



Better Gardening with Hügelkultur
Site C Endangers BC Food Security
Reflections on Soup



FREE

- 2 **Letter from the Editor**
- 3 **Better Gardening with Hügelskultur:
An Introduction**
CHRIS READ
- 5 **Sweet By the Bush, and
Mountain Women Seasoning**
MIKA SAGE PIERRE
- 6 **Reflections on Soup: One Bowlful,
One Story at a Time**
MERINA MOHR
- 7 **Gleaning: The Underutilized Solution to
the Costs of Food Waste**
MICHELLE AUSTIN
- 10 **Butterflies, Birds, and Bees**
KAYLA ZAWADA & NATALIE MOSSER
- 11 **Site-C Endangers BC Food Security**
KIA GUINDON
- 14 **Food Fight the Winter Blues**
SHANNON HECKER
- 17 **Anti-Abelism: Towards the right to our
vulnerable humanness, the hidden struggle
to anarchy-feminism in the XXI century**
SONIA MUÑOZ LLORT
- 24 **Join the Team!**

Letter from the Editor

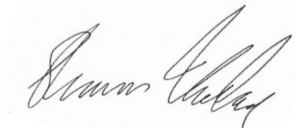
Welcome to the 20th issue of Right to Food Zine. I'm happy to see our team continue to grow & thrive! We have had a fun filled summer getting ready for the Wild Salmon Caravan. On Sept 12th, our team hosted a community meal and arts build, where we served delicious salmon soup before engaging the community in a Salmon Hat Making workshop. It was great to see so many people come out to participate in this event and we shared many smiles as we celebrated the spirit of wild salmon.

www.wildsalmoncaravan.ca

As the seasons change so do some of the faces of our zine family. We have many new writers and designers this time around. A warm welcome to our newest members, Sylvia, Indeeep, Kia, Jarmila, Sonia, Michelle, Mika, Judy & Chris. It is exciting to see so much new energy being directed to our Human Right to Food.

Issue 20 is our fall/winter 2018 harvest edition. Just in time, we have included a piece introducing hügelkultur to show an easier way to grow food, written by Chris. Mika has shared some poems inspired by living on the land at Ulluisc village, unceded St'át'imc territory. Merina shares her experience hosting a soup kitchen in North Vancouver. While Michelle describes ways in which we can reduce food waste while saving money that would be spent on food by gleaning. Kia has done a short report on the proposed Site C dam and how it will affect food security in BC. I've written a piece advising on how to Food Fight the Winter Blues, complimented by a recipe with seasonal vegetables.

Last but not least, we have included a piece by Sonia a correspondent from Norway who writes about anti-abelism as a way towards a healthier society. This piece will be in our new column "Food for Thought" dedicated to thought provoking ideas that are slightly outside of our scope on the Human Right to Food, yet still relevant to our diverse audience and team members.



SHANNON HECKER

RTF ZINE EDITOR

Better Gardening with Hügelkultur: An Introduction

BY CHRIS READ

Hügelkultur, roughly translated as “mound cultivation,” has been practiced heavily for the last century in Germany and parts of Eastern Europe. Gardeners will be keen to learn that it requires less effort and water.

Hügelkultur is a simple act of creating raised beds with buried detritus (soggy timbers and branches), which rots, retaining water and releasing nutrients. Knowing this, you can create your own basic hügelkultur garden. This form of permaculture is a system centered on simulating or directly utilizing the patterns and features observed in natural ecosystems. In this case, we observe how old logs seem to “nurse” new growth, with small trees growing faster and stronger when the roots tap into the deteriorating old timbers.

The information in this article will help you create a garden that won't need irrigation or many added nutrients, is easy on your back and will create more space. At the same time, it clears up excess clippings; especially helpful are timbers of alder, apple, cottonwood, poplar (dried), willow and birch. Some conifers can be used when fully rotten, such as pine, Douglas fir, and spruce—but never cedar. Cedar will detract from the richness and diversity of the soil ecosystem, which is unhelpful for us gardeners! Plant your big, soft, withering conifers at the very core, layering hardwoods and branches on the outside.

