Their sentences vary, but those who cooperated with the government received comparable prison sentences to those who refused. Some of the cooperating prisoners have received support from a handful of people within the movement, but the majority of the grassroots and "radical" components of these movements strongly oppose supporting them in any way.

Please, let us know which are for you the most notable information sources about repression against activists, Green Scare… (I mean web pages, zines, books… whatever)

A good overview of the many tactics used against activists throughout U.S. history is *Beyond Bullets: The Suppression of Dissent in the United States* by Jules Boykoff. For prisoner information, the Earth Liberation Prisoners Support Network runs a great email list with the latest updates.

And of course, www.greenisthenewred.com has become a clearinghouse of news on these issues. I hope people reading this will also consider checking out my book, *Green Is The New Red: An Insider's Account of a Social Movement Under Siege.*

After the Smoke Clears: Reflections on the Green Scare

Informants, Green Scare Snitches, and Surveillance: Interview with Lauren Regan, CLDC
Black and Green Review #3, Summer 2016
Retrieved from https://anarchistnews.org/content/informants-green-scare-snitches-and-surveillance-interview-lauren-regan-cldc

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And the Rest Is History... An Interview with Daniel McGowan
Earth First! Journal, Nov.-Dec. 2007 and Jan.-Feb. 2008
Retrieved from http://www.supportdaniel.org/media/

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"The most effective tactic… has been to turn the activists against each other": Interview with Will Potter
by *La Cizalla Ácrata*, posted to *Green is the New Red*, April 2012
Retrieved from http://www.greenisthenewred.com/blog/spanish-interview-international-activist-repression/5710/

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Informants, Green Scare Snitches, and Surveillance: Interview with Lauren Regan, CLDC

As an attorney and long-term activist Lauren Regan has a vantage on state and corporate surveillance that few other activists are exposed to. Regan is the founder and Executive Director of the Civil Liberties Defense Center based in Eugene, OR. She has an extensive history of defending activists after inevitable run ins with the law. She represented a number of Green Scare defendants and has arguably spent more time sorting through Green Scare, AETA, and other similar cases to know about the extent of government and corporate surveillance, disruption, provocation, and how failures of Security Culture opened the door for them.

-Lilia, BGR

What has been one of your more profound encounters with informants within radical action communities?

After moving to the Pacific Northwest I became involved with forest defense campaigns, and ultimately ended up doing a lot of legal support for my friends. Several years later Lacey Phillabaum was one of my housemates for a short time period. Then in December 2005 a bunch of my friends, fellow activists and clients were arrested as part of the Green Scare. Lacey came to me, freaking out that she was being asked to become an informant, and that Stan (Stanislas "Stan" Gregory Meyerhoff) had become an informant.

I told her that we would try and support her in whatever she needed to avoid being in that situation. The next thing I know her and her father are meeting with me and informing me that they are about to go and meet with the FBI, and she was going to become an informant.

That was that, I thought. But a couple of years later I'm on Briana Waters' legal team and we're going to trial for the first time, and she's facing life in prison with a 2 year old baby, and Lacey Phillabaum is testifying against her to try and put her away so that Lacey could get less time in prison. I'm sitting

because corporations are seeking to protect their profits around the world.

Which are, in your opinion, the "low points" of the movement which make it vulnerable to repressive attacks like the Green Scare, the AETA…?

The strategy behind the government's tactics is fragmentation. In discussing this, I think it's helpful to visualize social movements as having a "horizontal" and "vertical" component. The intention is to separate these movements horizontally, and create rifts between them and the broader left. Animal rights activists and environmentalists are therefore depicted as ideological extremists who, if they have their way, will stop you from eating meat and driving cars and having pets. There are of course already tensions between these movements and the more traditional left, but campaigns by corporations and politicians intend to exacerbate them. If these movements are not seen as part of a broader social justice struggle, it is easier for other leftist and progressive groups to turn their backs on their repression.

Similarly, there is a campaign to fragment these movements vertically. Aboveground lawful groups are told that they must condemn underground groups, and if they do not they will also be treated as terrorists. This two-prong strategy — breaking these movements away from other social movements, and breaking the aboveground away from the underground — isolates those who are being targeted and intensifies the repression.

So, to answer your question more directly, the most effective tactic for repressing these movements has been to turn the activists against each other, either by pressuring them to become informants or by pressuring them to publicly condemn each other.

In the case of the prisoners who decided to cooperate, did they receive minimum sentences or are they serving similar sentences to the people who decided not to cooperate? Are they receiving any support from the movement?

This is a very difficult question to answer, because social movements, by their nature, are always changing. However, it is undeniable that these tactics have had a chilling effect, which means that they have made many activists think twice about what they say and do because they are concerned about being labeled a terrorist. That being said, the animal rights and environmental movements in the United States are vibrant and growing. There has been a resurgence of non-violent civil disobedience in protest of climate change, and animal rights activists are using undercover investigations very effectively.

I guess the mass media have supported this kind of repression. How much importance did they have (or are having at the moment) in criminalizing activists? Did some paper, TV channel… show some form of criticism about it?

For the most part, journalists in the United States have failed to critically examine these tactics. I would argue that one of the reasons that "eco-terrorism" became such a threat is that mainstream journalists used this term without questioning the source. In recent months we have seen more and more criticism of laws like the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act, but for the most part these have not received much attention at all.

As you know, here in Spain some activists have been charged with animal liberation related stuff. They are (or were) all involved with legal campaigning. The comparison with the SHAC 7 or the Austrian activists case is inevitable. Do you think laws like the AETA can have some "copycat" laws in other countries?

Absolutely. Spain, Austria, Finland, and elsewhere are experience similar copycat prosecutions. The corporate-led campaigns to demonize animal rights and environmental activists as "eco-terrorists" have indeed become international in scope. I would argue that this is an example of how these tactics are not "state repression," as leftists generally describe it, but "corporate repression". The state may be carrying out these tactics, but only

at the legal table watching the direct examination by the U.S. Attorney's Office and all of a sudden Lacey points me out, sitting at the counsel table, and said "Lauren Regan knew what we were doing, or she should have known." She perjured herself and basically tried to get me indicted.

Luckily it didn't work.

When Lacey and her father met with you was that as a lawyer potentially representing her, or just as a personal friend?

No, it was as a lawyer who was a friend of hers at the time.

The day that the Green Scare bust happened, me, Jim, Lacey and Stan and a few other of our friends were all flying to Costa Rica for a friends' wedding. Jim and I and several other friends were already in Costa Rica when Stan got detained at the airport on the way out. Lacey started calling me in Costa Rica freaking out, and there was not much I could do at that time. But I remember she read me the names of all the people who had been detained, and that really scared me because there were names on that list that I could not believe would have been involved in economic sabotage at this level.

