

# **CROSSOVER SUMMER CAMP 2002**

**WORKSHOP READER  
(ENGLISH VERSION)**

## THE WORKSHOPS:

- Woman and State
- Sex Work, Migration, Self-Organisation
- Different Approaches to Antisexist Politics
- Direct Action, Deconstruction and Gender
- In Search of the History of Deportation Detention
- National Antisemitism
- The Discussion on Antisemitism in the Arab-Islamic World
- EU-Dominance over Eastern Europe and Counterstrategies
- Empire, Multitude, Informal Labor
- People's Global Action
- Free Cooperation – Utopia
- bio-fiction – bio-facts
- Women in Music
- A Critique of Schooling
- Body Work

| SUNDAY 4.<br>AUGUST                         | TUESDAY 6.<br>AUGUST  | FRIDAY 9.<br>AUGUST   |
|---|---|---|
| ewa:<br>woman and<br>state                  | begonia & eri:<br>a brief history of<br>deportation detention | ag genderkiller /<br>gik / afbl:<br>different<br>approaches to<br>antisexist politics |
| daniel & liz:<br>body work                  | christoph: free<br>cooperation – utopia                       | freddie & antje:<br>sex work,<br>migration, self-<br>organisation                     |
| n.n.: direct<br>action and<br>gender        | momo:<br>people's global action                               | manuela, & jana:<br>women in music  |
| erich:<br>empire,<br>multitude,<br>informal | ag ge_gen: bio-fiction<br>- bio-facts - bio-<br>politics      | goetz & mirjam:<br>the discussion<br>on antisemitism<br>in the arab-<br>islamic world |
| benni:<br>critique of<br>schooling          |   | alexandra:<br>national<br>antisemitism  |
|   |   | osteuropa-ag:<br>eu dominance<br>over eastern<br>europe and<br>counterstrategies      |

# Woman and State

with Ewa Majewska

No text available for this workshop.

# Sex Work, Migration, Self-Organisation

with Freddie Strack and Antje Conrady

Issues:

- The situation of migrant sex workers
- Consequences of the new law on prostitution
- Sex work and the traffic in women: two distinct issues
- Presentation of the project Hydra e.V.

# Different Approaches to Antisexist Politics

with AG Genderkiller, GIK and AFBL

No text available

# Direct Action, Deconstruction and Gender

with N.N.

**Patriarchal logic permeates our society through to all aspects of daily life.... from institutionalised violence, via sexist advertising, and through to more subtle thought models, behaviours (e.g. male patronising or 'protectionist' attitudes towards women, boundary infringements, sexualised violence) and the clichés in our heads. Active leftist organisations remain far from constructive anti-sexist practices. Where consciousness exists, this is often limited to exclusions which are, per se, not questionable. But this tends to form an attack against extreme forms 'only' (sexist attacks, rapes), thereby obscuring everyday sexism**

**which are more or less reproduced by all of us. \* What is more, such exclusions have little or no effect above and beyond the established circles of the left scene.**

How can we make patriarchal relations and gender constructs the issue.... within and beyond our own scene? How can we convey visions of a community beyond gender, rule, and patriarchy? And how can we dismantle discriminating behaviour, sexualised violence, homophobias, etc., with the long-term goal of creating spaces free of discrimination which will allow and encourage self-transformation?

## 1. De-Constructing Gender and discursive power

Recent discussions (gender-debates, queer theory) which draw on (de-)constructivist and post-structuralist theories posit that gender is not one's "natural" destiny, but a social construction. The categorisation of humans into women and men and the stereotypical assignments of characteristics and values produce seemingly homogenous groups and so are made the basis of discrimination and hierarchies. This line of thinking makes visible the effects of discursive power: the two-gender system is not imposed from „above“, but constantly reproduced through the media, through all-pervasive imagery, medico-scientific discourse, norms, and effects of socialisation which filter through all levels of society and condition people mercilessly from birth. All of these factors contribute to people seemingly straightforwardly experiencing themselves as either male or female, and then behave as such. In this sense, patriarchal relations and their gendered role logic constantly reproduce themselves.

