

Southern Foodways
Gretchen Dego
Recording name:
COV-016_20210415_Dego_G
April 15, 2021

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Gretchen Dego, Lauren Malhotra, Molly Graham
Future Economy Collective
Blacksburg, VA

Date: April 15, 2021

Location: Remote Interview, Blacksburg, VA

Interviewer: Jessica Taylor

Transcription: Sharp Copy Transcription

Length: Forty-five minutes

Project: COVID-19 & Foodways

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Jessica Taylor: All right. This is Jessica Taylor interviewing Future Economy Collective, and it is April 15th, 2021. And we're here in Blacksburg, Virginia, and this is the follow-up of the two-part interviews, basically at the beginning and end of COVID-19. And we're following up on much of the bigger themes that we talked about in the first interview. So in the first interview, we talked about mutual aid, we talked about the opening of your café, and then we also talked about how we've seen challenges to capitalism in the last year and gender, as well. So I wanted to start by asking about the mutual aid work that you-all have been doing and ask how it has evolved since we talked in June/July last?

Gretchen DeGo: Yeah, absolutely.

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The mutual aid project has continued somewhat at the same pace and . . . I don't know how to put this. [Laughter] Sorry. Yeah, the mutual aid project has just continued full force since the beginning of the pandemic. And at this point, we have served over-- we have done over 1,000 units of mutual aid boxes that have been sent out to families throughout the NRV. We've expanded from just doing food to also having large donations from different groups of, like, hygiene supplies. We have different relationships now with people so that we can also send out-- there's a group that redirects medical supplies whether that's over-the-counter medication or

things like walkers or diabetic shoes. They're able to send them to us, and we've been able to get those out to people.

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We started a community closet that has been a huge help to a lot of people to be able to get warm coats during the winter weather. And that community closet is now in our public space in the café where people can just come in and take what they need and leave without paying, 'cause it's a free closet. Um . . . oh, what else is there? Yeah, I mean, we've been-- we have continued to distribute harm-reduction supplies like Narcan and condoms and lube. Yeah, things have been kind of just tugging along at the same steady pace. There have definitely been some seasons where there has been more need and we have gotten massive amounts of requests and have had to amp up what we're doing.

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And there have been some times where the need is less still, but I think that the-- I think that the pandemic has not necessarily-- the pandemic has worsened the conditions of capitalism and those conditions still remain. And we are still in the midst of this pandemic even as places start to lessen regulations, mask mandates, things like that, restrictions around gatherings. So, yes.

Jessica Taylor: That's great. Thank you. And when have you seen big spikes or decreases in need, especially considering seasonal changes and phase changes and things like that?

Gretchen DeGo: Yeah. Definitely in October and November, as things were getting colder, the need sharply increased. I think also as it was coming up on Thanksgiving and on Christmas,

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these holiday seasons where people-- I don't know if as many people were coming together to gather, but as people were trying to do special things for other family members the need also increased.

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There are a lot of people who wanted not just the same kind of food, but they wanted to be able to make a meal for their family during those times. And that was the point where we started doing the community closet where we were serving a lot of folks and sending out a lot of clothes. And that was not just coats, but also, we were getting donations of baby clothes and children's clothes, as well. Yes. Yeah.

Jessica Taylor: You brought up something that came up in the previous interview about the needs of children versus the needs of adults. And have you seen shifts in the needs of families with children over the course of the last year?

Gretchen DeGo: Honestly, it's been about the same. I think that, yeah, we have definitely been providing sustained support to large families where you can kind of tell it's an intergenerational household.

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And we have also been providing support for families where it's just, like, two adults or one elderly person who might have a disability who needs sustained support. But I can't really say whether or not there's been changes in people who have children or don't have children. I think the only difference we notice when we continue to provide support for people with children or

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babies is that the diaper size requests get bigger, and that's about it. [Laughter] But, yeah, families with children, single-parent households, [queer? 0:05:43.2] households have continued to have these needs throughout the pandemic and beyond, yeah.

