DSG believe in building appropriate tools for struggle. We formed DSG at the end of 2010 out of a need; the need for a place to discuss issues of class-struggle that are broader or more imaginative than were already on offer, and a need to produce propaganda which travels with that struggle in a form more alive to our everyday realities. We wanted to reflect and further the class-struggle and the struggle against austerity as we see it in our lives, not try and shape our lives to fit dogma. But social conditions have developed – in 12 months we have seen a series of ruptures and attacks upon that neoliberal consensus, from the Arab Spring through to a series of riots of unparalleled ferocity. In that
time, we feel like our capabilities and potential have developed too; they have been restructured by action and by
results.

As a result, things have changed for us – we no longer feel the blogging format is such a proficient tool for the
spreading of propaganda. The greatest flaw to us is to be reactive, only responding to situations as the actions of
others make them arise, rather than seeking to overturn existing conditions on our own terms. The last thing we
would want to happen is to reach a point of ossification and stasis; of becoming yet another platform pouring out
link-baiting dross or dull, rote journalism, such as Liberal Conspiracy or Socialist Worker. We are tired of such
institutions and of the ideology spread by them, intrinsic to this publishing form: that the working class are
hardworking victims of capital, exploited by virtue of their own stupidity, desperate to give an honest days work and
just wanting an honest days pay... No, the proletarian is a master of struggle; she is aspirational, she wants to evade
wage-labour and regain the flesh of life. It is our class who produce and create and drive social change; it is our
struggles that capital reacts to, it is our struggle that shapes society. This is the movement we wish to be a part of,
and we don’t feel we can do it by remaining comfortable and reactive.

Class struggle is a dynamic force, and the propaganda that travels with it must remain as dynamic and powerful as
the class. As part of the European proletariat we recognise the enormous field of battle that has opened up before us;
we will not be limited by traditions of struggle; we must open up a new front in every area of our everyday lives. The
modern communist is a digital native and we embrace these territories as future playgrounds. So we have re-
evaluated our position and taken heed of opportunities as they have arisen. This blog is over. We have realised there
are better things we can be doing; we shall go and do them.

DSG

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Ten Growth Markets for Crisis

Posted on December 7, 2011 | 20 comments
From the DSG think-tank: a short series of speculative projections for new territories of struggle and focuses for future ideological ruptures. Download the full report here.

Ten Growth Markets for Crisis: A Trend Forecast

I have long believed we do not influence the course of events by persuading people that we are right when we make what they regard as radical proposals. Rather we exert influence by keeping options available when something has to be done at a time of crisis.

Milton Friedman, Two Lucky People

There is ... nothing permanent, nor even well entrenched about the current shape of the global economy – still less should it be sacrosanct. It was built aggressively by visionaries who innovated their way into rule-free spaces. It could be radically reshaped by human action, and in the timescale of a decade, not a lifetime.

Paul Mason, Meltdown
In a time of political flux, how do we escape a political discourse which is just a reaction to a series of attacks on our class? How do we place ourselves in a position which is not defensive, but launches a positive vision of social organisation? Where will the challenges and potentials of the coming months and years lie? In Britain mainstream political innovation slumps in the doldrums. Hamstrung by financial and political contingencies, Parliamentary politics offers little in the way of social critique and finds little resonance in the public. But in the field of radical politics? Whilst dissent flourishes, it lingers in the negative, unable to be converted into innovation, by doctrinal discipline or an inability to harness creative thought and speculative conversation. The field lies open for those who wish to write a new story. We have put together a few possibilities to spot these growth markets for crisis; a trend forecast for social struggle.

Let’s outline some key social trends, some growing ideological markets and some possible future scenarios as the class-war continues to warm up. These aren’t predictions, as such – they are attempts to open up our understanding of our current situation as ideologies come crashing down around us. We need to write new stories about how we got here, who we are, and how we’re going to cope with what is to come. Let’s turn tendencies into trends; turn trends into Tendencies.

1 Anti-Usury Campaigns (#usury)
The question isn’t so much ‘will we see a growth in anti-usury campaigns?’, but rather ‘why haven’t they gone mainstream yet?’. A moral and religious response to austerity and financial crisis is something of an inevitability, and we see indications that a renaissance of a historical discourse on the morality of speculation is imminent, from the Church of England to an upsurge in sharia banking.

This attitude, essentially a moral opposition not to capital but to speculation, finds its analogue in the softer and more popular end of the Occupy movement. It could be summarised in the DSG slogan, INSTEAD OF BEING NASTY, CAPITAL SHOULD BE NICE, an anti-structural critique that finds blame for collapse lying not with the system as it is actually constituted, but with a moral failing in the practices of those who oversaw and undertook the financialisation of the economy. Needless to say, as an analysis of power and of the wage-relation anti-usury campaigns would be as much about mitigating opposition to capitalism as it would be offering its own critique. But nonetheless, it seems likely that the first mainstream critique of the financial crisis to gain popular support may well come from the religious sector, with the attendant concerns that history provides us regarding anti-usury rhetoric.

2 Nosterity (#nosterity)
How does a society cope with the trauma of an imposed regime of austerity? Through resistance, but also through reaction. A rising cultural trend is the amalgamation of austerity rhetoric with a strange and toxic form of nostalgia; what might be called ‘nosterity’. An implicit form of social bullying, this runs deeper than phenomena like Keep Calm and Carry On, or endless invoca- tions of a return to the Winter of Discontent. It’s a framing of an economic and social crisis in such a way as to suggest that advocating social reorganisation is not just unnecessary but in some way a refusal to play a part in the narrative; that to complain and dissent is equivalent to a moral failing for being unable to endure with stoicism.

In doing so it fills a desire for contextualisation, lacking in the poll-led politics of parliament, with a stringent ahistoric explanation of austerity as part of a national moral fibre. Through the drip-drip of everyday culture, and a fetishisation of the everyday contingencies of our ancestors, we can expect an ever increasing trend of nosterity in everything from fashion and entertainment to childcare policy and employment conditions. In design, we face a return to WWII signifiers; in media coverage of dissent, a hip, retro take on everyday issues of class struggle filtered through the rose-tinted spectacles of ‘68 and Jarrow, or grim portents of ‘bodies left unburied’. This is about more than comparisons; it’s about removing the manifestations of struggles from their causes in everyday inequalities and injustices. Nosterity is social policing via the medium of kitchenware.
3 Social Democracy as the New Utopia (#labourutopians)

It’s a conversation we first referred to when talking about student demands during last year’s Tuition Fees protests, but it’s worth expanding into all aspects of a mainstream political conversation which focus on what is left of the social partnership built between labour and capital in the post-war years.

