

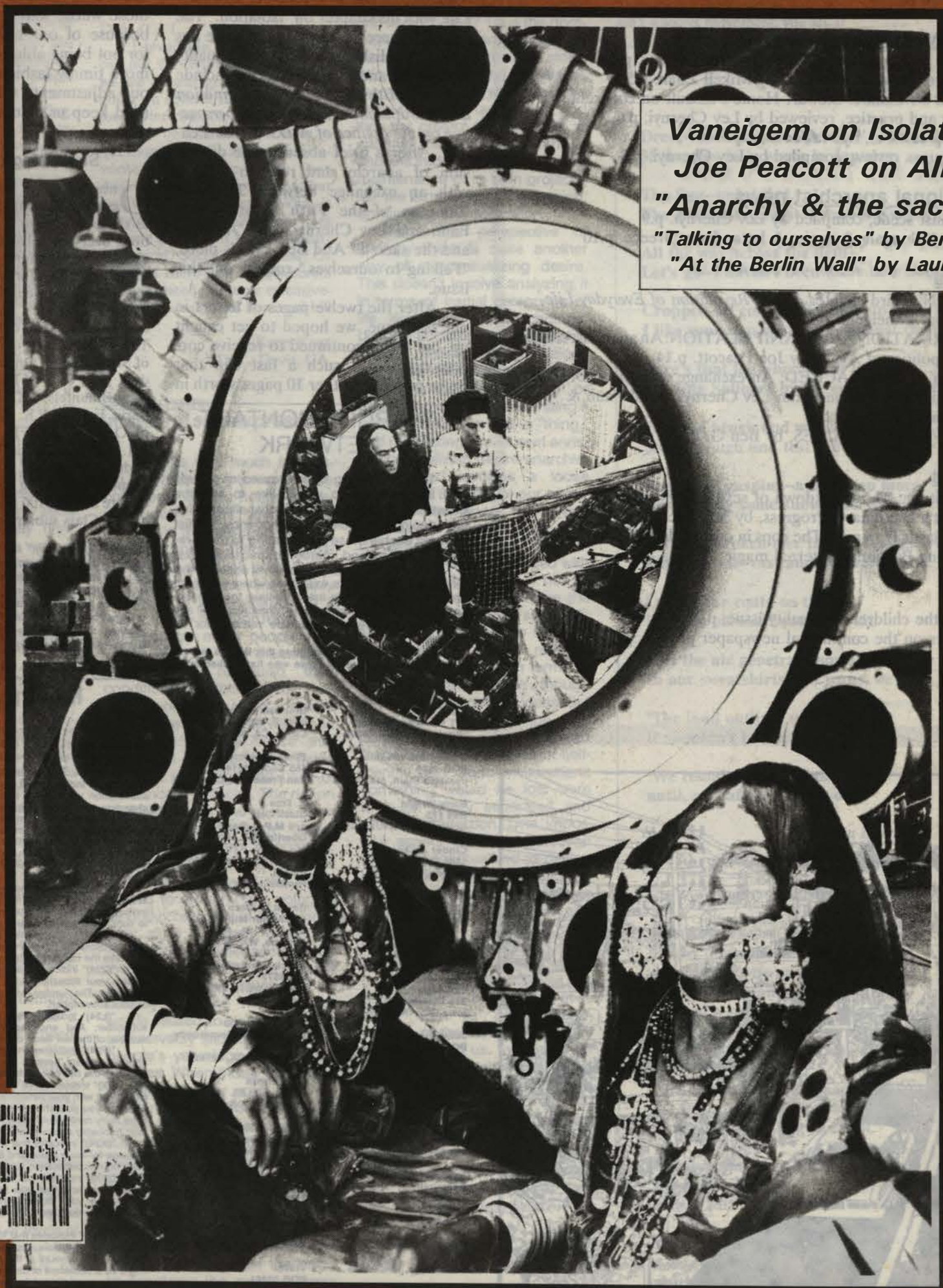
Towards a society based on mutual aid, voluntary cooperation & the liberation of desire

#24/Mar.-April '90

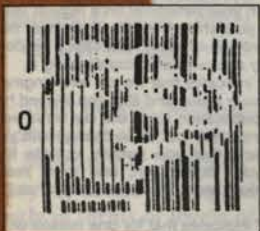
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Anarchy

A journal of Desire Armed



Vaneigem on Isolation
Joe Peacott on AIDS
"Anarchy & the sacred"
"Talking to ourselves" by Ben Price
"At the Berlin Wall" by Laure A.



Collage by Freddie Baer

Disarm Authority! Arm Your Desires!

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Anarchy notes

In this issue

After receiving a good response to our last issue, we hope readers will enjoy the different directions taken in this one, beginning with Laure A.'s first-hand account of the situation in Eastern Europe in "At the Berlin Wall." We continue our serialization of Raoul Vaneigem's *The Revolution of Everyday Life* with his chapter on "Isolation." The Boston Anarchist Drinking Brigade has begun publishing a series of quality pamphlets and in this issue we include the first of their series, *Misinformation and Manipulation: An anarchist perspective on the politics of AIDS* by Joe Peacott. After a brief absence, the discussion of anarchy and religion returns with an exchange between Dogbane Champion of the *Fifth Estate*, Feral Faun and Lev Chernyi over "Anarchy and the sacred." And Ben Price's piece, "Talking to ourselves," rounds out this issue.

After the twelve pages of letters in our last issue, we hoped to get caught up, but we've continued to receive correspondence at such a fast clip that we've printed another 10 pages worth in

ANARCHY CONTACT NETWORK

This is a listing of addresses of groups and individuals who would like to see the growth and development of a post-situationist, anti-ideological revolutionary tendency. The list will help enable those participating to make regional contacts and intercommunication links.

If you'd like to see your address added to this listing please write to us, explaining where you stand and why you wish to be listed. Neither "good intentions" nor vague commitments to "anarchism" will any longer be accepted as adequate reasons for inclusion.

(Note: We are only compiling this list, we are not endorsing the positions of those who have asked to be listed.)

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Openers



this issue--and next issue promises to require at least as much space! For those whose letters have been held up because of our backlog, we apologise for not being able to publish them in a more timely fashion. But we hope that our adjustments will eventually get us (and keep us) more caught up on this score.

Sustaining contributors

Once again we want to thank all our current sustaining contributors (as well as those who have sent us other contributions over our subscription rates) for their special contributions! These contributions make it possible for us to continue publishing by lessening our financial worries. Our current sustainers include: S.H. of Spencerport, NY.; D.A. of Carbondale, IL.; L.C., T.O., A.H. & S.H. of Columbia, MO.; K.M. of Scarborough, Ontario; A.M. of Farmingdale, N.J.; C.Q. of Pawtucket, R.I.; A.H. of New Braunfels, TX.; D.S. in Ohio; A.G. of Paris, France; P.K. of Flagstaff, AZ. D.D. of Orange City, FL.; E.H. of Providence, R.I.; L.P. of Detroit, MI. and P.B. of Alexandria, VA. Thank you all for your special support! Sustaining contributors to *Anarchy* donate \$50 to \$100 per year--which includes a First Class subscription.

Errata: Unfortunately, the back cover advertisement parody of the U.S. Forest Service in our last issue (Jan./Feb. '90, page 36) was printed without a disclaimer due to an oversight resulting from the last-minute layout rush to meet our publishing deadline. The poster parody was produced anonymously, and though we can agree with its message, we're sure the Forest Service would like to disavow any knowledge of its destructive practices.

--Lev Chernyi

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For those who are interested in such things, if you received this issue of *Anarchy* by mail, there was likely a short code in the upper right corner of the mailing label. The code key follows:

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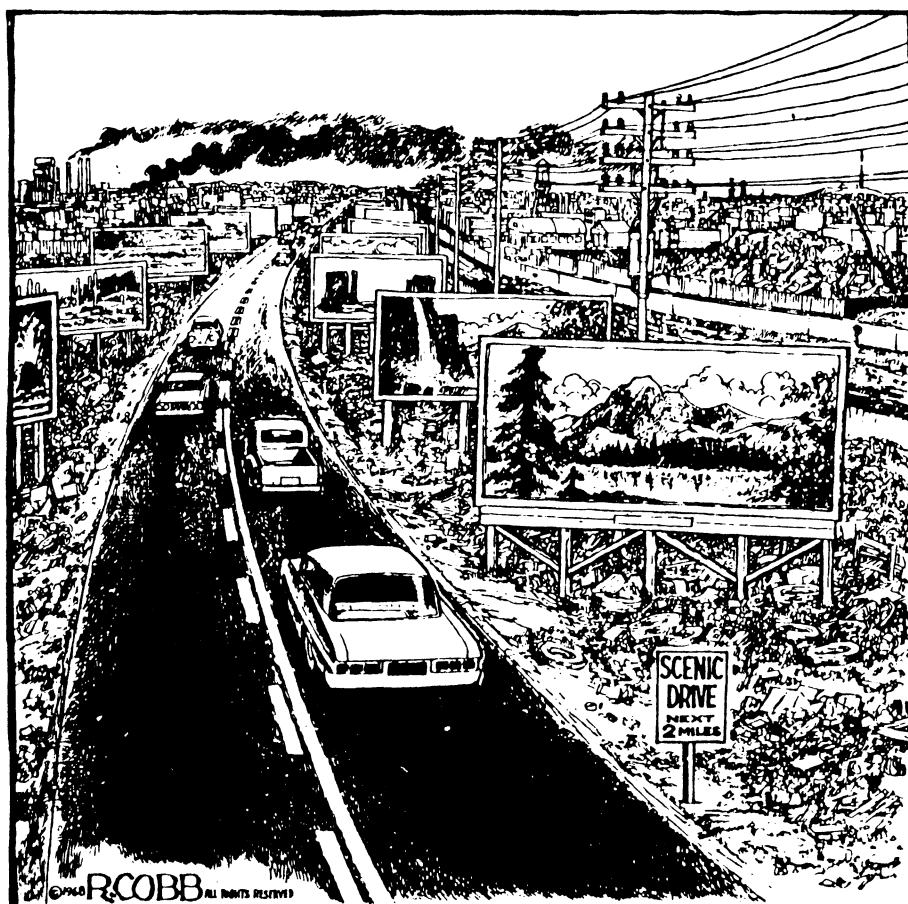
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For those whose mailing codes don't make sense by this schema, maybe we marked them wrong, maybe we forgot them, or just maybe you're not who you seem!



THE CARILLON - JAN 10, 1970

Openers

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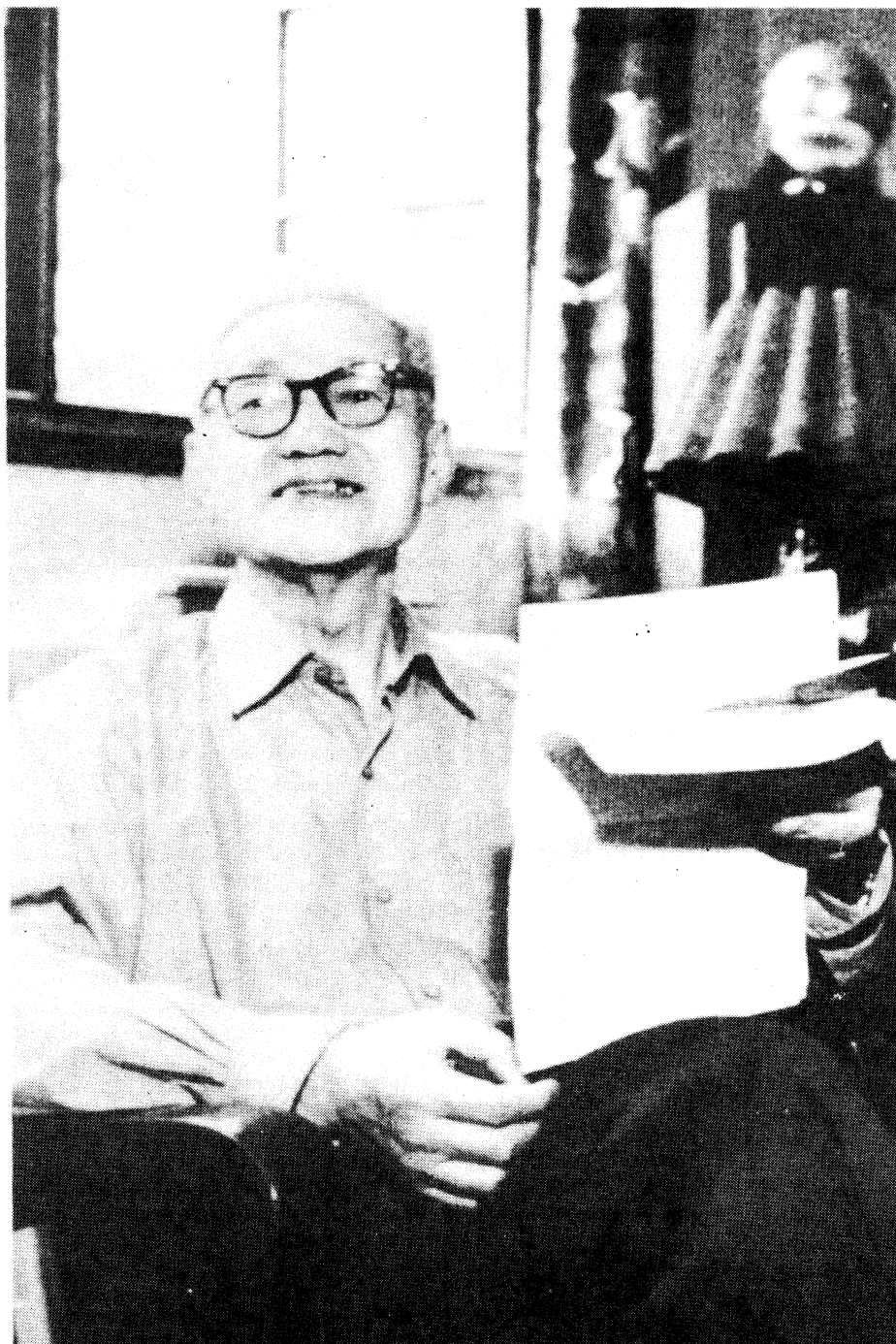
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Send an SASE for a copy of our current list of members.



Pa Chin. Photo from *Traffik* #28/1988 (Eduardstrasse 40, 4330 Mülheim 1, West Germany).

Pa Chin released

According to the October edition of the English anarchist paper *Freedom*, comrades in China report that Pa Chin (Li Fei Kan), the greatly respected Chinese novelist and translator who has been a dedicated anarchist for half a century and has been through many purges and "struggle sessions," was arrested at the age of 85 for having publicly expressed his sympathies for the Beijing students and the populace of the city, but has since been released.

Up to 1958 Pa Chin's writings were still both praised and criticized in Communist China. They were described as, at best, bridges that lead young people to Communism! He was forced to change all the heroines and heroes of his books from anarchists to Communists, and even pictures on the walls of his characters' rooms were changed from Bakunin to Mao Tse-Tung, etc. During the Chinese "Cultural Revolution" Pa Chin was bitterly attacked for the anarchist ideals he would not satisfactorily recant. He made the required obeisances, but did not retract his commitment. The Autumn 1983 issue of *Black Flag Quarterly* reported that in 1979 he wrote *A Record of Miscellaneous Thoughts*, which he called a "silent shout" to his readers. As B.F.Q. put it, his life became a "silent shout." Television audiences were treated during the Cultural Revolution to the spectacle of Pa Chin forced to kneel on broken glass as he was asked to confess his sins. Yet

he declared, "I have my ideas and you have yours, the best thing is to kill me."

The attacks on him were largely led by his literary rivals. Yao Wenyan denounced his novels as "propaganda for Kropotkin's philosophy...Anarchist literary works cause decay because they lead to more and more conflict." (Yao Wenyan was later, himself, sentenced to 20 years imprisonment for his support for the "Gang of Four"!)

Hu Wanchun denounced his works as "poison weeds." Red Guards from Peking forced their way into his home, beating his wife Ziao Shan and locking both in their bathroom. Pa Chin was subsequently sent to a forced labor camp rather than executed. Ziao Shan was dragged to a cattle pen and had a sign—"Bad thoughts element"—pinned to her. She later died of cancer with medical help denied her. Their son was also sentenced to hard labor.

Thus, it was something of a shock to for me to see Pa Chin's name mentioned in one of the front page stories of our local newspaper, the *Columbia Daily Tribune*, this last summer during the height of the Chinese movement. In the story, it was reported that the head of the Chinese Writers' Union, Pa Chin, had made a statement in support of the students and workers occupying the square. At the time he must have known that he would soon be arrested and imprisoned once again, but it appears that he remains unbeaten even now.

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For submissions, please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope with all articles, stories, photos, and graphic art if you wish to have them returned. Short news and comment articles which are used in the "The sad truth," "Radical news in review," and "International anarchist news" may be edited for brevity and style. Other submissions (features) will be edited only with the author's permission. Until we can afford to remunerate authors, photographers, and graphic artists for their published contributions we will give free issues or subscriptions, or other appropriate tokens of our appreciation. The deadline for submissions is the first day of the month previous to each issue's cover date. (E.g. deadline for the next issue will be April 1st.)

Editorial advisory group: A. Hacker, Shagbark Hickory, Toni Otter, Noa, Mikell Zhan, Avid Darkly and Lev Chernyi.

Thanks for typing assistance to D.D. and B. The views expressed in the articles, graphics, letters, etc. published in *Anarchy* do not necessarily reflect the views of the C.A.L., or those of the editorial staff.

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"The whirligig of time has its revenges."

--B.A.G. Fuller

Radical news in review

At the Berlin Wall: A personal report on Eastern Europe

I stood pounding on the Berlin Wall, trying desperately to make a dent in it. Around me, East Germans were selling little pieces for 3 to 10 Marks a shot. To my left a woman played old Bavarian folk tunes. To my right some good old Menschen joyously sang a few rounds of "Deutschland Über Alles." I had promised some friends I'd bring 'em back some pieces, but suddenly I didn't want to. My companion was puzzled; for years I had dreamt of doing this without fear of being shot. I'd even told him about my essay. A few years back in college when I was studying German, I had received honors and was expected to submit an essay about German political culture. I decided to write an anarchist tract disguised as a commentary on the division of Berlin, which of course ended with the people tearing down the Berlin Wall. I had intended to agitate, but instead won a national award. And then, after all the years of daydreaming, I left the Berlin Wall and went on with my business. What many have celebrated in the spirit of internationalism, German politics has played for the cause of nationalism.

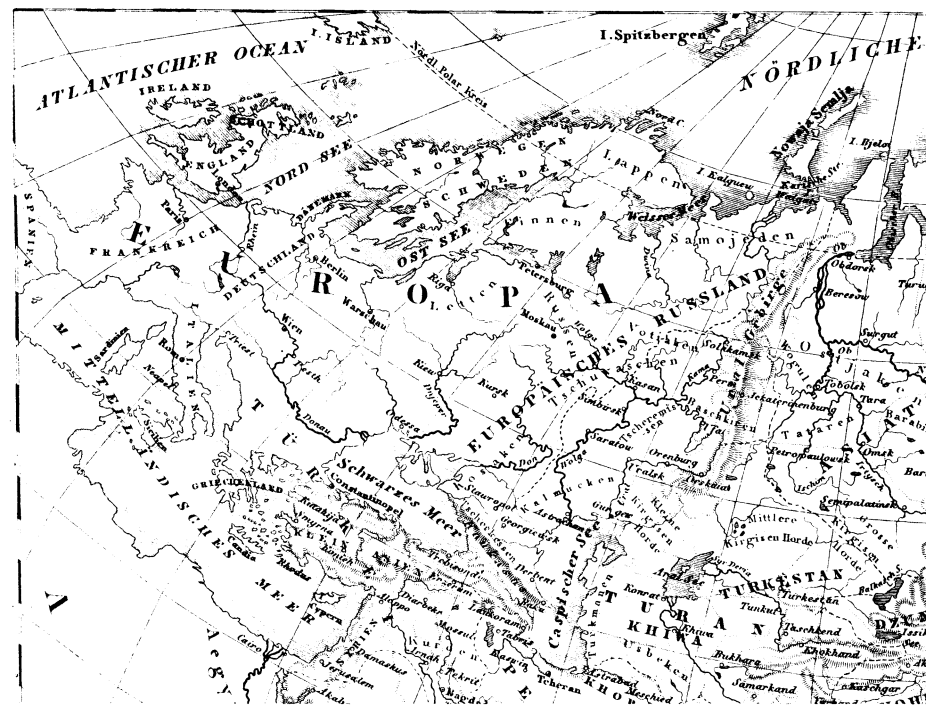
A few years back while visiting Upper Silesia, a friend took me to the celebration of a Polish national holiday. I was quite surprised to hear German bands up on stage. "They're all Germans," he explained to me, and were somewhat antagonistic towards the Poles. A few months ago West German Prime Minister Kohl visited the area and suggested having the education in German. When told that would be an economic impossibility, the B.D.R. (Bundesrepublik Deutschland, or West Germany) offered to pay for it. In the meanwhile in East Germany, persons of Polish descent were being beaten daily.

They worry about things like this in Poland. Without much capital and with a cheap labor reserve, if it doesn't have to withstand a military occupation, it will most certainly face an economic one. (May I remind you of the size of East Germany's army and of West Germany's pocketbook.) Ironically, many East Germans find themselves (although they always had a more lucrative economy than Poland's) in a similar economic situation to many Poles, but national ideas will keep them from allying.

While the "Western World" is bedazzled by ideological praise bestowed upon the citizens and governments of Eastern Europe, the actual events show a much different picture. Readers everywhere have been numbed by ideological buzzwords such as "democracy" and "freedom," so much so that they forego any definition. Few sources have touched upon the central issues of the situations; ironically it has been the Soviet press, traditionally notorious for reporting in accordance with ideological interests, that often has disclosed the most revealing information.

(The extent to which the press lies is totally staggering. I recall a reported demonstration in Latvia which never even occurred. In addition, any protest will become a protest for this or against that, regardless of the multiplicity of factions represented therein. More recently, Mimi Rosenberg spoke about this type of deceit when she spoke in Queens about Panama; while the American press had reported a coup attempt and blood running in the streets, she was out buying towels and the populace was calmly going about its business.)

Yea! We're all supposed to get excited because the Soviet Union has decid-



ed it might try a multi-party system. The reality of the matter is that Gorbachev is in trouble and needs to consolidate as much absolute political power as possible in order to carry out his proposed "reforms" with as little resistance as possible. (As it is now, the structure of the Congress makes it difficult to do so.) And just what is the crux of Gorbachev's reforms? To build up a richer middle class in order to create a buffer zone between the rich and the rank and file poor who currently pose a great threat to national political stability. In the meanwhile, tens of thousands of members of the party have turned in their membership cards (quite a sacrifice in a country where membership is often expected or even required to hold many high-paying or highly desired positions of employment). So much for democracy.

