

RECLAIM THE NIGHT

On the evening of 22 October, 150 women marched through central Oxford to 'Reclaim the Night'. Why? Because women cannot go out at night without worrying about the threat of rape. This is unacceptable. Each year in the UK, 3 million women suffer sexual violence, and each week 2 women are killed by their current or former partner.

Reclaim the Night (RtN) marches are held all over the world. Oxford *RtNs* in the 1980s attracted hundreds of women, and have restarted in the last few years, with marches growing bigger each year. Their message is simple: **women have the right to walk the streets without the threat of rape limiting their movements and crippling their freedom.**

RtN believes that we all have the power to help end sexual violence. It is organised by men and women, with the women-only march followed by a mixed rally. It raises money for the local *Oxford Rape Crisis* centre, which supports women and girls affected by sexual violence.

oxfordfeminist.ox4.org
oxfordrapecrisis.net

OUR POLITICS

The Ox-Fly is written to inform, inspire and aid community struggles. It is made by *Anarchists in Oxford (AIO)*. We think society would be better if we made the decisions that affect us **ourselves**, instead of being controlled by bosses and bankers.

We see representative "democracy" as a scam; we don't see how voting for someone once every 5 years amounts to democracy – especially since politicians, whatever their ideals, **always end up serving business interests once they gain any real power.** We think this is inevitable; that whenever a handful of people wield power they end up abusing it.

Instead of using parliament, we encourage people to take direct action together, seeing this as the most practical way to create a society ruled **not by profit but organised to meet human needs.** We aim to show positive alternatives and debate the root causes of the problems we face. All letters, queries and contributions to aio@riseup.net.

POOL IN PERIL

The council are not only demolishing our livelihoods – while lining their own pockets – they are also just stupid. The decision to close *Temple Cowley Pool* is a clear example.

They want to demolish the swimming pool in Cowley and build one in Blackbird Leys. **Not only is it a disaster for the community, it's also a massive waste of our money;** £200,000 just on checking out the options! It's a popular pool; 140,000 people a year use its facilities. Surveys suggest many people who use it wouldn't travel to the Blackbird Leys pool instead. This is especially true of the women-only nights – the most popular session. The council has been typically shady, giving dodgy figures for the costs, and providing only the most pathetic excuse for a 'consultation'.

But the community is fighting back! A campaign has held demos and got 10,000+ petition signatures. While, as anarchists, we don't see much point in petitions & lobbying, which politicians often ignore, this does show the strength of feeling against this idiotic, destructive closure. We believe sustained direct action can save the pool if we make it too costly for them to carry out their plans.

Check out: tiny.cc/savetcp

GROUP FOCUS: ART OF ACTIVISM

Art of activism are an Oxford based art collective hoping to bring creativity out onto the streets and raise awareness that art can play a role in social change. We **recognise the creativity of all people, not just 'artists'.** We also recognise that in a society where the state encourages markets and profits over people and relationships, the creativity of most people is suppressed.

In this atmosphere we need to take responsibility for bringing creativity into our **own** lives, since support from above is not available. Even if it were, it might involve limits and barriers to the creative process; authority has always struggled with the arts as it recognises their **capacity for subversion.**

One important feature of our group is that we value the process of creating art more than the end result. Creating art is a process that can **bring people together, break down barriers and educate everyone involved.** We do not fetishise gallery space as a goal; we are more interested in involving as many people as possible and bringing about social change.

We want to see **strangers talking to one another**, creating art together, coming to the same conclusions while feeding those thoughts into a creative process – a process that is open and easy to access for all. Projects like our next piece – *Democracy Outside* on 26th Nov in Bonn Square – aim to involve as many passers-by as possible. Through a creative, participatory workshop (coupled with some pretty cool filming) we hope to explore together the nature of democracy and our ability, obligation and right to challenge "democratic" institutions.

Want to get involved?
artofactivism@gmail.com

The Ox-Fly

Biting back: Oxford's radical newsletter



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FIGHTING BACK AGAINST EDUCATION CUTS



The movement against Education Cuts is growing. An independent group of students and education workers from Oxford University and Oxford Brookes – the "Oxford Education Campaign" – has been organizing huge meetings to plan action against the cuts.

These cuts, proposed by the recent Browne Review, will make universities increasingly elitist, with only the rich able to attend; tuition fees are set to triple. Students (who already find it difficult to find work after university) will be even more crippled with debt. The cuts are likely to result in education workers (from academics to cleaners) being sacked, and students being given less time with tutors and lecturers.