This is not, of course, to deny more outrageously "manifest" relations of violence and power! There are very obviously massive power asymmetries between humans defined as male and female, including sexualised violence against 'women' by 'men', as well as against children of whichever gender by men and sometimes by women. There is also structural violence, as exemplified by the legal provisions against abortion encoded in paragraph § 218 of German Criminal Law, or by the lack of collective forms of child-minding and –rearing as alternative to the patriarchal family. There are vile forms of institutionalised and legally binding oppression, such as the violent re-assignments of gender to intersexuals and other humans not born according to norm. In turn, institutionalised power and discursive power are inter-related. But in everyday life, a direct form of rule is not in fact necessary, since patriarchal discourses are all-pervasive and strongly anchored in the heads of people. Sexist heteronormativity could prevail even after the

dismantling of the state, the market, and other oppressive structures – the very specific characteristic of discursive power being precisely that it cannot be localised or pinpointed as residing in or emanating from one particular centre or institution. This is where Direct Action and Intervention can come to bear!

Discussions surrounding gender are almost exclusively limited, at this historical moment, to academic, merely theoretical discourses which often seem elitist and remote from social reality. There is no attempt to put deconstruction to work in practice. On the other hand, there are people involved in often rather nascent movements, who do create Direct Action, but only seldom fill the emerging space with content. The result is that visions are restricted to small circles and actions become reduced to a rather meaningless end in themselves – or otherwise are instrumentalised by NGOs to push their own agendas. Both outcomes are less than satisfactory! And yet several (queer)activists from counter-cultural movements and political transsexuals show us that things can be different: these are people who work to undermine strict role divisions and make space for confusion (even amongst the left).

## 2. Idea and Concept of Direct Action

The underlying principle of Direct Action is that every situation in our life bears the opportunity to express critique of and counter-positions to sexist heteronormativity, including vis-à-vis the “normal population”. Direct social intervention gives us the chance to trigger the questioning of one’s own oppressive behavioural patterns. If we carry this thought through, anti-sexist practice emerges as a continuous process through which sexism, constructs, fears etc. are all made conscious and then relegated step by step.

The concept of Direct Action combines resistance and theoretical vision: properly thought-through and carried out Direct Actions, that is unmediated resistant behaviour, can disrupt fixity and create confusion – in this sense, they are appropriate to convey meaning. They open up a space (a corridor of irritation) in which we can develop positions and trigger discussions... for example for and about a life after gender. The purpose of such a space is not to deny existing gender constructs and hierarchies, but to make them the issue, and a starting point for communication.

Corridor of Irritation

**What is important and decisive is that we undermine norm(ality): Media accounts, public outrage, distancing or approval, questioning or defaming – all of these belong in the corridor of irritation. This can then trigger self-reflection, or draw attention to a problem, or create space for debate, visions, and**

**arguments. Without such a corridor, ideas cannot expand and develop processually to change society. Depending on the type of action, the corridor will vary. An attack can be carried far through press accounts, whereas hidden theatre will touch only upon the people who are immediately present to the situation. Through targeted actions, we can determine such varied impact on discourses ourselves.**

Mediation

**This corridor of irritation can then be used to convey one’s own positions and visions. Some actions will be self-explanatory, but they can also be complemented by flyers, transparencies, speeches, press releases or the like. The most direct way to illustrate and complement an action will of course be through discussion with the people targeted by the action. The expression of our ideas is as important as the direct intervention: It is not enough, for example, to express that XYZ is a sexist asshole, rather, the sexism pervasive in society as a whole must be attacked as well. For many actions, it may also be appropriate and useful to do some self-organised press work, to avoid professional politicians and corporatists explaining our actions to the public.**

### 2.1. Examples of creative actions

The debate on how to develop and convey resistance against sexism and gender constructs could be approached on much wider terms than is currently the case. The following looks at a few examples of Direct Actions which may help draw attention to the construction of gender roles and its consequences. It is important to make manifest and intelligible that Direct Action can and must be filled with content, and that resistance against gender roles is possible, today, now, and everywhere! A few examples...

