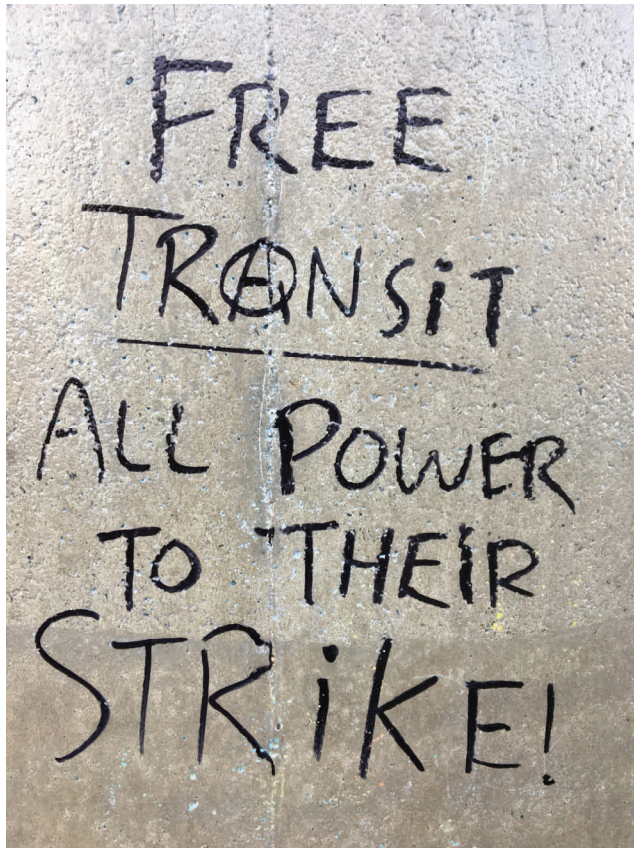


Classic maneuvers for fare dodging on the skytrain:

“Forcing [the gates] open or closed – which happens all too often – causing damage in some way, tampering with them, jumping over them and not tapping-in or out but piggybacking or sliding in behind somebody else who is going through that is tapping-in or out.”

-Transit police spokesperson Anne Drennan



Found at production way-university skytrain station



VOLUME 01

Fare dodger solidarity on stolen land
(vanshitty, canada) and why cities as we
know them shouldn't exist



<https://distro.black>

Winter 2019
Anonymous

“It’s just \$3.”

“Stealing is wrong.”

“Just pay your fair share.”

-things people say when they completely miss the point



Solidarity with Fare Dodgers.

Fuck the (Transit) Police.

Transit should be FREE!

Copy and distribute freely

**Winter 2019
anonymous**



Final words

>DON'T BE A SNITCH

If you see someone pass through transit gates or sneak on a bus without paying, **look the other way!** Remember, you don't know their circumstances.

- > **People without the correct papers have been taken in to migrant detention camps by cops checking for fare.**
- > **Cops check for other offenses and they have arrested fare dodgers with unrelated outstanding warrants**

> Consider your position and the risk you are taking. Some people are in a privileged enough position to absorb the consequences of getting ticketed. However, **if you habitually dodge, your chances of getting caught only increase.** We do not recommend you do anything that may result in consequences you would not be able to handle.

> If you are in a position to pay for transit and choose to do so, consider leaving your day passes and other valid fare passes for other people to find after you're done with them.

> Fun fact: a 3-zone monthly pass is \$177. If you're a person who needs to cross zones many times a day, it's cheaper to evade for two months and only get caught once! Just saying.

> Don't be afraid to ask bus drivers to give you a ride. Drivers get asked a lot! They can say "no", but many are understanding and/or indifferent. **You can still get ticketed if a cop materializes and asks you for proof of fare, though.**

> Wherever possible, try to maintain plausible deniability for both the camera and any onlookers. Watch the body language of people who tap their fare passes to card readers.

> Entering/exiting a skytrain station:
if there are no transit security/cops or customer service workers watching and listening for your pass to beep at the gate, the only people you have to look out for are bootlicking good Samaritan snitches (that is, until the first tickets are issued on the basis of facial recognition technology used on camera footage)

STOLEN LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This is stolen land. The unceded territory of the Coast Salish peoples—Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish), Stó:lō and Səl̓ílwətaʔ/Selilwítlh (Tsleil-Waututh) and x̣ẉməθḳẉəỵəm (Musqueam) Nations.

