Situating strategies of security cultures toward a diversity of tactics: Hybrid resistance in so-called Portland.

Thesis

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Abstract

This research is grounded in so-called Portland, Oregon through participation in the George Floyd Uprising during 2020 and subsequent fieldwork the following year. Against the tremendous deployment of police and surveillance technologies, I examine the hybrid digital-physical resistance practices of participants in the Uprising. I prioritize a bottom-up form of methodology and theorizing in radical solidarity with anti-authoritarian and anti-racist mobilizations in the 2020 currents of Black liberation. I utilize an (an/)archive of radical zines collected from skill-shares and online archives alongside fieldwork and informal interviews with nearly two dozen participants to articulate a strategic core of resistance that situates practices of hybrid resistance. This work is complemented by geographic scholarship and work from critical data and surveillance studies. I argue that participants varyingly navigate complicated terrains of digital-physical threat and securitization, through the practice of 'security culture' and collective accountability. These anti-authoritarian, anarchist, anti-fascist, anti-racist, or generally 'anti-political' strategic commitments, alongside accounting for each other's autonomy, enable the proliferation of a 'diversity of tactics' that negotiate hybrid online-offline terrains of conflict in multiple ways and in differing degrees often outside the register of contemporary activism and the politics of recognition, representation and transparency. I argue that this counter-apparatus modeled by an anonymous undercommons through an 'insurrection of subjugated knowledges' offers an important form of conceptualizing resistance from the ground up against cybernetic capture and control. This work amplifies the strategic capacities of study to attend to and attack securitization in the age of big data when the so-called radical spaces of the university practice co-presence with places of struggle against police.

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Chapter 1: The secret is to begin

> *Ready or not, you are already engaged in the struggles of our time. We were all born into them. It's not a question of whether to fight, but how.* (CrimethInc 2016)

Introduction

Night after riotous night during the George Floyd Rebellion of 2020 in Portland, Oregon a certain rhythm turned the task of directly contesting the anti-blackness of police into a ritual groove. The movements of crowds could regularly withstand and outlast the ruthlessly gratuitous violence of police pushes and the biohazardous "less-lethals" law-enforcers loved to launch. Goggles, gas masks, helmets, shields, umbrellas and plenty of nondescript black clothes, the increasingly ubiquitous uniform of frontlines everywhere, enabled the mobility of a Portland multitude to stake spatial claim to streets in a way that sustained for over a hundred days. Practical strategies to encounter the violence of 'cop-riots' and their surveillant assemblages emerged by necessity with the help of transnational insurrectionary knowledge networks maintained by those anarchist, antifascist, queer, indigenous and black insurgents familiar with street skirmishes. In the swathe of tear gas and many more wraths of state violence, questioning citizens found footing alongside those who claim no nation in an erratic battle for total abolition. Yet as resistance found quotidian rhythms among a spectacular rebellion, the cops and the insidious technologies of the US security apparatus were unleashed, as always, on their beat.

That summer saw media and lawmakers awash with outrage over the explicit overreach of federal and local law enforcement agencies' use of surveillance (Klippenstein 2020; Wilson 2020; Hosenball

2020). By August 2020, a congressional committee had formed to investigate the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) (House Intelligence Committee 2020). The exact intelligence practices and technologies used, whether the surveillance aircraft fixed with stingray devices, high resolution cameras and license plate readers (Cox 2020), the cloning of phones confiscated from arrestees (Klippenstein 2020) or spreading intelligence reports of Portland journalists twitter activity (Harris 2020) likely only scrape the surface. With the subsequent transition from one political party to another, the spectacle of democratic outrage vanished as the state stayed steadfast in its strategies of securitization. A special report confabulated a new domestic security threat category, Anarchist Violent Extremist (National Security Council 2021), which echoes the Black Identity Extremist designation implemented after the murder of Michael Brown and the Ferguson Uprising heralding the intention for explicit state infiltration. Domestic terrorism enhancements were applied to anti-racist lawyers arrested at a demonstration in New York City, and an anarchist, Daniel Baker, was sentenced to years in prison for a social media post encouraging the mobilization of defense against far-right militias before January 6th, 2021 (Lennard 2021). Finally, presidential plans seem clear to dramatically increase funding to police budgets even after already allowing states to divert COVID-19 funding to police (Slisco 2021).

The multiple Black Lives Matter mobilizations could be said to have coalesced around the slogan, "Defund the Police". Measured against such a demand, the Uprising challenges normative notions of mass mobilization's effectiveness at attaining demands deemed untenable by the ruling order. However, against reliance on outdated modes of politics revolving around successes and failure contained within a narrow terrain of policy and its permitted changes, many protestors, dissenters, demonstrators, activists, militants, dissidents, and detractors engaged in varying degrees of effective/ineffective action throughout complicated terrain. As demands to defund fell on the conspicuous coffers of carcerality we can also notice with Angela Davis the way notions of abolition

and racial capitalism proliferated (Davis and Goodman 2020). Popular activists like Mariame Kaba (2021) made waves in for contemporary abolitionist politics emphasizing the importance in unmaking of the Prison Industrial Complex (PIC) and opposing reformist policies that leave policing intact. Alongside groundswells around abolition, Geography has a crucial role in contemporary abolitionist theorization through Ruth Wilson Gilmore (2017, 2018) and others (Heynen and Ybarra 2021; Wright 2020). Each of these frame abolition as a productive practice of place-making as it simultaneously dismantles systems of oppression. Abolitionist praxis attempts to attack racial-carceral capitalism and its global policing-security apparatus through addressing the complicated and multiple terrain in which the state's strategies of capture, control and prediction happen; from the school to the street to the systems that imbricate each in the cybernetic city.

It is well known that crime prediction technologies uphold the core of contemporary US police regimes (Tulumello and Iapolo 2021; Ferguson 2017; Wang 2016; Minocher and Randall 2020; Dencik et al. 2018) and the code and algorithms on which such technologies rely are undergirded by racial logics of white supremacy (Benjamin 2019; Jefferson 2018). Beyond crime prediction, numerous entities churn out products with algorithms claiming to efficiently predict 'civil unrest' and sell products to law enforcement to intervene before any event occurs (Amoore 2020; Grill 2017). A nexus of state-corporate-academic relations incentivizes the diffusion of practices of datafication or "the transformation of social action into online quantified data, thus allowing for real-time tracking and predictive analysis"(vanDjick 2014, 198). So we must understand the Prison Industrial Complex and the racialized spatialities of policing as a much more complicated apparatus that necessarily involves digital systems in its domination. We are reminded by Jefferson (2020), "If opposition to digitized modes of criminalization is to gain momentum, it cannot be only defensive; it must also be abolitionist" (192). This paper frames abolition this way to notice the hybrid digital-

physical spatialities in which abolitionist praxis can and must be enacted to counter the deployment of security and surveillance in the age of big data.

This research is grounded in so-called Portland, Oregon through participation in the George Floyd Uprising and subsequent fieldwork the following year. Against the tremendous display of police and surveillance technologies, I examine the hybrid digital-physical resistance practices of participants in the Uprising. I prioritize a bottom-up form of methodology and theorizing in radical solidarity with anti-authoritarian and anti-racist mobilizations in the movement for Black lives, I utilize an (an/)archive of radical zines collected from skill-shares and online archives alongside fieldwork and informal interviews with nearly two dozen participants to articulate a strategic core of resistance that situates practices of hybrid resistance. This work is complemented by geographic scholarship and scholarship in critical data and surveillance studies. I argue that participants navigate complicated terrains of digital-physical threat and securitization through the practice of 'security culture' and collective accountability. These anti-authoritarian, anarchist, anti-fascist, anti-racist, or generally 'anti-political' strategic commitments enable the proliferation of a 'diversity of tactics' that negotiate hybrid terrains of conflict in multiple ways and in differing degrees often outside the register of contemporary activism and the politics of recognition. I argue that this counter-apparatus modeled by an anonymous undercurrent of 'subjugated knowledges' offers a unique form of conceptualizing resistance from the ground up that is of use to any scholarship that wants to attend to the troubling developments of securitization in the age of big data, especially in radical geographic scholarship and critical data studies.

