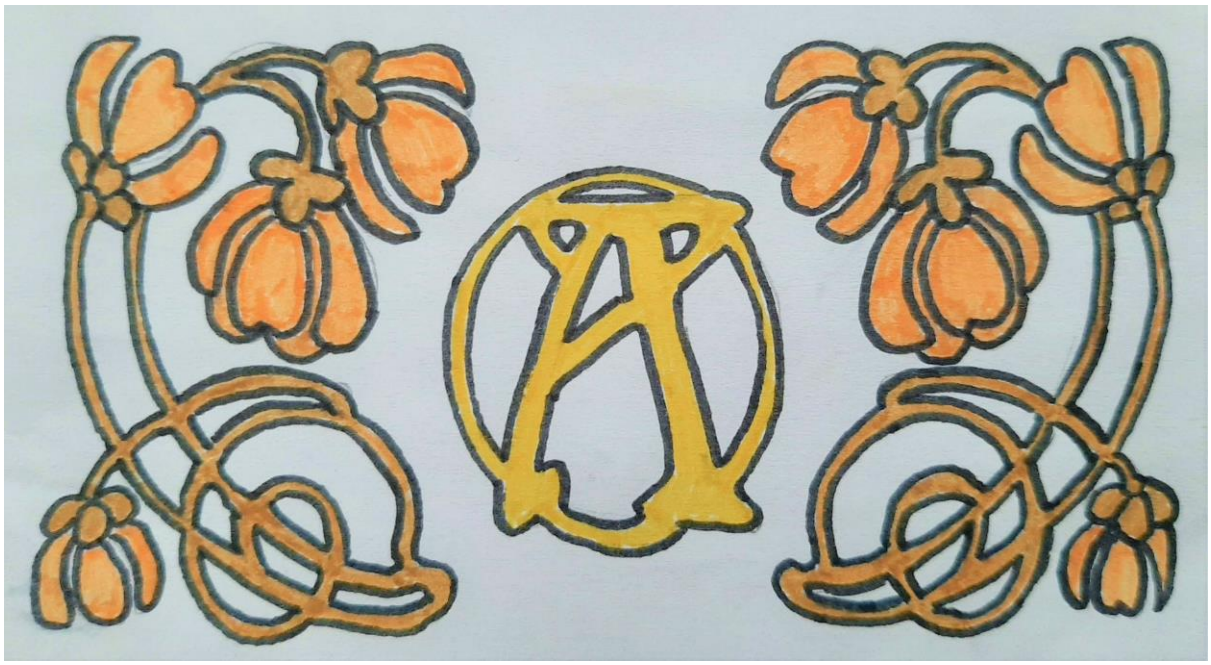
Anarchism & Collective Responsibility

Friday 24th of March 2023

Abstract Booklet



Collective Action and Collective Responsibility: Bad Concepts and Practical Dangers - Jason Day (University of Fribourg) and Sharon Casu (University of Fribourg)

In short letters to Nestor Makhno (1927-30), Errico Malatesta laments that the notion of "collective responsibility" is "a moral absurdity in theory" because only individuals can be held morally responsible for their actions. Moreover, he considers use of the concept by anarchists to be "a general irresponsibility in practice". For it threatens an executive committee forcing individuals to act a certain way, since all associated anarchists will prospectively be held collectively responsible for the actions of some, or forcing individuals to take responsibility for the actions that others have committed regardless of the individual's lack of involvement or disapproval. Thus, the concept of collective responsibility is at odds with anarchist principles of individual autonomy and free initiative. We will substantiate Malatesta's view by arguing that any notion of collective responsibility must be premised on a notion of collective action. One is typically responsible for an action one has done. Barring fringe cases, if someone is not responsible for something that has happened, then what has happened is not an action done by that individual. Similarly, if one rejects the concept of collective responsibility, one must also reject the concept of collective action. We offer another path to the rejection of collective responsibility than that offered by Malatesta, but one that further supports it: namely, rejecting the concept of collective action to begin with. If there are no collective actions, then there can be no collective responsibility. Our critique of collective action arises from a study of mainstream theories of action which can typically be called "mentalist", in that they posit the existence of mental states in the agent like beliefs, desires and intentions related to the action. To defend the existence of collective actions one would therefore have to defend the existence of a collective mind with, e.g., collective beliefs, desires and intentions. To escape the danger of reductionism, these must be somewhat independent of those of the individuals belonging to the collective. However, philosophers have thus far not given a satisfying account of how collectives could be independent in this manner, leaving the door open to reductionism. Thus, the existence of collective actions have not been argued for successfully. Although we hold that there is no such thing as "collective action" and thus no "collective responsibility", we do not argue that there are only individual actions. There are actions performed by individuals when cooperating to achieve common purposes. We call these "cooperative actions" or "common actions", the latter being a term that Malatesta himself uses. However, since he speaks only of individual responsibility, Malatesta lacks a concept of responsibility that is appropriate to common actions. Thus, we finally introduce a concept of "shared responsibility": responsibility that individuals share to varying degrees depending on the relative contributions of their individual actions in the common actions in which they are or were associated. We conclude that anarchists should best speak of common actions and shared responsibilities.