So I thought conspiracy – this is a witch hunt – this was a broader net than it needed to be. Primarily it was Daniel McGowan's name that surprised me the most because he worked very closely with me on Jeff Luer's appeal and prison support campaign. So the idea that he would be Jeff's #1 support, and so close to being indicted himself seemed reckless. I thought there's no way Daniel is involved in this, but clearly he was.

As someone who lived with Lacey do you feel that there was behavior or personality traits that you feel made it not surprising that she eventually went down that path?

No, and here's why. Lacey was one of the most militant, hardcore security culture nazis in our town. When people were subpoenaed to the grand jury she would be standing outside the door with a pad of paper trying to be the community scribe of everything that was asked and everything that was said, and if

you didn't fully debrief with her you were persona non grata.

If you disobeyed the militant culture of security culture as people pretended to adhere to it, she was down your throat in a second. So for her to just fold like a house of cards upon the first application of pressure, that was surprising.

She had been together with Stan for a while – a couple of years maybe – and they had this awful relationship. He punched her in the face a couple of times. They were just nasty to each other. In my head I thought, here's another smart woman who is so insecure in herself that she's with this piece of shit guy. She was leagues above him in many respects.

I wondered "why are they staying together?" She's living with me, and he is coming over occasionally, and he's as dumb as a piece of toilet paper. Whenever he would come over to my house I would remember he would often ask "How is Jeff (Luers) doing?" Jeff is in prison at this point, and I just assumed that because so many people knew I was Jeff's lawyer and lots of people who weren't really in the scene would approach me and ask "How's Jeff doing?", so I never thought anything about it that Stan was asking about Jeff.

Of course in hindsight I realized that Stan was involved in the Romania #2 arson (Jeff was charged with Romania #1, and Romania #2 occurred on the day Jeff's trial was supposed to begin in the same town the arsons occurred. Romania #2 is suspected of playing a part in the Court imposition of his original 23 year sentence) and had tremendous guilt over Jeff's sentence.

So at some point Lacey told me that her and Stan were moving to Bend, OR. At the time, to be frank, I thought it was a domestic violence maneuver. That he wanted to get her out of town. But even when she moved to Bend occasionally we would go hiking together and things like that.

Was it an intense experience realizing that a long term friend, someone you had lived with, gone on hikes with, could fold so easily?

Yeah, of course. It was the first time in my life, as well as many other people's lives around me, where we had to write off friends

"The most effective tactic... has been to turn the activists against each other": An interview with Will Potter

by La Cizalla Acrata

One of the most rewarding aspects of my work has been the opportunity to learn about activist projects around the world, and in some cases contribute in whatever small way I can. A while back I was contacted by a collective of anarchist translators in Spain (you read that correctly — how great is that?) and asked to interview. Here is the result. The translation is available at La Cizalla Ácrata, "Entrevista con Will Potter, autor del libro '*Green is the New Red.*'"

-Will Potter

Please, introduce yourself and your book "Green is the New Red"

Hello, everyone. I am an independent journalist based in Washington, DC. My work has been featured in publications including the *Los Angeles Times*, *Mother Jones*, and National Public Radio. The focus of my writing and lecturing is how political activists are being labeled as "terrorists" by corporations and the U.S. government. *Green Is the New Red* exposes how animal rights and environmental activists have become the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) "number one domestic terrorism threat." My book is written as narrative, telling the story of some members of the Earth Liberation Front, Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty and other groups while also investigating how corporations manufactured the idea of "eco-terrorism."

When we talk about the AETA [Animal Enterprise Terorrorism Act], the Green Scare… Can we say it has achieved their goal? I mean, have you noticed, there in the USA, that animal rights and eco-activists work have deceased since these repressive strategies begun?

that were fueled by an intense need to "just do something." We need to balance our need to do something about what we see happening with strategy and a healthy understanding of the risks inherent in these actions. By "actions," I am not just speaking of sabotage but any action on any campaign.

These discussions are the sort of articles that need to appear in the pages of the *Journal*. Despite the fact that my particular case is over, it's imperative that we discuss tactics and strategies in a way that people can actually hear and listen to what each other are saying. Someone once told me that many activists are not into criticizing actions that have been taken by the ELF because they want to support the defendants and that any criticism of the actions may be perceived as a diss on the people. I appreciate the sentiment and the consideration, but I think, now that much of the case is over, we should soon start to have these dialogues. I, for one, can take any criticism levied on me regarding actions that I have been involved in. In that way, we can move the conversation forward on how to resist ecological destruction in a serious and principled way, without losing so many of our friends to prison, burnout and despair.

as if they were dead. We were burying people left and right. People who cooperated with the grand jury, people like Lacey, we lost a dozen humans out of our community forever. That was like a mourning process.

And if that had been it, that would have been tolerable. But when she actually tried to take me down in addition to it, that's when I got mad. That's why people in this community that have remained friends with her unfortunately can no longer be friends with me either.

She's very smart, and was a journalist so she's very good with words. Both of her parents are lawyers, she was a debate captain, so she can be very good at persuading people. She can be both effective and dangerous. It was a big loss to the movement to lose her in this way, potentially over a guy too. Because if Stan hadn't squealed, I don't think she would have had any reason to. I think the reason she became an informant was because he completely snitched her out, then she basically wanted to stand with him.

That brings up an interesting issue that I don't think many people talk about, in terms of intimate relationships and how often those are related to situations where people end up informing, or there are informants that get into relationships with people and then snitch on them. Do you feel like that's a recurring enough theme that it's something that we should be thinking and talking about more?

I think human frailty and human dysfunction on all sorts of levels become a huge problem whenever you're dealing with high stakes security culture issues. Whether it's drug addiction, or whatever it happens to be, there's always issues like that which come up.

Within the Green Scare you had Darren Thurston jumping off the non-cooperation ship, as a result of pressure from Chelsea Gerlach, who was his romantic partner at the time. And Chelsea was specifically attempting to flip people so she could get bonus points from the Feds. She met with many of the non-cooperators to try and get them to flip. So there certainly

were a few examples of that within the Green Scare.

On the other hand there are examples to the contrary, like Joyanna and Nathan, who were a couple who stuck together and did not snitch. I can see it going both ways.

On the other hand, it is my understanding that Jennifer Kolar (Green Scare cooperating defendant), who dated Joe Dibbe (indicted in Green Scare, never apprehended) and Jonathan Paul (Green Scare non-cooperating defendant) at different times, flipped her blonde hair around and wiggled her way into very critical areas of the movement primarily because she was having sex with activist men. She was probably not vetted as she should have been. She not only flipped as soon as it hit the fan, but she gave up all the passwords and technology related things that ended up being very bad, damning evidence against a lot of different people.

