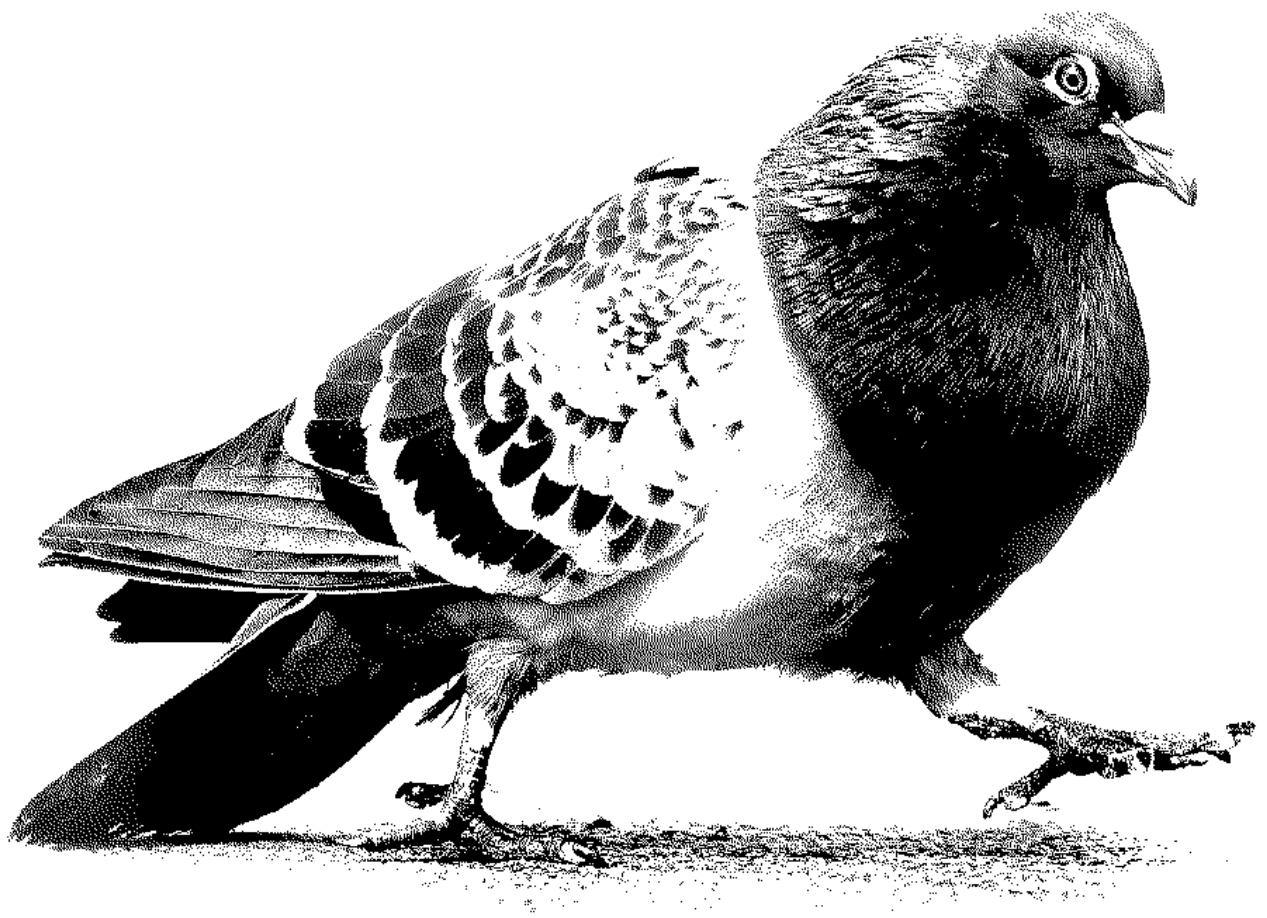


# **What My Cane Taught Me About Revolution**



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# THE EXISTENTIAL REALITY OF CHANGE