Foundations of a Logic of Collective Responsibility - Stef Frijters (KU Leuven, Center for Logic and Philosophy of Science)

Normative relations between individuals and groups are central to anarchist thought and to anarchist propaganda. One often encounters sentences such as ``no one has a right to ...'', ``the collective has a responsibility towards the individual'', or ``no one has an obligation to follow unjust orders''.

In the first part of this presentation I will argue that the framework of rights developed by the legal theorist W. N. Hohfeld provides a fruitful model to interpret these kinds of statements. Hohfeld's framework allows us to interpret normative statements as relations between individuals, without reference to an authority that legitimizes or enforces the expressed norms. It is thus especially suitable for an anarchist analysis (even though this probably was never Hohfeld's intention). To develop this analysis I take (collective) responsibility as the prototypical normative relation. I show that Hohfeld's analysis can be extended not only to responsibility, but also to normative relations between groups of people, in particular to the notion of *collective* responsibility.

In the second part of the presentation I will propose the fundamental ideas of a *logic of collective responsibility* (LCR), based on the Hohfeldian analysis of this notion. LCR is based on earlier work in term-modal deontic logic (TMDL). It has already been shown that TMDL can be used to successfully model the `first-order' Hohfeldian rights relations between individuals. The main contributions of LCR are the generalization to also allow for groups of individuals, and the introduction of other normative relations (such as responsibility). I show that LCR is highly expressive. As one example, it allows one to express statements such as ``everyone with property P is part of a group that has a collective responsibility towards person a for B''. It is also highly flexible. I will discuss many different possible logical principles for collective responsibility that can all be validated by simple variants of LCR. I will discuss basic modal principles such as the D-axiom (can a group be collectively responsible for something impossible?), the aggregation and monotonicity axioms (if a group is collectively responsible for A and collectively responsible for B, are they collectively responsible for the conjunction, and vice versa?), and necessitation (if A is necessary, does the group automatically have a responsibility for A?). In addition, I will discuss some interaction principles: if a group has a collective responsibility, does every member of the group have the corresponding individual responsibility? Vice versa, if every member of a group has a responsibility for A, does the group have a collective responsibility for A? Finally, I will show how the most important logical relations in LCR can be represented in Aristotelian diagrams. This makes the principles much more comprehensible to both logicians and non-logicians than a traditional logical presentation (which is more suitable for the proofs of metalogical properties such as completeness).

Security under Anarchy? - Lewis Ross (London School of Economics)

If they are to be more than utopian fictions, proponents of anarchist societies have the burden of spelling out how such societies would be organised. Among the challenges is articulating how anarchist societies would take responsibility for preventing wrongdoing. In any political arrangement, persons and collective endeavours require safeguarding from antisocial parties. This need is partly met under statist societies by the criminal and civil justice systems, undergirded by the state's monopoly on coercive power.