Have there been any other examples aside from "Anna" (who entrapped Eric McDavid) that you know of, of the FBI or corporate security actually sending people in to have relationships with activists?

Oh yeah. There are a number of proven situations where I've read the FBI reports myself where men have been targeted with female FBI agents that posed as interested parties for the purposes of infiltrating.

In my experience it's been men targeted by women. Although I know in Europe and other places it's definitely been the other way. And certainly with Peg Millet (one of the 'Arizona 5' accused of conspiracy to sabotage nuclear power plants and destroying power lines) and her fellow activists in Arizona, it was the reverse, with a male being sent in to infiltrate.

In my experience since the late 90s, I think female agents are used more often because there are more men in the direct action oriented frame of environmental and animal rights stuff, and younger men with a lot of testosterone that are very vulnerable to that type of thing; and statistically more men were committing acts of direct action, that it made a lot of sense for the FBI to be targeting men with women.

made many mistakes, like speaking to an old friend on a wiretap, allowing myself to grow overly cautious in my legal defense and not appreciating my wonderful life until so much of my freedom was ripped away.

I did what I did—not cooperating—because I honor my word to my allies. There is nothing inherently different in me that influenced that decision. You too are capable of acting with integrity, and I implore people to truly think through the consequences of your actions and work on building deep relationships that are able to withstand the pressures of legal battles that may happen 20 years from now. I erred in allowing myself to get desperate and lash out at entities that caused me great frustration. There are other ways of affecting change, although they may not give you the instant gratification that some actions will, nor will your actions be considered the most militant.

We need to have serious conversations about whether militantancy is truly effective in all situations. Certainly, direct action is a wonderful tool, but from my experience, it may not be the most effective one at all times or in all situations. This opinion will land me in disregard by both the militants (many of whom are hypertheoretical and, thus, their opinions exist in a sort of vacuum) and my enemies (who accuse me of playing both sides of the story). The truth is that things are more complex than that. In some instances, direct action is the most effective tactic. For instance, in 1999, I was involved in an action that destroyed a tremendous amount of genetically modified (GM) grass and equipment belonging to the company testing it. The risks of the GM grass were verified, and groups even sued to stop it—claiming that the GM grass would inevitably spread to the forests and grasslands, polluting them with herbicide-resistant or faster-growing GM grass. The action happened in 1999, but it took six years for the courts to rule in the plaintiff's favor, imposing a moratorium on the growing of GM grass. Actions that are understood by the public and seen as logical can have a positive impact on pre-existing campaigns and struggles.

On the other hand, I have to admit that I have been involved in some hare-brained actions that I am not proud of,

movement is what we need to do to combat this fear factor.

I'm concerned that my case seems too complex, and, thus, people will get confused by things like the names of who cooperated or didn't, the names of the charges and will "check out." This does not bode well for a movement that needs to combat amnesia and stop history from repeating itself. Of course, so much of what is happening in our movement and society concerns me—ongoing and endless war, seemingly impending war in Iran, the day-to-day ecological destruction that is seen as normal, activists in our movement facing serious time in prison, the fallacy of white people wanting to build a 700-mile fence on our so-called border, and hearing the word "faggot" and other slurs more times in the last three months than in the last 15 years and that being seen as okay.

Lately, I've been inspired by beautiful writing about resistance and emotions. Something about this ordeal has really affected my sensibilities, and I find myself crying when I think of solidarity and the support I have received and things like sibling relationships, friends who have passed on this past year or so, and our prospects. I'm inspired by brave people—the quiet kind who seek no accolades and who keep at it, day after day, with no end in sight and with no victory assured. I'm inspired by the selflessness of my co-defendant, Jonathan—who could have gone to trial and fought his charges further, not having the 30-year mandatory minimum count, but took the plea bargain to save us from spending the rest of our lives in prison. Finally, I am inspired by my wife and partner, Jenny, whose dedication and support I am so appreciative of.

Is there anything else you want to say to Journal readers and the EF! community?

First off, I want to thank anyone has picked up a pen to write to me or my co-defendants, has donated any money to help us pay for our lawyers, has sent supportive emails and letters, or has hosted benefits. Your support does mean something to me, and I will never forget it. I want to say that my co-defendants and I are human—just like you. We make mistakes; indeed, I have

How do you think the Green Scare has impacted the green anarchist/radical scene?

From traveling around the country and doing a lot of government repression types of talks, that integrate AETA and Green Scare related issues, I have certainly had a lot of people both long term activists and newer ones tell me that things have been different since the Green Scare. That things are not as active since the Green Scare.

I think that may statistically be true in terms of economic sabotage, but in terms of the grassroots movements—anti-tar sands movement and some of the climate justice groups that are now including undocumented immigrant communities and things like that, I don't see there being a huge deterrent to people getting active along those lines, at least in the last 5-7 years or so.

In discussions I've had with people they say that the Green Scare had an impact because we're not seeing arsons anymore, but I think that the reality was that after that binge during the late 90's and early 2000s, even people who were participating in those actions were having some serious reconsideration about the way the tactic was being implemented, and the potential for serious back lash. As well as some serious discussion going on about the effectiveness of it. Things were being rebuilt, like Vail (Ski resort in Colorado where $12M arson occurred). There were very few examples, Cavel West Slaughterhouse being one of them, where the target was not rebuilt. In nearly every other circumstance, the targeted property was rebuilt or repurchased. So I think there was a lot of internal discussion, and it was valid, and I think, a necessary discussion. So it's hard to say whether or not the underground movement itself put limits to that, versus it actually being government deterrence. By the time the [Green Scare] prosecutions happened in 2005 the actions had already pretty much stopped. Most of them stopped in 2001, and I think there was 1 or 2 that happened in 2003. Then the indictments didn't come down till 2005. So to say that the prosecutions were a direct result of ending that

tactic, I'm not sure that factually plays out.

The FBI has been teaching very real world methods of observation, tracking and intrusion for a long time, but are using more high-tech surveillance these days. Is it likely that they are still using those 'real world' techniques?

Oh of course. As part of the FBI/JTTF training they are using younger agents who are tattooed, who learn vegan-talk, who basically go to boot camp to specifically be able to integrate themselves into anarchist / activist scenes. That is absolutely still going on. The ability for the government to spy on activists has only exponentially increased. In addition to government surveillance we are also seeing an increase in 'gray intelligence' – corporations spying on campaigns. Particularly in the anti-coal, tar sands, pharmaceutical – you know – environmental and animal rights targets, climate justice targets, all have very big industries behind them and we're seeing a lot of both illegal and legal spying tactics by them as well.