And where are the anarchists in the Soviet Union? First of all, the ideological communists, needing all the people they can get in their camp, have decided to rehabilitate certain anarchists; you can now read books by Kropotkin and articles on people ranging from Bakunin to Makhno. (Of course Lenin never wanted to censure the anarchists. According to one source, he wanted to publish Bakunin's collected works, but of course he died, and you all know what nasty people followed "our leader and teacher.") In addition, there are anarchists organizing; a large national congress will take place in April. As one might expect, there are the traditionalists who wish to evoke the deeds of Makhno and then there are the hundreds of great unwashed throughout the country who have been persecuted for being anarchists, but who have never really had the desire to organize into a political movement. By and large, however, the anarchism has been based in Russian collective traditions and tends to be highly moralistic and didactic. There is more of a cultural-identity basis of anarchism here than, say, in the U.S., so it looks like the anarchist groups will be a continually growing phenomenon.

Without going into the problems of the many definitions of the word "anarchist," (which many of the readers of *Anarchy* will already be aware of, and besides which, could fill a book of their own), let's just say that there has been a tremendous increase in people calling themselves "anarchists" in Eastern Europe. This seems to be most prominent in Po-

land, the Soviet Union and in Bulgaria, respectively. In Poland for example, groups like the Orange Alternative and the Inter-City Anarchist Federation are known by everybody for their outrageous forms of protest. (The protests of the I.C.A.F. have triggered debates such as those we've seen in North America over the Day of Action events. The Orange Alternative has been far less destructive and much more creative in choosing its forms of protest.) Whether or not the tactics and politics of these groups throughout Eastern Europe are sound—in other words, are compatibly tolerated by the reader of this article—is another issue. I am not going to try to encapsulate the politics of thousands of individuals with intelligent-sounding but hollow critiques of the various groups. Whether or not you decide to get excited about people calling themselves anarchists is completely up to you.

My concern in writing this little piece was to convey a real sense of some important events in Eastern Europe rather than to act as a cheering squad for the anarchist movement. The reality of the situation is that there are a series of movements far more important in that their appeal is far more widespread and those are the various fascistic movements.

First of all, in order to identify a fascist movement, one must understand the possible characteristics they might take. The word "fascist," of course, has come to carry nothing but more and more emotional connotations; the actual ideology of various fascists has been almost completely obscured. It might not be appropriate to try to define fascism here. (I recall spending 3 or 4 weeks of an anarchist study group just trying to define the word); at best I can highlight some of its prominent characteristics. Most notable is nationalism. Fascistic states have always tried to evoke their former glory (sometimes by producing images and or heroes of folk origin). But other issues are also characteristic, such as "ruralism." There is often a concern for nature and a desire to return to the life of the peasantry rather than that of the industrial proletariat. The traditional values of the agricultural family are the masthead. Fascistic movements are those which have successfully mobilized the lower middle classes into one large family based on nationalistic ideology. If by chance they find an ideological leader, they can mobilize politically. (For

more on fascism, consult *The Mass Psychology of Fascism* by Wilhelm Reich, or *The Three Faces of Fascism* by Ernst Nolte.)

One famous political group that contains a large faction of fascists is the German Greens (so much so that some anarchist friends and I disrupted their conference). Ironically, these same Greens also have contained liberals, although it has never been the bastion of "progressive" politics that many liberals have attributed it to be. Where they meet are their concerns for the ecology. It is not surprising that fascists might share an agenda with liberals, or even with anarchists. (One friend nearly died of convulsions to find fascism and anarchism next to each other on the shelves of our local library.) As we came to see in the above-mentioned study group, on certain issues the line between fascism and anarchism remains foggy to all but the most savvy ideologues; the result of which is that many people wouldn't know a fascist if one bit them. (Remember, few people actually call themselves fascists. On the same note, many people call themselves communists. We can rarely trust a person's choice of self-definition as definitions inherently contain political motives.) Similarly, it is not surprising to find anarchists sharing an agenda with various communists, as has been an historical misfortune and as is currently apparent in North America as a hundred shades of communists are passing themselves off as anarchists to fulfill their political agenda.

The place where fascism is most apparent is in the Soviet Union. We have seen the strong nationalistic tendencies of many of the "minority" republics, but Great Russian chauvinism is growing at an equally alarming rate. Many Soviet Russians share the same distrust of the governmental communists as the Germans did prior to the ascent of Germany's National Socialist Party. In addition, they have a strong traditional peasant base and a vulnerability towards strong authoritarian figures; the political history of Russia has been plagued by one authoritarian autocrat after another. Some have stated that their mass psychiatry (in order to overcome some national insecurities) depends on it.

Out in Siberia the intellectuals are fighting to preserve the persistent way of life against the destructive tendencies of Soviet industrial expansion. Underneath this all, however, lies the fires of Russian nationalism. It's permeated Russian culture to such an extent that a good portion of the intelligentsia has identified itself with the nationalists. The most popular group of writers, for example, is the "country school" of Russian writers, looked upon in the West as a group of harmless dissidents who wish to return to the quaint simplicity of rural life. In reality the intelligentsia, headed by the powerful writers' union, has started a campaign against the "liberalism" of the "other nationalities," which culminated with a fist fight between Jews and Russian nationalists at a recent Writers' Union conference. Traditionally, literature has played a different role in the Soviet Union than in other parts of the world; political tracts have always been submerged in literary works, books are more widely read and hold a greater political importance. The fascists of the intelligentsia are merely echoing the fascism they have learned out there amongst the Russian populace.

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Alternative media review

Alternative press review

Compiled by Lev Chernyi

SKEPTICAL INQUIRER Vol.14, #2/Winter '90 (Box 229, Buffalo, NY. 14215-0229) is the official, 112-page journal of The Committee for the Scientific Investigation of the Paranormal (CSICOP). CSICOP "attempts to encourage the critical investigation of paranormal and fringe-science claims from a responsible, scientific point of view." This issue features a very interesting description of "The new catastrophism" (and how it differs from the "old catastrophism" of Velikovsky et al) by David Morrison and Clark Chapman, a piece by James Lett entitled "A field guide to critical thinking" (in which he gives his own 6 rules of "evidential reasoning" for examining paranormal claims), an article entitled "Cold fusion: A case history in 'wishful science'?" by Milton Rothman (in which he argues that "scientists can fool themselves like everyone else"), an examination of "The airship hysteria of 1896-97" by Robert Bartholomew (comparing it to UFO sightings of today), and a fairly interesting summary of the results of a survey of "Newspaper editors and the creation-evolution controversy" by Michael Zimmerman (showing among other things that a large minority of editors are quite sympathetic to creationist beliefs). Also included are reviews—the most interesting is by Jeffrey Schaler on *Heavy Drinking: The Myth of Alcoholism as a Disease* by Herbert Fingarette, listings of recent books and articles of note, and a surprising 11 pages of letters (which, from their references, make recent issues sound even more interesting than this one). Recommended if you're interested in examining the paranormal as fact rather than as metaphor, since its strict allegiance to positivistic notion of "Science" severely limits its perspective to the evaluation of "factual" claims only. Subscriptions are \$25/year (4 issues).

UTNE READER #37/Jan.-Feb.'90 (Box 1974, Marion, OH. 43305) still claims to be "The best of the alternative press," though it only covers the more establishment-oriented side of the "alternative press" in practice. This issue includes a piece (from "alternative" periodical *The New Republic*) by Robert Reich on "Why the rich are getting richer and the poor poorer" (but don't look for news of the class struggle here!), a piece by Paul Shaffer called "A tree grows in Montana: Indians turn to old ways to meet new challenges," "Deciding against motherhood: One woman's story" by Roberta Joseph, vacuous pieces by Mark Gerzon on "Starting over at midlife: Why there's more satisfaction to life after 40" and Laurence Shames on "Has the thirty- and fortysomething generation passed its peak?" and Ashley Montagu on "Reaching the child within us." All in all this issue is a bust. Subscriptions are \$18/year (6 issues).

ALSO RECEIVED:

Artpaper Vol.9, #5/Jan.'90 (VAIS, 119 N. 4th St, #303, Minneapolis, MN. 55401) is a well-produced, 32-page tabloid covering the arts scene and more. This issue focusses on "Decentralization, Self-Reliance, and Garage Band Culture," with a piece by Carol Moore entitled "Decentralization: An introduction," an interesting story of "WTRA-FM: One-watt radio" by Michael Townsend, David Morris' highly questionable "The technologies of self-reliance," Gareth Branwyn's "From publication to privation," and Howard Hampton's uneven story "Apocrypha Now!" Subscriptions are \$20/year (10 issues).

American Book Review Vol.II, #6/Jan.-Feb.'90 (Publications Center, English Dept., Box 494, Univ. of Colorado, Boulder, CO. 80309) is a 32-page tabloid reviewing "books of literary interest published by small, large, university, regional, third world, women's and other presses." This issue includes reviews of books on Alaska and on Chicano/a writing. Subscriptions are \$18/year (6 issues).

Reclaiming Newsletter #37/Winter '89 (POB 14404, San Francisco, CA. 94114) is a 20-page pagan newsletter "working to unify spirit and politics." This issue features Starhawk on "Lessons from the spiral dance." Subscriptions are \$6-\$25/year (4 issues).

Factsheet Five #32, #33 & #34 (Gunderloy, 6 Arizona Ave., Rensselaer, NY. 12144-4502) remains 124 pages packed with hundreds of zine, software, book, poetry, pamphlet, comics, video, record and tape reviews. Issue #34 includes a detailed history of "Eighties mail art networking" by John Held Jr. Also featured are columns by Anni Ackner, Kerry Thornley, Joe Lane, Garry DeYoung and Bob Grumman. If you haven't seen a copy of this "zine of crosscurrents and cross-pollination" yet,

it's a must. A labor of love. Subscriptions are \$3 or 8 IRCs per issue up to five issues, \$16 or 40 IRCs/year (6 issues).

Blackworld Vol.XX, #6 (no address given) is a 28-page, SUNY black student publication. This issue includes "One man's quest for a quality education" by Nathaniel Hendricks, and "The job interview: A mountain or a molehill?" No subscription information is given.

Alternative Press Index Vol.21, #3/July-Sept.'89 (POB 33109, Baltimore, MD. 21218) is a 120-page, quarterly, library-style index to a wide range of alternative and radical periodicals, including anarchic publications like the **Fifth Estate**, **Kick It Over**, **Open Road**, **Our Generation**, and **Social Anarchism**, along with **Anarchy**. Subscriptions are \$30/year (4 issues) for individuals & movement groups.

The Other Israel #39/Nov.-Dec.'89 (I.C.I.P.P., POB 956, Tel-Aviv 61008, Israel; or A.I.C.I.P.P., 2700 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Apt. 502A, Washington, D.C. 20008-5330) is a 12-page newsletter of the Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace. The editor, Adam Keller, states that though I.C.I.P.P. is not anarchist (it supports the creation of a Palestinian national state), he is personally sympathetic with "the anarchist point of view" after spending time in both civil and military prisons. This issue includes many interesting news and opinion pieces like "Beit Sahur solidarity and dialogue" by Maxine Nunn, "Deportation of women" by Rayna Moss and Adam Keller, and "Too much aid" (arguing for a reduction of U.S. aid to Israel—and claiming that "nearly half" of the \$1.2 billion in "Economic Support Funds go to settlement activities in the Occupied Territories") by Major General (ret.) Matti Peled. Subscriptions are \$30/year (6 issues).

Prison News Service/The Marionette #22[.]/Nov.-Dec.'89 (POB 5052, Stn. A, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5W 1W4) is a combined 16-page newsletter. This issue includes an article on plans to build a new prison in Colorado titled "Rocky Mountain low," a piece titled "Montréal massacre sparks national debate," and a description of U.S.P. Marion's segregation unit titled "Depths of the

dungeon." Send a contribution for a sample copy.

The American Rationalist Vol.34, #4/Nov.-Dec.'89 & #5/Jan.-Feb.'90 (POB 994, St. Louis, MO. 63188) is a little 16-page magazine which bills itself as "The alternative to religious superstition." Issue #4 includes interesting pieces on "Diderot's **Encyclopedia**," origin, development, influence" by Walter Hoops, and "Attempted criticisms of Ludwig Feuerbach's atheism: Why they fail" by Kenneth Long. Issue #5 features "Religion, the same tired old fiction" by Alexander Prairie. Subscriptions are \$6/year (6 issues).

Gnosis #14/Winter '89-90 (POB 14217, S.F., CA. 94114-0217) is a slick 92-page "Journal of the Western Inner Traditions," edited by Jay Kinney. This issue focusses on "The Dark Side" of these traditions, including Robin Waterfield's "Baron Julius Evola and the Hermetic tradition," "The evolution of Julius Evola's thought" by Elémire Zolla, "Who's afraid of the bogeyman?" by Jay Kinney, Joan McIntyre's "Descent to the underworld," an interview with two Hawaiian Kahunas titled "Kahuna Ana'ana: The one who walks in darkness," "The dark mind of gnosis" by Erik Davis, Peter Wilson's "Iblis, the black light; Satanism in Islam," and "Fundamental differences; Conservative Christianity looks at the new age." Subscriptions are \$15/year (4 issues).

The Nuclear Resister #67-68/Jan.'90 (POB 43383, Tucson, AZ. 85733) is an 16-page tabloid providing comprehensive coverage of arrests for anti-nuclear civil resistance in the U.S. and Canada. This issue includes a year-end summary of "Nuclear resistance 1989." Subscriptions are \$15/year (8 issues).

Fnrld! #2/Jan.'90 (Paul Leonard, POB 993, St. Charles, IL. 60174) is a 44-page "revolving miasma of unrelieved perversion and disease." This issue includes lots of drawings, a short story titled "A moment in time" by Paul Leonard, a reprint of "Autopsy-Turvy" by Ed Lawrence, some quick "Outtakes from the Devil's Dictionary" by Bob Black, and lots of periodical and book reviews. Sample copies are \$1.50.

Feminist press review

Compiled by Mikell Zhan

HERESIES Vol.6, #4 [undated] (POB 1306, Canal Street Station, NY, NY. 10013) contains 96 pages of impressive graphics and ideas that examine art and politics from feminist-socialist, Marxist, lesbian and anarchist perspectives. Two of my favorite articles from this 12 year anniversary issue are "Cunts/quilts/consciousness" by Miriam Schapiro and Faith Wilding which examines the radical expressions of women's sexuality in early cunt & body art of the '70s, and "Negotiating the feminist divide" by Whitney Chadwick, conveys frustration of the "sometimes absurdly polarized groupings of Feminist Art: feminism/postfeminism, feminism/theoretical feminism, essentialism/poststructuralist theory, feminist analysis/gender studies." Other articles include "From liberation to lack" by Mira Schor, Lucy Lippard's "Both sides now," "Sharings" by Freda Guttman, "Historias: Women tinsmiths of New Mexico" by Harmony Hammond, Michelle Wallace on the "Variations on negation and the heresy of Black feminist creativity," Virginia Cholesterol's "Ladies Against Women," "The evolution of Chicana erotica" by Ana Castillo, Carmen Abrego, Veronica Cunningham, & Beth Rocha, "The tangled skein: On re-reading heresies" by Moira Roth, and "A to-do or Not to-do" by Lynn Phillips. Authors of poetry include Aisha Eshe, Patricia Jones, Kimiko Hahn and Adelaida López. Subscriptions are \$23/2 years (4 issues).

OFF OUR BACKS Vol.XIX, #9/Oct.'89 & Vol.XX, #2/Feb.'90 (2423 18th Street NW, Washington, DC. 20009) is a lesbian-feminist newsjournal. Issue #9 offers an interesting array of national and international topics. Of particular interest is an interview between OOB and Rozena Maart, founder of the first Black feminist group in South Africa. Content listings include conference accounts of "Women in

Prison," "National Lesbian Conf. Planning," and the "National Women's Studies Assn.," which discusses post-feminism, war & peace, Jane (the abortion service), and Hollywood on working women and lesbian relationships. Issue #2 is a 32-page, 20th anniversary issue. What an enjoyable walk through memory lane of the '70s and '80s as OOB reminds us how far our society has come in the changing attitudes towards women. A look on the "Future of the feminist movement" is explored by bell hooks. "Feminist theory: Notes from the third decade" by Carol Douglas and "Child care—who cares?" by Lorraine Sorrel are two of several discussions on the still needed changes in and by the women's movement. Do check out their regular columns "Dykes to watch out for," "Chicken lady" as well as the interesting commentaries, music & book reviews, and letter section. Subscriptions are \$17/year (11 issues).

Feminist Teacher Vol.4, #1/Spring '89 (Ballantine 442, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN. 47405) is a 38 page, nicely bound, academic publication that is "committed to combatting sexism and other forms of oppression in the classroom...preschool to graduate school in traditional & nontraditional settings." Subscriptions are \$12/year (3 issues).

The Women's Alternative Times (TWAT) Vol.1, #1 & #2 [undated] (POB 49245, Austin, Tx. 78765) is a free 20-page bimonthly journal "of information and opinion." Issue #1's theme is concerned with pro-choice topics. Issue #2's central focus is on homosexuality & heterosexuality. Send an SASE for a sample copy.

If you publish a feminist periodical which you'd like to see reviewed here, please send it to: Mikell Zhan, c/o C.A.L., POB 1446, Columbia, MO. 65205-1446.

Classic Films Inquirer (Video S.I.G., 1030 C East Duane Ave., Sunnyvale, CA. 94086) is a 32-page tabloid catalog of more than 500 videotapes of old movies, TV shows and independent productions. Free.

ApaEros #23 & #24 (John & Kathe Burt, 960 SW Jefferson Ave., Corvallis, OR. 97333) is a fun-to-read, 32-page "unedited reader-written forum about sex, erotica and relationships of all kinds: het, lesbian, gay, bi." Issue #23 includes "Little nipples" by Frank Hart, episode 17 of "Sensuous ground" by Pat Underhill, "Molesting madness" by Mycall Sunanda, "Promethius" by Klondike, & "Tales of Horoshee Drueg" by Lance Juggerton. Issue #24 includes "Assholes and elbows" by Tex Evert, "Ayn Rand's beginners guide to porn mags," "Senior citizen sex," "The purple tangerine" by Ed Lenney, the final chapter of "Lonely is an eyesore," and episode 18 of "Sensuous ground." Both issues contain lots of reader comments & poetry. This a.p.a. is always worth checking out. Subscriptions are \$2/issue.

Funny Times #15/Dec.'89 (POB 18530, Cleveland Hts., OH. 44121) is a 24-page humor tabloid featuring some of the big names of liberal comics like Lynda Barry, Nicole Hollander, Matt Groening, Stan Mack, Mark Stamaty, and Dave Barry, along with columns by Art Buchwald, Hunter Thompson, and others. Subscriptions are \$15/year (12 issues).

Zenger Vol.4, #1/Mid-January '90 (POB 3323, Madison, WI.53704) is a 20-page tabloid which bills itself as "The Nation's Underground Paper," and seems to be devoted largely to marijuana legalization. This issue includes some interesting news on "CIA caught manufacturing evidence of weapons flight crash" (regarding the supposed Nicaraguan Cessna crash in El Salvador) by Willy Becker & "The ground war in El Salvador" by Esty Dinur, along with "How to stop a bogus arrest" by Ben Masel, "How to hang drug juries," and "Pot-smoker's brainwave commercial was faked." Subscriptions are \$10/year (12 issues).

FANZINES:

Dee Pee Em #5 (c/o Mike Simpson, 65 Farrow Cres., Ajax, Ontario L1S 4W3, Canada) is a 40-page fanzine featuring interviews with Big Drill Car and ALL, "A call against arms" and "Last stand of the Lubicon." Sample copies are \$1.50 postpaid.

Maximum RocknRoll #81/Feb.'90 (POB 288, Berkeley, CA. 94701) is still the premier punk zine with 128-pages of coverage. This issue includes letters on the Krishna-exposé issue, lots of columns—including a good rant by Lawrence Livermore, an article on the real reasons behind the Panama invasion, scene reports (from France, Sweden, U.K., Peru, and the U.S.), interviews including one with the Hard-Ons (featured on the cover), an interesting article by Paul Ross on the alternative press in the U.K. entitled "Against the grain," along with the usual large selection of record, tape and zine reviews. Subscriptions are \$15/6 issues.

OTHER SMALL PUBLICATIONS:

Youth Connection Vol.3, #1/Nov.'88 & #2/July'89 (Terry Inman, 3910 Nara Drive, Florissant, MO. 63033) is the 8-page "newsletter of the Libertarian Student Network." Issue #1 includes an "Interview with a Polish activist" and "Libertarian Party news. Issue #2 includes "Libertarians make waves at Miami University," and reprints of newspaper columns & letters to the editor to several papers. Subscriptions are \$5/year (2 issues?) for students, \$10/year others.

The Joke #2? (c/o Will, Box 256, Hampden-Sydney, VA. 23943) is a 3-page joke-zine. Send an SASE for a sample.

MSRRT Newsletter Vol.2, #10/Dec.'89 & Vol.3, #1/Feb.'90 (Chris Dodge/Jan DeSirey, 4645 Columbus Ave. S., Mpls, MN. 55407) is the newsletter of the Minnesota Social Responsibilities Round Table. Send a 45¢ SASE for a sample.

New Indicator Vol.15, #4/Nov.8, #5/Nov.-22 & #6/Dec.6,'89 (Student Coop Center, UC San Diego, B-023, La Jolla, CA. 92093) is a 4-8-page tabloid, student newspaper. Issue #4 includes "Towards a kinder, gentler coathanger" and the first part of an article on "Nicaragua's Atlantic coast." Issue #5 includes a continuation of the articles on "Nicaragua's Atlantic coast." And #6 features coverage of the "Landmark settlement in National Lawyers Guild v. F.B.I.," as well as info. on the Domino's Pizza boycott over its owner's right-wing activities. Send an SASE for a sample copy.

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Alternative media review

Stewart Home's assault on coherent theory & practice

The Assault on Culture

Review by Lev Chernyi

The Assault on Culture; Utopian Currents from Lettrisme to Class War, by Stewart Home (Aporia Press & Unpopular Books, London, 1988) £3.50 paper, 115pp.

From beginning to end, it's hard to tell just exactly what Stewart Home, the author of *The Assault on Culture*, has intended to do with this work. If he has anything very particular in mind, he unfortunately fails to let the reader in on very much of it. Essentially the book is a collection of short, sometimes overlapping, chronologies covering several of the more well-known tendencies of the post-Dada "anti-cultural" tradition—from the COBRA group, the Lettristes and the Situationist International, to Fluxus, mail art, punk and the Class War group.

