

WINTER 2012

GERMINATE

# THE CAPITALIST EDITION



Aboriginal Sovereignty Movement

Walking for Country

Carbon Blood Money in Honduras

People vs. Profit: Tassie Style

The Politics of Money



AUSTRALIAN STUDENT  
ENVIRONMENT NETWORK

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Germinate collective and the Australian Student Environment Network acknowledge and pay respect to the First Nations and traditional caretakers of this land past, present and future.

More than 500 nations have shared this land since time immemorial. These nations continue to exist despite invasion and we recognise the sovereignty of every First Nation throughout this continent.

We express solidarity and continued commitment to working with Indigenous peoples both in Australia and around the world in ongoing struggles for land rights, self-determination, sovereignty and the recognition of past injustices.



## SOVEREIGNTY WAS NEVER CEDED

This magazine was compiled on the land of the Kurna and Wurundjeri people, and printed on the land of the Dja Dja Wurrung people. Submissions have come from many nations all over the continent.

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# SOS

## STUDENTS OF SUSTAINABILITY

DATE: 4th – 8th JULY 2012

WHERE: LA TROBE UNIVERSITY,  
BENDIGO CAMPUS,  
DJA DJA WURRUNG COUNTRY

### WHAT IS SOS?

\*Sharing knowledge and skills on current environmental and social justice issues.

\*Five days of camping, good music, new friends, and social change.

\*A convergence of students, activists, academics, environmentalists, indigenous groups and the wider community.

\*Workshops, forums, skillshares, networking.

**REGISTER NOW:** <http://studentsofsustainability.org>  
<http://trybooking.com/BJQX>

Website – [www.studentsofsustainability.org](http://www.studentsofsustainability.org)

facebook – <https://www.facebook.com/events/187397901361634/>

twitter – <https://twitter.com/Wi/sosbendigo2012>



**POSITIVE CHANGE THROUGH POSITIVE ACTION**

# EDITORIAL



Hello all and welcome to the Winter 2012 edition of Germinate, you're number one source for independent environmental news not yet under the rule of Packer or Murdoch (bring on Rinehart!).

As you've most likely already gathered, the theme of this edition is capitalism. If you're reading this, odds are you would have some form of a critique of capitalism, but it is in this editor's opinion that the environmental movement has been slowly moving away (perhaps coerced) from directly confronting and challenging capitalism within our organising. We tend to fall into a pattern of focusing on small issues or protecting small pockets of existence all without challenging the overall system which allowed the destruction to occur initially.

While not every article in here directly addresses capitalism, every issue discussed is indeed affected by it in some way. Whether that be with an attempt to navigate the murky waters, an effort to retain what was fought for previously or a struggle to reclaim what has been stolen.

Capitalism isn't the only reason that oppression exists, but it is a part of it and unless we address it we will never stop the destruction of this planet.

# WHAT IS GERMINATE?

Germinate is the bi-annual publication of the Australian Student Environment Network (ASEN). Through Germinate, we inform readers of issues and campaigns, reflect on movements for change, and facilitate communication amongst grassroots student activists throughout Australia and beyond.

We welcome submissions from motivated and interested individuals on wicked actions, skills, campaigns, as well as graphics, photos, poems, recipes, comics, arty stuff, strategic campaign, reflections and anything else. Ideally, articles amount to less than 1000 words.

Customisable advertising features for environmentally and socially just organisations area available on request.

Reach us at: [germinate@asen.org.au](mailto:germinate@asen.org.au)

## CONVENOR'S REPORTBACK

### I'm trying to...

With the help of everyone in the network, I'm trying to figure out how ASEN can best contribute to the growth of a mass, grassroots student environment movement in Australia. So much is already happening, but there is such potential in all of us to build our power.

### I struggle to...

I struggle to figure out what effective ASEN convening actually looks like! There are so many ways to help environment collectives contribute to social-ecological change that distilling them into a coherent organising practice can be difficult. I think the best way to get around this is communicating our needs within the network, and figuring out collectively how we can bring about a sustainable society. That means sharing your ideas about the best way to help one another, so make my role easier and get chatting!

# WHAT IS ASEN?

The Australian Student Environment Network is a national network of students active on environmental justice issues. Active members are involved in local environment collectives, as well as state networks.

We are a non-hierarchical grassroots network, directed by our members. As such, ASEN is driven by a constantly evolving ethos, determined by the focus and interests of those who are involved.

ASEN is harnessed to organise local campaigns, share information and resources, coordinate national campaigns such as nuclear-free and coal-seam gas, all whilst collaborating with First Nations people for sovereignty.

We direct our energies, involve new students, and empower our generation to uproot environmental injustice and create remarkable communities and social change!

National Convenor, 2012  
Australian Student Environment Network  
Sean Munro

## I'm inspired by...

I'm inspired by two things. First and foremost, the incredible hard work of everyone in the network. If I had a dollar for all the times ASEN kids have completely outdone themselves, I would have left all you ferals for a tropical paradise months ago! Seriously though, being convenor has given me the amazing privilege of seeing just how much student environment activism takes place on campuses across Australia. Thank you all. Second, I'm inspired by the possibilities for transformative social change that young people around the world are making a reality right now. The broad social resistance to austerity that was ignited by a massive student strike in Quebec represents not only a challenge to Australian students to get our shit together(!), but a beacon of hope for anyone who feels powerless to fight environmental injustice. Quebecois students haven't just ridden a wave of social discontent – they have actively shaped their organisations to encourage the growth of a mass movement. We can do the same.

# GERMINATE

## Victoria

Across Victoria, students staff and union members have been protesting against the budget cuts to the TAFE sector. Over the next three years an expected \$300 million is to be cut from the sector which will result in staff redundancies and dropping courses.

The bottom line is that the State Government is undermining the system that every year gives hundreds of thousands of Victorians a ladder into work.

Visit: <http://www.tafe4all.org.au/>

## Queensland

Recently in Brisbane, organisers held an events to protest against the funding cuts for Healthy Communities (HC), which is the peak body for the health and well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Queenslanders.

The event was held in front of the Health Department Building and involved a mass die-in to show solidarity with HC and to symbolise that funding cuts will cost lives.

Visit: <http://www.qgroups.com.au/community/equal-love-brisbane>

## Western Australia

In the middle of May, two women were arrested when they parked and locked themselves onto their van in the middle of the road. This road was to be the main passageway for the Woodside convoy travelling to the James Price Point project site.

During this period, Premier Barnett sent an additional 150-200 police officers up to the area to intimidate local community members and activists at a cost of \$1 million over 10 days.

Visit: [www.savethekimberley.com](http://www.savethekimberley.com)



# NEWS

## Tasmania

By the time you're reading this, Miranda Gibson will have been suspended 60m above the ground in an old-growth Eucalyptus tree in the heart of Tasmania's

southern forests for over 200 days. For a daily blog visit:  
[www.observevtree.org](http://www.observevtree.org)

## South Australia

May 13th - 16th saw the richest companies and corporations in Australia and overseas descend on Adelaide for the Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association (APPEA) conference. Members from various environmental groups decided to slightly disrupt the conference by dying during morning registration. Visit <http://youtu.be/XV32M21AbjY> for footage.

At the conclusion of the conference, community members held a candlelight vigil on the river torrens in solidarity with those fighting against the gas hub at James Price Point.

## New South Wales/ACT

On April 1st over a hundred people took to the water to blockade the world's largest coal-exporting harbour in Newcastle which is due to be expanded three-fold. The action stopped all coal ships from entering the port for the entire day.

January 26th was the 40th anniversary of the Aboriginal Tent Embassy with the event attended by up to ten thousand people and one wayward shoe. From this event the spark for the National Unity Government was formed and has continued on with more nations setting up Tent Embassies around the continent. Visit:  
[www.nationalunitygovernment.org](http://www.nationalunitygovernment.org)

## Northern Territory

In early April, Muckaty traditional owners staged an inpromptu protest in front of the Northern Land Council (Darwin) which brought traffic to a standstill. The women elders gathered to reiterate their stance that they don't want, and will never want, a nuclear waste dump on their land. The Federal court challenge will proceed in 2013. Visit: <http://www.acecollective.org/>

# UPCOMING EVENTS

**July 14th - 18th**

Lizard's Revenge Music Festival:  
BHP and the Australian government  
are attempting to expand the  
Olympic Dam uranium mine and  
create the largest man-made hole on  
earth.  
[www.lizardsrevenge.net](http://www.lizardsrevenge.net)

**August 20th - September 14th**

Walkatjurra Walkabout:  
Walking for Country is to reconnect  
people with land and culture.  
Join for an hour, a day, a few weeks  
or the whole way.  
[www.walkingforcountry.com](http://www.walkingforcountry.com)

**January 21st - 25th**

ASEN Training Camp:  
Meet other young enviro activists to  
get trained up and organise for a  
better future.  
Join in Invasion/Sovereignty Day at  
the Aboriginal Tent  
Embassy  
[www.asen.org.au](http://www.asen.org.au)

**August 4th**

Second Annual Melbourne Anarchist  
Bookfair:  
Zines, Stalls, Info, Books, Workshops.  
Free entry!  
<http://www.amelbournebookfair.org/>

**September**

Coal and Gas Road Trip:  
Following on from the successful  
trip run in 2011 by the NSW/ACT  
student enviro network SEAN, they  
will be visiting communities which are  
being affected by the Coal Seam Gas  
industry.  
[www.asen.org.au](http://www.asen.org.au)

**September 29th - October 1st**

SASEN Skillshare:  
Once again the South Australian enviro  
student network will be running a 3  
day skillshare for old and new alike to  
learn, plan and strategise for enviro  
activism.  
[www.flindersenviro.com](http://www.flindersenviro.com)

**November**

Germinate Summer 2012 edition  
submissions due.  
Email:  
[germinate@asen.org.au](mailto:germinate@asen.org.au)





You might have heard about the protests that happened up in Brisbane recently, or perhaps noticed some Aboriginal tent embassies popping up around Australia. Or maybe you didn't, because let's face it, you rarely hear anything about Aboriginal people in the news... unless it's a sensationalised story about an angry mob or the government saying how much they are spending on the Intervention. I have been hanging around with the Embassy mob for a little while now and think it is time we start hearing about the strengths and positive stuff going on in the community!