Jessica Taylor: Absolutely. We have also, in the last year, had a couple of key national shifts, and I wanted to see how the things that we talked about have changed life for you.

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And one of the first things we talked about was antiblack violence and how--

Gretchen DeGo: I'm so sorry. Could you repeat the first part of the question?

Jessica Taylor: Yeah. So there have been key national shifts since we talked last, and one of them has been the conversation around antiblack violence. And I wanted to see, in terms of your own activism as an organization and as individuals, if things have changed for you since June in terms of activism in the New River Valley?

Gretchen DeGo: Yeah. There was definitely a massive upswell last summer, and we kind of continued to be in the streets and provide support. There are some people who are part of our collective who will be in the streets as medics or serving as legal observers, those types of roles.

[Pause in recording]

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Jessica Taylor: So we were just talking about legal observers and antiblack violence and the organization work that you guys have been doing.

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Gretchen DeGo: Yeah. We continue to provide support for folks who want to get those sort of things out, and, yeah, we're gonna be providing support at a rally tomorrow. It's still been difficult to be a physical forum for people to have things. There was one point last summer where we helped this people's assembly where people got together and imagined what a Blacksburg without cops would look like. And that was a really beautiful day and a really wonderful moment. And organizing in Blacksburg, they had an amazing show-out of people of all ages, and, yeah, that was really incredible.

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And I don't think much has changed, honestly, as far as reforms of different individual police departments across the state. Those even where promises have been made have been lackluster, and so there are still black people getting killed by the police and there are still people rallying around it. And we're here to support in the New River Valley and in Southwest Virginia however we can. So not an insane amount has changed there.

Jessica Taylor: Did you notice any shifts around the time period of the election and then the insurrection--

Gretchen DeGo: Any shifts [**where?** 0:08:44.7]?

Jessica Taylor: --in terms of the conversations that were happening in your circles? Huh?

Gretchen DeGo: Oh, sorry, sorry. I was just asking for clarification on the question. Like, shifts in conversations in our circles around the capitol riots and the election, is that what the question . . . ?

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0:09:05.7

Sorry. Yeah. I mean--

Jessica Taylor: Yes.

Gretchen DeGo: --I remember when the riots were happening, and we were hearing about it. Actually, we were at Southpaw. I don't know. I think that we as a group of people who kind of share a similar political analysis have never had faith in the Biden administration. And I think what happened at Capitol Hill was definitely not unexpected. I think the way that the police responded, definitely not unexpected. Huh, I don't know. I don't know if you want to answer this one. [Laughter]

Jessica Taylor: Yeah.

Gretchen DeGo: I don't know if our conversation has changed that much other than, like, fuck this, these stupid idiots . . . I don't know.

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Sorry. [Laughter]

Molie Graham: Yeah. I . . . yeah. I don't know. I feel like we also don't really have a ton of conversations with other folks about stuff like this all the time because people aren't sitting in the café or stuff like that. And usually volunteers that come in are relatively also within a similar political viewpoint. But, yeah, I also think that sometimes a lot of the work that we do kind of . . . I don't know. Not that we're constantly talking about events, but I feel like there are a lot of

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talks about very stressful things that happen in life just generally and in oppressive systems. And so . . . I don't know. I know that we talk about it, but I feel like there's no formal, sit-down thing.

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So I don't think it changed much of where we-- of our thought already.

Jessica Taylor: I hear that, yeah. And part of what I'm trying to get at is, like, what important conversations are happening in your café, which is the most exciting thing that has happened since we last spoke is the opening? And I wanted to see if you could talk about the process of getting it open because that was the biggest prediction. You were, like, by the time we talk next, it will be open. So I wanted to see if you could talk about-- 'cause it's exciting and cool.

Gretchen DeGo: Yeah. Do you want to talk about . . . ?

