NYC ABC
POST OFFICE BOX 110034 BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11211

Updates for November 30th

11 Nov - Two environmentalists sabotaged an oil pipeline in America. Are they terrorists or heroes?

As the devastating effects of climate change became impossible to ignore, Jessica Reznicek and Ruby Montoya took matters into their own hands.

MORE:
by Elizabeth Flock (*The Economist*)
When Jessica Reznicek walked into a courtroom in Des Moines, Iowa, last June, her sun-weathered face was the only clue that she'd lived rough: that she'd camped at the edge of an oil-pipeline construction site for months; that she'd camped night after night all over the country when she and Ruby Montoya, her co-defendant, were on the run; that she'd camped simply because, as far back as she could remember, she loved being in nature.

Reznicek, dressed in a black trouser suit and white blouse with her blonde hair hanging neatly, hoped that the federal judge deciding her sentence might show her some sympathy (Montoya was due to be sentenced later in the summer). So much had happened since the two women had started sneaking onto construction sites in the autumn of 2016, setting excavators on fire and blow-torching dime-sized holes in the Dakota Access Pipeline, which was being built to carry crude oil from North Dakota to Illinois. Since then, Hurricane Harvey had left a third of Houston underwater. Australians had fled to the sea to escape the grasping flames. California had seen its two worst fire seasons ever. The temperature in Portland, Oregon, had hit an all-time high of 116°F (47ºC).

In 2014, Energy Transfer Partners, a fuel-transportation company, had announced its plan to erect the giant oil pipeline, saying it would help end American dependence on foreign oil. The project would cost $3.8bn and stretch 1,200 miles, ferrying enough fuel to fill an oil tanker every 40 seconds. To environmentalists, the Dakota pipeline wasn't a solution to anything. It would simply further feed America's addiction to fossil fuels, driving the planet ever closer to collapse.

A large, sustained demonstration by the Standing Rock Sioux tribe in North Dakota in 2016 brought the proposed pipeline to the attention of the world – and to Reznicek. The Sioux argued that construction had already despoiled their ancient burial grounds. Were the pipeline to rupture, it could poison their water. The company building the Dakota pipeline repeatedly said that it would be safe. But in recent decades, oil spills and leaks from other pipelines in America have left hundreds of people dead, most of them workers killed in explosions, and caused extensive environmental harm.

Inside the baronial courtroom, barrel-chested marshals in bulletproof vests and earpieces ringed the perimeter. Reznicek's supporters packed the pews: a Zen Buddhist, several Vietnam vets reeking of cigarettes, a few members of "100 Grannies Uniting for a Livable Future" and a contingent of eco-activists who had traded their grunge-wear for dresses and suits.

That day, the judge had to decide whether Reznicek, a few weeks shy of her 40th birthday, was a domestic terrorist under the law. The Patriot Act, passed after 9/11, included its definition of domestic terrorism any illegal activity "dangerous to human life" that "appears to be intended to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion". The question of whether this definition of terrorism includes direct action motivated by the climate crisis has so far been little tested.

Reznicek told herself that she was no terrorist. She'd taken a blow torch to a private company's property, not the government's, and only when sites were deserted. No one had been injured. Not only that, none of the rioters who stormed the Capitol on January 6th 2021 had thus far been charged with domestic terrorism. Reznicek couldn't imagine how she could be classified this way. Then again, she'd never really imagined that Montoya would one day turn against her.

Reznicek's decision to leave everyday life and throw herself into activism came slowly, then all at once. (This story is based on a week of conversations with Reznicek and Montoya in 2018 as well as numerous subsequent interviews.) The daughter of a bureaucrat in a sheriff's department in Iowa, she was attending community college and waiting on tables at a country club when, at the age of 23, she met a well-to-do pharmacist.

He had green eyes like hers and made her laugh. He asked her to marry him and she said yes, "because I thought that's what normal people do". A few years later she enrolled in a small liberal-arts college near Des Moines to study political science and history. What she learned there "radicalised" her: the characterisation of crime and punishment in England 500 years ago; how America justified intervening in Libya during the Arab spring.

One night in 2011, Reznicek stayed up for hours watching a live-stream of the Occupy Wall Street protest against economic inequality. By 4am, she had packed her bags. When her husband sleepily asked where she was going, she told him that she was off to New York to "join the revolution". Their marriage would be over if she went, he said. "I left everything that morning," she told me. "My home, my job, my school, my marriage. I got swept up in the possibilities of change." Or, as she described her sudden leap in a blog post from that time, "I became liberated from the powerlessness and emptiness that accompanied the constant maintenance it required to function halfheartedly in the world of designer clothes and clammy handshakes."

Eventually Reznicek returned to Des Moines to join an Occupy protest there. When that died down, she moved into a Catholic Worker house in the city. The Catholic Workers are a leftist lay group devoted to fighting social injustice, best known for their Plowshares actions, which began in the 1980s when members hammered the nose cones on nuclear weapons and threw blood on them. This particular house was led by Frank Cordaro, a white-haired, loud-mouthed former priest, who told me he was in awe of Reznicek's eagerness to put herself on the line. "She was just raw talent," he said.

Reznicek had been raised Catholic but was more enthused by this countercultural spin on her religion. Short, sturdy and fearless, she was arrested in Chicago after trying to break through a police barricade at a demonstration against NATO in 2012. She was detained by Israeli soldiers in 2013 after helping Palestinians plant olive trees in the occupied West Bank, and arrested in South Korea in 2015 when protesting against the construction of an American naval base. Reznicek has been jailed around a dozen times for acts of civil disobedience: her longest stay behind bars was 72 days, in the spring of 2016, after being convicted for smashing the windows of an aerospace company in Nebraska which was making drones for the government.

Not long after Reznicek got out of jail, she turned her attention to the environment. Protecting the country's rivers emerged out of her childhood attachment to them and an interest she'd developed in indigenous spiritual traditions. "I was stepping out of the Jesus narrative into earth and sky," she said. She'd heard that the Dakota Access Pipeline would cross under the Mississippi river in south-east Iowa, just a few hours from where she grew up.

Eager to learn more, she headed to the protest at Standing Rock. The Native American-led movement's rallying cry – "Water is Life" – moved her. As a girl, she'd fled to the Raccoon river nearby whenever

things got bad with her mother, who was depressed and tried to kill herself more than once. Now, Reznicek's refuge was classified as one of the ten most endangered waterways in America, polluted by run-off from factory-farms and fields.