So you think corporate surveillance is definitely on the increase?

Oh yes.

Do you know some examples of how people are finding out about that? Because you wouldn't think it would come up on public records very often.

Well believe it or not, some of the private spy agencies screwed up by voluntarily sharing their reports with the FBI and local law enforcement agencies. Once they did that, all of those reports are subject to FOIA and public records laws, and that's how we actually got a lot of the stuff out.

For example, TransCanada was giving powerpoint presentations to FBI offices and local law enforcement agencies along the [Keystone] pipeline route. We actually got their whole powerpoint presentation, which included photos of lead

I was accepted into an environmental sociology program at Antioch University that is self-directed, and, attended a residency in April. I am responsible for recruiting my own instructors and creating syllabi, as well as keeping up with the workload like any student. I am on a leave of absence right now, due to my time in transit. I will be starting the program again in the Winter. The Antioch staff has been really open to working with me and has not hesitated at all, despite the many obstacles that this program represents for me as an incarcerated student. With luck and hard work, it will take me a little more than two years. I am also lucky to have a crew of graduate students on the outside who have helped me tremendously with my writing and preparation for a graduate-level program.

As for other plans, I am consistently exercising a lot these days and trying to take advantage of the track and many machines they have here. So far, I prefer rowing and a stationary bike, but I intend to add weights into the mix soon, too. The Bureau of Prisons makes you work, so I will be starting a job as an orderly tomorrow. Hopefully, that won't stop me from studying too much. I also intend to catch up on a huge reading list and correspond with a lot of people that I have not been able to for some time now, due to my sort of frantic schedule on the outside.

What concerns you? What inspires you?

A major concern I have is that the cases that comprise the Green Scare will spread fear and paralyze people from action and organizing. Like Will Potter ("*Green Is the New Red*") has pointed out, legislation like the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act and the federal crime of terrorism (which I and most of my-codefendants received) have the potential to create a severe chilling effect on activism. It's difficult, because it's necessary to speak of what happened, but we have to balance that with the paralysis that can set in from too much analysis or worrying. I think that groups like my support crew learned during this ordeal that action is indeed the antidote to despair—that moving, struggling and advocating for our friends' futures and the

and defendant support grows out of deep relationships with people and a lot of mutual aid. I had put eight years into prisoner support, and I had met and worked with a large number of people in NYC against the Republican National Convention. I feel like the support I gave out was reciprocated.

I would also like to see people who are not well-known receive a lot of support. That would be a good goal: Can we support those we do not know but who nonetheless deserve our support?

My best advice is to let the defendant/prisoner guide the work in some way, and to be flexible and work with their family and legal team. It's challenging but worth it in the end.

What's the best way that people can show their support for you?

I have received such insane support that I could never give anything but praise for those who have helped me out. I suppose the best way people can show their support is to engage in activism of some kind—the kind that is long-term and promotes ecological sanity in our society. Yup, it's a clichéd answer for sure, and I feel silly writing it, but it's the truth. I get lots of mail, books and magazines. Really, another great thing is for people to get others to take a look at the Green Scare cases, and help those defendants and prisoners out. I also have a special place in my heart for Joyanna "Sadie" Zacher, Nathan "Exile" Block and Jonathan Paul, so keep an eye out for them, and ask them what they need. For more information, check out www.greenscare.org [site appears defunct as of 4/2017].

Finally, I want to ask that people consider the partners, wives, husbands, boyfriends, girlfriends and families of those indicted and imprisoned. We are not in this alone, and our families and partners bear an awful burden.

This Summer, you were accepted into Antioch University McGregor's distance learning masters program. Can you tell us more about this? Do you have any other goals or plans for your time in prison?

organizers, and all of the federal terrorist crimes that they were encouraging local DA's to use against activists, and things like that. Some of it we actually got through their own stupidity.

But there are lots of things that they can do that would be really difficult to catch them on, particularly electronic surveillance. A lot of the gray spies are former FBI agents, and so there is a real muddy zone of old and new buddying up with each other. Old FBI calling up new FBI and saying "hey, do me a favor and run this through the computer."

What information do you think informants and undercover types are particularly after? What is their core aim in terms of the information that they are gathering?

Well I think from the government's perspective one of the main goals is psychological profiling, and attempting to map movements and activist communities for future targeting. I think that is a huge part of the goal. I think a lesser part of the goal is actually trying to stop and fight crime…

Or sometimes create crime…

Right, right. Especially I think in a post-Green Scare world where now, because of the level of disclosures that were made by all of these ELF and ALF underground cell operants, the feds are now very aware of how underground activists work. I think that akin to the COINTELPRO era, another major interest of the government in using spies and infiltrators is just the mere interruption of political activity that challenges the current social structures.

There are FBI anti-terrorist reports that I have read where they specifically say that anti-capitalist activism is one of the hugest threats to American society, and that is because of the buddy relationship between the government and these giant corporate profiteers. It's the government doing the bidding of these giant industries and corporations, so anything that is a direct challenge to that is not only being spied upon, but anyway that they can interrupt, interfere, malign – you know – they don't

want that movement to build.

Sometimes it's not about trying to prosecute anyone at all, it's basically about trying to divide up a community and interfere with successful campaigns. We see it over and over again. But because this is a big country and a big activist community we don't really talk as much as we should to be able to see that a certain thing happened in the Tar Sands campaign, and this is happening in the wolf campaign, and the same thing is happening here and there. What is the common situation that is going on? A lot of times it is that the government understands, from it's past spying, how easy it is to fuck with most activist communities.

Again, because of the human weakness, because we don't learn our history and we continue to repeat it. We don't take ourselves as seriously as we should as movement activists. The government preys on all of that and has the same playbook that they play out all across the county over and over again. Every couple of years they can come back and it's a new batch of activists and they can do the same thing again.

Speaking of which, why does security culture matter?

Security culture, in my mind, is not primarily about how to get away with criminal activity. It is about creating an environment and community where those that don't want to engage in criminal activity can be safe from grand jury subpoenas or aiding and abetting, or conspiracy charges as well. So security culture is an across the board agreement on how political activists – who are the targets of government and other kinds of repression – can be as strategically effective as possible and create safe boundaries for people, as best as they can.

A long term activist did a FOIA request that came up with some interesting information about how pre-9/11 environmentalists were being targeted on as potential users of WMD's. Do you know if there was any exposure of informants or spies in that program / investigation?

action. Shown the communiqué afterward, I pleaded to have Free's name removed from it and was rebuffed.

