

GALWAY

GRASSROOTS



#1

galway grassroots zine

Issue one: January 2016

The Galway grassroots zine is a space for radical writing that can help us imagine and build a just, equal and sustainable world.

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You are holding the first issue of the Galway Grassroots Zine in your hands! This wouldn't be possible without the great contributions we received from fellow activists and artists. A big, grateful hug of thanks to all of you! And thanks to those unknown artists whose artwork we borrowed.



Hey wild ones, send us your true stories, heartfelt letters, outrageous rants, extreme artworks and sublime poetry to ignite change, inspire action and touch the rebel in our hearts. In addition, you can send events for our monthly calendar, introduce your group, share news and campaign updates (max 500 words), or political analysis (max 500 to 800).

When sending in contributions, keep in mind that it will be printed on A5 and in black and white. Please send a *.pdf file and format the page in a nice zine-style, maybe even including artwork for empty space for it! We may otherwise insert artworks ourself.

The next issue will be printed end of July.
The deadline for contributions is Saturday 19 July.
Please send all contributions to gggn_zine@riseup.net
ggnewtworth.blogspot.org

This continued as Westside and Shantalla saw huge resistance while there was little resistance in Salthill and city centre areas.

Resistance to meter installation was organised through a number of steps, but Right2Water took the lead from residents themselves. When residents got in touch to say that meters were coming to their estate, we helped them organise a street meeting. Right2Water would attend the meeting and help explain the situation with water charges and water meters and also what had happened in other areas. It was always the residents themselves who decided what happened in their estate. Right2Water were always clear that we would not resist meters for them, we would help residents who wanted to resist meters being installed. In areas where nobody was interested in resisting meters we didn't do anything.

Using the networks of contacts we had built up through stalls, demos and leafletting, we had a significant number of activists who were willing to go to other estates and support residents there, while also leafletting and organising resistance in their own estates. We also held organising meetings of activists for planning demos, public meetings and fundraisers.

We held a fundraising table quiz, and did collections at all our events in order to fund the campaign, this helped pay for leaflets and placards. Buses to national demos were also subsidised to make them accessible for all.

Right2Water Galway is proud of its grassroots nature. Decisions are made collectively within the group which is diverse in age, gender, race, and political affiliation and activists come from all over the city and county. The group also has a number of members involved in the arts. This has been seen in the water goddess puppets which have become famous, while activists regularly dress up for demos and have written our own protest songs.

The groups democratic nature and artistic trend have kept the group cohesive while generating a big, visible public presence in Galway and nationally.

At the moment, Right2Water Galway is building for a national demo on the Saturday before the general election to keep the pressure on politicians and remind them water is still a issue. The group is contacting all local candidates to establish where each of them stand on the issue of water charges. Right2Water Galway will publicise the results when they hear back from all candidates.

Regardless of the election result, Right2Water Galway know that water charges will still be an issue and will continue to campaign against them.

What is the GALWAY GRASSROOTS NETWORK?



COMMUNITY

Solidarity

"Galway Grassroots Network (GGN) is a focal point for activists and groups working for social and environmental justice. Many of us are involved in campaigns around specific issues such as: climate change and environmental protection; the housing crisis; gender inequality and abortion rights; the anti-war movement; right to water; anti-racism; challenging the direct provision system etc. The network hopes to foster solidarity and encourage communication, support and collaboration in Galway."

ACTION

JUSTICE

"Decisions are taken by the people who turn up to meetings, and things are done by the people who care enough about them to make them happen."

* this not a definition. The network is what we make it.

Right2Water Galway

Right2Water Galway was established in April 2014, following a national conference in Dublin. A meeting was held in Galway with a speaker from Bolivia, where a huge campaign had successfully stopped the privatisation of water there.

The group brought members of a number of political parties including the People Before Profit Alliance, Sinn Fein, Eirigi together with non-aligned community activists.

The group really started to get going in late summer of 2014 as activists did stalls and leafleted a number of areas of the city. The first Galway demo was held on the 1st October in Eyre Square with an attendance of around 200. It was the first demo in Galway and there had been no large mobilisations against water charges anywhere in the country at that point.

The massive mobilisation for the national demo in Dublin the following week really changed things. Estimates ranged from 150,000 to 250,000 at the demo with the route having to be extended to accommodate the huge turnout. This boosted the campaign as people were suddenly aware of the size of the opposition to water charges. This was followed by two more large demos, one at local levels and one at the Dail in Dublin just before Christmas.

These massive demos had an effect, as the government changed a number of measures involved with water charges. They reduced the charge to a flat fee, and said people would not be charged for usage until 2018. The government backtracked on threats to take people to court for unpaid charges. Efforts to placate the movement against water charges failed miserably though as protests continued to be huge.

In 2015, the focus of the campaign shifted from large demos to resistance to water meters. Irish Water, through their contractors, Murphy's, started installing water meters in Galway in the spring. Installation started in the county in Kinvara and Athenry where there was little resistance despite the efforts of a number of locals with support from Right2Water. But Clarinbridge saw a significant level of resistance, with meter installers kept out of certain areas.

There was a similar pattern in Galway city when installations started in Knocknacarra. In common with other areas of the country, Irish Water started with wealthier estates where there was less resistance. In more working class estates there was far more resistance and meter installers were successfully stopped in Garra! Dhónaill and Sill Búrcá.

JOIN THE GALWAY GRASSROOTS NETWORK

Joining is easy and fun, no strings attached. Just send us your email address and you will be added to the email list. After that, you can enjoy the following benefits:

- Receive campaign updates and invitations to events
- Decide your dates based on coordination
- Send announcements of events you are planning
- Learn about skill-share opportunities
- Connect with people sharing similar interests
- Collaborate and share resources
- Get involved with groups



- ➔ Further, the website we're developing will offer you the opportunity to post your events in an event calendar
- ➔ publish your group description
- ➔ find info about all groups in Galway (especially for newcomers)
- ➔ publish reports and campaign updates

If you want to get even more involved, you can join one of the working groups or create a new one

- Social Centre
- Communications / Zine / Website
- Skill-sharing

■ The network is open for individuals as well as (existing / community / grassroots) groups.

gg-n-join@riseup.net <https://ggnetwork.blackblogs.org/>

GALWAY

GRASSROOTS
NETWORK



SOLIDARITY PARTY

REBEL BEATS + RADICAL DANCE

Arus na nGael

Thursday 30th June - 9:00pm

Fundraising for Gaza Kids to Ireland

After Paris: Growing the climate justice movement

On 12 December in Paris, as the UN climate conference came to a close, I found myself with thousands of people gathered on the Avenue de Champs-Élysées. We were there to say that the fight for climate justice will continue after Paris, in our communities and in solidarity with each other.