It has become a philosophical trope to suppose that anarchist societies cannot meet this challenge. Some critics, such as Robert Nozick, claim that this challenge is not just especially difficult under anarchism, but rather that plausible attempts to meet this challenge reveals the *inevitability* of statism. Other critics, such as Carmen Pavel, envisage genuinely anarchist attempts to secure social order, but argue that these attempts will invariably be normatively deficient. A common thread underlying this classic criticism is that there is an ineradicable tension between the *voluntaristic* nature of anarchist society and the role that *coercion* must play in maintaining security. In this paper I explore the possibility of security under anarchism. I sound a cautiously optimistic note for the anarchist in their ability to take responsibility for maintaining order and suggest that the dialectic against the anarchist is often misconstrued.

The paper consists of two components, containing three arguments. The first component is conceptual and the second is empirical.
The conceptual component addresses the supposed incompatibility between the voluntaristic nature of anarchism and the use of coercion in maintaining social order. Argument one is that the tension between the use of coercion and consent in maintaining security is often exaggerated—we do not require permission to enforce rules that correspond to basic moral norms, such as those rules against interpersonal aggression that comprise the core of criminal law in statist societies. This means, in my view, anarchist societies have the moral right to punish just as statist societies do (if they do at all).
The second component of the paper addresses recent claims that we have good empirical reason to doubt that anarchist modes of maintaining security can be effective, even if we grant the conceptual claim that such methods are morally permissible and consistent with anarchism. The two claims I discuss are Carmen Pavel's analogy between anarchy and the ineffectiveness of international law and Steven Pinker's use of historical homicide statistics to vindicate the state's role in the 'civilising process'. Argument two is that Pavel's appeal to international affairs is inappropriate because it amounts to the contradictory claim that we can appeal to problems *of* statism as a reason to *be* a statist. Argument three is that *even if* Pinker's statistics and associagted narrative are accurate, they do not provide any reason not to pursue anarchism as a political project for the future now that the civilising process is complete. In sum: there is reason to take seriously the idea that anarchists can effectively take responsibility for the project of maintaining social order.

The Birth of Panarchism. Voluntary Trans-Territorial States and Collective Responsibility in the Works of Gustave de Molinari and Paul Émile de Puydt - Davide Saracino (University of Milan)

Panarchism is a political theory advocating a global society made up of voluntary trans-territorial states founded on explicit social contracts signed between governments and prospective citizens (Tucker, 2015, p. 1). The emphasis panarchism puts on the individual right to freedom of association is not out of place. However, in Hohfeldian (1917) terms, everyone's right to choose their own state needs to have as its correlative everyone's duty not to prevent this free choice from taking place—i.e., not to aggress one another. In this presentation, I wish to highlight how panarchism is grounded on a collective responsibility for non-aggression. When a society is formed through a *pactum unionis*, it is responsible *qua* society not to impose non-consensual interactions to non-members. I shall emphasise this aspect through the analysis of the seminal works of two 19th-century panarchists: Belgian economist Gustave de Molinari and Belgian botanist Paul Émile de Puydt. In 1849, de Molinari published an article titled *The Production of Security*, claiming that free markets would do a better job than states at providing the service that states claimed as their core monopoly: security. In particular, they would do so through a multitude of competing firms. In 1860, Belgian botanist Paul Émile de Puydt also published an article on the very same issues lending its name to the theory: *Panarchy*. In de Puydt's (1860/1968) words, the different debates of his time on whether there were too much or too little freedom of expression or freedom of religion could be solved through an appeal to a more basic kind of freedom, namely "the fundamental liberty to choose to be free or not to be free" (p. 17). Curiously, the similarity of de Molinari's and de Puydt's theses has not prevented them from finding different audiences in the following century. De Molinari has been considered a forerunner to right-wing anarcho-capitalism (Rothbard, 1977/2009; Hart, 1981a, 1981b, 1982). De Puydt, on the other hand, has recently been rediscovered by a number of left-wing anarchists (Frey, 2001/2015; Long, 1993/2015). I wish to outline their views in relation to one another, suggesting that the distance between their audiences does not result from any theoretical disagreement. Rather, it is better understood as a consequence of the emphasis they put on different aspects of panarchism. As for the substance of their arguments, both authors acknowledge that the actual possibility of a society made up of voluntary trans-territorial states is grounded on the collective acceptance of panarchist states' responsibility not to aggress one another. However, such responsibility does not take logical or moral precedence over the individual right to freedom of association. On the contrary, it emerges as the result of the self-interested economic reasons that individuals would have to favour a panarchist society over the 19th-century (and current) statist one.