Molie Graham: Sure. Yeah. I'd also like to add that I think some of the biggest conversations that do come out of the café are usually related to pipeline stuff, at least in my experience of people coming in or, prisoner support.

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And that's also-- prisoner support is mostly just 'cause we have a lot of zines and we have a calendar about it, so it sparks a conversation. But, yeah, opening the café was wet and wild. It was a freaky time. It was definitely difficult, mostly because of the inspectors having random schedules and just, like, it was really hard to schedule folks to come in during the pandemic. And shipping things was really difficult. We had to renovate the kitchen floor and we had to get this special floor epoxy. And that shipping was so delayed because of the pandemic. And also

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starting-- I would never recommend to someone to start a food business during a pandemic.

[Laughter] Like, not something I super recommend.

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But I feel like we've been doing a really good job of putting together . . . There's been a lot of people who are interested in helping out and being a part of it. There's definitely a lot of challenges with certain moments where-- I think it only happened for real one time where we had to shut down the café because of a COVID scare. So it is kind of taking on this other level of responsibility in a space and has taken a lot of time to work around stuff with the health department and also what we want in a café, but also the capacity that we have to do this café. And to be honest, every single day there's someone doing something for this space in this core group. There's not a day that goes by that I don't think someone's working on something. So it does take a lot of work. It takes a ton of work.

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But I still find it very rewarding of a space, and I'm excited to see how the space will expand and adapt whenever it feels safe for all the people working there to have more people inside and to have events and stuff like that. I think it will become a really, really nice community space, more than it is already.

Gretchen DeGo: Yeah. I think one of the coolest things about the space is that it's not just us who see the potential in it now but it's a lot of people who come into the café and are able to

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browse our library or look at our zines or check out the little plant-- I'm trying to call it a plant library but . . .

Molie Graham: Plant store--

Gretchen DeGo: Yeah, the plant--

Molie Graham: --or the seed share?

Gretchen DeGo: No, it's not a plant-- the seed share. The seed share, yeah.

Molie Graham: [Laughter]

Gretchen DeGo: Or who are looking at the seed share.

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Or people who are, like, oh, you have these big curtains. What do you do on the other side? Or what do you mean I can choose the price that I pay for a cup of coffee? And getting to explain what we do and where their money goes and what we're all about here. And people being, like, oh, my God, I'm gonna bring my friends here! Oh, my God, this place is amazing! I can't wait to be able to gather here! And just, like, every day that we work at the café getting some sort of feedback like that, and having people really be excited about what we do and get involved with our mutual aid project. Or now we have this community garden that's starting because people have volunteered up their land for us to use and some resources for us to use to start that. Or, yeah, who want to just work at the café to hang out and be a space for people who want to talk about anticapitalist shit. [Laughter] Like, it's a really cool moment.

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And as somebody who's been in Blacksburg for over six years now and has only ever really found an outlet for this more radical thought in my friend group, finding-- having this space and seeing a community being actively created and other friend groups being formed, and different people having different kinds of revolutionary thought in Southwest Virginia is really amazing! Yeah. Yes. I mean, that was a lot. [Laughter]

Jessica Taylor: No, that's great. I wanted to see if you could describe opening day for me, too. I remember it being very exciting.

Molie Graham: I have no memory of [inaudible 0:16:43.4].

Gretchen DeGo: It was so hectic! [Laughter] It was so hectic. Yeah. There was a lot of excitement around it. And as soon as we opened, we had a massive rush of people coming in.

Molie Graham: We were not ready.

Gretchen DeGo: Yeah, we were not ready. Our coffee machine was acting weird.

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And I think all of us have done food service stuff before, but having it be food service and also, it's reflective of us, and also, explaining to a million people what we've been doing for--

Molie Graham: Ugh!

Gretchen DeGo: --since March.

Molie Graham: Yeah.