The streets were a riot of colour. Many groups dressed in red, symbolising their "red line" demands for food and energy sovereignty, gender equality, indigenous rights and workers rights. Climate justice calls for industrialised countries of the Global North to take their fair share of climate action because they've historically done most to cause the crisis and have most resources to act.

Despite the political fanfare celebrating the Paris Agreement, it falls far short of what climate justice demands. It's a difficult document to get to grips with, using "strategic ambiguity" to hide the reality there are actually few concrete targets or clear plans of action. States have agreed, for example, to keep global temperatures below 1.5 degrees. But when the maths is done on the emissions reductions they have actually voluntarily pledged, it's clear we're on course for over 3 degrees warming.

For all the talk of participation and listening to marginalised groups, spaces like the climate conference are controlled by the vested interests of the global elite. Hard fought for language in the agreement on human rights, gender equality, and indigenous and workers rights was all stripped from agreement by the time the final version was agreed.

The Paris agreement continues a business as usual approach that suits the interests of the Global North and major corporations. The solutions proposed by the Paris agreement fail to break out of the same capitalist thinking which caused the climate crisis, including carbon markets, technological "quick fixes" and carbon offsetting mechanism that have been criticised for promoting land grabs in the Global South.



What we are seeing today as a result of the banking collapse and the troika bailouts is a similar raising of consciousness in Ireland, though on a much smaller scale. Liam Mellows believed at the foundation of this state that it would serve merely as a buffer between a true republic and British capitalism. Today the state serves the interest of global capitalism and adheres to a neoliberal ideology which puts the market before all else. We do not have to brave guns or shells and we do not have to do the extraordinary things that those very ordinary women and men did. We do have to do what we can, however, to uphold the ideals that they fought for by fighting intolerance, inequality, racism and misogyny by campaigning for a progressive change in Irish politics. That is the only way we can properly commemorate the dead of 1916.

Most of the 600-700 that fought in Galway were small farmers or agricultural labourers and had ties to a local secret society focused on land agitation. They had been raised in the poverty made necessary by foreign rule and many had grandparents or even parents who had lived through times of **drought and famine**. Stories had been passed down of An Gorta Mór. Today stories of the Great Famine are generally told in a folkic and almost mythic style for their poetic value but in the early 20th century this was a reflection of the real conditions and tragedies of just 70 years previous. The ripples of class consciousness were present despite the area being a traditionally conservative one.

While most of the action took place in Dublin there was a significant mobilisation in Galway which involved assaults on RIC stations in Oramore and Clarnbridge and a brief gun battle in Carrmore where a police officer was killed before they occupied Athenry town until shelling from *HMS Gloucester* and the westward advance of British troops forced them to disperse. The volunteers, lead by Liam Mellows, were very poorly armed and knew that the London government had tens of thousands of soldiers mobilized since the outbreak of war in Europe that could be sent to Ireland in a moment's notice. They went out anyways and put up whatever resistance they could to the British Empire.



5

What if we broke out

of boxed-in thinking?

The exploitation

of people & planet

for the few suited men

of a global elite

What if we imagined

our way to a world

built on solidarity?

Connections of community

Love

Justice

and freedom

1916

As we mark the centenary of the most significant event in modern Irish history with farcical posturing and vague references to the bravery and patriotism of those who laid down their lives for the cause of Irish freedom we have lost sight of exactly what the women and men of 1916 were fighting for. The Easter Rising has taken an almost mythic status in popular discourse. Romanticism and sentiment have overridden fact and substance. The truth is that the volunteers of 1916 didn't gallantly "lay down their lives". Many died terrified and in agony. The same is true for the many civilians and British soldiers who died that day.

Some have seen through the veil of romanticism but have failed to see the facts and have instead turned to a revisionist version of history. Former Taoiseach John Bruton has recently said that he regrets that the Rising ever took place. He points to the fact that over half of the dead were civilians and that the volunteers did not have a "democratic mandate". Instead he says that we should commemorate "peaceful", parliamentary politicians such as John Redmond. The former Taoiseach, however, has a very misguided view of history. He forgets that the vast majority of civilian death was caused by British Artillery and their shooting of looters. John Redmond, Bruton's man of peace, lead over thirty thousand Irish soldiers to their death in the bloody, horrific battles in Europe on behalf of an imperialist state. More people died for this cause than in all the subsequent conflicts on this island combined.

As for a democratic mandate? The Irish people had consistently and emphatically expressed their will to self-determination before the Rising but Irish representation was minimal in London and voting rights were very limited and completely excluded women. Many would agree that in a functioning democracy there are certain rights which are not subject to popular vote such as the right to life, to vote and other human rights. The volunteers believed that every Irish person had the democratic right to control their own destiny, regardless of popular opinion at the time. They fought for democracy and against imperialism, sectarianism and oppression. One hundred years on activists of all shades of red and green have a similar battle in front of us. Regardless of who we elect the decisions which affect our lives are in the hands of the economic elites and European institutions.

The climate movement will never "win" climate justice by participating in these transnational spaces controlled by corporations. The power of big business is backed by money, but our power comes from people- from building a movement for change in our communities.

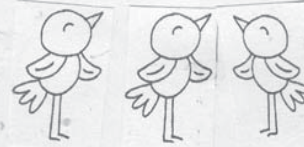
So the fight for climate justice continues, 'in small places close to home', as Eleanor Roosevelt said of human rights. It continues by us asking: what sort of society and community do we want to live in? How do we want to relate to each other and the earth?

