

The Everyday Politics of Decision, Or, Theory in Three Settings

Clare O'Connor¹

Recounting the influence of *Black Bloc*, *White Riot* on her own political and intellectual development, the author calls attention to Thompson's conception of *decision*. Although not usually associated with Thompson's work, this concept is here shown to be fundamental to his analysis of violence. In this article, the implications of Thompson's decisionism are drawn out by tracing his debt to Walter Benjamin, whose influence further helps to clarify why the lessons of the black bloc are so easily transposed to conditions far removed from the riot. [Article copies available for a fee from The Transformative Studies Institute. E-mail address: journal@transformativestudies.org Website: <http://www.transformativestudies.org> ©2021 by The Transformative Studies Institute. All rights reserved.]

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Back in the summer of 2010, a G20 summit and a large anti-summit mobilization shook Toronto, the city that both AK Thompson and I then called home. As protestors filled the streets and the black bloc set patrol cars on fire in the financial district, the gathered heads of state ushered in a new era of fiscal austerity. Local organizers had anticipated this outcome and understood that it would compound the devastation caused by the economic collapse of 2008. Up until that point, however, our movements had managed to mount little more than an erratic response to the crisis. It would be another year before the Arab Spring would erupt and set off a new cycle of struggle, inspiring strikes, street actions, and occupations around the world.

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