#### Hidden theatre against homophobias

With hidden theatre, we can represent an everyday occurrence of the oppression of people who resist the man-woman-system (for example inter- and transsexuals). For example: A guy wearing a skirt and a „queery“ attitude comes across a heteromacho in any given city centre. The latter verbally abuses the former and calls him a “gay prick”. This then leads to further, “normal” looking people intervening and expressing solidarity with the attacked. The resulting irritation of the surrounding people can be instrumentalised to start discussions about the issues involved. Possibly, „uninvolved“ people passing by will then come to reflect on and show their solidarity.

**No information on gender**

Imagine taking your local council office by storm as a group and claiming that it be allowed to make a tick in both categories for male and female on official data forms, or that, ideally, the categories should be abolished altogether. Use the workers' confusion in the office to start a debate: "Why do we have to be either a man or a woman?" Flyers could be distributed to complement the action. Press work carried out in parallel would also bring the action to the wider public. This action – even on its own, without flyers or press releases – can be repeated everywhere and everyday, by expressing refusal whenever information about one's gender is required of one.

### **Undermining the two-gender system**

Countless public situations are organised according to the two-gender logic... despite this being neither necessary nor self-evident. This is how (norm)ality is produced. This process can be undermined when the 'wrong' person plays the 'right' role in specific situations. Here too, hidden theatre can be very productive if, for example, as a guy you walk into a drugstore and enquire extensively about nail polish or 'female' perfume (with the explicit commentary that these are for you). Things will get even more confusing if a girlfriend or gay friend shows up. Your behaviour should be such that you draw attention to yourselves and start discussions with consumers... and so make space for a debate about the absurdity of categorising humans into two genders. Alternatively, a group of men could seek advice in the female clothing section of a large department store (best case scenario here would be if you did this because you actually wanted to, and weren't just "faking" it).

### **Ads are a battlefield**

Potential targets abound here. WEST advertisement-boards strike me as particularly conspicuous in the German context, since they so frequently rely on disgusting sexualised representations of women's bodies and also invoke racist stereotypes (of the coloured, „foreign“, exotic beauty). Easy means can be used to disrupt this: for example A3-size flyers can be attached to the posters, either to adapt the quoted statements by EU health ministries to our own purposes, or to make other statements, such as „Our ads are the precursor of sexualised violence“, or „Racist-sexist stereotypes are our speciality“. These statements could be followed by letters and fakes by established women's organisations („... we may argue about the means, but the idea is clear...“), so as to trigger public debate.

\*Exclusions are a necessary and legitimate measure to protect the targets of sexualised attacks and violence who can no longer bear the vicinity of perpetrators. But such exclusions do not lead on to a more principled questioning of

patriarchal behaviours and structures. Expelling sexists from one's (scene's) circles is a necessary interventionist measure but not more than that – since it only comes to play when an attack is known. The critique here, then, suggests that such exclusions as sole means of resistance are insufficient. We desire much more anti-sexist intervention, and for this to come to play at much earlier stages and much more processually. Otherwise, we would be presupposing „clean“ anti-sexist behaviour, rather than making it the goal of (self-)transformation.

## **In search of the history of deportation detention („Abschiebehäft“)**

with Begonia Petuya and Eri Park

In 1923, a so-called „concentration camp for aliens“ was established in Cottbus-Sielow. It had no (direct) connection to subsequent concentration camps during the Holocaust, though.

However, the existence of such a camp proves that a system of concentration camps was not an invention of the German-nationalist state, but that concentration camps with the goal of deterrence, or of dividing and controlling larger groups of people were implemented already by the bourgeois-German state.

The Cottbus-Sielow camp, originally set up for Russian prisoners of war, was shut down as a concentration camp for aliens in 1924, because of financial problems and transformed into a prison for women after that. Apparently, there is very little knowledge about the existence of the former concentration camp even in Cottbus and there is no information in the literature about it worth mentioning.

This is the background upon which we will read a short text about the history of „Abschiebehäft“ (deportation detention, or: custody pending deportation) which deals with the intersections of antisemitism and racism, and the logic of capitalist valorization, in dealing with migrants.