Put simply, whilst we oppose attacks on the welfare state as an attack on our class, a return to social-democratic social models is simply unfeasible – not for economic reasons (although such an argument holds considerable weight) but for socio-political reasons. What built and sustained the welfare state was a model of social-democratic political organisation which simply does not exist anymore. A large part of its dismemberment was undertaken by the neoliberal market reforms after 1979, but we have yet to accept that it was also being eroded by demands coming from within the working-class – demands of social liberalisation, increased personal autonomy and a rejection of the fetishisation of work, or indeed work itself – which traditional structures of class organisation could not deliver without breaking up their own bureaucratic structures.

Can we really expect a return to the glory-days of the social partnership through a series of rearguard actions? No – social-democracy can only be built through a progressive vision of a certain form of (limited) social transformation, and in reality that unformulated vision today is the new utopianism of the British political imagination. To rework that oft-quoted maxim of late capitalism – ‘It is easier to imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism, but it is easier to imagine the end of capitalism than the restoration of social democracy’.

4 Hey! Let’s not go to work today! (#internstrikenow)

Unpaid internships are becoming a steadfast part of our new economy, taking newly graduated workers in precarious employment and forcing them to give free labour in exchange for that ‘extra-something’ that will secure them a foothold in a competitive labour market. Organising around precarious workers is an indisputably difficult task: the law favours employers, traditional labour unions have, by and large, washed their hands of such workers and companies are adept at economically and emotionally exploiting such staff with fast turnover.

How might an organisation based around the economic power of unpaid interns work? We propose focusing on the strengths of interns, and suggest a strike for social reproduction; that is, not just withdrawing ones labour but creating new models in the process. A 6 month intern strike, where young strikers liaise via social media to start producing alternative political media, organisations and campaigns? Following the model of autonomy centres and the punk movement they helped nurture across Europe, the #internstrikenow could utilise the time and network-creativity of strike-interns to produce the infrastructure for a creative movement built in opposition to capital. After leaving the boring free-labour of the office internship and spending time guiding and creating your own cultural and social movement, why would you want to return? #internstrikenow – making autonomy work for you.

5 Currency Zones of the future (#CZF)

Financial industries engage in a race to the bottom as currency markets see the late growth of their long tail, with diversification into multiple niche marketplaces. With the gradual reallocation of wealth across new and old frontiers, currency projects that 6 months ago were strictly the reserve of the early adopting techno-utopians and anarcho-libertarians find a new uptake on the part of the early Mainstream money markets.

The needs of the marketplace and society at large acting to retain the status quo of wealth distribution, through the adoption of an even spread approach to financial security. This isn’t about innovation, it’s about consolidation; money markets defending their position, much as, post-Lehman, banks legislated and lobbied their way into defending their right to unsustainable capital ratios.

We’re likely to see the rapid take-up of digital currencies, LETS, time banking and formalised blackmarkets, as overlapping zones of exchange work to form an ecosystem for the complex stratification of capital. On top of this,
with the power of organised labour much restricted by new anti-union laws, we can expect to see employers establishing new currency zones within their work-forces – for example, food stamps and payments-in-kind. Early utopias in alternative currencies face adoption into a new model of the company store. In the future, supermarket employees will be at least partially paid in loyalty card points.

6 Rent crisis (#rentcrisis)
House ownership has long been a key principle of Conservative governments, both in order to build a credit economy in order to weaken organised labour, and as part of a long-term campaign to ‘make Britain conservative’. This policy, buoyed by growing economic inequality during the last Labour government, lead to a rise in buy-to-let mortgages. With sustaining these huge mortgages becoming a key focus of the government, and avoiding the politically-catastrophic drift into negative equity, Britain, and London in particular, faces a rent crisis. This is a crisis whereby frozen wages and rising rents combine to suck out increasing chunks of the take-home wage of low-paid, precarious and key workers, and it is a recipe for social tension. Out of rent-crisis are born rent-resisters.

Rent-resistance is a complex and difficult form of direct action to organise, but we predict it will show its first roots amongst student populations. Student housing in the form of university halls of residence offers a perfect breeding ground for a campaign that relies upon social solidarity; not because of the make-up of students as individuals, but due to the close, social living quarters, the relative lack of something to lose and the fact that all students in a hall of residence share the same landlord. Will 2012 bring a reinvigoration of the student movement of 2010, focusing not on fees but on the increasing, hidden squeeze working-class youth are facing, through a series of rent-strikes? Will we see new working-class youth identities formed on the back of student rent-strikes?

7 Britain’s Bread Riots (#breadriots)
Amongst the factors behind the Arab Spring (collapsing EU export market, high graduate unemployment etc) a key flash-point, particularly amongst the urban poor, was that of rising food prices. Despite the collapse of the commodity trading bubble, taken up by hedge-funds moving out of structured finance markets after the financial sector collapse of late 2008, the CFPI (Commodity Food Prices Index) continues to run high. Whilst DSG normally reject a ‘blame-the-bankers’ approach to financial and social crisis, this is one sector where speculation on commodity markets directly takes food off the plates of the world’s poorest people. There are, of course, other causal factors for a rising CFPI; the question is how long is it politically sustainable?

With wages falling in real-terms across the large British public sector, and unemployment rising against a similarly rising CPI, the issue of food poverty is once again pressing at the doors of many across Britain. This isn’t simply an issue for those out of work, living on increasingly punitive benefit and workfare regimes, but also for those in-work; with the collapse of the social partnership the idea that a wage should be able to cover the essentials of life is disappearing.

Long-established controls on social stability are being withdrawn. The safety-net of the welfare state is slowly being replaced with free-labour schemes for corporations and violently anti-worker legislation condemning millions to breadline misery. Social solidarity increasingly lacks mechanisms of enhancing social cohesion. How long till we see riots at the delivery and supply depots of Britain’s supermarket giants?

8 Crisis 2012: The Olympian State (#crisis2012)
The Olympic Village will be an island within London; an island of peace in a discordant London, an island of late-Capitalist prosperity in an ocean of austerity. It will be an island, and an island at all costs. A post-democratic logic is settling over government policy, whereby the greater good of national pride is being used to justify ‘special-measures’ against protest and dissent, in much the same way as we saw over the period of the Royal Wedding. This is the ‘new normal’, from the militarisation of London and attempt to present protest as inherently criminal (as
witnessed by the use of large-scale containment barriers on a recent trade union demonstration), to the growth of temporary policing facilities on previously common land and the restriction of protest placards, allowing ‘enforcement officers’ to enter private homes to destroy or conceal such placards.