Recently, I started walking with a cane. I moved from the relatively flat Metro Detroit, where I didn't need to walk around very much thanks to my vehicle, to an East Coast city where there is now much variation in the terrain, and without a vehicle after the transmission was destroyed on the journey. I underestimated what this transition would do to my legs and feet. Even before, I struggled to walk around for more than 30 minutes on flat surfaces, but I figured it was me being out of shape. I tried walking more, but I found out

quickly my legs were still not getting better even as the rest of my body was. I found myself more inclined to hide away inside instead of going out and enjoying the weather, even on nice days, because of the sheer exhaustion of simply having to go to the grocery store the day before. After a series of seemingly simple trips leading in the near self destruction of my legs, and the instability of my knees finally catching up to me, I realized that the only option was to start using my cane, a cane I purchased last year because of a temporary injury. I refused it at first thinking I didn't need it. Part of me was scared of discrimination in this economic spiral. But this is hardly the cane's fault - although I would prefer a wooden cane, this is quite nice itself. It is adjustable and light, allowing me to adapt to the right configuration. At first I had it at the wrong height. I made it a little longer and with

slight adjustments, it made moving my body around so much easier. It wasn't even that I needed it to walk, but rather that my legs needed a break, and suddenly with this condition satisfied, it felt like I could climb the world - perhaps not Everest, but the Everest of my own world, and beyond. Suddenly I was no longer simply tired in bed having to rest for days to recover from the adjustment - I could live my life again and spend more time doing what I actually enjoyed. I could even reconnect with nature somewhat, not having to be stuck inside all the time just because everything is so tiring to do. It doesn't matter if there is or is not something medically diagnoseable, or even whether or not this identifies me as a disabled person or not, but rather that it produces new possibilities for the future that never existed before. Not just futures for my own personal experiences, encapsulated in a protective

amnion to shield its influence from the rest of the world, as is the purpose of so much disability pity pornography that is plastered over so many disability charities - but a new edge of politics, shaped around the materialism of the body that has been produced, and embracing what it is now producing. In the 21st century, we are embracing completely novel political, environmental and health challenges that are transforming our bodies and its relations to the world as we speak. Toxic chemical industrial production starting in the 20th century finds itself incorporated into our bodies - microplastics are detected in all aspects of our bodies (interestingly, the discourse often focuses on men and sperm, how chemicals are "making us gay" or how it impacts our brains or digestive tracts, thus supposedly causing a variety of neurodiverse conditions, of course). The

increasing stress of the failures of capital and harmful new social interfaces distributed across online networks are producing a wide variety of mental illnesses, addictions and conditions, one that cannot be simply written off as "increased awareness". Every attempt to reverse this process instead further incorporates it into our bodies, further replacing life with simulations, detached propaganda, manufactured chemicals and plastics.

Undetectable because of the ontologies of the sciences attempting to measure them, these indirect interactions produced at their complex intersections are changing the world around our bodies faster than we can produce explanations for them. In order to survive, we have to transform our relations to politics and society. We have to find new relations between our bodies and the world around us - like how ecosystems evolve in response to

the stress of mass extinction.



# Liberalism, Fascism and Identity

Within capitalism, there exists a social machine whose purpose is to protect capitalism by identifying individual categories of classes and processing them, similar to a computer. For example, racial minorities are defined on strict lines based on a combination of physical appearance, language and history - taking these complex relations and reducing them down into categories that can be easily compared, contrasted and manipulated. Liberalism has taken the complex, multifaceted battles of the BIPOC and reduced their complicated histories and relations down to categories that beg to be "equalized", because their surface values are interchangeable - to liberalism,

the solution to antiracist struggle is not to acknowledge the material processes that lead to that struggle in the first place, but rather creating an entirely new category to organize the tension produced by this struggle. Liberals, presented with this challenge to their systemic power, which is critical to maintaining its control on worldwide trade and asserting dominance against opposing politics internationally, transformed conservative campaigns for gun control intended on targeting the Panthers and other radical groups to dismantle access to physical defensive power and to instead encourage integration into capitalist modes of production through "acceptance" in the form of civil rights. By throwing this kind of bone to minorities, this presented minorities with two possibilities itself - those who were willing to compromise would be willing to