Back in Iowa, Reznicek did what she'd always done when she perceived an injustice. She acted. In late August she brought her guitar and sleeping bag to a muddy ditch near the Mississippi and put out a call for reinforcements. Hundreds responded: local farmers and families, out-of-town activists and a slight, dark-haired, serious young woman named Ruby Montoya.

Montoya was raised in Phoenix, Arizona, by her father, a prominent civil-rights lawyer. "He's Chicano and he got it on my radar as a kiddo that 'This is our land, the United States, before the white man'," Montoya told me. She appreciated her father's worldview but little else about him. He hit her from the time she was five years old, she said – "I had marks all over me" – and regularly berated her. When she was 18, she got a protection order against him. (Her father, Stephen Montoya, said he would not comment on the abuse allegations other than to say he loved his daughter and hoped for the best from her case.)

By 26 she was living in Boulder, Colorado, working as a nursery teacher. She loved her job but felt like she wasn't doing enough to make the world better. Like Reznicek, she scorned the superficiality of her neighbours. "Everything [in Boulder] was super-cool, everything is organic as long as you have the money for it," she said. "We weren't producing our own food. The community was all surface level, without any roots."

The tipping point came when she attended a session held by Standing Rock members about the threat the Dakota pipeline posed to clean water. She was appalled that so much oil would flow beneath one of the country's largest waterways. Finally, she'd found a way to "be of service", she said. A week later, she quit her job.

Like Reznicek, she started with a pilgrimage to Standing Rock. But as much as she admired the determination of the "water protectors" – the term the Standing Rock organisers preferred — she found the scene overwhelming. Thousands of people were camped out in tents and teepees across the grassy plains, and a few days before her arrival, private security guards had used dogs and pepper spray on protesters trying to enter a construction site. While there, Montoya saw the news about Mississippi Stand, Reznicek's smaller protest. Montoya had some family in Iowa, so she decided to check it out.

Arriving with her camera slung over her shoulder, Montoya began taking pictures almost immediately. Overnight she became the camp's unofficial media representative. Her footage of road blockades and protesters chained to digging equipment was posted to the group's Facebook page. Montoya admired Reznicek's commitment to "living her values". Reznicek was equally impressed by Montoya's willingness to do whatever was needed around the camp, and her quiet spirituality. Every morning, Montoya led a daily prayer for the camp, the Iroquois Thanksgiving address. "She had the ability to centre people, even in volatile intergroup situations," Reznicek said. "I continued to seek her out for that. Do that thing Ruby, that thing you do that makes us all calm."

Montoya had been at the camp for three weeks when county officers sent the protesters an eviction notice. Unfazed by the prospect of jail, Reznicek wanted to stay, but none of her fellow campers was willing to defy the order, including Montoya. Abandoned, a "super pissed" Reznicek headed off by herself to Standing Rock. Montoya joined a group taking the protest elsewhere along the pipeline route.

At Standing Rock, Reznicek spent hours round the campfire with a revered member of the Catholic Workers. The conversation emboldened her to intensify her protests and return to Iowa. There she found

Montoya along a tributary of the Mississippi. The two women trudged through knee-deep mud and snow to observe their fellow protesters, a couple of whom were blocking a road that didn't even lead to a construction site. "I don't know what I'm going to do," Montoya said despondently, "but I can't do this anymore."

Reznicek nodded in sympathy. She'd been thinking about ways to render the pipeline machines inoperable. If Montoya was interested, Reznicek could tell her more. Montoya needed little convincing. "Let's get the fuck out of here," she said.

Barely a month later, on a clear evening in November, Montoya and Reznicek stole through the dark in north-west Iowa. It was election day – Trump v Clinton – though the pair was so focused on their mission they hadn't realised it. Dressed all in black, the two women scanned the pipeline site: four excavators, a bulldozer and a crane loomed up in the moonlight.

They divided up the work. Montoya climbed up onto the machinery and put a coffee canister filled with oil-soaked rags on the seat. Reznicek followed with the matches. "The big one's mine," Montoya called out.

As the fires crackled, the women stood at a distance to admire their handiwork. "Holy shit," Reznicek whispered.

"Did you get everything?" Montoya whispered back. Reznicek remembered a pickaxe they'd brought and ran back to retrieve it. Then they sprinted across the muddy road and jumped into their car. The interior reeked of motor oil. With the headlights off, they headed home to the Catholic Worker house.

Reznicek was thrilled. They were protecting the environment – and she felt as though they had "pierced through the first layer of the patriarchy". Privately, Montoya was less triumphant. We committed arson, she thought as she got into bed. Arson is a crime.

The next morning, Montoya awoke to Cordaro's booming voice from downstairs. "Well, of course!" They found out. Oh shit! Montoya thought, I'm going to jail. But Cordaro was only reacting to the news that Donald Trump had been elected president.

Nonetheless, the women decided to pause their activities. Montoya's fear subsided after a few days, but they both knew that their actions were criminal. They wanted to think about it, particularly Montoya, who is the more logical and deliberate of the two. Was this new approach really the best one?

Radical, high-profile environmental action wasn't especially common at the time. In the late 1990s and early 2000s groups such as Earth Liberation Front set fire to power lines, a ski lodge and ranger station, but federal and state prosecutors eventually cracked down on such acts of destruction. In what was known as the "Green Scare", they indicted dozens of eco- and animal-rights activists – from an anarchist who torched three SUVs to highlight global warming, to an animal-rights campaigner who set fire to a McDonald's in Seattle. The wave of prosecutions and long prison sentences put a chill on the movement.

Reznicek and Montoya knew little about the Green Scare. Another concern seemed more important: the arson attacks had barely stalled the construction; at best, they delayed work for a few days. Reznicek had another idea. The Iowa Utilities Board, an agency that approved pipeline permits, was just two miles away from the Catholic Worker house. If they could convince the board that the pipeline was dangerous, maybe it would revoke the permit. In late November, Reznicek began a hunger strike outside the agency's headquarters, insisting that she would eat only once she had secured a meeting with the head of the utilities board, Geri Huser.

Montoya didn't agree with the change of tactics: "Jess was essentially starving herself in front of this board that basically doesn't give a shit." Nonetheless, she sat beside Reznicek for hours in the freezing cold, growing increasingly concerned as her friend's sharp-boned face became ever more gaunt. The hunger strike ended after ten days, when Reznicek was arrested for criminal trespassing. (She never got the meeting she wanted, and the press officer of the Iowa Utilities Board later wrote in an email to me that the protest left "no impressions" on him.)

As their next move hung in the balance, Montoya travelled to Standing Rock. What she saw there solidified her convictions: children sledged down a big hill as police officers with assault rifles patrolled around them. She was frightened for the kids. "I thought, we can do something else. We need to do something else.