Gretchen Dego: Back in December was crazy, but it was also so cool because immediately people just started kind of hanging out and talking. And I remember joking with somebody that they were turning Southpaw into a salon, [inaudible 0:17:28.0] salon. [Laughter] And, yeah, to this day we still get people coming in being, like, so what is this place all about? But that first day was kind of like a massive wave of that, added with a lot of people who knew already what we were about and supported and were, like, oh, my God, this place is so cool! Y'all did such a good job of renovating! [Laughter] And getting to show people around and not screw up their coffee and . . . yeah. It was a good day, and it was a really exciting day.

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And it was a day that I think, up until that point, in my mind, at least, I was, like, are we gonna be able to make it? Are we gonna be able to do this? And just from seeing that-- all the people that showed up that day, that just carried me across these many, many months that we have continued to be able to do this. Yeah.

Jessica Taylor: Wow. Well, I had a couple of follow-up questions about that. You guys are really proud of your coffee and I wanted to see if you could talk about it for a second, how you source your coffee and who you work with.

Gretchen Dego: [Whispering] Do you know more about the coffee?

Molie Graham: I know a little bit. [Laughter]

Jessica Taylor: [inaudible 0:18:46.0]

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Molie Graham: Lauren definitely knows the most. We get the coffee from-- Strange

Coffee is the name of the business, and our friend, Russell [sp], runs it with this guy, Brian [sp], who's also extremely nice.

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And we've basically known Russell through the Pipeline Resistance, so it was a great crossover episode, mashup. And basically, all I personally know about the coffee is that it's locally roasted and transparently sourced. And I also believe that we are the cheapest cup of locally roasted, transparently sourced coffee, potentially, in the NRV. So they provide us with the beans, and then we grind them fresh onsite every day. And that's the coffee. And it's pretty good. You know, I'm not-- I wasn't really a coffee person before we opened this café, and now I drink coffee a lot more often. And I do think ours is genuinely good. I don't know. That's coming from a person who usually can't tell the difference between taste and [inaudible 0:19:55.4]. Gretchen is laughing right now.

Gretchen DeGo: [Laughter] I don't even drink coffee so I have nothing to say. I just help run this coffee shop.

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Molie Graham: [Laughter]

Gretchen DeGo: Yeah. I think there is something [0:20:09.8]--

Jessica Taylor: [inaudible 0:20:09.0] talk about the [inaudible 0:20:10.8]--

Gretchen Dego: --the way that Russell runs the Strange Coffee where workers' rights are very important, and making sure that people are getting paid adequately for their labor throughout the whole thing is . . . But if Lauren were here, she would definitely be able to talk more about it. But those kinds of things are important to us. No ethical consumption under capitalism, but it is important to make an effort. Yeah.

Jessica Taylor: How has the menu evolved over time since you guys opened? What do you enjoy making for people?

Gretchen Dego: I think we've expanded a lot of the different cream cheeses we've had. We've been getting more variety of stuff.

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We haven't expanded in terms of new items a ton per se, but I think that's gonna happen a lot more this summer. I'm working on making a bunch of popsicles, delicious, beautiful little popsicles. We're gonna start teaming up with Gardner's Frozen Treats. We have plans for nitro coffee. We just got a [**kegerator**? 0:21:22.2] two days ago, so we're gonna do nitro coffee, maybe kombucha. We'll have fresh seltzer on tap, which will be cool. And it's evolved a little bit. There's some things that I definitely want to see us incorporate in the future. Someone came in a couple days ago that's a friend and they just got diagnosed with diabetes, and now my mind can't stop thinking about-- 'cause they were, like, I don't know if there's anything I can eat that's on your menu right now.

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So we were talking about what could it look like, carrying stuff that people with certain dietary restrictions could eat, outside of working with vegans and vegetarians and figuring out that sort of stuff. And I also think our menu has become a lot more collaborative. We have more people who are making sodas or making bagel-like combinations and then are putting it on our specials board, which is really fun. So that's how I've seen it change.