The reality is that the slow violence of climate change is not fundamentally an environmental issue. It's a symptom of the social phenomena of the "3 Cs" which facilitated our development in the Global North over the last 300 years: colonialism, capitalism & coal. In this way, the exploitation of people and the planet is inextricably intertwined, with the colonialism of former times being replaced by modern day unfair trade deals.

The Native American Hopi language has a useful word to describe this way of being: *Koyaanisqatsi*, meaning 'life out of balance', or 'a state of life that calls for another way of living'.

This other way of living, one of justice and equality for people and the planet is urgently required today. It starts of course, by saying "No!" to dirty energy like fracking and industrial peat burning. But it also involves creativity and imagination- creating the world we want.

After Paris, it's clear that politicians are stuck in the logic of the 3 Cs. But as I stood in the streets with thousands of people proclaiming that 'another world is possible', I knew that I was amongst the people who are guiding us to that other way of living.



O, dear beloved, days have passed us by,
and thus we remain scattered without a reunion.

Tears shed by weeping soul with such elevated longing

Roll down my cheeks as melting diamonds

How would I ever celebrate such contemplative momentum of gazing your splendor
whilst tyrants rip off our homeland!

My heart has grown more eager, sickened by the pain of separation,
the distances they have forced us into!

There are mountains, oceans and seas now between us,

yet the hurdles imposed by their brutal
savagery will never do us apart!

It was them who scattered our bodies and swept them away to faraway shores,
Now ruthless gangs of heartless evil is invading our old house!

Despite the bullets I have swallowed,
Yet, I rise to my feet again to say it with pride,

By a Syrian

resident

of "The Jungle"

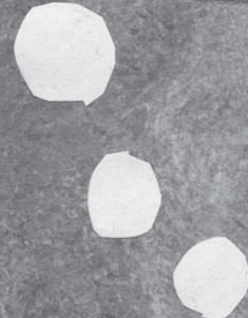
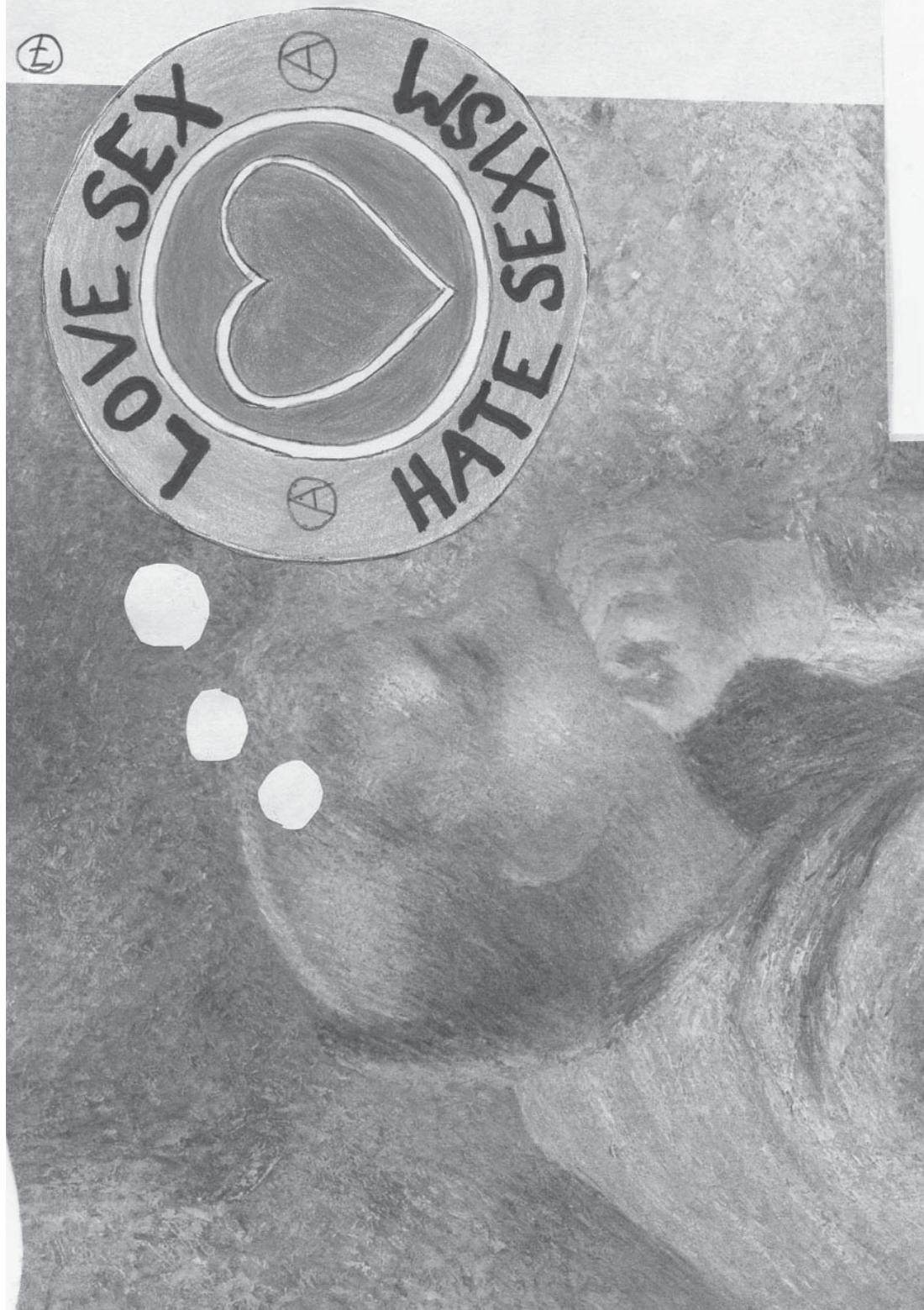
in Calais, France.

