood and gained a substantial body of adherents, thereby helping to transform the values and behaviour of many colliers.

Methodism introduced into Kingswood a new form of authority, a set of religious imperatives which attracted at least some of the colliers to a new outlook on life. The early preachers brought to Kingswood, not only a compelling personal dynamism, but also a message of concern and compassion and personal salvation to people who had stood alone – and some of them may have realised that they could not stand alone much longer. Outsiders were inclined to credit Methodism with the improvements that were thought to have occurred in Kingswood.

According to an observer in 1794 the colliers of the forest

"...were 40 or 50 years ago, so barbarous and savage, that they were a terror to the City of Bristol, which they several times invaded; it was dangerous to go among them, and their dialect was the roughest and rudest in the Nation; but by the labours of Mess. Whitefield and Wesley, by the erection of a parish Church and some meeting houses, and the establishment of several Sunday and daily schools, they are much civilized and improved in principles, morals and pronunciation."

The Rebels Tamed

By the late 18th century a new sort of discipline was emerging in Kingswood. Like many other forest areas, it was no longer relatively insulated from outside interventions. The spreading suburbs or Bristol were threatening to absorb it; and with the decline of social isolation it became more subject to forces and disciplines that were mostly not of the colliers' own making. As many colliers accepted or submitted to these pressures, the basis for independence and the collective action contracted. In the long run Kingswood was tamed, and its 18th century turbulence was succeeded by a 19th century of quiescence.

Bristol's Cult of *A Local Rant for Local People* Fool's Gold

"Money is labour-time abstracted from labour and solidified in a durable, measurable, transportable form. Money is the visible, even tangible, manifestation of the common element in all commodities - not two or several commodities, but all possible commodities. Money allows its owner to command the work of others, at anytime and anywhere in the world. With money it is possible to escape from the limits of time and space."

- Gilles Dauvé

It's been here awhile and seems to grow daily. Unsurprisingly, given some in this city's obsession with smooth talk about the 'local' and moaning against corporations in support of independent businesses, the Bristol Pound scheme has taken off quickly. More and more shops, cafés and bars are placing stickers in their windows notifying us that we can spend 'our' local currency there, simply amounting to increased advertising and, in the bigger picture, everyone's money still nesting in a few pockets. If the Bristol Pound is a cause, then is it worth caring for?

Its advocates maintain it encourages local trade by supporting independent businesses in a world where today our high streets are showrooms for global pillage with employees unsentimentally managed behind the counter. This merely uses small-time traders as a talisman against the nastiness of the big-time operators instead of honestly acknowledging how everything once was

local and independent etc., until larger economic forces played hard and, today, remain undisturbed by the quaint Bristol Pound. Exactly like sterling, it marks false value for the products of time robbed from us in work, expressing nothing about repercussions for the world at large or future generations. Its champions therefore lack a real strategy for closing the great divide of those who have property and influence against us lot, stressed with keeping ourselves afloat. Without money we're denied most basics and, in turn, even the Bristol Pound is formally tied to sterling, incapable of divorce.

'Happy money' - as the Bristol Pound refers to itself on its website - may pass from our over-worked hands to another pair at, say, The Canteen; supporting its alleged ethical custom, similar to the medieval belief that you could buy penance for sin. It's also 'independent', which is to say half-owned by Mayor George Ferguson, alongside his majority stakes in the Tobacco Factory, Harbourside and a multitude of other

commercial ventures. Yet spearheads for the gentrification of Stokes Croft, such as Hamilton House, helped tame and even partly commodify its hodgepodge of unruly street culture and displaced its poverty to other areas, distracting folks meanwhile with refurbished buildings. Just standard commercial practice carried out in the guise of some self-serving concept of fuss-free ethical living. Users of the new notes are likely to be those who already shop in and frequent independent enterprises, probably imagining there's a greater extent of economic distribution than really occurs.

Money given a cuddly makeover won't counter the broader factors stripping everywhere of any assets and selling them back to us as anything but the complete ruin of earth. The Bristol Pound is another example of the gloss applied to a crisis that doesn't speak its name. It's an infectious delusion where cash is pasted over cracks liable to burst wide apart and drag us all in. Acting as a refuge for people who, for example, find the climate change scepticism promoted by huge concentrations of wealth extreme, but still retreat from any notion of resistance into a muddle of comforting buzzwords, denial in a milder form. Scaremongering or cynicism this ain't. Thinking long-term, it's a matter of common sense and acting effectively before larger circumstances smack us in the face. It's easy, when we feel relatively prosperous, to downplay supposedly abstract and distant issues. The Bristol Pound is an inevitable result of this attitude, a sophisticated update of the cults of wandering people whipping themselves from the days of the plague. Consciences are eased through inhibiting serious answers emerging for the major questions of today looming over us.