In March, a group of people set up the Brisbane Sovereign Embassy, in Musgrave Park – a well-known inner city meeting ground for Aboriginal people from all over. There was a corroboree opening ceremony, a meeting of the tribes, and a sacred fire was lit and sung

up. People brought coals from the sacred fire in Canberra, and some brought gum leaves from their nations to add to the fire. It was a great day of celebration, fun, unity, respect, hope and healing.

The fire was then Government site.



registered with the State as a culturally significant People have been guarding that fire day and night ever since, inviting in passersby for a yarn, reuniting lost friends and family, hosting movie nights and other community events. In my view, they do exactly what ambassadors should – connecting people from different places and sharing culture. It also helps that they are the friendliest bunch and make the best cuppa in Brisbane!

Meanwhile, both the state and local government were going through elections and left the Embassy mob pretty much alone; until the Liberal- National Coalition Party won a majority at both levels. The day after the new Premier was sworn in, the police came in to forcibly remove the Embassy, its supporters and also the sacred fire. Coincidence? Possibly

That day, Wednesday 16 May 2012, was a very long and sad day. The pretext used by the local Council to remove the Embassy was that the 'Paniyiri' Greek festival was going to be held at the park that coming weekend, as it has done for years.



However, the organisers of the festival had been in direct contact with the Embassy and had publicly stated they were ok with the Embassy being there

In retrospect, it is easy to see that the Brisbane City Council had made their decision to move the Embassy on from the start. When the Lord Mayor came to the Embassy on the Saturday prior, at the request of the local Elders, he started his speech by saying that he was only able to be there for half an hour. It was the quickest 30 minutes of my life.

The Council's community liaison folk spoke for a bit, then the Mayor

spoke 'at' the crowd for about 10 minutes, about the good ties the Council has had with the Aboriginal community, but that they wanted the Embassy moved. The Mayor then took a couple of questions from the audience. As soon as people started to realise that this was not up for negotiation or compromise, the Mayor began to leave. The Mayor was asked to promise that the police would not get involved and that there would not be a violent removal. The Mayor refused to answer and walked out. How is this respectful communication promoting good ties with the community? What better place to yarn things through than around a fire, a sacred fire at that?

From that meeting onwards, people sensed something was going to happen. The Embassy called for more community support, and many people didn't sleep for days, staying up all night keeping watch, as they had been for months, but this time with suspense and tension in the air.

On that Wednesday, I was there from dawn 'til dusk as a witness



and supporter of the Embassy. On the whole it must be acknowledged that it was largely a peaceful non-violent protest, on both sides, from start until finish, despite over 30 arrests being made. People showed restraint and discipline.

Surrounding roads had been blocked off to both vehicles and pedestrians. One man tried to get in but was restrained and arrested by five police officers?

At 0600, not a minute earlier, the Embassy parameters were surrounded by some 250 police officers. There was no more than 60 unarmed people peacefully protesting inside a fenced off enclosure protecting the sacred fire (which might I remind you was a registered culturally significant site which the government had no right to move even by their law). It is clear that there was an overwhelmingly disproportionate police presence to incite fear and intimidation onto the crowd and put pressure on the 'negotiation process', which was happening with the Yuggera traditional owners up until the last point when the police closed in.

This is how the government in 2012 in Queensland conducts its negotiations with the Aboriginal community. And now the whole world is watching.

'Bullymen dominoes' Armed police surround the protestors at 6am.

These people have been forcibly removed from their lands and culture for years and it continues today

For me, the Embassy is about healing. It is about listening, learning and sharing. It is about empowering Indigenous voices that are continuously marginalised or silenced in Australia.

Go to the source and get amongst it! Inform yourself! If you have an embassy near you, nothing is stopping you going down there but yourself!



# ORGANISE

## **Organ:**

a part or member  
having some  
specific function



## **Organise:**

to form into a whole  
consisting of  
interdependent or  
coordinated parts

- Macquarie Dictionary

Come together, build a  
society, live our lives.

# What's the Brisbane Sovereign Embassy about??

In brief, the Brisbane Sovereign Embassy is part of a larger nation wide movement that came out of the meetings down in Canberra at the 40th Anniversary of the first Aboriginal Tent Embassy earlier this year. Michael Anderson, one of the original founders of the Canberra embassy, is leading the National Unity Government: <http://nationalunitygovernment.org/>

The idea is that many of the founding principles of the original embassy are every bit still relevant today. I remember reading down the list while in Canberra thinking, 'Mmmm nope, nothing's been down about that... or that... or that'. Read and tell me there is not one article here on the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples that has not been violated in one form or other since occupation and many that continue to be even today: [http://www.hreoc.gov.au/declaration\\_indigenous/poster.html](http://www.hreoc.gov.au/declaration_indigenous/poster.html)

The feeling down in Canberra was that the Australian government is not representing the true needs and values of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and that they have been repressed in their right to self-determination to govern their own affairs. So to fill this gap in representation they created the movement. It is a movement for the people, from the people. It's about informing and educating people about the fact that Aboriginal sovereignty has never been ceded, no declared war was ever defeated and no treaty was ever drawn up with the British crown despite even British law at the time saying that is what was required in order to colonise, according to the Pacific Islander Protection Act in 1875

It's about being able to have a say in what happens to your

children's future, having respect, learning and listening to a valuable part of Australia's history and culture!

That is my brief interpretation. It is explained well here: <http://www.facebook.com/BrisbaneSovereignEmbassyMusgravePark/info>

## Interview with Boe Spearim, from the Brisbane Sovereign Embassy

“Sovereignty is my birthright as a young Gamilaraay man – to teach and practice my laws, customs and culture. If you are born Aboriginal then you are born into politics...

“whether you like it or not. Growing up I heard all the stories, about the Embassy that was started in ‘72, and all the other marches and protests, and wanted to be involved, and now I am. You can not heal a culture by denying it!

“The same stuff is still going on today, with mining companies coming and destroying my land. At the moment back home, on my father's country, down at Toomelah, they are bringing the Intervention in and want to relocate the people to Coffs Harbour. They are going to put a gas line through the most sacred part of my tribe, so we are going to go down there and start an embassy and put culture back into the community.

“Woomera Sovereign Rights Union and what we are going to

do is go around Queensland and start up sovereign embassies.

We've got a few phone calls from some towns, from Cairns, Yarrabah, Cunnamulla, Toowoomba and Rockhampton, and they want us to help set them up.

"It isn't just us. There are two old black Gamilaraay women, in Northern New South Wales, who have been sitting there since December, by themselves. They are 40 miles out of town and an uncle drives in from town every couple of days with food... staunch black women..."

"I'm only 23 and sovereignty is not just important to me – it should be important to every other young Aboriginal person because it gives them that spiritual connection to the land and it's our past, present and future."



# IN SHORT SUPPLY

Jordan Mojan

You do not need to be a genius to see that we are in serious trouble. The rate of extinction is higher than it has been in millions of years, almost all of our ancient-forests have been logged and the regrowth forests are being flogged at faster rates than ever before (logging cycles in Southern NSW are down to 5-10 years instead of 25-30), more than half of the world's fossil fuels have been burnt and the coal, oil and gas industries are expanding everywhere. NSW is set for a tripling in coal exports over the next decade, Queensland is set for a six-fold increase, and the same pattern is being seen verywhere on the globe. Climate change threatens the loss of most of the world's species and loss of access to half the world's drinking water.

All of this despite the fact that that there are sustainable alternatives to mining and deforestation that can provide for the whole world - but to cost-cutting corporations, if the raw materials are "available", they'll take them.

Awareness is growing, green living is growing and movements are growing, but if we want to make an impact, we have to acknowledge a few things. Firstly, awareness is not enough. Ninety per cent of Australians were opposed to the Iraq war before the first bombs hit. Change does not happen in our minds, it just starts there. If the US civil rights movement had spent their time trying to influence opinion polls, the Jim Crow laws would still exist. Secondly, our power is not limited by what we choose to consume - we can do a lot better than just reduce our sense of guilt, and we can be easily conned by greenwash. We need to be involved in sustainable production (like community gardens, renewable energy co-ops etc.) as well as resist unsustainable production.

According to the dominant economic theory, when demand goes down in a certain industry, production will also decrease (unless the price falls quickly enough to encourage demand again). But the reality on the ground is very different. Ask any forest or coal activist - when an industry is under threat, they go gangbusters. The price of woodchip or coal only falls after, and if they can't find a buyer, they stockpile until they can. The same works in reverse - McDonalds doesn't build new restaurants because there's a huge demand for Big Macs out there - they push the supply and create the demand.

In the real world, production is not driven by demand, but consumption is driven by supply. The cheerleaders for capitalism also ignore the power that producers have in a "free market" - the power to put their own interests ahead of communities where they work or the environment, and even the power to sack politicians who go against their interests (mining super-profits tax, anybody?). Come up to the Hunter Valley sometime and ask local residents how much freedom they have in the free market system!

**Are you living the future right now? Are you willing to party while Rome burns?**

So here's the seven-generation question: how much are you cooperating with the system? Are you one of the local residents allowing a future-wrecking corporation to set up in your area? If a new Woolworths were to set up in your area, would you get in the way? Are you a good and loyal worker at your student job, or do you save your energy for your own passions? Have you learnt things from successful campaigns in your area - do you know how to organise disobediently? Are you living the future right now? Are you willing to party while Rome burns? If so, I'll probably see you soon.

(Oh, and anybody who is keen on direct action workshops should definitely send an email to [noplanetb.npb@gmail.com](mailto:noplanetb.npb@gmail.com). If you want to know how to garden you should probably ask somebody else.)

Strategic business management,  
CHORUS: Keep the prices low,  
Minimising money spent,  
CHORUS: Keep the prices low,  
Efficient operations, economies of scale,  
And other words to make it sound like  
wisdom will prevail,

CHORUS: Do anything, anything,  
CHORUS: Just keep the prices low.

2. The labour's done in the Phillipines,  
Keep the...

The staff are paid in kidney beans,  
Keep the...

Fear of unemployment keeps the  
workers off their backs,  
Whiole the company is pushing for  
another cut in tax,  
Do anything...

