

FROM ANTIGLOBE TO ANTIFA

A RECENT HISTORY OF ANARCHIST
STRUGGLE IN NYC

WRITTEN BY SOME NYC ANARCHISTS

March 2019

INTRODUCTION

The compilation of this history was inspired by "Fighting Collective Amnesia", which points to how anarchists can build a stronger movement going forward by first remembering and reflecting on our history:

"We are suffering from a collective amnesia around state repression and recent history ... Collective amnesia is when we forget the stories, victories, mistakes, and debates of the recent past. It's when we allow security culture to deteriorate and put ourselves and each other at risk unnecessarily. It's when we think that the state doesn't take us seriously and when we don't take our work seriously. It's when we don't share a common understanding of where we came from as an anarchist movement. This is especially dangerous for people who are new to these movements and circles, but most of us seem to be suffering from this amnesia. This puts all of us at risk of state repression and the inaction that comes with constantly starting over with the same debates and mistakes...

...We can fight collective amnesia by building a collective memory. We need a collective memory to adapt our struggles, lest we end up with the "immortal science" of creating endless front groups or more likely, a cliquy subculture full of informal social hierarchy. We all need to remember our recent history. We all need to remember what worked and what went wrong. We all need to remember the ones we've lost to the state. We all need to remember why we believe what we believe, and why we work the way we do. We need to collectively remember this, so that we have a collective way forward."

We hope the history compiled herein can build collective memory of recent waves of struggle in NYC, inspire conversations about the history and future of revolutionary organizing, and build a more informed, strategic, and militant anarchist movement.

BACKGROUND

In the mid-2000s anarchism was mired in a debate between insurrectionary anti-civilization eco-primitivism and anarcho-communist platformism, and had heavy streak of moralistic sub-culturalism. Much activity in the mid-2000s period was focused on the anti-globalization movement. Inspired by environmentalism, indigenous struggle, first-world deindustrialization and third-world workers' movements, the radical left proclaimed free-trade organizations, international finance, and trans-national corporations to be a centralizing threat to localized autonomy. The tactics of this movement involved combining an ethical lifestyle of ecological mindfulness with networking to disrupt summits of global leaders, notably the protests at the 1999 WTO in Seattle, 2004 RNC in NYC, and 2008 RNC in St. Paul.

In the wake of 9/11, through the passage of the Patriot Act and formation of the Department of Homeland Security, the state gave itself expansive powers to surveil and clamp down on any activity it could label "terrorism". The NYPD and CIA launched a program to spy on Muslim-owned businesses, community centers, and mosques. As US invaded Afghanistan and Iraq, much of the left's focus turned to resisting these wars. Communists and liberals joined forces to tightly control the anti-war movement's large peaceful demonstrations. Anarchists attacked and hosted sit-ins at military recruitment centers. A new formation of Students for a Democratic Society sprouted as a horizontal anti-war student organization. Some radicals focused on community-building issues like biking and gardening, and anti-repression like prisoner support and Muslim and immigrant solidarity.

During this time, the state also began heavily repressing radical environmentalists including ELF and ALF. This period, known as the Green Scare, helped foment strong prisoner support in NYC through projects like the NYC Anarchist Black Cross and Books Through Bars. To this day, NYC ABC hosts biweekly prisoner letter writing and an annual a New Year's Eve noise demo in solidarity with incarcerated people.



WTO PROTESTS (SEATTLE) - 1999

OCCUPY EVERYTHING (2008-12)

In 2008, as the Bush years ended and Obama-mania swept the nation, the financial crisis of the Great Recession threatened to radically change the structure of the global economy. At the same time, translated texts from the European ultra-left combining insurrectionary anarchism with left communism into the theory of communization (particularly *The Call* and *The Coming Insurrection*) began to circulate. North American anarchism entered a transitional phase, in which the leftist roots of the anti-globalization movement was subject to an anti-political critique.

At this time, anarchist students began occupying university buildings in New York and then California, calling not just for a freeze in tuition increases, but questioning the logic of the neoliberal university. Their slogans were "Occupy Everything," "Demand Nothing", and "Live Communism, Spread Anarchy" inspired by the communization current. The Arab Spring and Take the Square movements combined with the university occupation movement and the dregs of anti-globe to inspire Occupy Wall Street. Public occupations using consensus-based direct democracy decision-making spread across the country and captured an anti-elitist popular discontent. By six weeks after OWS started, there were around 2,300 Occupy protest camps across around 2,000 cities worldwide. "Small a" anarchism, which advocates living anarchy through direct action and consensus, was a central aspect of the movement.

