



An observation was made about the desire of black radicals to even purposefully remain in BIPOC and all-white spaces behind what might be a misguided craving for perceived uniqueness, inexperience with all-black spaces, and an assumption of power that they think accompanies being the only black person in a room.[1] These appetites, while not at all reducible to singular reasoning, can stem from a larger alienation that has yet to be exorcized. The baggage of the dominant social order is heavy. Having to not only analyze and dispel that baggage while bolstering a new sense of being aligned with a radical politic can venture into the traumatic. Complaining about white people is seen as a comforting political language but retreating into that comfort gets misconstrued as a significant, unifying political identity among black people. Hating white folks is not a meaningful politic. It's unsubstantial and very surface level, if not lazy.

One of the main weaknesses of such a politics of resentment can be located in an unfulfilled desire for a place within dominant power structures rather than a precise critique and push for its diffusion and ultimate destruction. What's often confused for liberation, especially within black radical politics culled from authoritarian inspirations, is no more than the age-old reform of power, hierarchy, and authority. Whether or not total freedom even enters the picture is up for debate.

A refreshing difference about the Black anarchist cookout was that no one even brought up white people. There's enough issues internal to Black anarchism and the broader Black liberation struggle that need to be grappled with. Limiting our ideas and actions to addressing white people is fruitless. It's not expansive and it centers the actions of a group that historically and currently oppresses us. For many of us who talked over the weekend, developing autonomous projects as Black people is far more interesting.

Abolitionists, Liberals, Authoritarians, and Black People Who Simply Aren't Anarchists

It's clear that autonomy and freedom mean different things to different people. To be frank, a lot of self-described Black anarchists just simply aren't anarchists. In fact, they tend to be liberals or even authoritarians who exist in the anarchist social spaces out of convenience or as tokens. It's also clear that as much as Black radicals in an anarchist spaces may share a critique of whiteness, we may not share anything other than that.

Luckily, on this front, there have been developments. A good example of this was the debate during the Maroon workshop that happened over the weekend. The two presenters (black and indigenous, respectively) were pushing a political position that many in the crowd found to be authoritarian and vanguardist and