3. Avoid environmental laws,  
Move to where they're not enforced,  
I can turn the tap on and the water's  
clean and fresh,

Coz the poison in the river is away in  
Bangladesh,

4. Make it shoddy, make it cheap,  
Make it nearly obsolete,  
Look how much I've purchased with a  
pocket full of cash,  
And when it falls apart on me I'll  
throw it in the trash.

5. A million toys form a plastic mould,

Make ten cents for each one sold,  
An esay way to earn a hundred  
thousand of the best,  
Just buy them by the crate and sell  
them cheaper than the rest.

6. Open up stores in every town,  
Force all the local prices down,  
Sell us things at less than cost for six  
months or a year,  
And we prob'ly won't react when all  
the small shops disappear.

7. Buying toys or bags of rice,  
Make sure you decide the price,  
Make them menufacture just exactly  
what you need,  
Then refuse to buy their product at the  
price that was agreed.

8. Buy the stock you know will sell,  
Easy things that market well,  
Join the mediocrity of every other  
brand,  
In united aspiration for a constant  
shade of bland.

9. Steal my pay cheque every week,  
Hand it to the rich and sleek,  
Make you rbusiness wealthy so  
investors all get rich,  
We'll like it or we'll lump it and it  
doesn't matter which.

Lyrics by Paul Spenver. For audio visit:

<http://paul-spencer.net/2012/03/21/keep-the-prices-low/>

<http://songweekend.wordpress.com>

# Keep the Prices Low

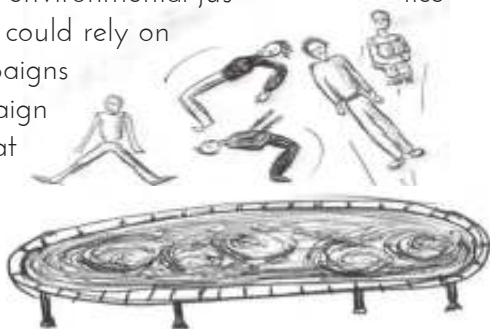
# The Politics of Money: organising to win



Imagine ASEN had all the money it could possibly need to sustain itself as a powerful grassroots network of activists, what would we do?

I'll come back to that in a moment, but for those people who have been involved in ASEN for a while you will be now used to the fact that ASEN runs on the smell of an oily rag. We run based on the hard work of a lot of people, often for little money and in recent times this has been just enough to sustain ourselves and our organisation. To make sure we train a small group of people every year to continue our work and that we have office bearers who can bring forward the collective memory of our organisation. But is that the best we can do?

To those that came to training camp you will remember from Holly Creenaune's workshop 'organising to win' that old adage is true for social movements too, "if we aren't growing, we're dying". When I took on becoming membership officer last year, it was because I wanted ASEN to become, in the longer term, the straw that broke the camel's back. A vibrant youth environmental justice movement that our external allies could rely on to help them win important campaigns we care about, such as the campaign against a Nuclear Waste Dump at Muckaty, or to freeze new coal fired power stations or exports.



As ASEN's short history has unfolded, the context we are working in has changed dramatically, our relationship with NUS is virtually non-existent (although perhaps undergoing somewhat of a renaissance). The student movement has after many years shown signs of life, and many of our people have participated and organised within those struggles. For a while now I have felt as though there are some things that are holding us back, but also significant opportunities to build on. I am constantly surprised over the years that within the student movement ASEN has an excellent reputation. We are considered to be organised and somewhat national, and good at network maintenance. Our task, I believe is to transform this network into a powerful organisation, cutting through with the unique perspective as an environmental justice organisation.

As I look at this problem, I feel like there are some essential elements missing to us achieving this goal. First of all, our plans for how we attract, train and organise members of our network are virtually non-existent. ASEN's membership numbers are small, and we don't really have a plan for how we can involve people and help them up the ladder from participation to organisation. Secondly, we don't have the financial resources to achieve this task. At the moment we barely have the resources for paid organisers, and when we have had the resources they have gone into the role of national convener where we expected that person to maintain the network, and for one person, we couldn't expect much more.



This brings us full circle to the question of finances. ASEN's unique brand of inclusion and hierarchy is significantly valued by its members but also those outside it, who see its internal function as an accessible commons, an open source social movement, kind of like the world we want to live in. On the other hand, the significant financial disorganization that results from this

means that we often have to supplement our income by applying for grants from external organisations. These grants distort our priorities and means that we allow others to drive our direction, rather than finding it ourselves and making a collective commitment to it. If ASEN had all the money we needed, in my opinion, we should immediately shift our priorities towards organisation. That means, most of our financial resources should be spent employing quality organisers in our communities where we are strongest and using those organisers to build the power of our organisation.



There are other organisations that work on a similar model. They are called trade unions, and they have almost two million members nationally, in fact they are the largest membership organisations in the country. The way they keep themselves organised and powerful is by being funded by the actual people that benefit and rely on their strength, which is us. We are the ones that value ASEN, we are the ones that are invested in its success, would we be game enough to adopt this model? Would we be game enough to commit to an organising plan that would attempt to make ASEN financially sustainable through regular dues from its members? Would we be game enough to grow ASEN's membership register substantially and direct our message out to the community and give these new people an even more amazing entry point into our social movement and build power with them? The way we look at our finances can no longer be seen as a bureaucratic thing we do at the end of our regular AGM's. We need to consider our current financial circumstances politically. What political strategy is required to grow our organisation and how does that relate to sustaining ourselves in this difficult environment?



# Expropriation

## A Tale of Capitalism, Coal Seam Gas and the Cops

by Sean Munro

Once upon a time, there was a community of farmers. Their simple but rewarding lives were far removed from the hustle and bustle of the metropolis. One day, however, the farmers were shocked to find that a band of strange city-folk laid claim to the land that had been passed down within their community for generations. In support of their case, the odd outsiders produced documents adorned with the signatures of city-based bureaucrats. They were inscribed with a clear message: the farmers' beloved land had been expropriated.

farmers, as they brought with them weapons and the threat of state-sanctioned force. According to the cops, the city-folk's property rights weren't negotiable.

You might think this story is a vague caricature of the experiences of rural communities with the Coal Seam Gas industry in this country, but it's not about Australia. It's the history of a series of royal and parliamentary fiats (known as the enclosures) issued in England between the 16th and 19th centuries. The enclosure laws subdivided the commons - a system of collective land ownership governed by

RESTRICTED AREA

Now, the farmers were not legal scholars, but it didn't make much sense to them that what had long been a possession of their families and friends had somehow become the property of people with no historical connection to the country. A mistake must have been made in the interpretation of the law, they reasoned. But attempts to bring the mix-up to the attention of parliamentarians were unsuccessful, and it soon became clear that the political class was far less concerned with protecting farmers than with collecting rent from the city-folk's promised economic activity. To the farmers' surprise, the decision to remain on their land irrespective of the law was met with the arrival of another alien group. Their presence was particularly distressing for the

feudal custom - into a tapestry of private estates which could be bought and sold by rich landowners as exchangeable commodities. They comprised a mass dispossession of peasant farmers, were one of the earliest expressions of contemporary property rights and are widely accepted as a precondition for the development of English capitalism. They also happen to shed light on the nature of Australia's coal seam gas (CSG) industry and the avenues available for shutting it down.

First of all, contrary to the prevailing media narrative, parallels between the enclosures and CSG developments demonstrate that the story of everyday people's expropriation under

capitalism is nothing new. In the Australian context, it dates back to the violent imposition of private property on indigenous people by colonialists beginning in the late 18th century.

Second, the enclosures show how the state – that is, the government, the courts, the police force, the public service and so on – represents a false salvation from the ills of economic tyranny. The astounding complicity of the NSW and QLD governments in ecologically and socially destructive developments such as CSG is inexplicable in absence of a systematic connection between corporate and political power. Any strategy for sustainability which fails to engage with this reality will not succeed.

Third, the enclosures demonstrate how the coercive arm of the state – the police – play a specific and crucial role in imposing the interests of capitalists over communities. The arrest of nine people by riot police (chartered by CSG company Arrow Energy for around \$100 an hour) at a community blockade in Kerry, QLD last year was a reminder of the state's position within the existing economic order.

Finally, the enclosures demonstrate the way in which the law is structurally oriented toward the interests of capitalists, rather than the communities they affect. The very existence of property rights and the associated government monopoly over all underground resources means that the 'scales of justice' are, more often than

not, tipped against anyone trying to resist the extractive industries. Indeed, even when we do win, we often lose. High court decisions in favour of CSG affected communities have been changed by parliamentary decree, and peoples' will to continue defending their communities and the ecosystems that support them is usually exhausted by drawn out court battles – allowing corporations to move on to bigger and better projects.



In short, the channels by which governments and corporations encourage us to achieve

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*(as defined by Origin Energy policies)*

environmental justice with respect to CSG are some of the most deceptive obstacles to its realisation.

Communities up the east coast of

Australia have learnt this first hand. It is, after all, the utter failure of submission processes, meetings with ministers and other time-consuming distractions which have left them with little option but to blockade their properties in order to protect themselves from the industry.

The moral of this story – of capitalist expropriation and its power structures – should be front of mind whenever we, as student environment activists, confront corporate and state interest. Only by engaging in a realistic assessment of the relationship between parties to ecological devastation will our movement be successful.

Stay critical.

a one-month walk from Yeelirree to Leonora

# walkatjorra walkabout



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20th August - 14th September 2012

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Conservation Council of Western Australia  
**ccwa**  
Look forward

**Walkatjorra Walkabout** is a pilgrimage across Wangkatja country in the spirit of our ancestors so together, we as present custodians, can protect our land and our culture for future generations.

**Walking for Country** is to reconnect people with land and culture.

My people have resisted destructive mining on our land and our sacred sites for generations. For over forty years we have fought to stop uranium mining at Yeelirrie, we stopped the removal of sacred stones from Weebo and for the last twenty years we have stopped destruction of 200 sites at Yakabindie.

We are not opposed to responsible development, but cannot stand wanton destruction of our land, our culture, and our environment.

We invite all people, from all places, to come together to walk with us, to send a clear message that we want the environment here, and our sacred places left alone.