The Olympics has become a showcase endeavour to demonstrate the unity and power of the national State, with the subtext that whilst we may be suffering under austerity, England endures.

The extreme special-measures the state will take to restrict any embarrassment in the form of anti-government protest will linger well past the end of the Games. The Olympic legacy for London will be felt on the shoulders of working-class people for years to come, in the form of an increased perceived legitimacy for stop-and-search powers, anti-dissent laws and further empowerment to the state apparatus.

9 Autoreductionism (#proletariansshopping)
Fuel poverty is reaching epidemic proportions. The RPI is rising at incredible speed, whilst large sectors of society face pay freezes (real-term pay cuts). Families are forced to choose between essential items for their children. Why not go shopping as a community?

Autoreduction is the collective determination of commodity prices enforced by community solidarity. It is not a symbolic protest against the high cost of living endured by working-class people, but a direct action aimed at relieving that burden. We see a dynamic social movement emerging, using decentralised models of organisation (such as UK Uncut) to produce replicable structures for autoreduction across the UK. Large groups of people arriving at their commuter station in the morning, forcing themselves through the turnstile; an organised troop of families fitting out their kids with winter coats, then demanding to see the manager for negotiations; a national campaign of underpayment on gas and electricity bills; in all instances normal people saying ‘we will pay what we can afford for the essentials of our life’— paying the ‘political price’ for goods and services. Why shouldn’t collective demand become a significant factor in establishing value?; if supermarkets can fix a cartel of suppliers, why can’t working class people fix a cartel of consumers? Why go shopping when you can go proletarian shopping?
“IT IS WRONG TO STRIKE”

ALL THE ENCOURAGEMENT WE NEED
A 1% shift can have massive repercussions in a global economy- a 1% shift in the TED spread signifies a looming disaster for liquidity, a 1% rise in interest rates can shut down SME’s across continents. The same holds for the economy of rhetoric. Last year, when the British government started the implementation of “Austerity Measures” with the comprehensive spending review, the justifying refrain that rang throughout the media was one of shared sacrifice- “We Are All In This Together”. One year on from the CSR and the media is alive with a new mantra- “We Are The 99%”. A 1% shift in the social cohesion markets signifies a significant shift in the dissent markets.

The metaphor might be stretched, but it illustrates an important point about the #Occupy movement, for whom “We Are The 99%” is about the only point of unity at the moment. Whilst those involved in organised politics worry or mock the movement for lacking a political programme, that very political naivete is indicative of the depth of the crisis. #Occupy is a result of a growth in widespread, popular dissent, incapable of finding expression in existing
political modes, and the “1%” slogan is a highly significant breaking of the “All In This Together” rhetoric and the conception of a popular class narrative to the economic and social crisis.

In recent articles both Paul Mason and Andreas Whittam Smith have touched upon this uncertain new landscape. In his recent blogpost “Occupy is a response to economic permafrost” Mason highlights this diversity, and the rejection of a lobbyist-rich parliamentary system, noting that “they have no intention of “raising demands” on Labour in opposition.” He also picks up on the memetic nature of the idea of the occupation of public space, as we focused on during the wave of Indignados occupations earlier in the year. But Whittam-Smith picks up on a much wider historical point about the haphazard nature of protests that can arise before major insurrections and periods of heated class struggle, claiming “At some point, this excessive difference [of income disparity] is going to cause trouble. Has that moment come?”. The current movement of Capital- hoarding, stabilisation, reorganisation– by a campaign of austerity that secures money markets at the expense of working-class lives can lead only to what we might call “growth in the class-struggle demographic” in the ideology markets.

The growth in public opposition to austerity was demonstrated pretty neatly by the short-shrift Louise Mensch received on “Have I Got News For You” last weekend. Trotting out some easy jibes against “anti-capitalist” protest, she demonstrated just how out of touch Westminster is with even mainstream sentiments. Mensch missed the nerve that #Occupy touches- that the “austerity” rhetoric is a sham, and that there is a developing popular critique of capital, more than “no to Starbucks”, which is outstripping the political critique offered by parliamentary parties in the marketplace of ideas.

Mensch attempts an effective, if crude, discrediting trick– to attribute to people beliefs and values they don’t actually have, then chide them for failing to live up to them. Her perpetuation of the stereotype of capitalism as a “thing” one can opt in or out of fell flat on its face. As if we, the working-class, were not the very thing that makes capitalism work– as if it were not the value we produce and the demand we produce that sustains capital– as if capital were not a zombie feeding off living labour.

We are not “outside” capitalism and neither are our struggles and demands– but our demands can be realised as more than consumer or parliamentary demands. Class power can produce class demands, demands that force capital to move– the motor of innovation that capital must react to in ever more creative and damaging ways in order to continue exploitation. Class innovates, capital reacts, whether it’s through concessions such as the welfare state, or aggressive reorganisation of labour, as in the globalisation of capital and introduction of easy consumer credit as a replacement for wages since the 1970’s. 1919-21, 1944, 1968, 1977– these were not the actions of an oppressed class pushed to the edge, but an innovative class power pushing capitalism so close to the brink it had react with militarisation, state violence and savage economic restructuring.
As Whittam-Smith postulates, at the moment we find ourselves in a moment of reconfiguration of class power— an in-between phase, a “permafrost” where our class is beginning the formulation of new demands and new struggle. It is economically impossible to return to either the neo-liberal social form, predicated as it is on cheap credit, or the social-democratic form, predicated on the organised labour of the mass-worker. Class struggle can only perpetuate for the foreseeable future. To believe that the urban poor (pushed onto workfare slavery, lacking education opportunity and facing rising food and consumer prices) or the under-employed graduate class (with no hope of cheap credit, lacking stable or even paid employment and ever-rising rent) are just going to “settle down” and contribute seems like a utopianism of astounding naiveté that can be believed by few outside Westminster and its assorted lobbyists and think-tanks.

Meanwhile, the public sector is heading the same way as the Miners, a victim of capital’s curious blend of ideology and ruthless pragmatism. As the Miner’s Strike was symbolic of the necessary destruction of class power in the form of organised labour, so the destruction of the NHS (made infinitely easier by the absence of any meaningful trade union militancy) marks capital’s victory over that working-class concessionary demand, the welfare state. Make no bones about it— the social-democratic model which bought the working-class such gains, and represented a genuine and meaningful victory for our class, simply does not and cannot stand up as an organising model against the complex and diverse properties and models of 21st century, globalised, neo-liberal model of post-fordist capitalism.