I think radical activists really need to consider their impacts on prisoners. Personally, I think "solidarity actions" are sort of creepy and centered way too much on us and not on the issue at hand. A prosecutor's wet dream is for a solidarity action to happen in the midst of a legal case. Any action dedicated to someone on trial or in a legal case will be fodder for the prosecution. That is just a fact, based on seeing it happen in many cases. Some people may like these actions—to them I say, to each their own.

Your support group was one of the first to form following the December 2005 arrests, and it appears to be one of the most visible and effective prisoner support groups currently operating. Do you have any insight into why this is? Do you have any advice for folks doing prisoner support work?

My support group is a bunch of badasses led by my wife, Jenny—who despite all claims that she is not an activist, is one of the best organizers I have ever met! The shock of my being ripped out of our city was a major factor in the fast response to my arrest: I was arrested at 4:12 p.m. on December 7, 2005, and the court room was packed the next day. My friends were able to mobilize a lot of the people I had worked with during the past five years in New York City. My family, employer, co-workers, fellow students and friends were out in full force, aided by the simple fact that my family got everyone this information really fast. I remember being in jail in Eugene, Oregon, and not only finding out that I had a lawyer ready to be interviewed and hired, but that I had a website and listserv, and letters were already being generated for a bail hearing that I didn't even know was planned! My friends chose to fight like hell for me, and I think that made all the difference. Living in New York, a huge and rich city, they hosted more than 50 benefits for me in the last two years and contributed massive amounts to my legal defense fund, as well as those of many of the other Green Scare defendants.

Is this something you can learn? I think good prisoner

divergent our ideas were. I was dismayed by growing factions that felt that what we were doing was not enough, at a time when I felt we should be pulling back, engaging only in sabotage actions that could bolster bridges between us and aboveground campaigns.

My time in Canada was full of new possibilities. I saw how indigenous people were resisting forest destroyers in their territory. I saw aboveground but militant and creative forest defense campaigns being fought in the Elaho wilderness, and I met inner-city harm-reduction activists working to decriminalize heroin users and work for safe injection sites. Inspired by their public and yet unapologetic militant stance, I came back to the US and made my break with the (ELF) final.

On Democracy Now, you told Amy Goodman that the solidarity action with Jeffrey "Free" Luers—the Romania action, which he believes was partly responsible for his original 22-year, eight-month sentence—made you "start to look at [your] actions as being very dangerous and having repercussions beyond [your] control." Can you explain in more detail what you meant by this? To what extent should radical activists be required to anticipate or even feel responsible for the government repression that arises in response to their actions?

I want to be very frank about the Romania action. It ruined Free's chance of a jury trial. Now, of course, a jury trial may have sent him to prison for a long time as well, but we will never know. Romania was serious and dangerous because it was horribly timed and showed a very poor logic—that somehow going back to the site of the original arson would have some positive effect on Jeff. This strategy was really poor, and the action was perceived by many as rather adolescent and taunting.

Did the people who took part in this action mean to harm Jeff? No, of course not. The thing is, our actions do have unintended consequences, and I feared that this group would continue to be interested in engaging in similar actions. I felt personally responsible for Jeff's outcome—not because I was involved, but because I was out of town and couldn't stop the

The incendiary devices that were used in the mid-late 90's were considered deadly devices, and that's why the terrorist enhancement stuck for a lot of the Green Scare defendants. But over and over again we see documentation from FBI agents, as well as corporate spies. For example, there is an anti-fracking group in Pennsylvania, and it's made up of teachers and doctors, and once a week on Friday afternoon they get out their banner and go down to the busy corner of this little town and they stand there and hold their anti-fracking banner. A corporate spy had been monitoring them, and had been writing a terrorist bulletin that they shared with law enforcement and the FBI, which is how we ended up getting it. The bulletin repeatedly said "they're holding a banner and they're doing this non-violence stuff now, but their rhetoric is getting more militant and they are going to move onto more violent activity, so we need to continue to monitor them…."

I think that generally speaking, law enforcement, in order to ensure the longevity of their jobs, and the continued funding, and gross increases in funding, there has to constantly be a threat and an increasing threat. You're never going to see the government saying "environmentalists learned their lesson, they're not going to do that stuff anymore." In the Green Scare they said "they may be doing property damage now, but they were going to be moving onto assassinations."

I assume that's enhanced so much more with corporate surveillance and private security agencies, which are so focused on helping drive profit growth?

The way a lot of them work, say Peabody Coal for instance, they know they can't have in-house spies. Because if that gets back to them, they get in trouble. So they set up and fund a separate private entity that is half-PR firm and half-security firm. In order for that entity to remain operational they have to produce information that Peabody Coal wants to hear, and they have to be validating their own job. So if they were to report "doctors and teachers are holding a banner every Friday" they are going to be pulled off that case, and they're not going to get paid to do that

anymore. What retired FBI agent doesn't want to just sit around and watch a bunch of peaceniks hold a banner, versus going after drug smugglers or something similar. They are perpetuating their own economic gain through that process as well.

One of the more classic examples is the private spy group that changes its name every other week that targets PETA on behalf of the Ringling Brothers and big pharma. They literally had spies employed by PETA and stole computer files, and things like that.

A huge issue though is the extent that activists are making the government and private spy's jobs so easy by using facecrack or email to put the most dirty laundry of movement participants out into these public domains. They are basically giving them clear road maps of where vulnerable targets for government repression might be located, or who might be more likely to be a snitch or an infiltrator.

For me personally whenever I see some of that stuff happening I am really suspicious of the sources of it. It seems unbelievable to me that someone who calls themselves an activist, and has any level of education about what being a political activist means, would originate or perpetuate that type of thing in the public sphere. That's not to say that I don't think that in certain circumstances a community shouldn't go to someone's house and do an intervention, or have some kind of accountability process. But that accountability process should never ever be over facecrack, or computers at all. The idea that everybody gets to vicariously watch somebody get tarred and feathered is ridiculous. Watch the Kardashians on TV if you want that level of drivel. If you live across the country and you're not involved in that campaign, you don't get to be a part of the accountability process. The gossip loving nature of the fallible human just seriously gets in the way.

Rather than being worried about spies and surveillance we really need to take ourselves a lot more seriously. People pay lip service to security culture and then they get on facecrack and act as if the concept doesn't exist. It's more than just a cool phrase while you're drinking beers with your friends. It really does mean things to people, and those that don't take it seriously

and am hoping that people learn lessons from it. One thing I hope people can see is that you do not have to sell your friends out. Also, arson is a very serious thing, and the consequences are lifelong. You will be connected to people for the rest of your life if you choose to do any direct actions. I think that the movement can show principled, strong and long-term support for defendants, and this can serve as a discouraging factor in informing. Support from the movement helped me solidify my positions and made it a lot easier. If we can show one another that we will be there for one another, then the prospects of snitching will be less.