Occupy did not create a unified re-articulation of the "we are the 99%" slogan as an assertion of class war, and various attempts to re-form the movement after eviction, including occupying buildings, starting neighborhood assemblies, and calling a national general strike, did not gain a strong foothold. However some projects lived on – two OWS groups have wiped out over \$19 million of student loans and medical debt, and Occupy Sandy helped thousands of NYers get through Hurricane Sandy. The frameworks of horizontalism, direct democracy, and consensus developed through OWS live on in many organizing circles and projects.

TIMELINE

President: Barack Obama (elected Nov '08, re-elected Nov '12)
NYC Mayor: Michael Bloomberg (re-elected Nov '09)

2008

December

New School cafeteria is occupied, demanding its President Bob Kerry resign and in solidarity with the insurrection in Greece. Kerry is chased down the street with tomatoes thrown.

2009

February

NYU is occupied, with demands relating to social justice issues at the university. Hundreds of supporters struggle with police to enter the building.

May

New School building on 5th Ave seized once again in a "hard occupation" with no demands. Hundreds of police swarm the area and treat it as an act of terrorism. Students are pepper-sprayed and beaten, leading to days of demonstrations against the University administration and the police. Kerry is eventually forced out.

September

After mass mobilization of over 4,500 people at G20 Summit in Pittsburg, with 190 arrested, police raid the hotel room of an NYC anarchist, purportedly in response to Tweets relaying the police dispersal order to protestors.

October

A week later, FBI and NYPD conduct a midnight raid an anarchist collective house in Queens in connection with the Pittsburgh G20 Twitter case. Cops search through items for 16 hours and confiscate dozens of boxes of items.

November

The day after holocaust denier David Irving's websites are hacked, NYC antifascists disrupt his midtown talk, the first NYC antifa action in recent memory.

2010

March

At a large student walk-out at Hunter against tuition increases at CUNY, administrative offices and newly-installed card-reader turnstiles are smashed. With flagging momentum and increasing sectarian conflict, this action is the last major NYC university occupation.

Black-clad group smashes Williamsburg American Apparel.

April

Police raid an anarchist media collective art space in Brooklyn, arresting two people for outstanding summonses for low-level offenses and asking questions regarding the NYC Anarchist Film Festival.

In an anti-capitalist feminist Take Back the Night march in Williamsburg, people calling themselves "Crazy Bitches" dressed in black skirts and masks smash up cars and windows and turn over trash cans.

The Crazy Bitches release a communique stating they have beaten up an NYC male anarchist who is a rapist, and that future incidents of sexual violence will be met with violence.

May

On May Day in one of several actions against Arizona's SB1070 anti-immigration law, black bloc protestors smash windows of Noho American Apparel, GNC, and other stores; afterwards a video mocking people who called police as "capital defenders" is released.

2011

March

Brooklyn Free Store on Walworth Street mysteriously burns down.

August

Following a call in the anti-consumerist magazine Adbusters, activists (including many anarchists) begin planning Occupy Wall Street to call out income inequality (99% vs. 1%) and corporate influence over the government. Anonymous, a decentralized hacktivism group, encourages people to attend.

September

Starting September 16th, OWS occupies Zuccotti Park. 1,000+ people mobilize at the occupation:

- People gather at Zuccotti to discuss economic inequality and injustice.
- Nightly General Assemblies are hosted, in which speakers talk using the "people's mic" (where the crowd repeats the speaker's statement to avoid using amplified sound, which requires a permit). OWS participants build an inclusive non-hierarchical structure where decisions are made via participatory direct democracy and consensus communicated via hand signals (e.g. twinkle fingers for consensus, crossed arms for block).
- Kitchen, library, security, and medical infrastructure is established. Hundreds pitch tents in Zuccotti.
- Dozens of working groups develop, including Demands, Structure, Direct Action, Labor Research, and Arts and Culture

As well, various OWS marches take place. Common chants include "We are the 99%" and "This is what democracy looks like". At one protest, an NYPD officer, unprovoked, pepper sprays protestors who are kettled behind a net, leading to significant media coverage and the officer being doxed by Anonymous. Many prominent leftists offer public support to the movement.