Method

Through the summer of 2020 to the end of the year, I participated in multiple direct actions, mutual aid projects, and community education events as well as immersed myself in the social media spaces

related to the Uprising. I returned in the summer and fall of 2021 officially doing 'fieldwork' after completing IRB certification[1]. Many of the practices of fieldwork enacted throughout this time were grounded in the collective study of a network of radical counter-knowledges that took the form of zines, social media infographics and radical independent blogs and publications. It is this (an/)archive of knowledge that "social movements and communities fight against capital over the constitution, organization and management of the archive" (d'Urbano 2020, 35) that this research primarily mobilizes in concert with fieldwork. The complementary combination of fieldwork and archival methods aim to bring attention to otherwise unnoticed features and practices in the research process (Harris 2001). I use zines and information hosted by radical organizations on the ground and through multiple internet repositories to reveal the current attention to hybrid digital-physical strategies of resistance from basic phone communications, to counter-surveillance, to the gathering of Open Source Intelligence (OSINT) against fascists and police. I used this method to recognize the power that archives have in being made and mobilized for resistance (O'Toole 2002), and how the zines of radical communities specifically "produce the culture that they represent", by noticing "who is reading and legitimating them" (Jeppesen 2012, 280-281).

My fieldwork and ethnographic approach attempt to exemplify through a shared commitment to anti-authoritarianism and abolition the practices of 'militant ethnography' (Juris 2007) that is "a combination of politically engaged participant observation and ethnography, generating insights into the cultural logic and practices informing anarchist and anti-authoritarian networks" (Apoifs 2016, 4). Further complicating the typical deployment of participant observation that reifies the insider-outsider of the participant-research, activist academic binary, I situate my fieldwork and involvement in the Uprising as 'observant participation' following Brown's (2007) conception of observant

[1] IRB Exempt status study ID: 2021E0685

participation as that which directly "engages with the materiality of the practices that constitute these activist networks and spaces" (2686). In order to practice solidarity as participant and researcher of the Uprising, I relied on the knowledges of the (an/)archive developing an understanding of 'Security Culture'. Security culture is understood as, "collective sets of practices and interpretive patterns aimed at securing safety and/or anonymity of activists" (Ullrich and Knopp 2018, 1) and involves a practical awareness of threat experienced in everyday interactions with hybrid systems. Through the practice of my own security culture within networks of radical affinity I was able to establish the foundation for meaningful fieldwork. Security and privacy, beyond the minimal ethical scaffolding of institutional protocol, in contexts of high surveillance is an ethical imperative regarding the safety of participants and facilitates the comfortable disclosure of participants that otherwise might self-censor (Ryan & Tynen, 2021). Such practices involved commitments to maximum anonymity and refraining from using any recording devices for interviews instead relying on extensive fieldnotes.

In 2021 I conducted informal interviews with nearly two dozen participants, of which many included multiple conversations in person and across encrypted messaging and email. Participants all had some knowledge of 'security culture' that allowed us to navigate the vulnerabilities of uneven power relations between researcher and research subjects through an "ethic of care" where care is understood as "shared risk" (Sharpe 2016, 131). At the same time, many people were unwilling to speak with me because their own security practices deemed interaction with me as an unacceptable risk. These experiences of being denied access were likely because of the lack of trust developed through shared experiences over time. The amount of time I spent in Portland, having been only a temporary resident intermittently over the last few years and minimally integrated in the political subcultures, restricted my capacity to make connections, form trust and collaborate with a broader range of people. Through the relationships already forged from earlier time spent in the city and in

my own time on the ground during the Uprising subsequent connections came through trusted communication of particular individuals who acted as 'gatekeepers' to connect me with other individuals in their trusted circles.

To ensure commitments to anonymity and to avoid excessive identifying details of participants potentially subject to state prosecution, I mobilize stories gleaned from conversations rather than accounting exact transcribed quotations. The stories serve as examples of shared strategic orientations and as an enumeration of a diversity of tactics practiced by participants in the face of multiple dimensions of threat. Following McKittrick (2019) this research aims to trouble the methodological foundations of academic research as itself theoretical.

Context

In order to situate this research, I provide some historical context of Portland and the region of the Pacific Northwest's conflict with white-supremacy, the far-right, and the police. I then turn to a quick overview of the Black Lives Matter movement as it developed from the Ferguson Uprising to the George Floyd Uprising. Such context establishes the importance of recognizing the ongoing character of struggles for liberation and also policing and securitization. Understanding their continuing yet contextually contingent development enables attention to how this paper's reflections of tactics are meaningful as lessons and tools for engaging with the past and future of struggle.

As does much of the history of the United States, Portland, the state of Oregon and the Pacific Northwest have a long history with white supremacy. The Ku Klux Klan had one of the highest membership rates out of the country in Portland (Bruce 2019). The Portland Police and local government were not unfamiliar with the Klan and are historically tied up with one another (Platt 2021). Even to this day, collaborations between police and white supremacist organizations remains

rampant, including collaborations between a Portland police officer and a leader of the Proud Boys, Joey Gibson (Wilson 2019).

In the podcast series, *It Did Happen Here*, Yanke and fellow cohosts (2020) describe how anti-fascist resistance emerged in the city because, "in the late 1980s, Portland was a known haven for racist skinheads". Rosenthal (2019) charts the history of "this racist paradise" from the origins of the state to the murder of Mulegeta Seraw in 1988 by a racist skinhead gang. The prominence of white supremacist skinheads throughout the US led to the emergence of large mobilizations of anti-fascists such as Skinheads Against Racial Prejudice (SHARP) and the Anti-Racist Action network which connected radicals in cities like Minneapolis, Portland, Milwaukee, Columbus and Chicago (Stitt 2020). The first use of the term 'antifa' came from the Portland branch of the Anti-Racist Action network that formed in 2007 as 'Rose City Antifa' that are still highly active in the area (Ross 2017). Across the Pacific Northwest, specifically from Olympia, Washington to Salem Oregon, one of the most prominent international federations of anarchist news formed in the 1990's with the name, CrimethInc. In 2000, the mayor of Eugene called the city "The Anarchist Capital of the United States" (Castillon 2018). Over the last several years far right militias emerged at a more frequent pace, putting Portland frequently in the spotlight as a place of political 'extremism'. This continued up until the George Floyd Uprising in 2020 when the federal government labeled Portland an 'anarchist jurisdiction' (Ellis 2020).

The situation in so-called Portland began in the end of May 2020 after the George Floyd Uprising emerged world-wide through calls for Black liberation under the decentralized organization and general slogan, "Black Lives Matter". Black Lives Matter (BLM) emerged as an organization through the Ferguson Uprising in 2014. At the time, BLM focused on calls for police reform through better training and body cameras in the wake of Ferguson, which were ineffective at their intended purpose

and entrenched surveillance further in policing (Dewan and Baker 2020). In 2020, BLM coalesced around the phrase "Defund the Police" harnessing a more policy oriented abolitionist discourse that also proliferated alongside BLM calls for action. This research does not focus on the social movement formation of BLM, but contextualizes the emergent insurgent Black and multi-racial emanations of the George Floyd Uprising avoiding the reduction of the complexity within any social upheaval through attention to the bottom-up practices of leaderless individuals and networks. Nevertheless, the attention to abolitionist politics from the main contingent of Black Lives Matter participants was likely co-constitutive of the solidarity that formed between those new to street conflict and those that identified as part of an anti-authoritarian milieu.

Following the burning of the third precinct in Minneapolis, the media spotlight honed in on Portland because of its sustained demonstrations of dissent and the alarming use of force from law enforcement and deployment of surveillance technologies. The local Portland police frequently collaborated with neighboring jurisdictions, as well as the county and state police over the duration of the protests. It was not uncommon for these police forces to coordinate with the Oregon National Guard, federal agents already in the city such as the Federal Protective Service and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and with those agents deployed to Portland by the Department of Homeland Security (Barrett et al. 2020). The deployed federal agents came from multiple agencies, the U.S. Marshals, and Customs and Border Protection (CBP), including an elite unit of CBP, BORTAC (Caldwell and Hackman 2020). Later in the summer, the US Marshals deputized more than a hundred members of the varied 'local' agencies who could now charge protestors at the federal level (Levinson and Haas 2020). Behind the lines, FBI agents conducted investigations into protestors as well as deploying their "Fly Team", a counterterrorism unit, to exploit protestors' phones (Schwartz 2020).

The mobilization of this multi-scalar law enforcement force and the massive resources at their disposal reveals the significant degree to which the state attempted to control the Uprising. Those that participated had to negotiate incredible levels of threat, and yet because there was a long history of resistance to the threat of both the far-right and police in the region, people were able to prepare themselves to be safe in the face of state and far-right violence. The history of resistance in the Pacific Northwest enabled networks of knowledge to ground resistance practices in the present Uprising that adapted to the unique mobilization of force and surveillance technologies by the state.

