



our
SOCIALISM

must be
FEMINIST

and our
FEMINISM

must be
SOCIALIST

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A zine by

SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE PHILLY

WHY SOCIALIST FEMINISM?

Thanks to generations of struggle, women and trans people have won important reforms and changed the attitudes of millions on gender roles in society. Now, there are more women on the Supreme Court, in elected office, and in corporate boardrooms than ever before. But for socialist feminists, representation in a rotten system is insufficient. We need to change the balance of power through mass movements to affect all layers of society rather than just the top. We want to totally eliminate all forms of inequality, violence, and injustice in our society. We don't think it's enough—or even possible—to achieve gender equality within capitalism.

The feminism of women in the 1%, like Hillary Clinton and Melinda Gates, is not our feminism! They want to break the glass ceilings that prevent them from being CEOs, presidents, and oil tycoons. Their goal is to gain equality with men, but only within this exploitative, unequal, and dehumanizing system. If a hundred female billionaires ran the country, they would run it in the interests of rich shareholders, not of the other 99% of women. The women who break the glass ceilings still need most of us to stay down on the floor to hold them up.

We are socialist feminists, so our feminism is different. We want a society where the resources, goods, and services that we all need to survive are collectively owned, and decisions about how to produce, use, and distribute them are made democratically, by all of us. Capitalism and patriarchy are intrinsically linked; socialism wouldn't end sexism overnight, but is the only system that would create the conditions necessary for the full elimination of patriarchy.

Our feminism has different goals. For working class women and nonbinary people, being treated as the equals of our fathers, brothers, or male friends, would bring some positive changes to our lives, but it would not be nearly enough. We would still face low-wage jobs, massive student debt, inaccessible physical and mental healthcare, and unaffordable rents. Many of us would still suffer from sexual assault, police brutality, incarceration, and other violence. People of color would still face these at higher rates.

Our feminism has different methods. We believe non-violent disruption of business as usual yields the strongest victories. We see working class men as comrades in struggle because we know that winning a better, safer, and more just world, will take all of us fighting together, across race, religion, gender, and sexuality.

Our feminist movement will be built differently because we know that only a unified movement of all oppressed and exploited people—in the US and internationally—can wrench power from the hands of the richest, strongest capitalist class in the history of the world. This is our task.

EDUCATION IS NOT FOR SALE

WE ARE STUDENTS, PARENTS AND TEACHERS IN SOLIDARITY: WE WILL NOT BE DIVIDED

Teachers, students, and parents are all harmed by the deep cutbacks in our public education system and attacks on working conditions in our schools. The systematic defunding of public education has led to larger class sizes, outdated textbooks, shortages of counselors, psychologists and nurses, high-stakes testing, and in states like Oklahoma and Colorado, a four-day week. In Philadelphia, teachers work in the same unsafe, dilapidated buildings our students learn in.

WE NEED FAIR, FULLY FUNDED QUALITY PUBLIC EDUCATION

As socialist feminists we reject reducing children's educational well-being to dollars and cents. We instead call for free, high-quality education for all students from birth through college with living wage, union jobs for all childcare workers and teachers. Lack of affordable, high-quality childcare robs us of time with our partners and children by forcing us to work excessive overtime or opposite shifts and leaving children in inconsistent, sometimes unsafe childcare arrangements. As long as school funding is based on local property taxes, schools in working class communities, especially communities of color will have access to vastly fewer resources than those in middle and upper income neighborhoods. End the reliance on property taxes and fund all schools at an equal per pupil rate.

WE ARE MORE THAN JUST A TEST SCORE

To meet the metrics required by standardized testing, students must memorize and regurgitate information, rather than raise insightful questions or develop critical thinking skills. Standardization stifles creativity and drives the light out of learning. As socialist feminists we call for an authentic, progressive curriculum that promotes critical thinking and debate, with meaningful input from educators, parents, and students. We need free healthy meals, LGBTQ-inclusive sex education, counselors, nurses, libraries, music, art, gym, recess, after school and extracurricular activities in every school.

GUNS ARE NOT SCHOOL SUPPLIES!

The NRA is a lobbying organization for the mega-profitable gun industry and cannot be trusted with "gun safety" programs. The ROTC preys on young people in poor communities using coercive practices to recruit them. A college education should be accessible to all who want it, not used as a bargaining chip to feed the US war machine. Get the NRA and ROTC out of our schools!