submit themselves to the liberal capitalist economy, resulting in reducing the number of remaining radicals, breaking up cooperative community movements and allowing for remaining isolated movements to easily be captured by police forces and effectively "cleaned off the map". Liberal "acceptance" and "lifestyles" exist to shut us up and get our butts back in the production seats. In the case of disabled people, this has been attempted through transforming the radical social model of disability towards incorporating accessibility needs and rights into structures of work, rent, legal matters and other matters within a capitalist society. Despite being promised fairness with assimilation to the capitalist machine, capitalism in of itself is an inherently discriminating process that produces hierarchies based on access to capital - something that is materially reflected in

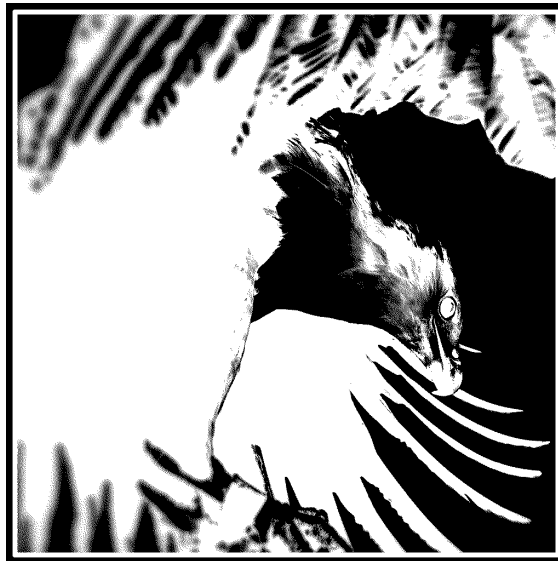
minorities historically with struggles they inherited to this day. This, along with having no real resolution to bigoted forces outside of legal repression, which is complicated by the bureaucratic civil rights claims process, a process that can be ignored by authorities if they desire, leads to little being done about actual discrimination outside of the most egregious cases, and ultimately low representation of minorities in higher power roles. Additionally, the result of the implementation of DEI policies and protections like Affirmative Action lead to a twofold problem: for white racists, it is painted like a sense of privilege, one that is actively being attacked for its so-called "biases", while also forcing minorities to aggressively compete for limited access to employment and other access to resources while allowing the rest of society to continue its discriminatory practices, leading

to a complete failure to live up to any promise - as if it was ever about us and our needs in the first place, but with an additional layer of motivation for racists to take even more from us. Thus, it only makes sense how liberalism in the United States and similar movements in other post-imperialist countries has led to fascism. The inability to actually make any sense of these politics through a regime of state-assigned identities leads to a shift in priorities in what to do with these categories. Instead of unsuccessfully trying to extract their labor and production while having to spend extensive resources suppressing their desire for liberation, fascism can simply use these categories as a way to identify subjects for elimination. This is what makes the fascist position so attractive to many in the current way of understanding political groups. This squares perfectly with the original intentions of capitalism

and imperialist-colonialism. After all, this process began as a means to extend white western European power across the entire world, extracting resources from far away lands to build an empire of control. The world for over the last 500 years has been carved out by racists trying to extract value from every corner of the earth to attempt to construct their image of the perfect man. With this, it requires the regulation of bodies on every level - not just for production, but also reproduction - to manufacture the mass production of this image. With racism, it aims to eliminate the people of native lands and displace them to extract their labor until they are no longer wanted - keeping a distinct separation between whites and BIPOC to maintain control of this process. With ableism, it exists to process the productive capacities of an entire population, eliminating those



who are not supposedly able to "keep up with the flows" - while sexism, homophobia and transphobia intend to control reproductive structures that exist to reproduce the nuclear family, acting as the base unit for the reproduction of this system - modeled after the harsh control structures within bourgeoisie families. Upon this realization, it becomes clear just how all of these processes link up together to reproduce the racist controlling forces of white powerful men. Initially, they expected our differential bodies to bend over and die, and when we resisted, they realized they needed to kill us. That is what founds the basis of fascist eugenic extermination.