Like Reznicek before her, Montoya said she had a breakthrough at Standing Rock. She was in the camp kitchen when a man there made a joke about sabotage. Montoya mentioned that a friend might be interested in trying something like that with the pipeline, and he told her he was a welder. It would be easy to burn holes in pipeline valves, which control how fast the oil flows. He could show them how, he said. All she'd need was an oxyacetylene torch.

Reznicek was enthusiastic when she heard. Finally, they'd be attacking the pipeline itself. It occurred to her that this might be a set-up – FBI informants have a history of inciting activists to commit crimes. But she brushed away her concern. (The FBI declined to comment.)

The man, whom the women refused to identify for fear of getting him in trouble, said he'd teach them to use the blow torch if they'd come to Denver. It took several days of practice, but they soon got the hang of it.

It had been pouring for hours one evening in March 2017. Violent thunderstorms had cut off power in the area. Sitting in a cheap hotel west of Iowa City, Reznicek and Montoya worried that they wouldn't be able to proceed. "We were like, 'Mother Earth, if you want this to happen, stop the rain,'" Montoya recalled. Apparently, she did. The rain eventually abated.

Reznicek and Montoya drove towards the pipeline. They got out of the car and dragged themselves towards their target, their feet sinking deep into the mud. When they arrived, Reznicek lit the torch. For a moment, they were blinded by the flame. A cow standing nearby mooed, and the women laughed. "Shhhh," Reznicek said, "we're trying to be on the down-low."

Everything happened so quickly, Montoya was surprised to find that she wasn't afraid. It took 15 seconds for Reznicek to make the hole, then the two of them rushed back to the car. They barely spoke on the ride back to the Catholic Worker house, amazed at how easy it was to do such damage.

They became more brazen, acting in broad daylight. Montoya served as the lookout and Reznicek did the piercing, wearing a ski mask, gloves and socks over her shoes so as not to leave footprints. "I saw that on TV," Reznicek said. "We are children of the USA." They cleaned houses to buy fuel for the torch, and plotted out their operations on a board, wiping it clean as they went.

The two of them got into a rhythm. They left their phones behind to avoid being tracked, and drove from site to site on gravel roads, smoking American Spirit cigarettes. The clock in the car was broken, so to keep track of time, they blasted on repeat a seven-minute song called "Build a Bridge" by an indigenous band, Nahko and Medicine for the People ("I torch my enemies [sic] house with a candle/In service forever, a mission to better…/Reclaim, recover, protect clean water"). The music drowned out their anxiety.

One day in particular, the two women felt as though their actions were being “affirmed by nature”, as Reznicek put it. At several valve sites they looked up to see horses keeping watch atop bluffs. Eagles swooped overhead. They read Native American bird myths aloud to each other. As they left one site, they spray-painted “ur children need water” and “Mni Wiconi”, or “Water is Life”, on a small shed. Working until dawn, they blow-torched six valves, stopping only when they ran out of supplies.

Near the end of April, Reznicek thought it might be fun to spend the night at the original Mississippi Stand. A local police officer, who recognised Reznicek, told them that they needed to move on (the officer, who asked not to be named, recalled the late-night encounter but not what was said). The women parked near an old schoolhouse and slept in their car. At around 3am, the policeman banged on the door.

“Get the fuck out of here right now,” the officer shouted, angrier than before. He’d just run into some private security guards who worked for the pipeline company and they’d told him about the sabotage across Iowa. “Don’t tell me you don’t know about the co-ordinated attacks,” he demanded.

Montoya didn’t say anything. Reznicek laughed and casually puffed a cigarette. “Geez, co-ordinated attacks, that sounds exciting.”

“Just stay out of this county,” the officer said. “Stay away from this pipeline, stay away from all pipelines.”

Reznicek put on a brave face that night, but she and Montoya were sure they’d been identified. Paranoia set in. Reznicek was convinced their phones were being monitored. They tried to stay away from the Catholic Worker house, lest, as Reznicek said, “people I loved would take the fall”. Montoya’s fear about going to jail came rushing back. She started talking about leaving for Mexico to avoid arrest.

But they kept going. Reznicek became “almost manic”, Montoya said, “wanting to act and act”. Montoya, who described herself as being in an anxiety-induced daze, couldn’t stop her. After each valve piercing, she burned sage in the car, as if to cleanse any spiritual trace of what they’d done. They drove long distances to clear their heads.

The pair had no idea whether they were significantly delaying the pipeline. They were too afraid to check the internet, in case their search history would later expose them, and they had read that many criminals get caught by returning to the scene of the crime.

Their last valve piercing was in early May 2017 in Wapello County in south-east Iowa. When Reznicek returned to the car, she smelled of oil. Oil wasn’t supposed to be flowing through the pipeline this far south. Had someone made a mistake? Had they? The last thing they wanted to do was cause an oil spill. This time, they drove farther than they ever had before, to Utah then through Nevada to California. Their stint as pipeline saboteurs was over.

Nearly three months later, in July 2017, Reznicek and Montoya stood shoulder-to-shoulder in front of the Iowa Utilities Board, the agency that approved the pipeline. A small group of reporters thrust microphones and cameras into their faces.

Montoya wore black shorts and a royal-blue T-shirt that read “Stop the Pipeline”. Ornamental grass brushed against her shins. Her face was wan and her thick, brown hair was rumpled, like she’d been up the night before, which she had. She bit her lip.

Reznicek, in a purple T-shirt and hiking trousers, was used to speaking to the media and seemed less tense. This was the same spot where she'd staged her hunger strike the winter before. She'd peed in the grass here for ten days straight. I helped grow you, she thought, laughing to herself.

Montoya and Reznicek believed their arrest to be imminent. Even though the pipeline company had yet to acknowledge the sabotage publicly, the pair had learned from a sympathetic reporter that TigerSwan, the pipeline's security firm, had identified them as suspects. This press conference could be their last chance to draw attention to the environmental implications of the project.

Reznicek spoke over the cars roaring down the highway: "The Dakota Access Pipeline is an issue that affects the entire nation and the people who are subject to its rule." "For some reason", Montoya continued, her voice steady, "the courts and ruling government value property and profit over our inherent human rights to clean water and land."

The women read alternately from a joint statement, describing their actions in some detail. "If there are any regrets," Montoya concluded, stumbling over her words, "it's that we did not act enough." The two chanted in unison, "Water is life, oil is death."