Conceptual framework

I began conceptualizing this research on-the-ground alongside many of those that would later participate in this research study. As my methodological approach attempts to ground the theoretical, I turned to Foucault's (1980) reference of the "insurrection of subjugated knowledges" that are "disqualified as inadequate" by dominant regimes of knowledge but "are on the one hand the products of meticulous, erudite, exact historical knowledge, and on the other hand local and specific knowledges which have no common meaning" (81). I privilege such 'subjugated knowledges' through attention to the (an/)archive of anti-authoritarian zines which was a living archive being contributed to and mobilized daily by participants of the Uprising. As Aparicio and Blaser (2008) identify in the context of bottom-up approaches to Latin American resistance movements the, "central point in these knowledge-practices is 'doing them' rather than in producing knowledge as accurate representations" (76). They go on to identify the resonance such knowledge have across movements:

> "In spite of the significant differences across these uprisings and movements, we can identify some commonalities that tend to be present when patterns of mobilization embodying the insurrection of subjugated knowledges emerge. These are: a) a politicization and defense of social and cultural differences linked to the

> notions of autonomy and territory, and b) a form of political action that is non-statist, eschews the logic of representation, and favors a logic that we might call relational" (Aparicio and Blaser 2008, 66).

Building from an insurrection of subjugated knowledges grounded in the notion of autonomy from a non-statist perspective that challenges "the logic of representation" and is focused on the relational, I situate this research in the emerging sub-discipline of anarchist geographies (Ince 2014; White et al. 2016). As Springer (2016) writes, "Anarchism is more appropriately considered a protean process that perpetually unfolds through the insurrectionary geographies of the everyday and the prefigurative politics of direct action, mutual aid, and voluntary association" (18). Geography gives attention to the uniquely relational spatial and temporal practices of anarchist, anti-authoritarian and networked movements of the twenty-first century noticeable in the rise of 'autonomous geographies' (Pickerill and Chatterton 2006) and 'geographies of the future' that focus on prefigurative resistance that understand means and ends as simultaneously connecting the past in order to create a future in the here and now (Jeffery and Dyson 2021; Ferreti 2022).

With regard to space, I follow Massey (2005) in "conceptualising space as open, multiple and relational, unfinished and always becoming, is a prerequisite for history to be open and thus a prerequisite, too, for the possibility of politics" (59). Continuing this attention to relationality then is also work in digital geographies where space is conceptualized as having become entangled with code as Dodge and Kitchin (2005) call 'code/space'. Expanding on this understanding of space as hybrid, Meek (2012) writes, "Dichotomies of the virtual/real have proved not only inaccurate, but impediments in our analyses of the relations between collective action and social media" (1430). Therefore attention to the always-already hybrid spatiality in an era of pervasive digitation means scholarship must also attend to the hybrid character of practices of resistance and their repression.

Geographic scholarship has focused on politics with a digital character conceptualized as 'technopolitics', (Cinnamon 2020), and specifically within anti-authoritarian movements as 'hybrid activism' (Merill and Pries 2019). Critical data studies and surveillance studies literature also provides a meaningful basis to understand the degree to which digital technology shapes the way we understand social life, power, and resistance as big data specifically composes the foundation of new regimes of domination whether understood as 'technocolonialism' (Madianou 2019) or 'data colonialism' (Fraser 2019). Andrejevic (2009) conceptualizes the limitations to agency such developments have had through the notion of 'digital enclosure'. Much of the literature suggests bleak realities and I agree with Denick et al. (2016) that, "The ability to monitor, record and store digital transactions on a massive scale creates an environment that substantially limits the possibilities for dissent and protest, whether through self-censorship, chilling-effects or active repression (10). Nevertheless, I focus on the affordances of the digital for resistance (Ettlinger 2018) with particular attention to the simultaneity of many tactics of resistance that, sometimes simultaneously, engage with the entropic, queer, and fugitive possibilities of data (Elwood 2020). I therefore ground this research in the possibilities of resistance that pay attention to the way power happens through hybrid spaces, that take antagonism with the state as a starting point, and build from the already existing counter-networks of subjugated knowledges.

Chapter 2: Navigating threat through situated strategy

> *A clean criminal record is an asset to aspiring revolutionaries, because it means they are likely not yet on the radar of the feds, not yet known by the government to be a threat.*
>
> - Street Warfare in Portland (2021)

Introduction – Threat and resistance

The above from a recent zine analyzing the utility of military strategy in reflection of the 2020 Portland Uprising offers important insight often taken-for-granted by incoming generations of dissenters: arrest significantly amplifies the threat you experience from the state because you are simultaneously made a more legible threat to the state. While there are many more ways than arrest that one might become more 'on the radar' of state agents, the threat of arrest and the increased threat from arrest had significant effects on many of the participants I spoke with. For a lot of us, the summer of 2020 was the first time we experienced direct conflict with police lines on a regular basis. The over one hundred days of street conflict and the consistent practice of police indiscriminately arresting even those most timid demonstrators meant that arrest felt like a tangible possibility for many. As one individual shared, being arrested felt like a rite of passage, a sort of mark of legitimacy through martyrdom that meant you were serious, especially if you kept coming out in defiance of the court-mandate to no longer participate in protest. Some thought that being arrested was nothing to be proud of and that if possible, one should do their best to avoid arrest. Still others experienced the intended 'chilling effect', no longer wanting to attend actions at all because of the fear of the possibility of arrest or the trauma inflicted by one already undergone.

The experience of threat amplified in very specific ways after being arrested. Nearly half of the individuals I spoke with were arrested at some point, almost a quarter more than once. For one participant the result of arrest included being fired from a recently acquired job because of an employment mandate of having a clean record. Others afterwards experienced far-right trolls attempting to harass their place of work and have them fired which led to awkward dynamics at their job. Some participants were particularly worried that their family would find out about their arrest and disown them because they had local law enforcement or various far-right conspiracists in their immediate family.

Upon arrest, the police would release images of those booked into the system onto a public repository. A local right-wing journalist, Andy Gno, that became popular for his dislike of milkshakes and working alongside racist reactionary groups in Portland would regularly take the photos, names and charges and dump them onto his social media profiles, particularly Twitter. Regardless of who you were, if you were arrested, you were branded a Violent Antifa Radical, or some such inflammatory designation. His followers would proceed to make jokes about the people exposed in the post, ranging from mundane humor to terrifying threats of violence. The degree of disturbing reaction often increased when the victims were people of color, women, non-binary, trans or those with non-normative or queer presentation. The exposing of both a name and picture in these threads functionally doxxed the individuals opening up a significant range of threat to one's safety. Doxxing involves "publishing a person's private information with the intention of exposing and intimidating them". Even before the 2020 Uprising, a meme phrase potentially originating from graffiti circulated widely online, "Andy Gno is a threat to our community and provides kill lists to Atomwaffen" after a number of journalists targeted by Andy on his social media were featured in a video branded with the dangerous neo-nazi group's insignia and experienced credible threats of violence (Gorcenski 2020). The threats became more streamlined during 2020 as more than one

participant showed me a shirt they had purchased that said, “I got doxxed by Andy Gno and all I got were death threats and this t-shirt".

The nightly incursions in the city center and in the suburbs near police precincts meant encountering an onslaught of immediate threat to physical safety. Across the country hundreds of people were injured by projectiles sometimes fired directly at their heads causing serious injury. The number of chemical weapons deployed in Portland surprised many and meant that it became very likely that one would have lungs and eyes exposed to a serious irritant, the cruelty of which was exacerbated by the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic that also targeted lungs. Furthermore, demonstrators quickly noticed that exposure to certain types of chemical weapons severely disrupted menstrual cycles. Participants shared many pictures with me of their first wounds and bruises from police violence, some still dealing with long-term pain as a result. From the end of May to September over a hundred incidents of car-ramming occurred at demonstrations across the country, with several devastating deaths. Since then states have introduced and passed numerous pieces of legislation sanctioning the use right for the far-right to continue ramming cars into people blocking roadways. In the Pacific Northwest, violence against protests by far-right actors was the norm from attacks on lone-individuals roaming the streets to homemade bombs being thrown by ex-military police instructors, to the shootings perpetrated by far-right against demonstrations. Threat of many different kinds was experienced from multiple dimensions and required participants in the Uprising to develop strategies that encountered threat and enabled action.

Strategy: Security culture

Many participants shared with me that they were already used to such ongoing threat as Black, Indigenous, queer, trans, or long-term anarchist individuals. They were used to having jobs, families, schools, healthcare, legal systems, police, politicians, corporations, treat them as others and threats.

They had developed repertoires of threat management that they then shared with newer generations of dissidents. One of the first skills people used to mitigate threat particularly used by those among an anarchist and antifascist milieu was the wearing of black bloc, or the wearing of similar clothing, usually black, that hides the face, disguises features, and enables action in the face of police targeting. The black bloc has a relatively recent but storied history popularized in the alterglobalization movement of the late 90's but innovated decades earlier in Germany. "Bloc'ing up", while garnering attention from the state as a sign of significant threat, simultaneously evades surveillance and enabled action. One participant reported never having seen such a massive influx of new individuals practicing in black bloc after having spent years practicing it themselves since Occupy. While many new people began incorporating the tactic of black bloc, "in Portland (and generally, the US) blocs are most often made up of discreet affinity groups" (Blocing Up 2020). Affinity groups are a model of flexible autonomous organization of "two to fifteen people" that know each other intimately so as to maximize trust and minimize threat and "once assembled, an affinity group should establish a shared set of security practices and stick to them" (Affinity Groups 2017).