Jessica Taylor: Awesome. I wanna also follow up on the community garden. How did that develop and what's the current status of that?

Gretchen DeGo: Yeah. So we had one volunteer who had been doing-- had had his own plot at the community garden at Wong Park.

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And he thought that it would be really cool to-- I mean, he had been donating things from his garden plot throughout the mutual aid process, so he had been giving us food from his garden. And we had another friend who-- I don't know if it was a Wong Parker, another one, but she had been giving us potatoes from her garden. So through that-- you know, every great mutual aid project has to have a community garden. And that's something that there was a lot of interest among folks who were volunteering with us to do. So we started with the plot at Wong Park, and then we had a friend who lives out in Ellett Valley whose family has had some land for a while, and they are currently-- there's a lot going on at that farm. But they have a lot of land that some of it is used as a hemp farm and some of it they have is a beef company. So they raise cattle there. But then, they have some rows that they were willing to allow us to use for our gardening.

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And so, as a part of the process of doing our mutual aid, we have folks fill out a form that just tells us their needs. There's no means testing or anything. So one of the questions we ask, which was entirely optional, was, if we have this community garden, what would y'all like to see us grow in it to be putting in these boxes? And we got lots of feedback. Loads of people want fresh vegetables, and we have been giving that, but a variety of them. So we've been taking that feedback and are currently-- we just planted a bunch of leafy greens out at Wong Park, and we're going to be doing a bunch of different kinds of beans, tomatoes, cucumbers, eggplant-- there's a whole list-- out in Ellett Valley. And we have folks that are regularly going out-- I think we're going to be going every, like, Tuesday-- to go attend to the garden. And we're working on some grants to get some more money.

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But they've been really great about providing us with a mower and helping till the land and making it not as labor intensive for us, but really being just a community coming together to make this garden flourish, so it's been sick.

Jessica Taylor: And I know some folks are involved in the pipeline fight from Ellett Valley, too, and I wanted to see how the recent events with MVP have affected you guys or what's going on at Southpaw in any way?

Gretchen DeGo: Uh, you're referring to, like, the tree sits coming down?

Jessica Taylor: Yeah.

Gretchen Dego: Yeah. So that's been pretty hard, I think because we've been in community with a lot of the people doing the pipeline fight in this area and at Yellow Finch for such a long time.

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And it was hard to be able-- I think there were so many times where we prepared ourselves for the sits to be coming down and then they just stayed up for another couple of months to half a year to beyond that. MVP and local law enforcement have made so many threats throughout the time that those sits have been up. So yeah, it's been hard. I think the sits and the things that were-- those sits at Yellow Finch were a place-- I think this is like-- a smaller version of this happened when the pandemic hit because it became less of-- we became less able to actually gather there because of the health risks.

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But to have that site of resistance here in Appalachia just torn away has been pretty emotional for a lot of people. Yeah. I mean, at Southpaw, we're continuing to do fundraising for the campaign. They need money-- funds for jail support and legal support. And we recently had a prisoner letter writing-- what was the term-- like a letter-writing party for Acre and Wren, who are currently being held in Western Regional Jail. Their trial's on May 5th, so . . . But they were denied bail and bond. Yeah, it's been rough. I mean, the fight continues, and so it's not as though all dreams of resisting this pipeline are gone.

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I actually think the Mountain Valley Pipeline is on its last breath, honestly, and that this sitter removal was an act of desperation on their part because they're just trying to please investors. But I think it was still, yeah, a really big hit for a lot of people in the community who rallied around that space and . . . yeah. Sorry, I was rambly. [Laughter] I don't think I'm very--
[rambling? 0:28:25.2]. [Laughter]

Jessica Taylor: [That's great? 0:28:26.4] Um, anything you want to add back there? I just don't want to cut you out.

Molie Graham: No. No. It's great. I was just stretching. Sorry. I'm laying down. It's been a long day. I'll pop up if I have something to add.