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Kropotkin and Senses of Moral Responsibility - Michael Th. Grooff (Radboud University Nijmegen)

A fundamental and central question in discussions surrounding collective responsibility, anarchist or otherwise, is whether there can be such a thing in the first place. In this paper, I
will approach this question by turning to a fundamental philosopher of anarchist morality: Pëtr Kropotkin. The first part of the paper, then, is to present his inherently anarchic view of morality, where I excavate an implicit conception of moral responsibility. This still individual
moral responsibility is closely tied to his conceptions of sympathy, mutual aid, and moral overflowing, borrowing heavily from Adam Smith and Jean-Marie Guyau. Put briefly, I will argue that a personal *sense* of responsibility is central to Kropotkin's anarchist view of morality, both in how we are moved to act, as well as in how we judge others.
In the second part of the paper, I apply Kropotkin's view of a moral sense (of responsibility) to fundamentally problematise the notion of 'collective responsibility', arguing that there can
be no collective sense responsibility that is more than the sum of its individual parts. However, I will argue for a critical distinction between this 'collective sense of responsibility'
and a 'sense of collective responsibility', which still arises in the individual, but which refers to the context of the collective. That is, we can take responsibility for others and for groups that we are in. Moreover, we can judge others for failing to do so. This sense of collective responsibility can, however, only be understood in terms of 'shared responsibility' rather than
'collective responsibility', as the collective *as a collective* does not have a sense of responsibility.

Panel: Criminality and Anarchism: normative implications of an unspoken intimacy - whatwaswound (Yorgos, Catrinel & Aristotelis)

“Arsonists and anarchists should be prosecuted”, cried soon-to-be US president Joe Biden in the not-so-distant year 2020. His rhetorical lumping together of adherents to an almost two century old political tradition with common criminals is all but unusual. In fact, it would not be an overstatement to claim that anarchists are assumed to be guilty of one crime or another until proven otherwise. One might even make the stronger claim that, in mainstream and right-wing discourse, anarchism and criminality function like synonyms. What if, instead of defending anarchism from such degrading accusations, we adopted them wholesale? We propose that the anarchist movement ought to take pride in its intimate relation with criminality, which stretches back to the movement’s origins. Namely, anarchists should cherish the fact that Michael Bakunin and Piotr Kropotkin used to rub shoulders with various outlaws back in the days of the First International. Moreover, anarchists were the first theorists of revolution to considered the lawless lumpenproletariat as the true revolutionary subject. With that in mind our collective intervention’s main thesis, which honours and updates the anarchist tradition, is the following: We suggest that anarchists and their friends can and should carve out the conceptual space necessary in order to accommodate criminality as a collective responsibility and occupy this space in practice. In other words, we are interested in exploring normative theories that uphold criminality as a guiding principle.

Our panel discussion will take up three sets of criminal practices and tease out a normative theory out of each. These questions strike us as interesting: How can criminality give shape to prefigurative anarchist politics? What limits do such theories face? How should the differential effects of bio- and necropolitics (in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality etc.) be taken into account in our anarchist theories of crime? Namely, how should we factor in the fact that supremacy, in its many inflections, targets a host of minority groups as always already criminal? Lastly, what do we make of the broader radical movement’s relation to criminality in recent years? It seems to us that criminality enjoyed a more central position in anti-state thinking and practice in the first years of the twenty-first century and that its appeal is now waning. How is this to be explained?