New forms of class power must, and are, emerging but will, and are, blindsiding us who so vainly search for an emergent model which mirrors the ones we inherited. Andreas Whittam Smith and Paul Mason detect this current and struggle to name it. We too have no prediction as to its shape. But it looms, silently growing, over our heads, like Marx’s great spectre. DSG, for one, welcome our new overlords of class power.
It is within this reformulation that we must contextualise #Occupy. #Occupy is not a mass movement, but it is an arrow in a quiver that is rapidly filling; a quiver of class antagonism. At a time when the class is beginning a reassertion after 15 years of capitalist realism, to attack an undeniable pole of attraction for many working-class people seems churlish in the extreme, and somehow missing the point. Bringing the crisis home— that is, agitating the class and breaking the “all in this together” rhetoric of parliament— will involve a massive plurality of struggles, and #Occupy serves that end well. Misgivings over “fluffy” politics are understandable, but it is through experience that political thought develops, and state violence is rapidly radicalising the #Occupy grassroots, with #OccupyOakland today passing a motion for a citywide General Strike following the state crackdown earlier in the week. Combined with a growing street presence, escalating industrial action and a general sense of unrest over rent, debt and fuel poverty, working-class people in Britain too are reasserting class in the struggle with capital.

Class struggle is a lived experience, a practice, not a series of treatises; it is a fight, and fights are reactions to events, not a choreographed, preplanned dance. Events like #Occupy are the start of a new explicit antagonism towards capital for many people— like all good political experiences, it is a set of questions as much as a book of answers.

DSG EDITORIAL

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Posted in Uncategorized

Goatse as Industrial Sabotage

Posted on September 27, 2011 | 24 comments
This short article is not for the faint of heart. It’s not for internet dabblers, or the recently-fed. Or maybe it is- maybe this article will give some insight into the world of the digital natives. It aims to shed light on an internet phenomenon, in turn giving the shadow, depth and form of class-struggle to what might, on first appearances, seem like a decidedly two-dimensional case study. Here, we wish to talk about a meme called Goatse, and the story of how a revolting and childish prank spread to become a modern-day “sabot”, a memetic tool for workers to undermine their employers, and with it, the ideology of work.

Goatse (usually pronounced Goat-See) is an internet meme that emerged in the late 1990’s, and is a good case study for how memes transfer through populations, shifting forms and emptying themselves of content as they go (something we talk about in more depth in our chapter for the forthcoming “20 Reasons” book). The original Goatse image, cunningly entitled “hello.jpg”, was hosted at Goatse.cx –.cx being the top-level domain for Christmas Island. It constituted a shock site, akin to the later phenomenon of “rickrolling”, where a link with a disguised URL is posted onto a forum or social media site under a false pretext. In a “rick roll” the unwitting victim clicks the link, and is redirected to the youtube clip, “Rick Roll’d”, of Rick Astley singing his 1987 hit “Never Gonna Give You Up”. This false link has become one of the most popular and enduring memes and “Rick Roll’d” has been viewed almost 50 million times as of writing.

Goatse was a similar “bait and switch” prank, but involved being redirected to the (arguably) more disturbing site of a middle-aged man using both hands to pull apart his dilated rectum remarkably wide, revealing to the poor victim the depths of the man’s guts. On his left hand, a gold ring; a touching detail. It’s a remarkably foul example of the murkier undercurrents of online fora, and visible here, if you’re that type of person.

So why are we raising this spectre, this perverse underbelly of networked technology? We’re raising it because Goatse is a prime example of the meme-form, and its memetic transference has interesting knock-on implications for the design industry in general, and the critical undermining of that industry through its workers specifically.

One of the interesting developments of the internet meme-as-subject (that is, a self-aware and self-reflexive subject, rather than a metaphor for information transfer, as originally posited by Richard Dawkins) is its ability to retain its unique identity even when its form changes, or its content, or even both. Only the minimum trace of the original joke needs to remain- or no trace at all, as long as those in on the joke can trace back the heritage of the joke to the original. And so it is with Goatse- indeed, losing the “shock” factor has spread the Goatse meme far beyond its original parameters. Whilst the original “switch and bait” meme survives, running concurrently with it is a meme which functions in almost a polar opposite form. In this, graphical representations of the original image are inserted into (or spotted in) everyday commercial design. Rather than being a surprise image of such stark realness that everyone is forced into a visceral reaction on first meeting with the image, instead the image works as an in-joke IRL
amongst those who consider themselves digital natives—people who operate in cyberspace as a singular territory in-and-of itself (rather than a sphere attached to the “real world”).

Examples of Goatses proliferate—some subtle, some blatant. Some can be put down to “accident”—a reading backwards of the meme. But we are more concerned with the more common occurrence—the intentional Goatse, slipped in surreptitiously to the advertising image with a wink and a nod to those who “get it”, and passing a reference to extreme rectal stretching under the noses of the paymasters.

The ability for this “in-joke” representation to appear within mainstream advertising and commercial image production relies upon two developments within postfordist capitalism: technological development and the proletarianisation of the creative industries. The first point is obvious—the development of cyberspace as a territory of virtual community, and the development of digital imaging hardware/software, has created a means of recording and disseminating chance observations of advertising hoardings, online and offline material and chance observations. It has also created a relatively lawless, anonymous environment where pornographic and extreme material can be circulated without fear of embarrassment.
This is the culture where the in-joke can breed, but this form of technological development comes hand-in-hand, fist-in-glove with new ways of organising the labour which produces this commercial cultural material in the first place; an atomised form of organising creative labour which has wholly changed the way graphic design works. It’s all very well creating the arena for subverted advertising to be passed around, but what was also needed was a particular disinvestment of cultural and creative workers, an alienation from the productive process whereby sabotage of their own creative output became more important than fulfilling the allotted task.

