

## Breaking Bread, Sharing Soup, and Smashing the State: Food Not Bombs and Anarchist Critiques of the Neoliberal Charity State

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Members of the anarchistic mutual aid group Food Not Bombs have been arrested in scores of cities throughout the nation. Their crime? Providing free vegan food in public spaces. In this article I contend that the group's oppositional relationship to neoliberal charity provides a partial explanation for the state's hostility to the group; however, this is not sufficient on its own for explaining why certain cities have cracked down on the organization. Instead, Food Not Bombs' resistance to neoliberal charity makes the group's actions a serious threat to state power only given the right confluence of neoliberal economic development, austerity, urban gentrification efforts, and public visibility. In this article, I look at the impacts of neoliberal policies on homeless services, examine how neoliberal charities discipline and regulate the poor, and then analyze the way that Food Not Bombs activists see their actions as a form of resistance to neoliberal charity. *[Article copies available for a fee from The Transformative Studies Institute. E-mail address: [journal@transformativestudies.org](mailto:journal@transformativestudies.org) Website: <http://www.transformativestudies.org> ©2014 by The Transformative Studies Institute. All rights reserved.]*

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