Thou Shalt Lie: Lying as Collective Responsibility - From Black Radical Thought to the Conspiracist Manifesto

“The media is lying to you.” When we come across variations of this phrase online - which is to say quite often- our right-wing tracking radars immediately sound off. Our muscles contract and our mental apparatuses switch gears, as we ready ourselves to fend off fake news, conspiracy theories and other forms of reactionary lies. In this contribution, I adopt a critical stance towards the reflexive urge to defend “truth”. Namely, if right-wing propaganda undermines the legitimacy of state-sanctioned discourse, it is not in our best interest to defend it, at least not from an anarchist point of view. Instead, anarchists would do well to reassert a fact that they are in a position to know all too well: our rulers and those who act as their mouthpieces lie all the time. Starting from this point, two alternative strategies open up in relation to truth-telling,

which are not mutually exclusive. The first is to expose supremacy's lies for what they are and re-establish factuality. The second, which we wish to argue for in this contribution, is to explore the radical potential of other-than-true discourse of our own making. Stretching the definition of lying to include storytelling and critical fabulation, we argue for the collective responsibility of making things up, as a way of radically re-imagining the world and enacting political visions of freedom. Crucially, to the extent that going against the state-sanctioned version of the "truth" is penalized – as in the case of a recent Greek law banning the dissemination of "fake news" – we offer lying as a criminal form of collective responsibility.

In the first part of this contribution, we review a certain strand of Black bibliography that foregrounds the methodological and political advantages of un-truthfulness. We are referring to that strain of Black scholarship that deals with modernity's paradigmatic antiblackness without recourse to positive notions of identity. Within this burgeoning and pluralistic theoretical milieu, there have been articulated methodologies of lying *sensu lato,* from which this contribution's thesis takes its cue from. In particular, fabulation has been proposed as a corrective to the constitutional racism of the historical archive, as a tactics of escape from slavery and as an attack on the descriptive statement of Man. In the second part, we examine the conditions under which lying can allow us to critique the modern paradigm of power without losing track of the question of antiblackness. To that effect, we propose a reading of the recent anonymous intervention titled Conspiracist Manifesto, which argues for conspiratorial thinking from below as a response to capitalist conspiracies. We pose two main research questions. First, what are the limits of the Conspiracist Manifesto's prescriptions of lying as a form of collective responsibility? Second, (how) can the anonymous Manifesto be squared with the aforementioned radical Black line of thought?

Stealing is a moral imperative of the oppressed class

Here goes the main point: Poor people steal; Anarchists should support poor people's stealing; We will adumbrate a moral theory of stealing for anarchist use. The justification runs in two parts: The ideal part of the theory, according to which stealing is assessed as a general moral principle of the ideal society; The non-ideal part where stealing is assessed as a tactic or strategy of the oppressed classes in their attempt to bring about the ideal society.

Ideal theory. Stealing will make no sense in a just society. There are different ways to spell this out. First, there will be no social reason to steal. In an ideal society the collectively produced output flows around the community in a way that meets the desires of the latter. To steal in that society would be socially irrational (yet not impossible). Second, stealing will be meaningless. In an ideal society private property will have withered away. But if stealing means taking something that is owned by someone else, then in a society where relations of property are absent, stealing becomes, strictly speaking, impossible.

From the standpoint of the ideal society, private property is immoral. This rests on the ontological assumption that property is inherently collective. One way of seeing this is the Marxist framework according to which social objects owe their existence to the collective endeavour of human beings. Property rights exclude some individuals from the objects they created. But if a class of people is excluded, why does it return at work to recreate the social wealth from which it will be excluded again? The answer is *force*. Therefore, property rights are normatively questionable. On the contrary, stealing counters private property. In the spirit of "property is theft", stealing negates one theft with a counter-theft. Thus follows the principle of stealing: *One should steal inasmuch as in so doing they abolish private property and transform social objects to collective ones*.

Non-ideal theory. In non-ideal theory we start with the existing conditions and try to build a theory of stealing out of them. First, exclusion from the socially produced objects is not accidental in the real world. Certain social conditions contribute to the creation of structures of exclusion (e.g., gender, race, geography, disability etc.) from social wealth. Second, from a phenomenological perspective, those faced with systematic exclusion are constantly experiencing a strong sense of injustice. In the most brutal sense, they feel that they should do something against it. Stealing is one the strategies they can adopt. Some tactical problems follow: Do they steal from everyone – inasmuch as they make private property collective – or should they consider other strategic factors (e.g., no stealing from local shops)? While stealing is an indirect increase in the value of the labour power, is it the best strategy for the oppressed? For example, why shouldn't the oppressed organize around unions and parties to demand better wages from the state?