"How long are you prepared to go to prison for?" a reporter called out to Montoya, who frowned, looked like she was about to say something, and turned away. Then she and Reznicek picked up crowbars and began to jemmy the letters off the utility-board sign. State troopers posted at the scene handcuffed them and led them away.

Reznicek and Montoya spent only one night at the Polk County jail. They were charged with damaging the sign, but nothing more. Instead, just as they'd hoped, publications across America picked up the press conference. Some environmental groups condemned their vandalism, others stood with them. In solidarity, activists in Washington state chained themselves across train tracks to prevent the passage of oil freight.

Only weeks later, however, Reznicek and Montoya awoke on a cool August morning in the Catholic Worker house to the sound of pounding on the front door. "The feds are here," Cordaro shouted. Montoya felt the terror of her childhood rear up, she said, but managed to suppress it. "I immediately got into this really calm space." She opened her bedroom door and held her hands up.

The women sat shivering on the front porch while some 30 FBI agents raided the house. Reznicek worried that they'd find marijuana. It's just weed, chill out, Montoya thought, annoyed. They have bigger fish to fry. Several hours later, the officers left with many of their belongings. When they met the state archaeologist that afternoon to discuss the status of native burial grounds near the pipeline, they turned up barefoot – the agents had taken their shoes and socks. Cordaro responded to the events by posting a poem to the national Catholic Worker message group: "Today the Feds raided my home, Where I lived with two of the bravest, noblest warriors I have ever known. And they are half my age and have twice my Spirit! And they are girls!"

Once again, "the girls" were not taken into custody. They embarked on a speaking tour. During a meeting at Iowa City library, they told a small crowd that the destruction had been a last resort after "endless" public meetings, rallies and petitions. They planned to fight any criminal charges using the "necessity defence", whereby someone admits to a crime but argues that it was necessary to prevent a larger one. "If a building were burning and there's a baby inside, I'm going to break a window and get the baby outside," Reznicek said. "It's somebody else's property, but there's a baby inside and the building is burning. C'mon people!"

In the meantime, the pipeline company had begun its own legal action to stop the various protests and recoup the cost of the damage. Kelcy Warren, the chief executive, said on national television that the sabotage had delayed the pipeline by 90 days and cost the firm millions of dollars. “What they did to us is wrong, and they’re going to pay for it,” he said. The company filed a lawsuit against Reznicek, Montoya and several environmental NGOs, arguing that the groups had incited the women to commit “illegal terrorist acts”. Warren later told an industry conference that people who put holes in pipelines need to be “removed from the gene pool”. (The company declined to answer questions for this story.)

The election of Trump as president had rocked the environmental movement. In January 2017, less than a month into his term, he issued an executive memorandum directing the Army Corps of Engineers to conclude an environmental review that had been delaying work on the Dakota pipeline. The same day, he gave the go ahead for the Keystone XL pipeline, which would transport oil from Canada’s tar sands to the Gulf Coast of Texas. In November that year, the Department of Justice vowed to forcefully prosecute anyone who damaged a pipeline.

Reznicek reckoned the pair should go “underground”. Montoya agreed. They adopted fake names: Reznicek chose “Olive”, because she liked the sound of it; Montoya picked “Logan”, one of her great-grandmother’s names. For a time they stayed in a motor-home belonging to a family in Arizona, but they slipped away after their host noticed that Montoya wasn’t responding to her alias: “Y’all are on the run, aren’t you?” They tried living in a Catholic community in California, but they didn’t see eye to eye. “They had their own agenda, and it was like subjugating women to become child-bearers for the Messiah,” Montoya said, laughing ruefully.

Being on the road was stressful. “A storm of emotional stuff was just coming to the surface for both of us,” Reznicek said. One bitterly cold night they found themselves camping in a field in Arkansas. They were huddling together trying to keep warm when Montoya began to dissociate. It felt as though the darkness of the night was “infiltrating” her. Reznicek felt desolate herself, but was overwhelmed with compassion for her friend. I’d carry her physically to the ends of the Earth, she thought.

During the heady days of the pipeline piercings, Montoya thought she might be falling in love with Reznicek. “Jess just had this presence,” she said. But she never mentioned it. She knew how single-mindedly her “comrade” was focused on their activism. In the months since, the women had spoken openly about how entwined they were, almost like lovers – they’d been together nearly every day for the past year. It had become too much. They decided to part, hoping that they could re-establish their independence.

At first it didn’t stick. Reznicek followed Montoya down to New Orleans. Montoya took the opportunity to declare her feelings. But Reznicek knew that she wasn’t in the right frame of mind for a relationship. “I had enough self-awareness to know I wasn’t doing well and would cause hurt to another person,” Reznicek said. They split again, but agreed to meet six months later at a burrito stand in Utah near canyons both women considered sacred.

Testament to their bond, they both turned up at the food stall in June 2018, but in very different frames of mind. Reznicek felt recharged and arrived with specific plans to take down other pipelines. Montoya had spent much of their trial separation wandering the streets of New Orleans, homeless, jobless and struggling with her sense of detachment. She was done with creeping around construction sites. Reznicek and Montoya realised they no longer had a shared future.

Montoya moved back to Arizona, where she taught at schools that emphasised environmentalism in their curricula. She tried to avoid conversations that led back to her sabotage. When her sixth-graders got tearful about the destruction of the Amazon rainforest or the animals that died in the Australian wildfires, she

talked to them about solutions, such as planting trees to prevent desertification, rather than stoking their anger. She had come to regret her activities with Reznicek, she told me: “I have a better picture now of what is helpful.”

Reznicek’s renewed enthusiasm for radical protest also took a sharp turn. She joined a Benedictine monastery in Duluth, Minnesota, as an intern, and considered becoming a nun. After the chaos of the previous few years, she appreciated the quiet of the cloister. The elderly nuns were grateful for a young person’s energy and help.

The women’s new-found serenity didn’t last long. In September 2019, over two years after the confession, federal agents arrested Montoya in her home in Flagstaff. Reznicek surrendered to the police four days later. The pair were charged with nine crimes related to their efforts to damage the pipeline and faced up to 110 years in prison. It isn’t clear why the government took so long to build its case, though lawyers for both women said prosecutors may have been looking for co-conspirators.

Reznicek and Montoya were released with ankle monitors and told not to communicate. During such a period, prosecutors often try to pressure co-defendants to testify against each other and indeed, a little over a year later, Montoya agreed to co-operate with the FBI. She wasn’t legally allowed to talk about what she’d said to the government, but she told me that she thought she’d been manipulated by Reznicek and Cordaro. (Cordaro said that he had no idea what the women had been doing.) “I was led to believe that it wasn’t that big of a deal,” Montoya told me. “I was the young new kid, the sidekick. She had the power, and I loved her. I still love her.” Montoya maintained that this made her less culpable. She sounded more bitter than I’d ever heard her.