Following this, we will do an investigative rallye through town and carry out interviews, which will be documented.

### **Background information**

In World War I, a lack of workers, especially into

the arms industry, was dealt with by recruiting eastern european-jewish workers, or by carrying them off to Germany by force.

In April 1918, after heated public debate, and against the will of german industrialists, a stop of recruitment for eastern european-jewish workers was imposed, followed by a deportation act in 1919 and an interment act in November 1920.

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of January 1921 the conservative prussian minister of the interior Dominicus announced, 'that they would start with the internment of undesirable aliens, which means especially 'eastern jews', in concentration camps'. The SPD (the social democratic party), which was in the opposition by now, demanded the dissolution of the camps they themselves had helped establish.

In December 1921, Severing (SPD) became minister of the interior again, but did not realize his own demands for the dissolution of the camps.

## National Antisemitism

with Alexandra Klei

No text available

## The Discussion on Antisemitism in the Arab-Islamic World

with Goetz Nordbruch and Mirjam Glaeser

The arson attacks on synagogues in Essen and Berlin by arab youths in the fall of 2000 were received with relief in Germany. After some months of the 'Aufstand der Anständigen' (the so-called 'uprising of the righteous', a state-sponsored, mainstream movement against the new wave of right-wing violence), the attacks were an occasion to foreground the universal character of antisemitic ideology: antisemitism, so much had to be admitted, was a bad thing – but it was everything but German.

The reports that appeared in German newspapers after the attacks about the extent of antisemitic thinking in the arab and muslim population were as correct as they were scandalous. Necessary and long overdue criticisms were mixed up with attempts to play down German right wing extremism and linked to demands to tighten immigration legislation.

This workshop, about forms, social relevance and backgrounds of antisemitic ideology in arab countries, is supposed to discuss this problem.

The discussion on the phenomenon of antisemitism in arab countries and its critique in Germany will be presented in three steps.

### *Facets of Antisemitism in Arab Countries*

Reports on antisemitic sermons and publications in arab countries are increasingly appearing in the German press since the beginning of the Intifada in september 2000. The radicalization of negative representations of jews and israelis is usually interpreted as "war racism", as a direct consequence of the escalation of the conflict. In this workshop - using text excerpts and video clips - other examples, in which the arab-israeli conflict is not directly mentioned, will be discussed as well. Reports about supposed dangers of globalization, changes in cultural values and norms, and the supposed dangers of a 'judaization of cultural identity' in arab societies document the existence of a variety of debates in which jews, outside the context of any real conflict, are imagined as existential enemies.

### *Explanations of antisemitic ideology in the context of the arab-islamic world*

While the fact that antisemitic representations are widespread in arab countries is hardly denied any more, interpretations of this phenomenon vary.

One question being debated in this context is that of the social relevance of antisemitic thought. Who are the 'carriers' of this thinking? Radical islamists, whose rejection of the West is inseparable from their struggle against Israel and jews? Or proponents of different nationalist currents, whose voelkisch ideology of community is based on a rejection of 'the jew within'? Is it a mass phenomenon, a movement from below, or is the social and political elite mobilizing the masses with the agitation against the jews to divert attention from internal social problems?

The historical roots of antisemitic ideology are also being discussed. What are the relations between antisemitic representations and islam, is there a connection between the confrontation between Muhammad and the jews on the Arab peninsula in the 7. century and the conspiracy theories of secular thinkers in the 21. century? What are the sources of the stereotypes, do they originate in the arab world or are they European export items? And, most importantly, what is the relation between negative representations of jews and israelis and the arab-israeli conflict? Are they cause or consequence of the conflict?