Medeas Are Right

In traditional political philosophy extreme violence (murder) is deemed justifiable in cases of self-defense. The act of killing is commonly registered as individually, not collectively executed, a counter response to some other form of violence targeting the individual, and as a last resort measure. Contrary to self-defense violence, political violence is prohibited by the state. More specifically, any individual or collective that seeks violence in the name of justice without resorting to the self-defense argument is unjust because they bypass the state's authority — which is the only legitimate executive of political violence.

Against the state monopoly on violence, we argue that there are just cases of extreme violence enacted by oppressed people beyond responding to or confronting immediate abuse. Instead, the form of justice we argue for escapes a state-oriented logic, becomes socio-politically driven and finds refuge and support in anarchist communities. To give it a name, we call this form of 'criminality' *oppression-born violence*.

One exemplary case is the Angel Makers of Nagyrév, a group of Hungarian women that poisoned their abusive husbands.1 From a political point of view, these women act out of collective defiance against patriarchy and oppressive traditional family norms. Nevertheless, there is no generalizable ethical principle that grounds mass killings. If "killing in response to oppression" was a general imperative then it would be analogous to death penalties, the only difference being that it wouldn't be the state deciding, but the individual, the community, or the society. It thus becomes obsolete

and self-defeating to defend such a normative principle. By contrast, oppression-born violence is moral and not institutionalized by state apparatuses like the police. More so, it does not establish a law, but functions as a pure manifestation of justice without ulterior means in defense of people who do not have equal access to power.

The normative assessment of oppressive-born violence rests on a strong intuition underlying its instances. This becomes evident when we look at the particular conditions the Angel Makers were living under. In ending their oppressors, these women fight injustice and consequently bring about justice.

However, these intuitions get obscured if we detach ourselves from the particular and take the standpoint of the state. The logic of state law demands the construction of universalizable ethical principles. But it appears that one cannot construct general moral principles of killing as long as these murders are not executed in self-defense; at best, the state can only grant extenuating circumstances to lessen the punishment for criminal action. Therefore, for the state, political or social justice via killing is unjust. In solidarity with those who manifest oppression-born violence, and in accordance with anarchist modes of opposing power, we find statist morality to be an unacceptable inversion of our moral intuitions.

By contrast, anarchist collectives can and should support subjects resorting to violence for justice, whilst that does not imply that anarchist communities should support all forms of criminal assaults. Consequently, more than welcoming criminality of all sorts, anarchist collectives have the responsibility to ponder upon which instances of extreme violence are just and, furthermore, show their solidarity.

1 Alongside with the Angel Makers we can add (groupings of) women like Aileen Wuornos, Mary Hobry, Mujeres Libres, Rote Zora, fictive characters like Ava (from Ex-Machina), Medea, Clytemnestra, The Danaides, Delilah, Dysomnia, female writers such as Kathy Acker and Sarah Kane and many other.

Undercommoning anthrogenesis: Fugitive anarcho-abolitionist futures for reproductive justice - Abortion Network Amsterdam

Sophie Lewis (2022) coins *anthrogenesis* as ‘the production of human beings’ and calls, by using this unfamiliar term, for a radical reimagining of gestational politics, as an alternative to liberal feminism’s focus on choice. Reviving Shulamith Firestone, for feminists like Sophie Lewis and Helen Hester (2018), this reimagination takes shape within a techno-utopic communist framework. While enticing, such a framework relies on a modernist understanding of institutions which has been critiqued by decolonial and abolitionist theory, and risks to undervalue the fugitive underground work of radical care and mutual aid that already exists today.

In this paper, I differentiate two strategies at play in the contemporary leftist reimagination of anthrogenesis: 1) a *communist* approach whose focus is primarily on fundamentally restructuring the commons of reproductive care on a grand societal scale; and 2) an anarcho-abolitionist approach that aims to abolish public institutions through *undercommoning* anthrogenesis in small scale mutual aid and radical care practices which are already constituting otherworlds of reproductive justice through transnational coalitions. Highlighting abortion and birth networks in the Netherlands (the *Abortion Network Amsterdam,* and a loose collaborative network of midwives) who transnationally and fugitively care for anthrogenesis, I propose the second strategy as a potential feminist future for reproductive justice. I hence develop another possible outcome of Firestone's revolutionary thought; not a gestational communism, but an anarcho-abolitionist fugitive undercommoning of anthrogenesis, building on the work Stefano Harney and Fred Moten (2013, 2021), Marquis Bey (2020, 2022), Chiara Bottici (2022), and Dean Spade (2022).