October

Thousands of NYers and visitors participate in the ongoing OWS Zuccotti Park occupation, nightly general assemblies, and activity of dozens of working groups. As well various OWS marches take place, including:

- On October 1, OWS marches to Brooklyn Bridge. NYPD initially allows march to enter bridge, but then kettles and arrests over 700 protestors.
- Later in October, over 5,000 demonstrators march to Zuccotti Park. Some demonstrators are arrested after approximately 200 people storm barricades blocking them from Wall Street.
- On October 11, OWS marches on billionaires' homes.

Mainstream media coverage of OWS begins to sour; pundits attack OWS for not having clear goals, the presence of homeless people and conspiracy theorists, and internal conflicts.

The New School building on 14th and 5th is occupied for weeks in an attempt to move OWS into buildings.

Take Back the Bronx begins hosting no cop zone events on Bronx street corners. At each event, signs are posted around the zone declaring cops unwelcome, and residents speak out on issues with police and discuss how they could resolve conflicts without police.

November

On November 5th, OWS protesters hold "Bank Transfer Day", marching on banks to encourage people to transfer their money to smaller community-based credit unions. An estimated 600,000 people across the US do so.

In the middle of the night on November 15th, OWS is evicted from Zuccotti park on Bloomberg's orders, claiming the occupation poses a health and fire safety hazard. Officials also clear occupations in Oakland, Oregon, Denver and Zurich in what appears to be a coordinated multi-city sweep.

Two days later in NYC, a massive 30,000-person demonstration is organized in support of OWS.

December

On the 3-month anniversary of OWS, protestors attempt to re/occupy a vacant lot outside Trinity Church (near Zuccotti Park). 58 are arrested.



OCCUPY WALL STREET (ZUCCOTTI PARK) - OCTOBER 2011

2012

January

There are multiple attempts to re-occupy Zuccotti Park.

NYC hosts a march in solidarity with Occupy Oakland, which was teargassed as it attempted to occupy a vacant building to convert it into a community center. A black bloc protestors knocks a journalist's camera out of his hand.

Combustion Books, an anarchist NYC-based publishing house, is founded.

March

On the 6-month OWS anniversary, protestors from OWS attempt to re-occupy Zuccotti Park; over 100 people are quickly arrested. One protestor who was arrested is later convicted of assaulting the NYPD officer apprehending her.

Thousands rally in Union Square for "Million Hoodie March" to protest the shooting of FL teenager Trayvon Martin by neighborhood watch vigilante George Zimmerman. Martin was wearing a hoodie at the time of his murder.

Protestors from OWS chain open emergency exit gates and tape up turnstiles at 20+ subway stations for free entry, protesting the MTA continually raising fares while cutting services and the NYPD arresting disproportionately POC for fare evasion. Protestors also post MTA-style signs for May 1 general strike.

April

An anti-police march after the 6th annual NYC Anarchist Bookfair leaves trail of graffiti and smashes a newly opened 7-11 on St. Marks. Two NYPD officers are injured in a scuffle. Police raid the Bookfair after party and arrest three people.

NYPD and FBI raid homes of known anarchists before May Day.

May

On May Day "Day without the 99%", actions start with an OWS Town Square and workshops, and included a mutual aid peoples' kitchen and Free University. Actions included decentralized direct actions against banks and to block traffic, "wildcat" black bloc march, and standard main march. At night,

thousands of protestors host an assembly and attempt to occupy 55 Water St. to highlight debt issues; police swarm it. 30+ arrested overall this day.

In an attempt to reconfigure OWS without an occupation, OWS activists move to hosting town squares and pop-up occupations focused in NYC neighborhoods, and creating time banks, debt resistance projects, workers cooperatives, and bicycle collectives.

July

Rally and packing the court in solidarity with hacktivist Jeremy Hammond.

September

On the 1 year- anniversary of OWS, 2,000+ protestors from around the country converge in NYC and use the WTO model of themed clusters to do various actions and shutdowns around the Stock Exchange. ~200 arrests.

October

OWS-affiliated people form Occupy Sandy to assist people affected by Hurricane Sandy through mutual aid outside of the state apparatus.

A museum dedicated to the history of squatting in the LES called MORUS opens, marking the end of the squatting movement in NYC.

November

Inspired by OWS, over 100 fast-food workers walk off their jobs in NYC to demand higher wages and better working conditions. This strike develops into the Fight for \$15.

December

Cooper Union is occupied to protest the potential end of free education at the university.