Within this environment the “in-joke” differs markedly to workplace in-jokes of the past. Today, you might be the only person in your office who gets the joke. But worldwide you’re connecting to thousands of others in a form of exploded solidarity. It’s a dynamic form, a vivid social relationship the marketeers can – for the time being – only dream of invoking with their cosy stock images of friends-coming-together, sharing a joke over a glass of chardonnay. The proletarian – especially within the present conditions, the info-prole – is a force who pushes forward innovation through her resistance to capital, and it is capital who exists on the back-foot, damming the flow of proletarian innovation, demanding enlarged logos in order to harness its power.
Here Goatse acts as a rejection of labour; and not just labour, but an ideology of post-fordist labour, where we are not simply selling labour-time, but selling ourselves, our creative and cognitive skills, as a product for an employer to buy. Perhaps here we can see Goatse as a morphing of the dialogic image. The dialogic image emerged as a strategy in the 1970s and 80s in the work of Dutch designer Jan van Toorn. The design presents multiple conflicting messages, with a view to forcing a demystified, critical reading from its audience. Here it is used in a positive form, influenced by Enzensberger's theory of 'emancipatory media'; it is considered, logical, a conscious and explicit criticality, aimed at heightening a social awareness of the constructed nature of the visual environment. A criticality negotiated between an autonomous, individual designer, an adventurous client, and a broad, undifferentiated public audience – a product of a social settlement already dead in the UK, now finally being destroyed in the Netherlands.

This settlement is long gone in Britain, used only as a bargaining chip or blackmail within industrial relations disputes. As our conditions of labour as cognitive workers have changed, morphed from the design studio to the atomised precarious freelancer, the ability to oversee a daring or critical design has been banished. Instead, we work as bees, each producing a tiny fragment of the whole. In this position as a worker, we cannot hold any critical control over the work we produce, just enact the formulations of other workers, the workers who piece together polls and focus groups, who brainstorm slogans or typefaces.

In this scenario, the dialogic image must be reduced to a short-hand: Goatse, the in-joke, provides that. Within Goatse, the dialogic image is covert; unable to exercise any significant level of authorial control within the design process, the designer forces the critical dissonance by tapping into the in-joke. Rather than a critical dialogue between worker and employer being an open one, it has become a secretive conflict; rather than a critical design image being a conscious attempt to demystify design as a mediated process, it becomes an attempt to undermine and destroy the design process. Adopting the supposedly most efficient working process for capital has pushed design to eat itself. The dialogic image has become the weaponisation of ridicule; the designer has become a postfordist saboteur of the industrial process, and the ever-present spectre of sabotage as the unspoken clot of class-war clogs another artery of capital.
DSG aims to publish posts and propaganda from various sources as provocation and stimulation. The following PDFs were produced by Timothy Thornton, a writer and musician living in Brighton. Thornton writes:

Two acknowledgments: TRAILS is definitely supposed to be some sort of poem, or dossier in verse, but in two aspects it is derived from musical works. Its construction was inspired by James Saunders’s #[unassigned] (2000-9), an “ongoing modular composition”; each version is compiled for a specific reading (in these cases, the night before, and then edited in the morning), and each takes as part of its title the date of that reading. From Oliver Rappoport’s Senderos (2008) it takes its title, as well as a compositional attitude mimicking exploration, congestion, prohibition, or diversion: some trails recur, either as before or in slightly altered form, some generate or lead to further trails, and some are abruptly curtailed or blocked off.

Download PDF of TRAILS 01/07/2001

Download PDF of TRAILS 13/07/2011
PRINT/DISTRIBUTE: We Will Fight We Will Kiss / London Cairo Rome Tunis

Posted on January 28, 2011 | 1 comment
DSG Official Guidance for TUC “March For The Alternative” Demonstration, March 26th 2011

Posted on January 26, 2011 | 4 comments
When a “new” issue for discussion arises within the left, it is often a proxy conversation for more timeless debates, a way of re-engaging old, important and unresolved differences under the cover of a pressing novelty. Currently, the dish of the day for commentators and pundits is “violence at demos”.

We attended the EMA protest in London last Wednesday, and the change in atmosphere was striking. The crowd were similar to previous demos- schoolkids, young students, jumping on the bus straight from school to attend, with their homemade banners, enthusiasm and thirst for a party. But the attitude of the “organised left” was somewhat different. Gone was the wide-eyed wonder from late last year, when they stood around shocked that, christ, genuine working class kids are turning up and are mad for a protest. Gone was the refrain “it’s their movement”, and gone was the willingness to set free the improvisation of smart young kids.
Instead, painfully, we saw a line of hi-vis, not from cops, but from party officials and union members who had taken it upon themselves to organise stewarding. No more the “anything but a kettle” carnival of the 30th November, when gangs of protestors hurtled across the capital, bringing traffic and commerce temporarily to a halt. This, we were reliably informed, was Organised. A chain of stewards linked arms, self-kettling the protestors, holding them back from bursting out from the prearranged route and taking grasp of the streets. It was a genuinely sad sight, to watch the lessons of last year being ignored in what seemed like a desperate grab for control.

Tired of being pushed and shoved, fearing a kettle, we pushed through a barrier, onto the oncoming lane. There we were confronted by a steward, wearing (literally no joke) a hi-vis jacket and a “Crass” hoodie. This, we were informed, was for our own good, to stop police provocation and stopping violence. And here, in a nub, was what we are to expect from future demos. A return of the stewarded A-B march, some riveting political rhetoric at the end, a bit of self-policing and a morose pint afterwards, as our protest is registered and politely ignored. The TUC has even organised a stewarding call-centre at Congress House where inter-steward communication will be linked automatically and immediately with the police. This is not the route to a confrontation with capital, but neither is the spectacular violence we have seen.

Spectacular violence should no more be a feature of the ultra-left than political action- it serves no real radical, direct purpose, and exposes many people to a level of physical risk or risk of arrest and state recrimination who really needn’t have to take such a risk. We have no need of martyrs. We should deal with it on practical grounds- because it’s an ineffective tool to achieve social change- and not on moral or ethical grounds. It’s usually justified, it’s just not always particularly useful.

The mistake is, perhaps, to conduct the debate assuming that violence is an exception, that it isn’t normally there, that it’s a result of an exceptional will by malcontents to create a violent situation. The violence is always there- the violence is the routine of our daily lives. The violence is always there, as a potential, in the very presence of the police. Whether they choose to make it explicit, to realise it upon our bodies and our bones is, yes, another question, but what we are talking about isn’t the creation of violence by dark extremist infiltrators, but the reaction of people to the violence they see, either implicitly or in the sight of black rubber crashing into a body of people.

We do not seek out violence. We do not recognise the caricatures painted by both right-wing rags like the Daily Telegraph, or their utilisation as a spectre in lieu of an argument, by liberal journalists like Sunny Hundal. Such a characterisation positions the ultra-leftist and the anarchist as having a somehow pathological need to conduct the rhapsody of breaking glass. This is conflated with “anarchist” as a term to describe anyone engaged in spectacular violence at a demonstration, regardless of political persuasion. The reason, perhaps, that the ultra-left are wearing such wry smiles these days is not because they’re now capable of orchestrating certain non-hierarchical, direct action tactics, but because more and more people are adopting those tactics of their own accord out of pragmatism and a lack of dogmatic pressure upon their own organising.