Overall, I think that the movement needs to have an honest and frank discussion about these tactics, who seems to choose them and what that means for the prospects of prison.

What led you to decide that sabotage was not an appropriate tactic—or at least, not an appropriate tactic for you?

I decided that using arson and sabotage were not the right tactics for me shortly after the Jefferson Poplar action. Part of it was my experience dousing SUVs and trucks with gasoline and being profoundly affected by that. It just didn't feel right. I started to realize that all that was in my future was more destruction, and that destroying things doesn't make a movement. In our situation, I felt that we were too far removed from the broader environmental movement to even be complementing their efforts. There was also this sort of ticking clock I thought about—regarding whether we were getting closer to someone getting hurt. Some of my co-defendants started exhibiting behavior that was scary to me, and it dawned on me that our goals were very different. To me, arson and sabotage are means to an end. I really did not take pleasure in destruction like some of my old friends did.

I decided to take some time off to clear my head after a particularly disappointing meeting—what the prosecutors call "the last book club meeting"—where we discussed our goals and why we did what we did. Although I risked my life with these people, it was surprising, to say the least, to find out how

There seems to be a pretty massive divide between the radical environmental movement's anti-snitch rhetoric (e.g., "snitches get stitches") and the movement's actual response to snitches. What do you make of this divide, and what are its implications for the movement's chances of discouraging snitching?

I have little tolerance for the whole pro-violence against snitches thing. Not only is it phony—let's be real, no snitches in our movement "get stitches"—but I find it counter to what we believe in. We are not the Irish Republican Army. We are not Marxist-Leninist rigid cadre organizations that punish weakness with personal violence. Some of the comments on Portland Indymedia were so useful to the prosecution that they must have been posted by law enforcement of some kind—especially after the agents moaned to my lawyers that I was spearheading this campaign against the snitches. Again, I want to be crystal-clear: I don't support violence against informants in my case.

I do support their complete and total ostracization from the movement, as I think they are dangerous people. They have shown themselves to be so self-centered in their outlook as to sell people out when they swore up and down they never would. (Here's a funny aside: The biggest informants were the ones who were the most tough and militant at the time of the actions. What does that say?) No welcome back should be given to these people. When you think of their actions and feel that, at one point, they were honorable people trying to do their best to make the world better, that is fair. But keep in mind, the people who sold me out are not the same people anymore.

As far as the movement's chances of discouraging snitching, I do think the movement has a responsibility to educate new people who get involved, so that they can know their own history. My understanding of my case and my views are greatly informed by the past: the Justin Samuel debacle and how Darren Thurston was sold out by someone involved in his 1992 Animal Liberation Front. Knowledge is power, and you can begin to see how things were done in the past and how they could be done in the future.

I'm concerned with the historical legacy of my case

aren't taking themselves seriously either.

A lot of times when people do air dirty laundry on social media they use the rhetoric of "I'm just trying to keep people safe by letting them know this information about this person." But if you bring up the safety of security culture it's completely dismissed.

That's right. There's a way you can keep a community safe without doing that mass distro-style thing. I remember there was a person who we outed as a federal infiltrator. He was a drug convict who was working his punishment off by trying to spy on environmental activists. He stole money from an environmental campaign and caused a bunch of problems and divisions. The way we were actually able to out him was after a couple of people ended up getting federally prosecuted, I found in the discovery that I received from the US Attorney's Office all the receipts for this guy's reimbursements and his daily log notes. They had inadvertently turned it over to me. They quickly realized their mistake and asked me to return them, but I had already given them to the clients, so it was already out there. So he got outed and then we heard that he fled town. But someone had some understanding that he was actually headed up to the Buffalo Field Campaign. We were able to call them, and I remember I faxed a black and white photo of the person to them, and said "hey this person may be heading in your direction, keep your eyes out." And they did, and they were able to shoo him on. The idea that some mass dissemination is the only way to keep communities safe is ignorant.

It seems to be a huge reflection on the very sudden change in our communications, with social media having become so central. A lot of people have grown up with that now, and understand it as the norm.

In doing teen 'Know Your Rights' trainings that we've been doing it's clear that this new generation has been reared with metal detectors and no sense of privacy at all. They don't understand what a right to privacy is, and why someone would be up in arms about that at all. They are so acclimated to a big

brother, and nothing being private ever, that that's going to be the new cultural norm eventually. Which is exactly what the government has indoctrinated people to adhere to.

They have been extremely successful in that. Do you have any thoughts on how you resist that? Do you just keep off social media?

It's going to be so hard because of course mass media and the giant systems that have been set up, like facecrack, are reaching millions and millions of people. Not only in the US, but around the world. Our 'Know Your Rights' trainings, or any kind of political education, are not taught in the public schools. There's such a tiny minority of youth that will even be exposed to any semblance of this, that I don't have a lot of optimism. I think the only way that it could be really seriously reversed is if there is some major political upheaval that occurs.

Access "Know Your Rights" training resources and more at cldc.org

supporting these people, soliciting money from the movement, asking magazines to send them free subscriptions and obscuring the truth about the depth of their cooperation. I won't delve too deeply into the situation with Darren Thurston, but I will say this: Thurston is a cooperating witness against the people in the Litchfield Bureau of Land Management ELF action. Some of these people are informants themselves, but a few people are not. Thurston told the government the timeline of the action—what he did and what other people did, specifically. It does not matter that he and his support person both say the government already knew this. That is their assertion, not a fact—and either way, that idea of "they already knew it" has been so thoroughly discredited over the last 30 years that I'm surprised it can still be spoken without meeting universal derision. The assertion made is that Thurston will not have to testify against the three people he told the government about either because a) they won't be caught, or b) he will be in Canada by that point and won't have to testify. Sadly, most people that the FBI deems "fugitives" are caught (e.g. Peter Young, Sara Olson, James Kilgore) so that really isn't too much consolation. Secondly, if Darren thinks Canada is a refuge, maybe he should read a little about the cases of Leonard Peltier, Tre Arrow, John Graham or Jeremy Hintzman (US conscientious objector). Of course, maybe the US government told him that they wouldn't need him, but that's just conjecture. His plea agreement is available to the public, except for the paragraphs dealing with the cooperation he offered, which are still sealed. So, we are left in the dark, really, because his support people and Thurston himself keep his plea agreement and FBI debrief forms sealed. I think that anyone who reads the court reports can see that not only did the prosecution call him a remarkable cooperating witness but his lawyers also lauded his cooperation. Ask yourself how a former Animal Liberation Front (ALF) prisoner, banned from the US and caught with a fake green card, more than 20 fake IDs, guns and drugs, and a participant in an ELF arson at a government facility gets not only a 37-month sentence but no terrorism enhancement? How much proof do people need?