محروني في سائر الايام .. وثقنا محسني دولنا الامل
روحنا تساهي تساهي حتى جرى .. فوق الجرد لاني وحسام
كيف اللهاه بعتناك ولحظنا .. ويندنا بقتنا طلعنا
لم فرقتنا، والوان بظلمنا .. وان القاصد، والراق سقام
بطني وببناك اجسر ونحو اطفي .. وحراجر اليراقع والاعلام
لم حمر ونا للمطير، ودارنا .. زعت بها اصراهم وعوام
قلبي اقول وفي مقالتي قصيدة .. ستعود ذكرنا ونرجو السلام

I shall utter it over and over

Back home we shall be,

Prosperous our Cradle will be again



Because some chains set you free...

CRITICAL MASS



The last Friday of every month
6pm @ Spanish Arch

Critical Mass is a means of direct action. It celebrates cycling as a sustainable means of transport and highlights the need for better bicycle infrastructure.

Reclaim the streets!

criticalmassgalway.wordpress.com

... in streets with no cars

PARKS ARE FOR KIDS NOT CARS

I LIKE TO RIDE MY BIKE!

... breathing fresh air

I LIKE TO RIDE MY BICYCLE...

(27)

Solidarity through Anti-racism!

It's not enough to just be non-racist, solidarity is spread through anti-racism. By setting up a network of anti-racism activists in Galway city and county, we hope to raise awareness of the various types of discrimination suffered by groups in Galway. Our city has been enriched by the wealth of cultures that now call the City of the Tribes home. Unfortunately, with the onset of economic recession, the divide-and-rule tactics of successive right-wing Governments has caused divisions amongst various communities. The Galway Anti Racism Networks purpose is replace such animosity with solidarity.

The last few years has seen an explosion of firsthand accounts of the experiences of asylum seekers in direct provision. From the conditions of accommodation centres to the pittance our migrant brothers and sisters are expected to be grateful for receiving; the way we treat asylum seekers needs to change now and fast. The 27th Amendment to the Constitution enshrined in law a racist differentiation of how people who are born here can gain Irish citizenship. This has led to the division of families as well as creating a deportation process that is waiting to be exposed for its flagrant human rights violations.

It's unacceptable how casualised discrimination against Travellers has become. It took the deaths of 10 people to start a proper conversation about the issue of Traveller accommodation. Local and national politicians have kept their jobs despite openly propagating stereotyping myths about the traveller community. The Roma people are treated just as bad. When prejudiced neighbour-behind-the-curtain types claimed Roma families had kids that weren't theirs (purely due to the complexion

(8)

of the children), the police and health services responded by taking the children away only to return them later. That in the 21st century, the state would separate families based on the fact that a racist Irish neighbour couldn't fathom that its possible for Roma parents to have children lighter than them, beggars belief.

With jobs hard to come by and levels of pay and work conditions plummeting, it was inevitable that migrant workers would feel the brunt of people's anger. Instead of blaming vertically – identifying the Government and the powers that be as the cause for all our problems, too many Irish people rely on horizontal blame – lashing out at those worse off, lashing out at ethnic minorities who are already being pushed into the furthest suburbs of major Irish cities. We are already seeing "white flight" in Ireland, we are experiencing gentrification. It's not uncommon to see schools where only non-white kids attend. This separation of communities is fostered by local and national politics and a culturally ignorant media. It's in the workplaces and in our communities where the message of anti-racism needs to start.

It the next few weeks it is hoped that we'll get the network off the ground. Rather than reinventing the wheel, we propose to support and extend the work done by already existing anti-racism groups and initiatives. Our message will am for every platform, from the terraces of Deacy Park to the dance floor in Aras na Gael. Watch this space!



TAMAI!

escapism? No. The focus is shifted, with the main purpose of not getting stuck in TINA. Traditional acts of resistance can still happen, but need to be re-framed holistically:

What do I mean by holistic? a) changing the internal processes towards horizontality, inclusion, and empowerment, b) changing spaces towards growing autonomy, c) changing the messages and rhetoric towards positivity, d) change thinking towards radical imagination, e) changing and creating institutions, f) changing emotional spaces towards mutual support, and g) redistributing power and resources. While this list surely is not complete, and while all of the points demand further detailed explanation, I say it all starts with the radical imagination. Do you, fighting against one or another injustice, really believe that it will change? Do you really believe capitalism and patriarchy will be overcome? That is what we need to work on together, in small and bigger groups, because ideas grow in exchange, debate, and difference of opinions, and not in secluded, silent cubbyholes. All else will follow from there. In order to preact, we need to preimagine. Lets work together towards the many alternatives!

ps. responses in the next issue encouraged!
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If world trade brings us death, what other forms of exchanging and producing can we imagine?

Collaborative networks of local collectives?

The new approach I shall name: prefigurative activism, or short: preAct. It reminds of minority report's preCrime, and this is no accident. Resistance always means, that it is reaction, even reactionary to something one or another authority is doing. preAct wants to turn this around: the actors take the power that they have and do something, outside of the vicious circle of resistance. They are the first to do something, and not intentionally in relation to any authorities around. It draws mainly from the concept of prefigurative politics, which primarily focuses on the internal process of protest groups and networks. It means to enact the wished for future society, especially its relations, already in the now. This means for example: horizontal decision making and organising, mutual aid. PreAct looks for the cracks that come up in the capitalist system, filling them, temporarily, with autonomy and creativity. Temporary Autonomous Zones (TAZ), or autonomous geographies, many names exist for more or less the same phenomena. So you say: but some things are so bad, they need to be resisted, they need to be fought against, they need to be stopped. Is this all some kind of hippiesque

Towards autonomous spaces: let's create a Social Centre!

Social centres are spaces for uniting social movements, strengthening activism and thinking strategically. As clearly defined spaces for grassroots organising and horizontal politics, autonomous spaces tend to naturally act as hubs for an array of local campaigns and activists to hold meetings, plan actions, create new networks, publicise their campaigns, produce banners, write pamphlets and raise vital funds to keep going. Social centres contribute to strengthening local grassroots movements by bringing together people from different autonomous groups and walks of life in order to create interaction, break down boundaries and community across activist/non-activist divides.