As wood goes through its life cycle, it retains a tremendous amount of nitrogen. Gardeners typically cannot get enough of it! Fortunately for us, as wood decays, it finally releases all that stored goodness generously into the soil. A great idea to get full nutrition to your plants is to cover your buried logs in comfrey or seaweed, compost, old manure, or if you have sod, to turn the grass-side down over top of all of it, then add a layer of dark earth atop it all.

Roots and rot will gradually eat the logs away over a period of about 20 years but in the meantime, the decomposing logs retain a remarkable amount of water. So much so, that a 2 meter (6 feet) tall and 1.3 m (4 feet) wide hügelkultur bed will only need to be watered once per season for its entire lifetime—even in desert locations! And further good news: you needn't build it all at once. A hügelkultur bed can be built in stages, over seasons, and still have water retention benefits!

One major drawback about hügelkultur in the city is vermin. They can bore holes in the sides of your beds and eat your ripe fruit early in the morning. To reduce infestation requires planning. Situate your beds at least 20 cm (8") from other garden beds, houses, or outbuildings, as this will allow you to observe interlopers. Building the beds in an enclosed yard belonging to a cat or dog can help. Lining your bed with timbers, decorative siding, or wire mesh deters burrowing. If you have pests, make certain that they are not taking free morsels from a pet's food dish, or spillage from a bird feeder, as that will sustain them while your garden is bare. It is most important, however, that you identify the kind of animal pest as deterrents are possibly your best defense. For example, in the case of rats, it should help to plant peppermint and spearmint around the outside perimeter of your garden. Many rodents are deterred by cayenne pepper or oregano sprinkled on their path. It can also help to plant daffodils and hyacinths around the mound, although not so close that you can't access your harvest! None of these plants smell acceptable to our furry friends.

Get rotting early. This is the most important thing to be said (aside from using love in your garden—your plants can feel it!).

A hügelkultur bed will work with non-putrefied logs, but you will be far more successful, and faster, if you use spoiled timbers.

I hope this article cultures your attitude toward hügelkultur!
Celebrate the seasons my friends with all colours of thumbs!



Sweet By the Bush

Same colour as my blood
It's in her
Her roots
Flames growing their taste from the sky
Red orange pink
Mmmm
Lovely is what they'll all think
It's hot
She's juicy
Abundance looking sweet by the Bush
Sharing with the ones that fly
Ones that growl
My tummy that moans
Raspberries, wild strawberries, blue berries, salmon berries
Some of my favorite favourites
I thank her for the jams desserts dried goods and juices

MIKA SAGE

PIERRE

Mountain Women Seasoning

Mother earth spoken
She reeks Tsweta and wild onions
Feast
The time is now
She can pick
Mother has shown her how
Eat as you wish but don't get sick
Wild onions are green and red and pink
Dangerous difference colorless
Eat as you wish Tsweta leaf
Fall for its aftertaste
She leaves you to come back
Chomp her with your teeth
Dry them diced saved for you and your family pack

WRITTEN AT ULLUILSC

*aka a Voice for the Voiceless camp. An Indigenous
reoccupation in unceded St'át'imc Territory.*

www.facebook.com/reoccupationofjunctioncreek

Reflections on Soup: One Bowlful, One Story at a Time

BY MERINA MOHR

*BFA Mixed Media Artist;
Advocate and Aoghair Minister;
Ordained Elder Ceann-lùil;
Pathfinder of the Sagh'ic-Tìre
Dhream, Wølven Path Tradition*

I have been helping run a soup tent for a number of years (see location below). At the beginning a lot of volunteers thought the 'help' would be one sided, and they came for soup and food and the guests would leave. Then a shift began to occur around the time everyone became less afraid and stopped looking at folks through stereotyped eyes.