Kado Muir  
Traditional Owner, Yeelirrie

**Walkatjorra Walkabout**  
**Walking for Country** is a celebration of Wangkatja country, a testament to the strength of the community who have fought to stop uranium mining at Yeelirrie for over forty years, and a chance to come together to continue to share our commitment to a sustainable future without nuclear. It is a chance to reconnect with the land, and to revive the tradition of walking for country.



**support this walk and donate today:**

DIRECT DEBIT: Account Name: Fremantle Anti-Nuclear Group  
BSB: 633-000 Account No: 137443347 Ref: WALK

DIRECT DROP OFF: at Senator Ludlam's office, 8 Cantonment St, Fremantle,  
Mon – Fri 9-5pm.

**wishlist:** fresh fruit & veggies, soy milk, long life milk, bread, wraps, cereals, spreads - jam, peanut butter, tahini, grains - rice, quinoa, millet, pulses - beans, chickpeas, lentils, pasta, noodles, canned goods - tomatoes, coconut milk, corn etc, olive oil, vinegar, flour, tea & coffee, trail mix, snacks. camping gear - gazebo, lightweight tables, chairs, tarps, satellite phone, torches, ground mats, solar showers, first aid, swags, blankets, mattresses, art supplies, musical instruments, candles.

**All donations are greatly appreciated big or small.**

**this walk will be lead by** the Walkatjorra Rangers, in partnership with Footprints for Peace, Western Australian Nuclear Free Alliance (WANFA), the Anti Nuclear Alliance of Western Australia (ANAWA) and the Conservation Council of Western Australia (CCWA).

**I AM A  
DEGREE  
FACTORY  
YOU ARE THE  
RAW  
MATERIAL**



**EDUFACTORYBLOG.WORDPRESS.COM**

# If we want to save the planet, we have to break the law

CHRISTIAN DARBY

A couple of months ago, in the dead of the night on Easter Monday, three people snuck along Wollongong's exclusive Cliff Road up to the wall surrounding the mansion of the Gujarat NRE executive chairman, checked that nobody else was around, then spraypainted anti-coal slogans all over it. Gujarat NRE owns two coalmines in the Wollongong area and, highlighting the role played by the coal industry in fuelling runaway climate change and endangering prime agricultural land and water supplies, the graffitists sprayed messages like "Carbon criminal," "Can't eat coal, can't drink gas" and, more whimsically, "I smell a Gujarat."



In the wake of the attack, the NSW Minerals Council, a body representing mining companies, noted that "once again it appears that the so-called 'anti-coal movement' has been overtaken by extremists who are prepared to flout the law to make their point." "We call upon all members of the community," the Council went on to urge, "including those with strong views on the coal industry, to join us in condemning this latest illegal act."

Given the Minerals Council has practically invited people to comment, and as one of those 'with strong views on the coal industry,' I thought

I'd take the chance to say that no, I refuse to condemn the actions of those who spraypainted the wall, I refuse to fall for the Minerals Council's attempt to divide the environment movement between 'good' and 'bad' protesters, and I absolutely applaud anybody brave enough to defy the law to stop the expansion of the fossil fuel industry in Australia.


The simple reason is this: any attempts to work within the law and the 'proper channels' to stop catastrophic climate change are failing abysmally.

Take the lead article in the environment section of UK newspaper the Guardian on 25 April, which quotes from Maria van der Hoeven, executive director of the International Energy Agency: "The world's energy system is being pushed to breaking point. Our addiction to fossil fuels grows stronger each year. Many clean energy technologies are available but they are not being deployed quickly enough to avert potentially disastrous consequences."

"On current form," the article goes on, "the world is on track for warming of 6C by the end of the century – a level that would create catastrophe, wiping out agriculture in many areas and rendering swathes of the globe uninhabitable."

Then take the Australian government's response to the problem. Talking about the government's 'Energy White Paper', which sets Australia's long-term energy strategy for the next 50 years, the Australian Financial Review notes: "By 2050, Australia will still generate most of its electricity from coal, gas and oil, according to the paper... Large-scale solar power plants, which have been heavily subsidised, are forecast to provide only 3% of energy needs by 2050."

Attempting to solve this problem through the ballot box has proved fairly inadequate. In 2009 the Greens voted to torpedo the government's Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme, criticising it,



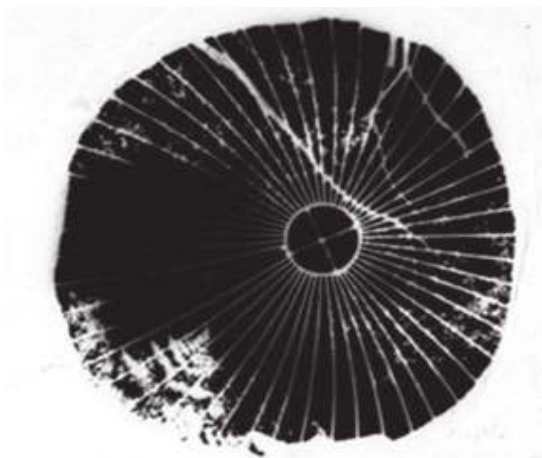
reasonably accurately, as 'worse than useless.' Then they decided to vote through the almost identical Carbon Tax - which compensates polluters for up to 95% of the emissions they produce, allows what minimal reductions that are compulsory to be achieved through the international carbon offset industry which has been wracked with scandal and fraud, and sets an utterly inadequate emissions reduction target of 5% by 2020 (the minimum acceptable target is generally regarded as 25%).

Meanwhile, the fossil fuel industry is expanding at an unprecedented pace. Former coal industry lobbyist Guy Pearce has observed that so many new coalmines are planned in Queensland that, taken together, they will cause 11 times more carbon pollution than the carbon price is supposed to cut. A new coal port proposed for Abbot Point is set to export 400 million tonnes of coal per year, when current coal exports for the whole of Australia currently stand at 300 million. Newcastle coal port, currently Australia's largest, is set to triple in size. The banner headline on the front page of the Financial Review on 16 March this year says it all: 'Our fossil fuel energy future'.

Compared to this rather uninspiring record, action taken outside the 'proper channels', in complete defiance of the law, comes off pretty well. Plans are well advanced to turn Australia into a 'Saudi Arabia of gas', in the words of federal government MP Simon Crean, with the New South Wales government recently declaring nowhere in the state off limits to coal seam gas mining, and projections for 40,000 CSG wells to be drilled in Queensland alone - despite coal seam gas being up to 105 times more greenhouse intensive than coal. But furious opposition across the country is halting the industry's expansion. At least three times in New South Wales last year, farmers flagrantly broke the law and blockaded roads to stop exploratory drilling; in each case, no wells were completed. In Wollongong, locals are also organising to blockade should any coal seam gas drilling begin in the area.

Similarly, in 1998 the federal government attempted to build Australia's first new uranium mine in 20 years in the middle of Kakadu National Park. Thousands of people turned out, blockaded the site, and were arrested in their hundreds – but no mine could ever be built. Likewise in 1983, when government plans to dam the Franklin River in Tasmania were met with such a huge campaign of disobedience and disruption that they were simply given up on. And, most famously, thousands of construction workers in the 1970s risked their jobs by placing 'Green Bans' and collectively refusing to work on environmentally destructive projects, saving the part of the Sydney Botanic Gardens from being transformed into a carpark and the Rocks from being converted into high rise office blocks, as well as stopping the demolition of hundreds of other historic buildings and environmentally sensitive sites.

The planet is heading towards unmitigated environmental calamity and Australia's political establishment is not only doing nothing about it, but actually making the problem worse, abetting a massive expansion of polluting industries and even, it was recently revealed, going to such lengths as deploying ASIO to spy on the environment movement. In the face of this complete insanity, mass blockades, pickets, risking arrest, breaking the law and putting our bodies on the line, far from things to be condemned, seem to be the only tactics that are actually working, and the only way we have of guaranteeing that we'll still have a planet to live on in 100 years' time.





# People vs profits:

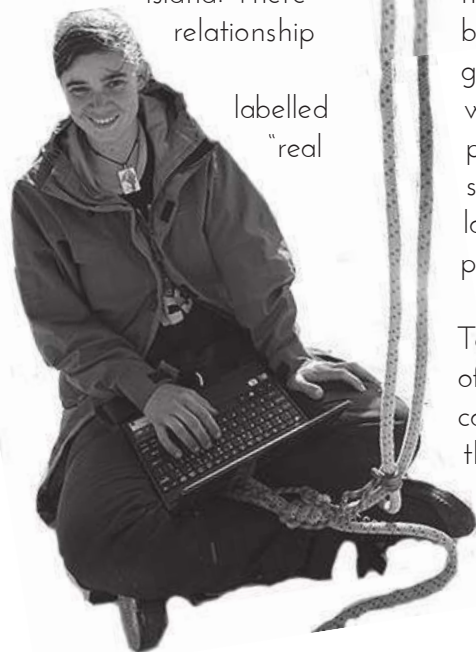
## Tassie style.

MIRANDA

Every where you look the world of corporations the environment and exception. Here every industrial scale logging.

In fact, in Tasmania over what goes on than symptom of capitalism, island! There relationship

labelled  
"real"



there are plenty of examples all around turning a profit at the expense of communities. And Tasmania is no day unique ancient forests are lost to

corporations seem to have more control the government. Perhaps this is also a that I'm sure is not unique to our has always been an unnervingly close between the forest industry and the government here. Some people even woodchipping giant Gunns Ltd as the parliament" of Tassie. Now, with Gunns stepping away from native forest logging, the new contender for this position is Malaysian company Ta Ann.

Ta Ann's profit comes at the expense of not only the environment but a cost to Australian tax-payers, with the Government Business Enterprise responsible for forest management, Forestry Tasmania, running at a

loss. Just a few weeks ago the new budget allocated an additional \$110 million to them, while public sectors such as health and education suffered.

So powerful is the force of profit-making that Ta Ann's demand for wood seems capable of undermining the Tasmanian Forest Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA). On March 15th 2011 a moratorium was due to be placed over 572,000 hectares of high conservation value forest. This was never implemented. And the very forests that are currently being negotiated about, that are on the table as proposed new reserves continued to be irreparably damaged to feed Ta Ann's veneer mills. Then once again, more promises were made in August last year when an agreement was signed between the State and Federal Governments stating that an "immediate conservation

agreement" would be placed on 430,000 hectares.