Documents revealed showing surveillance and the violent crackdown on OWS and Occupy encampments across the country was coordinated by FBI, DHS, local police departments, and private-sector organizations, who treated OWS as a domestic terrorism threat.

BLACK LIVES MATTER (2013–16)

Black Lives Matter captured brewing popular anger towards longstanding issues of police brutality, over-policing of black communities, systemic racism, and the criminal injustice system. The movement originated online, when three black female organizers helped coin the hashtag #blacklivesmatter in response to the acquittal of the murderer of unarmed black teenager Trayvon Martin. The movement's first protests ignited in Ferguson, MO, after Michael Brown, unarmed, was shot by a white police officer; frequent unruly, frenetic protests and actions then erupted all over the country. Riots exploded in Baltimore and Ferguson, resulting in property destruction, looting, and physical clashes with police.

These demonstrations provided anarchists an opportunity to intervene with their tactics and criticisms of state violence, institutional white supremacy, and police/prisons. Anarchists from St. Louis intervened and contributed in meaningful ways to the uprising in Ferguson, and in New York an ultra-left and anarchist coalition organized some large demonstrations. The history of black liberation, abolition, and contemporary black radical thought became more serious concerns within the US anarchist movement.

Some organizers from BLM went on to push the issue with politicians (particularly 2016 Presidential candidates) and draft legislation to reform policing tactics and strengthen police accountability. Others continued organizing toward the abolition of police and prisons through disruption and direct action. To this day, NYC Shut It Down continues to host a "Peoples Monday" protest every week, reading the facts surrounding the deaths of people at the hands of the police as well as shutting down streets and disrupting public areas. While the annual number of black people killed by police has remained steady from 2015 to 2018, BLM pushed race and policing to the foreground.

TIMELINE

President: Barack Obama (re-elected Nov '12)

NYC Mayor: Bloomberg (re-elected '09); De Blasio (elected Nov '13)

2013

March

Days of protests, including small riots, in Flatbush after teen Kimani Gray is murdered by the NYPD. One night, 46 are arrested.

April

Members of National Anarchist Tribal Alliance, a white nationalist fascist group, are pushed out of the NYC Anarchist Bookfair.

May

Students at Cooper Union occupy the Presidents' office for 65 days, ending with an agreement to form of a task force to look into alternatives to tuition.

An NYC anarchist is jailed for refusing to testify to a grand jury as a witness regarding 2008 Times Square military recruitment center bombing. He joins a history of grand jury resisters who accuse the FBI of using attempting to use grand juries, which are secretive proceedings that do not allow one's lawyer to be present and subject witnesses to answering far-ranging questions about any topic, to fish for information about other anarchists.

July

The FBI visits home of several activists regarding the 2008 Times Square military recruitment center bombing.

In response to the acquittal of George Zimmerman for shooting of Trayvon Martin, thousands pour into the street, blocking traffic in Times Square and some marching all the way up to the Bronx.

August

A court rules directs the NYPD to adopt a written policy to specify where stop-and-frisks are authorized. Stop and frisks drop dramatically thereafter.

The Base, an anarchist political and social center in Bushwick, opens with events that include talks from various anarchists, Spanish lessons, copwatch trainings, mutual aid self therapy, potlucks, and more.

October

Media reveal the identity of an NYPD officer who has undercover throughout his heavy involvement with OWS, OWS protests, and Occupy Sandy, affirming long-held suspicions that OWS was infiltrated.

2014

January

Woodbine, a space inspired by the anarchist/communist tendency described in texts by the Invisible Committee, opens in Ridgewood.

February

The NYC chapter of Black Rose Anarchist Federation, a working-class oriented group organizing in mass movements through social insertion, is formed.

April

Noise demo at Queens ICE detention center in solidarity with detainees.

July

While being arrested for selling loosey cigarettes, Eric Garner is killed by NYPD officer Daniel Pantaleo using a chokehold (a maneuver which is prohibited by NYPD rules). Video of the incident, where Garner is seen gasping for air and stating "I can't breathe", spreads rapidly. Protest hosted in Staten Island.

NYC anarchists form Jane Addams Collective to provide an anarchist alternative to mental health therapies and a critique of capitalist psychology.

October

Cop watch, active in monitoring and documenting NYPD activity to deter police brutality since 2011, is ongoing in eight NYC neighborhoods.

November

Rojava Solidarity-NYC is founded, holding protests (which include scuffles with Turkish fascists), raising money, and hosting events to support Rojava.