The black bloc is an example of one tactic that might be considered at the core of anarchist and antifascist "security culture" defined by the classic zine as "a set of customs shared by a community whose members may be targeted by the government, designed to minimize risk" (What is Security Culture? 2012). But just like the black bloc not only provides cover from surveillance but also produces possibilities that "create open-ended situations, in which the actions of a few can open the floodgates for others to join in" (Blocs, Black and Otherwise 2003) so too security culture, "should make openness more possible, not less" (Confidence. Courage. Connection. Trust. 2019). Acknowledging the simultaneous negative and positive quality, "security cultures are productive effects resulting from power relations..." aiming to process "specific vulnerabilities and visibilities..." which "not only emerge and transform in confrontation with surveillance and policing but also with

general norms and practices" (Ullrich and Knopp 2018, 192). One zine remarks that security culture is a practice of consent and intersectional care, that is crucial for liberation, and when we do not practice it "we do the work of our oppressors" (The Invisible Ground 2018).

Academic literature rarely addresses security culture or its practice of 'threat modeling' outside of corporate, technology and specifically cybersecurity depoliticized contexts (Slupska et al. 2021). One publication on cybersecurity seems to incorporate the radical notion of a 'diversity of tactics', without mention of its political affiliation, to situate security as always socially contingent (Pierce et al. 2018). Only recently has some scholarship in critical data studies taken on the concept of 'threat modeling' in political contexts but either specifically related to digital activists (Myers West 2017) or in relation to what is called 'anticipatory data practices' that act as "a heuristic aid... to counter concerns over surveillance and datafication." (Kazansky 2021, 9). Scholarship of on-the-ground applications of security culture usually reference anti-authoritarian and anarchist groups but without attention to the digital (Robinson 2008; Currans et al. 2011) or with attention only to visual surveillance (Ullrich and Knopp 2018). Meanwhile the anarchist and antifascist (an)archives often mobilized in the Uprising and from which I pull in this study robustly reference security culture as a process embedded in digital and physical spatialities simultaneously such as *Activists Guide to Information Security* (2016), *Digital Security for Activists* (2012), *London Calling* (2011); *Security Culture: A Handbook for Activists* (2001); *Security Culture: An Interactive Sock Puppet Farce* (2010) and *Stay Calm* (2013).

Among participants, phrases like "practicing good security culture" were ubiquitous and many of the aforementioned zines on the topic were on almost every distro's table at every protest-related event held in Portland that I attended. Some participants would frequently use the term OpSec (Operations Security) to expresses security culture in relation to taking action or InfoSec

(Information Security) with regard to securing potentially vulnerable knowledge, revealing further transference of tactics between US military and intelligence, cybersecurity and anarchist scenes. This likely stemmed from the drift of an earlier generation of hacktivists and militant intellectuals that recognized the value of knowing the strategies and techniques of power at the service of empire to enhance tactical discussion among radicals (Nomad 2013). When participants would discuss security culture they often reflected on criticisms of sloppy implementation they had noticed from others not wearing clothes that disguised their appearance well enough or criticizing the over-disclosure of certain people in online discussions. Furthermore, the practice of security culture became incorporated into the hybrid digital-physical terrain of their everyday lives. Therefore, to extend security culture as a mode of emancipatory praxis the following sections will connect it to strategies of a radically anti-authoritarian practice that facilitate a diversity of tactics.

Strategy: Anti-politics and accountability

After returning to Portland over the summer of 2021, I connected with a number of individuals willing to share their experiences and contribute in whatever way they could to the research project. Sometimes I would meet with people individually, walk around locations we were familiar with or meet at bars and coffee shops to speak. Other times I would be invited to meet in groups that had strong affinities with each other congregating in living rooms and parks together. We spoke of the many actions they were planning, events coming up they were participating in, reflections on the last summer and perspectives on the local radical scene's dynamics. I was often told they met and spoke about such things regardless of my being there. Their social worlds were deeply committed to continued action and critical analysis. The various individuals that spoke with me represented a broad range of identities, queer, trans, non-binary, black, indigenous, asian, latinx and white. Many of these individuals came together because they already knew each other from their lives as longtime

friends. Others found each other through shared experiences on the ground from the many antifascist actions in the Pacific Northwest in recent years and many more came together through the lengthy struggles of 2020. Some individuals recounted memories of first noticing each other as strangers wearing black bloc who through their shared practices on the streets began supporting each other during police pushes, when they needed their eyes flushed, eventually meeting to discuss strategy, share resources and form affinity groups for their own actions. They did not congregate because they shared membership to a political party but because they shared tactical terrain and an ethical orientation of antagonism against the police.

Most of the individuals that spoke with me identified as anarchist. More than one echoed David Graeber's quote that anarchism is about *doing* and not *being* an anarchist. A few others also didn't identify as being anything but could list what they were against: the state, the police, white supremacy, fascists, capital, electoral politics; and for: black liberation, total abolition. Marquis Bey (2019) notices that abolitionism marks the core undercurrent of contemporary movements that act in the Black Radical Tradition and that "abolitionism... is fundamentally anarchic" (74). One individual shared with me that they felt a sense of belonging among many of those they met in the black bloc because the shared strategic orientation wasn't only about challenging the police in their precincts and riot formations in the wake of another racist murder, but in abolishing authoritarian formations through the whole of society, even in themselves. Nathan Eisenstadt, through an extended auto-ethnographic study in anarchist spaces in Bristol, discusses such an ongoing self-reflexive approach to non-domination through the lens of Black Feminism emphasizing the importance of an 'anarchist anti-oppression praxis' (Eisenstadt 2016). As Zoe Zamudzi (Solecast 2018) has said, "the analysis of Black feminism has a particularly deep resonance with anarchist understandings of mechanisms of power, which similarly foreground a linking across all systems of domination." Returning to Marquis Bey this sentiment is echoed when they write, "There is no way

anarchism can do anarchism to the fullest if it does not heed Black feminist theory" (49) and goes further to notice the ways Black, trans, queer and feminist struggles harmonize in their ultimately abolitionist orientations to gender, whiteness, the state, and the self.

Many people shared instances when other people in the Portland scene would say or do something that would attract critical attention from others. Whether the person or group engaged in sexist, racist, homophobic, or ableist, behavior or practiced poor security culture that put others at risk, other radicals would often step in and attempt an accountability or conflict resolution process. More than following the call to 'find each other' that echoes in radical spheres worldwide (Invisible Committee 2009, 97) we must also 'lose each other', and "the courage to do away with" even "losing our own selves and whatever we held as a dogmatic notion of truth and norms" (Marneros 2020). Robust attention is paid to such processes of accountability in the (an)archive that often critically examine already existing accountability practices in anarchist scenes in order to critique and improve how we care for each other because they often fail (Accounting for Ourselves 2013; The Broken Teapot 2014; In Our Hands 2017). Other anarchist zines address issues of consent (Learning Good Consent 2013; Let's Talk About Consent Baby 2013), or helping survivors of sexual abuse (Strategies for Survivors 2012), or in connecting the importance of addressing oppressive practices because of their tendency to increase vulnerability to state operations (Why Misogynists Make Great Informants 2010). In Portland many of the stories shared with me didn't end well, often with a group needing to break off from the person who perpetrated the wrong because they refused to recognize or change behaviors, or worse, a main group refusing to . In *Accounting for Ourselves* (2013) they introduce the concept of concentric circles of affinity that enable accountability processes to be situated within existing relational networks rather than in imagined communities. This processual accountability enacts a scalar politics that attends to various circles of involvement depending on the situation. One's responsibility to a member in their affinity group is crucial where it is important to

"be open to criticism, calling out, and transformation with the trust that my comrades will be, too." while not necessarily expecting the same process to work with "some random person who's supposedly an anarchist" (43).

This anti-oppression accountability practice mirrors writings on security culture that emphasize the necessity of having difficult conversations when someone in your circle could be doing something that makes themselves and others vulnerable. Combining security culture and abolitionist praxis establish a strategic coherence that allows us to analyze the effectiveness of the tactical practices it generates. In the face of constant threat of infiltration and securitization, the emphasis on finding strategic harmony enabled individuals to form lasting social bonds and sustain the capacity for action across a wide range of personal difference. As one participant described, they came together across radically different lives because they kept finding more things that they all were against.