WHEN WE FIGHT, WE WIN

77% of public school teachers are women, and about half of all K-12 teachers are represented by a union. Teachers and their unions have been at the forefront of the battles for quality public education. The victorious 2018 teacher's strike in West Virginia sparked a wave of successful struggles for students and teachers in Kentucky, Arizona and Oklahoma, and a 30,000 strong strike in Los Angeles. Build union power in your school. Organize charter school and daycare teachers and staff.

OUR RIGHT TO CARE



ZOË

Until I got sober and started in addiction recovery over a year ago, much of my life was characterized by the pain of trauma and substance abuse. I spent most of my high school and early college career running from hurtful childhood memories I couldn't make sense of and surrounded myself with people whose lives were also built around prioritizing addiction. Eventually, I hit my deepest bottom, wanted to drop out of college, and give up.

But one night, I saw a Facebook post by someone I vaguely knew about a Feminist Collective meeting. It sparked my interest and I was desperate for something to change in my life, so I went.

I immediately became fascinated by this group of people that were talking about queer identity, sexual violence, shame, poverty, health, reproductive rights, the education system, socialization, race issues, and how to build a better world. A week later I went to the March to End Rape Culture. The emotional honesty in these spaces was refreshing and the vision of a more just world was inspiring. It gave me hope, taught me it was possible to stand for something important, helped me enter into addiction recovery, and showed me that fighting patriarchy also means fighting capitalism and building socialism.

In addition to women being free, I want all people to be free. I want future generations to grow up learning to love and care for themselves and each other, not compete with each other to be the most productive and "win" at the cost of knocking others down

HEALTHCARE IS A HUMAN RIGHT

Access to healthcare is the very ability to go on living. Nothing—not money, not immigration or housing status, not incarceration or social standing, not gender, not race, not religion, not language—should stand between us and the highest quality, most advanced care. Profit has no place in health care. We need improved Medicare for All, free at the point of service and paid for by taxing the billionaires and their corporations.

REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE

Socialist feminists fight for a world where people make choices about when and whether to have and raise children, without economic or cultural coercion. To make this a reality, we need access to contraception, safe abortion, comprehensive sex education, adequate prenatal and pregnancy care, guaranteed paid parental leave, healthy affordable food, and safe communities and homes. We need a movement to defend Roe vs. Wade, and a system that provides real alternatives for those dealing with intimate partner abuse and violence.

TO BE HIGH-QUALITY, HEALTHCARE MUST BE ANTI-RACIST AND TRANS-INCLUSIVE

The for-profit healthcare industry produces measurable health disparities across all oppressed and exploited groups in US society. The startlingly high Black infant and maternal mortality rates are one stark and tragic example. Progress in the field of health science and technology should result in more effective and accessible treatment for everyone, not bankruptcy, neglect, and death.

END THE WAR ON DRUGS: TREAT ADDICTION WITH HEALTHCARE, NOT JAIL TIME

Addiction cannot be divorced from the social conditions in which it arises. Trump's America is full of hate, violence, antagonism and lies. To function on a daily basis, we detach from our emotional selves, and substance abuse is one coping mechanism people use to get by. Most people addicted to heroin start out taking prescription painkillers. Doctors are incentivized to over-prescribe these drugs directly by the pharmaceutical industry and indirectly by the insurance companies who prioritize quick fixes. For-profit rehab centers charge patients thousands per day, while paying their workers poverty wages.

The war on drugs has been a racist war on human beings, not addiction. We need needle exchanges and safe injection sites to reduce the risk of overdose death and spread of HIV. But we don't just want to reduce risks, we want to heal our communities. Rehab should be free, accessible, and publicly funded. Decriminalize all drugs and free all non-violent drug "offenders!"

HOUSING FOR ALL

HOUSING IS A FEMINIST ISSUE, HOUSING IS A HUMAN RIGHT

On top of the daily stresses of gender-based oppression, many working women and trans people feel the pressure of insecure housing and rising rents, further exacerbating the dangers they face. Our rents are rising and our wages are stagnant. Socialist feminists fight to tax the rich to fund real affordable housing for working class people with rents based on our income not set by developer lobbyists! We need tenants unions and community organizations to fight back against housing discrimination, evictions, and foreclosures by landlords and big banks.

FOR A SAFE PLACE TO REST OUR HEADS

Under capitalism, many women and LGBTQ people, especially LGBTQ youth, are faced with an impossible choice: remain in an unsafe, abusive environment or face a financially ruinous housing situation or even homelessness. We deserve relationships based on mutual love not economic necessity, and the freedom to leave abusive relationships and housing situations without fear of ending up on the streets.