Community empowerment isn't gained by consumption paid for with a novelty currency since ambitious, socially minded action is what actually delivers on that front. Striving for discernible control of our lives, in cooperation with others doing likewise, contrasts with the contrived form of community alluded to by the Bristol Pound's backers. The sentiment behind which is rooted in a vague, narrow concern stemming from how huge power is kept from us. It's misguided however, seeing the arbitrary size of firms and their location as virtuous, while blind to the larger institutional factors dictating the circumstances of our existence. Meaning we end up with the same old usual with some piffling redeeming quality, in this case perhaps not having Her Majesty's face to draw glasses onto. Erm, hang-on...

Collateral News

'Serious disorder' at HMP Oakwood

05.01.2014

Up to 60 prisoners caused disturbance at the prison near Wolverhampton for 5 hours on Sunday evening, with some reports suggesting that weapons were involved. Extra resources were brought in to try to contain the disorder, including "tornado" squads of prison officers wearing riot gear who are specially trained in public order. Run by security giant, G4S, Oakwood is the largest prison in England and Wales.

EDL and anti-fascist demonstrators clash in Bristol

07.01.2014

About 30 supporters of the English Defence League turned out on College Green to stage what had been advertised as a "peaceful" protest against the former Jesters comedy club in Cheltenham Road being turned into a mosque. Bristol Unite Against Fascism held a counter-demonstration, attended by about 80 people, as well as informal groups of militant anti-fascists being present, which led to a 40-minute stand-off near the entrance to Bristol Cathedral. The two groups shouted slogans and abuse at each other, separated by a cordon of about 24 police officers in high-visibility jackets.

Mark Duggan inquest jury concludes he was lawfully shot dead by armed police

08.01.2014

The inquest into the death of London man Mark Duggan today concluded he was lawfully killed when police shot him in Tottenham in August, 2011. A firearms officer shot him once in the arm and once in the chest after forcing a minicab he was travelling in to stop. Officers believed he was linked to a drugs gang - Tottenham Man Dem - and that he had just picked up a gun. A handgun was found around 20 feet from his body.

North Wales police helicopter laser attack

09.01.2014

A young man launched a persistent and prolonged laser attack on a police helicopter as it hovered above his home, looking for a missing person. Council worker Kevin Mark Griffiths, 22, used a powerful laser pen which bought on holiday in Spain to flash about ten times at the North Wales Police helicopter over eight minutes.

Arson Attack at Bristol Royal Marines base

13.02.2014

Anarchists have claimed responsibility for a targeted arson attack that destroyed three vehicles at a marine base in Bristol. Police have confirmed that at 3.40am on Tuesday someone went to the Royal Marine Force Voluntary Reserve Base in Litfield Place, Clifton Down and set fire to three vehicles, which were all significantly damaged during the fire. To read the communique go to <http://www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2014/02/515322.html>.

Four cars torched by arsonists in St Pauls

20.02.2014

At 23:55 last night firefighters responded to a call to find four cars – an Audi, Mercedes, VW Golf and a Honda - damaged by fire.

Michael Adebolajo gets whole-life jail term

26.02.2014

The two terrorists who murdered British soldier Lee Rigby on a south London street fought with guards yesterday in the dock of the court yards from the grieving family of the soldier they butchered as a judge sentenced the mastermind of the attack to die in prison. Michael Adebolajo,

29, who hacked at Rigby's head, was sentenced to a whole-life term for leading the first al-Qaida- inspired terrorist attack on British soil to claim a life since the 7 July bombings eight years ago. The sentence means he is unlikely to ever be released.

PCSO denies assualting 15-year-old

28.01.2014

Nicholas Pearce, 31, of Downend, is accused of committing the crime after he and his colleagues responded to a call about a group of teenagers who were playing football at Downend Sports Centre on July 22 last year. PCSO Pearce was charged after an investigation by Avon and Somerset police's Professional Standards Department into a complaint made by the alleged victim's family about how he was treated that evening.

3,500 prisoners behind bars longer than necessary

05.03.2014

The justice secretary, Chris Grayling, has been accused by a former law lord of failing to free thousands of prisoners serving indefinite sentences – a punishment that has been abolished. More than 3,500 inmates are being held behind bars long after their recommended tariff expired, according to lord Lloyd of Berwick, who is pressing for them to be released. More than 5,000 prisoners are serving indefinite sentences for the protection of the public (IPPs) under section 225 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003, a section that was repealed two years ago.

Thousands of pounds worth of lead stolen from primary school in Kingswood

06.03.2014

Thieves struck at two buildings at Beacon Rise Primary School in Hanham Road at the weekend.