Mutual aid in data-driven medicine: musings on the overlooked role of anarchist thinking in bioethics - Michiel De Proost (Ghent University, Bioethics Institute Ghent)

Data extraction, concentrations of power by Big Tech firms, and viral spread of misinformation and disinformation represent defining features of the current phase of digital transformations, also called "digital disruption", in healthcare. The ethics debate about data-driven medicine and justice is stuck in a battle between two camps: one liberal camp of data rights activists arguing that patient autonomy is essential and citizens should be paid for their health data; another altruistic camp arguing that solidarity is necessary to protect against the power of tech giants and that people should by no means be rewarded for the use of health data. Part of the solution to this problem lies in a return to the roots of anarchistic thinking about mutual aid and collective responsibility that could minimize the friction between these two camps. This presentation looks at what this tradition has to offer in debates concerning the use of big data in healthcare. Rather than presenting a case that follows one particular anarchist theory on mutual aid, the main goal is to raise issues and initiate debate in this understudied topic at the intersection of bioethics and political philosophy. What anarchism brings to the discussion is, in search of a better term, the idea of "digital mutual aid". In contrast to the inadequate response of governments on these issues, we could embrace the idea that we can cooperatively reason with one another in online spaces on how to organize health data use, and thereby instantiate our common inclination to build a healthy society that benefits all without supporting any form of hierarchy that functions to enforce coercive and violent arrangements on health data.

Anarchist decentralization and public health ethics theorizing - Ioannis Drougkakis (independent scholar) - online

Public health has been a subject of much discussion in political circles, but anarchist accounts and frameworks related to it have been almost non-existent so far. This

can be explained by the fact that the state has been viewed as the traditional public health authority as well as the agent of public health interventions. As a result, anarchism has been marginalized as a viable political way of organization, promotion, protection and prevention although the actions of individual moral agents in the sphere of public health do express anarchist ideals, either deliberately or not (Cowan, 2020). It has been pointed out before that anarchist thought and praxis is more common than we realize (Essex, 2021), and can be revealed in the efforts to support public health at a local level.

Although there is a considerable number of different strands and schools of thought within anarchism, it can be summarized, at its most basic level, as the government of no one (Kinna, 2019). The rejection of a centre of authority in anarchist theory and practice signifies the importance of decentralization and mutual aid practices, which has been traditionally frowned upon by conventional public health. Although an anarchist public health framework based on the primacy of decentralization may seem utopian, it finds an unlikely ally in the person of Michael Marmot, and justification in his work (Marmot et al. 2010) as well as in the implementation of his suggestions by local communities in England (Marmot et al. 2022).

Yet, I claim that there are three problems in any attempt to such an account of public health theorizing: 1) it has to deal with limited resources at the local level, 2) fiscal decentralization produces better health outcomes but also wider health inequalities (Rotulo et al. 2020) 3) it may show lack of coordinated large scale efforts towards positive population health outcomes.

The traditional biomedical model in public health has also shifted the burden of responsibility from the collective to the individual, by emphasizing the importance of biophysical agents, genetics and risk factors over the social determinants of health (Krieger, 2011). Any implementation of anarchist decentralization on the other hand would mean that the focus would shift back to the collective, with a renewed focus on the social determinants. I claim that Rojava's health assemblies should be seen as such an example, which challenges today's indirect accountability model, where public health professionals are held accountable by a public health authority and that authority is in turn held accountable by the public, in favour of a direct accountability model in which public health professionals are directly held accountable by both the public health authority and the public.