In February this year both women pleaded guilty to a single count of conspiracy to damage an energy facility. (The government dropped the other charges.) They had decided to abandon the necessity defence, which had never been successfully used by environmental activists at trial. They were to be sentenced separately.

At her sentencing hearing in June, the federal prosecutor portrayed Reznicek as a criminal whose egregious actions fell under the Patriot Act’s definition of terrorism and therefore deserved an increased sentence. She had risked the lives of pipeline workers and firefighters, he said, and contended that since pipelines are subject to extensive regulation, attacks on them are “clearly designed to intimidate” the government. He cited a piece Reznicek had written for a Catholic Worker publication in 2017, in which she referred to the American government as an “oppressive regime” and argued: “It’s time to dismantle the White House.”

Reznicek’s lawyers countered that she was a fundamentally well-meaning person whose passion for protecting the environment had perhaps gone too far. The women’s only “victim” was the pipeline transportation company, one of them said. Terrorism was usually applied to crimes such as firebombing or kidnapping.

Finally, Reznicek herself spoke. Just outside the courtroom, old maps on the walls depicted the Des Moines river where the water has become undrinkable because a mass of algae had grown, fed by fertiliser and manure run-off. “I’ve had a special and strong relationship with water,” Reznicek began. “The Des Moines and Raccoon are contaminated. It’s a really personal issue.” She began to cry. “That is why I took the actions I did.”

The judge conceded that Reznicek’s goal of cleaner water was “laudable”. But that was beside the point. She agreed with the prosecutor that her actions qualified as terrorism under the law. Without significant punishment, the women might continue to inspire copycat activism. “Deterrence is at the front of the

court's mind," she said. The judge sentenced Reznicek to eight years in prison: three for criminal conspiracy, five more with the terrorism enhancement. Reznicek and Montoya would also be required to pay nearly $3.2m to the pipeline company as restitution, a debt that will hang over them after they're released.

When the judge was finished speaking, Reznicek rose from her seat, turned to the crowd and blew a kiss. Cordaro met her eyes, then bowed low.

Montoya was due to be sentenced in early September, not long after Reznicek. At the last minute she got a new lawyer, a criminal litigator called Daphne Silverman, who the judge granted more time to prepare a motion to revoke Montoya's guilty plea. Silverman claimed that Montoya's first lawyer sought to make her a "martyr" for the movement, and that her second represented her inadequately. There had been no investigation into the possibility that the welder who taught the women to burn valves was a government plant. If he was, then Montoya could claim entrapment.

Silverman also argued that the level of trauma Montoya endured as a child made her susceptible to coercion, and thus reduced her responsibility. Most significantly, she said that the oil-pipeline company had vastly overstated the losses it incurred. If true, that would mean the women should not have been tried in federal court.

Reznicek is now in her third month in Waseca federal women's prison in Minnesota. Montoya's defence has made her "so angry", she told me over the phone. She completely rejects the idea that the younger woman was her pawn. "I did not do what she's saying, not anything like that," she said. "Our journeys were so intertwined. Despite what she wants to claim, she was very much a part of it."

It has been a shock to go from living in the monastery to being crowded into a dormitory with 175 other women. "For the first few weeks I did not sleep," Reznicek told me. "I was so overstimulated by the close proximity: bunk beds as far as the eye can see, all on top of each other."

In the meantime, the American government remains ambivalent towards fossil fuels. President Joe Biden has cancelled the Keystone XL pipeline, but other projects have gone ahead, including the massive Line 3 pipeline replacement project, which runs from Canada to America.

Many environmental activists consider the continued expansion of oil infrastructure to be the real crime. The offence of "ecocide" was proposed as far back as 1972, and revived this June by a global panel of lawyers. They hope their definition of illegal damage to ecosystems will be adopted by the International Criminal Court in The Hague. As a branch of 350.org, an environmental group, tweeted in response to Reznicek's sentence: "How many years do you think ANY fossil fuel CEO will serve for knowingly destroying our planet's climate?"

Peter Kalmus is a leading American climate scientist who has never met Reznicek or Montoya but followed their case closely. "The demise of human civilisation is certain unless we change course," he told me after Reznicek was sentenced. He was struggling to absorb the court's verdict against Reznicek. "They were taking strong action to save lives. They were acting from love, not from hate." He started to cry. "Sorry, it's too much for me. They couldn't be further from terrorists in my opinion. It just couldn't be further from the truth."

In an appeal filed in early November, Reznicek's lawyer argued that the terrorism enhancement had been wrongly applied. Reznicek told me that she isn't counting on the courts to rule in her favour. Instead, she's trying to "set up a life" for herself at Waseca.

Three times a week she visits the chapel media centre, where it's quiet, "to read, study or watch 'Narnia', something fun". She corresponds daily with one of the nuns from the monastery she stayed in before she was jailed. She has applied for a programme training service dogs and is doing a sociology degree through a correspondence course. Recently, she signed up to shovel snow on the prison grounds. It's no Raccoon river, but she'll be outside, under the open sky.

November 18th - Update From Jessica's Support Crew

As we told you in our last update on November 4th Jessica's legal team filed their brief appealing her sentence and the governments application of the terrorism enhancement.

In the week following the filing of Jessica's the following exciting developments occurred:

- 4 Amicus (Friend of the court) Briefs were filed in support of Jessica each one elaborating additional legal arguments as to why the use of the terrorism enhancement is Jessica's case was inappropriate. The groups that filed the briefs included the Climate Defense Project, the Center for Protest Law & Litigation, Honor the Earth, Climate Disobedience Center, CodePink, The National Lawyers Guild, Water Protector Legal Collective, Catholic Social Action, and The Center for Constitutional Rights. If you are interested in reading a summary of each brief or the brief itself please look at the bottom of this email.
- *The Economist* Published this article about Jessica titled "Two Environmentalists sabotaged an oil pipeline in America. Are they Terrorists or Heroes? [SEE ABOVE]
- The last interview with Jessica before she turned herself into federal prison 3 months ago has been published.