### *Between the critique of ideology and racism*

The necessity of a critique of antisemitic thinking in arab countries is evident. Especially in the context of a German left, whose uncritical, often conscious solidarity with antisemitic groups in the region only became an issue for a broader left debate in the nineties, this discussion is overdue. But the attacks of 11. september intensified the dilemma of having to formulate a critique of the political and ideological conditions in the Arab countries within the context of a racist public opinion in Germany. Not the Junge Welt (orthodox left daily) or the taz (left-liberal daily close to the Greens) reported on the antisemitic content of speeches origination in the ranks of al-Qaida, Hamas or the Hizbollah, but Die Welt (conservative paper with extreme right wing leanings), the BZ (conservative sensationalist rainbow press, very popular) – and the “Bahamas” (the very controversial magazine of a small circle of “Anti-German” critics).

In the reporting on the pro-palestinian demonstration in mid-april this ambivalence of this debate became evident. The images of fathers carrying their children with fake explosives attached to their bodies and dressed in military look through the city center, shouting “Death to the Jews” were in contradiction to the reports of many papers describing the demonstration as a “peace demonstration”. The Tagesspiegel (Berlin-based daily with social democratic leanings) on the other hand deemed it fitting to call these fathers “child molesters”, while “Bahamas” illustrated its last issue with a foto montage, in which one of these fathers, with a fake moustache attached, becomes a reborn Hitler.

This workshop, in search of a way of not taking back any of the severity of the critique – while, at the same time, not collaborating with racist scandalisations, and not working into the hands of a – left - revision of Nazism - intends to raise questions a left debate on these issues should address.

## **EU-Dominance over Eastern Europe and Counterstrategies**

with: Osteuropa-AG Berlin

The European Union and other international institutions determine the processes of transformation of the eastern european countries into neoliberal economies to a large degree. and wield great influence over the internal policies of these countries.

Different strategies are used vis a vis different countries, and different kinds of „peripheralisation“ result.

In this workshop we will first present and discuss the strategies of influence of the European Union and other international organisations and their consequences for eastern europe. There will be a short input by us on this.

Then, we want to discuss – together, no input from our side this time – which levels of west european influence seem to be the most important: is it the international institutions, state institutions, transnational corporations, certain NGOs? The aim of the discussion is to determine what would be good objects of international antagonistic campaigns.

We would appreciate it if especially activists from eastern europe would participate in the discussion and also present their ideas on west european influence.

## **Empire, Multitude, Informal Labor**

with Erich Landrock

No text available

## **Peoples' Global Action**

with Momo

In this workshop we will discuss the origin and development of the international network PGA.

PGA was founded in february 98 as a platform for social movements that identify with the following hallmarks:

1. A very clear rejection of capitalism, imperialism and feudalism; all trade agreements, institutions and governments that promote destructive globalisation;
2. We reject all forms and systems of domination and discrimination including, but not limited to, patriarchy, racism and religious fundamentalism of all creeds. We embrace the full dignity of all human beings.
3. A confrontational attitude, since we do not think that lobbying can have a major impact in such biased and undemocratic organisations, in which transnational capital is the only real policy-maker;

4. A call to direct action and civil disobedience, support for social movements' struggles, advocating forms of resistance which maximize respect for life and oppressed peoples' rights, as well as the construction of local alternatives to global capitalism;  
5. An organisational philosophy based on decentralisation and autonomy.

The first part of the workshop will be about the history and backgrounds of PGA until now. Which kind of ideas stood behind the first Global Days of Action against the 2. WTO-conference in May 98, which discussion and actions took place, what was before Seattle?

How is the relationship to other networks, such as ATTAC?

What was the role of PGA in mobilisations in Seattle, Prague, Genova etc; and what should be in the future?

In the second part in the afternoon we will present projects in the framework of PGA and discuss about the 2. European conference of PGA in Leiden (Netherlands). The concrete themes depend on the interests of the participants, but on the main issues in Leiden will be the further structure of PGA and the strategies and tactics of a global movement that goes beyond "Single issue struggles" and the objective to reform the ruling system.

## Free Cooperation - Utopia

with Christoph Spehr

**"It's the end of the left as we know it (and we should feel fine)" - The theory of free cooperation**

The necessary, fundamental transformation of left theory and practice is still incomplete. Radical insights and important critiques (against any form of objectivism, hierarchy, authoritarian politics) are, on the contrary, being challenged by ideas that we should go back to "the economy", "the social question", "hard facts" etc. ("the young hard thinking", as Claudia Bernhard has put it). On the other hand, a post-modernist "anything goes" is not what we have in mind, either. We can't accept, for example, that every form of social order is alright because it's "a question of culture" and cannot be criticized.