Once again, it was never implemented.

Logging coupe TNO44B is one of these areas that was meant to be protected. Forestry Tasmania's official documents state that they key reason for proceeding with logging in this forest is to supply wood to Ta Ann.

Somehow they seemed to think that this justified ignoring the conservation agreement. On December 12th 2011 machinery rolled in and the trees began to fall. It seemed like the "forces of darkness" were to have their profit-making, forest destroying way. But never fear, because wherever the shadow of capitalism falls, there will always be resistance, shining a glimmer of hope.

Two days latter I climbed 60 meters above the forest floor, into



the upper canopy of an old growth to remain here until the forests the long-overdue protection they urgently needed. I haven't put my feet on the ground since. For almost six months I have remained on a small platform, bringing international attention to the value of these forests and the need for protection.

Eucalypt and vowed  
received

so



photo by Alan Lesheim

Armed with solar panel, computer and phone, I have battled the forestry industry with the power of information and truth. I have exposed the lies behind not only the false promises of the government, but also the deceptive marketing of Ta Ann's products. The company produces veneer made from the destruction on ancient ecosystems, endangered species habitat, endemic rainforest trees and old growth. Despite this, they label their product as environmentally friendly "eco-ply" and have actually told customers that it is made from plantations and managed regrowth. You just have to look at the tree that I'm living in to see what an outrageous lie Ta Ann are telling. I am in a tree that is hundreds of years old, in a forest that until six months ago had never been touched by logging.

A few days after my action, known as The Observer Tree, hit the media spotlight the machines packed up and left. Perhaps the industry was not too keen on having it's actions exposed to the world? However, the area still remains open for logging, as does thousands of hectares of high conservation value forest in Tasmania. We need industry and government that we are watching them, not just from this tree, but from the whole world. And the world does not want to see Tasmania's forests lost forever.

Now is the time for these ancient ecosystems and the species that

call them home to be prioritised over profits. The forest industry itself is in crisis. It has become increasingly hard to sell products that come from Tasmanian forest destruction on the international market. But unfortunately companies like Ta Ann are trying to get around that by selling fake eco products. They need to be held accountable. The real solution is for them to transition out of native forest destruction and move to a sustainable product.

People often ask me if I think one person can make a difference against the forces of capitalism. And I think that the answer is two fold. In one sense yes, I think my action is making a huge difference because it is spreading the truth like wildfire, across the globe. But on the other hand, my action alone cannot protect Tasmania's forests from destruction. I hope the Observer Tree will act as a catalyst to inspire others to get on board. This doesn't mean I want you all the join me in the tree (it would be lovely, but I think it might get a bit crowded on the platform!). The weapon we have in this battle is the collective power of all the people who want to see these forests protected. And that is why I hope you will do what you can to help Tassie's forests. One easy way is to jump online and take part in the cyber action. This will send a message on your behalf to the companies who purchase wood from Ta Ann, letting them know the truth. And if that's not enough to satisfy you, there's plenty of other ways to get involved. Hey, why not come on down to Tassie?

You can follow the story of my tree top vigil online at [www.observer-tree.org](http://www.observer-tree.org). I update a daily blog about my life in the upper canopy, the values of the forests and the ongoing threats. Here you'll also find a link to the cyber action. You can also contact me at [servertree2011@gmail.com](mailto:servertree2011@gmail.com)



**My**



**ECONOMIC  
GROWTH**

# ABOUT HITCHHIKING

Republished from Occupy Sydney Zine Issue 5

written By Alejandro Panés

THE HIGHWAY IS A MASSIVE AND INTIMIDATING FOREIGNER,  
A FUNNEL OF DECISIONS AND PURPOSES,  
ASPHALT PHRASES TRACED----- ON COUNTRY  
PAPER,  
VEHICLE TERRITORY WHERE WANDERERS CAN EASILY BEFORGOTTEN.

I RAISE MY THUMB AND BUM  
SOME ALIEN SPACE AND TIME.  
IS ROMANTICISM STILL OUT THERE?

SOLIDARITY?

CURIOSITY?

CHARITY?

IT'S ALWAYS EASIER TO FIND REASONS NOT TO STOP  
THAN TO STOP  
THE HUGE IMPORTANCE OF THE SPOT

ENOUGH VISIBILITY AND A | BROAD | SHOULDER  
I MUST CREATE A BIGGER CHANCE FOR THEM TO PULL OVER.

MY ARM IS LIFTED SINCE 8 AM AND 3 HOURS LATER...

I'M STILL HERE TALKING TO MYSELF

AND SHOUTING TO MY IMAGINARY FRIEND.

EXTREMELY [ ] IN FLUENT TRAFFIC  
DEMORALIZING

EVERYBODY LOOKS AT YOU FROM THEIR CARS EXPRESSIONLESS OR  
TURN THEIR EYES TO SOMEWHERE ELSE.

GLUED TO THIS HEARTLESS SHOULDER  
FOREVER.....

BUT PEOPLE WILL STOP AND

I WON'T BE AN ATHEIST ANYMORE.

WHY?

ALTRUISM SPROUTS IN THEIR TRAVELLING SOULS

THE DRIVER HAS DONE IT HIMSELF

THE DRIVER IS A LEFTIE

NAH

40 DRIVERS WANT A DECENT CHAT



ALWAYS EAGER TO HEAR PROPHET STORIES AND EVEN BETTER,  
TO TELL YOU THEIRS.

PRACTICE YOUR STORYTELLING SKILLS  
ADD SOME DRESSINGS TO YOUR TALES

THEY WILL BRAG SKIN-DEEP OR  
THEY WILL IMMERSE INTO HONEST CONVERSATION  
CONFIDENT CONFESSIONS OFF THE RECORD,  
UNDER THE SHELTER OF THE STRANGER.

I HEAR ABOUT RHODESIA,  
ABOUT MIRACLES,  
ABOUT KIRK DOUGLAS,  
ABOUT MONEY,  
ABOUT VALUE,  
ABOUT MARRIAGE,  
ABOUT VALUES,  
ABOUT SEX AND  
ABOUT SEX AGAIN.

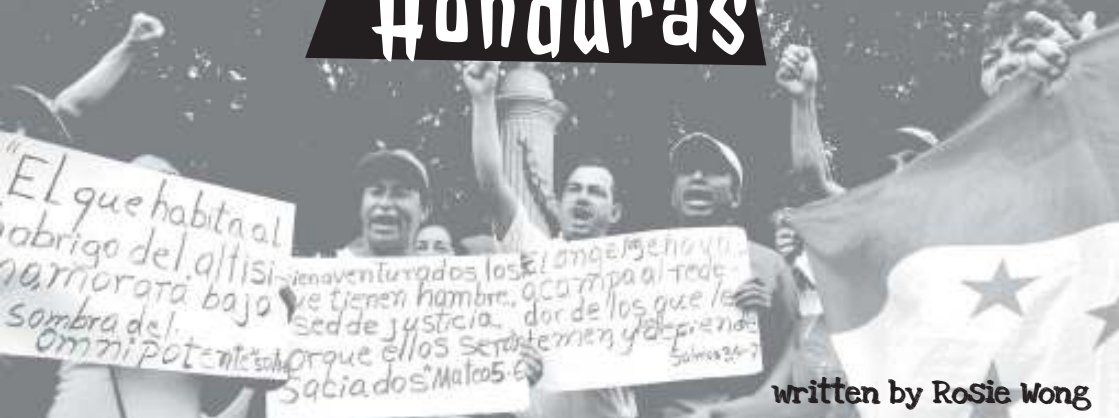
A WOMAN DRIVING A V6 OVERTAKES AND RANTS  
OUT OF MY FUCKN WAY CUNTS!

GIGGLY OLD FELLOW CHEATING ON HIS WIFE WHILE  
A LONELY MAN IS LOOKING FOR A PARTNER.

BEEN STUCK IN THE MUD FOR HOURS?  
SUV'S WITH 600,000 KS AND STILL WORKING  
HAVE KIDS  
A NEW SUV IS QUITE EXPENSIVE  
DON'T WASTE YOUR TIME TRAVELLING

I TELL THEM ABOUT SPAIN,  
ABOUT WOOFING,  
ABOUT WOODFORD,  
ABOUT THE SUN  
TANNING JUST MY HITCHING ARM,  
ABOUT BEING YELLED 'GET A JOB!'  
ABOUT THE GUY WHO PICKED ME UP BEFORE,  
ABOUT HITCHHIKING.

# Carbon Blood Money In Honduras



written by Rosie Wong

With its muddy roads, humble huts, and constant military patrols, Bajo Aguán, Honduras feels a long way away from the slick polish of the recurring UN climate negotiations in the world's capital cities. Yet the bloody struggle going on there strikes at the heart of global climate politics, illustrating how market schemes designed to "offset" carbon emissions play out when they encounter the complicated reality on the ground.

Small farmers in this region have increasingly fallen under the thumb of large landholders like palm oil magnate Miguel Facussé, who has been accused by human rights groups of responsibility for the murder of numerous campesinos in Bajo Aguán since the 2009 coup. Yet Facussé's company has been approved to receive international funds for carbon mitigation under the UN's Clean Development Mechanism (CDM).

The contrast between the promise of "clean development" and this violent reality has made Bajo Aguán the subject of growing international attention – and a lightning rod for criticism of the CDM.



## The Coup and Its Aftermath

In June 2009, a military coup in Honduras deposed the government of



Manuel Zelaya, stymieing the government's progressive social reforms and experiments with participatory democracy. "It was not only to expel President Zelaya," says Juan Almendarez, a prominent Honduran environmental and humanitarian advocate. The coup happened "because the powerful people in Honduras were acting in response to the people's struggles in Honduras."

The result has been social decay and political repression. The homicide rate in Honduras has skyrocketed under the Porfirio Lobo regime, registering as the world's highest in 2010. Human rights groups highlight the ongoing political assassinations of regime opponents. In this small country of 8 million people, 17 journalists have been killed since the coup. LGBTI organizers, indigenous rights activists, unionists, teachers, youth organizers, women's advocates, and opposition politicians have also received death threats or been killed. Those responsible are rarely punished by the justice system, which instead devotes its energies to prosecuting social and human rights activists. Protests are often met with teargas canisters and live ammunition.