Chapter 3: The quotidian tactical terrain

> Let five people meet who are resolved to the lightning of action rather than the agony of survival—from that moment, despair ends and tactics begin.
>
> - Affinity Groups (2017)

Introduction: Diversity of Tactics

The slogan 'diversity of tactics' could be seen scribbled in graffiti on walls, heard shouted at peace police when they attempted to control an action of another demonstrator and generally became a quotidian quotation among protest cultures. It hails from at least 2008 in St. Paul Minnesota when people mobilized resistance to disrupt the Republican National Convention which also include three other points. All of which are listed as follows:

1. our solidarity will be based on respect for a diversity of tactics and the plans of other groups.
2. the actions and tactics used will be organized to maintain a separation of time or space.
3. any debates or criticisms will stay internal to the movement, avoiding any public or media denunciations of fellow activists and events.
4. we oppose any state repression of dissent, including surveillance, infiltration, disruption and violence. we agree not to assist law enforcement actions against activists and others.

These guidelines became standard practice for allowing movements of confluent social worlds and political strategies to sustain solidarity through differences such as during the Occupy movement, later during the Ferguson Uprising and it was shared online again during the beginning of the George Floyd Uprising. That an anonymous group of radicals could organize in a particular place to

cultivate a strategic manual that effectively transferred across space and time is partially what guides the intention of this research. So as I have discussed above, security culture, when combined with an anti-oppression praxis or what might also be called abolitionism, is a mode of practice that itself is intended to foster the proliferation of a diversity of tactics.

I will discuss some of the many tactics individuals shared with me with the intention of revealing the multiplication of terrains of struggle that display the effectiveness of the core of anarchist/abolitionist/antifascist strategy mediated through a security culture and organized via affinity groups. Rose City Antifascist describe three main strategic submodalities that are: direct action, mutual aid, and community education. These modes guide the development and application of tactics among those anti-authoritarian subcultures that share resonances with anti-fascism. All of these are therefore intended to be prefigurative, enacting in the here and now, of an anti-authoritarian, anti-oppression, anarchist, abolitionist praxis and privilege the security of themselves and each other. Through illuminating the numerous tactics employed by participants I aim to not only emphasize the effectiveness of anti-authoritarian strategy and organization but also reveal the multiple terrains that tactics engage and how they travel across borders through shared struggles. I do this in order to contemplate what might be possible when we continue to practice such strategies as we critically encounter the terrains of digital-physical spatialities.

Tactical Stories #1

It is late summer of 2020. Emma is gearing up with 3 of their friends to go to a skill-share at a local park branded by a collection of local collectives as an Everyday Antifascism event to counter an expected mobilization of the far-right and white supremacists. They prepare by getting dressed in loose fitting black clothes, including a mask and hoodie to cover their hair and face. There are reports that various contingents of the far-right group, Patriot Prayer and some Proud Boys are

mobilizing to disrupt the event. Normally Emma would wear 'grey bloc', or clothes that cover their features but blend in with civilians at these community-based events but they decide to wear black bloc to be prepared for the conflict with the far-right. This includes a bullet proof vest, a backpack with a respirator and googles for the inevitable pepper spray and paintballs the far-right love to use. In the backpack is a bottle of saline solution for washing out eyes that are exposed to chemical irritants. Emma and her friends dress in varying degrees of protective gear and make their way to the corner of the park where a contingent of other groups are also wearing black bloc prepared to defend the event from far-right disruption. Emma doesn't plan on being on the front lines, but understands the importance of having numbers for when the counter-demonstration goes down. Just recently, when a far-right convoy came into Portland and terrorized anyone in their path a conflict broke out and an antifascist who did security for many actions shot down a member of Patriot Prayer. Presidential outrage at the incident led to an immediate man hunt by a US task force killing the antifascist on site in what journalists have found to be a questionable situation of likely vengeance killing. Emma notices a sign that says "RIP Michael Reinhoel" leaning against a tree.

In the same crowd of black bloc, Nestor is geared up in old motocross equipment a full-face mask respirator and a heavy duty helmet. They wield a shield made from cutting in half a water barrel and attaching straps to it and have a lacrosse stick poking out of their backpack. For Emma this is the second time they will be encountering the far-right and is a little nervous about the situation, but because they have spent the last few months in regular conflict with the police experiencing incredible violence at their hand, they have become confident to place themselves in front of the far-right assault Nestor on the other hand is seasoned in encountering the far-right through the regular conflicts that occurred in Portland's recent history. Nestor actually prefers conflict with the far-right because there is more opportunity to be physically engaged without the fear of arrest and because they understand the effectiveness of countering the far-right as more tangible than defending against

police. Emma has a friend at home who is monitoring Twitter for news about the far-right movement, and they pull out a burner phone from a Faraway bag to check the Signal app for updates from their friend or in a group chat they share with other locals. They share the updates with other people in the black bloc who are also anxiously waiting for news of the far-right's location. They recognize many of the members of the crowd through their build and style from other actions and speak with several who they have developed familiarity with enough to know their street-name, but outside of the affinity group they came with there are only a few who they congregate with outside of anonymous actions. Nestor is there with one friend also geared up for in protective gear and shields and chooses to not socialize with anyone but stays close to catch updates from others because they never bring their phone to actions like this.

Across the park sits Lucy, eating some vegan food prepared by the local Food not Bombs org. They are dressed in regular clothes, wearing a mask for Covid reasons, but enjoying the grass and leafing through some of the zines they have acquired from the numerous distros tabling at the event. They took a few zines on Direct Action, some on Black Anarchism and theory and one on how to treat gunshot wounds. They recently attended a workshop hosted in the same park to learn 'stop the bleed' techniques and wanted to see how the zine compares to their knowledge. They have a bag of medical gear they acquired from the workshop lying beside them as they eat and discuss the contents of zines with their group of friends who also have a variety of zines they are sharing and passing around. Lucy checks Twitter and notices Portland trending under topics as antifascists and activists across the country express fear and solidarity for the events in Portland, worrying at the possibility of another militant far-right attack. A speaker comes on the small sound system and introduces an organizer from Minneapolis who shares how grateful they are for Portland carrying the struggle further and shares how important it is to refuse space to both the far-right and the police. Lucy notices a few cops walking along the side of the park and a group of antifascists following him

making jokes about them that make everyone around laugh. One person taunts the cops as having a small penis and being a b-word. Lucy hears another person in the crowd say something that we shouldn't shame people for their body because having a small penis is something many struggle with and we should avoid using derogatory terms for women. The original heckler acknowledges the criticism and responds that they personally have a small-penis but they didn't become a cop because of it. The crowd laughs again.

At another park a few miles away a different set of collectives organized an event, less affiliated with antifascist groups. Reports come in that some far-right trucks have been seen circling the event. Some of the affinity groups in the black bloc at the first park decide to go set up at the other event. John is there already with their affinity group because they knew that the event was vulnerable with most of the people ready to defend the other event. There is a DJ playing music and speakers who are trying to emphasize the importance of peaceful tactics. At this time there more antifascists and medics dressed in body armor arrived ready for whatever is to come, and John rolls their eyes at yet another person with a microphone trying to preach non-violence as if violence wasn't a condition of their situation already. Someone in the crowd yells, "we defend us" as if to counter the preacher's pacifist sermon. Soon a contingent of people carrying the Pan-African flag and wielding rifles and body armor arrive and march directly in front of the stage where the speaker once stood. A group of press that were previously unseen flock around the Black militia and begin asking questions targeted at what appears to be the leader of the group. The speaker returns to the mic and tries to break up the flurry of spectacle that they claim is distracting everyone from the reason they are there.

After some time, people in the black bloc realize that the far-right have gotten drunk at their usual bar in Vancouver and might be regrouping to come into downtown later that evening. Emma notices many of the groups are planning on heading to the Justice Center in a few hours to prepare

for the far-right or simply because it is the ritual place to spend a weekend night where you can expect the police to show up. Emma is signed up for a jail-support shift much later that night and decides to go home and get some rest. Nestor decides to take off some of the protective gear and get some food before heading downtown. Lucy speaks with their group of friends to decide on whether they want to go downtown. Everyone but one person agrees so Lucy goes home to get dressed in black and retrieve protective gear for the evening. John changes into grey bloc and heads straight downtown to do some scouting.