It became clear running a soup tent wasn't about the food we had to share or the about the warm cup of coffee. It is about seeing, seeing the person right in front of you. Hearing their life stories. We started to grasp their stories, and asking for a hug helped us as much as our guests. From once being defensive they now wanted to stay and help. Looking over the cup of soup, seeing into their eyes, we saw them as they saw us.

This is the thing about food: it always brings folks together. We all need to eat and it is simple humility that brings us together—the ones who gather the food and set up the spot, and the ones who wait for the food. Over time these faces no longer frown and now show up on time to help set up our little tent.

We get to know their names and listen to their challenges.

Nobody remembers what soup they had. They remember that they went away seen, along with some dry socks and the story they shared that day.

They go home full for the day. And we go home with their stories. So next time you see someone asking for biscuit, get that biscuit and share it with them, see them. Maybe one day we will be making bread and soup with them. One bowlful, one story at time. Or if it's a person asking for change, even if you don't have any, look at them and say hello.

Food heals when it brings us together.

The Soup Tent is held in October at the Recycling Depot in North Vancouver, by Capilano Mall, sponsored by the Wolven Path Tradition.

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WINTER SCHEDULE TO BE DISTRIBUTED



Gleaning: The Underutilized Solution to the Costs of Food Waste

BY MICHELLE AUSTIN

Introduction

A common topic amid food systems-related discourse is food waste and the ways in which its various costs to the planet and people can be adequately addressed and reduced. Food waste is defined as, “the loss of food along the value chain that is suitable for human consumption...” due to the inefficiency or ineffectiveness of the current management of the value chain. The cost of this loss is defined in numerous ways depending on the variables that are measured, such as the environmental, economic, and humanitarian cost. Solutions to this fault of

our current food system are also diverse and require different levels of participation, but one in particular is an avenue for the everyday citizen to participate in that goes beyond buying “ugly” produce at the grocery store or practicing better food habits in the household: The participation in “gleaning”.

The Humanitarian Cost

The humanitarian cost of food waste can be presented by highlighting a comparison between how food secure a nation’s population is in relation to the amount of food waste being produced. Food security is defined as when “all people at all times, have physical and economics access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life”. According to Statistics Canada, about 8.3% Canadian households are food insecure while approximately 6 million tons of food is estimated to be wasted every year in Canada. This data highlights that the presence of food waste is not an issue of a food production surplus due to a lack of consumer demand for food. In other words, the humanitarian cost of food waste equates to almost 1 in 10 Canadian families experiencing prolonged hunger despite our nation’s food system producing more than enough to meet the demand.

A Solution

The activity of gleaning has deep, historical roots but is still prevalent today in a modernized form. Gleaning is defined as the “gathering [of] surplus produce from fields...after the harvest is finished”.

Gleaning was first practiced during Roman times as a way for poor individuals to access food.

During this era, gleaning was a relationship that directly connected the producers of food to those that were most in need.

Today, gleaning has transformed into a volunteer opportunity run by local food aid organizations aimed at tackling food waste and insecurity. Participants gather leftover crops from farms who have agreed to open their fields to these organizations, but the food that is collected is not commonly brought home by the volunteer harvesters directly. The collected food is often given to the food aid program that has organized the gleaning event, and then the food is either distributed back to the volunteer harvesters equally, or to the greater community of those seeking food aid.

Participation in gleaning trips effectively minimizes food waste as it addresses the portion of waste that is created at the production stage of the food value chain. This stage of the food value chain is responsible for about 10% of total food waste. Furthermore, the numerous costs of food waste are successfully reduced. First, perfectly edible food is not left to biodegrade at the site of production; second, the various monetary investments associated with food production are not lost; and third, the collected crops directly benefit those who are food insecure.

How to Get Involved

One amazing gleaning initiative found in Vancouver is the Vancouver Fruit Tree Project (VFTP). This non-profit society invites all to come out and help pick fruit from over 100 different trees that have been offered by various owners throughout the city who do not wish to pick and use the fruit themselves.

Since 2002, the VFTP has successfully rescued and redistributed about 60,000 pounds of fruit from being wasted and into the hands of those who need it most.