Grand jury does not indict Darren Wilson for the killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, MO, where the first Black Lives Matter protests occurred months prior. ~3,000 protest in NYC, blocking the Lincoln Tunnel, the FDR Drive, the West Side Highway and several East River bridges. A protestor sprays NYPD Commissioner Bill Bratton with red paint. Chants at this and other BLM protests include "no justice, no peace", "I can't breathe", and "hands up, don't shoot" (or "fists up, shoot back").

Akai Gurley is shot by NYPD officer Peter Liang, who claims his gun discharged accidentally as he entered a stairwell. Protests follow.

December

Grand jury does not pursue charges against Daniel Pantaleo for the killing of Eric Garner. Hundreds of people protest nearly daily for weeks, taking unplanned routes, conducting actions inside store and public spaces, and blocking various roadways, tunnels, and bridges. Hundreds are arrested.

NYC's Millions March protest is the largest street protest against the killing of black people by police, drawing 30,000+ people to a planned march from Washington Square to midtown to 1 Police Plaza downtown.

- A black bloc contingent breaks off in midtown. A group chants, "What do we want? Dead cops! When do we want it? Now!". There is also property destruction.
- Later a group of protestors takes the Brooklyn Bridge. NYPD attempts to arrest a protestor for allegedly throwing trashcans from the pedestrian walkway onto the bridge below. The protestor is de-arrested, injuring two police officers in the process. NYPD seeks out



MILLIONS MARCH (MANHATTAN) - DECEMBER 2014

and arrests some people for their alleged involvement in this incident.

NYC Shut It Down, a group dedicated to ending police violence composed primarily of anarchist QTPOC, begins doing a weekly "Peoples' Monday" march highlighting a different victim of police brutality.

Later in December, two NYPD officers are shot, sparking the "Blue Lives Matter" movement.

2015

March

Disarm the NYPD, a campaign to encourage participation in cop watch, create cop-free zones, and eventually disarm the NYPD, is launched by a group of anarchists including members of Copwatch and Take Back the Bronx.

April

In solidarity with riots in Baltimore after the death of Freddie Grey, who was injured while being transported in police custody, NYC protestors stop traffic, block the Holland Tunnel, and march to Times Square; 143 arrests.

May

May Day march is focused on BLM, with many expressing solidarity with the uprising in Baltimore. Disarm the NYPD has strong presence; banners include "make them pay for Freddie Gray".

June

Kalief Browder, who had spent three years on Rikers (much of it in solitary confinement) simply waiting for trial, commits suicide. A protest to #ShutDownRikers occurs in front of the bridge to Rikers Island.

July

Disarm the NYPD organizes an event to burn a Confederate and American flag to protest police brutality and institutional racism. Fox News picks up the story.

Over 100 pro-flag counterdemonstrators, including bikers, show up at the event and chase down the flag burners with weapons.

Small #SayHerName protest in NYC calls out the killing of black women, including Sandra Bland, by police.

August

Bronx Social Center is opened by anarchists affiliated with Take Back the Bronx.

An anarchist organizing assembly is hosted at the Base to provide a forum to anarchist organizers to find each other and speak out about new and existing projects.

Journalists confirm that undercover NYPD officers have attended many BLM protests in NYC, and NYPD intelligence and MTA counterterrorism agents have been tracking the movements of BLM protestors keeping photos.

2016

January

NYPD forms the Strategic Response Group, a unit of the NYPD that is responsible for both counterterrorism and managing protests.

February

Documents released confirming the NYPD has used Stingrays, surveillance devices that spy on nearby cell phones by intercepting their communications and tracking their location, over 1,000 times since 2008.

April

Peter Liang, the NYPD officer who murdered Akai Gurley, receives no jail time in his sentencing. Protestors go to the home of the DA Ken Thompson for a late night noise demo. Multiple arrests.

June

Anarchists from The Base and Brooklyn Solidarity Network engage in various anti-gentrification actions against a new development proposed in Bushwick.

July

500-people NYC protest against police brutality calls out the killing of people in Minneapolis, Baton Rouge, and NYC by police.

5 cops are killed at a protest in Dallas protest, and 3 cops are killed in Baton Rouge. People erroneously link video of "dead cops" chant from 2014 NY protest to these killings and fuel the narrative that BLM is explicitly dedicated to violence against cops.

August

A group of anarchists begins organizing a rapid response network to provide medical and mental health crisis support (as an alternative to calling police), and to resist ICE raids.