The theory of free cooperation is an attempt to give answers to questions such as: If we let go of "scientific objectivism", what can our critique be based on? If we drop ideas like "the full development of the forces of production will create a free society", what is our utopian horizon? If the many different social struggles and movements cannot be subsumed under a single analysis or category, is there a common link between them? When the "great narratives" of the 20th century are deconstructed and de-legitimised, when there is no more theory that "fits everything" - is there still a "collective story", as Gayatri Spivak has put it? And, most of all: how do we act, in real life?

Such a theory, of course, is nothing that can be "invented" by any one person. It appears: in the practice and the ideas of social movements worldwide which have challenged oppression as well as the blind spots of traditional leftist thinking and politics. But there is work to be done in order to articulate this as a theory; as a framework for communicating and for solidarity, and as a tool for the clarification of aims and for action.

The theory of free cooperation opposes coerced cooperation and propagates free cooperation. It is based on the assumptions that:

- Nobody can decide for others what is good for them or what they want.
- People should be taken serious in what they say they want. (One should not operate with terms like "real needs", "real meaning", "manipulation". There's nothing hidden.)
- The distribution of property, access, rights etc. is a historical fact, it has no higher legitimation, because everything is based on the collectivity and historicity of labour and cooperation. There is no "just" distribution that could be recognized and realized so that all would be equal.
- Cooperation is a useful term because it does not divide into "production" and "reproduction". Cooperation is not just work, for example; you can also cooperate by accepting what others do and this should be considered as an active role. The term cooperation considers that you cannot exactly mark any outcome as "this is the effect of what this single person has done" (like the term "work" suggests). Likewise, "coerced cooperation" is open for aspects of domination as well as of exploitation.
- In the end it all comes down to the rules: Who makes them? who can change them? who can challenge them? what power do different people or groups have to influence or develop them?

According to the theory of free cooperation, a cooperation is free if:

1. all rules can be challenged. There are no "holy rules" for the cooperation that cannot be touched.

2. all members of this cooperation have the same power to influence or develop the rules. This power is not given by formal structures of decision-making; it has to be the real power to influence the rules because all members are free to withdraw their cooperation, leave the cooperation, set limits to their cooperation or give conditions for their cooperation.

3. the "price" of this (what you lose when the cooperation splits up, becomes looser, or does not work fully) is similar and possible for all members of the cooperation. Otherwise it would be simply blackmail and not a free cooperation.

You can see how this works in children playing with another. They cooperate; then they disagree. One quits ("I don't play with you any more"). They split and play with others; or (mostly) they come together and play on, with changed rules, so that both are content with it. This is free cooperation and they just do it. So free cooperation is a sort of bargaining, but it does not need a special articulation or given structure; it is an action, done by body and mind. You do not need to attend my workshop or read my books to do it.

What, then, is the political left all about? My thesis is that this is exactly the distinction between "left" and "right":

1. a "left" (emancipatory) position affirms and defends all three conditions of free cooperation, in every given cooperation, on all levels of the social - whereas a "right" (counter-emancipatory) position denies them.

2. the third condition of free cooperation, the "price" of splitting up or of withdrawing cooperation being equal and possible for all members, is the central focus of leftist politics: an ongoing, never-ending task of changing rules and material conditions so that this equality of the "price" is maintained, on all levels of the social, in every given cooperation.

3. "What happens then, is all up to you." (The Matrix)

From this and from the study of social movements and struggles of the last decades, some more can be said about how leftist/emancipatory politics work: winding down power structures, instead of "using" them; articulating one's own concepts of bargaining and decision-making; developing social abilities that are needed for that; aiming at critical democratisations that avoid the mistakes of liberal/formal democratization; organising people for independence. Given cooperations have to be reformed so that "who cooperates/works shall also decide"; that people who are silenced and hidden in their cooperation (we use their workforce and cooperation, but we do not let them decide or bargain about it) get a voice and get power; that forms of division of labour are cooperative structures (some people enable others to do

special things) and have to be controlled from "below".