The food that is collected is redistributed to various locations including neighbourhood houses, community centres, and to volunteers themselves! To get connected, send them an email at info@vancouverfruittree.com!



Butterflies, birds and bees,
Bees make honey.
Butterflies flap their wings,
Birds Fly in the breeze.

Birds chirp and tweet,
They sound so sweet,
The bussing that I hear
Is music to my ear.

The squirrels are collecting nuts,
Foraging and such.
The trees grow nice and tall,
Preparing for the fall.

All the nuts are stored
Beneath the earths floor.
The busy, busy creatures
Run to get some more.

Pumpkin, squash, and apples
Get ready for the samples.
Plentiful is the harvest
Coming forth in the handfuls.

KAYLA ZAWADA AND NATALIE MOSSER

Site-C Endangers BC Food Security

BY KIA GUINDON

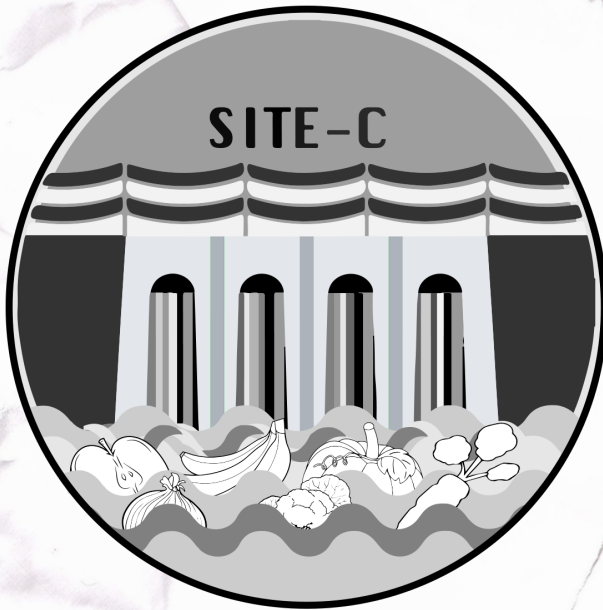
The history of Canada can be partially characterized by its addiction to profit at the expense of Mother Nature and those who depend on her for survival. The degradation of our forests, oceans, and other natural habitats is a reality Indigenous communities and environmentally conscious Canadians have been grappling with for decades. Although Canada continues to exploit its natural resources, activists across BC are standing up to harmful environmental practices by opposing the construction of Site-C.

For those who don't know, Site-C is the proposed project by BC Hydro to build a 60-meter high mega dam in the Peace River Valley of Northern British Columbia. The potential construction of this dam poses a very real threat to food security throughout BC as well as to Indigenous communities living in the area.

If built, experts predict that Site-C could destroy some of the province's most fertile farmland, effectively putting the future of BC's food security under siege. The Peace River Valley contains 20% of BC's best topsoil, giving it the potential to supply fresh and nutrient dense fruit and vegetables for up to a million people. The Valley is also home to many small farm owners who have worked tirelessly to sustain and foster community connection by providing families' access to nutritious food. These farm owners face losing everything they've worked hard to obtain if Site-C were to be built.

The future of food security in BC is an important issue for all British Columbians but holds significant pertinence for children living in the province.

It has now become common knowledge that there is a direct scientific correlation between health and poverty; the findings suggest that poverty has a 50% determinant over health outcomes.



Much of this comes down to access to proper nutrition. Low-income families often do not have the resources to provide their families with the food needed to sustain a healthy lifestyle. Without access to proper nutrition, children are put at a higher risk for a host of developmental and other health issues. BC already holds the highest rate of child poverty in Canada; with the building of the Site-C dam we might be putting an already at risk group of children in even further harm.

Food insecurity in BC will be increased if the Site-C dam is built. Indigenous communities in BC also have cause to worry as these communities use the land not only for its material resources but also look to the land for spiritual and medicinal healing. Ancestral gravesides and other important cultural and historic sites would also be put at risk if the dam were to be built. Government officials claim to have consulted with Indigenous communities regarding the construction of Site-C, but individuals within these communities disagree and strongly feel as though their voices and their rights have been ignored and violated.