Downtown a larger crowd as formed in between Chapman and Lownsdale Square where many of the earlier summer's most violent police actions took place. Some American flags are burnt where the elk used to be and spirits are kept high by some loud hip hop being played. The crowd stands around in the park until John tries to get people to start taking space in the street, making the argument that if they are all here they might as well start doing more than lounging around. Some people start to take to the streets. Soon caravans of police vans arrive and form a small line. Nestor was weary waiting for the far-right to make a move and is somewhat glad that the police have gathered the crowd's attention but the police lines form for only a few quick maneuvers before retreating. The crowd slowly dissipates as police only show up on occasion and the far-right show no sign of mobilizing. Nestor is disappointed that they didn't get to engage with the far-right but understands that their preparedness today was likely effective at discouraging the sloppily organized far-right from running loose in the city. Lucy gets asked to be interviewed by a random press person and their crew but denies the opportunity because of not wanting to be exposed. John gets together with their affinity group to debrief about the long day and relax. Emma reports to jail-support late in the evening for those few that did get arrested that day and checks twitter for report backs and discussion of the day's events.

Tactical Reflection #1

Throughout the above story we see a number of tactics employed by the participants. We can see how the people involved are generally mobilized for an antifascist event, and thus identification with being an antifascist is less important than participating in an antifascist counterdemonstration. The tactics can be categorized under the sub-strategies of direct action, mutual aid and community education which fold into each other to generally support the antifascist claim to space against the far right. The ability to situate resistance at a park that has become familiar to collective organizing but also move to other areas depending on the actions of the far-right illustrate the flexible territoriality of antifascists claim to space and how a non-statist imaginary of territory allows for mobile resistance in relation to strategies of the far-right (Ince 2021). However, a similar counterdemonstration against the far-right the following year revealed that sometimes the ability for antifascist mobility faulters. A report-back from the event recognized that the original meeting place for the counterdemonstration ended up receiving greater support from antifascists even though the far-right switched location to a smaller neighborhood at the periphery of Portland. The anonymous authors criticized some of the antifascists for imagining the concept of 'our city' as a static territory that applied only to downtown Portland which is the seat of wealth of the city but ignoring the poorer neighborhood that the far-right actually attacked (rosecitycounterinfo 2021). They remind people of the Anti-Racist Action slogan of, "We go where they go".

Simultaneous to the direct action were numerous mutual aid projects, feeding people, providing PPE, free helmets, etc. Lucy attended a community education event at the same park and also read zines from some of the many local distros to learn about tactics, strategy, and theory. The speakers shared stories that inspired hope, expressed care and educated others on the strategies and tactics of

another city's struggle while social media support swelled also. This translocal solidarity is a common feature of antifascist mobilization that utilizes hybrid activism of social media and on-the-ground solidarity (Merrill and Pries 2019). The coordination of a variety of tactics made the act of claiming space in the park less of an explicitly militant direct action and a more holistic community mobilization.

Antifascists employed the tactic of humor to laugh at the presence of the police, a practice that the subjugated often wield against power that challenges their claim of domination by saying, "your power has no authority over me" (Bhungalia 2020, 389). Listening and participating in the heckling of police is often filled with as much creativity as it is disgust. The importance of maintaining a playful emotional dimension through more explicit clowning is researched by Routledge (2012) in the context of the G8 meeting in Scotland in 2005. But also displayed in this moment was a form of 'checking each other', a form of Anti-Oppression Praxis when another individual sought to reframe the body-shaming of the heckler in order to inspire more inclusive denigrations. This intersectional attention to dimensions of oppression that are reproduced in moments that might not be noticed otherwise are a key feature of the Portland scene.

Practices of security culture in the story are various, and range in effectiveness. The different levels of bloc shifted depending on the situation, as wearing nothing can be fine in a general gathering and grey bloc can be more appropriate than black bloc when not in a larger crowd to blend in. The using of an encrypted messaging app to communicate with someone monitoring comms at home plus the use of a burner phone or not bringing a phone stored in a Faraday bag are core security practices but the reliance on keeping track of the far-right meant that having a phone and using Twitter were crucial to judge next actions and often left some people using their personal phone regardless. Each group used pseudonyms on-the-ground and in the group chats. Finally, interactions with the media

were seen as not productive to their individual safety and feelings towards the media presence were often very negative as they focused on photo ops and would later reproduce harmful narratives.

Tactical Stories #2

Goon has been attending mass protests almost every night since the end of May when they started They share that it would have been more difficult if they had a job, but because of the pandemic they were currently unemployed. Nevertheless, Goon had a history of activism with more environmental causes but this was their first season in direct conflict with police and already they were becoming quite skilled. They often practiced front liner tactics but one day they were arrested in a particularly violent fashion and decided that they might not want to participate in the same way anymore. Instead, having some experience and interest in media, they began livestreaming events to their Facebook. Goon experienced first-hand the constant display of 'excessive force' and wanted to capture some of these experiences to maybe hold them accountable.

Fray is also new to direct conflict with the police, but even more than that new to anarchism and antifascism. From the beginning of the protests in Portland they, like many others across the country and world with the limited social capacities afforded by the pandemic, spent a lot of time on social media monitoring the developments of the protest. The immense violence of police that they witnessed from the murder of George Floyd to every subsequent engagement livestreamed afterwards pushed them to reconsider their relationship with the state. They were inspired by the various infographics and conversations online about policing's relationship to slave-patrols, the plantation to the carceral system, settler colonialism to racial capitalism, property to white supremacy elicited an accelerated political education. They were also exposed to the practices of black bloc that were visible in the livestreams from many cities, but especially in Portland, and because they knew many of the people who were actively participating in these protests, they were able to recognize the

distorted manipulations of mainstream media setting against the villainized violent white anarchist against the peaceful Black Lives Matter activist. Fray decided that they wanted to participate as press in providing better media representation of the anarchists they became familiar with through the protests as they rarely had any fair coverage in almost any outlet. Soon they were blocing up as a member of the press who identified as being in solidarity with anarchist and antifascist practices.

Angel is an anarchist that has spent a couple years in the radical subcultures of the Pacific Northwest. They have spent many days in the frontlines of counterdemonstrations to fascists but spent much of 2020 in various affinity groups that avoided the mass protests and instead conducted their own actions that avoided direct conflict with the police. For Angel, it was too exposed to be constantly in the sights of police surveillance, city cameras, and the surveillance provided by activists trying to support the protests. They felt that the work of resisting police was best done outside of their visibility. Angel would regularly carry a laser, some graffiti and a hammer to try and disable any cameras that were reachable when conducting an action. They were used to using an umbrella on the frontlines to enable limited exposure of those that were trying to surveil their group. Angel took an explicitly low-tech approach to participating in actions, leaving their phone at home, and did not participate in any social media interactions or Signal group chats instead preferring face to face meetings. Angel had tried participating in the mass protests but would often get frustrated by the massive amounts of media members or random people with phones that would film actions that captured people doing things they might get prosecuted for later. Because Angel preferred more militant direct action, they preferred to remain out of sight of any surveillance and disconnected from digital devices.

Goon began livestreaming many of the mass protest events to support them but stay in a position that wouldn't exacerbate their pending charges from a previous arrest. Even though they might be

dropped, if they were arrested again things might escalate. Goon didn't identify as anarchist or militant in any way but supported anti-authoritarian causes generally. When they livestreamed actions they tried to do so in a way that only filmed the actions of the police. They would offer critical commentary of the events so that people that watched online would at least have some framing that didn't perpetuate narratives of mainstream that supported state strategies. Because so many people watched livestreams of the popular protests in Portland, some streamers would be have their feed added to an aggregate of streams often organized by activists from other cities that wanted to help. In one situation where police targeted Goon with violence and attempted arrest, a random person who followed their stream and the aggregate of livestreamers was able to clip the footage of multiple angles showing the police targeting someone Goon even though they identified clearly as press. This random person sent the footage to Goon just in case they wanted to join legal initiatives against the police. Another night when moving with a group of protestors through police pushes, they were struggling to keep their camera forward when a small group of black bloc demonstrators moved in front of the camera and began trying to cut through an obstacle. Almost immediately, a van of law enforcement officers pulled around the corner and targeted these individuals. Goon recognized later in a news report of the Portland Police that they consistently pulled up livestream footage to keep track of real time movements, sometimes using the same streaming aggregates compiled by activists. Goon is confident that those few seconds where their camera caught the potentially illegal actions of a couple demonstrators was being watched by the police and triggered an immediate response.

Fray chose to follow along smaller actions with majority of people in black bloc. They became embedded in affinity groups of newer activists that identified with anarchist and antifascist tactics. They soon became a relatively common source for information on social media and were encouraged to go public with their name to gain legitimacy as a member of the Press. Within weeks

they were targeted by a swarm of far-right trolls that doxxed their information and targeted them with endless harassment including explicit death threats. They turned to friends in their activist groups to help clean up the mess the far-right had made, but it was too late and they were severely exposed including where they lived, medical conditions and who their family were. Goon similarly used their personal social media profiles to livestream their footage and very quickly after started receiving text messages with subtle threats and eventually more explicitly death threats. Goon and Fray both reflected that they wish they had cleaned up their online presence before getting involved. They were targeted endlessly throughout the rest of the year so much that Goon decided to stop participating as press and turned to more mutual aid roles. Fray's situation was markedly worse but because of the extreme exposure already experienced they decided to continue as a partisan member of the Press because they were already experiencing the worst of it.

