New Developments in Anarchist Studies

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Appendix 4: A few words about Surrey

Surrey is a too much reviled working class suburb of Metro Vancouver. A shadow city. Not economically peripheral, it is an epicenter of capitalist megaprojects and strip malls, a sprawling convergence of 7 superhighways and a massive port expansion.

Surrey is a city of migrant settlers on (mostly) unceded Indigenous nations’ traditional territories. Besides English, it is now Punjabi and Mandarin which are the most commonly spoken languages. It is a rapidly growing suburb which became a city itself with sprawling satellite suburbs. Often outside of or marginal to the activist cultures of downtown Vancouver but with its own overlooked, unrecognized, histories of working class radicalism.

There is a long and varied history of anarchist organizing and action in the BC state context. From the intense IWW struggles in timber and mining through the Yippie riots of the 1960s, intentional communities and free schools, to the ongoing struggles against pipelines and fracking and campaigns in defense of migrants today, anarchism has taken diverse forms reflecting specific communities and circumstances. More recently recognition by anarchists has grown of the complementarity between indigenous community governance and anarchist perspectives. Current struggles pose challenges of settler anarch-

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2 From the Introduction to the Conference Package
ists defending migrants and opposing borders or contesting oil and gas extraction on unceded indigenous territories, in a context of longstanding indigenous resistance. Surrey itself sprawls across many contested territories, lands of the Kwantlen, Katzie and Stó:lō people in the north and to the west, the Tsawassen and Musqueam Nations in the north and to the east, the Semiahmoo First Nation in the south.

Over the past two decades, there’s been a growing interest, both inside and outside the academy, in research done on anarchism (or by anarchists), and we have seen a resurgence in related multidisciplinary reading, study and theory.

It is hoped that this conference will build upon the work of the four successful previous NAASN conferences; first, as a wonderful opportunity for head-to-head gathering, with lively discussion and comradely debate, and then at conclusion, will leave an open archive of all published papers & presentations intended to stand as a positive contribution to the further flourishing of anarchist ideas and action. We are also looking to establish new connections within our local communities, and build toward future new infrastructures of resistance to the rule of capital. We look forward to working together with you, and thank you for your words and deeds herein...

*solidarity regards,*

Chris Howell, PJ Lilley & Jeff Shantz
(for the NAASN5 organizing committee)

surreywhat.info ----- # ---- # ---- naasn2014.org