Little-v vancouver and little-c canada exist today because european settlers invaded and straight-up killed the indigenous folk already living here while stealing and destroying their means of survival. Colonial violence is ongoing. **canada is a sham and does not deserve our respect.**

We are rootless and uprooted settlers opposed to life-destroying construction and extraction projects aimed at controlling and commodifying everything free and naturally-occurring.

Recommended reading:

Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor by Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang

Recommended listening:

From Embers podcast: *Against Reconciliation - Decolonize Means No State*

<https://frommembers.libsyn.com/against-reconciliation-decolonize-means-no-state>

Transcript:

<https://north-shore.info/2018/10/22/autonomously-and-with-conviction-a-metis-refusal-of-state-led-reconciliation/>

Via translink, Consequences of Fare Dodging

Source: <https://www.translink.ca/Fares-and-Passes/Fare-Infractions.aspx>

If you get caught by a transit cop/transit security personnel, it's \$173

which turns into \$213 after 180 days
and then turns into \$273 after 366 days

Your driver's license and insurance can be held hostage by ICBC. Your fine can be sent to a collection agency, so 3rd party jerks can hassle you for dollars

It's a debt generated from nothing.

A relationship of owing that didn't have to be. An alchemic conversion — \$3 to \$173 — with no basis in reason or fairness. Some people just decided this.

The dollar amount is arbitrary.
How much the fine increases over what timescale is arbitrary.



FARE DODGER SOLIDARITY

And the money collected don't even go toward improving transit service...

Our fines only pay for the apparatus that makes enforcement possible!

Direct action?

We have no easy recommendation for how to dismantle our global economy, the institution of employment, and all the other things that are destroying life on our planet. That's a conversation for another zine.

Regarding vanshipy transit in particular:

Far be it from us to suggest organizing mass fare dodging protests in print. Looking at /r/vancouver, it looks like we are very far from having a widespread consciousness of how shit sucks and no one should be paying fare at all. Or maybe that subreddit is just a hole infested with judgmental boomers. Maybe there is hope. Talk to your friends about it.

Anyway, there are some examples of organizing and direct action that we'd like to point to...



Remember what students in **Chile** and folks in **NYC** did this year. You can find videos, and you'll notice several people chose to mask up. It's a good idea, in general, to surrender as little data as possible, regardless of whether or not you intend to break the law.

The organizing that inspired this zine comes from **Sweden**, where people who refuse to pay transit fare contribute to a fund that helps fare dodgers pay for their fines: <https://planka.nu/eng/>

Doesn't that seem like a cool idea?

The spatial layout of the city decides a lot for us. It sets standards for what is considered “mundane”, “acceptable”, “moral”, “natural”, and “realistic” by exclusion and omission. A lot of us don’t have a notion of how else things could be, so we assume the way things are is probably as good as it gets.

It didn’t have to be this way, but it’s so entrenched and normalized that now, *everyone is too small to make a difference*. This is a secret that’s out in the open. There are many ways you can resist, try to sustain yourself outside coercive labour relations, or express your displeasure, but you’ll quickly run into conflict with the hired goons (VPD and RCMP) who are paid to use force and violence to maintain this existing social arrangement.

Coming back to transit and what to do

We aren’t advocating for any particular action in this zine. We’re only saying transit should be free. Also, our context in which long-distance mass transit is a public necessity is a nightmare hell world that shouldn’t exist.

But what do you do? As a statement, fare dodging in isolation does not make a significant impact. It places only you, the dodger, at risk and does not challenge the structure of transit. Transit cops are also generally not receptive to arguments for abolishing transit fare (not that you should talk to cops at all).

You gotta do what’s right for you. Among people who know transit should be free, some folk dodge out of necessity. Some could spare \$3 but hate letting the bastards have their way. Some just swallow shit and pay. If not having the stress of being vigilant for cops boarding your train car is worth the price of fare, you do you. This is coercion and it sucks, but this is how it is right now...



Bear in mind that surveillance and control apparatuses are evolving to keep pace with the ingenuity of law-breakers, and our transit system will definitely be incorporating more sophisticated technology into their operations over time. It may be a simple matter (if you have the size and mobility) to wriggle in sideways through the accessible skytrain gate now and not be accosted later in your home, but we can’t take that for granted forever.

Facial recognition tech and data obtained via social media are being used to identify law-breakers in many other places. We have not seen positive confirmation that there are plans to implement this in our local context (we haven’t dug deeply), but more and better cameras are inevitable, as are more integration of services and inter-company sharing of our data, and more “free” services in which we volunteer our data in exchange for convenience.

In other words,

OUR FINES JUST PAY TO MAKE MORE FINES

What are you doing with the money you’re collecting from fare infraction tickets?