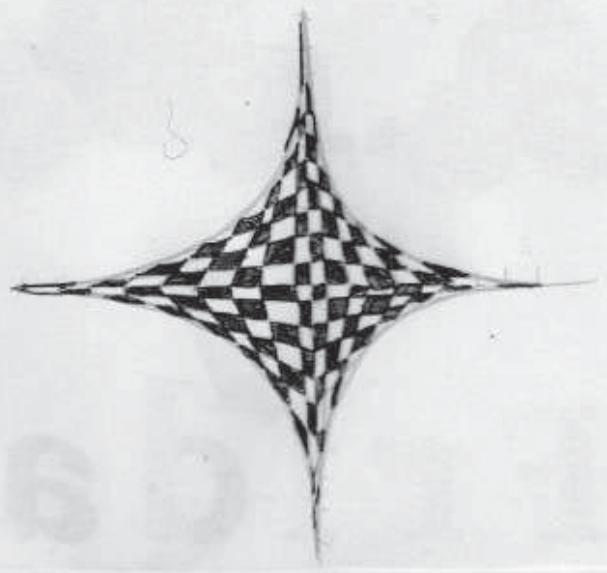
SOCIAL CENTRES CAN INCLUDE:

- ✓ AN INFO-SHOP
- ✓ A RADICAL BOOKSHOP
- ✓ A ORGANIC, VEGAN CAFE / BAR
- ✓ SPACE FOR GIGS
- ✓ INDEPENDENT CINEMA
- ✓ RESOURCE CENTRE
- ✓ OPEN-SOURCE MEDIA CENTRE AND HACKLAB
- ✓ ...



The Galway Grassroots Network intends to set up a Social Centre! A working group has formed to find a suitable building and get it started. We are looking for more groups and people to get involved, so please get in touch with us ggn-centre@riseup.net

[Text adapted from Chapter 13/14 in Do it Yourself – A handbook for changing our world (Trapese Collective)]



This is all in line of the TINA-doctrine: there is no alternative. It has permeated our minds. Thatcher lives on. When all roads are leading to Rome, it is not enough to change the direction. We need to leave the road. Of course, war and its anti-movement are just one example, but once looking at the names of movements, you can realize that the anti-stance is a wide spread phenomena. What I propose is to shift the focus, naming movements in line with what is desired, the other sides of the coin. Admittedly, some movements are doing that already: there is the peace-movement, there is the right to water movement.

Naming the movement is important, but successively, many steps have to follow, in a holistic way, as an overall strategy, even as an general approach to activism. This new approach will lead to, and depart from, a new way of thinking, what I call TAMM: there are many alternatives.



What we do...



Workshops & Events

We run a creative, ethically motivated workshop and social hub where people can learn how to repair their bicycles and run all sorts of projects.

Why we exist...



Because we love bicycles (and their cyclists)

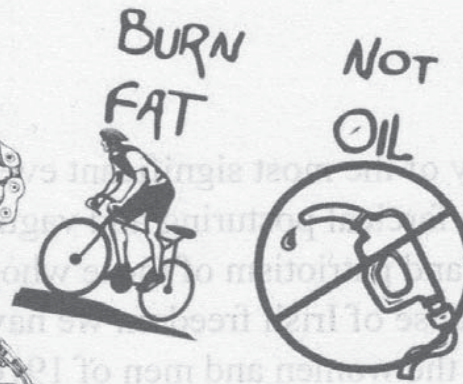
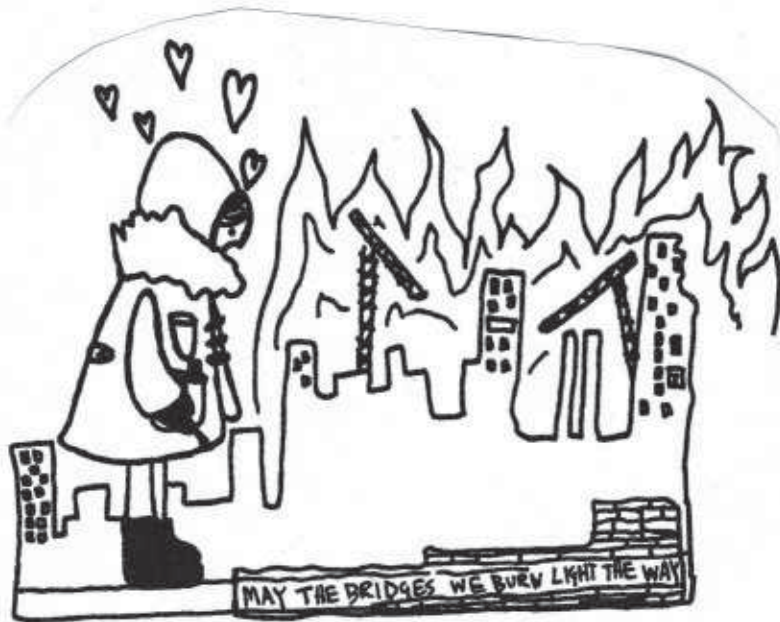
We encourage positive environmental choices and a cycling culture in Galway. We want to help build and share community strength and resilience, and promote the health and environmental benefits of cycling.



You'll be wheellie, wheellie happy to meet us!...

Radical Imagination: TAMA. There are many alternatives!

Let's start with a question: what is activism? Or what is an activist? For most people, one conception comes to mind: somebody who resists. Activism is often used as a synonym to resistance. Activists either resist the status quo, or an upcoming change to the status quo, working towards the 'better' option. Movements coming from this perspective often define themselves and their goals in dependence on that which is resisted. Without war, no anti-war movement. I argue, that without an anti-war movement, there is no war. This is a strong claim to make, so let's weaken it a bit: the anti-war movement is contributing by its activities to the existence of war. It is doing so by setting the focus on war, by perpetuating the dominant thinking of the ideology of war.



Some chains can set you free...

When we're open...