# The Changes of the Body and Mind

The truth is that no such categories actually exist that are inscribed into our bodies. Our bodies are just material organizations of flesh, bone, social relations and adaptive technologies that allow us to navigate the world. The categories on the other hand are a product of this organizational process of society, a means to make sense of our traumas and organizing these bodies into a structure of how they plug into larger historical narratives. Identity is a consequence of social relations that is produced through the separation and division of people and other subjects to organize them into narrative structures. For example,

I have recently started walking with a cane, and I am astonished to discover how many people (most of whom I have never previously met) already begin to compose narratives of how I got here! When in reality, my cane walking is simply a consequence of a conscious decision between the cane and my body to deal with a particular situation, walking long distances and up or down steep hills, which causes me difficulty. It has greatly improved my life, but I have already been categorized by this binary machine, like a computer calculating the boundaries of an object. Something similar occurs with being transgender, my homosexuality, the expression of my kinks and my other illnesses. This is not to say that group identity is necessarily bad in all instances - unified identity constructed through radical social movements in the 1970s were essential for organizing and mutual aid - but this politics was

then dismantled by incorporating these identities back into liberal narratives of fairness within capitalism, through the use of categorization, and thus dividing class solidarity, along with its own internal scuffles. This process forced groups that were spontaneously forming through radical pressures to be contained within a predictable calculus and transform the surface of these movements into static shells, easy to dispatch with various methods. However, as it turns out, our bodies are constantly transforming regardless of any categorization. From birth, we experience transformation through our bodies, evolving, developing and breaking down, and forcing us to to change course with how we approach the future with every development. Most people with forms of congenital blindness must adapt through their lives to the changing impact of their vision, while those with

predisposition to psychotic disorders know very well the challenges of managing more and more extreme cycles of their internal mental processes as their illness progresses. I have noticed this personally with aging as well. As I reached my 30s, parts of my body that I had simply taken for granted started to make unstable shifts - my knees would randomly go out, pain erupts in my feet and muscles, and I am already finding myself needing to compensate for my ability to deal with my own physical weakness. Fascism views this transformation as something inherently harmful, because this "decay" represents a breakdown from the structures that it is trying to uphold through its own image so much. This is why, for example, the Nazi party started its eugenics campaigns with the disabled and the elderly - these bodies represent "failures" to conform to the needs of the

fascist agenda, and thus must be thrown out. Despite this horrific violence against disabled people, it is this very belief that makes fascist regimes surprisingly weak at their core. Not only must they use massive amounts of resources to identify and round up the millions that fit within these identified borders, they need to produce or utilize structures (ghettos) to be able to collect, store and organize these individuals for extermination, let alone the expenses of the physical extermination itself. Every point of this process is further slowed down by the resistance of individuals who force costs of these procedures to skyrocket for simply not bending over and dying. This is all a tremendous expense for the preservation of a "perfect" white man's face as a template for humans in a "perfect" society. This not only is a massive waste of resources, but also leads to the reduction in physical