Below are some ways you can support Jessica and our campaign to free her (all available at **supportjessicareznicek.com**):

- Sign the Petition
- For representatives of supportive organizations sign this form
- Purchase a T-shirt

Here is a summary of the 4 amicus briefs that were filed in support of Jessica, click the hyperlink to read the full brief:

On November 10, the Climate Defense Project, the Center for Protest Law & Litigation, Honor the Earth, Climate Disobedience Center, and Code Pink filed an amicus brief which argues that Jessica's Reznicek's actions do not in any way meet the legal definition of terrorism. The brief explains why the federal terrorism enhancement is doctrinally inappropriate, why the District Court's reliance on Ms. Reznicek's public statements violated her First Amendment rights, and why the sentence was overly harsh when considered in context of the larger movement for community self-determination and resistance to fossil fuel projects that has swept the country over the last decade. You can read the brief here.

On November, 12, The National Lawyers Guild (NLG) and Water Protector Legal Collective (WPLC) filed an amicus brief which argues that the sentence imposed on Jessica is unduly harsh and unjust and harms not only her but many others as well, especially Indigenous communities. In this brief they write, "A large portion of the world's remaining natural resources—including minerals, water, and potential energy sources—are located on Indigenous lands, which means natural resource extraction increasingly occurs in or near traditional Indigenous areas. Because extractive industry and the climate crisis have a disproportionate effect on Indigenous Peoples and lands, the sentence applied in Ms. Reznicek's case could have a disproportionate impact on Indigenous frontline defenders struggling to protect the water, Earth, and cultural survival of their communities, traditional lands, and sacred sites." The brief writes, "Sentencing Reznicek under a federal terrorism enhancement for acts of civil disobedience targeting private property, sets an alarming and dangerous precedent for climate justice movements and endangers Indigenous and front-line defenders most impacted by worsening climate conditions."

On November, 12, the Center for Constitutional Rights filed an amicus brief in which renowned international law scholar Professor and Dean Sudha Setty, set out in detail why Jessica's actions are not terrorism. Looking to core international definitions of terrorism by the United Nations and others, the authors explain "Jessica Reznicek's criminal acts are unequivocally not terrorism, as there is no evidence that she had any intent to cause death or serious bodily injury; rather the evidence suggests that she took pains to ensure her actions would not cause physical harm to any individuals." The brief notes that "The broad United States definition of terrorism allows for problematic results." and concludes, "If Jessica Reznicek's acts can be punished as terrorism, the United States will have moved so far past the international consensus as to be operating in a completely different realm."

On November 10, Catholic Social Action, a campaign for Catholic social teaching,filed an amicus brief which argued that Jessica's actions were not terrorism. They encouraged the court to look at her actions in the context of a long line of Catholic social teaching which condemns environmental exploitation and the storied history of faith-based actions by the Catholic Worker movement.

These briefs all asks the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals to reverse Ms. Reznicek's sentence, which used a federal terrorism enhancement to arrive at an eight-year prison term and over three million dollars in restitution in response to protests by Ms. Reznicek against the Dakota Access Pipeline in 2016 and 2017. The same week Reznicek reported to prison, the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change released their Climate Report signaling "Code Red" for Humanity. These amicus briefs were filed as the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) wrapped up in Glasgow, Scotland, and perceived widely as a failure to address the urgency and severity of climate change.

15 Nov - Recent Filings in Eric King's Case

Eric's lawyers with the Civil Liberties Defense Center recently filed the "Defendant's final argument" in support of amended motion to suppress.

MORE:
This is the brief requested by Judge Martinez at the end of the October 14, 2021 evidentiary hearing on Eric's amended motion to suppress, in which Eric testified after Bureau of Prisons (BOP) staff. You can read it at cldc.org

It is 20 pages and details testimony given by Eric regarding the torture he experienced in the wake of being assaulted by a BOP Lieutenant. Facebook does not allow PDFs to be posted but you can request this document (and the government's post-hearing brief) by messaging us and we will send it your way: facebook.com/SupportEricKing

We also posted a few screenshots of the documents. As of right now, there is no trial date. Both sides have submitted briefs regarding the amended motion to suppress and there is a discovery dispute based on the government not giving Eric's lawyers specific documents which they need.

Eric is still in segregation in FCI Englewood's SHU and still on a mail restriction that only allows him to get mail from his immediate family. We will be posting new books you can send Eric on his wishlist soon.

21 Nov - Peltier Podcast Wins 2021 Human Rights Audio Award

It's official. The LEONARD: Political Prisoner *podcast was honored with Duke University's first ever Human Rights Audio Documentary Award sponsored by the Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library.*

MORE:
Winners are invited to present their work at Duke.

The Human Rights Audio Documentary Award seeks to support outstanding documentary artists exploring human rights and social justice and expand the audio holdings in the archive for long-term preservation and access.

The theme of this year's inaugural Human Rights Audio Award was language and human rights. *LEONARD* engages language as part of their storytelling strategy. The podcast reviews the history of tribal names such as the Sioux, explaining how such names can be used to foster a sense of self-identity or as a tool of repression.

Peltier, through the voice of actor Peter Coyote, explains how as a child at an Indian Boarding School he was forbidden from speaking his own language, "You could say that the first infraction in my criminal career was speaking my own language, there's an act of violence for you." Weaving together historical research, oral histories, and contemporary voices, *LEONARD* utilizes the strengths of the podcast medium to present complex histories and their aftermath. More here.

We are grateful to Duke for the special recognition and the opportunity to work with a team of archivists at the Rubinstein Library to preserve the audio series and related supporting documents for years to come!

ABOUT THE PODCAST

Leonard Peltier has spent the last 45 years in prison for a crime he didn't commit. This is the story of how he ended up behind bars, and the people who've been working for decades to set him free.

LEONARD: Political Prisoner blends true crime with social justice to uncoil the astonishing series of events that led to Peltier's arrest and conviction, the extraordinary efforts to free him, and the equally extraordinary efforts by the FBI to keep him behind bars. With a mix of archival audio, new interviews, and narration by Emmy Award-winner Peter Coyote, we revisit the facts of Peltier's case and explore its repercussions in the context of the latest world-wide demands for racial justice inspired by the murder of George Floyd.

Season One (eight episodes) contextualizes why the deadly FBI firefight broke out on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation on June 26, 1975, and takes listeners on location with fact witness Edgar Bear Runner, a Lakota tribal historian who intervened as a mediator on the day of the shootout to quell massive bloodshed.

Season Two (in progress) explores the flawed FBI investigation, Leonard's problematic extradition from Canada and the ensuing criminal trials. It will culminate with our interview with 2021 Pulitzer Prize winning author, Louise Erdrich, who attended Peltier's trial in Fargo in 1977.

22 Nov - Anarchist Prisoner Dan Baker Moved to Tennessee; Addresses Supporters; "Please Send Letters and Books to Read!"

Anarchist prisoner Dan Baker issues a statement after being moved to a facility in Memphis, Tennessee.