This is the door

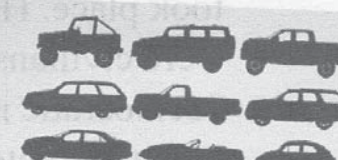
DIY Bicycle Workshops (you fix your bike with guidance from our volunteer mechanics):
Wednesdays 6pm-9pm & Fridays 12-3pm

Services & Repairs (leave your bike and we fix it for you):
Wednesdays & Thursdays 1-5pm

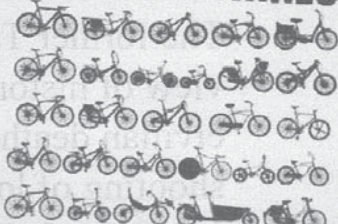
Email: an.mheitheal.rothar@gmail.com
Facebook: An Mheitheal Rothar

Where We Are...

Opposite the Cathedral
Earls Island - Between the Huston School of Film & West Ireland Cycling



DEATH MACHINES



LIFE MACHINES

CRIMINAL AS

Politicians North and South need to face up to reality. Criminalising abortion puts women in danger and does not decrease the rate of abortion. At least ten women a day travel abroad for abortions and women who cannot travel order pills online. Our draconian laws make them criminals and discriminate against the most vulnerable women - those without the resources or papers to face travel. Women living on the island of Ireland can face imprisonment (for life in Northern Ireland and 14 years in the Republic) for taking tablets which would be prescribed on the NHS in Scotland, England or Wales.

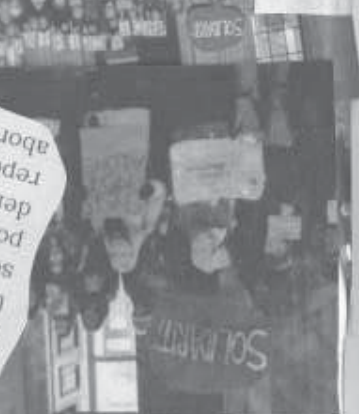
SHE IS NOT ALONE

Although organisations like WomenOnWeb and WomenHelpWomen exist to assist and guide women in accessing the abortion pill online, women are still left vulnerable to both the stigma of abortion and our laws which criminalise them.

While marching on Shop Street chanting "Free, Safe, Legal Abortion Now!" we got cheers from passers-by. It's striking to think how much the pro choice movement has grown in Ireland and how much it's challenged the stigma around abortion. We'll continue to organise and to give voice to the lived experiences of women who for so long have been silenced. We'll continue to remind our politicians that there is a grassroots movement demanding change. We'll continue to campaign for repeal of the 8th Amendment and for free, safe and legal abortion in Ireland.

If you would like to get involved in Galway Pro Choice come to a monthly meeting or event. You can also sign up to our mailing list by emailing us on prochoicegalway@gmail.com.

Galway Pro-Choice



GALWAY

GRASSROOTS

SKILLSHARE

Join us for a FREE day of workshops to EXCHANGE, LEARN + CONNECT

13/02/16
10:00-17:00

Galway Rowing Club (no. 10 Waterside)

Creating Empowering Processes

The need for participatory processes for social change

Radical Dance

Learn Radical Dance (it doesn't matter what you look like, all that matters is that you dance, it's a very short life.)

Social Change in Galway: Where to start
Using local knowledge to facilitate effective action

For more details and to register your interest please email ggm-join@riseup.net

Galway Grassroots Network (GGN) is a focal point for activists and groups working for social and environmental justice. The network hopes to foster solidarity and encourage communication, support and collaboration in Galway.



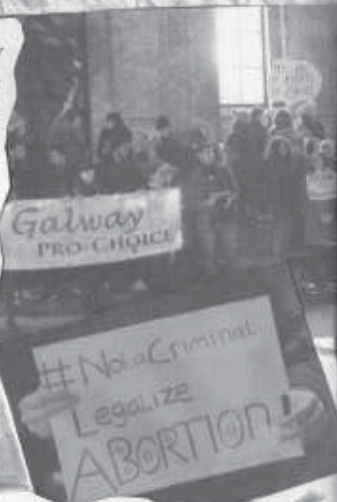
WE'RE NOT

On January 15th Galway Pro Choice stood in solidarity with a 21-year-old woman facing prosecution in County Down on charges of using 'poison' to procure an abortion. On the cold Friday evening 60 people gathered outside the Courthouse for a solidarity demonstration chanting "My body, my choice, my vote" in both English and Irish before leading a spontaneous march through the streets of Galway to the Spanish Arch. Protestors held signs that read "She is not a criminal", "She is not alone", "We stand with her" and "Drop the charges". We stood with activists in Belfast, Dublin, Cork and London, where simultaneous demos were held, to say she is not a criminal and neither are the thousands of women North and South of the border who use these pills every year.

The pills in question, Mifepristone and Misoprostol, are not poison. They're on the World Health Organisation's list of essential medicines. They are considered basic drugs that all doctors in all states should have available.

The woman has been ordered to stand trial for charges based on the archaic Offences Against the Person Act of 1861. The rest of the UK has since repealed the abortion provision of this act and its past time for Northern Ireland to follow suit. Had this woman lived less than 100 miles due east, these pills would have been provided to her by the NHS.

The hypocrisy is galling considering that although the 21-year-old and a Belfast mother charged last year were arrested in connection with the abortion pill, around 215 Northern Irish women who publically signed an open letter informing officials of their illegal abortions have been essentially ignored.