If there seems to be something of a lack of continuity to a few of these groups and movements, Stewart Home certainly doesn't let it faze him. He moves from a quick discussion of one to a review of the next; usually without bothering—in more than brief, and at times less than lucid, comments—to assess their relative contributions, their overall significance, or their actual places in the "assault on culture."

The strength of the book lies in the chronologies and the brief descriptions of the people, groups, and movements themselves. Despite the lack of any coherent analysis or framework for evaluation and comparison, the book does at least succeed on this level of narrative. Though even here, some of the descriptions are marred by the author's often inadequately explained (and seemingly unjustified) personal prejudices—for one example, Home has an obnoxious habit of ritually referring to the Situationist International [S.I.] (as it existed after March 1962 when a faction broke away to form a "2nd International") as the "Specto-Situationists," despite the fact that neither the S.I., nor the 2nd International, nor anyone else that I know of has ever used such terminology. Nor does this word-use add anything to Home's rather low-level analysis, to the extent that it exists. In fact, it merely appears to be an instance of sour grapes—in which Home is unhappy because the S.I. managed to gain more notoriety for itself than the "2nd International" ever did, such that most people in Britain and North America don't realize that a second S.I. even existed.

This aside, however, in his introduction Home moves from a speedy, capsule overview of the origins and development of the modern categories of art and culture, and an equally fast summary of the "utopian current" which opposes them, to his jumping off point after the rise and fall of Futurism and Berlin Dada, both of which he situates within this utopian tradition. Though he underrates the contributions of the Surrealists, in one of his more lucid moments of analysis, Home writes:

"Paris Dada was later renamed Surrealism. Under this title it became the most degenerate expression of the Utopian tradition during the pre-war years. Whereas Berlin Dada rejected both art and work..., the Surrealists embraced painting, occultism, Freudianism and numerous other bourgeois mystifications. Indeed, if Surrealism had been a movement in its own right, rather than a degeneration of Dada, any claim that it belongs within the Utopian tradition would be open to question."

From these pre-war movements the



essential features of twentieth-century Utopianism become apparent. The partisans of this tradition aim not just at the integration of art and life, but of all human activities. They have a critique of social separation and a concept of totality. From the 1920s onwards Utopians were conscious of belonging to a tradition that stretched back at least as far as Dada and Futurism, and were aware that in previous centuries similar 'beliefs' had been manifested in certain 'religious' heresies" (p.5).

From there Home moves directly to a description of the COBRA group which broke away from Surrealism in the late 1940s, and whose significance lies primarily in that break, their affirmation of a "revolutionary" perspective, and their subsequent break with the Communist Party. He next discusses the Lettriste Movement "launched by Isidore Isou." The Lettriste Movement also rejected the hegemony of Andre Breton's Surrealism, though it apparently contributed little else, except to the subsequent birth of the Lettriste International (L.I.). The L.I. broke away from it in 1952, and merged with the International Movement for an Imaginist Bauhaus to form in turn the Situationist International in 1958. In a sort of parenthesis, the book next moves to a short description of the more light-hearted College du Pataphysics ("pataphysics" = "the science of imaginary solutions"), before quickly discussing the Nuclear Art Movement and the International Movement for an Imaginist Bauhaus, on the road to the foundation of the Situationist International.

The Situationist International was heavily influenced by Henri Lefebvre's theory of "everyday life" and by the chief theoretician of the Socialisme ou Barbarie group, Cornelius Castoriadis, as well as by some of the more coherent ideas and texts of its precursors mentioned above (along with Ivan Chitchevlov's "Formula for a New City," outlining a theory of "unitary urbanism," which was published in the first issue of *Internationale Situationiste*). The S.I. managed to put together a semi-coherent theory, a well-run self-publicity campaign, and a somewhat far-sighted grasp of the possibilities for (and realities of) new forms of social and cultural opposition. However, in what has to be one of his weakest treatments—given the importance and complexity of the S.I.'s position in the whole tradition being described—Home essentially dismisses most of the S.I.'s accomplishments and hardly begins to give any sort of adequate assessment of its place in this tradition.

Despite his concern with putting down the S.I. rather than genuinely coming to terms with it, Home can give us only sketchy and rather spurious arguments for its dismissal. For example, using a "materialist" definition of art culled from Roger L.

Taylor's *Art, An Enemy of the People*, he curiously comes to the bizarre conclusion that the Situationist International's demand that art be both "realized and suppressed" is "mystical" because "it implies not only that art has an essence, but that as a category it is autonomous of social structures!"

Home then criticizes Debord's theory of the spectacle because of his (Debord's) inability "to arrive at a uniform notion of the concept. Debord only appraises various movements without demonstrating any real relation between them" (p.44). And in a glaring categorical error, Home makes the ridiculous argument that:

"The Specto-Situationist conception of both capitalist and communist society is as mystical as its conception of art. Debord announces that the 'spectacle is not a collection of images but a social relation among people mediated by images,' as though human relations hadn't always been conducted via sense impressions (which in terms of sight have always been images)" (p.44).

Could it be more obvious that here it is Stewart Home who is entirely missing the point? Especially when, beyond this, Home can justify the relative incoherence of the 2nd (Situationist) International with the lame argument that:

"Rather than attempting to develop rigorous theories, and failing miserably, the 2nd International pursued a more open policy. In the Situationist Times de Jong would draw together photographs, diagrams and odd pieces of writing on a specific theme (for example labyrinths in issue 4, Paris 1963) and leave her readers to draw their own conclusions" (p.44).

This evaluation leads in turn to a (final) chapter on the S.I. dealing with "The Decline and Fall of the Specto-Situationist Critique" which Home devotes to a quick description and criticism of the S.I. pamphlet *On the Poverty of Student Life* (written by Mustapha Khayati), followed by an even quicker dismissal of the Situationist's role in the events of May 1968 in Paris. He somewhat correctly maintains that "The specto-situationists claimed they played a major role in the May events, a view not shared by disinterested observers."² But he then makes the strange argument that:

"During May, the specto S.I., and its supporters, formed themselves into the Committee for the Maintenance of the Occupations—a group numbering approximately 40 persons. When it's considered that millions of workers and students participated in the May events, such a minuscule grouping cannot be deemed of much significance" (p.48).

If this is so, one might then be forgiven for thinking that, given the relatively small numbers of people who participated in most of the groups or movements

which he describes, that the whole subject would hardly merit having a book written about it at all!

I have gone into Home's arguments against the S.I. at some length here not because I think the S.I. could do no wrong, but because it should be apparent that despite its many mistakes, the S.I. still accomplished much. It achieved much that is still in need of digestion and assimilation by those radical tendencies which continue to exist. And it serves little purpose to merely dismiss the whole S.I. phenomenon without assessing it more carefully.

Following his treatment of the S.I., Home turns to the rise and fall of the Fluxus grouping (from early '60s to the mid-'70s). He describes Gustav Metzger and Auto-Destructive Art—"a one-person art movement" (p.60), including his failed three-year "art strike" from 1977-1980. And he mentions the Dutch Provos, Kommune 1, the Motherfuckers (who, he says, formed around the Dada-inspired magazine *Black Mask*, which attacked gallery openings, museum lectures and rock concerts), Yippies and the White Panthers(!).

In his final chapters, Home covers mail art, punk, neoism and the Class War group. Mail art is a lightweight and often humorous mode of semi-artistic expression, which (rather than being sold as a commodity) is distributed freely to friends and acquaintances. This "movement" owes much of its self-conscious existence to Ray Johnson, who invented the New York Correspondence School of Art. "Beyond mail art," Home mentions Monty Cantsin and the "multiple name" concept (employed by Home's own [London] *Smile* magazine, one of several magazines all of which are ostensibly published by "Karen Eliot"). While Home's treatment of punk is largely oriented towards debunking the notion that "specto-situationist" theory or practice was very important for its origins! For Home, predictably, "the influence of futurism, dada, the motherfuckers, fluxus and mail art is more obvious and important" (p. 81) than that of "specto-situationist theory."

Home's description of Neoism and its apartment festivals hardly seems worth mentioning. While his treatment of the Class War group (some of whom originally put out the satirical magazine *Authority*) raises more interesting points. Class War, he says, was made up of disaffected youth—attracting the fringe of the punk movement who participated in the "Stop the City" demos before beginning their own "Bash the Rich" forays. However, Home claims their satirical rage was eventually dropped in favor of a "populist approach" in order to broaden the movement, and that they then lapsed into all the "traditional errors of the anarchist milieu."

The book's relatively unenlightening conclusion is that "samizdat" (though obviously riddled with contradictions) is a diverse and continuing tradition of self-organizing cultural agitation. And that "cultural, as well as political, agitation is required if radical ideas are to have any impact on the repulsive society in which we live" (p.105).

As a whole, Home's patchwork book is a barely decent beginning at chronicling this history of cultural self-organization mingling with radicalism, though it's certainly not the last word on the *interpreta-*

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Alternative media review



Collage by Johann Humyn Being (San Francisco, CA.).

Boycott cop culture!

By Hakim Bey

If one fictional figure can be said to have dominated the popcult of the '80s, it was the Cop. Fuckin' police everywhere you turned, worse than real life. What an incredible bore.

Powerful cops--protecting the meek & humble--at the expense of a half-dozen or so articles of the Bill of Rights--"Dirty Harry." Nice human cops, coping with human perversity, coming out sweet'n' sour, you know, gruff & knowing but still soft inside--"Hill Street Blues"--most evil TV show ever. Wiseass black cops scoring witty racist remarks against hick white cops, who nevertheless come to love each other--Eddie Murphy, Class Traitor. For that masochist thrill we got wicked bent cops who threaten to topple our Kozy Konsensus Reality from within like Giger-designed tapeworms, but naturally get blown away just in the nick of time by the Last Honest Cop, Robocop, ideal amalgam of prosthesis and sentimentality.

We've been obsessed with cops since the beginning--but the rozzers of yore played bumbling fools, Keystone Kops, Car 54 Where Are You, booby-boobies set up for Fatty Arbuckle or Buster Keaton to squash & deflate. But in the ideal drama of the '80s, the "little man" who once scattered bluebottles by the hundred with that anarchist's bomb, innocently used to light a cigarette--the Tramp, the victim with the sudden power of the pure heart--no longer has a place at the center of narrative. Once "we" were that hobo, that quasi-surrealist chaote hero who wins thru wu-wei over the ludicrous minions of a despised & irrelevant Order. But now "we" are reduced to the status of victims without power, or else criminals. "We" no longer occupy that central role; no longer the heros of our own stories, we've been marginalized and replaced by the Other, the Cop.

Thus the Cop Show has only three characters--victim, criminal and policeperson--but the first two fail to be fully human--only the pig is real. Oddly enough, human society in the '80s (as seen in the other media) sometimes appeared to consist of the same three cliché/archetypes. First the victims, the whining minorities bitching about "rights"--and who pray tell did not belong to a "minority" in the '80s? Shit, even cops complained about their "rights" being abused. The criminals:

largely non-white (despite the obligatory & hallucinatory "integration" of the media), largely poor (or else obscenely rich, hence even more alien), largely perverse (i.e., the forbidden mirrors of "our" desires). I've heard that one out of four households in America is robbed every year, & that every year nearly half a million of us are arrested just for smoking pot. In the face of such statistics (even assuming they're "damned lies") one wonders who is not either victim or criminal in our police-state-of-consciousness. The fuzz must mediate for all of us, however fuzzy the interface--they're our only warrior-priests, however profane. "America's Most Wanted"--the most successful TV gameshow of the '80s--opened up for all of us the role of Amateur Cop, hitherto merely a media fantasy of mid-class resentment and revenge. Naturally the truelife Cop hates no one so much as the vigilante--look what happens to poor &/or non-white neighborhood self-protection groups like the Muslims who tried to eliminate crack dealing in Brooklyn; the cops busted the Muslims, the pushers went free. Real vigilantes threaten the monopoly of enforcement, *lese majeste*, more abominable than incest or murder. But media(ted) vigilantes function perfectly within the CopState; in fact, it would be more accurate to think of them as *unpaid* (not even a set of matched luggage!) *informers*: telemetric snitches, electro-stoolies, ratfinks-for-a-day.

What is it that "America most wants?" Does this phrase refer to criminals--or to crimes, to objects of desire in their real presence, unrepresented, unmediated, literally stolen & appropriated? America most wants...to fuck off work, ditch the spouse, do drugs (because only drugs make you feel as good as the people in TV ads appear to be), have sex with nubile jailbait, sodomy, burglary, hell yes. What unmediated pleasures are not illegal? Even outdoor barbecues violate smoke ordinances nowadays. The simplest enjoyments turn us against some law; finally pleasure becomes too stress-inducing, and only TV remains--and the pleasure of revenge, vicarious betrayal, the sick thrill of the tattletale. America can't have what it most wants, so it has "America's Most Wanted" instead. A nation of schoolyard toadies sucking up to an elite of schoolyard bullies.

Of course the program still suffers from a few strange reality-glitches: for example, the dramatized segments are enacted cinema-verite-style by actors; some viewers are so stupid they believe they're seeing actual footage of real crimes. Hence the actors are being continually harassed & even arrested, along with (or instead of) the real criminals whose mugshots are flashed after each little documentoid. How quaint, eh? No one really experiences anything--everyone reduced to the status of ghosts--media-images break off & float away from any contact with actual everyday life--Phone-sex--CyberSex. Final transcendence of the body: cybergnosis.

The media cops, like televangelical forerunners, prepare us for the advent, final coming or Rapture of the police state: the "Wars" on sex and drugs; total control totally leached of all content; a map with no coordinates in any known space; far beyond mere Spectacle; sheer ecstasy ("standing-outside-the-body"); obscene simulacrum; meaningless violent spasms elevated to the last principle of governance. Image of a country consumed by images of self-hatred, war between the schizoid halves of a split personality, Super-Ego vs. The Id Kid, for the heavy-weight championship of an abandoned landscape, burnt, polluted, empty, desolate, unreal.

Just as the murder-mystery is always an exercise in sadism, so the cop-fiction always involves the contemplation of control. The image of the inspector or detective measures the image of "our" lack of autonomous substance, our transparency before the gaze of authority. Our perversity, our helplessness. Whether we imagine them as "good" or "evil", our obsessive invocation of the eidolons of the Cops reveals the extent to which we have accepted the Manichaeian worldview they symbolize. Millions of tiny cops swarm everywhere, like the *qlippoth*, larval hungry ghosts--they fill the screen, as in Keaton's famous 2-reeler, overwhelming the foreground, an Antarctic where nothing moves but hordes of sinister blue penguins.

We propose an esoteric hermeneutical exegesis of the Surrealist slogan "*Mort aux vaches!*" We take it to refer not to the deaths of individual cops ("cows" in the argot of the period)--mere leftist revenge fantasy--petty reverse sadism--but rather to the death of the image of the flics, the inner Control & its myriad reflections in the no-place-place of the media--the "gray room" as Burroughs calls it. Self-censorship, fear of one's own desires, "con-

science" as the interiorized voice of consensus-authority. To assassinate these "security forces" would indeed release floods of libidinal energy, but not the violent running-amok predicted by the theory of Law'n'Order. Nietzschean "self-overcoming" provides the principle of organization for the free spirit (as also for anarchist society, at least in theory). In the police-state personality, libidinal energy is dammed & diverted towards self-repression; any threat to Control results in spasms of violence. In the free-spirit personality, energy flows unimpeded & therefore turbulently but gently--its chaos finds its strange attractor, allowing new spontaneous orders to emerge.

In this sense, then, we call for a boycott of the image of the Cop, and a moratorium on its production in art. In this sense...

MORT AUX VACHES!

Alternative press review

Continued from page 5

Campus Review Vol.5, #9/Dec. '89 (336 S. Clinton, Suite 16, Iowa City, IA. 52240) is a scurrilous, right-wing student tabloid. Issue #9 contains more of the same old shit dished up in previous issues--homophobia, anti-feminism, attacks on civil liberties, defense of Christianity, etc., along with excerpts from a disinformational speech to the (misnamed) Young Americans for Freedom by Antonio Ybarra-Rojas on "The prospects for free elections in Nicaragua." Subscription information not given.

Outrage #20/Oct., #21/Nov. & #22/Dec. '89 (108 Schuyler Place, Ithaca, NY. 14850) is a 12-page, free student monthly. Issue #20 includes a short account of last year's San Francisco anarchist gathering. Also included in these issues are anti-Greek (fraternity) articles, pieces on abortion, graffiti, U.S. in Latin America, etc. Send an SASE for a sample.

Pagans for Peace #43/Jan. 9990 A.D.A. (POB 86134, North Vancouver, B.C. V7L 4J5, Canada) is an 8-page newsletter for socially-activist pagans. This issue features "Thoughts on individual and community in Wiccan religion" by Maphis. Subscriptions are \$15/year (13 issues).

New Indicator Vol.15, #7/Jan.3, '90 (Student Co-op Center, U.C. San Diego, B-203, La Jolla, CA. 92093) is an 8-page student tabloid. This issue features extensive coverage of the University administration's continuing war on the semi-autonomous student co-ops on campus. Send an SASE for a sample copy.

PSRU: It's Only the Beginning Jan.-Feb. '90 (Box 1653, Hampshire College, Amherst, MA. 01002) is a 4-page newsletter for People for a Socially Responsible University. Send an SASE for a sample.

The Southern Libertarian Messenger Vol. XVIII, #8/Dec. '89 (Rt.10 Box 52A, Florence, SC. 29501) is a 12-page, photocopied right-wing, Christian "libertarian" publication made up largely of news clippings and promotional material for the misnamed "Libertarian Party," and anti-tax information. Subscriptions are \$6/year (12 issues).

Think For Yourself Schmuck! #1-#6 (POB 22551, Memphis, TN. 38122-0551) bills itself as "underground magazine." Issue #1 is a 2-page sheet, while #6 has grown to a 42-page, photocopied zine. These issues include pieces on Columbus, witchcraft, U.S. foreign policy and genocide, excerpts from Jerry Rubin's *Do It!*, and reprints of comics. Send a 65¢ SASE for a sample copy.

Storm Warning! #14/Feb. '90 (VVAW-AI, 4710 University Way NE., Suite 1612, Seattle, WA. 98105) is a 24-page anti-imperialist veterans newsletter. This issue contains news of (and incitements to engage in) flag-burnings, along with information on the U.S. government terrorism in the Panamanian invasion, and a review of the movie "Born on the Fourth of July." Subscriptions are \$10/year(?) (10 issues).

Something Short #3/Feb. '90 (Daniel Ust, 321 Maple St. #49, Perth Amboy, NJ. 08861) is an 8-page photocopied zine of short-short stories. Send an SASE for a sample copy.

Communist Egg Beaters [unnumbered/undated] (c/o Sarris Bookmarketing, 125 E. 23rd St. #300, New York, NY. 10010) is a 40-page mini-zine, subtitled "Punkture verse and snot" by Bob Z. Includes such classics as "Flaming underpants," "Overflowing john," and "Ighbor's armpit." Send an SASE for a copy.

Alternative media review

Anarchist press review

Compiled by Lev Chernyi

FIFTH ESTATE #333/Winter '90 (POB 02548, Detroit, MI. 48202) has produced another fine issue after a delay of several months. This 32-page tabloid features a cogent restatement by George Bradford of the FE perspective on industrial capitalism and the ecological crisis entitled "Stopping the industrial hydra: Revolution against the megamachine." Also included are several accounts of the Summer 1989 gathering under the collective title of "Anarchy in San Francisco"....A wild undomesticated week" by Debbie and Rob, Bob Brubaker's important criticism entitled "No radical, utopian vision," and Sun-frog's balanced assessment of the gathering's Day of Action entitled "The DOA: Contrived revolt in Berkeley." The issue is rounded out with an in-depth, anti-authoritarian look at "China: The mysterious journey of the democracy movement" by Gabriel Dumont, and a long review by David Porter of Alice Wexler's new book *Emma Goldman in Exile: From the Russian Revolution to the Spanish Civil War* under the title of "New book distorts history & a life." Whatever other publications you read, this one is a must. Highest recommendation. Subscriptions are still a cheap \$5/year (4 issues).

THE MATCH!



THE MATCH! #84/Winter '89-'90 (POB 3488, Tucson, AZ. 85722) is an 88-page journal, lovingly published by Fred Woodworth on his own press. This issue includes his usual preface, "From the editor," which contains a peculiar criticism of *Anarchy* for advertising in the *Utne Reader's* "Off the newsstand," along with a sensible criticism of the U.S. government's ISBN book numbering system. Also in this issue is an account by Chaz Bufe of last summer's "Without Borders" gathering in S.F., no less than 17 book and periodical reviews, a polemic against armed struggle entitled "Violence: A psychology and tactic of unstable people" by Mark Leier, "Studies in alienation" by Jeff Gallagher (who used to publish the nicely-done journal, *Black Star*), Fred Woodworth's eye-opening exposé of Madalyn Murray O'Hair's often bizarre antics in an essay entitled "The atheist cult," I.R. Ybarra's "Around & about," part one of a new novel serialization entitled "The Two Sisters" by Iris Lane, along with other articles and "the world's largest letters column." Subscriptions are \$10/4 issues. And if you haven't yet seen a copy, don't forget to order Kent Winslow's book (which was serialized in past issues of *The Match!*), *Dream World*, for \$8.00 postpaid (highly recommended).

OUR GENERATION Vol.21, #1/Fall '89 (Suite 444, 3981 boulevard St-Laurent, Montréal, Québec H2W 1Y5, Canada) is a 128-page academic "independent semi-annual journal dealing with contemporary anarchism and libertarian socialism." This better-than-average issue features an interesting series of pieces on "Beijing Spring 1989: The Peoples' Democracy Movement" (Documents from participants at Tiananmen Square), Brian Morris's "The Sans-Culottes and the Enragés: Libertarian movements within the French Revolution," Bruce Allen's "Poland's new generation of oppositionists," Frank Harrison's "The crisis of Soviet statism," and L. Susan Brown's reasoned "Beyond feminism: Anarchism and human freedom." Recommended. Subscriptions are \$25/2 years (4 issues).

LIVE WILD OR DIE #2/undated (POB 13765, Portland, OR. 97213) is the 28-page newspaper of (mostly) dissident (or ex-) Earth Firsters, providing an alternative, uncensored forum for radical environmental ideas largely unwelcome in the unofficially "official" journal *Earth First!* As the introduction says, "Yes, live wild or die! Not an organization, not an ideology, just another mindless chant with a ring of truth." It includes a potpourri of short articles, reprints of posters and graphics, letters, poetry, monkeywrenching suggestions, etc. This issue, titled "After the deluge: Hastening the downfall, hearkening the dawn," features A. Mary Praxter's "The wild ones fight back: Some thoughts on strategy," "Take action or die" by C.J. Hinke, Nagasaki Johnson's "Around the lightbulb," "Against the wild" by Still Mad, "Live stupid & go to jail!!!" Lee's "Alternative living," "Dumpster diving," and a reprint of the pamphlet "Regaining control: Taking health care into our own hands." This paper has a lot of energy crammed into its pages. Definitely recommended. Send a couple bucks contribution for a copy.