I would soon have a lawyer. Legal trainings that I had been to a dozen times suddenly made sense as I saw the silly attempts that were made to get me to talk. Specifically, Eugene cop Greg Harvey told me that the 924 (c) count was the same count that Chris McIntosh pleaded to, that he knew I had a niece and that I shouldn't bankrupt my family, and that I should be smart and talk with the prosecution as "the door is open now but it's closing soon." I saw this attempt for what it was and reasserted my right to silence over and over to them.

I can't say there was much pressure put on me by others—all my friends and family understood my decision to not cooperate. My codefendant Gerlach did wage a "choose life" campaign, seeking to meet with every defendant and lawyer and tell them that we should "choose life" and not be martyrs! This was a very obvious attempt to gain credence with the prosecution and at her sentencing, she and her lawyer attempted to cash in on this, stating that she got many people to cooperate. Of course, this is true in the case of her private meeting with Darren Thurston, who left a joint agreement with me and Jonathan Paul shortly after this meeting with Gerlach (and started cooperating with the government after that point). Her meeting with my lawyer and private investigator provided me with a lot of insight into the mind of someone who cooperates and the lengths that they will go to in their quest to lessen their time in jail. A document of notes regarding Gerlach's attempts to get me to inform will be made public soon on www.supportdaniel.org.

How do you feel about the support that some of the informants continue to receive from some folks in the radical environmental movement?

I think it's sad that some people in the radical enviro movement still support informants from this case. I can understand in some way a situation in which a friend is dismayed by the actions taken by another friend who is an informant and thus, I do not begrudge them that. However, there is a huge difference between supporting a friend privately without using movement money (making sure they have commissary and letters) and publicly

And the Rest is History...: An Interview with Daniel McGowan

by the Earth First! Journal Collective

Editor's Note: This is a two-part interview conducted in 2007, shortly after Daniel had been sentenced to seven years in prison as part of the FBI's "Operation Backfire" which sought to prosecute people for unsolved Earth Liberation Front (ELF) actions. He was released from prison in 2012.

Earth First! Journal: How are you? How have you been adjusting to prison so far?

Daniel McGowan: I'm doing fine, all things considered, and happy to be here at my designated facility after two months in a Brooklyn jail and three weeks on the road. They definitely throw you in the deep end of the pool here, and the shock of it all is tremendous, but I'm adjusting bit by bit, day by day. Unlike representations of prison on TV and in popular culture, things are chill here. It's a low-security prison with lots of recreational opportunities, dormitories with bunk beds and a lot of free movement. That said, it's prison—the prison governs every aspect of my life. I am 1,200 miles from home and unable to take part in activism outside the realm of writing.

Did you do anything special to prepare for prison?

My preparation and acceptance of prison began a long time ago—before I even took part in direct actions. Once it became likely that I was going to prison, my preparation consisted of reading about prison, interviewing and meeting with former political prisoners, seeing a therapist to deal with anxiety and doing tons of legal research about where I might end up and how to conduct myself while in prison. Additionally, I did a lot of research on potential graduate school programs, as I was determined to have a very busy time while imprisoned and wanted to make the most of this "time out," so to say. One thing I did not do enough was have fun! Beset by anxiety and stress, I

found myself delving into the rational and computer-based side of prison preparation at the expense of spending time with those I love. It's my number-one regret about my time from February 2006, when I was released on bail, to July 2007, when I self reported.

Has your experience doing prisoner support for Jeffrey "Free" Luers been useful during this ordeal?

Yes, I do think my experience of doing prison support for Free and others was useful. It may not be as linear as this, but I think working with people in New York City (NYC) and Oregon on prisoner support over the years helped us hone our tactics and strategies in support work. So, after doing it for eight years, I was able to be the recipient of these tactics and strategies, which resulted in fairly intense and vigorous prisoner support. For me, my friendship and correspondence with Jeff informed my decisions greatly—knowing how he was treated by the government, I had no illusions that the state would be fair with my case. My experience with Jeff's case left me with no hope for justice from the courts, the US legal system or any judge—no matter how liberal they are perceived to be. Jeff's appellate decision in February was easily the shining point of the year for me.

What brought you to activism, or specifically, the radical environmental movement?

I grew up in a neighborhood that was heavily polluted by jet fuel released from planes landing and taking off from La Guardia airport in Queens, New York. Cancer rates are high there, and my childhood memories are full of times that we were not allowed to swim in the ocean due to algae blooms or toxic waste washing up on the shores. I grew up with images of the then-radical Greenpeace putting themselves between whalers and whales (so much has changed!) and learned about the greenhouse effect and the impacts of greenhouse gasses on the environment as an elementary school student. It wasn't, however, until I took a

median sentence. I received six months less than what the government asked for, due to my involvement in aboveground and non-destructive activism from 2001 to 2005. Honestly, I felt that my activism, the fact that I left the ELF without pressure from anyone and my complete lack of criminal history would have led to a lesser sentence. But I'm not surprised, really—there is no justice from the courts. If there were, the judge would never have tolerated our being charged with the 924(c) counts (use of a destructive device) which could have given me a 30-year mandatory minimum if found guilty of one and mandatory life in prison if found guilty of both. We called 924 (c) "the snitch maker" because the count caused great fear and hopelessness amongst those who were charged with it. Relief was certainly something I felt after I went from facing life in prison plus 335 years to "only" eight years. I am surrounded by people whose sentences of 20 years and more remind me that I could have gotten a lot more time.

That said, I think it's imperative that we not accept these charges and characterization of ourselves as "terrorists" (eco, domestic or otherwise). We should never accept the overarching tactics the government uses to get people to break.

Most of your codefendants decided to cooperate with the government by informing on you, the other non-cooperating defendants and each other. From early on, you were very clear about your refusal to do this. When and how did you decide to make this commitment? Was this a difficult decision? How much pressure was on you to inform on others, and how did you withstand this pressure?

