

MUTUAL AID MONTHLY

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The Myth of The Perfect Victim

Systemic victim blaming makes the world go round

Subcomandante Jade and Subcomandante Ronnie

A disgusting act that liberals, conservatives, and even radicals participate in is requiring a “perfect victim” to justify acts against atrocity. The myth of the perfect victim necessitates that victims of capitalist violence only deserve aid or safety if they’ve consistently been a saint in action or politics.

A horrific current example of this is the Biden administration sending Israel massive amounts of weapons and funding to further ethnic cleansing and implement Western (white) economic control in Palestine. Over 27,000 Palestinians have been murdered since October 7th, and the bombing continues to increase. However, support for Palestinians is not justified because Hamas dared to attack the settler state that’s been erasing their existence for 70 years.

Another example is using a victim’s past of criminality (based on our enemies’ systems) or mental health (a reaction to those same systems) to justify the murders of Black and Brown people by the pigs. Michael Brown might have shoplifted, so he deserved to die. Zachary Bearheals was “anti-social” during a mental health crisis, so he also deserved to die. Their executions were justified because they committed some sort of lesser “crime.”

The media manufactures and reproduces these narratives which are often accepted as fact by the public. Thankfully, we have been less hesitant to fight back against these myths throughout this last decade, with no sign of slowing down. We must accept that the state will punish us for our courage if we are to achieve victory for Palestine and liberation at home.

Resist Commodifying Ourselves

You and I are people, not products

Comrade Jordan

To commodify ourselves is to treat ourselves and each other as marketable objects. Products to be advertised, considered, chosen, and exchanged. Products can be ignored or discarded with little consideration; we must not treat anyone with such little respect.

All aspects of our identities and lives can be commodified. Many Americans state their job(s) immediately after their name when introducing themselves. Relative status is placed on us based on what we do to make wealthy people richer. In reality we are defined by our entire lives, not just what we must do to support them.

We are encouraged to commodify ourselves in choosing romantic/domestic partners. We turn our passions, interests, and attributes into objects of desire to be considered against other options in the marketplace of potential partners. People are too often evaluated by a sort of value before any connection is made or attempted.

We are pushed to publish information about ourselves to develop a personal brand. If we are sharing to develop a following or monetization, then we are exchanging our life experiences for social status or economic gain. This has led to a reversal of effect, where one’s life becomes determined by the demand of the followers.

Technology provides tools to commodify ourselves. These websites and apps perpetuate our commodification, but the problem existed before. These sites also make the commodification process more apparent, which makes it easier to identify and avoid in our own lives.

I catch myself thinking in the ways described above. I ask the reader to join me in discarding this toxic view and see the humanity in each other and ourselves.





A Letter to The Damned: Love and Rage

Hat

I love you. With all of my heart I love you, and I am sorry for what has been done to you. I am sorry for the trauma you have experienced first hand, I am sorry for the oppression you face, and continue to face. I am sorry for the way in which you have been treated. And with open arms, and unconditional love, I welcome you into this house, the house of revolution. It is because I love you that I wish to burn this system down, to rage against it. It is because I love, that I wish to create something better. It is because I love, that I wish to do this with you. I welcome you into this community, I welcome you into my home, I welcome you into our rage, and I welcome you into our revolution. When we stand together, hand in hand, nothing is impossible. When we love in the face of hatred, malice, and abuse, we are unstoppable. I stand in solidarity with you, your struggles, and together, we will make this right.



This flyer is a production of Des Moines Mutual Aid, which is a local network of anarchists, communists, and socialists building community autonomy from capitalism and the state. Below are our points of unity - basically, the political and social outlook which binds us together.

0. We believe in working shoulder to shoulder and standing in solidarity with all oppressed communities. We ourselves are oppressed, and our mutual aid work is a fight for our collective liberation. We do not believe in a top-down model of charity. Instead, we contrast our efforts at horizontal mutual aid, the fostering of mutually beneficial relationships and communities, to dehumanizing and colonizing charity.

1. We believe in community autonomy. We believe that the communities we live and organize in have been largely excluded from state social services, but intensely surveilled and policed by the state repressive apparatus. Capitalism is fundamentally unable to meet people's needs. We want to build self-sustaining communities that are independent of the capitalist state, both materially and ideologically, and can resist its repression.

2. We are police and prison abolitionists. Abolition and the mutual aid that we practice are inextricably linked. We don't rely on capitalist institutions or the police to do our work. We believe in building strong and resilient communities which make police obsolete, including community systems of accountability and crisis intervention.

3. We work to raise the political consciousness of our communities. Part of political education is connecting people's lived experiences to a broader political perspective. Another component is working to ensure that people can meet their basic needs. It is difficult to organize for future liberation when someone is entrenched in day-to-day struggle.

4. We have open disagreements with each other about ideas and practices. We believe there is no formula for resolving our ideological differences other than working towards our common aims, engaging with each other in a comradely manner, and respecting one another, whether or not we can hash out disagreements in the process.

If you want to get involved, let a collective member know. For more information, including how to donate, visit <https://iowamutualaid.org/>.