On 28th October, over 1000 students and workers from Oxford defied police and marched through the city centre. They were protesting Vince Cable's planned visit to Oxford and the massive education cuts his party are helping impose. Cable, apparently under the advice of the police, decided to cancel his visit,

presumably fearing for his reputation and safety. This didn't stop huge numbers of people taking part.

The cops repeatedly blocked the students from getting to the High Street, sometimes violently. At first students weren't keen to walk through police lines even though they were effectively being imprisoned in the Rad Cam Square.

However, the prospect of static chanting and speeches failed to appeal to most, and after some more militant students showed how easy it is to get past the police the initial timidity faded away. **As the crowd pushed through one police line after another, the feelings of empowerment were plain to see.** People not on the march expressed their support; some even joined in!

This more confrontational approach inspired many and shows that students and education workers are not going to take these cuts lying down. This was taken further at the 10th Nov National Demo. **Tory HQ was occupied by thousands of students from diverse backgrounds**

(not just a handful of anarchists as the corporate press pretend).

The property destruction may have had little material impact on the government but it has had a huge psychological impact on the country. **A fighting spirit has emerged and the government is on the defensive; the illusion of consent has been smashed.**

See tiny.cc/oec to get involved.
Free University and more: p3 >

THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

To quote the Oxford City Council, "nothing is sacred" in terms of job security and public services – **apart from managers and their growing salaries** it seems! While normal council staff received a pay rise of 0.5% last year, and 0% this year (less than inflation), the bosses all claimed massive pay rises of between 11.4% and 34.6% last year. While some at the council earn as little as £7 an hour, these bosses are earning **six-figure salaries.**

Where's this money coming from? Well, council tax was increased last year, while the council's providing **less and less services.** It's clear that the extra council tax we have to pay is going **straight into the pockets** of these managers. As you'd expect, people are angry. A massive 96% of people in an Oxford Mail poll called the pay rises 'unjustified' – only 4% thought these bosses were doing a good job and deserved the money.

WELCOME TO CAMPSFIELD HOUSE

by Spike McGrimsel

As a group of detainees on hunger strike put it:

"Our lives incidentally have been stalled without any hope of living a life, having a family or any future [...] some of us are tortured and even face death or mental distress [...] We are issued removal directions without given enough time for an appeal. [...] On a regular basis, we are tortured, restrained, strapped like animals and beaten to effect [deportation]."

Why should some people be allowed to live in the UK and not others? After all, which country you are born in is a matter of **pure luck**.

You have probably heard it said that if everyone was free to move and live where they like, there wouldn't be enough to go around. This ignores the real reason why there isn't enough to go around: because the system allows **the rich and powerful to hog it all!**

False divisions between 'locals' and 'foreigners', and between different cultures and groups, are used all over the world as a way of distracting people from this, **the biggest injustice of all**.

- Find out more: barbedwirebritain.org/Voices.php
- Tell everyone you know.
- Campaign/take action against detention centres:

noborders.theoarc.org.uk
closecampsfield.org.uk

- Support local asylum seekers: asylum-welcome.org
- Get alerts on deportations + help stop them: www.ncadc.org.uk or stopdeportation.net
- Visit people in detention: aviddetention.org.uk
- Buy supermarket vouchers from asylum seekers so they can have cash to pay for travel and other expenses: tiny.cc/voucherswap

VODAFONE DISCONNECTED



On 30th September, around 30 people shut down Vodafone on Cornmarket, protesting in response to corporate **tax evasion** and the cuts that will affect us all.

Vodafone have been let off at least **£4.8 billion** taxes. At a time when everybody is being told to 'tighten our belts' for the well-being of the economy this is **disgusting**.

The police tried to arrest one person, but he was de-arrested by the other protesters, who then went on to hand out leaflets outside another Vodafone store, in the Clarendon Centre.

Hundreds of others **all over the country** took part in closing down Vodafone stores on the same day, with actions in at least 21 cities including London, Brighton and Glasgow. Another such day of action is planned on 4th December.

The demonstrators showed the double standards of cutting essential services while letting corporations off the hook with their taxes.

See: ukuncut.org.uk

For event listings
and more reports see:



Your news
Your site

oxford.indymedia.org.uk

ALL IN THIS TOGETHER?

The working class in Europe is facing its biggest attack in living memory.

The *Institute of Fiscal Studies* estimate 1.4 million further job cuts will hit Britain. In Oxford, with many people working in the public sector, these cuts will hit **hard**.