Our goal is to encourage people to pay their fares, not collect fines! This process helps ensure that people who don’t pay their fares face consequences if caught. TransLink just started fine collection in September 2012, so it’s a new process for us. We don’t expect fines to be a source of revenue to fund operations. However, revenue from fines is expected to help pay for running the program. This includes fine administration, dispute resolution and collection costs.

<https://www.translink.ca/Fares-and-Passes/Fare-Infractions/FAQs.aspx>

*“It’s the rules.
I don’t make
em but I gotta
enforce em.”*

-someone who
doesn’t think too
deeply about the
implications of
their actions



1-zone Transit fares (AKA one Poor Person's Tax of many) as of this writing:

	1-zone adult	1-zone concession
Single/cash fares	\$3	\$1.95
Stored value (compass card)	\$2.40	\$1.95

The way things work now, a one-way fare costs at least \$3 for adults. You get a slight discount if you submit to their data-gathering surveillance experiment (ie: have a compass card) or if the state recognizes that you belong to a category of people who might have trouble ponying up the usual fare. If you happen to cross into a different zone on the skytrain, there's an additional charge. Even if you're only riding one stop over. There are 3 zones total.

It's bad enough if you have to tap in twice a day as a 9-5er going to and from work. Imagine if your typical day involves making multiple trips all over the map crossing multiple zones. You've always gotta be mindful of whether you're within the grace period of 90 minutes where you don't have to pay again. Imagine if you're broke. Just getting around where you need to go can get in the way of saving up money if you don't have much of an income. What if it's a choice between tapping in or eating something today? There are countless situations where it'd make sense to skip out on fare.

In response to the common refrain *"IF PEOPLE CAN'T AFFORD LIVING HERE, THEY SHOULD JUST MOVE"*... This is fucking heartless and simply leaving isn't feasible for many.

What if this is where your family and friends live?
What if this is the community you've known all your life?
What if this is where your support network is based?
What if you have dependents who can't pick up and move?
What if you're not able-bodied, or you don't have transferrable skills that can get you a job "anywhere"?
How fucking expensive is moving?

You don't know the lives people have lived.

You are in no position to know what is best for them as you don't know their circumstances.

And if you think that fare dodging is harmful or immoral, or that the truly poor should get a break but anyone who isn't flat broke should pay, or that maybe fare could be cheaper but we all have a duty to contribute to maintaining this public service, pay attention to the next page...

We should be thinking about how utterly screwed we'd be if supply lines got cut off somehow. If roads became undriveable, if cheap gas no longer was available on the ready, if indentured agricultural slaves in the Global South revolted or climate change destroyed their crops, we in the city would starve within days. Most of us don't have a clue how to find/grow enough food to sustain ourselves and our communities. In the first place, most of us can't have access to the land that would let us do that.

Aside from the inherent precariousness of survival in the city...
If we work just to pay the costs of eating and taking up space,
what's the point? This is the situation a lot of folks are in.

We ought to be thinking about what we actually need.
We ought to be thinking about what our desires are.

Our aspirations should be interrogated if they end at attaining a paid position where we don't have to worry about money.
"Financial independence" is a lie.

It's just purchasing power. It is expanding the menu of commodities you can consume on demand. That is not freedom. It feels better than being fucking poor, for sure, but isn't it still fundamentally a life of submitting to false authority and acting under duress within coercive conditions?

Produce faster or starve
Smile when you're told or be homeless
Snitch on your friends or you'll be relocated
Etc., etc.

Furthermore, what are you producing? Who are you smiling for and what does it accomplish? Why do we have a social arrangement where anyone can rise to a position where they can set the terms of our lives?

And even if you're alright, what of the others who are still fucked over by business-as-usual status quo operation?

These are questions that hedge the often-unaddressed futility of how we are supposed to spend our effort, time, and emotional energy. It's not just that some jobs are pointless Bullshit Jobs. **It's that employment as a framework for producing necessities and supporting life is egregiously flawed.** It is built to serve the interests of those who are in a position to employ, and that comes at the direct cost of those who need to be employed to survive.

When city living is all you know because this is where you were born and raised (i.e.: you have skills for living directly off of what the land provides)

What kind of lives are possible/impossible here?

What way of life is forced on us by city geography?



Here's the default way we're supposed to exist, the unquestioned norm for us humans born in civil captivity:

How we live depends on industrial processes that irreversibly poison the world. It depends on resource extraction that tears apart living habitats. How we live runs on literal slavery, especially in places where labour laws have been deliberately slashed. The economy isn't oriented around meeting the needs of living beings. The economy serves the market and those who pay themselves exorbitant salaries based on fictions like GDP and shareholder value.