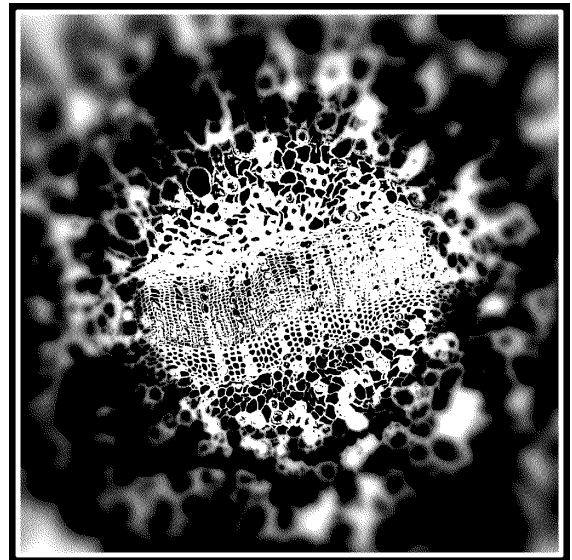
numbers of their forces. After all, they do not see someone who is blind, in a wheelchair, using a cane, schizophrenic, diabetic, or whatever else as viable for their political project in the long run - and certainly not in the front lines of theory or combat. These people are either simply nodes of transmission of their virus at best and are targets for extermination. Queers, women, BIPOC, and other minorities alongside are used as pawns to try to suppress their own people, only to be consumed once they are no longer useful. Like a wasteful wealthy child, the fascist movement throws anyone under the bus with a thousand arms in a thousand directions to make a little progress in its achievements, weighting every strategic move as a transaction, an approach that squares perfectly with the translation of their economy of ethics into a means to produce their ideological values of a dominant

white society. Not only this, but they cannot even preserve their creation if they were able to succeed. This is the biological consequences of the reduction in gene and phenotype expression caused by this intentional reduction. Genetic and phenotypical diversity gives humans and all other species the ability to contend with the challenges of existence through a wide range of possibilities on every stratum of our bodies and presence. This is well observed in domestic populations of exotic pets, where certain genetic lines become unsustainable after multiple iterations of extensive breeding due to the inheritance of major genetic defects to try to conform a breed to a particular standard or market expectation. The proliferation of this idea of a racist "utopia", the nearly indistinguishable faces of white men, is a reactionary breeding project to reduce diversity of expression down so far to

preserve the "perfection" of the image of this face, into a runaway process of phylogenetic suicide, with no other possible conclusion than the extinction of the human race. And for what more than to preserve the power of white men as long as it can in a rush to burning out? Antifascists, in comparison, have a completely different goal that allows us to mobilize this population in ways that cannot be achieved through transactions. We try to find value in those who are transformed into the marginalized ejected minoritarian class, either from the conditions of their birth or as a series of life developments. These people are part of a disjointed, alienated and rapidly breaking apart working class who are suffering the consequences of the toils of their bodies through centuries of repeated collective trauma, along with decades of environmental and media

pollution that has pulled all of us further and further away from solidarity with the rest of the oppressed masses. Thus, it is the challenging project of an antifascist movement to pull these forces together, not in a singular unified movement, but a complex political process that consumes fascist territories in all walks of life on the scale of the micropolitical, like viruses ripping through its flesh, via the recognition and protection of our allies on the ground, on the solidarity emerging through unified struggle for life against death, and for a new world of possibilities through our bodies. This process gives minorities a serious advantage in this war, because instead of closing down our possibilities and decreasing our numbers, it actively uses these experiences to explore the meaning of life in a million new directions, all while allowing us to cover each others weaknesses in spontaneous developments of

temporary political projects that exist to turn the tides of the tired and wounded towards a world of new possibilities for life.



Contrary to what the average evangelical may believe, the cane is not the end of my life, but entrance into a new one. I discovered this as I was able to scale hills, accessing new worlds that I never thought was possible. If a cane is capable of producing this with a simple adjustment to my gait by giving me an artificial third leg, then what possibilities are there in the future if we can employ these effects into a political praxis?