BLM protestors from Millions March and other abolitionist groups organize an occupation of a park by City Hall that it renames "Abolition Square". The #ShutDownCityHallNYC occupation demands the city redirect resources from the NYPD to victims of police brutality and black, brown, and working class communities and fire NYPD Commissioner Bill Bratton (who steps down 2 days into the occupation). Horizontal general assemblies are hosted. NYPD presence is constant.

Once the Abolition Square occupation ends, protestors begin doing general jail support, offering food and cigarettes as people are released from jail.

September

#CLOSERikers organizes a rally in front of the bridge to Rikers Island to demand Rikers is closed. #CLOSERikers says they want a "more humane and smaller" city jail system. Over 160 nonprofits sign on to #CLOSERikers campaign.

Noise demo held outside Brooklyn's MDC prison in solidarity with the largest-ever nationwide prison strike, which is held on the 45th anniversary of the Attica uprising and coordinated with support from the IWW's Incarcerated Workers Organizing Committee (IWOC). A march after the noise demo shuts down the BQE; no arrests.

ANTI-TRUMP, ANTI-FASCISM (2016-PRESENT)

In 2016, the snarling racism of the Donald Trump campaign and the vacuous incompetence of Clinton's posed an ideological crisis to the centrist political consensus. Since Trump's election, Republicans have enacted legislative war on the poor, Muslims, and noncitizens, opened the floodgates to capital's assault on the environment, and given a greenlight to misogyny and white nationalism. Furious liberals have raged about Russian interference in the election and doubled down on the losing vacuous Democratic party, while many, disgusted by the charade, continue to sit out politics all together.

The election of Trump to the presidency sparked a fever-pitch of organizing. Countering an increasingly emboldened far right with de-platforming, mass mobilizations, doxxing, and collective self-defense has become a central focus of anarchist organizing. The antifascism of 2017 has prevented the alt right from entering the mainstream conservative movement, becoming one of the most successful explicitly anarchist projects in memory. Anarchists have also mobilized against the Trump administration's anti-immigrant policies, including with a wave of occupations of ICE facilities that attempted to block deportation processing, with mixed results. Fascist and police violence, as well as state repression, have taken a toll on many anarchists and antifascists during this period.

As well socialism has entered the mainstream – the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) has massively increased its membership, reaching 50,000 members nationwide in 2018 (up from 6,000 in 2014), and elected two people to Congress. Socialism is polling better than capitalism with millennials.

The question of where to go from here remains open.

TIMELINE

President: Donald Trump (elected Nov '16)

NYC Mayor: Bill De Blasio (elected Nov '13, re-elected Nov '17)

2018 (continued)

October

NYU College Republicans invite Milo Yiannopoulos to speak on campus; the university cancels the event due to concerns of violence.

November

NYC Antifa doxxes Proud Boys and other alt-right people active in New York. Many of them lose their jobs.

Large mobilization in NYC protests the building of the Dakota Access Pipeline, an oil pipeline planned to run through the land of the Standing Rock Sioux tribe in North Dakota. A few days later, the arm of a NY activist, who is involved with NYC Shut it Down, is nearly blown off in an explosion at Standing Rock.

December

A group of activists are assaulted by homophobic Trump supporters outside of event by Decolonize This Place. NYC Shut It Down holds rally in response.

Metropolitan Anarchist Coordinating Council (MACC) is founded, organizing several working groups and hosting monthly General Assemblies.

2017

January

On January 20 ("J20"), thousands protest Trump's inauguration in Washington, DC. Prominent white nationalist Richard Spencer is punched in the face by a black clad protestor. A limousine is tagged with a circle A and lit on fire. During an antifascist march where some windows are smashed, 200 protestors (including many from NYC) and media are indiscriminately kettled

and arrested, and are charged for riot and property destruction with sentences up to 60 years in prison. Members of MACC help coordinate J20 legal defense.

Actor Shia LeBeouf begins art project of 24/7 livestreaming camera in Queens. Quickly white supremacists, including Identity Evropa, begin showing up to recite the 14 words and pour milk on themselves. The project is shut down.

An antifascist infiltrates NYC's alt-right scene, attending multiple events with Proud Boys, The Right Stuff crowd, and other far-right figures.

February

College Republicans invite Gavin McInnes, founder of the Proud Boys, to speak at NYU. Counter-protestors mace him in the face and burn a seized MAGA hat; 10 counter-protestors and 1 Proud Boy are arrested.