So instead of living arrangements where our homes are within walking distance of food, water, and other things we need, we have urban sprawl and people densely stacked on top of one another in high-rises and a skytrain system that shuttles people between shopping malls.

And so we have mass transit and highways and inaccessible places and hyperaccessible places, a system that effectively controls where people get to move and don't

And so we have more personal cars than the entire human population could use and overflowing automobile junkyards

It could've easily been another way. This arrangement is not natural or inevitable or correct. In fact, we've probably imagined one of the cruelest and least efficient ways for humans to live off what the land provides.

And this all constrains our lives in such an important way.

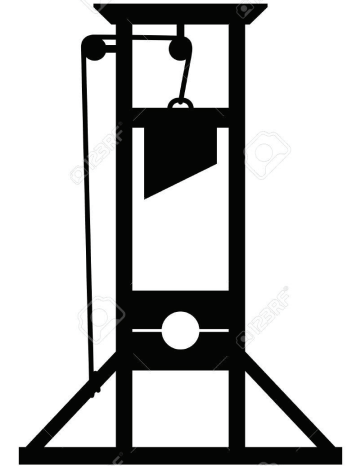
It necessitates orienting our lives around employment — alienated labour in which we have to do whatever the business tyrant paying your salary says (or you obey the whims of the market if you are an entrepreneur), get paid, then use that money to buy food, medicine, clothes, shelter, etc.

The issue is not the dollar amount of either fare or fare evasion tickets . This zine maintains that **transit should be free, motherfuckers**, and framing failure to pay as a moral wrongdoing is short-sighted and lacking in compassion.

To every vanshitty transit rider who has ever given stink-eye to a tailgater on the skytrain or attempted to publicly shame someone hopping on the 99 B-line (AKA Free Line) without tapping in, to every cop who has written up a ticket for a fare dodger, to every good samaritan who has pushed closed a skytrain gate stuck open, to all the customer servicers and bus drivers who don't just look the other way...

**Fuck off.
translink's
CEO is rich.**

Transit corporation executives are making bank off a public necessity that doesn't even work properly.



	2018 Salary	2019 Salary Effective Jan. 2019
Coast Mountain Bus Company President Michael McDaniel	\$121,285 (after starting May 2018)	\$279,818 to \$372,513
TransLink CEO Kevin Desmond	\$405,242	\$406,634 to \$517,443

Source: <https://globalnews.ca/news/6121240/vancouver-transit-strike-exec-salaries/>

“Fare evasion is theft,” said a former translink CEO, without a hint of irony.

Source: <https://www.vancouverobserver.com/politics/news/tougher-fines-fare-evaders-bc-transit-starting-sep-4>



This is a system that doesn't work properly because it overworks its employees and underserves people who need it. Transit workers are on strike at the time of this writing.

HERE AND NOW, considering how much wealth trickles up in the form of executive salaries, tax breaks and corporate subsidies (no sources cited because we can take these things for granted at this point), vanshitty could definitely afford to have free transit, better-paid workers, better working conditions, and better service overall if things were structured differently.

HOWEVER...

The main point isn't just that fares should be cheaper (transit should be free) or that transit systems need more funding and transit workers should be paid more and given meaningful breaks w/o forced overtime. All these changes would be great, but beyond that...

We should be wondering why transit is a thing that we need. **Who benefits from city architecture as it is now, and who are the people who constantly have to eat shit and compromise to fit into it?**

We should ask ourselves questions like:

Why is an uncompensated 1.5 hour-long commute (AKA Supercommute!) to/from school or work socially acceptable?

Why are food deserts a thing?

Why is it normal for people to uproot their lives and transplant to whatever location has work available?
Shouldn't other more important things decide where we spend our lives and who we spend time with?

Why is all the stuff we need to live so far away from where we live?

The simple argument:

Transit fares and fare dodging fines are unjustified given the necessity of public transit

AND the stress/inaccessibility/financial burden of the alternatives

ESPECIALLY SINCE transit company executive crooks are making big money off our moving around.

The harder sell:

Cities aren't how people should be organizing themselves to meet their needs.

Our point is that cities (as they are now) are structurally hostile to life and thriving.

Long-distance mass transit, no matter how it is implemented, is a solution to a problem that shouldn't exist:

namely,

we shouldn't be living so fucking far apart from each other and the things we need to survive.