MORE:
Hello Everyone!

This is a group message to all my friends and family. I am now in Memphis.

Please send letters and books to read! I lost most of my books because the mail room refused to send them with me. I was only allowed to keep 5 books out of nearly 100! I really need books because I am on

lockdown here for no good reason – they said it was quarantine at first but we all challenged that because most of us are vaccinated, having been told we would not be quarantined if we got vaccinated. Then medical staff tried documenting that we all "refused to vaccinate" – but we are already documented as vaccinated! I have a vaccine card with the date I was vaccinated at FDC Tallahassee, and it's in the BOP database.

So now they are saying it's because they don't have enough beds here. So if they don't have enough beds we should not be locked in our cells 24/7 for 3 days at a time and only let out once every 72 hours for 30 minutes to call, shower and use the computer. This is exactly why they are closing the Atlanta US Penitentiary- they violated everyone's constitutional rights. If they don't have the room or resources to legally house so many inmates they should release nonviolent prisoners and people whose "crime" had no victim. So we are organizing to file informal and formal grievances, BP8, 9 and 10 forms.

We are not being provided with cleaning supplies and there is black mold growing in this unit, "Shelby-B." I have not received my property with my few books I was allowed to keep, and my spiritual books and meditation beads from Tallahassee FDC. It took 9 months to get those. I have also not had access to dental floss for the past several weeks of being shuffled around the country – Tally to Atlanta, then back to Florida in Jacksonville Airport, then to Cimarron in Oklahoma then to FCI Memphis in Tennessee. Flying COn Air was a grueling experience as they only fed us 4 pieces of bread for a 12 hour trip. The marshals lost a guy and the other prisoners were ready to riot. The guards as Cimarron were walking out (4 of them quit and the place is being shut down for good) because they didn't know we were coming and they didn't have staff or room for us there.

At Cimarron they fed us honey buns from the store because they didn't have food for us at first. I'm not supposed to eat food made with eggs and they didn't accommodate my religious diet until the day before I left. I had to protest (peacefully) to get that. They also were refusing to treat two inmates with kidney stones and a diabetic man was not receiving diabetic meals or treatment there. Atlanta was the same, with 24/7 lockdowns and only letting us out for one hour every 72 hours. The guard here just yelled that I have 17 minutes left, and I haven't been able to reach [people] on the phone and I don't have anyone else's phone number due to losing my contact book to Tallahassee FDC's targeted harassment. I'll try to write some down from the computer.

The commissary here has refused to fill our orders despite everyone seeing money on their accounts. They say they'll do it next week, but they put a $30 restriction on new arrivals. Please tell everyone thank you for sending money, I am planning on buying some of the nice vitamins they sell here, much better than the vitamins at FDC Tallahassee and necessary for vegetarians with unhealthy prison food. I will also be buying cold weather clothes as they don't provide enough clothes for people here and TN is very cold in the winter. It's only fall and it's already cold. I'll also be replacing my drinking bottle because they refused to allow me to ship mine with my property.

Please send me contacts because the mail room at Tally FDC refused to allow me to add my address book to my property despite having receipts for it.

I have not heard back about the status of my appeals yet, but we are appealing my sentencing and conviction. I'd like to have a more involved part in that process.

I am applying for a job and for programs and education here, apprenticeships and job training.

I can receive visitors here so please come and visit! We get a max of 2 visitors at a time for 2 hours and there is no contact allowed.

I'm working out with my cell mate to get big and we are meditating!

Well I think that's everything for now! Thank you for standing by me and for being my friends, family and comrades, and for being in my corner! It really means the world to me and I owe you big time.

23 Nov - The Wages of Whistleblowing

Last month, after an excruciatingly long wait in a regional jail, drone whistleblower Daniel Hale was finally transferred to a federal prison facility.

MORE:
In most respects, this was a significant upgrade in living conditions. But it also meant that Daniel was placed in the restrictive "Communications Management Unit" (CMU) -- one of the lesser-known Kafkaesque legacies of the Bush administration's War on Terror. These facilities have stricter limits on correspondence, and much heavier surveillance than other facilities. The effect is to distance Daniel from friends and supporters, and to impede his contact with the outside world at a time when drone strikes have come under closer scrutiny from mainstream journalists than ever before. With the belated media attention, more Americans saw what Daniel had been trying to tell them for years. We may never get a full accounting of how many innocent lives, how many whole families were destroyed in those years the government spent prosecuting a voice of conscience instead of admitting the truth about civilian casualties in drone warfare.

Daniel's journey took him to the dark heart of the War on Terror abroad, and as reward for blowing the whistle, he has been sent to its darkest corner on American soil, a facility that has been dubbed "Guantanamo North". This will be his first Thanksgiving incarcerated, after struggling to live under the shadow of an Espionage Act prosecution for the past seven years.

I hope you'll write to Daniel, using the mailing address and guidelines here. Communication through the CMU can be slow and cumbersome, but he deeply appreciates hearing from you. We also urge supporters to donate to his welcome home fundraiser to cover his debts and prison expenses so that he can start fresh and finally move forward with his life upon release.

Daniel's prosecution is one of the most egregious cases of retaliation and repression I have witnessed -- it is exactly these kinds of cases that led us to start WHISPeR. Our base of small donors has allowed us the independence to support clients like Daniel, when no one else can or will. We are the only organization dedicated to providing direct legal representation for national security whistleblowers who lack the financial means or the mainstream political support to defend themselves against the full fury of the U.S. government.

26 Nov - Why Eric Adams Doesn't Understand Anarchism – Or the NYPD

A response from the Metropolitan Anarchist Coordinating Council (MACC-NYC) to mayor-elect and former NYPD officer and Republican, Eric Adams, attacking anarchists.

MORE:
by Metropolitan Anarchist Coordinating Council NYC (*It's Going Down*)
Eric Adams is raising the alarm about the NYPD. In his interview this week, he pulled no punches in describing the "professionals…many of them from outside the city," who come into New York solely to "create violence." We couldn't have said it better ourselves, Mr. Mayor-Elect, and honestly, we were surprised to hear a former cop take on his old colleagues so accurately!

Wait. Hold on, we just got a text. Ah. It appears Adams was actually referring to “anarchists,” not cops. Our bad.