ALSO RECEIVED:

Freedom; Anarchist fortnightly Vol.51, #0/Oct.'89 (84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX, England) is an 8-page "dummy" issue, giving subscribers a preview of the new tabloid format beginning in January. This issue includes "News from the Crooked Square Mile," "The Labour Party's policy review: No challenge, no change" by Andrew Hedgecock, and "Land notes; Burning topics." Subscriptions are £15.00/year (24 issues).

The Shadow #8/Dec.'89-Jan.'90 (POB 20298, New York, NY. 10009) is an energetic 24-page tabloid. Issue #8 includes "Parks pigs raid homeless in the park-again!," Political activist framed by Koch cronies," "ABC Community Center retaken by community" by Chris Flash, "The truth behind the Revolutionary Communist Party" by Tad Kopley, and lots more news of local homeless, Tompkins Square Park and squatting struggles. Definitely worth checking out if you're interested in what's happening with the Lower East Side in New York. Subscriptions are \$10/year (? issues).

Instead of @ Magazine Vol.9, #47/Winter '90 (POB 433, Willimantic, CT. 06226) is a lively little 36-page journal, this time covering the topic of "coping with the system without contemplating suicide," with contributions from (the publisher) Michael Ziesing, Mike Gunderloy, Terry Epton, Pablo Eskimo, Avi Naftel, Mchawi Obadele, and Laure A. If you haven't seen a copy yet, check one out. Subscriptions are \$6.50/4 issues.

The Thought Vol.9, #12/Dec.'89 & Vol.10, #1/Jan.'90 (POB 3092, Orange, CA. 92665) is a 22-page, photocopied, monthly publication of the Philosophers Guild. Issue #12 includes a report by Bob Black on an attempted "letter-bombing," a very long & confused essay justifying belief in gods & reincarnation titled "Echoes" by Kenn Wood, "What kind of man reads *Playboy*?" by David Vautrin, and the first part of a vampire story by Ronald Tobin. Issue #1 includes the conclusion of the Tobin's vampire piece, thoughts on the "founding fathers" from several people, and Bob Black on "The refusal of art." Subscriptions are \$10/year (12 issues).

Black Flag #194/Oct.'89 (BM Hurricane, London WC1N 3XX, England) is an 8-page, monthly anarcho-syndicalist newspaper—now subtitled "For Anarchist Resistance." This issue includes a short piece on "Cuba's forgotten anarchists," a longer exposé of the frameup (for I.R.A. pub bombings in the '70s) of the "Guildford 4—Behind the cover up," a story on "The siege of Carrara" (an attempt to steal the large local anarchist center that has been around for the last 45 years), and part two of "The hidden history of Trotskyism in Spain." Subscriptions are £10/year (12 issues).

Profane Existence #2/Feb.-Mar.'90 (POB 8722, Mpls, MN. 55408) is a new 32-page anarchist fanzine with lots of letters, columns & news, as well as interviews with State of Mind & Sofa Head, a scene report from New York and an article on (the anarchist) "Revolt against communism" by Felix. Subscriptions

are \$9/year (6 issues).

Anarchist Labor Bulletin #16/Jan.'90 (POB 210095, San Francisco, CA. 94121-0095) is the 8-page publication of the Anarchist Labor Network "formed at the 1989 Anarchist Conference in San Francisco." This issue includes news of the "I.W.A. Conference on Eastern Europe" (I.W.A. = International Workers Association, an anarcho-syndicalist federation), and other union and organizing news. Subscriptions are \$10/12 issues.

Bulletin of Anarchist Research #18/Sept.'89 (T.V. Cahill, Dept. of Politics, Univ. of Lancaster, Lancaster LA1 4YL, England) is the 24-page newsletter of the Anarchist Research Group. This issue includes long reviews of Hakim Bey's *Chaos* and Marilyn Ferguson's insipid *The Aquarian Conspiracy: Personal and Social Transformation in the 1980s* by John Moore, "What price liberty? A sketch of suburban zero-sum politics" (on the demise of the squatters' movement in Europe) by Julian Dahl, a disgruntled response by the new book-review editor—John Moore—to a review of his pamphlet *Anarchy and Ecstasy* in a previous issue (plus a reply from the original reviewer, Tom Cahill), and a review of Zygmunt Bauman's *Freedom*. Subscriptions are £6/6 issues (checks must be in Sterling).

OTHER SMALL PERIODICALS RECEIVED:

Ecomedia Bulletin #65/Nov.28, #66/Dec.12 '89, #67/Jan.2 & #68/Jan.16,'90 (POB 915, Stn. F, Toronto, Ontario M4Y 2N9, Canada) is a 4-page fortnightly anarchist news bulletin. Lots of Toronto and Canadian news in these issues. Subscriptions are \$15/year (26 issues).

A.Y.F. Bulletin #2/Jan.-Feb.'90 (POB 8585, Mpls., MN. 55408) is a 2-page street-sheet of the Minneapolis-based Anarchist Youth Federation. Send an SASE for a sample copy.

The Weedeater #4 (c/o Ancorag Press, U.S.F. #3146, Tampa, FL. 33620-3146) is an 8-page, xeroxed student zine. This issue is a parody of the *USF* (University of Southern Florida?) *Oracle*. Subscriptions are \$4/4 issues.

Counter Information #25/Nov-Jan.'89-90 (Pigeonhole C1, c/o 11 Forth St., Edinburgh EH1, Scotland) is a 4-page newsheet. Issue #25 includes more coverage of the mass poll-tax nonpayment in Scotland and Britain in an article entitled "We are winning." Send a contribution for a sample copy.

Tribal Notes Sept. & Nov.'89 (Cliff Bennett, RR2, Hawkestone, Ontario L0L 1T0, Canada) is an 8 to 16-page "personal & occasional letter to about a hundred friends" by a former member of the Resistance group of N.Y. back in the '40s. Send an SASE for a sample.

Rise Above #1[?] (POB 116, Troy, IL. 62294) is a 16-page, photocopied zine featuring short pieces and collages. Send \$1.00 or trade.

Sorte Kors Winter '89-90 (c/o Peter Bach, Strandvejen 93, DK-4200 Slagelse, Denmark) is a two-page, English-language newsletter of the Danish Anarchist Black Cross. Send a contribution for a sample copy.

OTHER NON-ENGLISH-LANGUAGE PERIODICALS RECEIVED:

Interrogations pour la communauté humaine Dec.'89 (c/o I.S., B.P. 243, 75564 Paris Cedex 12, France) is an semi-annual 18-page, French-language journal with a perspective close to *Fifth Estate* and *Anarchy* [see our series of reprints of *Interrogations* texts in our columns sections]. This issue includes a fairly long critique of feminism, entitled "Petite analyse de la différence...ou le féminisme et pourquoi s'en débarrasser," which argues that feminism reduces the problems of the entire world a struggle between men and women for power (as far as my limited comprehension of the French language would indicate). Also included in this issue are comments on Michael Williams' essay "The «Bufoneoneries» continue" (which appeared in *Demolition Derby* #1) criticizing the adoption of an ideological primitivism. Cover price is 10F; send extra for postage.

Solidaridad Obrera #204/Sept.-Oct.'89 (Pza. Medinaceli, 6, pral., 1ª; 08002-Barcelona, Spain) is the 16-page, Spanish-language regional newspaper of the anarcho-syndicalist C.N.T. in Catalonia. Issue #204 features information on the campaign to regain the C.N.T. "patrimony" (buildings, equipment and money stolen by Franco and the fascists). Cover

price: 65ptas. Send at least double that to include postage for a sample copy.

Le Libertaire; Revue de Synthèse Anarchiste #101/Dec.'89, #102/Janvier & #103/Fev.'90 (25 rue Dumé d'Aplemont, 76600 Le Havre, France) is a 4-page, monthly, French-language "review of synthetic anarchism" published by the Union des anarchistes. International subscriptions are 80F/year (10 issues).

Guágarra Libertaria Vol.10, #4/Otoño '89 (ISHSS, POB 1516, Riverside Station, Miami, FL. 33135) is a nicely-produced, 32-page, Spanish-language journal produced by Cuban anarchist exiles. Send a donation for a sample copy.

Liberecana Ligilo #67 (P.Persson, Svartviksvägen 14, S-123 52 Farsta, Sweden) is the 20-page bulletin of the libertarian/anarchist faction of the Esperanto-language workers' organization S.A.T., headquartered in Paris. Most of the stories are translations from *Arbetaren*, organ of the Swedish libertarian union S.A.C. This issue includes information on the anarchist movements in the G.D.R. and U.S.S.R., plus a historical summary of the libertarian faction of S.A.T. Send a contribution for a sample copy.

CNT #110/Enero-Feb.'90 (CNT-Periódico, Apartado, n.º 282, 48080 Bilbao, Spain) is the 20-page Spanish-language newspaper of the anarcho-syndicalist Confederación Nacional del Trabajo (National Confederation of Workers union) in Spain. Issue #110 includes "Crónica de una invasión anunciada" (on the U.S. invasion of Panama) by Floreal Castilla, and "El principio de la escasez en el capitalismo" by Abraham Guillén. Subscriptions are 1900ptas./year (12 issues).

The Assault on Culture

Continued from page 6

tion of this tradition. If you're as ignorant as I was about some of the details of its development, it will definitely be worthwhile to check out this book, despite its numerous problems. Just don't expect to find any coherent evaluation of the phenomenon as a whole. If it wasn't for Home's seeming antipathy towards sustained attempts at theoretical and practical coherence, this might have had a chance at being a landmark work. As it is, it must stand as an ephemeral, interim study that will have to do until someone else does the job right.

Notes:

1. For Home, the point of this denunciation of Surrealism (that it embraced such "bourgeois mystifications") is not that painting, occultism, Freudianism, etc. possess absolutely nothing of any value, but that in their relatively uncritical appropriation by Surrealism, their ideological function was by no means thoroughly rejected.
2. Though who might constitute these theoretically "disinterested observers" is unclear to me, Stewart Home makes a claim to himself being "objective" at one point in this book—a claim hard to take very seriously!
3. I picked up a copy of the then-current issue of (London) *Smile* at the time this review was originally written (Summer, 1988). Unfortunately, I can't recommend it to anyone.

Political prisoners in Europe

The Dark Side of Europe: More than 100,000 Political Prisoners, published by Comité Català de Solidaritat Internacionalista (Apartado de Correos 2192, 08080 Barcelona, Spain, 1989) 104pp. paper, 700 pesetas postpaid.

The Comité Català de Solidaritat Internacionalista has published a new book titled *The Dark Side of Europe: More than 100,000 Political Prisoners (Part I)*. The statements and essays are sloppily printed in several languages, and appear to be intended as an uncritical defense of all the various armed struggle gangs in Europe, most of whose politics are distastefully Marxist-Leninist. English-language contributions include: "The prisoners from the R.A.F.," "The E.T.A. prisoners and Algeria," "Ingrid Strobl's statement in her trial," an interview with G.R.A.P.O. (Spanish leftist guerrilla gang) prisoners, and an interview with I.N.L.A. (Irish National Liberation Army) prisoners. The introductory essay, which denounces the present situation in Europe from a vaguely—but militantly—leftist perspective, doesn't attempt to critically situate the activities of these kinds of pseudo-revolutionary groupings in much of any context. And I'm afraid that if it did, the book would only be even more distasteful reading. Not recommended.—Reviewed by Lev Chernyi

International anarchist news

The anarchist scene

compiled by Lev Chernyi

A 4-PAGE PAMPHLET BY DARIO Alagrea has been published by UltraLeft, Ink. (POB 12812, San Diego, CA. 92112-3812) on "The Challenge for Progressives." Send an SASE for a copy.

THE BOSTON ANARCHIST DRINKING Brigade (B.A.D. Brigade, POB 1323, Cambridge, MA. 02238) has published two well-produced pamphlets with a promise of more to come. **Misinformation and Manipulation: An Anarchist Critique of the Politics of AIDS** by Joe Peacott (reprinted elsewhere in this issue of *Anarchy*) is available for \$2 in North America or \$3 elsewhere, while **Against Separatism** (edited by Joe Peacott), a collection of essays critical of (primarily) feminist and lesbian/gay separatism, is available for \$3 in North America or \$4 to other continents.

THE BLACK BANNER BRIGADE (POB 7962, Austin, TX. 78713-7962) is organizing an anarchist contingent to greet this summer's I.M.F. Conference in Houston from July 9-11th, and they "want out-of-town folks to come and join" them!

WORKERS' DEMOCRACY (POB 24115, St. Louis, MO. 63130), a Marxist/DeLeonist journal, is sponsoring a Conference on Workers' Self-Organization on May 4-6th at the Sabathani Community Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Registration is \$20. Speakers will include "Peter Rachleff introducing rank and file strikers," Staughton Lynd and David Roediger. The conference is co-sponsored by the New Union Party and the Socialist Party of Texas.

ACTS OF RESISTANCE (537 JONES ST. #1584, San Francisco, CA. 94102) is a new video production group formed out of conversations started during the Without Borders anarchist gathering of Summer 1989. Acts of Resistance intends to link "video producers together to meet specific community needs" and to "empower individuals with hands on training and precise explanation of television production."

AN APRIL FOOLS MIDREGION RENDEZVOUS is being organized by Big River Earth First! and Southern Illinois Earth First! (Revolutionary Anarchist Faction) for March 30th through April 1st in the Shawnee National Forest of southern Illinois. The rendezvous will feature seminars and workshops, discussions on regional and local strategies, general merriment, and an action to wrap up the weekend. Be prepared to pack your stuff in as the camping will be primitive. Contact: John (618) 939-3697 or Orin (314) 257-2437, or write: Big River EFL, POB 189, Pacific, MO. 63069).

THE ANARCHIST BLACK CROSS IN Denmark (c/o Peter Bach, Strandvejen 93, DK-4200 Slagelse, Denmark) has announced a continuing campaign to send a printing press to the Polish anarchist federation, Miedzynastowka Anarchistyczna. "The anarchist press in Poland is badly produced and issued irregularly. This is not proportional to the actual strength of the anarchist movement in Poland but is due to the fact that the access to printing facilities is limited. Send a contribution to: Marcin Rey, c/o Christian Veron, 6 rue de Hauts pavés, 44000 Nantes, France.

THE NATIONAL FLAG DESECRATION Network has designated June 15th National Flag Desecration Day. On this day they encourage anyone to burn flags, defecate on them, fly them upside down, wear them as an article of clothing, or any other action considered disrespectful to the flag in order to protest U.S. government hypocrisy.

THE ANARCHIST COOKBOOK IS NOW back in print again. Anyone who reads the classifieds in liberal/left publications will notice the ads from Barricade Books, Inc. (Box 1401, Secaucus, NJ. 07096) selling the "cookbook" for \$22.00 postpaid. All genuine anarchists should be aware that this book is **not recommended!** The "recipes" are suspect (unreliable). Anyone with a genuine interest in explosives and firearms would do much better to consult U.S. armed forces manuals and more "mainstream" publications on these subjects. Barricade Books, Inc. (owned by Lyle Stuart--the person) recently bought back the rights to this book from its original publisher, Lyle Stuart, Inc. (which he had sold last year for \$12 million). He bought back the book's

East/West anarchist conference

"Eastern Europe; A freedom workshop"

Everyone is aware of the rapid changes taking place in Eastern Europe, however less know about the resurgence of anarchism. In almost all of the countries of the East, in Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, the Soviet Union, and Yugoslavia, there are anarchist individuals, groups and movements. In Trieste (Italy), border town between East and West, anarchists from both sides of Europe will join together on the days of April 14th to 16th, 1990 to give life to the first meeting of its kind organized in the West, an obvious occasion for celebration.

The aim of this meeting is to encourage the exchange of information and to develop personal contacts and concrete cooperation. The meeting is being organized by the group Germinal from Trieste with the support of the Italian Anarchist Federation and other western anarchists.

The following are the proposed themes of discussion:

- 1) The ideological crisis of Marxism. The decline of state socialism. The development of "free" market economies. The spread of liberalism. New nationalist and religious movements. Institutional changes such as "democratic" elections, social compromises, and turnover of politicians.
- 2) Development of opposition movements in the East. Ecological tendencies, youth, alternative groups, feminism, syndicalism, human rights. The potential for real autonomy and freedom. The reality of libertarian movements. Prospects for concrete work and projects.
- 3) The opening of new and common perspectives by anarchists to the consequences of the unification of Germany and of the new European Deal of 1992.
- 4) Material cooperation and direct solidarity between anarchists in the East and West.

We will decide as a group on the first day to either continue working in an assembly or to create smaller commissions or groups with a specific focus. On the 17th of April there will be a public manifestation open to both the city and the media.

This conference, which is not to be a spectacular meeting, is addressed to the entire anarchist and libertarian community, but especially to the groups and individuals of the East to those in the West who have a particular interest in these activities.

To meet the enormous costs, especially to allow for the people from the East to attend, we are asking anarchists from the West to concretely support this initiative by sending financial contributions to the Giro Account C/C/P 16525347 registered as "Germinal," Via Mazzini 11, 34121 Trieste, Italy.

Whoever would like to participate in this meeting is invited to get in contact with us beforehand by calling as soon as possible at (0)40/368096 on Tuesdays or Fridays between 18:00 and 20:00 hours, or writing to:

Gruppo anarchico GERMINAL
Via Mazzini 11
Trieste, Italy

publishing rights for \$75,000 and he "expects to make this back and more the first year."

N.Y.C. NEITHER EAST NOR WEST would like to send a representative to the Trieste conference (see announcement on this page). They state that "North American anarchists have played a prominent part in networking with radical oppositions in the East, and it's crucial we get at least one of us there... N.Y.C. N.E.N.W. has no money to send anyone. We are asking N. American anarchists to take this on as a collective project...If the thou-

sands of us out there only sent in a dollar each we'd have the bucks for a bunch of airfares and funds left over to help the conference with its costs." Tax deductible contributions can be made to the Aspect Foundation (c/o Bob McGlynn, 528 5th St., Brooklyn, NY. 11215). Anyone who'd like to go please contact Bob McGlynn at: (718) 499-7720.

If you have announcements concerning anarchist gatherings, new publications, or other anarchist activities or projects which our readers might find of use, you can send them to: Attn. Anarchist Scene, c/o C.A.L., POB 1446, Columbia, MO. 65205-1446.

Polish anarchists invade parliament

Between 100 and 200 mainly young Polish anarchists invaded the Polish parliament during a session devoted to explaining government economic policies which was being broadcast live, shouting slogans and causing an uproar which resulted in a fifteen minute suspension of the program. Among the slogans were: "Down with the nomenclatura," "We've had enough of price hikes," "Down with capitalism," and "Soup for Kuron" (a reference to soup kitchens for the poor set up by Labor Minister Jacek Kuron).

The anarchists then headed to the building of the central committee of the P.O.U.P. (Communist Party), where they finished up at one of the offices of the now governing Solidarity union, where they destroyed several posters. No arrests took place and the cops did not intervene.

Denmark's Parliament of the Street

On the first weekend of October '89 two hundred young revolutionaries met at a socialist youth conference to discuss a wide range of topics and joint activities in the future. All tendencies were present: the 57 varieties of Leninism, anarchists, automen, squatters, anti-apartheid activists, anti-racists, etc. The conference marked a turning point in many ways. The Danish left has suffered many political defeats in the '80s, the pro-Moscow communist party and the so-called left-socialist (New Left) party have both lost their representation in Parliament and have now made an electoral pact together with the Trotskyist "Socialist Workers Party." But contrary to the fear of many the youth conference didn't applaud or support this new parliamentary dodge. The conference instead

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Misinformation & manipulation

Annotated bibliography

Continued from page 17

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- Hessol, N.A., et al. "The Natural History of HIV Infection in a Cohort of Homosexuals and Bisexual Men: A 7-Year Prospective Study." *Proceedings of the 3rd International Conference on AIDS*. (Discusses study where only 36% of the HIV positive men studied developed AIDS during 88 months of follow-up.)
- Jerking Off. Summer, 1987. (Radical gay/lesbian booklet from Toronto. Gives standard "safer" sex advice, including advising showers.)
- Kingsley, Lawrence A., et al. "Risk Factors for Seroconversion to Human Immunodeficiency Virus Among Male Homosexuals." *The Lancet*, Feb. 14, 1987. (Report of study showing no risk of HIV infection from giving blow jobs.)
- Knox, Richard A. "NYC Figures on Prevalence of AIDS Virus Criticized." *The Boston Globe*, Jul. 22, 1988.
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- "Let's Stick to the Real Issues." Unsigned editorial. *Bay Windows*, Feb. 2, 1989. ("Good gays" come out in support of closing homosexual bathhouse in Boston.)
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- Massachusetts Department of Public Health/Boston Department of Health and Hospitals. *AIDS Newsletter*, Mar. 1989. (Cites number of AIDS deaths as of Feb. 28, 1989, as well as 4% figure for heterosexual cases.)
- McKnight, Jennie. "Safer Sex Ads Advocate Sucking." *Gay Community News*, Oct. 30-Nov. 5, 1988. (Reports on ad campaign in Britain emphasizing low risk of HIV transmission via cocksucking.)
- O'Neill, Cliff. "FDA Removes Roadblocks for AIDS Blindness Drug, DHPG." *Bay Windows*, Mar. 23, 1989.
- Queer Anarchist Network Prison Support/Wimmin [sic] Prisoners' Survival Network. *Untitled pamphlet about AIDS*. (Contains lots of advice on "safer sex," discusses low risk of oral sex, but most guide-lines pretty standard. Does discuss minimal risk of Woman-to-woman HIV transmission.)
- Reeves, Tom. Article in *The Guide to Gay New England*, Sept. 87. (Cites data from several studies on AIDS and oral sex showing no transmission of HIV via cocksucking.)
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- Rist, Daniel Yates. "The Deadly Costs of an Obsession: AIDS as Apocalypse." *The Nation*, Feb. 13, 1989. (Critiques the obsession with "the epidemic" among lesbian/gay activists.)
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- "Safer Sex and Drug Use Guidelines" and "Doing it Together. Another Look at Safer Sex and Drug Use." *Gay Community News*, April 24-May 7, 1988. (Conservative "safer" sex advice from "radical" lesbians and gay men.)
- "Safe Sex Guidelines for Lesbians at Risk." *Gay Community News*, Oct. 12-18, 1986. (Very conservative, inaccurate "safer" sex advice for homosexual women.)
- "Sex and Solutions in the Fenway." Unsigned editorial in *Bay Windows*, June 30, 1988. (Gay editor calls for the destruction of a cruising area where men have sex with other men.)
- Sherman, Laurie. "700 Lesbians Say Pussy." *Gay Community News*, Nov. 1988. (Critical of lesbian "sexpert" JoAnn Loulan, who encourages "safer" sex for homosexual women, for not emphasizing AIDS enough in her talk.)
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- "Study: Heart Disease Kills 1M in U.S. per Year." *Boston Herald*, Jan. 16, 1989. (Gives statistics on deaths from heart disease, cancer, and AIDS.)
- Sweeney, Timothy J. Letter to *The Nation*, May 1, 1989. (Discusses sources of GMHC funding.)
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International anarchist news

At the Berlin Wall; A personal report on Eastern Europe

Continued from page 4

Little things that we might ignore are indicative of the extent of Russian nationalism. The second most talked about subject in the Soviet Union (next to perestroika) is the subject of street names. It seemed silly to other North Americans I'd encountered, but I understood the ideological impetus accompanying it. After the Revolution, millions of streets and towns had their names changed. One was the city where I stayed, former Tver (the province where Mikhael Bakunin was born). When in Moscow, one day I looked up and thought to myself, "I must be on the wrong street," even though I knew exactly where I was going. Turned out they changed quite a few names back to the original due to popular pressure. This movement has even taken on ridiculous heights as some people want to change all the street names regardless of what they were before and what they are now. At one meeting I went to the citizens were outraged because the city had changed the name of some metro stop to "Red Gates" but the square outside it (formerly the Red Gates) remained named after Lermontov. I asked them what possible objection they could have to Lermontov (a writer who died way before they even had a revolution), but was not only told that was not the point, but also asked to "shut up or leave" as I was not a national Russian and therefore had no business being at their meeting. I wound up going to a lot of meetings.