Jessica Taylor: No worries at all. [Laughter] Okay. Well, one of the things that we talked about at the conclusion of our last interview was the return to normal, because we had thought that it was around the corner eight months ago when we last talked.

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Molie Graham: [Laughter] [inaudible 0:29:06.2]

Jessica Taylor: [Laughter] And-- huh?

Molie Graham: Oh, I just went whoo-hoo.

Jessica Taylor: Oh, that was just a scream?

Gretchen DeGo: Yeah. [Laughter]

Molie Graham: [Laughter]

Jessica Taylor: And you had said, "Normal sucks butt."

Gretchen DeGo: [Laughter]

Jessica Taylor: And so I wanted to see--

Gretchen DeGo: [inaudible 0:29:24.3]

Jessica Taylor: --how you felt about what you would like the next phase to look like as things will start to change now that the vaccine rollout has really started in the NRV.

Gretchen DeGo: Yeah. I mean, we're definitely right now in this strange intermediary period of normal, but it's not normal at all because there isn't equal access to the vaccine. And even if there were, we still don't know that much about these different variants that are coming out, or levels of efficacy or . . . ahhh! You know, people who are immunocompromised. There are just so many different factors.

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But I think the culture of America is that-- I was gonna say shoot first, ask questions later, but I don't think that's the right analogy-- metaphor. [Laughter] It's just kind of like preventative measures are for babies and, you know, we'll take it as it comes. Kind of this, like, masculine, militaristic, irresponsible, uncaring, innocent, somewhat genocidal way of looking at it, like incredibly ableist, awful. And so, because of that, it's hard-- it's gonna be hard to say when I feel like we've returned to normal. And I don't think there's really a normal to return to. I think, ideally, we're past the point of making people aware of the atrocities of the United States government.

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I think there are some people at this point who are turning-- or cope by turning a blind eye to it or creating different justifications. But we've reached a threshold of people who are aware. I think the new normal looks like-- or what I would hope the new normal would look like is not just people being aware anymore but people actively in their lives doing things to resist the system and build systems of resilience in their communities that counter what the government is doing to actively harm us and put us in the way of danger, whether it's this pandemic or police brutality or climate change or this pipeline. That's what I hope the new normal could and can be.

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And I feel like we see examples of this, and my hope is that they just become more widespread. [Laughter] I think also in life as American culture-- and this is very generalizing. You know, there's a lot of different cultures within the American whatever, umbrella, but I want to-- I yearn for this shift from having these fear-based, trauma-based responses to being mistreated by the powers that claim that they're there to care for us-- or not even claim but that we would expect to. Because why have a government if that government is not going to care for you or do things to make your life easier and be in a system that creates harmony among people? Yeah.

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My desire is to move away from these trauma-based, crazy QAnon conspiracy, racist, individualistic responses to this harm that's being done to us as a society and more to these care-based forms that we've been trying to cultivate with our mutual aid project here at Southpaw or

within our friend groups and the groups of us that do organizing against these oppressive systems. Yeah. [Laughter] That's my hope. I see it a little bit, but not an insane amount.

[Laughter]

Jessica Taylor: The café is going to and is becoming a place to organize and a place to think through these things. How do you-- and you talked about being in Blacksburg for a long time. How do you want the café to change Blacksburg and the New River Valley in the coming years?

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Molie Graham: Ooh. I think I would want this space to, I guess, change Blacksburg in the way of providing-- holding physical space for groups that don't otherwise have space. I feel like in Blacksburg it's really hard to find certain spaces for certain groups of folks. And I would like it to also become a space where people could gain community skills. I guess part of the café story for me was coming from a place of being a survivor of sexual violence and not having any community infrastructure to help me deal with it, I guess. And it turned out really bad for me. And feeling like I had no space to go to. And so I pretty much became a hermit and people thought I had left town.