The coup has also proved a setback for campesino activists seeking to halt the encroachment of large landowners on their farms. Almost every farmer I interviewed said that it was unsafe to leave their settlements. The countryside is dotted with military checkpoints, and farmers have been killed travelling to or from their settlements. "The way we see it, it has become a crime to be a farmer here," Heriberto Rodríguez of MUCA explained. There have been at least four military operations in the area since 2010.

### **Palm Oil and Power**

Bajo Aguán's small farmers are already under siege, but carbon trading with the global North could help to fuel in this aggression even further under the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). Set up under the current UN climate treaty, the CDM is supposed to encourage "clean" technology in the South and to provide Northern actors with the most efficient (i.e., cheapest) way to reduce global pollution. The basic equation is simple: a project in the global South that ostensibly reduces carbon emissions generates carbon credits. These credits can then be bought and sold by companies in the global North, who can use them to meet



government requirements to reduce pollution without actually reducing emissions in their factories or power plants.

Dinant, Facusse's palm oil company, has set up one of these projects. In the past, the company's oil mill pumped its waste into large

palm

open pits, a process that produces large quantities of methane. Dinant's project involves capturing this greenhouse gas and using it to power the mill. The project's blueprint claims that it will reduce pollution in two ways: first, by not letting the methane from open pits escape straight into the atmosphere, and second, by preventing pollution from burning the fossil fuels that were formerly used to power the mill.

Dinant's approval is obviously problematic for a number of reasons.

First, with the expanding palm oil industry contributing to massive deforestation in sensitive tropical regions, it's ironic that Dinant would be rewarded for environmentally sound practices. Moreover, its CDM approval essentially endorses a business model of producing palm oil for export—instead of food for local consumption—in a country where one in four children suffers chronic malnutrition. As Heriberto Rodríguez argued, "We don't need palm oil here. We need what we can eat."

Finally, if Wikileaks cables detailing some of Facusse's more unsavory dealings—including but not limited to his potential links to drug traffickers (to say nothing of his documented violence against local farmers)—are any indication, Facusse's misdeeds are no secret to the North. And yet one CDM board member told a journalist that "we are not investigators of crimes" and that there is "not much scope" to reject the project under CDM rules.

As rights groups have brought these problems to light, Northern companies associated with the project have pulled out one by one, including a consultant that contributed to the project application, the German government bank that had agreed to



give a loan to Dinant, and the French electricity company that had agreed to buy the credits. This has left Miguel Facussé and Dinant out on a limb. However, the struggle to stop European carbon market money from flowing to Bajo Aguán is not finished: the CDM board has re-approved the project, and the British government has not withdrawn its support, which means that new buyers could still appear.

## Not for Sale


At an international human rights conference in February, MUCA signed an agreement with the Lobo regime that included a financing plan for the farmers to pay the large landholders for occupied land. But critics say that even if the government can be trusted (itself a questionable proposition), the crucial issues of assassinations and impunity were ignored. Facussé's company is now accusing farmers of new "invasions."

Needless to say, the situation in Bajo Aguán continues to be incredibly dangerous. Local rights groups have called for a Permanent Human Rights Observatory to witness, document, and discourage the ongoing violence against farmers in the region.

Although growing international condemnation has made it more difficult for Dinant to access carbon market money, the project remains officially sanctioned, and loans from international development banks have not been cancelled. Heriberto Rodríguez, speaking from a roadside hut in an Aguán settlement, had no doubt about the impact of this international support: "Whoever gives the finance to these companies also becomes complicit in all these deaths. If they cut these funds, the landholders will feel somewhat pressured to change their methods."

MUCA spokesperson Vitalino Alvarez rejects the idea of carbon trading projects altogether. "To get into these deals is like having [our land] mortgaged," he said. "So to this we say no; this oxygen, we don't sell it to anybody."

To view links to references and to see the full article, please head to [http://www.fpif.org/articles/carbon\\_blood\\_money\\_in\\_honduras](http://www.fpif.org/articles/carbon_blood_money_in_honduras)



# Forno Radicale

organic artisan bakery

*Jeanette De Foe is an activist-turned-business owner who has probably fed you if you've been at an SoS in the past few years. Along with fellow past SoS organiser, Michael Martucci, she has recently opened an organic artisan bakery.*

## **YOU'VE BEEN INVOLVED IN FOOD COOPS AND FEEDING HUNGRY MOUTHS AT SoS FOR SEVERAL YEARS NOW. WHERE DID YOU START OUT?**

I started volunteering at Monash Wholefoods simply because it was there and I thought it'd be a good way to contribute to the place that fed me lunch everyday. It was fun, I met loads of cool people and eventually started co-ordinating. I was very involved there in 2009 when SoS was being held at Monash. The organising collective that year was small and struggling and some friends roped me into helping three weeks before the conference. I hadn't done any enviro activism before that but I can honestly say that that SoS changed my life.

I met heaps of people who were involved in food co-ops across Australia that year and suddenly the little things I was doing at Wholefoods seemed so much bigger than just feeding people

cheap wholesome food. I realised that the work I was doing was part of a movement that could make serious changes to the way we accessed food. Also, once you feed five hundred people three meals a day for a week, you feel like you can do anything.

I think at that point, becoming a food activist was where my life was headed, even if I didn't know it then.



## **TELL US ABOUT THE ROLE YOU TOOK ON IN BUILDING A FOOD CO-OP NETWORK AND WHERE THAT ENDED UP LEADING YOU.**

Soon after SoS'09, Wholefoods hosted a dinner party called the "Cross Campus Co-op Carnivale". It was huge and we had over a hundred people attend! Over the next year or two I attempted to do some work linking up co-ops around Australia which included travelling interstate and spending time with various co-ops. I noticed that food co-ops tended to be very insular communities and that every



problem one co-op was going through had already been experienced and solved by another, so I thought that instead of reinventing the wheel, these co-ops could seek support and guidance from each other on a regular basis. Although my presence was appreciated by the co-ops I spent time with, this food co-op network never really took off and I became disheartened.

I single handedly wanted to turn every food co-op in Australia into a less insular space but what I didn't realise was that on some level co-ops need to be insular. They are grounded in their communities and importantly, they are a reaction against the industrial food system dictating to them how to source food, what to source and when, so naturally they want to do things their own way and figure things out for themselves.

So to take it back to that analogy yes, the wheel is being reinvented over and over again, but in doing so, people are learning how the wheel works and how it could work for them. That is what makes co-ops such amazing breeding grounds for activists and revolutionaries.

### **AND THEN YOU STARTED A BAKERY. TELL US ABOUT WHAT LEAD YOU TO OPENING FORNO RADICALE?**

I blame Michael! Michael is my business partner and life companion who somehow makes crazy ideas seem like good ones. If you were at SoS'09 you might remember the sourdough bread we made there. Yep, that was Michael saying "Sure, we can make bread for five hundred people over five days using a four day sprouting and sourdough process even thou



ugh we've never done anything like it before". So when he suggested I open a bakery with him I said "That's a ridiculous idea... OK, I'm in."

So then we came up with Forno Radicale, meaning 'radical bakery/oven' in Italian. We wanted an Italian name to reflect Michael's Italian heritage and the style of the bread, and the "radical" part was about being radical in a transformative sense, but also about going back to the roots of what bread, culture and food is all about.

So the bread we make is properly fermented sourdough, meaning it only contains flour, water and salt. Our flours are all organic and sourced as locally as possible (within 160km for most of it) and when we start getting into pizzas and pastries we're going to source as much of our ingredients as

possible from local permaculture gardens and backyards through some kind of barter system.

**ORGANIC SOURDOUGH SOUNDS LIKE TOTAL YUPPIE FOOD. CAN YOU TALK ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CLASS, YOUR FOOD ACTIVISM, AND THE MARKET FOR YOUR BUSINESS? WHAT HAVE YOU DONE IN YOUR BUSINESS TO DEAL WITH THESE ISSUES?**

I hate that "sourdough" and "organic" have taken on those connotations because what we do is really an old and sustainable tradition of food that has only recently been (almost) destroyed by modern industrial agriculture. But you're right; "organic" food and "sourdough" bread are often aimed at a very affluent market and priced accordingly.

"Food for people, not for profit!"

was the catchcry of Wholefoods and it is something we will always believe in strongly. We figured that considering the area we're in (one of these not quite gentrified but soon will be suburbs), if people can afford to pay then they should, so we have a two tiered pricing structure. The concession price is explicitly a no questions asked, have the concession if you feel you need it concession.

We realise that despite our attempts to make our bread more accessible, it's still going to be out of reach for many. This is a work in progress but already people can come in and get bread from us without money. Other things



we're doing or will be doing include trading bread through the Local Exchange and Trading System (LETS), doing barter

trade for things that grow in people's gardens, running sourdough bread workshops so people can make it themselves at home, educating people about why this bread is better value than the two dollar loaves from the

supermarket, and a bunch of other things we're yet to think of.

It's important to note that this stuff isn't just about making bread more accessible but about making post-capitalist/alternative economic systems accessible to people who ordinarily wouldn't have any exposure to "crazy lefty ideals".

**YOU'VE CHOSEN TO OPEN A FOR-PROFIT BUSINESS RATHER THAN, SAY, A CO-OP OR SOMETHING ELSE. WHAT WERE YOUR REASONS FOR ABANDONING THE PROLETARIAT AND PLAYING THE CAPITALIST GAME?**

Haha thanks for the loaded question. I'm pretty sure many an activist friend thinks I've sold out big time. First of all, we do consider ourselves a co-op -- a workers co-operative that works by consensus and currently has two members. The minimum number for a legal co-operative is five so once we get to that we'll officially become a co-op. Secondly, don't let the term "profit" fool you. By "profit" we mean "enough money to pay us a living wage and put some back into growing this project so we can continue to prepare our community for Transition".

At the heart of it, this entire bakery project is about Transition -- transition from the current industrial capitalist

system to whatever comes next (economic collapse, the end of cheap fuel, who knows?!).

But I think Transition needs to be about not just existing but thriving in the current system as well as in the next one.