However, if we continue to take up these tactics, to push street action from the symbolic, by acting directly to disrupt capitalism, we can expect violence. **We come into conflict with the police whenever we transgress the boundaries set by the state as an acceptable territory for politics.** Whenever a march spills from the declared route, we know the TSG will be there to greet us. When we force a blockade of roads and goods depots, no brick need to be thrown or window smashed for the state to use physical violence to enforce its will. When we conduct wildcat strikes and solidarity pickets in defiance of anti-union laws, or occupy our workplaces, we know that we can expect a literal manifestation of the term “full force of the law”. Demonstrations aren’t (necessarily) effective when they’re violent- they’re violent when they’re effective, when they start to damage political and economic power. If we’re genuinely interested in this nebulous concept about “left unity” perhaps we should recognise this, and work to help each other deal with this violence appropriately, not start purging our ranks of kids who chuck stones at coppers, in a breathless attempt to woo the press.

The resurrection of the heavy-handed stewarding model is an attempt to stop this sort of action, to reinsert the
organised left as the arbiter and mediator of the anger and drive of working-class people. The aim is not just to prevent conflict with the police (thereby supposedly damaging the cause in the eyes of the general public) but also to regain the political influence of our presence as a justifier for their own political position. Owen Jones raises interesting issues regarding this wider “public perception” issue in his blog when he posits a fictional working-class woman, worried about hitting the streets for fear of violence. Obviously, he ignores his own parties massive complicity in the general feeling of impotence in street politics, and in doing so ignores the fundamental lesson of it—that symbolic protest is simply a minor distraction to parliamentary politicians. Of course, the opposite to symbolic action isn’t spectacular violence, but direct action within the economic system, but by implementing “discipline” through a reinstitutionalised, shepherded march in an attempt to quell violence you end up preventing any action with genuinely radical potential. Such action destroys any chance of direct action, and, eventually, saps the enthusiasm of even the most committed. There is only a certain number of times you can walk 4 miles to hear Tony Benn describe a truly historic moment before you just don’t have the heart for it any more.

The fact that the conversation between these positions revolves around the question “Should we allow violence, and if not, how do we stop it?” reveals a certain attitude amongst the commentators, the planners, the stewards. We, the “rank and file” of the fight against austerity, lack a degree of political autonomy. Our strategies, tactics, actions have been tested against the programme, and, frankly, found wanting. We are needed, in our millions, to make up the numbers—not to make decisions about our life, or how we wish to fight this struggle. But the fact remains that we, working-class people, will continue to turn up and we will react directly, as we see fit, to actions of state and capital. We’re terribly sorry if that ruins your plans for us.

DSG EDITORIAL

(Title recuperated from this nugget of joy, Photo: DSG)

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Posted in Uncategorized

Tagged Police, protest, stewarding, student movement, TUC, violence

Education’s Napster Moment

Posted on January 19, 2011 | 2 comments

DSG aims to publish posts and propaganda from various sources as provocation and stimulation. The following text was produced and disseminated at the “Demo 2010” protest on 10th November 2010. It is credited to “Luther Blissett”.

Education’s Napster Moment

As a result of the emergence of a virtual marketplace that encourages the forming of community and the sharing of ideas, we have inadvertently been equipped with the tools needed to undo the current rules of engagement.
Ours is the first generation to be given the toolset by which to produce, collectively organise and display our message/ideology/product to a global audience; an audience that, like you, has an equal opportunity to subvert the current trajectory of our education system.

Universities are collapsing. Not as a result of dramatic cuts but because they represent an outmoded model for their primary function, the exchange of knowledge and research. Like the music industry, the education industry is about to experience the same death blow to its infrastructure and profit model that Napster issued to the music industry back in 1999.

Everyone within our generation is aware that the construction of ideas and the execution of research has shifted its locality to a sprawling virtual space that is open to collective input.

Let us not draw out the death rattle of our institutions by allowing concessions to be made and minor battles to be fought and ultimately lost – instead let us accelerate the pace of their demise.

Abandon the institution and declare it’s death, the point at which our apathy for the current state of play is declared, the better. With this change we will be able to destabilise the mediated control of our social trajectory, causing a genuine crisis for those that stand to profit both politically and financially from our existing system. It is the institutions and those that control them that need us.

Create a real crisis, torrent your syllabus, duplicate your id cards and give them to strangers, scan your entire library and post it on AAARG, distribute maps of your university online, relocate your seminars to a space outside of the institution. Invalidate the universities existence, so that together we can begin to build fresh foundations on its grave.

Invite anyone and everyone to participate, saturate your institutions and make them a true open space. The path to knowledge does not end on the day of graduation.

This document was put together on the spur of the moment as a direct response to this situation, its ideas are not fixed. Instead it seeks to act as a provocation or suggestion that we should consider the complete reformation of what we currently have. More money/Less cuts cannot cure the decline of our institutions. We have now a unique opportunity to create something new, independently and autonomously.

Lets begin a conversation anonymously at this location: http://tiny.cc/dqv7u

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Posted in Uncategorized
Tagged education, NUS, UK

2 Comments
No one can escape the dominant conversation around the ill-defined, oft valorised “movement”. If you were to judge political activism from your country Manor House, detached from real life in city streets, you’d be forgiven for thinking that the prime concern of the class struggle today is social media. Whilst it’d be nice focus on something more vital, it’s an issue that reluctantly must be addressed.

There’s no doubt twitter, Facebook and YouTube have really changed political activism. But it’s not entirely clear whether this is any more than a radical change in form. Despite being the subject of numerous feature articles, television segments and such, what is lauded as the mainstream “bloggerati” offer very little in the way of revolutionised content. The link between a dynamic form and dynamic content that has previously been the hallmark of revolutionary technological change is not at all clear in the current scenario.

The radical, democratised communicative potential that resides in the internet is still largely untapped – whatever you think of them, those who are making their voices heard most loudly (many of whom’s blogs are listed to the right of this post) are not people who would previously have been excluded from representation in mainstream media. In past times they are those who, sooner or later, would have found voice, whether in the mainstream or alternative print press, or other mass media.