MADI

When I was a kid living in New York City, my mother, my grandmother and I all lived in Washington Heights. My grandmother has been living the building since 1986 and we were able to live in this rapidly gentrifying area due to rent control.

In 2006 the owners of my building, Gershon & Co., tried to evict my grandmother under the cause of “lease violation”. My grandmother figured out that Gershon was trying to evict her (alongside other elderly women) so they could split her apartment into two and charge double the rent! She went to court against Gershon, won in 2007, and still lives in the Heights!

Being a kid, the need for feminist socialism didn’t spark in my eyes yet - but it’s always something I thought about as I was learning more about socialism through a feminist lens. Something about that situation seemed off, and I began to ask: How does gentrification impact working class women and non-binary people?

MAKE PHILLY AFFORDABLE FOR ALL

While working families struggle, wealthy real estate developers are trying to turn our city into a playground for the super rich. We need an end to tax breaks for big developers who claim to “revitalize” neighborhoods, but in reality drive out residents and pocket big profits. However, defending these neighborhoods is not enough. We need real investment in our communities with playgrounds, well-funded schools, grocery stores, living wage jobs and public transit in a city where working class people can afford to live.

HIGH QUALITY PUBLIC HOUSING NOT INFINITE WAITING LISTS

Millions of women across the US live in public or subsidized housing. The Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) is in shambles, with a 10-year closed waiting list and substandard conditions in existing buildings. We need to tax the 1% to fully fund public housing, including repairs, refurbishments and social services. To protect low-income families from economic evictions and unsafe living conditions, we need democratic control over PHA by residents, labor union members who work at PHA, and community members. All people who need it should have access to public housing, regardless of criminal record or immigration status.

WE NEED RENT CONTROL...BECAUSE THE RENT WON'T WAIT

More than half of Philly renters spend over 30% of their income on rent. We need rent control to stop landlords from digging any further into our paychecks. However, as long as the housing industry is run on a for-profit basis, no sustainable solution is possible. To truly address the housing crisis we must break with capitalism, take the housing industry into the democratic control of working people, and build a socialist society where housing is built for human need, not for profit.

Learning how to be a socialist while being feminist has given me a better analysis as to how class interacts with being a woman or non-binary. We are being targeted by landlords first because we are the easiest to evict by raising rent! Working class women and non-binary people (especially WOC) who already struggle to afford healthcare and other necessities are pushed into neighborhoods with even less resources! Gentrification only reinvests in private property (and not the people living in them) because of capitalism’s tireless hunt for profit. Socialist feminism, to me, fights for accessible housing for all and also protects women and non-binary people from displacement and lack of resources in neighborhoods.

FOR A SOCIETY **FREE** OF VIOLENCE

BRING #METOO INTO THE STREETS

From the highest court in the nation to our own homes, women and trans people face an epidemic of sexual harassment and abuse, keeping us afraid and divided. We need to bring the #MeToo movement into the streets, our workplaces, and our schools to combat the patriarchal violence that is embedded in every institution of capitalist society. The recent Google Walkouts and McDonalds actions show that we can fight back against violence, sexual harassment, and discrimination through collective struggle like strikes and direct action- and we can win!

FIGHT PATRIARCHY, FUND SOCIAL SERVICES

Under capitalism, the working class and especially those at the intersections of special oppressions cannot depend on the state, its laws, police, prisons, or military for safety. Over 40% of police officers abuse their partners but are tasked as the first line of defence for victims of gender-based, sexual, and domestic violence. Many women, particularly Black and Native women, are targeted and arrested by police when they call for help. Socialist feminists demand higher wages, affordable housing, and social services including free counseling to truly support people experiencing intimate partner violence. We demand the decriminalization of sex work- protect sex workers not pimps and traffickers! LGBTQ people, especially trans women of color, face high levels of violence and discrimination, including from police. Bring #WeWillNotBeErased into the streets to fight for justice, safety, and dignity.

DEMILITARIZE OUR NEIGHBORHOODS

Police murder and commit sexual misconduct towards unarmed people of color and disabled people at staggering rates. We demand the demilitarization of our neighborhoods and community control of the police with the power to hire, discipline, and fire officers. We need an end to stop and frisk policing, a discriminatory practice which targets people of color. Prisons reinforce and reproduce dangers they claim to protect us from, and warehouse poor people, disabled people, and people of color, the majority of whom are incarcerated for economic crimes and parole violations. The fastest growing population in prisons is Black women. We need an end to the racist war on drugs to dramatically reduce the prison population.