DROP THE CHARGES



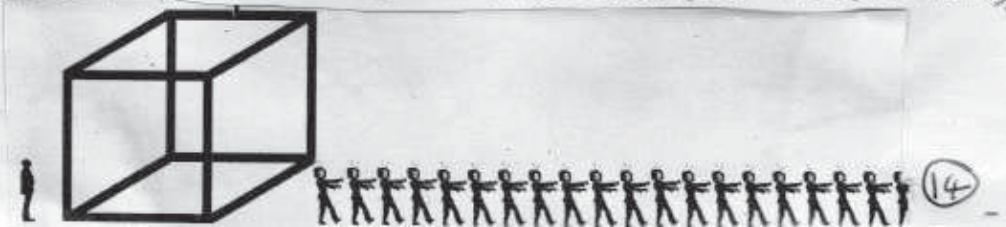
DAY 1

CALAIS CAMP FOR REFUGEES

IT WAS 7AM & THE LAST FAILED STRAGGLERS OF THE NIGHTS' ATTEMPTS TO REACH THE UK FLOATED PAST US IN THE MORNING MIST. TWO MEN, CROUCHED CLEANING THEIR PUMSOOLS, WATCHED US CLURCH OUR WAY THROUGH THE FRAECED SLUDGE. 'ASSAZAMU ALAIKUMS' WERE PASSED TO OUR DIRTY BOOTS WITHOUT EYE CONTACT. WE STOPPED IN FRONT OF SOME MEN IN A BIG TENT UNDER A SIGN: 'KITCHEN CAMP' RESIDENTS FEEDING OTHER CAMP RESIDENTS - THE OTHER CAMP RESIDENTS HAD BROKEN IN THE NIGHT BEFORE & STOLEN FOOD. I GAVE THEM MY SAD EYES & MUTTERED SORRY. HOT CARDOM ON COFFEE, THICK WITH SUGAR, WAS PRESSED INTO MY HANDS.

I WASHED UP THE CUPS OF 1500 WITH A YELLOW BOY FROM IRAQ. HE ASKED ME IF I WAS HERE ALONE. YES I SAID & HE LAUGHED THAT I HAD NO FRIENDS. HE TOLD ME ABOUT HIS FRIENDS, TOOK OUT HIS PHONE & SHOWED ME PICTURES, FACEBOOK & FOUR GRINNING CADS SLIDING & THE NEXT PHOTO. FATHER, BROTHER, BROTHER, SISTER, BROTHER, BROTHER, MOTHER. HOW MANY SIBLINGS DO YOU HAVE I GERIN. 9. BUT NOW 2. THE REST GONE. AND FATHER? DEAD. I DON'T ASK ABOUT HIS MOTHER.

BUT, I ASK SOMEONE - WHY IS HE YELLOW? BECAUSE HE IS DYING BECAUSE THE FRENCH WON'T GIVE HIM A BLOOD TRANSFUSION. THIS SECOND MAN, HE WENT ON TO TELL ME HE WAS A DOCTOR IN AFGHANISTAN & THAT'S HOW HE KNEW. HE WORKED ALONE IN A CARAVAN, TREATING THOSE WHO WERE TOO SCARED TO GO TO THE HOSPITAL AFTER THE POLICE HAD BEATEN THEM UP, OR THE TRAIN TRAIN TRACKS HAD SLICED OFF THE TIP OF THEIR TOES. THE MAN HAD LOST TWO TOE ENDS, BUT THE END OF ONE, HE FORGOT WHICH, WAS GRENCHED INTO A BLOODED FIST OF TISSUE IN HIS HAND.



DAY 3

AN AFGHAN TENT IN THE CAMP FILLED WITH MEN CHARGING THEIR PHONES, SMOKING SHISHA BETWEEN TWO WOMEN: PRIVANICA CHIKRA

SINGING AS A BEAUTIFUL BROKEN SOUL IN ALL HER FIERERY ON A WIDESCREEN TV & ON THE OPPOSITE WALL, A PAINTING OF

QUEEN ELIZABETH THREE TIMES THE SIZE OF MY BODY. I SAT BEWITCH MY QUEEN —

LEGAL ADVICE: WHERE WOULD YOU CARE TO GO I BEGAIN?

HOME. WHY ENGLAND? I ASKED TOO MANY TIMES. BECAUSE:

COUDON. MY FATHER IS THERE. I SPEAK ENGLISH. WE CANNOT

STAY HERE. WHERE ELSE? THANK YOU SISTER - YOU ARE FROM ENGLAND!

TAKE US WITH YOU!! YES YES, I WILL HIDE YOU IN MY SUTCHASE.

DAY 6

THREE HOURS I CUT GARLIC IN THE SOOTHING MEDITATION OF REP-

ITION. SOMEONE ASKS - YOUR MOTHER IS FROM SCOTLAND? YES, YES

I SAY. A PHONE IS HANDED TO ME - HERE, IT IS MY MOTHER, FROM

IRAN, SHE IS IN GLASGOW! I COULD BARELY UNDERSTAND THE

VOICE THOUGH ITS THICK GLASWEGIAN ACCENT - TAKE CARE

OF MY SON MY DEAR, HE IS ONLY 9. BRING HIM HERE. PLEASE

THE VOICE CRACKED. YES YES I SAID. YES YES BEFORE THE BOY

DISAPPEARED WITH HIS PHONE & THE CRACKED MOTHER WITH HER

GLASWEGIAN ACCENT.

DAY 8

A SINGLE DISCO BALL HUNG FROM THE CEILING & THE SUDANESE

BEATS RICOCHETED INTO THE AIR, COMPETING WITH THE HINDI

RAP BEARING OUT OF CAFE KARAVI NIGHT HAD FALLEN ON THE CAMP

I DANCED WITH EYES CLOSED AS A FESTIVAL WITH FRIENDS. ONE

SEE - WE TAKE YOU ON AN ADVENTURE, A NIGHT WALK UP TO THE

MOTORWAY. THIS IS WHERE WE JUMP ONTO THE TRUCKS. THEY

BLOCK THE ROAD TO CAUSE TRAFFIC JAM. HERE LOOK - LOOK!

QUICK! COME COME! TENDRILS OF TEAR GAS STROKING MY WINGS.

QUICK COME COME! AND THE ROAD IS BLOCKED. CRACKLE INTO

THE SKY - THE FASCISTS AND THEIR FIREWORKS BROWN

COVERED FACES RUNNING & SMALL BAGS BUMPING ON THEIR

BACKS. A TOWN STRONG STAMPEDE. MY FESTIVAL FRIENDS

5

promotion. For many women there is also the challenge of the "sticky floor", with many of the most precarious and low paid jobs also being filled by women, including administration, and cleaning. Indeed many cleaning and grounds staff in the university are now contracted-in from outside agencies. This is a growing trend that leads to job uncertainty and insecurity for those whose work is already undervalued and low paid.