Thousands quickly mobilize to JFK airport to protest Trump's "Muslim Ban" executive order. Taxi drivers join by striking for an hour.

Outside a right-wing event at Clockwork bar in the Lower East Side, members of right-wing gang 211 Boot Boys attack two people after noticing an antifascist sticker on one of their phone cases.

March

De Blasio pledges to close Rikers in 10 years.

April

Documents confirm undercover NYPD officers infiltrated small groups of people at BLM protests and gained access to their text messages.

Part of a multi-year IWW and Brandworkers campaign in solidarity with Tom Cat baker immigrant workers subject to DHS audit, protestors, including members of MACC, chain themselves to a Tom Cat Bakery delivery truck.

May

May Day is more raucous than usual. A group of Proud Boys and other alt-right people attempt to disrupt the demo, but are pushed out. There are over 30 arrests this day overall.

The Revolutionary Abolitionist Movement (RAM) is announced. RAM combines anarchist direct action with the tradition of black liberation, slave revolts, prison abolition, and Rojava's liberation struggle. RAM outlines their approach in the book *Burn Down the American Plantation*.

June

ACT for America, an anti-Muslim hate group, organizes "March against Sharia" events nationwide including one in Foley Square where Gavin McInnes is a speaker. MACC and with several leftist groups coordinate a "No Platform for Fascism" counter-protest, which far outnumbers the approximately 100 right-wing ralliers.

- A member of the Oath Keepers has a heart attack at the event and goes to the hospital.
- A Proud Boy attendee assaults a young Muslim woman outside a bar.

Following this event, MACC and some leftist groups continue meeting as an antifascist coalition under the banner "No Platform for Fascism".

July

A bar patron smashes a bottle into the face of right wing troll Jovi Val at a bar. He receives free plastic surgery from a Trump-supporting surgeon.

Members of Shut It Down, Bash Back, MACC, and others disrupt the annual Pride Parade under the banner "No Justice No Pride" to call out corporate co-optation and the police presence at Pride. Pride parade organizers ask NYPD to arrest the protestors, which they do.

August

A group of alt-right people enters Bluestockings, a feminist bookstore, to plant copies of Milo Yiannopoulos' book on the shelves and antagonize the staff.

Far right groups convene in Charlottesville to protest the removal of a statue of Robert E. Lee at a rally titled "Unite the Right", organized by Jason Kessler. Hundreds of antifascist protestors (including many from NYC) face off with the far right and protect each other. A 250-person tiki torch rally at UVA on Friday

evening is followed by a day of rallying on Saturday August 12 ("A12"). Far right figures and Neo-Nazis openly carry guns, lead Nazi chants, and use Nazi imagery. There are many brawls and violent attacks:

- A black Charlottesville resident is beaten with pipes by six white men.
- A KKK leader fires a gun at the foot of a black protestor and calls him a racial slur. The protestor takes a lighter to a spray paint can to cast a flame back.
- Counter-protestor Heather Heyer is killed when James Fields drives into the crowd. Dozens of antifascists, including from NYC, are injured or otherwise traumatized in this incident.

This event brings huge national attention to the racism and violence of the growing far right, as well as the tactics of antifa. In the aftermath, antifascists and fascists are doxxed. Antifascists leak organizers' planning chats. Some companies pull websites and payment processing from far-right groups. Many call out the police for their inaction in preventing violence.

September

NYU Against Fascism organizes a rally after Identity Evropa posters are found at NYU.

October

Columbia University College Republicans host invite Mike Cernovich, right-wing Pizzagate conspiracy theorist, to speak at Columbia University. Amidst the protest, right-wing provocateurs dress as antifascists and plant a false-flag banner that shows antifa supporting NAMBLA.

Rally against rapist police is hosted in response to teenager Anna Chambers being raped by two NYPD officers. Protestors, including MACC, also show at every court date to call out rapist cops and support Chambers.

December

In first J20 trial, the prosecution tries to make the case that anyone participating in a black bloc has willfully associated with a "riot" and is guilty of any property destruction that happens. Jury acquits first six J20 defendants.



A12 (CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA) - AUGUST 2017

RAM announces its Community Bail Fund and begins bailing people out.

2018

January

J20 prosecution drops charges for 129 defendants, focusing on remaining 59.