WE DESERVE SAFE COMMUNITIES

The use of guns exacerbates existing violence in society. We support the existing ban on fully automatic weapons and demand a ban on semi-automatics and the sale of large capacity magazines. There should be background checks and waiting periods for all gun sales; however background check denials must be for good cause (e.g. history of domestic violence) and subject to democratic accountability and appeal. We oppose banning anyone with a conviction from buying a gun since in practice that means excluding a significant section of the Black working class because of the racist war on drugs.

NO ONE IS ILLEGAL

Undocumented immigrant women face dramatic risk, often performing backbreaking work for criminally low wages, stomachached only because the bosses possess the threat of deportation. Sexual harassment and abuse is especially common because of this level of vulnerability. Immigrants flee economically unstable homelands devastated by globalization and war, only now to be separated from their children at the border, and detained sometimes indefinitely. Undocumented immigrants are not competition in the workforce, but allies in the fight against capitalism and oppression. As socialist feminists we fight to end this vulnerability, and demand an end to detention and deportation, an end to ICE and the workplace raids, and full legal status for all immigrants.

INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY NOT IMPERIALISM

Drone strikes ordered by women are not more empowering to the people whose lives and homes are destroyed. Many vulnerable teens including women who are driven into the military often do so because it is their only path out of poverty, but the treatment of veterans and sexual violence against women soldiers shows that the only one who benefits from foreign wars is the ruling class. As socialist feminists we know that it doesn't have to be this way. Our survival is not dependent on the exploitation and murder of others, but instead is strengthened by our solidarity with working class women and LGBTQ people around the world. We call for an end to all wars, and for a slashing of the military budget to fund social programs to attack violence at its root!

ECONOMIC EQUALITY NECESSARY BUT NOT SUFFICIENT!

CLOSE THE WAGE GAP: WE WANT OUR WHOLE DAMN DOLLAR!

On average, women make less than men for doing the same work. The disparity is sharpest between white men and women of color. Data collected on the wage gap for LGBTQ people reveals similar trends. Politicians can—and should—legislate equal wages, but how can this mandate be enforced in the workplace? The single most effective way to actually achieve wage equality is a union contract. Robust union rights for all workers!

RAISE THE WAGE: \$15 MINIMUM WAGE WITH COST OF LIVING INCREASES!

What good is it to be making the same amount as men who aren't making enough? We all need a raise. Increasing the minimum wage to \$15 will put upward pressure on wages across the board; \$7.25 pulls us all down. No sub-minimum wage for tipped, young, disabled or incarcerated workers!

MORE THAN JUST WAGES: WE NEED TIME AND ENERGY FOR OURSELVES AND THE PEOPLE WE LOVE

Every health study says, "Get more exercise, eat better, get enough sleep." None says where we are supposed to find the time. Guaranteed hours and predictable schedules! We need fully paid vacation, sick time and parental leave!

ALL FOR ONE AND ONE FOR ALL: EVERYONE WHO WANTS A JOB SHOULD HAVE ONE AND ONE JOB SHOULD BE ENOUGH!

