

ANTISECT

All of life is around us.

We choose what we embrace and we choose what we reject. Every single, last one of us. NO ONE IS INNOCENT and NO ONE GETS OUT ALIVE.

The wheels and gears of power are vast and many, and take an age to turn. It's no surprise that we can barely register their movement and no surprise that many of us simply buckle under the strain and become suffocated by our everyday situations along the way. We begin our time on the planet filled with optimism and the sense of opportunities. Then slowly but steadily the machine begins to strip them away. Ideals turn to cynicism and hope gives way to resignation as eventually most of us are ground down by the sheer weight of simply trying to survive.

Don't let anyone tell you that you don't make a difference. EVERY THOUGHT, EVERY ACT AND EVERY INTERACTION MAKES A DIFFERENCE. Sure, sometimes we may feel like we're the only people alive. The great unwashed. Isolated. Disenfranchised from the mechanisms of power, but we're not. We're really not. We have each other, and we draw from a common bond that says although we are constrained by the circumstances in which we currently exist, we want more from our lives. We see the cracks in our society. We see the lies, the injustices, the hypocritical bullshit. We are the unbelievers.

But let's not kid ourselves. We're all here to participate in a weekend of music. Noise. Stimulating entertainment it may be, but if we're really serious about creating change we must surely use the situation as a catalyst, as a reaffirmation of a powerful, progressive force.

All the sloganeering in the world will never resonate fully if we are unable to follow this through and offer practical alternatives to what we rally against. We can shout and scream all we want about the injustices that surround us but this does nothing if we're unable to argue our case with those who disagree. Patting each other on the back and congratulating ourselves for how righteous we are doesn't move anything forward. Making links with like minded people should be viewed as a starting point and not an end in itself. We all know there are a fuck of a lot more people in the world who do not share the outlook that's present among us here, so of course it is they who we need to be engaging with. Gatherings like this present a vital opportunity to consolidate connections but the value of this is diminished if we are unable to take it to the great big world outside. WE DO NOT EXIST OUTSIDE OF SOCIETY. Like it or not we are a part of it. We breath the same air, drink the same water and use the same resources as those we might view as our opposition.

If we're ever to convince others of the value of our beliefs we must be able to put across our arguments in a measured and compelling way. This involves a level of understanding and communication that goes far beyond sloganeering and basic punk rock terminology. We're more intelligent than that, aren't we? AREN'T WE? We fucking hope so.

So what then? How do we take our energy from here to the rest of the world? Are we too deeply ensconced in our punk rock ghetto to influence the world outside it? Of course it's a challenge, but not one that's as difficult as it can sometimes feel, and our ability to take on this challenge forms a vital part of the journey towards change. Our choice is whether we rise to it or meekly accept the world as it is and make do with these occasional forays into "rebellion".

No one likes to be told they are wrong. But surely learning is all about discovering new attitudes and approaches to existing situations? New truths replace the old ones until such time that the next paradigm arrives. The first in line is always the heretic, the madman, the dissident, until enough people agree that the argument is credible, whereupon the balance tips and what once were considered the ravings of a lunatic eventually become established wisdom.

WE ARE THE DISSIDENTS. And if we are ever to realise a world that reflects a different culture than the one that's with us now, then the most potent tool we have is the ability to communicate our thoughts and ideas to others. Search for ways to relate to people, find common ground and use our similarities to explore the reasons behind our differences. We are not all the same. We never will be. But we do all have very similar basic needs. Needs which are plainly not being met by the ways the world is currently organised.

Those in power seek to maintain their status by systematic methods of control. The fabric of which is held together by the complex interconnections of wealth creation economics, nationalism and disinformation and the insecurities that exist because of all three. They fail to offer us an enlightened view and instead endlessly push the concept that, if they weren't around to organise and protect us, society would simply dissolve into chaos and all order would collapse. Not so. There are plenty of established communities based on non hierarchical structures of order, communities that don't reward the greedy, the ignorant, or the power hungry and are truly organised in ways that benefit everyone as equally as possible. WHEN THERE IS NO LONGER AN ADVANTAGE TO BE HAD IN BEHAVING LIKE A SELFISH FUCK WE WILL BE A LOT LESS LIKELY TO DO SO. Of course we're not stupid. We're not naïve enough to think that this level of change is going to occur overnight. It's not even a remote possibility during our lifetimes. And there lays the real challenge. Are we prepared to live our lives according to a philosophy that we will never experience the benefits of? Do we live in the moment or do we lay the foundations for future generations. Do we really believe that there is a better way of life to be had out there or are we content to accept what surrounds us? For all our slogans and cliches, are we really making a call to action or is it merely hollow bullshit to make us feel like we belong to something outside of the norm? What's it to be? The punk rock ghetto? Or the real world?

"Alternative lifestyles" are just that. Lifestyles. Not a t shirt, not a back patch. An alternative lifestyle goes far beyond a casual disaffection for authority and the present society. It's no coincidence that libertarianism is linked with the concepts of ecology and sustainability, the anti-war movement, animal rights, etc. etc. Whether you choose to embrace these ideas or not, it is impossible to trace the path of any one of them without encountering another. The choices we make about the food we eat are not necessarily solely based on either an empathy or a disregard for other species, they are often only one part of a wider philosophy that adopts a holistic approach to how we manage our time on the planet. Our attitudes toward other species become an extension and an illustration of how we regard our own. The more we examine the realities that influence the choices we make, the clearer it becomes just how much of what surrounds us is interlinked. And again, like it or not, WE ARE JUST AS MUCH A PART OF "IT", AS "IT" HAS BECOME A PART OF US.

So. What the fuck? Where does this leave us? No one's suggesting we can all become perfect people or that we all have to think the same, but maybe it's right that we do allow ourselves a little time to "think" every now and again. The answers won't be the same for all of us, but that doesn't matter. That's what makes us individuals. What does matter is how we reconcile the differences. Consider what we do, and try not to lose sight of the understanding that everything affects the bigger picture. There is no escape. And like it or not, we all play our part. So yeah, let's not kid ourselves – If we want things to change. *Really* want things to change, it is up to us to change them. But c'mon. we know this shit anyway, don't we? Yeah. We do. Right! What now? Oh yeah... LET'S FUCKIN' ROCK!

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