Despite the potential perilous future Indigenous communities face in Northern BC, there is still cause for hope. The West Moberly and Prophet River First Nations have filed a court injunction arguing that construction of the dam would come in direct violation of Treaty No. 8 agreement. This treaty was signed in 1899 to ensure that Indigenous communities would have the constitutional right and legal protection to hunt, fish, and trap on their own land. The judge presiding over the case has stated that he hopes to have a decision on the injunction by late October.

While the West Moberly and Prophet River First Nations wait to hear back from the courts, there are still ways that citizens of BC can get involved in the fight to stop the Site-C dam.

One option includes pestering MLAs by writing letters of opposition to the dam. Citizens can also show their opposition by holding protests at MLA offices and refusing to leave until they are heard. It is also important to support and look out for local grassroots organizations that are fighting to put a stop to the construction of Site-C. In the Peace River Valley these organizations include the Peace River Landowners Association, as well as the Peace Valley Environmental Association.

Within Metro Vancouver citizens of BC can support and get involved with groups such as FightC, a non-partisan community based group engaged in the fight against Site-C.

FightC works alongside Treaty 8 First Nations and informs people about the threat Site-C poses to BC food security, the future of BC farmlands, and Indigenous rights. Citizens can follow FightC on twitter [@FightSiteC](https://twitter.com/FightSiteC) to get the latest updates on protests and other important information regarding the fight to stop Site-C.





Food Fight the Winter Blues

BY SHANNON HECKER

One condition that is experienced by many is the winter blues, what doctors now refer to as Seasonal Affective Disorder or SAD.

I am a firm believer that food is medicine which can both prevent and cure many ailments and so called disorders.

I feel that a lack of seasonal foods consumed by an individual contributes greatly to this phenomenon. This disorder would also be impacted by an excess intake of refined sugars & foods which are often also genetically modified and have other long term health implications.

How can one prevent & combat the winter blues in order to reset your health to find balance and happiness?

Return to the whole. Number 1 rule for my own shopping and food consumption is to avoid any processed foods if possible.

Eating whole foods that you know are organic or pesticide free can have huge impact on ones health.

One of the biggest benefits of gardening here on the southern part of the Pacific West Coast is that the climate is so mild that you can grow food nearly year round! Eating fresh vegetables daily is a great way to keep up with the vitamins and minerals that are needed for balanced health; both physical and mental.

Balance is key to health and wellness year round.

Following the seasons & natural systems of food availability in your local bio-region will contribute to having a well balanced and healthy life.

As a resident of the beautiful BC Coast here in unceded Coast Salish lands & waters, I am very grateful to have access to wild salmon at certain times of the year. However, I will only receive fish from local indigenous fisher-people in order to support indigenous sovereignty. I also keep my consumption to a minimum as

salmon stocks are very low and are needed by many indigenous people and animals all along the watershed.

I feel that eating happy, healthy wild fish also has an impact on the kind of energy I imbibe into my own daily life. Wild salmon are high in Omega-3 fatty acids which improve brain function and some studies link people who are high in this to be less likely to experience depression. Vegetarian sources that contain the highest levels of omega-3 fatty acids include hemp seeds/oil, flax seeds/oil and walnuts.

Another factor that plays a part in seasonal mood disorders is a lack of Vitamin D. Eating food sources of vitamin D include milk, egg yolks, mushrooms, and fish that have bones help offset the fact we spend more time indoors during the fall and winter.

Unpasteurized foods such as honey or kombucha and live bacterial cultures found in yoghurt are a great way to reset your natural balance. Best if you can find local sources as those animals will have enzymes in the foods they produce which will reflect the local biosystem!

Foraging locally available foods is a great way to keep up with our natural balance. Here in unceded Coast Salish lands and waters there are many greens that can be harvested & dried in the spring to supplement our diets. Stinging Nettle is high in iron and many other nutrients; a great example of a versatile food that can be made into pesto and frozen. Dried, drank as a tea or added to soups. Horsetail is also good as a tea but should only be used daily for up to 2 weeks or can be toxic to our system.