I went to a meeting in Kalinin (Tver); after shouting down the head of the Kom-somol (Young Communist League), I was approached by a man who said he wanted to come visit me and bring some politi-

Denmark's Parliament of the street

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decided to establish a national network of autonomous groups called "Gadens Parlament" (Parliament of the Street). This is a Danish expression like "mob rule," used when people are unsatisfied with the authorities and start to act for themselves, in short: self-management and direct action.

Of course, the young party-members haven't suddenly turned into anarchists. At the following national anarchist gathering in November opinions differed as to how profound this new anti-parliamentary attitude was. The national network of Gadens Parlament was named after a local activist group which also hosted the conference. This local group has existed for approximately three years. A member of the Anarchist Black Cross who participated points out that party conflicts have been ruled out by mutual consent and this has attracted a lot of non-aligned youth who have made the group the active center of the left in the city. Before the municipal election in late November '89 the local groups of Gadens Parlament took action against social cutbacks and racism. Some proclaimed town halls to be free community centers, made attempts at proletarian shopping (mass shoplifting) in supermarkets—distributing the goods to the unemployed and elderly; some sent forged gift tokens to consumers from supermarkets, took to the streets to save Santa Claus from the commercialized Christmas rush, etc. Only the future will show if the Parliament of the Street turns out to be just another recruitment base for the parties or becomes a genuine anti-parliamentary, anti-capitalist movement.

Source: *Sorte Kors* (c/o Peter Bach, Strandvejen 93, DK-4200 Slagelse, Denmark).

cal leaflets. I found out he was a member of a group called "Return"—definitely a nationalist group, but not as overtly fascist as some others. As I was greatly interested in nationalistic movements, I spent quite a lot of time talking to these people, finding out about their politics and the politics of the other groups. Return's big public platform was to rename the city Tver and to stop the destruction of the Volga River (upon which Kalinin/Tver is situated). They carefully use these two issues, behind which the whole town can rally their support, to attract people to their meetings and ideological sessions. Their real agenda, however, was to restore the Russian ideals of God, family and land. They were still socialists, though. Most of the fascist groups in the Soviet Union were to some degree socialists; let's just call them national socialists.

The two groups to worry most about remain Pamyat (or "Memorial"), and Shield—a group of fascists who have thought to arm themselves. In addition there are tons of little Tsarist groups and a group that calls itself the Whites, after the White movement. One day in Leningrad, I got in a real fight with the Whites and a riot broke out between them and the typical Soviet citizenry. The good Soviet cops let me go and arrested the Whites on ideological grounds. A couple of weeks later, Pamyat and the Estonian nationalists were having a real riot. I decided to watch them kill each other. Instead, I had a run-in with the same cops who, fortunately for me, were corrupt enough to forgive me a second time. A lot will depend upon whose camp the police and the military will fall into, that of the nationalist socialists or that of the multi-party state-capitalists.

Nationalist groups are appearing everywhere throughout Eastern Europe, seducing people with their ideologies. The political situation looks like an anaemic version of the (nationalist) revolutions of 1848. In the words of one politician, "They (Eastern Europeans) are adopting our Western ideals, our ideals of democracy and freedom."

Yikes! You have to begin to worry.

--Laure A.

An imagining passion by Noa

Lanternal magic

Continued from page 25

favorite of the lot was the story of a dreamland which realizes their only reality is in a man's dream state and that their survival is contingent on keeping him asleep.

The second fifties film I referred to earlier is a very gaudy musical western called *Red Garters* which uses the conventions of several genres to satirize and (maybe) transcend them. Good and evil ain't what they used to be in quirky and outrageous sendings of western traditions.

I should mention a third film of this same period (which I recently watched again on video) *Johnny Guitar*. As a western, *Johnny Guitar* has several interesting features. Its central character is a strong woman who defies conventional morality and perseveres as a saloon owner in the face of those who would like to close her down. Johnny Guitar is a guy who'd like to put his gunfighting days behind him, but old habits die hard. The film twists and



Letter from Greece

November 17th again & again Anarchists battle police in Athens

Dear comrades. Of course you remember our previous reports about the 17th of November anniversary (*Anarchy* #17 & #18). For one more time, Athens became a battlefield during the 16th and 17th of November.

On the early evening of November 16th there was a students' demonstration in front of the U.S. air base. Police brutally attacked the students when they tried to enter the base.

Three hours later, an anarchist demonstration was held in downtown Athens. About 200 comrades attacked the offices of the Conservative Party. Half an hour later, the anarchist comrades gathered in front of the Polytechnic and they attacked the cops who were guarding a Socialist Party gathering. After that a lot of anti-riot cops attacked us using tear gas. We answered using stones. The fight lasted for about an hour.

Next day (Nov. 17th) was the day of the big demonstration. Even before the demonstration was started, hundreds of

comrades attacked a bus of anti-riot police, a building of the State Department and the biggest shop in Athens. The bus and the shop were totally burned. More than 15 banks and the French and Italian embassies were attacked with molotovs. "Fire barricades" were made during the whole way of the demonstration.

Late at night, hundreds of comrades started gathering at Exarchia Square. Another anti-riot police bus was attacked and it was totally burned. Some cops who were in it were also burned (not "totally"). One of the biggest computer shops of Athens was smashed.

On the 24th of January there will be a trial of 27 comrades from Salonica. They were arrested two years ago after the occupation of Salonica's university. They need all the support they can get.

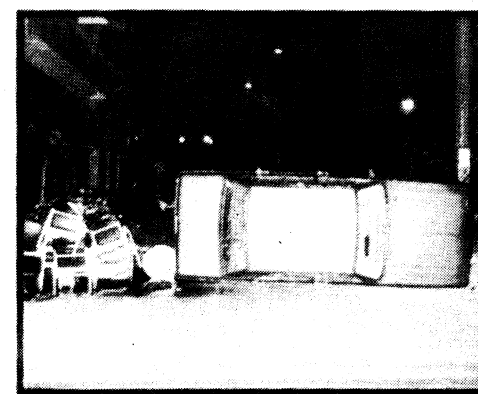
That's all for now.

WE WANT THE FUTURE...NOW!!!

Disturbance
POB 31961
10035 Athens
Greece



Lines of cops guard a theater where the Greek Socialist Party gathered.



turns and keeps you breathless. It might not be until later, sitting by the fireplace, that you realize that the story was a metaphor for the self-righteous witch hunts of the McCarthy era and its devastating impact on the lives of people branded as "un-American".

The same kind of small-minded conformity becomes an insidious force in a film now available on video, *House-keeping*. It deals with a free-spirited woman who finds herself placed in the role of guardian of two young girls. The

aunt is wonderfully charismatic and eccentric as she refuses to parent her charges, but nonetheless making sure they have a home. The differential responses of the two girls to the bohemian woman leads to the concern of the "good Christians" of the town. The clash of values is taut, carefully revealed and disturbing.

I hope some people who are interested in movies and other media will write in with their own observations and comments.

Explore the labyrinth of desire!

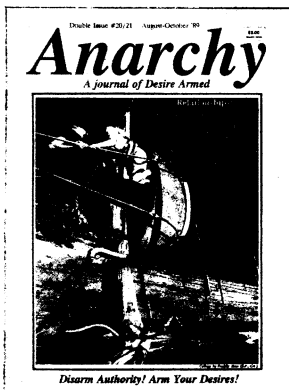
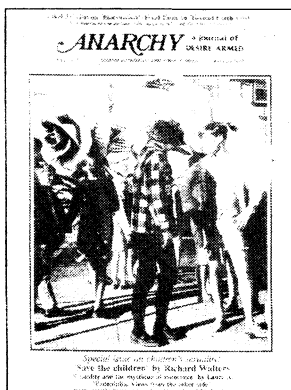
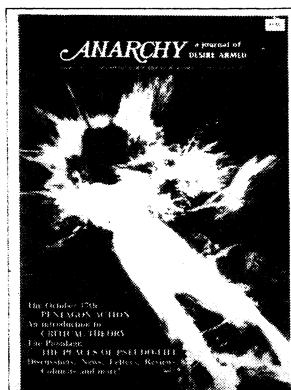
Tired of being told what to do, how to feel, and what to think? Discover and explore the world of anarchy. We don't claim to have any final "answers" to the question of how we can create a genuinely free and satisfying social world, but we'd like to search for them with you.

Anarchy is a journal of **desire armed**! Neither left nor right, we're just uncompromisingly anti-authoritarian. **Anarchy** refuses all ideology. We criticize all religion, all spiritualism, all moralism, all political ideology. We refuse to bow before the altars of "God" or the nation-state. We spit on nationalism, militarism, racism and hierarchy. We don't want to leave anything out. **Nothing** is sacred, least of all **anarchism**.

We want to create a genuinely different alternative vision--radically cooperative & communitarian, ecological and feminist, spontaneous and wild--a liberatory vision free from the constraints of our own human self-domestication.

Anarchy defends what little integrity still remains in our highly-alienated "brave new world." We defend the integrity of the individual. We encourage attempts to create and maintain genuine community, not for the sake of repressive ulterior motives--money, God, morality--but solely for the sake of the pleasures we may find there. And most fundamentally, we defend the integrity of our desires. For if our own most intimate and inalienable desires cannot be trusted, why bother with living?

If you haven't already, please subscribe today!



Many of our back issues are still available!

(Back issues are \$2.00 each in the U.S. & Canada, \$2.50 each by first class U.S. mail or surface mail to other continents and \$5.00 each by airmail to other continents. (Note: the double issue #20/21 is double the price of other back issues.) Circle the issues you want to order.)

Anarchy #1 (4pp., xeroxed) [January 1980] Contents include "Pigs will be pigs," and a short story, "Ausma," by Badguy.

Anarchy #2 (4pp., xeroxed) [March 1980] Contents include "Drifting toward World War III" by Sea @.

Anarchy #6 (12pp., tabloid) [August 1985] Contents include "U.S. lies about Nicaragua," a story by William Cottrell, "Mother Love," a section on "Native American News" and a reprint from the *Fifth Estate*, "Star Wars=1st strike; U.S. plans Death Star."

Anarchy #7 (12pp., tabloid) [September 1985] Contents include "South Africa; the resistance continues," "Pornography & female sexuality" by Diane Dekay, "Eros denied: a culture against untouchables" by Julian Noa, and "In defense of Young Lust" by Jay Kinney.

Anarchy #8 (12pp., tabloid) [October/November 1985] Contents include "Julian Beck; a memory" by Badguy, "The daily battle" by Freddie Baer and "The abolition of work" by Bob Black.

Anarchy #9 (12pp., tabloid) [December '85/January '86] Contents include "Foreign Policy," a tale from *Neutron Gun* by Gerry Reith, a discussion entitled "Cooperation is anarchy" and "The Plague (Central America)" by Julian Noa.

Anarchy #10 (12pp., tabloid) [February/March 1986] Contents include the first installment of "The Papalagi by Tuiaivili of Tiavea," the 1985/86 revision of the Columbia Anarchist League's *As we see it!*, and "Storybox" by Jai.

Anarchy #11 (12pp., tabloid) [April 1986] Contents include "A history of the Anarchist Black Cross," "The Papalagi" (part 2); "The Federal Programme of the West German Greens--Part I;" "The Badguy Report--The Club Dekrepit bust: two years after;" "Ecology as ideology; *Ecological Politics and Bioregionalism*," a review by Lev Chernyi; and "Winning hearts and minds," a story by Gerry Reith.

Anarchy #12 (12pp., tabloid, plus the 12-page Summer '86 *The Gentle Anarchist* included as an insert) [Summer 1986] Contents include a report on the "Haymarket '86 anarchist gathering," "Radical movements confront apartheid in South Africa," "The Papalagi" (part 3), "Let us prey! Smash the state!" by Bob Black, and "Notes on playing for keeps" by Alf Sprack.

Anarchy #13 [Weekly World Anarchy issue] (20pp., tabloid) [Fall/Winter 1986] Contents include "The Papalagi" (part 4), "The bioregional vision--far-sighted or myopic?" by Lev Chernyi, "Theses on libertarian municipalism" by Murray Bookchin, "A summer place" by Kerry Thornley, and "Reagan's drug war" by Kurt Nimmo.

Anarchy #14 (28pp., tabloid) [Summer 1987] Contents include "Anarchy in Greece, Part 1," "The Papalagi" (part 5), "Vagaries of negation" by John Zerzan, a review of "Noam Chomsky's *Turning the Tide*" by Lev Chernyi, "Intervention in Vietnam and Central America: Parallels and differences" by Noam Chomsky, and "Harmonica Vengeance" by Lev Chernyi.

Anarchy #15 (32pp., tabloid) [Winter 1988] Contents include "Give chance a piece," "Propping up the cities," a review of Murray Bookchin's *The Rise of Urbanization and*

the Decline of Citizenship by John Zerzan, "Feyerabend's *Against Method*" reviewed by Larry Giddings, "The Papalagi" (part 6), "The realization and suppression of religion" by Ken Knabb, "Anarchy & religion; a dialogue" (including "Anarchism or religion" by Fred Woodworth, "Religion and anarchism" by Jay Kinney, "The sacred & the profane" by Lev Chernyi, "Freedom and religion" by Jay Kinney, and "Between concept and reality" by Lev Chernyi).

Anarchy #16 (32pp., tabloid) [Summer 1988] Contents include "Native American guerrillas in Colombia," "Rabbi Rousers protest in Minneapolis," "Working Girls; A review" by Lev Chernyi, "The Papalagi" (part 7), "A note on biocentrism" by Lev Chernyi, "Realizing desire" by New Rage, "A boring night out, circa 1975" by Lev Chernyi, "My life in the porn biz" by Holly, "Pornography and pleasure" by Paula Webster, "Anarchy & religion--the dialogue continues" (through letters), "Gnosis and esoteric spirituality; a review of Jay Kinney's *Gnosis Magazine*" by Lev Chernyi.

Anarchy #17 (32pp., 10 1/2"x14 1/2"/stitched) [Fall/Winter 1988/89] Contents include "Stumps Suck! on the Okanagan" by Mikal Jakubal, "Notes from the California Earth First! Rendezvous" by Lev Chernyi, "Chaos and anarchy" by Kansas Slim, "The Papalagi" (part 8), "The point of no return for everybody" (a review of John Zerzan's *Elements of Refusal* and John Zerzan & Alice Carnes' *Questioning Technology*) by Lev Chernyi, "Who killed Ned Ludd?" by John Zerzan, "The freedom of biocentrism: a poem" by Lone Wolf Circles, "If nature abhors ideologies...biocentrism is no exception" by Lev Chernyi, "Anarchy & religion--the dialogue continues" (including "The quest for the spiritual" by Feral Faun, "Ten theses toward the end of the flesh-spirit dichotomy" by Feral Faun, and more letters), and the first installment of "The nihilist's dictionary" (on "Niceism") by John Zerzan.

Anarchy #18 (32pp., 10 1/2"x14 1/2"/stitched) [March/April 1989] Contents include a "Report on the Oct. 17th Pentagon action" by Paul Simons; reviews of Jeremy Rifkin's *Time Wars* by Maria Mitchell, Ward Churchill and Jim Vander Wall's *Agents of Repression* by Toni Otter, and Kent Winslow's *Dream World* by Lev Chernyi; "Current controversies concerning the annual continental anarchist gatherings" by Lev Chernyi; "The Papalagi" (part 9); an excerpt from "Bigger cages, longer chains" by Spectacular Times; "An introduction to critical theory" by Lev Chernyi; two reactions to the Toronto anarchist gathering's "Day of Action"; a continuing discussion of "Biocentrism vs. the critique of ideology" between Feral Faun, Lone Wolf Circles, and Lev Chernyi; a continuing discussion on anarchy and religion; columns including "On unions" by Interrogations, "The nihilist's dictionary" (on "Technology") by John Zerzan, "A's for attitude," and "The return of the Badguy report."

Anarchy #19 (32pp., 10 1/2"x14 1/2"/stitched) [May/July 1989] Contents include a "Report on the April N.O.W. March in D.C." by Melen Lunn; "The Economic Movement and the Polish opposition" by John Barrett; "Taking the low road to *High Weirdness*," a review by Bob Black; "The Korean anarchists," a review by Toni Otter; "Another Heresy" survey results; "The Papalagi" (Part 10); "Pedophilia; Views from the other side"--including "I

was fifteen, she was forty-three" by Chris Bearchell and "Girl Love" (anonymous); "Liberating sexuality," reviews of Richard Walters' *Sexual Friendship* and Will McBride & Helga Fleischhauer-Hardt's *Show Me!* by Lev Chernyi; "Sexuality and the mystique of innocence" by Laure A.; "Save the children" by Richard Walters; "Biocentrism: ideology against nature" by Mikal Jakubal; "Beyond Earth First!" by Feral Faun; columns including "The Badguy Report," "Nation, state...or human community" by Interrogations, "Feral Revolution" by Feral Faun, "A's for Attitude," and "The Nihilist's Dictionary" by John Zerzan on "Culture."

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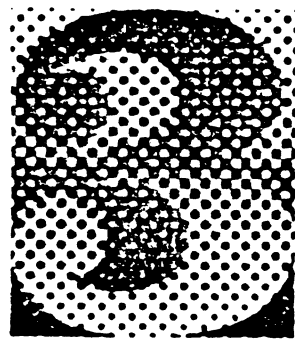
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A journal of Desire Armed

The Revolution of Everyday Life



by
Raoul
Vaneigem

*The impossibility of participation:
Power as sum of constraints*

The mechanisms of attrition and destruction: humiliation (two), isolation (three), suffering (four), work (five), decompression (six).

Isolation

*Para no sentirme solo
Por los siglos de los siglos*

All we have in common is the illusion of being together. And the only resistance to the illusions of the permitted painkillers come from the collective desire to destroy isolation (1). Impersonal relationships are the no man's land of isolation. By producing isolation, contemporary social organization signs its own death sentence (2).

1

It was as if they were in a cage whose door was wide open without their being able to escape. Nothing outside the cage had any importance, because nothing else existed any more. They stayed in the cage, estranged from everything except the cage, without even a flicker of desire for anything outside the bars. It would have been abnormal-impossible in fact-to escape into something which had neither reality nor importance. Absolutely impossible. For inside this cage, in which they had been born and in which they would die, the only tolerable framework of experience was the Real, which was simply an irresistible instinct to act so that things should have importance. Only if things had some importance could one breathe, and suffer. It seemed that there was an understanding between them and the silent dead, that it should be so, for the habit of acting so that things had some importance had become a human instinct, and one which was apparently eternal. Life was the important thing, and the Real was part of the instinct which gave life a little meaning. The instinct didn't try to imagine what might lie beyond the Real, because there was nothing beyond it. Nothing important. The door remained open and the cage became more and more painful in its Reality, which was so important for countless reasons and in countless ways.

We have never emerged from the time of the slavers.

On public transport, which throws them against one another with statistical indifference, people wear an untenable expression of disillusion, pride, and contempt, like the natural effect of death on a toothless mouth. The atmosphere of false communication makes everyone the policeman of his own encounters. The instincts of flight and aggression trail the knights of wage-

labour, who must now rely on subways and suburban trains for their pitiful wanderings. If men are transformed into scorpions who sting themselves and one another, isn't it really because nothing has happened, and human beings with empty eyes and flabby brains have "mysteriously" become mere shadows of men, ghosts of men, and in some ways are no longer men except in name?

We have nothing in common except the illusion of being together. Certainly the seeds of an authentic collective life are lying dormant within the illusion itself--there is no illusion without a real basis--but real community remains to be created. The power of the lie sometimes manages to erase the bitter reality of isolation from men's minds. In a crowded street we can occasionally forget that suffering and separation are still present. And, since it is only the lie's power that makes us forget, suffering and separation are reinforced; but in the end the lie itself comes to grief through relying on this support. For a moment comes when no illusion can measure up to our distress.

Malaise invades me as the crowd around me grows. The compromises I have made with stupidity, under the pressure of circumstances, rush to meet me, swimming towards me in hallucinating waves of faceless heads. Edvard Munch's famous painting, *The Cry*, evokes for me something I feel ten times a day. A man carried along by a crowd, which only he can see, suddenly screams out in an attempt to break the spell, to call himself back to himself, to get back inside his own skin. The tacit acknowledgements, fixed smiles, lifeless words, listlessness and humiliation sprinkled in his path suddenly surge into him, driving him out of his desires and his dreams and exploding the illusion of "being together." People touch without meeting; isolation accumulates but is never realized; emptiness overcomes us as the density of the crowd

grows. The crowd drags me out of myself and installs thousands of little sacrifices in my empty presence.

Everywhere neon signs are flashing out the dictum of Plotinus: *All beings are together though each remains separate*. But we only need to hold out our hands and touch one another, to raise our eyes and meet one another, and everything suddenly becomes near and far, as if by magic.