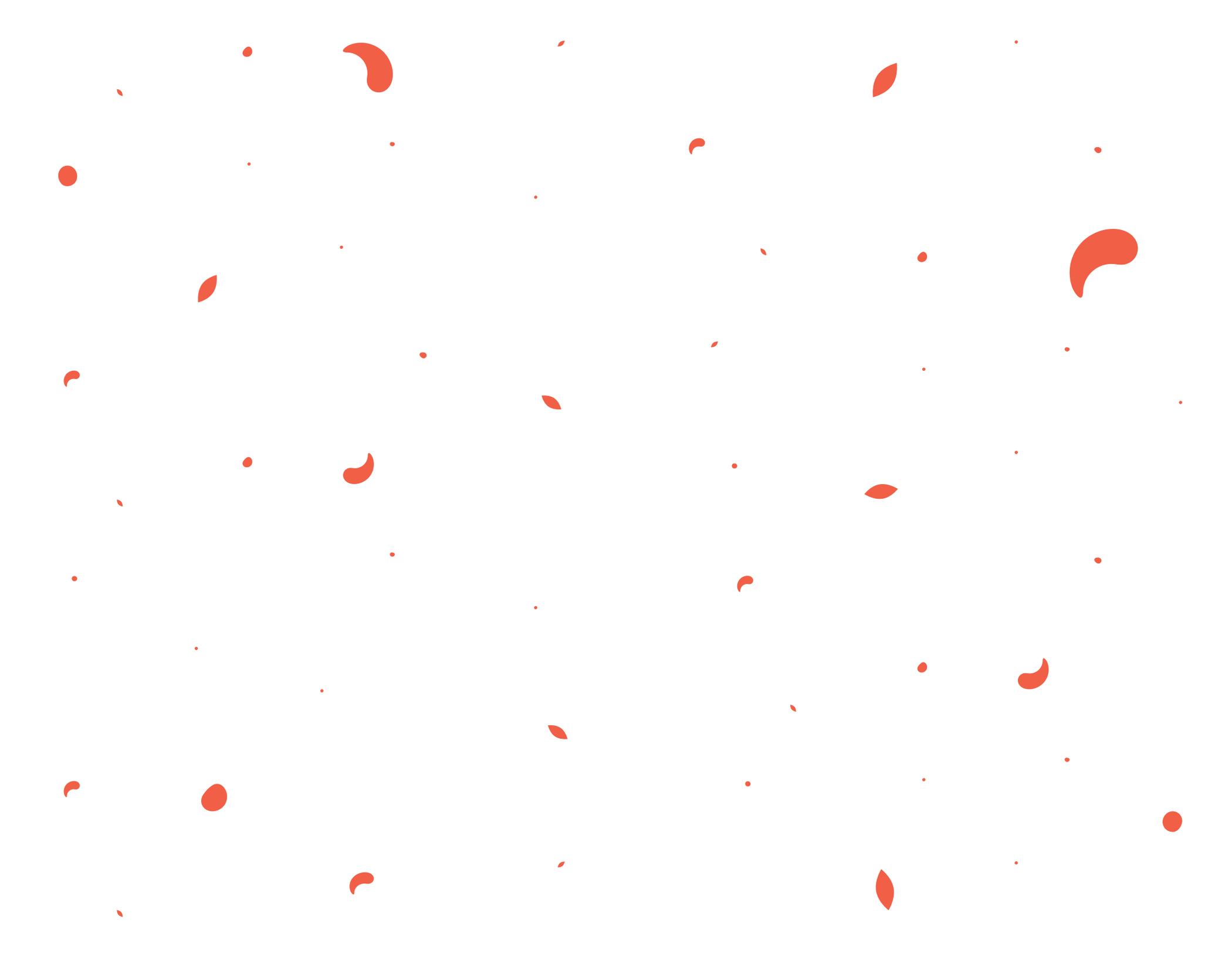
Our beautiful, historic city is falling apart. There is no limit to the work that needs to be done, only a lack of political will to raise the funds to pay for it. We call for a massive Green New Deal jobs program that provides job training and jobs at union wages and benefits to rebuild our crumbling infrastructure and renovate our aging housing stock.

TAX THE RICH! FUND EDUCATION, HEALTHCARE, HOUSING AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT CRISIS SERVICES

Alexandria Ocasio Cortez's demand for a 70% tax on the very wealthy is a great start at the national level. In Philadelphia, we should tax the Fortune 500 corporations headquartered here, like Comcast, and demand payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT's) from the wealthy non-profits like Penn and Jefferson. End the tax abatement for the developers and wealthy homebuyers.

WE CANNOT CONTROL WHAT WE DO NOT OWN

Take the fossil fuel industries and big banks into public ownership under democratic control to transition our society to clean energy, free mass transit and a sustainable future. The technology exists. We need investment and the political power to implement the changes.



WE NEED A MASS WOMEN'S AND LGBTQ MOVEMENT!

There is a growing mood among women and LGBTQ people to fight back. The escalating right wing racist, sexist, transphobic, and nationalist attacks by the Trump administration and the recent confirmation of Brett Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court point to the necessity of connecting the struggles of all oppressed people and working together to combat sexism, homophobia, and transphobia, and demand reproductive justice for all.

We need a new system—one that prioritizes the economic independence and bodily autonomy of all women and LGBTQ people. The only way we can effectively fight for our liberation is by organizing in our workplaces, on our campuses, and in the streets, demanding an end to a system that sustains itself by diminishing our rights, wages, health and education.

Bring **#MeToo** and **#WeWontBeErased** to the streets!

Join Socialist Alternative to fight for a better world!

Build a socialist feminist movement!

PUBLIC MEETING: HOW DO WE WIN REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE?

Tuesday January 29 at 6:30pm

Repair the World (4029 Market St.)



CONTACT US:

phillysocialistalternative@gmail.com

facebook.com/PhillySocialistAlternative

Philly website: socialistalternativephl.org

National website: socialistalternative.org

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