# Motivations for Changing Technology and the Future

Part of the struggle surrounding the discourse of disabled people is that our innovations have been appropriated by liberal and fascist aesthetics as a means to recapture these differences in human experience, through absorbing the new world that we have carved for ourselves into their structures of classifications and transforming them either into normalized relations to society, or tools to enhance the image of "perfect men". For example, think about how in many fictional or propaganda narratives, the subject of the

visibly disabled person is used as a way to portray either the destruction of desirable futures or the production of undesirable ones as a way to maintain productive control over how we manage differing bodies. There is even an implication that our lives must be filled with suffering, especially regarding the transition to a mobility device. In these fictional or propagandist examples of images of disability, what we see is how the technology of disabled people, such as prosthesis, canes or wheelchairs can be used to normalize a disabled person to return towards capitalist modes of production. An open source screenreader doesn't necessarily just exist to make its users free, it is positioned in a social continuity to allow for the potential freedom of participating in a capitalist productivity as a worker - "to work so that you can be free" through this development. Those

who appropriate the images of these tools thus see them as a way to perform better and somehow "enhance" the image of the racist white man to its fullest potential, shoving the disabled subject aside as merely a tool to achieve that greatness, to allow him to become a sort of "super-object" where its ideals are accelerated infinitely towards the "perfect individual". Technologies like NeuroLink and many developments within anti-aging are only using the bodies of disabled people as a means to gain acceptance, funding or attention - they don't exist to help those with disabilities, they exist to attempt to produce a new race of "superior humans". This is in contrast to the relationship with bodies naturally decaying over time and adapting to the use of accessibility and mobility devices and the reality of a new body. I didn't start using a cane to become a "superior" version of



myself, I started using it to experience a life that didn't make me feel tired all the time when I came home from walking a long walk to work and back. Whether it is "superior" to my younger years is a question that cannot be answered, because I would never want to be that person again anyways!

Accessibility and mobility is about granting access to a new form of life, one that allows me to trail-blaze new futures. Being able to work more efficiently is only a consequence of the world I am creating with me and my cane, one that the organization of the state wants to capture back into its operations, but it can produce countless more. This all ultimately leads back to the weakness in both the ontologies of identity's difference within liberalism and fascism - both see this difference as a problem that must be coded into a particular binary machine. Two computers! One desires for me to submit and

get back to work to extract the maximum amount of labor capacity, the other desires to eliminate me to reduce the "cost" for other laborers who can work more efficiently. But what neither model wants to truly embrace is the possibility of new futures that such a new arrangement with a cane can create. Under both models, someone who becomes permanently disabled is an inferior resource, and the question becomes on what to do with that inferiority. That is not a future I will tolerate. With an ontology focused on new futures, of using new kinds of bodies to produce new possibilities, I am able to see the value that is produced through these experiences. This is not to say that we should actively seek out trauma, self harm, destruction or suffering, or that we should assume that any of these things produces some kind of inherent value - this simply absorbs us back into the liberal way of

thinking as everything valuable as a potential transaction. Rather, these experiences produce completely new worlds that organize the signs of society and reality itself in new ways, allowing us to produce new solutions and ultimately political responses to our own suppression. Think, for example, about how the 504 sit-in protest was able to occupy a federal building in San Francisco for almost a month using the combination of different kinds of bodies and tools to create cryptic communications, block entrances, and resist physical interference, all while exploiting the machines of the social encoding of the disabled as pitiful people to weaken the morale of their resistance. What we need is the ability to organize protests on a spontaneous scale, to orient our politics towards producing these new kinds of assemblages that defeats the purpose of mass categorization

of bodies to allow for forms of resistance that the enemy could never imagine, because they, like Narcissus, are too busy staring at the beauty of their own reflection to imagine anything else as the walls of the cave collapse around them. A disabled liberal is a less useful tool to extract labor from. A disabled fascist is thrown away as soon as they can no longer be extracted from. But a disabled antifascist is an open door for new discussions on how the world can possibly be changed. Oftentimes, in the discourse of organizing the working class, more traditional white Marxists will often criticize minority politics as a form of distracting from larger class solidarity. This observation makes sense when we look at it from the context of a liberal ontology of difference, where all differences are produced by identities and uniqueness, and thus act as a means to separate groups based on the boundaries