Eat lots of leafy greens and berries. Low levels of folic acid, Vitamin B-12 are also linked to depression.

One of our elders at the table in our rtfzine meetings has highly recommended eating at least 10 different vegetables every day!

Some people suggest supplements, but I feel going straight to the sources is much better if possible. Our bodies are not meant to process highly concentrated amounts of these vitamins and minerals, we are meant to absorb them through the foods we eat.

TRY THIS SIMPLE ROOT
VEGETABLE RECIPE!

Root Vegetable Medley

2 CUBED POTATOES
1 CUBED YAM
2 QUARTERED CARROTS
1 SMALL CUBED TURNIP
1 CUBED BEET
1 QUARTERED PARSNIP

TOSS WITH AVOCADO OIL OR
GRAPESEED OIL, CUMIN,
PEPPER, SALT & TURMERIC!
ADD A SPRINKLE OF CRUSHED
CAYENNE PEPPERS IF YOU
WANT SOME EXTRA KICK.
BAKE AT 425°C FOR 30 MINUTES.

In addition to going straight to the source, its important to be mindful of where we are sourcing these foods from? Does transnational export/import of foods benefit the overall health of our mother earth (climate change contributors)?

Bananas are a great example of a food that is high in many important nutrients, yet alien to many of our ecosystems and not locally available if you are living in the Northern Hemisphere. Root vegetables on the other hand are a great way to get lots of important vitamins and minerals our bodies need to build up over the winter until spring comes and a variety of foods are more readily available.

Exercise is also equally important, despite how tempting it is to sit in the house and watch movies all day, we must stay active. Another great reason to garden throughout the year is to be active and keep the blood flowing!

As a person who experiences anxiety and depression I know all too well how much our food consumption and daily activity are connected to our overall emotional health. Take it from me and follow the seasons and eat whatever is being harvested locally. Not saying you can't have avocados anymore, because they are also great for you! Just remember, mother earth has an infinite knowledge of balance and wherever you are, the earth is underneath you.

Indigenous Hunter & Gatherer societies have known and practiced living with the land and following the food for thousands of years. There might just be something to this! Our relationship to the earth and our food is so important and we all are connected through water, as water is life. Following the natural flow of the food systems of your watershed will support local food systems to thrive as well as your personal health and well being. ❁❁

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Right to Food Zine is excited to present our new column—Food for Thought. We would like to make space for subjects that may not be directly related to food, but are relevant to our diverse group of contributors and readers. We hope you enjoy the very first Food for Thought article!

ANTI-ABELISM: TOWARDS THE RIGHT TO OUR VULNERABLE HUMANNESS, THE HIDDEN STRUGGLE TO ANARCHA-FEMINISM IN THE XXI CENTURY

BY SONIA MUÑOZ LLORT

As a psychopedagogue and as a white European slightly visually impaired woman, I have often thought how much of our lives are determined by ableism. Its discriminatory force might be subtle, but the truth is that several Western fields, such as health or paid labour, are strongly based on the idea of a masculine health norm as an ideal towards which we should strive. Moreover, many of our organizational systems are developed around the idea of a permanent state of good health where disease and disability are seen as weaknesses that prevent us from being fully worthy members of society.

The masculine norm has not only a patriarchal background, but also an undeniable capitalistic cause that anarchy-feminism should openly fight to smash. In a very eloquent tweet written by the user named Conor Arpwel on February 16th 2018, went straight to the essence of ableism:

“Unlearning ableism requires a fundamentally anti-capitalist change in perspective. Specifically, it necessitates that you believe in the inherent worth of human beings, regardless of someone’s social position or productive potential”.

The whole issue here is how anarchy-feminism can cooperate for example with disabled and ecological groups. The goal of this cooperation should be to create solidarity networks based on mutual aid in order to live a good life beyond the masculine norm of health and without engaging in the work force just to prove our self-worth.