Like crowds, drugs and love, alcohol can befuddle the most lucid mind. Alcohol turns the concrete wall of isolation into a paper screen which the actors can tear according to their fancy, for it arranges everything on the stage of an intimate theatre. A generous illusion, and thus still more deadly.

In a gloomy bar where everyone is bored to death, a drunken young man breaks his glass, then picks up a bottle and smashes it against the wall. Nobody gets excited; the disappointed young man lets himself be thrown out. Yet everyone there could have done exactly the same thing. He alone made the thought concrete, crossing the first radioactive belt of isolation: interior isolation, the introverted separation between self and outside world. Nobody responded to a sign which he thought was explicit. He remained alone like the hooligan who burns down a church or kills a policeman, at one with himself, but condemned to exile as long as other people remain exiled from their own existence. He has not escaped from the magnetic field of isolation; he is suspended in a zone of zero gravity. All the same, the indifference which greets him allows him to hear the sound of his own cry; even if this revelation tortures him, he knows that he will have to start again in another register, more loudly; with more coherence.

People will be together only in a common wretchedness as long as each isolated being refuses to understand that a gesture of liberation, however weak and clumsy it may be, always bears an authentic communication, an adequate personal message. The repression which strikes down the libertarian rebel falls on everyone: everyone's blood flows with the blood of a murdered Durruti. Whenever freedom retreats one inch, there is a hundredfold increase in the weight of the order of things. Excluded from authentic participation, men's actions stray into the fragile illusion of being together, or else remain locked in its opposite, the brutal, total rejection of social life. They swing from one to the other like a pendulum turning the hands on the clock-face of death.

Love in its turn swells the illusion of unity. Most of the time it founders and is aborted in triviality. Its songs are crippled by the fear of always returning to the same single note: the icy fear, whether there are two of us or ten, of finishing up alone as before. What drives us to despair is not the immensity of our unsatisfied desires, but the moment when our newborn passion discovers its own emptiness. My insatiable desire to fall in love with so many pretty girls is born in anguish and the fear of loving: we are so afraid of never escaping from meetings with objects. The dawn when lovers leave each other's arms is the same dawn that breaks on the execution of revolutionaries without a revolution. Isolation *à deux* cannot overpower the general isolation. Pleasure is broken off prematurely and lovers find themselves naked in the world, their actions suddenly ridiculous and pointless. No love is possible in an unhappy world.

The boat of love breaks up in the current of daily life.

Are you ready to smash the reefs of the old world before they wreck your desires? Lovers should love their pleasure with more consequence and more poetry. A story tells how Prince Shekour captured a town and offered it to his favourite for a smile. Some of us have fallen in love with the pleasure of loving without reserve--passionately enough to offer our love the magnificent bed of a revolution.

2

To adapt to the world is a game of heads-you-win, tails-I-lose, in which one decides *a priori* that the negative is the positive and that the impossibility of living is an essential precondition of life. Alienation never takes such firm root as when it passes itself off as an inalienable good. Transformed into positivity, the consciousness of isolation is none other than the private consciousness, that potential of individualism which respectable people drag around like their most sacred birthright, unprofitable but cherished. It is a sort of pleasure-anxiety which prevents us from either settling down in the community of illusion or from remaining trapped in the cellar of isolation.

The no man's land of impersonal relationships stretches from the blissful acceptance of false collectivities to the total rejection of society. It is the morality of shopkeepers: "You scratch my back, I'll scratch yours," "There's good and bad everywhere," "Things aren't so bad really": politeness, the art (for art's sake) of non-communication.

Let's face it: human relationships being what social hierarchy has made of them, impersonality is the least tiring form of contempt. It allows us to pass without useless friction through the mill of daily contacts. It does not prevent us from dreaming of superior forms of civility, such as the courtesy of Lacenaire, on the eve of his execution, urging a friend: "Above all, please convey my gratitude to Monsieur Scribe. Tell him that one day, suffering from the pangs of hunger, I presented myself at his house in order to worm some money out of him. He complied with my request with a touching generosity; I am sure he will remember. Tell him that he

acted wisely, for I had in my pocket, ready to hand, the means of depriving France of a dramatist."

But the sterilized zone of impersonal relationships only offers a truce in the endless battle against isolation, a brief transit which leads to communication, or more frequently towards the illusion of community. I would explain in this way my reluctance to stop a stranger to ask him the way or to "pass the time of day"; to seek contact in this doubtful fashion. The pleasantness of impersonal relationships is built on sand and empty time and never did me any good.

Life is made impossible with such

cynical thoroughness that the balanced pleasure-anxiety of impersonal relationships functions as a cog in the general machine for destroying people. In the end it seems better to start out right away with a radical and tactically worked-out refusal, rather than going around knocking politely on all the doors where one mode of survival is exchanged for another.

"It would be a shame to die so young," wrote Jacques Vaché two years before his suicide. If desperation at the prospect of surviving does not unite with a new grasp of reality to transform the years to come, only two ways out are left for the isolated man: the pisspot of political parties and the pata-physico-religious sects, or immediate death with *Umour*. A sixteen-year-old murderer recently explained: "I did it because I was bored." Anyone who has felt the drive to self-destruction welling up inside him knows with what weary negligence he might one day happen to kill the organizers of his boredom. One day. If he was in the mood.

After all, if an individual refuses to both adapt to the violence of the world, and to embrace the violence of the unadapted, what can he do? If he doesn't raise his desire to achieve unity with the world and with himself to the level of coherent theory and practice, the vast

silence of society's open spaces will erect the palace of solipsist madness around him.

From the depths of their prisons those who have been convicted of "mental illness" add the screams of their strangled revolt to the sum of negativity. What a potential Fourier was consciously destroyed in this patient described by the psychiatrist Volnat: "He began to lose all capacity to distinguish between himself and the external world. Everything that happened in the world also happened in his body. He could not put a bottle between two shelves in a cupboard because the shelves might come together and break the bottle. And that would hurt inside his head, as if his head was wedged between the shelves. He could not shut a suitcase, because pressing the things in the case would press inside his head. If he walked into the street after closing all the doors and windows of his house, he felt uncomfortable, because his brain was compressed by the air, and he had to go back home to open a door or a window. 'For me to be at ease,' he said, 'I must have open space...I must have the freedom of my space. It's the battle with the things all around me.'"

"The consul stopped. He read the inscription: '*No se puede vivir sin amor.*'" (Lowry, *Under the Volcano*).

The cult of the sacred

Continued from page 23

anthropologists to the assumption that primitive societies have all been religious, whether in an animistic sense or in a theistic sense. At the least, there must be good reason to wonder whether groups like the gatherer/hunter Pygmies of Central Africa have any conception of the sacred in this sense when contradictory claims of observers have variously indicated that they "worship" nature spirits, or that they worship nothing at all—disdaining the religious superstitions of neighboring agriculturally-based tribes! How can we be sure? In the pages of this journal it seems to be excessively hard for people to grasp the distinction between the non-reified concept of spirit (merely suggesting an "essential nature") and its reification as a thing-in-itself (standing over and above something else). How are we to expect that rank-and-file anthropologists (who have only a limited time to learn everything there is to know about an alien language and culture on their own) would know the difference between a primitive religion and a primitive philosophy if either was staring them in the face? We're talking about people who hardly possess an adequate understanding of the compulsions and illusions of their own native societies, much less a comprehensive understanding of philosophy and the nature of human alienation! Dogbane's imagination is so limited that he can't conceive of the existence of a third perspective outside of the religious and enlightenment traditions; can we really expect that anthropologists would recognize non-enlightenment forms of rationality in primitive societies that are already so invisible in their own? And even if we were to grant that the universal religious prejudice of anthropologists has some basis in the reality of the societies they have studied, what are we supposed to make of all the gung-ho archaeologists who are so fond of glibly announcing the discovery of Paleolithic "religious" figurines, the ruins of "religious" stone circles or "sacred" woodhenges! Could it be that there is something going on here which bears further examination?

Metaphors or metaphysics?

Many of Dogbane's arguments against the questioning of the sacred rest on his own (and his sources') inability to distinguish metaphors from metaphysics, the symbolic from the sacred. Reading his essay, the reader can be excused for getting the impression that all myths or metaphors must be sacred myths or sacred metaphors, since for Dogbane there isn't any other alternative besides "empiricism and science"—as though these don't possess mythical/metaphorical elements as well. In fact, all conceptual thought is metaphorical (relational), not just sacred thought. Any metaphor or myth can be reified, but this says nothing about its function or value per se. What makes it sacred is precisely its fetishization. Instead of remaining "just" a metaphor or myth, it is invested with an added **metaphysical** or **transcendental** significance. It is "set apart for worship" as a common dictionary definition of the "sacred" reads, or it is treated as giving access to another—more important, yet purely symbolic—world separate from that which is lived. Contrary to Dogbane's view, the referent of the sacred is not the "nonhuman other," in actuality it refers to the **fetishized conception** of the nonhuman other, and as such it is practically useless for the project of overcoming our actually-existing alienation.

For us, here and now, the important question is not what some highly debatable concept of the sacred meant for other cultures in another time or place. The real question is what it can mean in our current situation, and how we can relate to this. Any valid uses the concept might have are far outweighed by its multiple liabilities. The fact is that there are billions of people who now worship some form of the sacred, yet this hasn't gotten us any closer to the abolition of alienation. By continuing to mystify our goals in theory we only make it harder to achieve them in practice.

[Note: Much more needs to be said concerning all this, yet there isn't enough room in this issue for me to continue. I would especially have liked to respond in detail to some of Dogbane's individual arguments, instead of being constrained to relying on so many generalizations. I will have more to say on other important aspects of this subject in the future.—Lev]

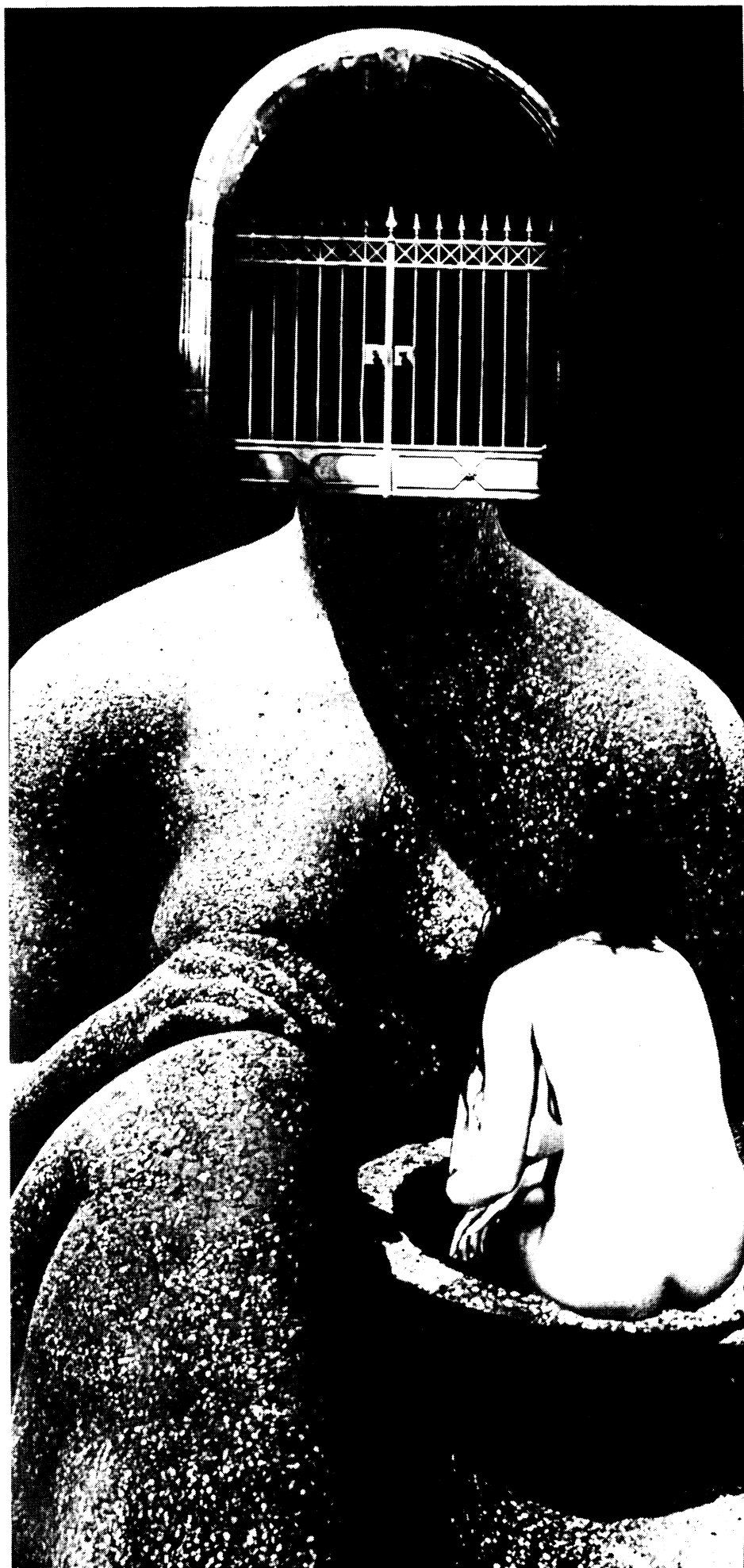


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Misinformation and manipulation:

An anarchist critique of the politics of AIDS

By Joe Peacott

Introduction

AIDS, like all diseases, is having an effect not only on those who have AIDS, but on society as a whole. There is a continuous flow of articles in the press, TV specials, brochures from AIDS organizations, and even ads on the subway, all of which make AIDS an issue in most people's minds. Unfortunately, much, if not most, of the information people are receiving is inaccurate, incomplete, and/or manipulative, including that put out by AIDS "service" organizations and the AIDS activist groups. The two major pieces of misinformation that almost everyone seems to accept are that AIDS is the most important and dangerous health care problem facing Americans at present, and that action by the government is the way to solve the problems caused by AIDS. This pamphlet will argue that: while a serious problem, AIDS is not the plague that the mainstream press, government and AIDS organizations say it is; most people are at little risk of HIV infection and AIDS; and not only is government activity not the solution, but eliminating government intervention from our lives is the best way to fight AIDS.

Scope of the problem

Both the mainstream news media and most of the radical press, gay and straight alike, continually describe AIDS as an epidemic, or simply as the epidemic. While AIDS, like many other diseases, certainly fits the medical definition of an epidemic, the emphasis on this term serves only to frighten people, not to increase their understanding of the disease and its transmission. When people are afraid it is more difficult for them to look at and talk about a problem objectively. And an objective perspective on AIDS is sorely lacking in this country at present. The way statistics about AIDS are presented in most of the news media and medical literature also contributes to the panic atmosphere associated with this disease by greatly exaggerating the impact of AIDS compared to that of other diseases and causes of death in the U.S.

Statistics for AIDS are generally presented in terms of the number of people who have gotten the disease and/or died from it since the outbreak began in this country. This makes it difficult to compare AIDS statistics to those for other diseases/causes of

death, which are generally reported as cases per year. But even using the government figures in this form, and comparing them to figures for other diseases, one can illustrate the slanted way in which the scope of the AIDS "epidemic" is being depicted. In the U.S., breast cancer kills 42,000 a year; 94,000 die in accidents, 46,000 in car accidents; 466,000 die of cancer; and almost 1,000,000 die of heart disease. AIDS has killed 49,976 (as of 2/28/89) since the outbreak began; 11,000 people died of AIDS in 1987. The point is not that AIDS is not a problem, but simply that it is one of the many diseases and dangers people are at risk of, and significantly less dangerous for most people than many other things. Many more gay men will die of heart disease this year than will die of AIDS, but I have yet to see an article in the gay press advising homosexual men to avoid high-risk eating activities, such as eating meat and dairy products, while we are constantly told to avoid any remotely risky sex.

The "experts" also frequently make predictions about how many will get AIDS, are infected with HIV (the virus, human immunodeficiency virus, that many believe to be the cause of AIDS), or will go on to get AIDS after being infected with HIV. The games played

Heterosexuals and AIDS: Assessing the Risks

Based on data from several studies, researchers have roughly estimated the chance of becoming infected with the AIDS virus through heterosexual intercourse with partners of varying backgrounds. The true risk in individual cases may differ greatly from group averages. The scientists say that while

even the group averages are only approximate, they accurately characterize the comparative risks. For all categories, the chance that the virus will be transmitted in a single sexual contact with a partner who is definitely infected is assumed to be 1 in 500; the condom failure rate is assumed to be 1 in 100.

Risk Category of Partner	Assumed Prevalence of Infection	One Sexual Encounter	500 Sexual Encounters
Infection Status Unknown			
Not in any high-risk group			
Using condoms	0.0001	1 in 50 million	1 in 110,000
Not using condoms	0.0001	1 in 5 million	1 in 16,000
High-Risk Groups¹			
Using condoms	0.05 to 0.5	1 in 100,000 to 1 in 10,000	1 in 210 to 1 in 21
Not using condoms	0.05 to 0.5	1 in 10,000 to 1 in 1,000	1 in 32 to 1 in 3
Negative AIDS virus test²			
No history of high-risk behavior			
Using condoms	0.000001	1 in 5 billion	1 in 11 million
Not using condoms	0.000001	1 in 500 million	1 in 1.6 million
Continuing high-risk behavior ³			
Using condoms	0.01	1 in 500,000	1 in 1,100
Not using condoms	0.01	1 in 50,000	1 in 160
Infected with AIDS virus			
Using condoms	1.0	1 in 500	1 in 11
Not using condoms	1.0	1 in 500	2 in 3

¹ A range is given because the extent of infection varies widely within the groups. The greatest risks involve homosexual or bisexual men and intravenous drug users from major metropolitan areas and hemophiliacs. The lower risks involve homosexual or bisexual men and drug users from other parts of the country, female prostitutes, heterosexuals from Haiti and certain African countries, and recipients in the early 1980's of multiple blood transfusions in areas where the virus is prevalent.

² A negative virus test could be misleading because of testing inaccuracy, because the person had not developed antibodies at the time of testing or because the person was infected after the test.

³ Sexual intercourse or needle-sharing with a risk-group member.

Source: Journal of the American Medical Association

with statistics are even more sophisticated and subtle in this area. Last year, the press reported on a study that supposedly showed that 99% of people infected with HIV would go on to get AIDS. However, if one reads this study one finds that although the researchers favor the 99% figure, they concede that the true number who will get AIDS could fall anywhere between 38% and 100%, according to their statistical manipulations, and that they are only 90% confident that even this interval is accurate. Most scientists and statisticians demand a 95%-99% confidence level before accepting and reporting results as significant. The authors also clearly state that their estimate of the number of gay men who will develop AIDS after HIV infection "should still be treated cautiously". Additionally, as of January 1, 1987, of six men in this study who seroconverted (developed antibodies to HIV; this usually occurs within a few months of infection) in 1978, only three had developed AIDS, only one out of eight infected in 1979 had AIDS, and three out of twelve infected in 1980 had come down with AIDS, all of which argues against the researchers' contention that most persons infected with HIV will develop AIDS, since they also maintain that the average time elapsed from infection

with HIV to diagnosis with AIDS is less than eight years. In other words, the news media took a study containing questionable methodology and conclusions, reported the authors' speculation as fact, and did not mention either the doubts voiced by the authors themselves about their work, or the criticism of this report by others. This is an example of how AIDS hysteria is manufactured.

Studies that indicate that many or most people with HIV will not develop AIDS are given much less exposure in the media than those that paint a more grim picture. There have been no page one stories, about the group of men studied at the New York Blood Center, 20-25% of whom have no measurable immune dysfunction after ten years of infection with HIV. And who has heard about the study showing that only 36% of a group of HIV positive men studied for over seven years have gone on to develop AIDS? And what newspaper reports pointed out the inconsistencies in the study I discussed above, where the numbers in the study group developing AIDS after HIV infection were not consistent with the researchers' own conclusions and indicated that many, if not most, HIV-infected people may remain AIDS-free. While these studies do not prove that most people with HIV infection will not develop AIDS, there is no evidence from other studies to prove that they will. In other words, no one knows how many HIV-infected people will get AIDS, but that does not stop the press and AIDS organizations from presenting the worst possible scenarios when they talk about this disease.

A final example of the statistical manipulations to which AIDS is subjected is the revised estimates of the HIV infection rate in New York. Last year the New York Dept. of Health cut its estimate of the number of New Yorkers infected with HIV by one half. They justified this by using a new model for estimating HIV infection rates based on epidemiologic studies of homosexual men in San Francisco. Both this model and their previous model could be defended scientifically, but produced numbers that were not even close, showing that they really don't know what they are talking about and their various estimates are simply guesses. Despite this, much of the press, of course, simply accepted these new figures as true and reported them as such. Many in the AIDS "service" and activist "communities" attacked the revision as politically motivated, to be used as a justification for cutbacks in AIDS funding.

Almost no one pointed out that these numbers were really no more valid or invalid than previous ones. The press believes and reports as fact whatever the government says, and the AIDS organizations accept whatever will lead to more funding and reject what may lead to cutbacks. Neither group however, seems interested in facts, especially if they indicate that "the epidemic" is not as fearsome as they contend it is.

Many people are infected with HIV, many have AIDS and many will develop AIDS. But many more people will die of other causes, and there is no convincing evidence that AIDS will ever surpass heart disease or cancer as killers of Americans. Despite this, people are daily subjected to AIDS horror stories, much more dramatic and terrifying than reports of death and disability caused by other, more common, diseases. This is done for two major reasons: some wish to use AIDS to further their anti-sex and anti-homosexual agenda; others wish to use an exaggerated fear of AIDS to increase government funding of activities concerning AIDS, and thereby further their careers. Neither group is necessarily interested in the truth about the disease, its incidence, or its transmission. People need to be more careful about believing what they read and hear about AIDS and not just accept what they are told by the "experts".

Who's at risk?

We are constantly warned these days that everyone needs to be more careful in every sexual encounter we have: we need to practice "safer" sex; we need to use rubbers or dental dams at all times; we need to have sex with fewer partners; some even say we need to marry and be "faithful" to one partner for our entire lives. We are told that there are no high-risk groups of people, only high-risk activities. But is everyone really at equal risk of HIV infection?

In 1986 the Centers for Disease Control [CDC] changed its method of presenting statistics and began to present the figures for people who have AIDS who were "born in countries in which heterosexual transmission is believed to play a major role" (primarily people from Haiti, with some from Central Africa) as part of the "heterosexual cases" category. This category had previously included only non-Haitian/non-Central African people who "have had heterosexual contact with high risk individuals" (IV drug users and men who have sex with other men). When these two categories were combined, the number of "heterosexual cases" more than doubled and the press duly reported the "explosion" in AIDS among heterosexuals, and has continued to devote a lot of coverage to heterosexual AIDS ever since. But has anything really changed? Has there been and will there be a major outbreak of AIDS among non-IV drug using heterosexual people?

