

Crashing the Party

Legacies and Lessons from the RNC 2000

Kris Hermes

Foreword by Marina Sitrin • Afterword by Heidi Boghosian

Over the past fifteen years, people in the United States—and dissidents in particular—have witnessed a steady escalation of the National Security State, including invasive surveillance and infiltration, indiscriminate police violence, and unlawful arrests. These concerted efforts to spy on Americans and undermine meaningful social change are greatly enhanced by the coordination of numerous local, state, and federal agencies often operating at the behest of private corporations. Though these developments are commonly associated with the post-9/11 world, *Crashing the Party* shows how they were already being set in motion during the Republican National Convention (RNC) protests in 2000. It also documents how, in response, dissidents confronted new forms of political repression by pushing legal boundaries and establishing new models of collective resistance.

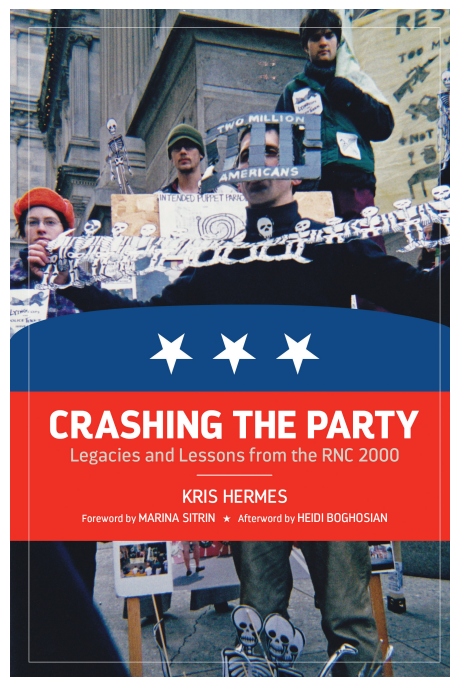
Crashing the Party explains how the events of 2000 acted as a testing ground in which Philadelphia Police Commissioner John Timoney was able to develop repressive methods of policing that have been used extensively across the U.S. ever since. These events also provided a laboratory for the radical, innovative, and confrontational forms of legal support carried out by R2K Legal, a defendant-led collective that raised unprecedented amounts of money for legal defense, used a unique form of court solidarity to overcome hundreds of serious charges, and implemented a PR campaign that turned the tide of public opinion in favor of dissidents. While much has been written about the global-justice era of struggle, little attention has been paid to the legal struggles of the period or the renewed use of solidarity tactics in jail and the courtroom that made them possible. By analyzing the successes and failures of these tactics, *Crashing the Party* offers rare insight into the mechanics and concrete effects of such resistance. In this way, it is an invaluable resource for those seeking to confront today's renewed counterintelligence tactics.

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

Kris Hermes is a Bay Area-based activist who has worked for nearly thirty years on social justice issues. Organizing with ACT UP Philadelphia in the late 1990s spurred his interest in legal support work and led to his years-long involvement with R2K Legal. Since 2000, Hermes has been an active, award-winning legal worker-member of the National Lawyers Guild and has been a part of numerous law collectives and legal support efforts over the years. Hermes has written extensively in his professional career as a media worker and as a legal activist.

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