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Eco-Anarchism, Collective Responsibility, and Freedom - Jeffery Nicholas (Providence College) - online

Murray Bookchin notes that the German philosopher Fichte contended that "humanity is nature rendered self-conscious, that we speak for a fullness of mind that can articulate nature's latent capacity to reflect upon itself, to function within itself as its own corrective guide" (*The Ecology of Freedom* 315). Rejecting Fichte's reading, Bookchin suggests that the construction of a free society must be one that takes its cue from the concept of nature rendered self-conscious. Yet, it remains unclear what such a concept could mean. Recent eco-anarchist suggest that human beings must take care of nature. Ted Trainer holds, for instance, that "local self-governing communities" have "a stake in a policy formation such as for management of the river valley they all share" (https://thesolutionsjournal.com/2021/02/26/the-answer-is-not-eco-socialism-it-is-eco-anarchism-2/). John Clark argues that "Eco-anarchist politics has two major expressions. The first is direct action to prevent the developing social-ecological catastrophe, and the second is the struggle for a comprehensive program for social and ecological regeneration and the creation of a free ecological society" ("What is eco-anarchism?, *The Ecological Citizen* 3(supplement C) 2020: 9-14). Both of these positions leave us stuck in Fichte's world. Clark's position is rather odd, in fact, because he so rejects the implicit "dualistic and hierarchical idea of the rational element" in Bookchin (*The Impossible Community* 275). Yet, by suggesting that humanity is a corrective guide, eco-anarchist have adopted a similar ruling-art element that renders nature a servant of humanity.

In contrast, Native American thinkers recognize that the ecological crisis will result, not in the destruction of nature, but the destruction of humanity. Lakȟóta activist and writer Winona LaDuke shows that nature is rational and tries to speak to us. Unfortunately, as Vine Deloria jr., a Lakȟóta lawyer and theologian said, we have lost our ability to listen to what Uŋčí Makhá (Mother Nature) tells us. Following this tradition, humanity is not nature rendered self-conscious as much as humanity is one-form of agentic consciousness in nature. In speaking of human beings caring for nature in the way they do, eco-anarchist may have inadvertently adopted a colonized mind-set which works against their goals.

That leaves us with the problem of addressing climate change and its threat to humanity and the building of an anarchist society in which we can engage in collective

responsibility. The writer Starhawk presented one such possibility in her *The Fifth Sacred Thing.* Members of the anarchist community of San Francisco represent various facets of nature in the communal assembly. However, they undermine the primary principle of anarchism when they hold the ability to veto decisions of the assembly. If we are to develop an ecological anarchism, we might do well to begin to look where others interpret nature. Here I will recommend Indigenous forms of knowing and midwifery practical reasoning at birth. Both offer us a position from which to think about how we might construct a better world in which Uŋčí Makhá has agency.

Where is the urgency? The Western position in dire global climate change - Anarcha (the Post Office Distro)

Anarchists like to think a lot about how people can get together to help one another, especially regarding the disadvantaged. They tend to analyze situations in order to stamp out oppression and coercion in both subtle and deliberate ways. How then, does anarchism deal with the dire climate situation in a context of the unequal global impact of climate change? The global south, and generally the economically impoverished regions of the world, are predicted to be among the first to experience the truly dire effects of climate change. This raises the question of what role we collectively should play in helping one another across the globe. Do we as individuals in Europe with a certain privilege have a responsibility to utilize our financial, social, and political means to aid the fight for equality in such an unequal situation? What role should the historical discrepancy between main CO2 consumers versus the main victims of climate change play in our idea of justice and responsibility? This presentation proposes that a general striving to global equality in the context of climate change has shifted in difficulty and intensity in recent years, due to new knowledge of the intensity of climate change's effects in the coming decades. Donations to charities and a focus on personal consumption are insufficient, and individual capital (be it political, financial, or otherwise) is often underutilized. The desperation of our situation regarding climate change calls for an equally intensive step-up in our methods. This is not to ascribe a savior role to Europeans, but rather to question why the efforts of Europeans (and others) remain subtle and indirect when the situation that those aim to solve has worsened considerably. Author Andreas Malm of *How to Blow up a Pipeline* has questioned why climate activists utilize pacifism so intensely. Similarly, this presentation wants to question if our current passive efforts in climate justice (peaceful protests, charity donations, online activism, limiting personal consumption...), are themselves unjust, considering our possible responsibility and means relative to those most in danger of climate change, and our role in propagating it.