of these identities. However, with this new approach, seeing that bodies are differential variations capable of new kinds of production, a new kind of materialism is injected into Marxist discourse. Instead of these differences as being seen as a threat to solidarity, they become tools to construct new machines of solidarity - we stand by the person who needs to walk with a cane not because they are a cane walker, but because they are part of our same struggle, and their position as a cane walker exists as a consequence of being positioned in a different place within the discourse of capital. Minority politics is the material expression of the consequences of capitalism across these differential bodies, and its discourses emerge as a consequence to describe that expression. It is a scientific and historical expression of how classism interacts with all walks of life and all sorts of different

bodies in different positions in space and time. With this new lens, it gives us a new dimension to explore the proletariat, not as a unified mass of workers who are radicalized through the specific relationship between themselves and their bosses (one that has repeatedly stopped short of actually producing any sort of long term revolution), but rather as a class of people whose unique expressions of difference and subjective experience produces the depth of analysis that is only possible through observing our different reactions to this process. It is for this reason why radical minority movements such as the wide assemblage of BIPOC, queer and disabled movements from the 1970s were capable of even expressing such formidable opposition to the hegemony of the United States. But their limitations were in their ability to sustain themselves, since they were unable to establish a true

generalist international movement, especially in the wake of the compromise of liberalism, reorienting the desire of the people towards a new generation of submission in response to "being accommodated for their differences". We have seen what the dire consequences of this compromise really has been in the last few decades. Thus, it is only reasonable to pull back together these movements and embrace difference as a means to produce a new kind of fight.



# A POLITICS OF TRANSITION FOR A CHANGING WORLD

While it may not seem like it at first glance because of how much violent power is concentrated in the growing fascist reactionary right wing across the world, minorities actually hold incredible power among themselves. Fascists must use incredible violence to alienate, isolate and intimidate minorities into submission, and liberals use their own sense of selves to construct barriers against solidarity. Both of these are to contain the power of minorities within assigned identities and structures. Fascists

and liberals alike must act on paranoid identification to be able to recognize and eliminate their enemy, but this paranoid process depends on the positive identification of identity and cooperation from the masses. However, a new world, a new edge, produced not by static identities and guilt complexes, but rather on evolving relations to the world that can produce new powerful forms of political solidarity, is the weapon that we can use to fight back against this force. These groups depend on our alienation in order to be successful in any capacity. Again, this is not to say group identity is not a valuable asset. Rather, we need to take claim of what subjectivizes us into identities. We are not a group because someone else said we are - that is no different than throwing a bunch of animals into a fighting pen. Rather, we build out own ecological relations between

each other naturally, forming bridges of identity when necessary and dissolving them when they are no longer needed - a constant sociopolitical ecology of change. We are forming a new relation to a new social ecology. Fascism is successful and continues to reproduce itself not because it is powerful, but because it is able dig deeper than the microscope and form connections through microscopic flows of desire in society to construct reactionary apparatuses that allow us to be oppressed at a mass scale through micropolitical relations. The recent death of Johnathan Joss, who died not just because he was murdered, but because an entire system of decisions made by many people to voluntarily ignore he and his husband's pleas for help in an aggressive harassment campaign for years enabled a structure of increasing violence to form around him and take his

life, is one such spontaneous death machine that can be deployed by fascism. The state enabled this death by simply allowing these interactions to happen. This is why we must work collectively to change the flow of desire in politics through embracing the importance of collective diversity, not only within our ideology but as a material political and evolutionary tool for survival. When you see me and my cane, don't ask yourself what it is like to live as a young person with a cane. Instead, see what you can learn from me and my experiences, just as I am doing from you. Existing is resisting, and the longer I stand in your way - regardless of what I need to continue standing - the longer that I can change the direction of this madness into something that can make something right out of a very wrong world. As Félix Guattari said, "The order of the real is not destiny - one can

change it." Through this change, a constant world of revolution is always occurring around us and within us, and it is only a matter to see what potential is possible if we allow it to connect and speak freely.





"The order of the real is not  
destiny - one can change it."  
- Félix Guattari



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