

"There are certain practices that exist in the ways in which self-proclaimed "radical trans" people and "anarcha-feminists" of certain activist subcultures have set into motion in response to the question of gender. These include consent zines/workshops, "trans 101"s, and call-outs of "fucked up" behavior internal to their subculture, in addition to dance parties and orgies. There is certainly nothing inherently *wrong* with any of these things, but if we take seriously the notion that we must destroy gender and all social relations of this society, there is clearly something lacking in the practice which only challenges gender at a level of language use and subcultural dynamics. If we abandon the leftist-activist model and accept the charge that "revolutionary movements do not spread by contamination, but by resonance" and writing that has further elaborated this thesis of an insurrectional music, we come to an understanding that there are at the very least a number of problems with thinking that these isolated methods alone could build a force to destroy gender."



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An Insurrectional Practice Against Gender



Considerations on
Resonance, Memory,
and Attack

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apply it to our place within the cycles of deadly gender violence and mourning. Indeed, this has already been experimented with amongst anarchists in the United States. This model was experimented with in Bash Back!'s "Avenge Duanna" campaign, in which queer anarchists from a variety of cities carried out actions in response to Duanna Johnson's murder in Memphis, TN in 2008. This brought to life a practice which connected the visceral emotions of vengeance, connection to collective memory, and attack which built power and the refusal of victimization. Its failure was perhaps failing to continue to materialize this force with every death, although in recent months there has been a resurgence in vengeance attacks.

If we are to build a rhythm of bashing back, we must be steadfast in refusing to let the death of a trans woman go unnoticed. We must impose our own powerful rhythm, identifying the nodes of gender policing and violence in our local terrain of struggle and exacting our vengeance upon them, displacing the rhythms of fear, victimization, and empty gestures that continue to characterize current anarchist, feminist, or trans-activist responses to gender violence. Through connecting the terrain of our daily life to cycles of the struggle against gender violence, we make material our resistance and leave a material mark of our refusal of victimhood.

If this practice is to resonate we must steadily build this rhythm and refuse to allow anyone to ignore the multiplication of trans death all around us, by means of media sabotage, graffiti, or a variety of other methods. We have the opportunity to experiment with many methods of action with the potential to diffuse techniques of sabotaging gender production. Let us boldly experiment in this regard. Only then might the painful song of gender be replaced by the the rhythm of its collapse.

I wish I could tell you that I became numb to the pain after all these years, but the news of the murder of another trans woman punches me in the gut every time it reaches me. Upon discovering details of Deoni Jones's murder, I'm left gasping for air and for the words or actions to express my total hatred for the society that produces the rhythms of gender-maintaining violence and mourning that have come to characterize the only rhythm that is audible to those of us seeking a way out of gender's terrible song. There's something inside of me that almost wishes to become deaf to this rhythm, but I know that it would not be enough to quiet gender's reverberations in my body and in my daily life, which I have unceasingly tried to silence through hormones, alcohol, drugs, and writing idiotic essays. I fear this essay is nothing but another of those futile attempts. So many of us have tried these means and more to manage the crushing pain of gender in isolation, but there is nothing we could do short of collectively interrupting this rhythm and destroying gender in its entirety that will ease our heavy hearts. It is with this in mind that I will elaborate a proposal for those weary of gender violence and death for the creation of a new rhythm of vengeance against the gendered order.

There are certain practices that exist in the ways in which self-proclaimed "radical trans" people and "anarcha-feminists" of certain activist subcultures have set into motion in response to the question of gender. These include consent zines/workshops, "trans 101"s, and call-outs of "fucked up" behavior internal to their subculture, in addition to dance parties and orgies. There is certainly nothing inherently *wrong* with any of these things, but if we take seriously the notion that we must destroy gender and all social relations of this society, there is clearly something lacking in the practice which only challenges gender at a level of language use and subcultural dynamics. If we

abandon the leftist-activist model and accept the charge that “revolutionary movements do not spread by contamination, but by resonance” and writing that has further elaborated this thesis of an insurrectional music, we come to an understanding that there are at the very least a number of problems with thinking that these isolated methods alone could build a force to destroy gender. Such a practice falls short at both directly addressing the material manifestations of gender violence as well as creating practices that will resonate with the unthinkable pain we carry deep in our bodies. We must build a rhythm of struggle which resonates in our bodies and builds the links between attack, memory, and the gender terror we experience in daily life.

It is simple enough to begin a discussion of insurrectional strategy with the notion of the attack. Yet many confuse this process with merely smashing a random bank and writing a communiqué telling the cops to fuck off. Of course, I’m not interested in condemning such a practice, I’m merely more interested in examining the ways in which various notions and methods of attack are positioned in relation to our memory and all of the emotions that have built up over time due to all of the gender violence we’ve endured. While it’s easy enough to mock candlelight vigils or the Trans Day of Remembrance, these moments function to create a continuity and rhythm of memory in relation to trans violence that many radical approaches to gender fail to do.

When we hear the name Deoni Jones today and see pictures of groups huddled by candlelight, we cannot help but think of Dee Dee Pearson, Shelley Hilliard, Lashai Mclean, Sandy Woulard, Chanel Larkin, Duanna Johnson, Gwen Araujo, and Marsha P. Johnson. We cannot help but have our minds fill with the history of

those murdered at the hands of a society that must maintain the gendered order at all costs. It’s so easy to get lost in the pain that comes along with this, to look over your shoulder as you walk home every night in hopes that the noise you’ve heard isn’t someone ready to pounce on you. You might soon forget, and then be reminded next month when it happens again to another trans woman in another city or perhaps your hometown.

This is the rhythm of our memory and our collective fear and misery, which repeats with every murder, vigil, and Trans Day of Remembrance. An insurrectional practice which attacks the foundations of gender must also utilize the rhythms of memory and emotion, but toward the end of breaking the ideology of victimization and passivity that the former practices maintain.

Insurrectional comrades elsewhere in the world write: “Power has implemented on its behalf a machine of forgetting, each time more perfect and macabre, in order to maintain actual conditions in its favor. Amnesia only generates an acceptance of imposed reality while observing past struggles or comrades like photographs, severing every connection with reality, achieved by showing how unfeasible every intent to disobey the masters is.” This has manifested in attacks in solidarity with insurrectional comrades who have fallen or who are facing repression. These attacks are an attempt to tap into the visceral stores of hatred for this world and for its attacks upon those who share the desire to see an end to it, connecting the rhythms of collective memory, a desire for vengeance, and the terrain of struggle upon which they are situated.

We might be able to remove this practice of attack from a situation in which anarchists are only self-referential to the history of their own struggle and also