The workshop is open for everybody. In the beginning I'll give an input (about half an hour). Then we'll discuss it. In the afternoon, I'd like to talk about your experiences and my experiences with "coerced cooperation" and "free cooperation", taking concrete examples. My essay "Gleicher als Andere. Eine Grundlegung der freien Kooperation" ("More equal than others. A foundation of free cooperation") can be downloaded (only in German) here:

[www.rosaluxemburgstiftung.de/Einzel/Preis/rlspreis.pdf](http://www.rosaluxemburgstiftung.de/Einzel/Preis/rlspreis.pdf).

But it's not necessary to read it before (of course, I'd be happy if you do, but it's about 80 pages).

I'd also like to show 2 short videos, "Time is on my side" and "Vorwärts, ihr freien Schweine" that we made in Bremen (we find them quite funny). If we have a beamer or something, we could use them as an "opener" or as an "refresher" after the break; otherwise we could show them in the evening.

Who am I? I'm 39, male, white, have 2 children who teach me a lot about cooperation, live in Bremen. Together with others I run the "alaska - Zeitschrift für Internationalismus"; we also organise public meetings and conferences (e.g. the "out of this world"-congress about science-fiction and utopian perspectives). I write books ("Die Aliens sind unter uns. Herrschaft und Befreiung im demokratischen Zeitalter" was the last to be published), give lectures and readings.

You can e-mail me at:

[yetipress@aol.com](mailto:yetipress@aol.com)

## Biofiction - Biofacts

with ag ge\_gen

Gene- and biotechnology do not merely stand for visions and concerns of tomorrow.

They have already made their way into our lives and they have a striking impact on many people's everyday life. We meet gene- and biotechnology everywhere: In racist migration politics, someone's origin as a warranty for a family reunion has to be proved through DNA fingerprints; genetically manipulated and patented

seeds aggravate the world-wide racist division of labour; an efficiency-oriented health system leads to normalisation and optimisation of one's self and the discourse about eugenics is newly awakening. Gene- and biotechnology serve as a means of manifesting and of reproducing relationships of dominance and dependence.

During the first half of our workshop, we would like to discuss gene- and biotechnology as a product and an intersection of patriarchal, capitalist and racist processes of socialisation. Discussing gene technology, we always have to take the engineer, the institutions and structures of power into consideration. We want to address the changes in common ideas about illness and health that occur alongside gene technology as well as our position as risk carriers.

Bearing this in mind, during the second half of the workshop we will look at human genetic information centres as an example of how gene technologies work in their everyday practice and within their institutionalised disposal. Taking the historical development of gene technology into account, we will talk about its connection to eugenics and population policies. Especially in Germany, we need to address the "eugenic race hygiene" during National Socialism.

Currently, human genetic information centres function as public facilities which produce a risk assessment of someone's predisposition to illness. Expectant parents and particularly women feel the pressure to optimise themselves and transfer the pressure to their potential child. We want to

discuss that in a society which is hostile to disabled people it is the expectant mothers who ask for these examinations and tests offered by human genetic information centres.

We wish to work out together with the participants of our workshop what kind of an idea about humankind and about society stands behind gene- and biotechnology and how resistance can be possible - not at least in our everyday practice.

## **Women in Music**

with Manuela ? and Jana Spalt

No text available

## **A Critique of Schooling**

with Benjamin B.

No text available

## **Body Work**

with Liz Messerschmied and Daniel Mang

This workshop will be about communication through touch. It will be a practical, introductory workshop: on perceiving one's own body and others' bodies; recognizing one's own and others' boundaries; and expanding the vocabulary of one's language of touch.

Why are we offering this workshop at this camp?

- because it's fun

- because we think that, in our circles, too, people's ability to communicate through touch is not very developed.

Not much different than in mainstream society, physical communication is reduced to a few ritualized bodily acts (shaking hands, embraces

when saying good-bye etc) and contact is governed by rather strict norms.