Over £150m of County Council cuts will be made by 2015, with at least 1000 people sacked – leaving those of us still in work with higher workloads, while redundancies are also made in the private sector. Meanwhile the unemployed are being forced into 'volunteer' work, paid the equivalent of £2 an hour in benefits.

Cuts of 80% are hitting universities; more Academies are being built which choose students selectively; tuition fees are trebling. **This is an attack on education which amounts to privatisation**. The poor would be squeezed even further out of higher education, while teaching, counselling and other university services are cut to a bare minimum.

Cuts to the NHS, nurseries, and so on see our welfare state being peeled back. **The government are lying when they say they will protect the NHS**; as any NHS worker will tell you, 'efficiency savings' is just another name for cuts.

These cuts will hit women hardest; they are predicted to suffer 72% of the spending cuts. But **the people making the cuts aren't affected**; they can afford private healthcare and education.

Meanwhile, bosses and bankers continue to 'earn' more and more. FTSE-100 chief executives awarded themselves an average of **55% pay rises** last year; most university bosses also gave themselves huge pay rises.

'Tory Cuts'

The liberal and leftist press are describing the cuts as 'Tory cuts'. And the Lib Dems are supposed to have 'betrayed' their principles. But **these cuts were started by Labour**, and would have gone ahead regardless of who won the election.

Now in opposition, Labour can make all sorts of promises and **fake outrage**, but the Lib Dems' U-turn shows us that once in power all politicians put business interests first.

Resistance

The unions and the Left have been trying to channel our anger into official channels. Unions need to appear 'respectable'; union bosses are **comfortable** in their paid positions and tend to sell us out rather than risk their privileges. Liberals oppose any form of resistance that actually threatens the system itself, and think that the rich and powerful will be kinder **if we just ask nicely**. Various leftist sects are trying to get another Labour government elected, and recruiting for their own parties.

None of these tactics work. Instead of turning to politicians, union bosses or 'revolutionaries' to change things for us, **we should turn to each other**, to neighbours, friends and workmates.

Rather than trying to elect a different government, **we can take control** of our own struggles. Direct action gets results; eg binmen in Brighton had a wildcat strike in 2008 against management bullying. Their union tried to get them to go back to work and strike within official rules, but they stayed out and **won completely**.

Conclusion

We are not all in this together. There is us, the **huge majority** of people who have to work for a living, or are students or unemployed. And there is the ruling class, who own all the power and wealth in society. They have declared all out class war on us; **we need to fight back** if we want to stand a chance of winning.

EVENTS ** 24th Nov, 1pm
meet Cornmarket
Day of action against education cuts **
** 26th Nov 4pm, Bonn Sq, **Democracy Outside** **
** 27th Nov, 12-2pm, Langford Lane,
Kidlington, **Campsfield demo** **
** 27th Nov, 11:30am, Manzil Way, **Cuts demo** **
** 4th Dec, everywhere, **Day of action against cuts** (ukuncut.org.uk) **
Full details and more at:
oxford.indymedia.org.uk

FREE UNIVERSITY

On 13th Nov, *Oxford Education Campaign* held the '**Free University**' on Broad St. It was really successful with about 80 people joining the various short workshops, and many more enjoying the free food (see below). Discussions had a political focus as *OEC* builds resistance to the cuts. These '**Free Unis**' will be regular events and will be seen across the country on **24th Nov, the National Day of Action**.

FOOD NOT BOMBS HOLD FREE FEAST

by Oleg Grendelkin



Food Not Bombs (FNB) Oxford recently celebrated its first meal, in support of the *Free University* event.

After a successful night recycling – collecting £200 worth of sandwiches and rucksacks full of vegetables, (and - bizarrely - toffee apples), we had a fun morning cooking up a feast. The menu included hot pasta, vegetables, garlic bread, fruit salad, pains chocolat, and a huge selection of sandwiches and soups.

Passers-by and participants dug in happily to a spread of tasty, recycled and absolutely free food, while chatting about the event and the issues it raised.

As an act of resistance to war, capitalism and poverty, *FNB* recover food thrown out by supermarkets, cook hot vegan meals and share them on the streets and at protests, pickets and occupations. **We are not a charity, but a leaderless group of people dedicated to social change.**

FNB Oxford is still at an early stage and anyone is welcome to get involved! Join us to recycle, peel, chop, socialize, share ideas and EAT! foodnotbombs.oxford@lists.riseup.net