The alt right hosts "A Night for Freedom" in NYC; Mike Cernovich is the headline speaker, and far right figures including Gavin McInnes are in attendance. Military analyst-turned-whistleblower Chelsea Manning shows up as part of an attempt to infiltrate the far right. ~80 people counter-protest outside. After an altercation between a Trump supporter and an antifascist, the Trump supporter is hospitalized, and the antifascist is arrested.

March

A solidarity union of the IWW claims victory over the owner of Ellen's Stardust Diner, who begins paying out workers half a million dollars in back wages.

Protest held in solidarity with Afrin in Rojava.

April

Protest takes place in Crown Heights after Saheed Vassell is shot by the NYPD, who claim to have thought the pipe Vassell was holding was a gun.

May

Anarchists host a May Day picnic.

New School cafeteria occupied in support of cafeteria workers' labor dispute, which is quickly won.

June

In response to increasing anti-immigrant policies including separating families at the border, MACC is joined by NYC Shut It Down and other groups to host an occupation outside the ICE processing facility and court on Varrick Street under the banner #OccupyICE.

- Twice, demonstrators attempt to block a van carrying detainees from driving to long-term detention centers.
- ICE ceases operations at the building for one day and moves all court hearings to video conference. MACC celebrates the shut down of detention processing, but also argues the occupation is being scapegoated for ICE's decision to halt court hearings. Nonprofits pressure demonstrators to stop the occupation. The occupation ends after 5 days.

Afterward NYC Shut It Down and others hold an Occupy/Abolish ICE occupation in Foley Square. NYPD sweeps the camp nightly after the park closes, forcing demonstrators onto the sidewalk. The occupation ends after a few weeks.

July

A judge rules that the prosecution withheld evidence in the J20 cases; all J20 charges are dropped – a relief for the defendants and embarrassment for the prosecution.

Identity Evropa drops anti-immigration banner in Inwood Park.

August

Jason Kessler organizes Unite the Right 2 in DC; ~25 right wing protestors (including NYC's Jovi Val) outnumbered by thousands of counter-protestors, including some from NYC. Very heavy police presence, and very little action.

Second nationwide prison strike happens. MACC and IWOC organize weekly prisoner letter writings in advance of the strike. RAM organizes a noise demo outside Brooklyn's MDC prison, which ends with a march and a few arrests.

De Blasio administration unveils plan to build four new jails to replace facilities on Rikers Island. #NoNewJails campaign launched.

September

At a midtown protest against Turkish President Erdogan, NYPD threatens to arrest protestors wearing masks. The bike tires of some protestors are slashed.

October

Gavin McInnes schedules a speaking event at the Metropolitan Republican Club.

- The night before, the club is vandalized with circle As and smashed windows, and its locks are glued; a communique is left denouncing Republicans' support for white supremacy.
- McInnes' talk includes re-enactment of the assassination of a Japanese leftist by a fascist.
- After the event in one altercation, 3 antifascist protestors are arrested.
- A couple blocks away, a large group of Proud Boys and 211 Boot Boys assaults a small group of antifascist protestors. NYPD arrives and allows the attackers walk away. Video footage of the incident goes viral. Many call out the NYPD for their inaction. NYC Antifa doxxes the Proud Boys involved in the attack. Over the next few weeks, 10 Proud Boys are arrested and charged. The Proud Boys claim self-defense.

December

Six months after the ICE occupation has ended, the Varrick St ICE immigration court continues to host all court hearings over video conference, stating it is "more efficient, providing an economic savings to taxpayers".

2019

February

Protests outside MDC prison in Brooklyn as reports surface that the jail has been without electricity or heat during the coldest week of the year.

LEARN MORE

This history compilation is short, incomplete, and very light on analysis. Talk about the history of anarchist struggle in NYC with folks who were there to learn more and develop insights.*

For additional readings on histories of recent anarchist struggles, check out these texts, available at www.theanarchistlibrary.org:

"After the Crest: The Life Cycle of Movements" by CrimethInc

Outline of the typical life-cycles of movements and analysis of strategy at each step (foreseeing events, making the most of the waning phase and peak, dealing with the fallout, and what to do in the lulls). Includes histories of and lessons from specific struggles in Oakland, Barcelona, and Montréal.

"Fighting Collective Amnesia" by Kacey SW

Discussion of collective amnesia and memory within the anarchist community, a very brief contemporary history of anarchism in the US, and an overview of modern tools of repression.

CONTACT US

If you have suggestions, questions, or comments, email us at someNYCanarchists@protonmail.com

* But don't ask about who did what – it's bad security!