Starting a bakery in this particular way allows us to make bread for people while meeting our basic needs of food and shelter. The capitalist economic system doesn't need my help to crash but my community does need my help to survive that crash. So we're essentially working at creating the alternatives now so that by the time the current system falls apart a more sustainable, more just system is ready to take its place.

**IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU'VE NEEDED TO SWIM AGAINST THE TIDE TO MAKE THE BUSINESS WHAT YOU WANT IT TO BE. WHAT CHALLENGES HAVE YOU FACED AND WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO OTHERS THAT CHOOSE TO WORK WITHIN THE CAPITALIST SYSTEM?**

People from The Industry (hospitality) have said a lot of things to make us doubt ourselves. We have been told that we're incompetent and that we're "a joke" for thinking we can run this

bakery. But the fact is, we have no desire to be part of an industry which at its heart is the antithesis of what we're trying to do.

So, haters gonna hate but I think the biggest challenges have been in

wrestling with our own demons. Michael and I both spent significant periods away from Melbourne before starting this bakery so we lost touch with many of the support networks we had here. When the haters started hating, there was no one telling us that we could do it, no one who understood our vision. We have felt incredibly isolated at times but we're starting to build up support networks again, mostly through folks involved in the local Transition Towns movement, permaculture gardens and the local council.

My advice to anyone attempting something similar is to seek out support networks to help you through the tough times, remember what you're good at and why you're doing it, and just don't let the haters get you down!

Images from Forno Radicale

An SoS not so long ago, F.A.N. Dan had stuck "make some music" up on the open spaces board. It was my second SoS, and I'm zinging with energy, stoked to see so many enviro-minded students in one place (we're not alone, there are others that think and care like us). My head was spinning with campaign information and strategy sessions. But what about my heart? How was it to keep me motivated and connected through the time ahead? In the "make some music" workshop my heart found stories of past campaign struggles and wins, and a group of people to celebrate them with through singing. "Lock-on pipes, banner drops, tripods and canoes" here was a cheeky song that explored the, for me hitherto taboo, topic of civil disobedience. From the Franklin to the Mary River, from the Daintree to the Styx Valley, direct action has got the goods.  
<http://ecopella.org/makesomemusic.htm>

# SONGS FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

Songs for Social Justice is a gathering to share our rich treasury of songs, to meet other music-lovers and to encourage more music into our movement for change. It will include a concert showcasing some of our most passionate performers and a program of teaching and sharing that you're heartily encouraged to take part in.

24 - 26 August, 2012  
Teachers Federation House  
23-33 Mary Street,  
Surry Hills

<http://songweekend.wordpress.com>





# Walkatjurra Walkabout

## Walking for Country

LAURA HOGAN

Western Australia's anti-uranium mining campaign stepped up a notch in May as we heard news of Toro Energy's proposed mine at Wiluna getting State Environment Protection Authority (EPA) approval. It is not a time to sit around and commiserate however, Toro is still a way off beginning to mine, and if we get active today it may never happen. It is time to think about using our strengths - inspiration, solidarity, commitment and community - to turn things around. 'Walkatjurra Walkabout' is an example of peaceful action that will support Indigenous voices speaking out against the mines and strengthens the WA anti-uranium mining campaign. Want to learn more? Read on

'Walkatjurra Walkabout - Walking for Country' is a celebration of Wangkatja country, a testament to the strength of the community who have fought to stop uranium mining at Yeelirrie for over forty years, and a chance to come together to share our commitment to a sustainable nuclear free future. It is a chance to reconnect with the land, and to revive the tradition of walking for country.

As Kado Muir (a Traditional Owner from Yeelirrie) elaborates: "Walking for country is to reconnect people with land and culture. The Walkatjurra Walkabout is a pilgrimage across Wangkatja country in the spirit of our ancestors so together, we as present custodians, can protect our land and our culture for future generations.

My people have resisted destructive mining on our land and our sacred sites for generations. For over forty years we have fought to stop uranium mining at Yeelirrie, we stopped the removal of sacred stones from Weebo and for the last twenty years we have stopped destruction of 200 sites at Yakabindie. We are not opposed to responsible development, but cannot stand wanton destruction of our land, our culture, and our environment."

The walk will be lead by the Walkatjurra Rangers, in partnership with Footprints for Peace, Western Australian Nuclear Free Alliance (WANFA), the Anti Nuclear Alliance of Western Australia (ANA-WA) and the Conservation Council of Western Australia (CCWA). The Walkatjurra Ranger group provides opportunities for Indigenous community members to undertake cultural maintenance activities, for youth to learn and for elders to promote their culture to others, and to develop opportunities for training and livelihoods based on cultural enterprises. Ranger group activities also provide inspiration in the community for cultural expressions through art projects by allowing access to country and traditional lands.

The seed of this walk was sown in 2011 when 'Footprints for Peace' organised a 10 week, 1250km walk from Wiluna to Perth. It was a "Walk away from Uranium Mining" in solidarity with Aboriginal people to push for a ban on uranium mining in Western Australia.



Since the Barnett Government of WA lifted a ban on uranium mining in 2008, a number of mines have been proposed, and there are now approximately 140 companies with uranium interests in WA. Lake

Way, near Wiluna, is the only proposal with

EPA approval, although two more proposed mines are engaged in the State EPA approvals, followed closely by another two proposals that are advancing their exploration programs. Yeelirrie is the site of a proposed BHP mine, and within 100km are both Toro Energy's project at Lake Way, just out of Wiluna, and Mega Uranium's project at Lake Maitland. No mines have State Government approval yet.

The Lake Way proposal comprises of an open pit only 30 km from the town of Wiluna. Under this plan, tonnes of radioactive mine waste would be left in an open-air dump, while radioactive ore would be transported

nearly 2,700km through Leonora, Kalgoorlie, Norseman and other communities. Toro claim the mine will create 350 jobs over 14 year lifespan of the mine. However there will also be plenty of work for the next 100,000 years - dealing with the tailings and toxic contaminated water created by the mine. It is not clear who will pay for this work, but let us assume that Toro Energy do not plan to cover those costs, otherwise uranium mining would be frightfully uneconomical for them.

The push to keep WA uranium mine free is heightened as we witness what is happening in South Australia. BHP Billiton is expanding Olympic Dam uranium mine three fold to become the world's largest mine of any kind. The expansion will result in even more unsecured radioactive tailings and every day the mine wastes millions of litres of precious water which is stolen from surrounding Arabunna and Kokatha lands. BHP activities at the mine have destroyed Aboriginal Sacred Sites, including drying up or reducing flow of ground fed springs like the famous Mound Spring. It is time BHP listened to the Aboriginal people whose land they are digging up, and respect the clear opposition to uranium mining in WA and South Australia.



It will be a lot easier to stop the mines before they begin, we just need your help. Muir says "We invite all people, from all places, to come together to walk with us, to send a clear message that we want the environment here, and our sacred places left alone."

Join us on the walk from Yeelirrie to Leonora from August 20th - 14th September. It's a community affair, drug and alcohol free and kid friendly. We'll be walking 10-15 km a day with a support vehicle carrying our gear and a kitchen truck with food and water on board. Everyone contributes what they can to cooking, cleaning and camp set up. If you cannot join us in person, you can help out with financial donations and in kind support - visit the website for details on how to donate or have a look at our wish-list, [www.walkingforcountry.com](http://www.walkingforcountry.com). Contact us at [walking4country@gmail.com](mailto:walking4country@gmail.com). And talk to people about the threat of uranium mining in WA and elsewhere - better active today than radioactive tomorrow!

For more info check out [www.walkingforcountry.com](http://www.walkingforcountry.com) or email [walk4country@gmail.com](mailto:walk4country@gmail.com).



# A brief history of community gardening in

## New York City

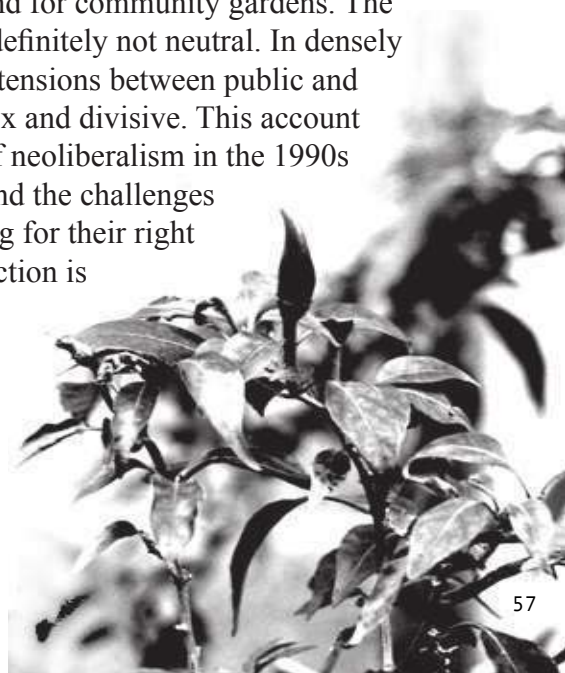
RIDGET HOLTOM

When one thinks of New York a 'Frasier' skyline might be the first thing that springs to mind, Wall Street, Time Square, The Giants, the Knicks and the City that never sleeps.

In many ways New York is the iconic symbolism of capital. The capital of the capitalist country of the world run by capital...This is a story of how the hegemony of money-dominated economy and society has been challenged. The ways it is subverted and the ways it subverts. On the corner of downtown blocks and in the cracks of the urban concrete, seeds of change have been sewn.

Beyond all those iconic images, the citizens of the city have built a movement to reclaim plots of land for community gardens. The phenomenon is not new, and it is definitely not neutral. In densely populated city such as New York, tensions between public and private claims to space are complex and divisive. This account highlights how the hegemony of neoliberalism in the 1990s led to the destruction of gardens and the challenges this posed for communities fighting for their right to land in a city where food production is low on the list of administrative priorities.