The campaign continues

The campaign continues, and the five other women are in the long and tedious process of preparing their cases and no dates are set for them yet. But as long as the university refuses to acknowledge the failures of the 2018/09 round of promotions, there is still a need to keep the pressure up in the campaign. Go to <https://mitchelneesthreeconditions.wordpress.com/> where you can find out more, get the latest news and sign the petition.

UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT in "Charm Offensive" #50



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NUI Galway's Jim Browne continues to deny gender discrimination

Have you heard about NUI Galway's radical stance on gender equality? It doesn't believe in it. For many years now, qualified women academics have been systematically passed over for promotions.

Now, dozens are appealing this discriminatory practice, with five women taking the university to court. Already, Dr Micheline Sheehy Skeffington won an Equality Tribunal case in December 2014 against the university for discrimination on the basis of gender in a 2009 round of promotions.

Dr Sheehy Skeffington is the granddaughter of Hanna Sheehy Skeffington, the famous Irish suffragette. She was awarded €70,000 in damages which she has donated to support the five women taking cases against the university, as all other avenues are closed to them.

Justice is an expensive business when you have to the fight resources of an institution like a university. And it seems that university president Jim Browne has given up any ideas about leading a forward thinking, 21st century academic institution. Instead, Browne's bull headed approach is to deny any wrong doing and force each woman individually through the courts.

The glass ceiling and the sticky floor

These academic women are playing an important role in addressing the "glass ceiling", the invisible and unwritten barrier of gender inequality which prevents women from receiving equal opportunities in pay and

LEAVE ME. SORRY SISTER, WE MUST TRY FOR ENGLAND. BE SAFE SISTER. SORRY SISTER, I AM A BROWN FACE CHOKING AMONGST THE OTHERS, WITH A TICKET TO ENGLAND BURNING THROUGH THE CONSCIENCE OF MY THROAT UNTIL I CANNOT BREATHE. THEY ARE A HERD TRAMPLING THEIR WAY TO THE FREEDOM OF THE INSIDES OF A TRUCK. CARCASS. ANIMALS.

DAY 15

THE YELLOW BOY TELLS ME HE WILL WALK ME OUT THE CAMP TONIGHT - IT IS NOT SAFE TO BE ALONE HE SAYS. THE POLICE ARE ANGRY TODAY AND YESTERDAY. AND THE RESIDENTS OF CALAIS ARE ANGRY, AND THE RESIDENTS OF THE CAMP, THEY ARE ANGRY TO WE LEAVE THE CAMP AND THE POLICE SEAL THE ENTRANCE BEHIND US. WE SIT & WAIT THAT THE YELLOW BOY CAN RETURN & HE HOLDS AN UMBRELLA OVER ME & SHOWS ME HIS FAMILY ON HIS PHONE. FATHER - BROTHER - BROTHER - SISTER - BROTHER - BROTHER - MOTHER. WE CLOSE OUR EYES TO THE LULLABY OF HIS FAMILY. I WILL BE YOUR FRIEND HE TELLS ME. WE GIGGLE & MY EYES STING - TOO MUCH TEARGAS PERHAPS. HE IS TURNING GREEN. COME, I WILL TAKE YOU HOME - IT IS NOT SAFE TO BE ALONE TONIGHT I TELL HIM. NO NO YES YES. THE POLICE LINE, GUNS COCKED. TEARGAS? RUBBER BULLETS? HE TELLS ME NOT TO BE SCARED. I HAVE BITTEN THROUGH THE SIDE OF MY MOUTH - RUSTY IRON BLOOD. I IMAGINE A FILM CREW & THE PICTURE OF THE TANK & THE LITTLE PALESTINIAN BOY - AND THERE IS THE POLICE LINE WITH THEIR GUNS COCKED & ME & THE LITTLE GREEN BOY. AND THEY DON'T LET US PAST. AND THEY DON'T LET US PASS AND IT IS SO COLD. AND I AM TIRED. AND A RED CAR REVS PAST US, WORDS OF ABUSE HURLING ALONG THE CONTOURS OF A PEPSI CAN THAT SPINS TOWARD US FROM ITS WINDOW. THE GREEN BOY BECOMES A BIT SMALLER BY MY SIDE. I GROW BIGGER AND I TELL HIM HOW LOVELY IT WILL BE WHEN HE REACHES ENGLAND, A FAIRYTALE FROM THE WICKED WITH

Direct action is a proclamation of personal independence.

It happens, for the first time, at the intersection of your self-consciousness and your tolerance for being screwed over. You act. You trust yourself forward and intervene. And then you hang loose and deal with whatever comes. In that moment of decision, in that leap into the unknown, you come to life. Your interior world is suddenly vivid.

You're like a cat on the prowl:

alive, alert and still a little wild.

SMASH
THE +
PATRIARCHY

DAY 18

I AM CUTTING GARLIC AGAIN. EVERYDAY I CUT GARLIC. SHE,
FROM BRITAIN, TELLS ME SOME OF THE GUYS GOT BADLY
BEATEN LAST NIGHT. I SHRYG OVER MY GARLIC - THE
CLOVE IS LARGER THAN USUAL. THE YELLOW BOY LIMPS
IN. HERE AND HERE AND HERE. HE POINTS TO WHERE
THEY BEAT HIM. HERE AND HERE AND HERE. HE
GRUMBLES INTO MY ARMS. WE SHUFFLE TO A CORNER &
I MISS THE PEACE OF THE GARLIC. HERE AND HERE
AND HERE. SHOW ME YOUR FAMILY I ASK - THERE IS
SOME PEACE IN THAT. THEY TOOK MY PHONE. THE POLICE
WE ROCK TOGETHER TO THE CHANT: FATHER - BROTHER -
BROTHER - SISTER - BROTHER - BROTHER - MOTHER. THEY TOOK
MY PHONE. NO PHOTOS. THEY TOOK MY FINGERS. NO ENGLAND.
THERE THERE THERE I COMFORT HIM. YES YES.

DAY 22

I RETURN
TO ENGLAND.



(17)