The shoots of that potential are showing, but mainly on Facebook. The most interesting exchanges of political expression and tactical planning have been happening on event walls of some of the major protests – at some times cack-handed and naive, at others critical and rich, but always passionate, usually egged on by a surprisingly counter-productive culture of right-wing trolling. These kids are the constituent base of the student movement, and it is they who are the unheard voice of the working-class young people today, more than a single journo could ever achieve. It’s interesting to note that the few journalists who have recognised this shift have been those not primarily engaged in the echo-chamber of the online blogs, old-media journalists such as Paul Mason on BBC’s Newsnight.

The real change will involve a critical change in tone. It’s right to describe the current online student vanguard as “media savvy”. They understand well how media works as a controlling, policy-forming element of capitalist society. Articles, media appearances and blog posts are sharp, directed (although often ham-fisted) attempts at a mix of
“nudging” public discourse, tugging the heartstrings of middle-England and introducing predetermined tactical veins into the public consciousness. They are rarely expressions of working-class consciousness, aimed at critically debating the issues that effect our everyday lives. They aim to take up a position within the marketplace of ideas, rather than exist outside the world of the liberal media. And, always, with one on possibility of a book deal. Rarely with one eye on a world free of the wage relation.

But the capability of working-class people, especially young people, to take up the potential for revolutionary media offered by the internet remains. It finds its current expression not in a language of class struggle, but in expressions of everyday existence under capitalism. Whilst internecine warfare between London postcodes plays out through gang violence on our estates, it represents itself, its cohesive form, through the social media- and has been doing so for many years. The real change in social media as a radical political platform will happen when we start to see user-generated content from these same voices, expressing not a fetishisation of consumer goods and hierarchy between the powerless, but a critical response to the causes of poverty and discrimination (to be fair, that criticism is already implicit in much output, but is currently easy recuperated- a discussion worthy of many more blogs no doubt). When we see groups from, say, the Woodberry Down, Pelican or Pepys Estates making that political content (in whatever language) the claims of a YouTube (or, more likely, Ustream) revolution will have more ground.

This is not a million miles away– the make-up of the recent demonstrations and the “don’t give a fuck” attitude of anti-state violence shows that political consciousness amongst working-class youths is rising– anyone involved in political organising on the ground in their communities can well you that. Indeed, the politicians are starting to realise that too, and you can see the fear in their eyes. We all heard the dog-whistle when Cameron switched from “violent minority” (shadowy, nondescript bomb-throwing anarchists) to “feral thugs” (black and asian kids from working-class communities).

We welcome this new upsurge of online angry class consciousness, if and when it comes, on whichever platform. We look forward to the inevitable howls of the right-wing media, mixing crypto-racist anti-gang invective with the rhetoric of anti-leftism. But we will cherish the day in our hearts when the liberal-left media, the nursemaids of the twitter revolution, start wringing their hands with talk of how things have gone “too far”- because that’s the day the proletariat youth will have got sight of their real goal.

DSG EDITORIAL

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Posted in Uncategorized

Labour Councillors

Posted on January 18, 2011 | 1 comment

Pity the Labour Councillor- burdened with the unenviable task of slashing the public services that keep the working-class of Britain happy in their homes. What a decrepit situation to find oneself in, through no fault of ones one, powerless to resist! Fear not, stalwart reformers of Capital, defenders of those who produce the wealth- though your
heart is rendered asunder, help is at hand. Defend yourself from the brickbats of infantile utopians who claim “you should be resisting local authority cuts” with this handy cut-out-and-wear lapel badge, showing your true allegiances even when desecrating the welfare state. Suitable for all future budget meetings.

“I don’t enjoy doing this but it must be done”

“Lewisham? Never again!”

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Posted in Uncategorized

OCCUPATION/BLOCKADE

Posted on January 17, 2011 | 16 comments

In three months we've seen an explosion of street activity that took us all by surprise. Whereas there's always been a
core of far-left activity in Britain that has, in rhetoric if not in action, stood as a public opposition to capital, it would be fair to say that for many years even the most effective action has been on a local scale, where hard-working activists have played King Canute to the tide of neo-liberalism. However, in an autumn, we have seen an afternoon of smashed windows turn into an almost hyperactive atmosphere where an attitude of social cynicism and apathy seems to have turned to anger. Whilst we can (probably) all agree that this offers an opportunity to challenge the logic of parliamentary-democracy and, in turn, capital, if the struggle can be spread from students to the wider social body. However, we must be honest with ourselves, both on the current parameters of the social crisis, and the fact that a social crisis does not amount to a crisis in capitalism.

Whilst “the movement” made a significant impact on the mainstream media, and raised direct action and extra-parliamentary politics as a spectre at the least, it’s important not to get too carried away. Even over the short Christmas break, issues around unity and sectarianism, carried over from earlier, pre-existing arguments, but also from new tactical and organisational divisions, have started to spread, ironically exacerbated by the social media which has proved such a vital organisational tool. Significant actions need to be taken in order to return to an atmosphere of class antagonism, if only on a media stage, in order to stimulate a sense of momentum and confidence in class antagonism proper.

The manifestations of the student “movement” have been two-fold, firstly, a wave of occupations that spread across university campuses towards the end of the year, and four major national demonstrations of increasing anger, intensity and violence that pushed through proposals on tuition fees with a much diminished majority. If you had predicted such a scenario just a month and a half before to even the most committed ultra-leftist activist you’d have been swatted away from conversation as a fantasist. Such a swift turn-around is what created such a hyperactive buzz, on parts of campuses and in the online student opinion press and personal blogs. It was also this rapid change, and the new potentials it seemed to offer, that precipitated the series of occupations.

The principles behind an occupation, especially at a university, are well laid out. It is the principle of direct action-to interrupt the functioning of the university, not as a symbolic protest but in an attempt to disrupt or halt the operations of the university as an economic entity. A sit-in is simply occupying a space in protest, or to provide that space as a resource, for education or debate, but an occupation is an attack on the functioning of the institution itself. To varying extents the 40+ occupations across the country succeeded in this, whether by occupying lecture halls, administration buildings or libraries. These occupations were really a huge political eye-opener to many of the participants. Unlike in many European countries, British universities are relative strangers to the occupation model, and reports have varied as to reactions and decisions made within different academic institutions. Whilst some operated effectively, others suffered from divisions. Whilst some managed to hold on to spaces for long periods, others were quickly evicted by management, often with the help of bailiffs and the police.
The occupation of the library at Goldsmiths College in South East London seemed to be an interesting case study with wider ramifications. Goldsmiths (both the management and the student body) sees itself as a radical institution—indeed, ironically, this radicality is a key recruitment tool for the university. The College went into occupation quite late in comparison to others, and pretty soon fractious divisions arose amongst occupying students regarding the nature of the action. Whilst many students and staff felt that a full closure of the library was the only action that could push beyond a symbolic protest, others felt that such a move, especially in the month leading up to key dissertation deadlines, would only turn the majority of the student body against the nascent “movement”. This division seems indicative of a wider divide within the student “movement”—the divide between those who were already politically active, and those who have been induced into action, or wider political awareness, by the implementation of massive cuts to public services as part of the “package of austerity measures”. Whilst certain arguments are well-rehearsed within political currents, their foundations and implications might not be so obvious to people new to direct action. And that’s not to suggest a hierarchy, that they’re necessarily right—certainly there is no bigger enemy of programmatism than fresh eyes, picking holes in often dry and tired dogmatism taken for granted by operating politicos. It was this division that was played out dramatically at Goldsmiths College.