The number of heterosexual cases reported by the CDC as of 2/28/89 is only 4%, the same percentage as when the definition of heterosexual cases was changed in 1986. Not much of an explosion. The "doubling" of heterosexual cases in 1986 was not a real change, it

was merely a statistical "blip" caused by combining two previously separate categories. There are few heterosexual cases now, and although there may be an increase in the future due to the increasing numbers of people who have acquired HIV infection through IV drug use, most of whom are heterosexual and can infect their sex partners, there is no reason to predict a major increase in AIDS among heterosexuals who do not use IV drugs or have regular sex partners who do. Even Surgeon General Koop, who is pushing the lifelong monogamy line, says that he is "quite sure that we won't have an explosion in the heterosexual population."

There have been several studies in the last two years that have emphasized the low risk of contracting AIDS for most heterosexuals. A study in Denver of approximately 1,000 persons seen in a VD clinic, showed zero cases of HIV

studies show that only prostitutes who use IV drugs or have ongoing sexual relationships with IV drug users have become infected. Another study showed that prostitute women in San Francisco had the same rate of infection as other women who had multiple partners or partners at risk of HIV infection. There is no evidence that prostitutes who do not use IV drugs and are not sex partners of IV drug users are any more at risk than other women with multiple partners.

Additionally, there is no evidence to back up assumptions that prostitutes are "spreading" HIV infection and AIDS to their customers; 80% of prostitutes use rubbers some or all of the time, and most of the time they engage in low risk sex activities such as hand jobs and blow jobs anyway. Despite the fact that street prostitutes see approximately 1,500 customers a year, 20% of men

view, and prefer to spread the myth that "we're all at risk."

There appear to be two main motives for putting forth this view. Some wish to scare heterosexuals into either celibacy or monogamy and marriage. Others, especially AIDS organizations seem to be encouraging this view in order to increase the amount of government money they can obtain, reasoning that the government won't fund their activities unless they think heterosexual non-drug users might get sick as well, since they really don't care about queers and drug users. Although this may be true, and the strategy effective (there certainly is a lot more AIDS money coming from governments these days), it does not justify the misinformation and fear being spread. Unfortunately, the AIDS bureaucracy, both governmental and non-governmental seems more interested in making rules for others to live by than in providing people with the truthful information they need to make informed choices about what activities they want to engage in and what risks they wish to take.

Safe sex and queers

Advice about "safer" sex for men who have sex with men, although directed at a group of people who are truly at high risk for HIV infection, is no less full of misinformation and half-truths than guidelines for heterosexuals. In some ways the "safer sex" literature for men who have sex with men is even worse than that directed at heterosexuals. At least the "experts" generally aren't telling heterosexual men and women not to fuck when they have sex (although, of course they should only have monogamous, preferably marital, sex), but are simply telling them to use rubbers when they do. Much "safer" sex advice to men, however, suggests not only using latex in all sexual contacts, but even encourages men to give up homosexual sex entirely, and instead learn to "eroticize" non-sexual activities. A recent edition of *Next*, a magazine distributed free in homosexual bars in Boston, in a particularly offensive and anti-sex series of articles lists the following as "life affirming erotic options" in their "sensual buffet": flirting, kissing, phone sex, sensuous feeding, and consensual exhibitionism and voyeurism. The writer also recommends dirty talk, leather, lubricants (he doesn't specify what is being lubricated), and bubble baths. We are encouraged not to "screw up something perfect" like playing with whipped cream by introducing those much talked about "bodily fluids". These articles, and workshops sponsored by AIDS organizations encourage men to learn to consider non-sexual activities satisfying substitutes for fucking and sucking. Michael Callen of the People With AIDS Coalition in New York is one of the few AIDS activists who oppose this attempt to eroticize non-sex activities. He has said "what I find so pathetic is the cheery sloganeering of the 'Great Sex is Health Sex' campaigns. For those of us who proudly referred to ourselves as 'hot sex pigs', 'healthy' sex is definitely not great sex. It is a depressing consolation prize and I sometimes want to smack those who pretend otherwise. Yes, if we want to

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Changing estimates

Infected with HIV

Previous NYC estimates

Total cases 400,000

Gay males	250,000
IV drug users	100,000
All other*	50,000

New NYC estimates

Total cases 200,000

IV drug users	100,000
Gay males	50,000
All other*	50,000

* Heterosexual cases, babies infected during pregnancy, those infected through transfusions of contaminated blood and blood products, those originally from Haiti and Central Africa, where transmission patterns are predominantly heterosexual.

infection in low-risk individuals, i.e., non-IV drug using heterosexuals who did not have sex with IV drug users. A similar study in Seattle of 343 people showed no infections in persons who were not homosexual men, and a Queens, N.Y. study showed one infection among 200 low-risk persons. This data indicates that there are indeed low-risk people, and that most people in the U.S. fit the low-risk description. An article in *JAMA [Journal of the American Medical Association]* last year estimated the risk of acquiring HIV infection during rubber-free penis-vagina sex with low risk person is approximately 1 in 5 million for one encounter, and 1 in 16,000 for 500 encounters. The researchers stated that "the risk of AIDS from a low-risk encounter is about the same as the risk of being killed in a traffic accident while driving ten miles on the way to that encounter." These articles, whose information is certainly important to the discussions of transmission of AIDS through sex, although covered briefly in the press, are seldom mentioned in discussions of what safe sex is and who needs to practice it.

Prostitutes are considered by some to be a high risk group for HIV infection and the Public Health "Service" lists sex with a prostitute as a high-risk activity. As with so much we read about AIDS, this is simply not true. CDC

hire prostitutes regularly, and 70% hire them occasionally, as of September 1987, only 33 men (out of more than 40,000 persons who had AIDS at the time) whose primary "risk" factor was sex with prostitutes had been diagnosed with AIDS. COYOTE, an organization of prostitutes, estimates that if prostitutes were truly spreading AIDS, by 1988, "at least 100,000 straight, white, middle-class businessmen would have been diagnosed" with AIDS. Clearly, this hasn't happened.

Despite the availability of the above information, the U.S. Public Health "Service", most of the press, both gay/lesbian and straight, virtually all the AIDS organizations, and even ads in the subway (virtually all of which appear to be directed at non-drug using heterosexuals), take the position that straight people are at high risk for AIDS and need to take the same precautions when having sex that gay men and IV drug users need to take. They spread the myth that there are no high-risk groups of people, but only high risk activities. However, one of the studies cited above convincingly argues that, because the rate of infection is so low among low-risk groups, unprotected sex with a low-risk person is safer than sex with a condom with someone in a high-risk group. But most AIDS "experts" and activists seem unwilling to discuss this

Misinformation and manipulation:

An anarchist critique of the politics of AIDS

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stay alive, we have to practice safe sex. But let's not pretend it's the real thing."

In addition to encouraging men to avoid real sex altogether, the AIDS educators encourage men to view all sex between men not involving a rubber as equally risky, and people who do not share this view are portrayed as stupid and irresponsible. But, there is evidence that not all sexual activities and not all "exchanges of bodily fluids" are equally risky. Getting fucked in the ass, and, to a lesser extent, getting fucked in the cunt, appear to be the only two high risk sexual activities. A number of studies published in the medical literature, for instance, have found a minimal risk of becoming infected with HIV from giving blow jobs, or being the fucker in rectal sex. A study from 1987 showed essentially no difference in rate of HIV infection between men who had given up both fucking and sucking and those who had continued to have oral sex (some of whom had also continued fucking, but not getting fucked) in the two years prior to the start of the study, while those who continued getting fucked had a significantly higher rate of HIV infection. Another study the same year showed that of 147 HIV-free gay men who gave blow jobs, some of whom also swallowed cum, but none of whom fucked, not one became infected in six months of follow-up, while 95 out of 1,998 men who engaged in fucking became infected during the same period. A report at a national AIDS conference in 1987 reported that 50 of 522 men who fucked became infected, but none of the 50 who engaged only in blow jobs acquired HIV infection during an 18 month period.

Despite these encouraging reports, there is evidence that cocksucking is not totally risk-free. There have been some reports of infection with HIV men who engage only in oral sex, but the numbers are very small, the risk of infection from cocksucking appears to be minimal, and getting fucked without a rubber seems to be the most risky sexual activity and the primary mode of transmission of HIV between men. AIDS activists and educators in several other countries, such as Canada, Australia, and some in Britain, as well as the Gay Men's Health Crisis [GMHC] group in New York, based on this kind of information, consider cocksucking to be a low risk activity. Few AIDS educators or activist types in the U.S. are willing to give people this kind of information or emphasize the vast difference between sucking and fucking. Instead, most AIDS and gay/lesbian groups and newspapers, with the exception of GMHC continue to put out the most conservative possible safe sex guidelines, listing blow jobs as equally risky as fucking, which is simply not true.

Cocksucking is not the only low risk activity inappropriately considered highly risky by the AIDS establishment. Tongue-kissing, watersports (pissing), and rimming (licking assholes), activities even less risky than cocksucking are considered moderate-to-high risk activities by most AIDS organizations. This, combined with the advice to shower and have your partner shower, which is often seen in safe sex literature (showering does *nothing* to prevent HIV or other sexually transmitted infections) makes me think that there is as much concern here with encouraging people to engage in "nicer", "cleaner" sexual activities, as there is in preventing HIV infection. It all seems awfully anti-sex.

The anti-sex hysteria has even taken root among homosexual women. They are advised by women's and gay/lesbian newspapers, the AIDS bureaucrats, and "sexperts" Susie Bright and JoAnn Loulan, that they are as much at risk of acquiring HIV infec-

tion as everyone else. This myth is being spread despite the fact that there have been few reports of possible transmission of HIV infection between two women in the medical literature, and one report of possible transmission of HIV to a man from eating out a woman. The CDC reports only seven "probable cases of woman-to-woman transmission" of HIV (but no cases of AIDS acquired by woman-to-woman sex), and purveyors of the myth of lesbian AIDS like *The Village Voice* and ACT UP cite only three of five cases. Even if the number the CDC cites is accurate, this bears out my contention that woman-to-woman sex is nearly risk-free, since millions practice woman-to-woman sex, while it appears that no more than seven have acquired HIV infection sexually. Yet, homosexual women are urged to use rubber dams and gloves and take various other precautions at all times.

Most AIDS "experts" and activists are not interested in increasing people's awareness of relative risks and coming to their own conclusions. They instead wish people to unquestioningly follow the anti-sex guidelines which these experts have come up with. Certainly there are risks involved in cocksucking and eating out women, as well as other, even lower-risk activities, which the "safer" sexers advise against, but these are much lower than the risks of rectal, and to a lesser extent, vaginal, fucking. Despite this, virtually all safe sex guidelines describe activities with greatly different levels of risk as being equally dangerous. A brochure by the AIDS Action Committee in Boston, for example, lists rimming, cocksucking, eating out women, and fucking without a rubber in the same category, as high risk activities. Instead, people should be informed of the relative risks of different kinds of sex, and encouraged to make their own choices about the risks they are willing to take.

The majority of AIDS educators want no part of such an approach. At a lesbian/gay health conference in Boston last year, some AIDS activists confronted AIDS educators at a workshop on safe sex about the supposed high level of risk associated with cocksucking. The educators defended their commitment to discouraging men from sucking cock, and felt that "changing the rules" would lead men to question their credibility (a positive development, in my opinion), and would confuse people. They said they preferred the "on me, not in me" rule because it was simple and easy. Additionally, when an article entitled "I Hate Safe Sex" which questioned the whole anti-sex approach of the AIDS establishment appeared in a Boston gay/lesbian paper, it was criticized by the AIDS Action Committee, who claimed the article would "undermine the efforts of AIDS organizations throughout the country". These kinds of responses by AIDS educators to criticism of safe sex dogma clearly show their contempt for people and their sexual desires, and show that their commitment to their "safer" sex ideology outweighs their interest in supplying people with honest information.

The safer-sexers and their allies in government have not confined their activities to propagandizing against sex. In a number of cities places where men congregate to engage in consensual sex have been shut down or driven out of business by the government. In all of these cases there has been widespread support for these shutdowns among some sectors of the "gay community". In Boston, Jeff Epperly, the editor of the local mainstream gay/lesbian paper, *Bay Windows*, not only editorialized in favor of the shutdown of the only homosexual bathhouse in Boston, he actively collaborated with the city in its "investigation" and later closing of the baths. (He has also editorialized in favor of

cutting down the reeds in a part of a park in Boston in order to prevent men from having sex there.) He and one of his writers went to the baths, spied on the sexual activities of the customers, and informed the city health department of their "findings". Epperly later attended meetings with the health department officials who subsequently took action against the baths. The idea that people were engaging in sex of which he disapproved seems to so enrage Epperly and people like him that no restriction of personal freedom seems too high a cost (for other people) to pay to prevent "unsafe" sex between men.

The "safer" sexers tell people that they should engage only in totally risk-free sex. And some people feel that attempting to totally eliminate risk from their sex lives, even at the expense of eliminating sex altogether in some cases, is in fact the appropriate strategy. This strikes me as odd, since many of these people are willing to take risks in other areas of their lives everyday, like smoking tobacco, eating meat, driving a car, or even crossing the street against the light. Many of us wish to lower our risk of acquiring HIV, but are willing to take some risks in order to continue having a pleasurable and satisfying sex life. While driving without a seatbelt is arguably more risky than wearing one, I find driving more comfortable without one. The risk of injury while driving, whether strapped in or not, is small, and I'm willing to accept the possibly increased, but still small, risk of driving without a seatbelt in order to make driving more enjoyable. Similarly, I would be at lower risk of acquiring HIV infection if I stopped giving and getting rubber-free blow jobs, but I prefer to take that small risk in order to continue having an enjoyable sex life. As in all areas of my life, I, like many, if not most, people weigh the possible risk of my actions, decide if the benefits outweigh the risks, and act accordingly. Providing people with honest information about relative risks associated with different sexual activities, instead of unsubstantiated anti-sex warnings, would enable individuals to make informed decisions about their behavior and what level of risk is acceptable for them. A risk-free life would also be a pleasure-free life, and the total elimination of risk from their sex lives, even at the cost of eliminating sexual pleasure, as the AIDS educators recommend, is an attempt to narrow people's options and manipulate their behavior under the pretext of concern for their health.

IV drug use and AIDS

Another area where the AIDS "crisis" is being used as a pretext to restrict the scope of people's personal activities is that of recreational IV drug use. IV drug users and their sex partners make up a large and growing proportion of HIV-infected people and people who have AIDS. These people, while being urged to use safer injection techniques, are also being urged to give up IV drug use totally as the most efficient way to stop transmission of HIV among drug users and their partners. Although similar to the safe sex/no sex campaign directed at homosexual men, the anti-drug campaign, disguised as an anti-AIDS campaign is based on even more faulty premises, most importantly, the myth that IV drug use is inherently a high risk activity which should be outlawed.

Drug use would be totally free of risk from infectious disease transmission if the government simply decriminalized needle and drug use. Needle exchange programs are not what is needed, in part because they force drug users to submit to the surveillance of the public health authorities, but most importantly because they do not address the main cause of needle sharing and subsequent transmission of HIV: an inadequate supply of sterile needles. In the 38 U.S. states that do not criminalize possession of needles without a physician's prescription, IV drug users are not at high risk of AIDS because needle sharing is mini-

mized. The states with the highest number of IV drug users are also the states that restrict access to needles, contributing directly to the extremely high rate of HIV infection in drug users in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and other states. The government and the media constantly regale us with stories about the high rate of HIV infection among children born in New York, most of them children of IV drug users, but fail to point out that most of these infections would never have occurred were it not for laws against needles in New York. And even the totally inadequate needle exchange program being conducted in New York has been opposed by many politicians. These politicians and their laws are contributing to the death of IV drug users, their sex partners, and their children.

Decriminalizing and deregulating drug and needle use, would not only dramatically cut the rate of HIV infection among drug users, it would also reduce the other health risks of recreational drug use, such as endocarditis, poisoning by additives, and unintentional overdose, by bringing drug sales and manufacture aboveground and open to examination by users. Decriminalization and deregulation would also produce a precipitous fall in drug prices, improving the economic situation of drug users (and, incidentally, eliminating most street crime, most of which is a result of users seeking cash to pay high drug prices or dealers fighting to monopolize a lucrative market). These changes would likely result in an improvement in the general health of drug users which would help those already infected with HIV to better deal with the infection.

**Government is part of
the problem, not the solution
to the AIDS "crisis."**

Most people in this country, including most leftists and many anarchists, look to government as a source of help in dealing with AIDS. As in the case of IV drug use, government intervention in any area of our lives, including AIDS and its associated problems, causes more problems than it "solves". Eliminating government intervention in health care; "therapeutic" drug research, manufacture and sales; recreational drug and needle use and sales; and sexual activity, including sex-for-a-fee, would greatly increase people's options in both AIDS prevention and AIDS treatment.

As stated above, decriminalizing and deregulating recreational drugs and needles would decrease transmission of HIV and lead to better general health among IV drug users. Abolishing the FDA and deregulating the research, manufacture and sales of "therapeutic" (or non-recreational) drugs would also be of benefit in dealing with AIDS and HIV. The FDA holds up the release of drugs with proven benefits for people who have AIDS, like ganciclovir [DHPG], a drug used successfully for several years to treat retinitis caused by cytomegalovirus [CMV], a common infection in people who have AIDS. They recently tried to force people into sight-threatening studies where the drug would be withheld from some people until their disease worsened, potentially leading to blindness. In order to impose this on people the government had forbidden the manufacturer to provide the drug to people who needed it on a "compassionate use" basis, as it had in the past. Political pressure by AIDS activists resulted in a reversal of this policy, and the FDA is expected to approve the drug soon. The FDA also held up approval of aerosolized pentamidine, a treatment proven to prevent *Pneumocystis carinii* pneumonia, the most frequent cause of death in people who have AIDS, discouraging physicians from providing this treatment, and insurance companies from providing coverage for it. This policy resulted in many deaths that were preventable, and approval was granted only after widespread protests by AIDS activists. Eli-

minating regulation of drugs would enable people to use these drugs, as well as other drugs that may be effective in treating AIDS, but whose use is criminalized by government regulations.

Deregulation of drug research and manufacture would also result in the production of many new drugs to fight AIDS. Expensive government-mandated drug trials prevent many drug manufacturers from developing some drugs, and prevent new drug makers from entering the market, by making the business too costly. Abolishing the system of drug patents would bring down drug prices dramatically and allow new manufacturers to more easily enter the market. These two developments would result in more varied and cheaper drugs to use against AIDS (and other diseases as well). Doing away with the prescription system, which prohibits people from making their own choices about what drugs they wish to take, and forces them to go along with the dictates of government-certified physicians if they wish to get any drugs at all, would enable people, at long last, to really make their own decisions about their health care. A marketplace made up of totally unregulated drug makers competing for the business of consumers unencumbered by the dictates of government and its approved physicians would result in cheaper, more varied, and, hopefully, safer and more effective drug treatments for AIDS.

Deregulating the rest of health care would similarly increase people's freedom to choose how they wish to maintain their health and treat their illnesses. By imposing restrictions on who can provide health care advice and treatments through licensing laws and boards of registration, the government prevents people from choosing which health care practitioners they wish to hire. The system of prescribing (and proscribing) drugs and other treatments and procedures pushes people into the hands of government-approved MD's as there is no other way, under the current system to obtain many drugs and other medical treatments. Abolishing professional licensure and prescription laws would enable people to choose the people, drugs and treatments they wish to employ, without requiring them to seek the permission of "experts" licensed by the state.

Laws regulating individuals' sexual activities have also hindered the fight against AIDS. Criminalization of homosexual sex and laws preventing homosexuals from working in certain jobs and from participating in some activities, such as adopting or providing foster care for children, contribute to a pervasive anti-homosexual atmosphere in this country which discourages many men who engage in homosexual sex from acknowledging and accepting their sexual tastes. These men may, out of fear, not be willing to frequent places or read literature where information about truly risky sexual activity is available and remain ignorant of the hazards to which their sexual activity may expose them. Additionally, many men who engage in sex with men ignore information directed at homosexual men, since they don't consider themselves homosexual because of fear of the possible consequences of being known as homosexual. Abolishing laws which criminalize homosexual sex and discriminate against homosexual people would make it easier to fight the anti-homosexual bias so widespread in this country and would, hopefully, make it easier to reach all people who need information about AIDS.

Another group of people among whom anti-sex laws have contributed to an increased rate of HIV infection and AIDS is people who engage in sex for a fee, i.e., prostitutes. Criminalization of prostitution has resulted, at least among street prostitutes, in the association of this activity with other outlawed activities, especially IV drug use. Street prostitutes have a high rate of IV drug use, as well as often being in long term sexual relationships with IV drug users, these two activities being the main causes of the relatively high rate of HIV infection

among prostitutes in some areas of the U.S. Decriminalization of providing sex for a fee would enable prostitutes to work out of their homes or offices, advertise their services, and otherwise conduct their occupation as other service providers do, without living in fear of police and pimps. This "normalization" of their occupation would make them no more likely than anyone else to use IV drugs, and therefore put them at low risk of HIV infection.

Virtually all writers on the subject of AIDS, including even some anarchists who share my criticisms of government intervention in people's lives, feel that increased government funding for "the fight against AIDS" is a positive step. These people feel that without government funding, no research would be done, no new drugs devel-

other health care facilities is what makes health care in this country so expensive. Government-certified doctors have a virtual monopoly on provision of health care in the U.S., supporting government-imposed restrictions both on their own numbers, through state regulation of medical schools, and on other health care providers through occupational licensure laws. Hospital and health care institution regulations prevent new and/or alternative health care institutions from opening because of the expense of complying with government rules, many of which do nothing to improve health care or protect patients. (During the early '70s in Chicago, an illegal group, the Jane Collective, provided safe, effective, and cheap abortions without any government oversight.) This artificial shortage of health care

providers and institutions leads to hugely inflated health care costs. Abolishing state regulations and the medical monopoly would lead to plentiful and affordable health care providers and facilities of all healing philosophies, again obviating the need for government funding of health care.

Certainly there are some people who would not be able to afford even much cheaper health care. But government is not the only, and surely not the best, source of money. AIDS education and service organizations (as well as other private groups like the American Cancer Society) have been very successful in raising money from non-governmental sources. GMHC raises 80% of its \$11,000,000 budget from non-governmental sources. Such charitable organizations, funded by private contributions would, as they have done historically, be able to assist those who were still in need of financial assistance after health care deregulation. Taking voluntary contributions has the added benefit of removing attempts at government control of the activities of private groups, as when a \$700,000 federal research contract with GMHC was not renewed because of government opposition to a sexually explicit "safer" sex comic book they published. Avoiding government, including government money, whenever possible is the best way to ensure freedom of action in providing quality services to people in need.