Angel and their group of friends decided to go out to more events specifically to make members of the media aware that their footage is and would be used to cause harm to participants. They would carry umbrellas and try to block livestreamers that were reckless with their camera angles capturing demonstrator's faces and actions that didn't need to be recorded at all. They would ask the person to correct their filming practices and focus only on police action or to stop completely. Angel wasn't the only one doing this, but was significantly kinder than some others. For some people filming that wouldn't cooperate and respect the security concerns of more anonymously minded demonstrators they might have their phone knocked out of their hand or equipment smashed. In response to demonstrators defensiveness against being exposed, many media would begin growing hostile to those that challenged their ability to record the events. Angel would only commit to participating in more militant actions when they were explicitly free from people with recording devices. After the first months of the protests many smaller actions would be organized and shared among smaller networks that advertised "No Megaphones. No Livestreamers. Bloc Up." Soon Angel recognized

who claimed solidarity with anarchists and antifascists would prioritize their public social media commitment to posting content and discussing events. Angel and many others preferred staying away from media entirely happen and there were many disagreements with the level of participation that media should have in their actions. It became common that even sympathetic press coverage would adopt narratives that fit bigger publications and would turn to reifying negative tropes of the demonstrators already significantly targeted by the state.

Tactical Reflection #2

These stories provide example of the complications that arise when trying to navigate various tactics of counter-surveillance alongside those of sousveillance. I use the term sousveillance following scholarship in surveillance studies that attempts to theorize a practice of watching or 'veillance' that is 'sous' or 'from below' that challenge the monopoly of surveillance that govern and control (Mann, Nolan and Wellman 2003). But more recent writing on sousveillance conceptualizes the practice as not inherently liberatory. "If the modus vivendi of digital capitalism is to continuously develop new sites and methods of data creation, sousveillance—including cop-watching—can allow digital corporations to discover, capture, analyze, and potentially undermine yet another relatively esoteric activity" (Borradaile and Reeves 2020). Goon's stream was used to target demonstrators in real time, and while Goon is sure that they got away, footage from livestreams and other media can contribute to the prosecution of participants even years later. The surveillant assemblage quickly incorporates that which seeks to escape it, especially when it relies on the same infrastructures (Wood 2013).

But just as Fray was able to experience a transformation of personal politics through exposure to media of the practices of both policing and of resistance, scholarship recognizes that sousveillance is capable of "empowering ordinary citizens to question surveillance practices and expropriate them for their own use" (Bradshaw 2013, 454). Many of the other participants I spoke with who were

newly acquainted with street conflict acknowledged that the accessibility of the images of police and the remarkable representations of resistance facilitated their swift and confident commitment to participating themselves in what would have otherwise been a difficult and terrifying set of practices to enter into. But Fray also experienced severe consequences for taking a partisan stance on media representation and denying the myth of impartiality. Sousveillance must therefore be situated in its context addressing the agency and security of those involved if we are to assess the effectiveness of its employment as a tactic.

Important to consider when reflecting on the tactical use of video and image is the development of surveillance technologies and techniques are deeply rooted in anti-blackness and the imperative to make visible Black flesh through "Black Luminosity" (Browne 2015). When we rely on the suffering of images to motivate us to action, we fall into the trap of what Spillers (2003) calls the 'pornotroping', or "the enactment of suffering for a shocked and titillated audience" (Weheliye 2008, 71). Following Hartman's (2019) critical engagement to upend the violent archives of Black women, Culp (2022) warns that "each practice of looking" evokes a "libidinal economy of violence fueled by the emotional currency of Black death" (124). A negative valence similarly surrounds the mass consumption for entertainment of conflict with law enforcement often referred to as 'riot porn' (Nomad 2013; Razsa 2014) "catering to prurient interest and lurid fascination in the category of raw, citizen-produced video" (Dowling 2021, 8).

"For decades the choice of visibility seemed an obvious strategy. Today, the personal and political ramifications of visibility have proven to be more nuanced, as the gaining of visibility comes with its own, often irrevocable and irrational consequences" (Juhasz 2016). Queer, Trans and Black studies have made significant contributions challenging the norms of a 'politics of representation'. Abdur-Rahman writes in conversation with Simone Browne (2021) that, "I want to substitute the mandate

for participation in a politics of visibility with the ethic and heuristic of collaborative community building" (68). Security culture in combination with an abolitionist praxis is such an ethic and heuristic that productively generates possibilities for action "in defiance of the system of compulsory visibility" (Culp 2022, 162).

The practices of Angel invoke a critical use of counter-surveillance tactics that attack not only the surveillance of the police or the city infrastructures or the reckless livestreamers, but also has an awareness to other 'veillances' that include personal digital devices and participation on social media. Similar awareness of the vulnerabilities of surveillance beyond the visual into anywhere that produces data are apparent in the (an)archive related to counter-surveillance (Who Needs the NSA When We Have Facebook 2015; Security and Counter-Surveillance 2009). As Ruha Benjamin (2019) writes after situating surveillance as entangled with anti-blackness that "countering this form of violent exposure can entail listening deeply to the everyday encounters of those who are forcibly watched" (128). A popular zine found on many tables in Portland entitled *In Defense of Smashing Cameras* (2016) offers some guidelines for those that must use a camera:

> 1. Contrary to what many protest-photography tips tell you, don't get up close.
>
> 2. If there are faces in your shot, blur them. A simple swirl in photoshop won't do. We're talking scrambling such the police cannot reverse blur them.
>
> 3. If there is distinctive or identifying clothing in your shot, blur them.
>
> 4. If certain identities stick out (the few black bodies in a white protest, the few visibly disabled in a seemingly able-bodied demonstration, etc. etc.), delete the photo.
>
> 5. If you choose to participate as a spectator, then realise your participation is secondary to those actively engaged in the moment of revolt. This means you should step aside, even if it means losing that 'wining' shot.
>
> 6. If possible—and it usually is—ask for consent or indicate that you are taking a photo so that we have an option to turn away or decline. Yes, we get it. We are in a public place and you don't have to ask, but realise that failure to ask makes us suspicious of your motivations and provides us with added reason to assert our capacity for opacity.
>
> 7. Your camera is a weapon. Friendly fire is not acceptable.
>
> 8. You are a partisan in social war. Become involved in the struggles you choose to document. Should they be documented? If so, how should they be documented to spread their capacities? Become a comrade and earn the trust of those around you. Excepting professional activists, for the vast majority of us, this is not a career.

9. Photograph the police.
10. Infer more guidelines from the analysis above.

Tactical Stories #3

Rusty had never been a part of a 'radical' scene before but participated in various online forums related to Free and Open Source Software (FOSS), privacy and taught themself coding on their free time. The onset of the global pandemic and its massive mismanagement that unevenly distributed death acted as an invocation of their critical politics. When events of the end of May 2020 occurred, Rusty was already reading anarchist literature and leaped at the opportunity to get involved. However, based on their situation they could only intermittently participate in the action on the ground. Rusty closely followed the protests on Twitter but had a familiarity with alternative technological platforms that privileged privacy and open-source code. Following the various hashtags related to the Portland protests they soon found a new project emerging out of the Portland and Pacific Northwest radical community. Brickshop hosted their own server and ran a chat room on an encrypted instant messaging application called Riot, whose name has since changed to Element. The brickshop platform was formed to facilitate the implementation and creation of secure and open source tech tools for radical communities specifically in the Pacific Northwest and the chatrooms were full of witty remixes of anarchist historical figures and black flag emojis as screennames and various Circle A overlayed onto black cats for profile images.

Volt spent the last few years of their life between houses, never being on any lease. Most people in their life didn't know their legal name and as a trans anarchist made the most of this anonymity by continuing to stay off paper for as much of their life as possible. This meant also engaging with technology in a unique way. They understood that the reliance on technology was a vulnerability but they made the most of what they used. Having done some work proximal to technology before, they were equipped to use an android phone with Graphene OS a non-profit open source project that

prioritizes security and privacy. They maintained a few social media accounts registered with emails using the encrypted emails services of both protonmail and riseup, a service made and ran by anarchists. The social media accounts included a few on Twitter and Facebook that they used to monitor fascist groups and networks. The most personal account the managed was on the decentralized open source social network, Mastodon. They arranged chatrooms for their various affinity groups on Keybase and Signal. They sometimes made fake accounts for a variety of other applications to continue infiltrating far-right organizing on platforms like Gab, NextDoor, and Parlor.