There can be no denying that tensions in the space ran extremely high; meetings became tortured and laborious without offering many real tactical gains, and often a sense of personal antagonism poisoned the air. Whilst there was no doubt a kernel of difference which was the base of this atmosphere, it is important we do not overweight the significance of it—there was much agreement, discussion, solidarity and friendship within the room, even some sexy-time if management are to be believed. Small problems were exacerbated by fatigue and stress as well as procedural difficulties. However, we should not flinch from being self-critical here, but we should put the division into perspective. There was no fundamental schism, but rather a lack of communication between political positions, and a lack of understanding of others politics.

This highlighted a fundamental problem, however. How effective is occupation of an educational resource as a weapon? An occupation seems like a logical step for an educational institution, but is it the most effective use of our time, energy and resources? In the end at Goldsmiths there was not an occupation, but a sit in, but would an occupation have been any more effective, or would it have been counterproductive to the achievement at a time when the majority of the student body do not necessarily identify themselves with the student movement? Those engaged in occupations really must ask themselves, we feel, the degree of economic frustration caused by shutting down occupations.

It would seem to us that, whilst we shouldn’t write off occupation of the university as a tactic, it is not the most effective use of our time, and politically (with a small p) they often prove unnecessarily contentious and counter-productive. Much of this is an issue of political fluency—the occupation is not currently part of the political language in our country, whereas it might be better understood in other areas of the world. Whilst we hold a responsibility to change that misunderstanding, we can not act as immediatists, and blame others for not understanding the political and tactical objectives of the occupation. And once we hold directly-democratic student assemblies, we cannot then override that process because it starts slipping into reformism. In such a situation our task as radicals should be agitation, not cutting ourselves off.

This raises a more pertinent issue—what is the most effective extra-parliamentary direct action the student movement could take right now? Whilst we acknowledge the tactic of occupation on our campuses, and reserve the right to take that action which we deem necessary, perhaps we could push our energy into a more effective form of economic (and class) warfare.

The focus of the previous few month’s action has been squarely upon parliament. That action has been radical, often violent, but it betrays a fundamental falsehood—that the key to social change lies within Westminster, within the centralised power-structures of parliamentary democracy. The protests, whilst rejecting the slightly tragic leadership of the National Union of Students, has still focused it attentions on the same arena—by lobbying those in power, we might, somehow, persuade, threaten or guilt-trip them into doing the right thing. What that is, we’re not
Not implementing tuition fees, no doubt, but the analysis ends their; the popular accusation of “spoilt students defending their free education” might not be so far from the truth, if that were the case. As long as capital operates outside Parliament, we must operate outside Parliament. Politics is not a limited sphere of negotiations around lawmaking that exists solely within the limits of Westminster, politics is our everyday interaction.

Any more radical approach must focus not on the machinations of Parliament, but on the economic system Parliament is sworn to protect— the system of deregulated financial capital that created the social crisis in the first place, with it’s reckless gambling on markets and subsequent transference of the results of that failure onto the public pocket, in the form of public ownership of the banks. By refocusing the dissent against the financial industry, the struggle against austerity can start to seriously undermine the dominant “argument” for the massive attack on the working-class— that is, the language of “inevitablism”, that the cause of the social crisis is a deficit caused by reckless public spending. This, so far, has been a real problem with the student “movement” when it comes to engaging in dialogue with the wider public, a public so far relatively disengaged from the idea of opposing cuts.

The point of the economic blockade is two-fold, direct and political; firstly, to shut down the financial industry whose continued operation works against the interests of ordinary people, and secondly; to draw attention to the fact the students cause is not the protection of a mollycoddled middle-class elite but an attack on the financial scam that has put us all in this situation.

*There's class warfare, all right, but it's my class, the rich class, that's making war, and we're winning.* -Warren Buffett

We don’t perceive this to necessarily be a radical agenda in itself, but the start of a process of offering an alternative, intelligent and practical criticism of capitalism. It’s the start of asserting that the problem isn’t Labour’s sloppiness in book-keeping (as the coalition claims) or general Tory nastiness (as much of the student movement seems to be asserting). It’s to raise the role and effects of the financial system as the originator of the current austerity measures.

When it comes to direct action, every struggle must use the weight of their enemy against them, must take advantage of every weakness. In Greece, the sanctuary of the university and historical position of the students enables us to push against the state directly in the streets. In Britain, we learnt for the first time that the one weapon we can use most effectively in the face of police repression is improvisation- to turn quickly on our heels and bolt before the monolith of a militarised police line can react. Like that police line, the industrialisation of our education system, teamed with a paranoiac fear of bad publicity damaging their market stake, has turned our universities into a bureaucratic behemoth. If we take advantage of that, we can use the resources a campus offers to the best of our advantages. To hold a physical space for a week in London, a convergence space to be freely utilised to fight against austerity, to meet fellow students, to practice tactics and prepare tools, a place to come to rest together after an action- this is a massive practical achievement that is more than possible today.

Therefore, a proposal; we take what we learned from a hectic two months and dozens of nationwide university occupations and work together to step up the fight against austerity. In the week approaching the next national demonstration against fees and cuts we take control of physical space within our universities not with the aim of shutting down the education system, but with the aim of shutting down the financial sector which has engineered this crisis. We use those spaces, and social media, to launch a week of flash-mobs, sit-ins and shut-downs of the infrastructure that support the city- train stations, tube lines, city-boy pubs. Each action planned on the hoof, with hundreds of students throughout the week improvising take-overs of Canary Wharf, creative actions inside the Bank of England, a close-down of the stock-exchange, if only for an hour. A week where the students take the fight to those who started it- the financiers who are still in the clover as the public sector is closed down. A week of economic warfare.

*DSG EDITORIAL*