In this essay I will present some of the social arenas in which we must work in order to unlearn ableism and to create a safe, free and open society where human health is based on diversity and solidarity.

Disability is just a word

Disability is a complex phenomenon that includes both different kinds of body function—including physical, cognitive and psychological functions- as well as different kinds of limitations caused by society. In Karen Whalley Hammell’s book “Perspectives on Disability and Rehabilitation” (2006) is thoroughly discussed in chapter 3 how disability and the deviance from the norm is yet another stereotype socially constructed classification to oppress that excludes and marginalizes people.

The contemporary conception of disability has grown hand in hand with the possibilities of every person to engage in the paid workforce just like any other social classificatory practice

we use. What makes ableism so catastrophic is not only its rhetoric and how it renders people with disabilities invisible in the anti-capitalistic struggle, but also how fascistic ideologies have, throughout history, fought against human biodiversity with eugenics that saw this ideology as a means of ameliorating poverty within the capitalist system.

Our invisibility as people becomes reinforced by the invisibility of our actions on an everyday basis.

Many people face depression, low self-esteem and low self-worth because they have internalized the commodifying message that the work system sells to us: if you can't work, you are unworthy of a good life and cannot be a visible person in society.

Capitalism's psychosocial weapons for control and oppression against us are stigma, alienation and guilt but these are often treated as individual problems rather than consequences of an oppressive system.

Women know very well that even temporary health issues affect how we are attacked by capitalists. We have the issues of pregnancy, childcare tasks and burn out syndromes that many women suffer because of their responsibilities for themselves, as workers and for others. These issues are the cause of systematic abuse against women when, from a neoliberal discourse, they are turned into sickness because most men do not have the same daily experiences. The personal has always been political.

Accepting diversity as the reference to our humanness

It seems obvious that there is no such thing as a norm just as no individual has permanent good health through our entire life span. This is why we have to fight for our rights for diversity without striving towards a fictitious and non-existent ideal of human life.

In addition to this, many people still think that people with disabilities live in constant self-pity because they want to become "normal" or disability-free. This is an utterly authoritarian thought,

since it implies that there is an inherent and vertical hierarchy in health, that being constantly healthy puts you at the top of this hierarchy, while at the bottom we find people with chronic diseases and/or disabilities. This ableist thought builds upon the idea that everybody with a disease or a disability is willing to strive towards the masculine norm of healthy person.

When it comes to seeing freedom from a physical and architectural view, we must face the fact that many public spaces are not built for human diversity while other spaces such as internet might be easier to access. In order to achieve real freedom, solidarity and cooperation and create a genuine alternative to capitalism, we need to fight for accessible and safe physical spaces. We also need to fight for personal assistance and access to aid resources that allow people to participate fully in their communities.

The lack of accessibility in the political and welfare system is clear. In this case, social movements should rally to find collective solutions to assure aid resources and welfare measures to those who need them. My first thought is that we can take advantage of the technological advances found in aid resources to create a user network that shares existing resources and that is managed and organized collectively by those who use these resources. In order to guarantee a free life and full access to participate in society, it is vital that aid resources and assistance are directly shared and managed by those who actually need them. This requires a new economic organization based on communal cooperation. In any case, organizations and anarchist groups can debate local solutions in order to build grassroots- alternatives. To achieve freedom of movement we must work for freedom of function diversity opening for several ways of activism.

Decolonizing the masculine norm of health to embrace human diversity

The Western ideal of a masculine health norm must be unlearned and replaced. In order to do so, embracing diversity must have a

decolonizing perspective that replaces the idea of the normal. This unlearning process must operate both individually and collectively. Individually we must recognize our vulnerable humanness; collectively we must change the educational system into a children-teacher arena in which freedom, critical thinking, human diversity and social cooperation become the key learning frames.

The reason behind the need of decolonizing the idea of the normal is that in many cultures, the understanding of human nature is not based on either the healthy-sick duality or the masculine norm.