Rusty began working with others in the group on building out their network of open source apps to make a radical and secure online social world more accessible. They started reading groups on the alternative Reddit application, Lemmy, and transferred a collectively sourced compilation of political music to the open source application, Funkwhale. Their intention was to create a variety of places online where people could interact that were not exposed to the state through platforms that notoriously collaborated with law enforcement. The brickshop chat flourished for a short time. They discussed everything from street tactics, technical manuals for building Stingray detectors, to critical perspectives on the TOR Project. Rusty tried to get more involved in to make sure the organization of brickshop's admins wouldn't lock them out if someone got arrested, computers confiscated, or experienced burnout. But exactly as he tried doing this admins became less responsive. It was known that they were also actively involved in struggles on the ground and maintained employment, so it was very likely they were becoming burnt out. Within a short time the chatrooms stagnated, the project disappeared, the server offline. Rusty moved onto working with various Raspberry Pi devices to attempt building Stingray detectors, prototypes for a mesh network and mobile counter-surveillance devices.

Volt really valued the work of anonymous antifascists networks that identified fascists online through Open Source Intelligence (OSINT) practices. They would sometimes use some of these tools of scraping information from far-right people they encountered online who practice poor security and send the information in their closed group chats but wouldn't go to the extent that many antifascist researchers would do by publishing full threads of 'receipts' on fascists they doxxed on Twitter. Volt performed a number of imaginative infiltrations of far-right spaces to disrupt their plans that they would celebrate with friends. They were interested in getting more people involved in using basic security practices online and transitioning to alternative platforms. They helped configure a few comrades' devices to use a repertoire of software that moved away from the 'silicon valley devils'. But Volt found that these friends would often find the curve of learning too steep, or at least inconvenient. They noticed others that while Signal had become ubiquitous were still using Facebook and Twitter with their long-time emails. The exposure was not a threat enough for those that relied on social networks for their mutual aid funds and social lives in a pandemic.

Tactical Reflection #3

I had the opportunity to participate in some of the alternative projects and chatrooms listed in the above story. I learned a lot about how much I didn't know when it came to the digital. Participating in these places were crucial parts in the questions at the core of my research. It was validating to find that I wasn't the only one that found it odd the level of exposure normalized in the mass protests and questioned whether the security apparatus of the state would extend further than we typically imagined. A zine with the title, *Signal Fails* (2020), and which also quotes the above Le Tigre lyrics, was one of the first affirmations that anonymous others were questioning the core applications and security assumptions that had become norms among demonstrators and making interventions about

it. "Give some people a little encryption and they'll immediately subject their contact list to the sketchiest shit" (Signal Fails 2020, 18).

There was a remarkable amount of privacy guides for activists that were published in several mainstream sources over 2020. One group of researchers analyzed 41 of these guides shared during the George Floyd Uprising and found 13 categories of digital security and privacy of which, "the most common advice included disabling phones' transmission features (e.g., putting them in air-plane mode), communicating via an end-to-end encrypted (E2EE) app, and disabling biometric unlocking on phones" (Boyd et al. 2021, 1). They found that most of the 167 'BLM activists' who responded to their survey "did not widely follow, nor fully understand, protest specific recommendations" (17). Another study attempted to understand the challenges that are involved in helping BLM protestors create the "security culture they need" (Wade et al. 2021, 1). Rusty and I reflected multiple times on a brickshop conversation where someone hypothesized that this massive trend to push privacy and open source technological practices was not as liberatory as it was potentially a way to move more people into a market that was set be dominant in the near future. These ideas didn't seem too far fetched considering the securitization by marketization of urban space was well documented by Graham (2011). Why not also digital infrastructure that were increasingly becoming imbricated with cities?

> "The idea that social media could be weaponized against countries and governments deemed hostile to US interests wasn't a surprise. For years the State Department, in partnership with the Broadcasting Board of Governors and companies like Facebook and Google, had worked to train activists from around the world on how to use Internet tools and social media to organize opposition political movements. - Levine (2018, 244)

Levine goes on to identify how both Signal and The Tor Project while being crucial to resistance movements and celebrated by activists of numerous dispositions, originated with significant funding

from various US government resources. This information multiplied the questions in our heads as we continued conversations with other activists about the issue trying to challenge Levine's hypothesis that the anonymity these tools afford are also prized by US intelligence agencies for their own operations (2018). Nevertheless, we realized that many people still didn't even bother changing any of their everyday technological practices.

Rusty and Volt broad utilization of alternative technologies certainly exemplify attempts at mobilizing a contentious data politics (Beraldo and Milan 2019). Rusty specifically understood that "this calls for a careful consideration of the infrastructural layer of activism, that is to say the often invisible, embedded socio-technical arrangements that make social practices possible" (3). Rusty and Volt mobilized by the situations on the ground in Portland attempted to help develop infrastructures and practices that could "produce unruly digital subjects by resituating subjects and digital systems in their broader social entanglements, contesting gendered and racialized hierarchies of technological expertise, and promoting collective practices of experimentation and reflection" (Lynch 2020, 2).

Some studies in the field of Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) are beginning to connect anti-authoritarian politics that are critical of state-centric logics to technological practices (Sanches et al. 2020) or specifically putting forward the idea of "Human-Computer Insurrection" (Keyes et al 2019). Volt was able to utilize their self-described basic technological skills to deal blows to far-right organizing online and at the same time help friends develop habits for their interface with technology. Still other times, Volt struggled getting others to switch applications and change practices. Scholarship in Critical Data Studies attempts to understand this through such concepts as "surveillance realism" that incapacitates resistance to exposure because of an institutionalized strategy that normalizes surveillance "ultimately limiting possibilities for alternative imaginations of organizing society" (Dencik and Cable 2017, 777). Digital resignation captures a similar disinterest in

changing digital habits as Draper and Turow (2019) find is cultivated by corporations. Alongside this normalization of digital vulnerability Barassi (2019) identifies a "systematic coercion of digital particpation" (419) that undergirds surveillance capitalism. "To better understand such consequences, we need insights into how users interact with structures of datafication to study everyday experiences with data and advance a social critique of datafication" (Ytre-Arne and Moe 2020, 2).

Bridges (2021) introduces the idea of entropic, queer and fugitive data as methods for achieving 'digital failure' against the "deeply patriarchal and white-washed logics encoded into algorithmic systems" (2). These tactics are similar to what Andrew Culp (2022) proposes with his 'guerilla theory' for a new generation of resistance that focus on anonymity, criminality and fugitivity via historical and contemporary analysis of insurgent, queer and Black radical practices. The harmonization between technopolitical or data tactics and those of struggles on the ground is not surprising for those that practice radical resistance such as Rusty and especially Volt. Elwood (2020) writes, "The terrain of politics in the 'smart' city is defined not just by these profoundly unequal digital-social-spatial topologies but also by the ideologies that manufacture consent to them" (216). Zines among the (an)archive address similar awareness of the simultaneity of tactics online and offline, "We can reject paranoia and employ *strategic anonymity* that seeks to interfere with surveillance and repression wherever possible" (Anonymity/Security 2012).

Conclusion: If all fails, retreat.

From the Net to arcade simulations games, civil society is all just one giant research-and-development wing of the military. The military industrial complex has advanced decades ahead of civil society, becoming a lethal military entertainment complex… the street is now the playground in which low-end developments of military technology are unleashed, to mutate themselves.

Kodwo Eshun *(1998, 85)*

It feels so eighties
Or early nineties
To be political
Where are my friends?

I'll meet u in the street
(Get off the internet)
Destroy the right wing
(Get off the internet)
I'll meet u in the street
(Get off the internet)
Destroy the right wing

This is repetitive
But nothing has changed
And I'm crazy
Where are my friends?

Le Tigre – Get Off the Internet (2001)

The events of 2020 revealed that resistance to the anti-blackness of state securitization is growing more robust. However, it also exposed the vulnerabilities of the growing reliance on digital infrastructures and devices that threaten those that dare exercise dissent. Through grounding research in solidarity with the anti-authoritarian, anarchist, abolitionist, anti-fascist milieu of Portland

during the Gorge Floyd Uprising, and turning to an insurrection of subjugated knowledges of the radical zine culture, I distinguished how participants utilized strategies of security culture and shared commitments to anti-oppression praxis in order to enable tactical action against securitization across a wide digital-physical terrain. This work shows what is possible when strategies and tactics are conceptualized by and with those who are most targeted by surveillance and the state and connects tactics that are typically distinguished distinctly as either digital or physical as being simultaneous. The stories and practices of participants shared with me offer insight into the need for further examination and theorization of what resistance in the age of ever evolving technological state securitization might look like when geographic scholarship embraces a commitment to radical solidarity.

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