These norms – who is supposed to move or hold him/herself in what way, who should touch whom when, how and where, etc – have been internalized by many of us in the course of an authoritarian education, and such norms are reinforced all the time through images in the media and in everyday interactions.

Contravening them – by men that are unmanly with each other, or by women who dare sit in the metro in an unfeminine fashion, may be “punished” by violence, particularly male violence.

So, the liberation from these norms governing physicality – something we wish for - is not simply a question of good will, it’s a question of spaces of partial autonomy, which have to be struggled for socially. Changes in ourselves are part of this social process, though.

The workshop is meant to give people who come to this camp because they are interested in emancipatory, profeminist, radical left... politics some practices and ideas that we believe could be helpful in these processes of personal change – which we hold to be an essential part of radical politics.

In the dominant discourses of society (everyday conversations, scientific theories, reports in newspapers, works of art...), “body”, “emotion” and “mind” are separated and arranged in hierarchical fashion. This is connected with the practical separation and hierarchisation of “manual” and “mental” labor, as well as of “women’s work” and “men’s work”.

We reject the capitalist-patriarchal and racist division of labor and the alienation of people from their own capacities that it entails. Accordingly, our utopia includes a non-dualist understanding of body, emotion and mind, that is neither rationalist nor romantic.

We are making an issue of the body at a time when images of bodies and texts about bodies are everywhere (on tv, in advertisements, books and magazines...), where the care of the body and various bodily practices (new and newly imported kinds of movement disciplines and kinds of sports, new and newly imported body therapies etc...) are spreading through society.

We see the cult of the body and health mania in (post)modern societies as – **on the one hand** - expressions of a certain kind of social control, but also – **on the other hand** - as a compensation for a real suffering, a discontent with the given social relations – which entail the exploitation of and

domination over “inner and outer nature” (the “social relations with nature”).

The “body boom” is part of a new stage in the expansion of techniques of social control and self-disciplining. After all, the main goal is the slim, smooth postmodern body, always fit and efficient...

The developments in the field of body- and health-practices are contradictory, though: emancipation and self-control, normalization and liberation are close neighbours here.

As we said earlier, we interpret the current “fashion for the body” as a kind of compensation. The less actual physical labor is performed, the more people live an urban lifestyle, the more important virtual, immaterial communication and production become, the stronger the nostalgia for the good body, the longing for an unadulterated nature, the wish for an authentic subjectivity will be.

We criticize the depoliticizing doctrines of salvation that promise a completely private happiness while obscuring the social conditions we suffer from, that make us “sick”.

But the longings for a good nature, the true body, the real feeling, should, in our opinion, not be treated as mere ideological delusions, but also taken seriously as reflections of a real suffering in capitalist patriarchy and its social relations with nature.

**The wishes and needs of the body need to be brought into play as limits to human adaptability to social pressures, as limits to economic exploitation - and as a demand for another life; while at the same time attempts to define a fixed “human nature” in conservative ways (crass examples of this are biologicistic ideas about “genes for criminality”, the inborn aggressiveness of men and the like) need to be attacked.**

**We are searching for emancipatory perspectives in the field of body politics. What kind of body, what kind of self is produced by certain kinds of “working on yourself”, or a certain kind of sport? What values are incorporated in different practices, what social structures do they conform to, which do they subvert?**

These would be some of our questions – which we will only be able to deal with very partially in this workshop.

There will be time to talk, but the workshop will be mainly experiential, its focus will be the practical work with the body.

The structure of the workshop will be as follows:

- Refining perception of center of gravity, weight, posture, contact, boundary
- Some principles of body work as we understand it
- Brief introduction to shiatsu techniques and meridian stretches

BREAK

- Practice time: body work exchange, speaking about the experience
- Time for discussion / conversation in the group

About us:

Liz is a practitioner of complementary medicine with a focus on chinese medicine (acupuncture, among other things) and phytotherapy (healing with plants). Daniel is a physiotherapist and interested in different kinds of body therapy, does aikido and movement improvisation.