In the 1970s the gardens began to grow out of the city's neglect. The fiscal crisis following a certain oil embargo resulted in





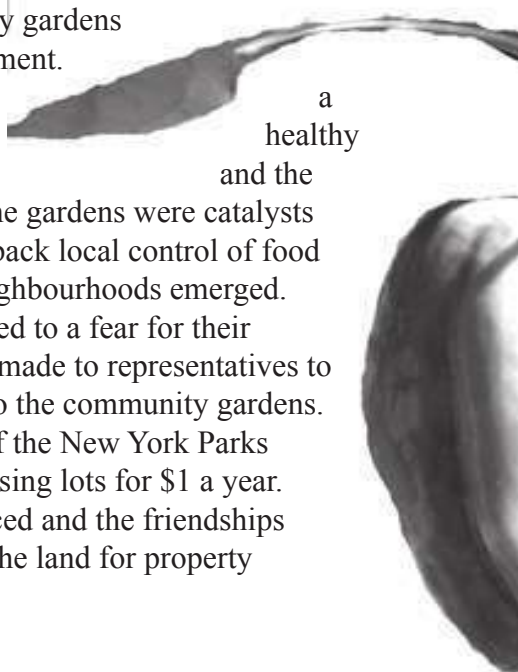
1973 image of Liz Christy in one of her Lower East Side gardens. Courtesy of Donald Leggett.

arson and abandonment and by 1977 there were over 25,00 empty lots. This era made way for the Green Guerrilla, an early initiative of guerrilla gardening lead by pioneer Liz Christy and her merry band of like-minded activists. Armed with seed GreenAids and wire clippers they took to transforming the city. These acts of civil disobedience questioned embedded ideology concerning who owned the rights

to use and transform public space in cities. Armed with a vision of ‘if they don’t do anything, we will’, the guerrillas were initially targeted as trespassers and vilified by city officials. Images of gardens being bulldozes attracted media attention and publicity stunts were used to highlight the community value of gardens and their right to a place at the city’s table.

During the 1980s, over 800 community gardens grew out of the cracks in NYC’s pavement.

Urban Gardens were embraced as a response to a lack of access to fresh food due to poor urban planning and the rise of fast food industry in the US. The gardens were catalysts for communities. They aimed to take back local control of food production and in the process new neighbourhoods emerged. The increase in pride for the gardens led to a fear for their security before the law. Appeals were made to representatives to legislate leases and ensure longevity to the community gardens. Operation ‘Green Thumb’, a branch of the New York Parks and Recreation Department, began leasing lots for \$1 a year. However, the value of the food produced and the friendships forged never superseded the value of the land for property



development and lots on land valued at higher than \$20,000 were at risk of displacement.

By the early 1990s, gentrification led to increasing land prices and threatened the existence of gardens across the city.

The gardens themselves served to increase the value of the housing around them. The very success of New York's community gardens became a threat to their existence.



The political and economic background in the US at this time can not be ignored. There was national pressure on New York to become a tourist hub and push for modern development spurred investors. Inevitably, land was needed for this redevelopment process to evolve. On top of this, the benefits of neoliberalism were being heralded as the saving grace of the city which had faced division, crime and violence in the early 1990s.

In 1995, community groups were divided when the Rudy Giuliani administration announced plans to auction off more than half of the city's gardens. A utilitarian argument was used to justify the need for housing rather than gardening and plans to develop lots were made. Some action groups took to the street dressed as fairies and pumpkins and brandishing flowers and vegetables protested the changes.

Giuliani responded; "If you live in an unrealistic world then you can say everything should be a community garden". As a result, half the gardens were lost in 1999 to housing development that promised to be affordable but was reportedly not so low cost. The other 200 or so gardens were saved because they were purchased with help from a supportive trust

fund. However this was only under the compromise of Green Thumb acting as regulator and coordinator. This compromise was a loss handing over of land remains contested.

Throughout the 2000s, The a 8 year lease. However, the gardeners face eviction pumpkins protesting on ridiculous now, but the York has grown as a rather than subsided and

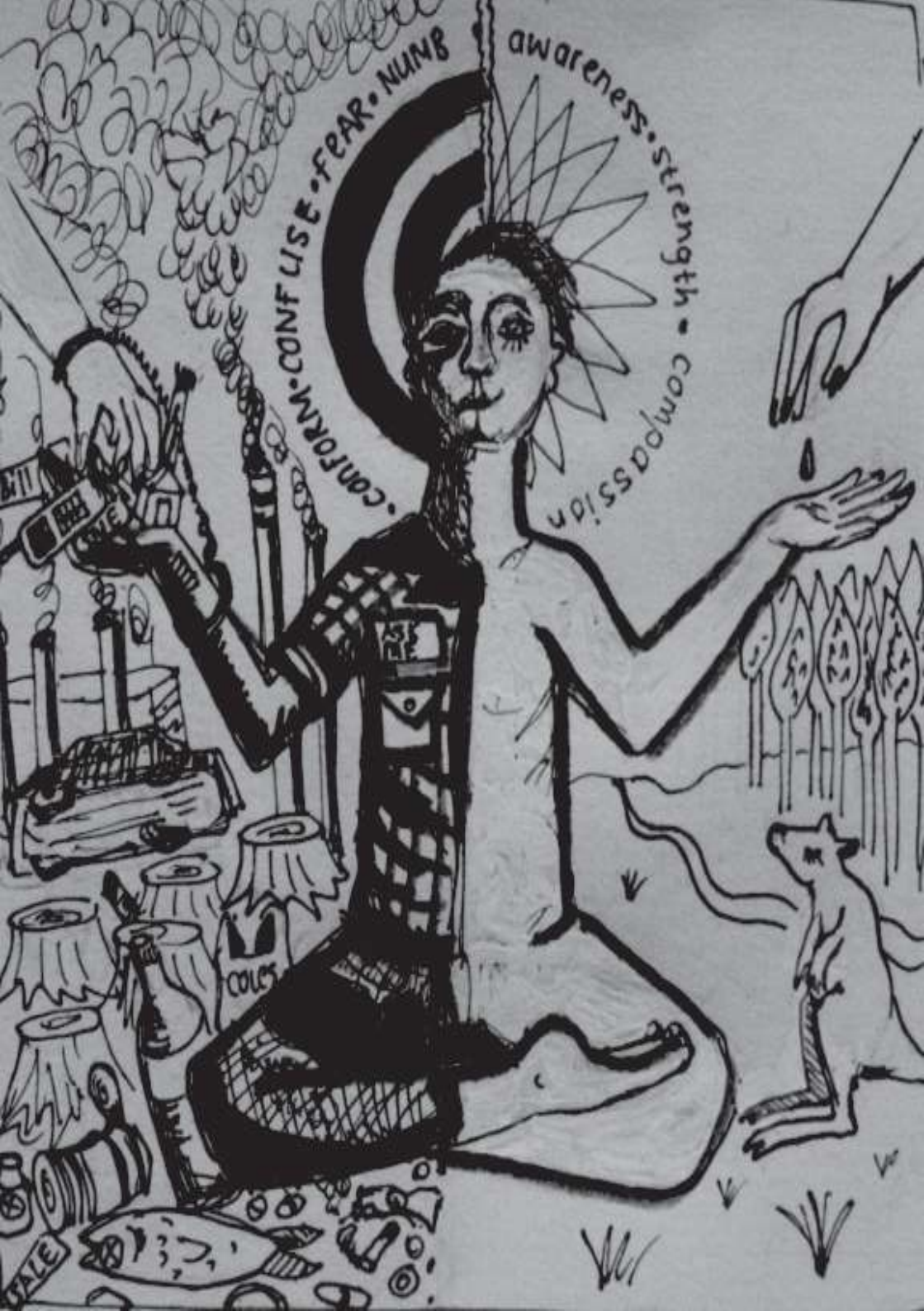
Whilst I may be accused world, I believe we must in cities such as New York in urban spaces offers an invest in the expansion of as a means of reducing for the rights nurture movements to growing city. This is movement current food with the system, which both many forms.

For some, this and represented a claims which still

gardens were protected under this ran out in July 2010 and once again. The imagery of parliamentary steps seems gardening movement in New reaction to the challenges needs to support to survive.

of living in an unrealistic find a place for urban gardens and Sydney. Freedom to garden alternative. Either we choose to the elite-controlled agribusiness food insecurity or we fight of community to plants and through the rights space in the part of a larger to combat our system, along global economic promote injustice in







## Individual Membership Form

☐ **YES, I would like to become a member of ASEN**

Please note: ASEN does not have tax-deductibility status.

### Contact Person

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (landline) \_\_\_\_\_ (mobile) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

University or Workplace: \_\_\_\_\_ Approximate Year of Graduation: \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliate Group (Collective you are part of): \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I agree to the Principles outlined in the ASEN Charter

Do you have any skills to share: \_\_\_\_\_

What is your reason for wanting to join ASEN? : \_\_\_\_\_

Which E-Lists would you like to be signed up to (Circle) :

ASEN Organisers (Higher Volume) and/or Enviropeople (Announcements)

Could you make a regular monthly donation to help ASEN fund its work? Yes/No

### How would you like to pay your membership fee?

Annual membership is 5% of your collective's annual operating budget (it is possible to apply for a fee waiver). Please attach a cheque, money order or application for a fee waiver to this form. Please do not send cash in the mail.

☐ **Cheque**

I have attached a cheque made payable to the "Australian Student Environment Network"

**OR**

☐ **Money Order**

I have attached a money order made payable to the "Australian Student Environment Network"

**OR**

☐ **Fee Waiver**

I have attached a statement requesting a fee waiver because I am facing financial hardship

**OR**

**Electronic Transfer** (Credit Card, Direct Debit)

Labelled as \_\_\_\_\_

(Eg John Smith Membership)

(ASEN's bank details are:

Account Name: Australian Student Environment Network, BSB  
803140 Account number: 12022218)

Date transferred \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I have attached a copy of the electronic transfer receipt and checked the details are correct (if available)

**Please send this form to:**

**Australian Student Environment Network** - 10/36 Perry Street, Marrickville, NSW 2204

Contact email: [membership@asen.org.au](mailto:membership@asen.org.au)

[www.asen.org.au](http://www.asen.org.au)

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An extra special thanks  
to our main funder:

## Melbourne Uni Enviro Collective

# THANK YOU

First off I just want to say thank you to everyone who contributed.  
Without your critical and creative works Germinate would be completely lifeless.

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was great

**JARRED**

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Cheers and see you next time!



**CAPITALISM**

Germinate Summer 2012  
Submissions due  
November

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GERMINATE

THANK  
YOU