You can see why we would be confused. Over fifty percent of NYPD officers live outside of New York City – they really are out-of-towners. In contrast, we’ve had a thriving and homegrown anarchist scene here for a few hundred years, from the founding of anarchist “intentional communities” in the nineteenth century (right near Union Square!), through Emma Goldman’s residency and activism in the late 1800s, to so-called “Ferrer Schools” founded in the early 1900s, to the anarchist-affiliated squats of the 1980s, and right up to the present day. Anyone who comes to a MACC meeting (no cops, please!) will happily find fellow members from across the five boroughs. Anarchists are and always have been a thriving, vibrant part of the fabric of New York. We are real New Yorkers – certainly realer than the cops who drive in a few days a week from their Suffolk County McMansions.

Adams also, bizarrely, claimed that anarchists are “white men,” which would surely come as a shock to the many female, non-binary, Black, and brown anarchists of New York City. Come to a protest – they are as diverse as New York itself! The NYPD has only 15% Black officers in a city where one-quarter of the population is Black. Again, Adams is focused on the wrong target.

As for “professionals,” well, we anarchists don’t do this for money. Have you met an anarchist, Mr. Adams? A lot of us don’t have two pennies to rub together, and we didn’t become anarchists to get rich. Meanwhile, the NYPD enjoys salaries significantly higher than other city workers who are forced to live in our overpriced city. With overtime (which the City pays out without question), even newbie officers can make over $100,000. As Bloomberg News has put it: “Even before applying for a job, potential recruits to the New York City Police Department learn of a way to double their pay.” The highest paid cops here can pull in over $600,000 in a good year. Nice work if you can get it!

And finally, who is really “creating violence” in this City? If any anarchists have been arrested for physical assault recently, we haven’t heard about it. In contrast, in 2020 the city closed out a whopping 2,813 excessive force complaints against officers. Indeed, New York’s Attorney General is currently suing the NYPD for the violence used against protestors last year. Every week, we read a new story in the news about an officer using an illegal chokehold, or roughing someone up for recording them. And unlike anarchists, who will get arrested if they sneeze the wrong way, cops are almost never punished for their brutality.

So, Mr. Adams, who exactly are these “out of town professionals causing violence” you speak of? You seem to find it useful to blame anarchists for anything you don’t like, in a distinctly Trumpian fashion. Perhaps instead of trying to distract, confuse, and scare New Yorkers, you could address why our city has become a playground for the wealthy with the poor left to rot, and why our government has decided that police are untouchable, even for the worst abuses of power. (And also, maybe you could explain why you’re accepting private jet rides from Steve Bannon associate and crypto billionaire Brock Pierce!) Respectfully, until you understand even the first thing about anarchists or anarchism, you should decline comment, or risk again looking like a fool.

28 Nov - The Shoatz Family Needs Our Support

Please donate for ongoing medical care of recently released political prisoner Russell Maroon Shoatz: ***gofund.me/14fb0f33***

MORE:

First and foremost my siblings Sharon, Russell and, myself, would like to thank you for your continued support.

Maroon's time with us isn't long; therefore I come to you for assistance. With your financial support, Maroon's granddaughter and great grands were able to meet their grandfather. Their first attempt wasn't granted because Maroon had a three hour medical treatment. Eventually the grands were able to visit Maroon, and are looking forward to visiting again.

Presently it's been an emotional rollercoaster; the reality of losing my father is real. He's no longer in prison, but at night I cry, often reliving that humble day when Maroon was released to HOSPICE CARE: I know he won't be with us for long, he's losing weight, grumpy, yet very caring.
I'd like to thank everyone for your phone calls, the visits, kind words, the past campaign support, and your financial assistance
Maroon spent 49 years in prison, 23 years in solitary confinement, presently Battling Stage Four Cancer

28 Nov - Prisoners of the State, You Are Not Forgotten!

When was the last time you wrote a letter to a prisoner? From animal rights and eco struggle to anti racist, anarchist and anti fascist prisoners, many folks are locked up due to their political fight.

MORE:
via *Unoffensive Animal*
Sending dissenting activists to prison is a fairly common tactic by governments, not only in an attempt to silence those taking action, but also to inflict fear and doubt in others who might consider doing the same.

For that reason, supporting political prisoners is not only a necessary act of solidarity with those incarcerated, it also is a way of ensuring that those who are not being targeted by the state feel that if the time ever comes they will also be supported.

Today, grab yourself some paper and write a letter to a prisoner. Write to someone you've written before, or write to a complete stranger, that does not matter! But ensure you write a letter to a prisoner and open a new window within their concrete walls.

If you don't know what to say or you've never written to someone incarcerated, simply tell them about your day, or about the last time you went for a walk in nature or a moment in your life that made you very happy. It doesn't matter, simply talk to them about anything and everything except for maybe their case (specially if they are awaiting trial) or anything that could be understood as illegal.

Every prison (and sometimes just some prisoners) have mail restrictions. These vary vastly but for the most part, if they are allowed to receive mail the safest way to send it is on white paper and using black ink. You can check on specific prisoner support groups to know if the person you're writing to has restrictions. If they don't, colorful postcards, news clippings and photos will always be a wonderful addition to your letters!

If by any chance you feel the need to understand why we stand against prisons, against judges and against the police, we cannot recommend this read any more effusively: **dysophia.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Dys5-WhatAboutTheRapistsWeb2.pdf**

3 Dec - Metropolitan Anarchist Coordinating Council (MACC) General Assembly

WHAT: General Assembly

WHEN: 6:30pm, Friday, December 3rd
WHERE: Online (details below)
COST: FREE

MORE:
We will be hosting another "Virtual" General Assembly—lookout in your various Working Group platforms, e-mail listservs, Loomio, et cetera for details on how to join in and visit macc.nyc

General Assemblies are the most ideal place for new folks to plug-in to MACC, learn about our projects and ongoing efforts, and connect to organizers. We encourage everyone to come with ideas about what they would like to see for future campaigns or actions and what direction they'd like MACC to take to build a more powerful anarchist movement. Especially in our current context, when renewed attention has mixed repression with struggles for racial justice, abolition, and a humane economy. There will be a 6:30-7PM orientation for folks who would like to get connected and learn more about MACC's structure and history.

Accessibility statement: This is a virtual event at this time, which usually takes place on Zoom, although Jitsi is also an option if requested. We don't currently have ASL or language interpretation in use; we can do close-captioning. For closed captioning it is helpful, if possible, to coordinate that in advance so we can plan for someone to come to an event prepared to do that. We can coordinate in advance using the accessibility question on this RSVP, the email info@macc.nyc, or at the beginning of the meeting we will do a check-in and we encourage anyone who is comfortable doing so to use that time to whatever extent is desirable to them to share or request anything that will help them to experience a greater level of comfort and/or ability to engage fully in the event.

Please review these documents before coming: macc.nyc/organizing macc.nyc/safer-spaces