I decided a long time ago that I would never cooperate with a situation I might find myself in years later. Before I took part in serious actions, I thought long and hard about it. Frankly, it was not a hard decision to make and I think it plays to my personality—which is very stubborn at times! Once I was arrested, I clammed up and tried my best to ignore what was going on—I was cold, hungry and in a cell that was freezing with the lights on, but I knew that this was temporary and that

cooperating codefendants. Much has been said about their choices, which resulted in a long list of arrests, death threats and a seemingly never-ending investigation. Let me be really clear: There was a spoken and crystal-clear agreement made between all who were involved in these actions that we would never, ever turn each other in to save ourselves. I took that oath seriously, as did a few of my old friends. Sadly though, not everyone did, and instead threw us to the wolves. In one month, I went from having three people pointing their fingers at me—a sociopathic heroin addict (Ferguson), an intellectually diminished domestic violence abuser turned conservative (Meyerhoff) and a meek porn store manager and pothead (Tubbs)—to having almost all of my codefendants selling me out. It was shocking and tremendously hurtful, and I will never forgive them for the betrayal. The straw that broke the camel's back was probably when I found out that Suzanne Savoie, an ex-lover and once close friend, told the government of my entire illegal history from 1998-2001—including some 10 or so actions that we did together—with incredible details. She got 51 months; I got 84—the price of treachery is apparently 33 months.

That said, I am not willing to give these people any more of my time and my life. I have no desire to ever hear from them again with fake apologies or regret. Their actions are their cross to bear—not mine. I can wake up in the morning knowing that not only did I try to stop the destruction I saw, but that I acted honorably when facing life in prison.

Finally, I want to say that it was very difficult to stand silently in court while the prosecutor said that our actions were analogous to the actions of the KKK. I pride myself on speaking out when I hear racist garbage like that, and I regret that I was cowed by my surroundings and half-expected the judge to rebuke prosecutor Stephen Peiffer for his racist and horribly inaccurate remark.

How do you feel about the sentence you received? Were you surprised? Disappointed? Relieved?

My sentence of seven years for two arsons is double the federal

life-changing trip to Thailand after graduating from college that I sought to be involved. While there, I hiked rainforest trails, met environmental refugees from Burma and experienced serious pollution. My attempts to get involved in activism floundered until a late-night drunken stumble into Blackout Books (RIP) and a free-pile copy of the *Earth First! Journal* (the one with the "Super Freddy" with the automatic weapon guarding the Cove-Mallard timber sale!). I checked out the directory, saw that the NYC contact—the Wetlands Preserve—had open meetings and a few days later attended one. There, I heard about the Yerkes protest against primate research firsthand, as well as letter-writing attempts to keep Captain Paul Watson from being extradited to Norway. One month later, I took off cross-country for the 1997 Round River Rendezvous in Crandon, Wisconsin, got arrested for standing in front of a mining company, and the rest is history. How's that for a plug for the organizing effect of the EF!J?

What role did EF! and the EF!J play in your growth as an activist? What role, if any, do they play in your life now?

The Journal has always been a major part of my activism, from the times I would lunge at the pile we used to get at Wetlands to submitting my first article (Mitsubishi lockdown, October 1998) to seeing analysis of the ELF actions I was involved with. I short-termed for the Journal in 2000 and volunteered for the two years I lived in Eugene helping with editing, filling sample issue orders and soliciting articles and artwork. The EF!J was a major reason for my move to Eugene and subsequent involvement with the ELF and was a base for many of the activists in Eugene who always came out for the (then) every-six-week mailing parties. I still get the Journal, enjoy most of the writings and during my time in prison, intend to submit articles and letters every issue.

For a while, I thought the Journal would not recover from its growing pains and would join the huge list of magazines that failed or ceased publication in the last two years, but I'm happy to read about new developments. The new (old) format and the scrapping of horrible relationships with vampiric

distributors is promising. I am also happy to see the Journal's commitment to not only listing prisoner addresses but also seeking input and articles from them. We are still people who have opinions and want to meaningfully participate.

What's your sense of the state of the radical environmental movement? Where do you see it, and specifically EF!, heading?

The radical environmental movement has been the canary in the coal mine for the last 30 years, but the future, I am not sure about. We have called attention to issues long ignored by the press and our accommodating mainstream "Group of 10," the huge environmental non-profits. Old-growth forests, mining, development, mountaintop removal, biotechnology. We should be proud of calling attention to these issues, but we need to do more than just be the messenger—we need to actually work toward having an impact on these issues. The decline of groups using the name "Earth First!" is one thing people point to as a bad thing, but if our issues are being covered or worked on by a growing number of people and organizations, perhaps that isn't so bad. Ultimately, climate change needs to be combated as a survival issue, not just limited to an enviro issue. If we allow climate change to be just another one of our issues, we are letting people off the hook. To really deal with it—and trust me, I have my doubts about our ability and desire to deal with it—we will need more than just radical enviros doing something. At this point, within EF!, I am curious about whether Rising Tide will rise to the occasion and whether or not our opposition to this new batch of coal plants will result in some actual victories.

Many within EF! have observed that the number and intensity of radical environmental direct-action campaigns seem to have dropped significantly during the past 10 to 15 years. Do you agree with this assessment or have any thoughts on why this might be?

Not having a comprehensive diary or list of actions that qualify as "radical environmental direct actions," it's hard for me to say.

What we always have to keep in mind is that for every action claimed through a communiqué by a group with a name, there are tons of other unclaimed actions by people who may not identify as activist in any way. It's well known that "ecotage" did not originate with identifiable groups, complete with names, guidelines and statements to the media. Our history supports this point: The Tucson eco raiders, the Fox, billboard topplers, tree spikers, road rippers—all existed before the rise of groups like the ELF. So, I can't say that any evidence points to fewer actions overall, although I agree with the fact there are fewer actions claimed by groups with public statements, etc.

As for radical environmental campaigns, it sure seems to be true that there are less of these. When I lived in Oregon, there were, at times, four active treesits, as well as quieter campaigns by people like myself that focused on disrupting timber sales and many lawsuits attempting to take large amounts of forest off the chopping block. Nowadays, there seems to be a much-changed situation, with no active treesits in Oregon or Washington and disbanded groups in these once very active communities. However, it isn't always about quantity, and there are still efforts to protect forests, such as the Cascadia Wildlands Projects (CWP) and lawyers like Lauren Regan who thanklessly (and with no help from the non-profits) work hard to protect burned Biscuit sales in southern Oregon. One good thing I just heard is that the Clark timber sale (known better as Fall Creek or, in its early days, Red Cloud Thunder) is now canceled. Years of occupying trees and, in later years, red tree vole surveys that shrunk the size of the sale down to 29 acres resulted in the sale no longer being profitable. The groups that worked on this, from the mainstream Oregon Natural Resources Council (now Oregon Wild) to the CWP, treesitters and surveyors should be proud of themselves for working together on different levels. We need more of these combined efforts.

Now that your sentence has started, is there anything you've wanted to say but couldn't until this moment?

I suppose now is the best time to address the issue of my