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And it was just 'cause there is no physical place that felt centered around survivors. A lot of people--I would have talks with people and pretty much everyone that I'd known that had gone through something similar had ended up having to leave town. And I wanted there to be a space

where I could be, like, I'm not leaving because of this. This will not be the reason I leave this area or anything. And I think a lot of us have similar feelings of our situations in this town and things we've experienced. And not that it has to only be about sexual assault violence or anything like that, but I think that having a space that at least tries to encourage community, problem solving, and also be able to stand as a physical space that holds books and zines and conversations about these sorts of issues, I think will at least provide the spark of possibility that something could be different.

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It also provides a space that is physically accessible. We don't have a lot of spaces around here that are set up as both with any space and/or physically wheelchair accessible. So I feel like that's gonna change Blacksburg in the way of maybe thinking more about who has access to spaces and who doesn't. And how can we-- thinking about the town of Blacksburg and who is, I guess, architecturally able to be a part of this community in certain ways. And also just, like, providing spaces for people to do things that will actually benefit the New River Valley and not just Virginia Tech.

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Or not just-- give an idea that they're doing something, like the Big Event, like going to people's houses that have so much money and doing free yard work for them isn't really doing anything materially good for the community. You're just doing free yard work for someone who could afford to pay all of them a decent wage to do it. And not saying that our café is perfect by any means or is able to completely change the area, all this stuff, but I think it at least provides

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options for outlets that will be able to at least materially help in even a small way some of the surrounding area and not have the narrative revolve around universities and educational systems.

That's my thoughts.

Gretchen DeGo: Yeah. I think on top of that too, going back to what Molly said about having a survivor-oriented space, I'd love for Southpaw to be a space where people can understand what accountability looks like.

0:38:02.7

Yeah. I had a similar experience of assault in a space that I-- in a group of people that I really cared about and thought that they cared about me at the time but realized that because there were no examples of accountability and also because it was just their misogyny, I was ostracized from that group, and the person who was assaulting people was not. And right now we, in doing the organizing that we've done-- there are some of us who have been a part of conflict teams that are responsible for holding conflict in a group and helping people work their way through it. And these conflict teams are pretty exhaustive. We're trying to-- [Break in audio]

0:39:01.2

Jessica Taylor: Gretchen, your mic is out.

Gretchen DeGo: How is it now?

Jessica Taylor: Perfect.

Gretchen DeGo: How long was it out for?

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Jessica Taylor: Okay.

0:40:01.3

Good. I kept waiting for you to come back. [Laughter] That's okay. You cut out at--

Gretchen Dego: [inaudible 0:40:08.6]

Jessica Taylor: No, it's okay. You cut out at about 20 seconds ago.

Gretchen Dego: Oh, okay.

Jessica Taylor: Um . . .

Gretchen Dego: Um . . .

Jessica Taylor: So it was-- yeah, you got it.

Gretchen Dego: Yeah. Yeah. Just being a space for leftists and queer people and people who are not white to hang out and-- that would be great. Yeah. Sorry. I kinda lost my train of thought there, but . . . [Laughter] Like survivors of [inaudible 0:40:41.2].

Jessica Taylor: Zoom is hard and the worst--

Gretchen Dego: Huh?

Jessica Taylor: Oh, I just said Zoom is hard and the worst--

Gretchen Dego: Oh, yeah.

Jessica Taylor: --at [**disconnecting?** 0:40:50.1].

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Gretchen Dego: Yeah. Yeah.

Jessica Taylor: Thank you so much for sharing that, though, and that is so important, and I'm glad that you said what you said.

0:41:02.8

Gretchen Dego: Yeah.

Jessica Taylor: I wanted to see if there was anything that we did not talk about that you wanted to talk about in this-- anything that we should've covered?

Gretchen Dego: Umm . . . I don't think so.

Molie Graham: I don't have anything.

Jessica Taylor: Okay. Cool. Awesome. Well, I will-- here, I'll go ahead and thank you very much for your time and I'll stop the recording.

0:41:39.4

[End]