A critical place to decolonize through respect for diversity is in the school system. The main obstacle in the school system is multiple, because of the way in which the Western school system is biased, whitewashed and based on the exaggerated focus on the instrumentalization of skills. In the globalized educational system based on Western school system there is a narrow understanding of what is the goal of learning. That defines the methods, contents and skills that the state decides children should learn. Right now the goal for learning is not free individual development but to create obedient workers. This is a disgusting issue in itself, but the hidden problem is that many children with disabilities face discrimination and isolation because the range of important skills is too instrumental and narrow. They are excluded in the classroom, and later they are excluded in society.

Good health is a right, not a privilege. Health injustice is class war

Independently of our body's function or health level, we can agree that everybody deserves to have a good quality of life. Under the existing economic system, health is seen as a privilege limited to the wealthy class. Just like any other feature in our lives, health has become a commodity that only rich people can afford.

It is also often connected to our educational levels, which go hand in hand with social class and economic status. We can agree that in most countries health is a product you can buy, which makes it an equality source well misused by governments

to control the population. If you are sick or disabled without any possibility of getting help, it is less possible that you actually organize and rebel.

The privatization of health services at the same time as part of the population is being stigmatized for their need for healthcare is beyond inhuman. We cannot pretend that social stigmatization of our human vulnerability is not an effective tool for exploitation. Many people are being stigmatized for being too far from the ideal of health normality and, at the same time, they are being held accountable for their lack of economic resources in order to get a better life. This is a form of class war against the poor: individuals with “bad” health are robbed of their rights to a good quality of life.

The privatization of health services is theft and class war, just as it is when governments allow private companies to profit from our human vulnerability. Our health is commodified and we urgently need to disrupt the connection between private health-related companies, the state and the health system. The health system should be organized and managed publicly by health workers and the rest of the population, though in this case the structure should be revised thoroughly to ensure all the medical specialties are well distributed according to the population’s needs.

As anarcha-feminists we should also focus our fight from an intersectional gender perspective. Maternity, children’s health and sexual health issues are constantly being deprioritized in today’s health care system according to the funding priorities of state politicians.

Dismantle the capitalist workforce

The capitalist workforce is yet another form of oppression because of both its compulsory and inherently discriminatory nature.

Anarcha-feminist direct action must attack the core of ableism, that is, the economic and patriarchal background of this discrimination. Initially I quoted a tweet explaining how the connection between paid work and self-worth is established in capitalist societies. That is why it is mandatory for anarcha-feminists to make

paid labour a choice and not an obligation in order to break this association that affects our self-worth and self-esteem.

It has been proven that in this highly technological age the principle of economic growth through labour is being challenged by robots and other technological solutions. These solutions might challenge the routines of paid labour, leaving many people outside the job market. But the major turning point is to abolish the idea of compulsory paid work as a prerequisite for covering our daily needs. By shifting the structures of paid work we can create a system that works according to our human nature without economic or material dependence in order to cover our basic needs.

Reformist proposals such as 6-hour working day or universal basic income can just be accepted as temporary solutions always having in mind that the main goal is to dismantle the paid work force. As social beings we seek activity and contact with others, and these needs can be covered by self-organized local communities where categorization, oppression and exploitation is not allowed. Mutual aid should be the safety network that guarantees that every person can cover their basic needs and, at the same time, develop their potential as human beings with dignity in a social context.

Our human vulnerability means that any of us can potentially experience difficulty and discrimination if our health suddenly changes. Unlearning ableism at an individual level, combined with the establishment of solid mutual aid structures as alternatives to state-owned health care and welfare systems, are the biggest steps we can take to live with dignity in our vulnerable human nature.



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Our Mission

Right To Food Zine's mission is to promote the human right to food that is healthy, nutritious, affordable, and presented with dignity. Our voices reflect the diversity that is the Downtown Eastside. Our articles, research, and recipes speak to the DTES residents, social justice groups, and beyond. We inform our readers, while fostering the desire to know more and to become more engaged. As part of DTES community, we strive to be a tool for community building.

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