In AIDS and health care policy, as in all areas of its activity, government is interested only in serving the interests of itself, and the politically and economically powerful social groups with which it is allied. Getting government out of the health care business, as well as the rest of our lives, is the best way to confront AIDS and other problems we face.

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oped, and no health care given to indigent people who have AIDS. Since such an idea is so widely accepted, people who believe this feel no need to argue the merits of their position; they simply state it and assume, rightly, that most people will agree. But abolishing government regulation of health care and drug development, would not only result in better AIDS treatment, as argued above, but would also eliminate the need for government funding.

Government funding is necessary to those who now do research into AIDS treatments and provide AIDS-related health care because of the restrictions imposed by government laws. Expensive, often unnecessary, government-mandated drug trials force drug makers to lay out massive amounts of money to develop new drugs. They are then awarded with exclusive patents that allow them to monopolize the market and charge extortionate amounts of money for their products. Because of the expense of the research and development process, many researchers rely on government funding to continue their work, and many people who have AIDS must rely on government to pay for their overpriced drugs. An unregulated market in drug manufacture and sales would enable drug makers to do research and develop drugs cheaply, and price competition produced by abolition of patents would produce affordable drugs. With cheap drug research and manufacture and cheap drugs, the necessity for state funding in the AIDS drug business would be eliminated.

Provision of other treatments and care for people who have AIDS would also be better served by deregulation of health care than by increased government aid. State restrictions on entry into the health care occupations and regulation of hospitals and

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An exchange with the FIFTH ESTATE

ANARCHY
& the SACRED

NOTE: This exchange brings together two strands of dialogue appearing in the pages of the *Fifth Estate*. One continues an ongoing discussion that started with a report on the 1987 Minneapolis anarchist gathering (Summer 1987 FE), followed by a letter exchange in the Spring 1988 issue. The other began with the critique of Deep Ecology (Fall 1987 & Spring 1988 FEs) and the letters in response to it in the Summer 1988 issue. Back issues of FE are available for 75¢ each from: POB 02548, Detroit, MI. 48202.

Introduction

For quite a while now, I've wondered about where the path taken by *Fifth Estate* writers in their exploration of primitive societies was taking them. The *Fifth Estate* has done some exciting and pioneering work in broadening the contemporary range of radical critique to include all of civilization and the totality of its modern technological capitalist incarnation. Yet the theoretical/practical grounding of this work has for the most part remained unstated, and even possibly unexamined. As time has passed it's become more and more obvious that this lack of theoretical and practical grounding has been leading FE writers into a progressively more uncritical embrace of the categories of the sacred and the spiritual. At the same time, this descent into religious themes has meant a retreat from the FE's earlier commitments to the exercise of critical rationality in a critique of alienation. From the first time I began to notice these complementary trends I've questioned them--though without getting any substantial answers until the following



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letters from Feral Faun and myself appeared in the Summer 1989 issue of FE, along with a fairly long reply by Dogbane Champion. Since Dogbane has indicated in private correspondence that he's not interested in continuing this exchange in the *Fifth Estate*, it is being reprinted here in order that I can more fully state my critique of the FE within the context of this obviously unfinished discussion.

--Lev Chernyi

Why embrace
the sacred?

Dear FE,

I read with some interest Dogbane Champion's reply to Jon Bekken's critical letter in FE #328/Spring 1988. And while I'm no special fan of the ideological anarcho-syndicalism and/or anarcho-communism Bekken promotes, I still think his picket sign message, "Say No to All Religion!", is worth further consideration, just as FE's pro-spiritual stance is worth a more critical examination.

Dogbane himself comments in his criticism of the ideological anarchism frequently found in the anarchist classics, that it was saturated with a "positivist, religious faith in the mystique of material progress." And he later, approvingly, quotes Jacques Ellul's obser-

vation that in technological society "there is nothing spiritual anywhere. But man cannot live without the sacred. He therefore transfers his sense of the sacred to the very thing which has destroyed its former object: to technique itself."

My question is this, why is it not obvious that this "religious," "spiritual," "sacred" "faith" in technological rationality is a direct, though nominally inverted, continuation of the traditions of religious alienation in which it was incubated and from which it was born. For me, the continuities between religion and scientific ideologies are more significant than their differences. Why reject scientific ideology only to embrace the idiocies of religion, spiritual-

ism and the sacred? Isn't it clear that your criticisms of the reification and worship of technique no less imply the importance of a critique of the reification and worship of nature?

I keep seeing a defense of the spiritual and the sacred in the pages of FE that seems to have no justification save the close association these concepts have established with the anthropology of primitive societies. Must we uncritically adopt the cultural mistakes of the primitives in a package deal along with all that is more valuable and worthy of our emulation? Can't we realize that if our "more advanced" stage of human culture has become as fucked up as it has, that it is highly likely that its "more primitive" stages--even before the first hints of ecological catastrophe and institutionalized hierarchies--probably had their flaws too?

The concept of the sacred is the foundation for all religion, spiritualism, ideology, worship, faith, belief. It logically (and inevitably) implies the existence of the profane. And though it may be transmuted into many other dualities--good and evil, spirit and matter, god and devil--they all perform the same insidious function of dividing our naturally whole experience of our world into two rather arbitrary conceptual spheres. The idea of the sacred is a conceptual fetishization, a reification of certain aspects of what we might otherwise more clearly see as the unity of

our experience. Why not just jettison it in favor of a truly holistic and non-dualist perspective?

There's no compelling reason that I can see for uncritically accepting what I can only describe as the "ideology" of certain (I'm far from convinced that all shared it) primitive societies. As far as I can guess, the sacred seems to be the conceptual seed of civilization. Why continue to cultivate it?

take care,
Lev Chernyi

The sacred is
the separated

Hello, FE folk,

Lone Wolf Circles' letter (entitled "Sacred World View" by FE editors in issue #329/Summer 1988) makes a common misuse of the word "sacred." "Sacred" does not mean and never has meant "intrinsic, equal." It means "separated, set apart" and usually specifically "set apart for a religious or other special purpose." A truly radical ecological viewpoint would, thus, utterly reject the concept of sacredness, pointing out that no being has a truly separate existence--we are all connected--so nothing is sacred.

It was the Judeo-Christian concept that humans were "sacred--separated from and place above all other beings--that was one of the main ideological justifications of the rape of the Earth. There is evidence that the concept of the sacred played a major role in the development of property and exchange, authority, sex roles, work, agriculture and the domestication of animals. In other words, it is a major source of this alienated civilization.

Of course, Lone Wolf Circles says basically that everything is sacred. But that is both blatantly untrue (everything is not "set aside for a special purpose") and, like all such glittering generalities, meaningless. It tells us nothing. It is just as meaningful, and more true, to say nothing is sacred. It cannot be an abstraction like "sacredness" which motivates our defense of the earth, but our own very real, personal love for the natural wild beings we interact with. Otherwise, we will fall into the absurd moralism and dogmatism which can be found in the writings of Abbey, Foreman, Miss Ann Thropy, and their ilk.

For a world of wild, free
beings sharing pleasure
without restraint,
Feral Faun

In defense of the sacred

By Dogbane Campion

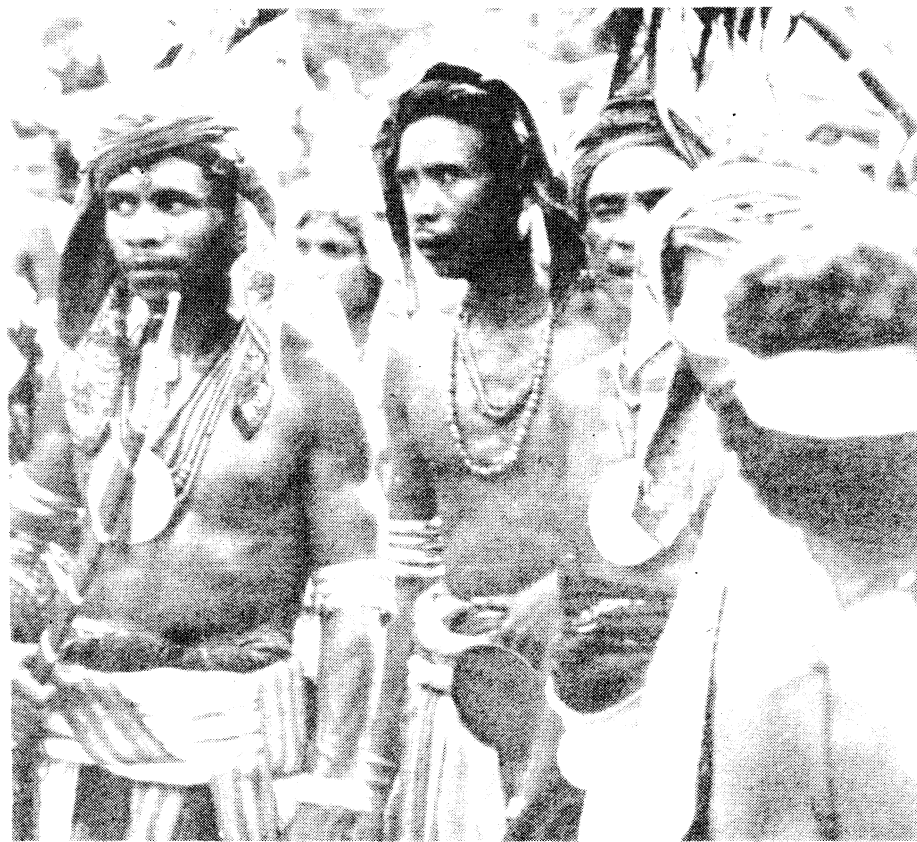
Lev Chernyi argues that the notion of the sacred that has been transferred to technology is "a direct, though nominally inverted, continuation of...religious alienation...." To the degree that this is true, it is because science and industrialism grew out of a culture whose religious experience was already cut off from deeper spiritual realities. While he and I agree that scientific materialism is itself a dogmatic faith (at least for most people, including the practitioners of science), on what other basis but empiricism and science does the modern atheist reject the "idiocies" of the sacred in all its manifestations?

To say, further, that the intuition of the sacred is false because the world is simply what it is, is to overlook that the world is also not what it is. The Christian civilization that created industrialism had lost sight of this insight, but it was understood in most archaic, and particularly primal, societies. "From one point of view all those divinities exist," a Tibetan lama told a visitor, "from another they are not real." And a Tantric text puts it, "All of these visualized deities are but symbols representing the various things that occur on the Path." (Quoted in Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, p.181.) In an essay on the role of clowns in Native American cultures, Barbara Tedlock tells the story of a white man cured by a Navajo healer during a Red Ant ceremony, who asked "whether he **really** had red ants in his system. The curer told him, 'No, not ants, but **ants**. We have to have a way of thinking strongly about disease.'" (In Dennis and Barbara Tedlock, *Teachings from the American Earth*, p.109.)

Are ants real, and ants an illusion? Is something someone tells you in a dream less real than what is told you in waking life, even if what you hear in the dream has such an effect upon you so as to change your life? Lev is confusing ants and **ants**, but primal peoples don't seem to do so. "The Sanema Indians told the anthropologist Johannes Wilbert that their shamans could fly, or at least walk one foot above the ground," reports Hans Peter Duerr in his luminous book *Dreamtime: Concerning the Boundary Between Wilderness and Civilization*. "Naively, the scientist answered that after all, he could see that the shamans ran around just like anybody else. Whereupon the Indians countered, 'The reason for that is that you do not **understand**.' ...Put differently, one might say that the Indians knew that the ethnographer had not the faintest notion what the word 'flying' meant in shamanistic context, because he presupposed that one could only fly like a bird or like a PanAm pilot" (pp.83-4).

If anything characterizes technological civilization's "magical rationalism," to use a term that reflects what I was trying to say previously, it is an intense fear of such flying combined with a pathological, Earth-destroying desire to simulate such flying with a physical

apparatus. This society has forgotten what the shaman knows, and what the popular song reminds us, that thinking is the best way to travel. Shamanistic flight becomes less and less possible in a world in which living nature is reduced to dead objects--resources or commodities--and from which spirit is banished: a world in which **nothing** is sacred. The need to fly remains, of



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course, hence Pan Am and the space shuttle. Technology rules in such a world because no other meaning remains other than blind instrumentalism and procedural nothingness.

In primal society, on the other hand, technique was kept to its proper dimensions by making it more a question of experimentation **in order to see**, confirming Mircea Eliade's definition of shamanism in his book by that name as a "technique of ecstasy." Such experimentation is found, to give some extreme examples, among the Inuit, who advise the explorer, "Go to a lonely place and rub a stone in a circle on a rock for hours and days on end," or "Let the person who wants a vision hang himself by his neck. When his face turns purple, take him down and have him describe what he's seen." (See *Shaking the Pumpkin: Traditional Poetry of the North American Indians*, edited by Jerome Rothenberg, p.197.)

A question of metaphor

Chernyi sees no justification for the affirmation of the sacred "save for the close association" between this perspective and primal societies--an enormous exception! These societies were saturated in myth, saturated in the sacred; we cannot approve their sense of kinship and community, their reci-

procity and communism, their stateless anarchy, their sensitive integration with the natural world, and then dismiss their profound sense of the sacredness of nature and the cycles of life, as "cultural mistakes." As Eliade has observed, in such societies, "every act which has a definite meaning--hunting, fishing, agriculture, games, conflicts, sexuality--in some way participates in the sacred...the only profane activities are those which have no mythical meaning, that is, which lack exemplary models." (*The Myth of the Eternal Return*, pp.27-8.) All meaningful acts, therefore, connect humans with the nonhuman other, the sacred. And as Ernst Cassirer has written, basic mythic conceptions and acts "are not mere products of fantasy which

vapor off from fixed, empirical, realistic existence, to float above the actual world like a bright mist; to primitive consciousness they present the **totality** of Being. The mythical form of conception is not something super-added to certain definite **elements** of empirical existence; instead, the primary "experience" itself is steeped in the imagery of myth and saturated with its atmosphere." (*Language and Myth*, p.10.)

Does the intuition of the sacred signal a reification of nature as it "really" is, or is it a question of the metaphorical, analogical forms of thought that characterize this intuition? Is the idea of the sacred a mystique that conceals an essential "unity of...experience" or is it a way through this remarkable and problematic phenomenon called **mind**, of connecting with and apprehending the world? Is sacred myth a lie, or as Joseph Campbell puts it, "the secret opening through which the inexhaustible energies of the cosmos pour into human cultural manifestation"? (*Hero*, p.3.) Is it certain that the notion of the sacred is the direct source of alienated religion and abstract science, or could alienated religion itself be a **simulation** of the original notion, with this ambivalence between ants and **ants** suppressed, in order to legitimate a nascent leviathan and its breach of the reciprocal gift and symbolic cycles? And with the passing of so many generations of slaves, couldn't this religion have

become a pillar of authoritarian conditioning, a spectral image of that which it replaced?

Why do we suffer when someone cuts down an ancient tree? Is it because "resources" are being wasted, or because we think the tree-cutter is making an obscene profit, or is it for aesthetic reasons? Or is there some level of meaning, connection, kinship, that has a spiritual, sacred character, a personhood? How about if someone cuts down our parents? Does a spirit reside within them, the people and the trees, is there an **orenda** there, or are they just loops of geobiochemical processes? The impoverished optic of scientific rationalism dismisses this **orenda**, this **manitu**, this Mighty Something as superstitious idiosyncrasy. Similarly, the ethnographer congratulates himself for knowing that the vision of the **bruja** is "really" only a hallucination caused by pharmacological substances. Commenting on this mentality, Duerr writes, "What is **real**, the scientists say, must **pass our tests**." Of course to pass our tests this reality must be commensurable to our experiments, must fit into our laboratory. But by that time it no longer matters. Duerr quotes a Haitian proverb which says that "the spirits leave the island when the anthropologists arrive" (p.127).

A range of reality

Yet for the primal or archaic person, as Eliade points out, "It is the experience of the sacred--that is, an encounter with a transhuman reality--which gives birth to the idea that something **really** exists" (*Myth and Reality*, p.139). And as Robin and Tomia Ridington write in an essay on shamanism in the Tedlock book, myths "do not give meaning to life but rather disclose the meaning that is its intrinsic property" (p.191). "The shaman does not really fly up and down, but inside to the meaning of things" (p.192). One might ask, if the sacred has a symbolic dimension, why not go past it to a direct experience of reality? As Duerr might answer, "What the sorcerer is concerned with is to demonstrate to the anthropologist that there is a range of reality which his armour-plated culture usually forbids him to enter, and even more importantly, to recognize as reality" (p.92). While the rationalist may try to stand back from events to see an "objective" view, the shaman **participates** in them.

In *An Essay on Man*, Ernst Cassirer points out that this dual reality with which the primal person lives and which civilization tries to suppress actually does represent a more fundamental unity. The primal person, he writes, does not approach reality "with merely pragmatic or technical interest...His view of nature is neither merely theoretical nor merely practical; it is **sympathetic**...Primitive man by no means lacks the ability to grasp the empirical differences of things. But in his conception of nature and life all these differences are obliterated by a stronger feeling: the deep conviction of a fundamental and indelible **solidarity of life** that bridges over the multiplicity and variety of its single forms. He does not ascribe to himself a unique and privileged place in the scale of nature. The

Continued on next page

In defense of the sacred

Continued from previous page

consanguinity of all forms of life seems to be a general presupposition of mythical thought" (p.109). Commenting on this celebrated passage, Jamake Highwater remarks that for Native Americans, this solidarity for life "is an expression of kinship and not a conviction of unity" (*The Primal Mind*, p.69). In such a way, it does not impose any single vision, but rather "a multiverse of possibilities" (p.68).

The rediscovery of a primal vision has barely started, along with the critical Luddism that contests science and technology. What can it mean for us to ferret out the "flaws" of primal society and its vision, flaws that may have existed, we are told, "even before the first hints" of hierarchy and ecological destruction? Such a search probably says more about our society than it does about theirs. Or perhaps nature, too, has its flaws, flaws which existed even before a hint of the appearance of this problematic, tricksterish figure, humanity. And can we even use the word "stage" (even qualified by putting quotation marks around the obviously mechanistic and Eurocentric "primitive" and "advanced" stages), given the long continuity and stability of such societies—some ninety-nine percent of human existence—in contrast with our eyeblink of history? Can we assume that the sacred as it existed for someone like Black Elk or a Tungus shaman led 'directly' to what it came to mean to born-again Christians, Imams, and N.A.S.A. technocrats? Couldn't it be that there was instead a reversal of magnetic poles in primitive society, that led to the rupture and to state society, with causes that may be beyond available evidence and our ability to uncover? Isn't the notion of a fatal flaw or first cause more something we bring to this question from our world?

Our world has been desacralized

Our world has been desacralized; even though we are plagued by "magical rationalism" or what has been called technolatriy, so it is difficult for us to comprehend a sacred vision free of alienated and manipulative aspects. It is because our civilization has suppressed the balance between ants and ants. The world of ants has been degraded to energy and resources; the world of ants has been burned at the stake.

In Europe, both events coincided in the first stirrings of industrial capitalism. I wouldn't argue that we can directly recreate such an integrated vision; I am only arguing that we cannot and must not deny it. The sacred persists, either as a revenge on its own repression, as the quote from Ellul suggests, or as an opening for us to experience that mysterious other in nature and in ourselves. The Teton Sioux bear singer sings,

"my paw is sacred
all things are sacred."

(See Jerome Rothenberg, editor, *Technicians of the Sacred*, p.417.) It is not a

logical absurdity, as Feral argues, that everything is sacred. It depends, for one thing, on how we define everything.

The dualities that Lev derides may also be a matter of interpretation. As Stanley Diamond writes in his essay "Job and the Trickster," the structure of civilization is reflected in deep, deterministic, unyielding dualities of good and evil. Ambivalence, which among primal peoples is allowed freedom to express itself fully and openly (for example, through the tradition of clowns who mock sacred ceremonies with impunity and who thus play an important role in reminding people of the mythic duality), is suppressed in civilization.

"Conversely," Diamond writes, "among primitive peoples, all antinomies are bound into the ritual cycle. The sacred is an immediate aspect of man's experience. Good and evil, creation and destruction—the dual image of the deity as expressed in the trickster—are fused in the network of actions that define primitive society. Therefore moral fanaticism, based as it is on abstract notions of pure good, pure evil and the exclusive moral possibility or fate of any particular individual—what may be called moral exceptionalism—is absent among primitive people. In primitive perspective, human beings are assumed to be capable of any excess. But every step of the way, the person is held to account for those actions that seriously threaten the balance of society and nature" (*In Search of the Primitive*, pp.260-91).

The clown underscores this refusal of absolute dualities. In Native American societies, the clown lived a life of reversals, throwing every custom and even notions of common sense into question; once recognized as such a person, the clown was considered as special and protected. Clowns would wear heavy clothing in the hot summer and go nearly naked in the winter, complaining about the cold in the summer and the heat in the winter. Every experience was *derealized*, to use the surrealist term, by the clown in what has been called a "burlesque of the sacred." Diamond notes, referring to this cultural mode, that one "can hardly imagine" such mockery "taking place, at, let us say, a modern patriotic ceremony; in this sense all state structures tend toward the totalitarian. But, among primitives, sacred events are frequently and publicly caricatured, even as they occur" (pp.153-54).

According to Barbara Tedlock, "the Navajo clown who reveals sleight-of-hand tricks (thus causing people to laugh at the shamans) is in effect reminding the people that these tricks are not in themselves the power which cures them, but instead are a symbolic demonstration of power which is itself invisible" (p.109). Another writer on the Navajos observes that although Navajo belief "stresses the dichotomy of good and evil, it does not set one off against the other. It rather emphasizes one quality or element in a being which in different circumstances may be the opposite. Sun, though 'great' and a 'god,' is not unexceptionally good...Similarly, few things are wholly bad...Thus evil may be transformed into good; things predominantly evil, such as snake, lightning, thunder, coyote may even be invoked. If they have been the cause of misfortune or illness, they alone can correct it...In short, definition

depends upon emphasis, not upon exclusion" (Reichard's *Navajo Religion*, quoted in *Technicians of the Sacred*, pp.499-500).

Tedlock tells the Acoma tale of the first clown, who, interestingly, "was different from the other people because he knew something about himself...and since he was not 'afraid of anything,' nor did he 'regard anything as sacred,' he was 'to be allowed everywhere'" (p.110). Even an irreverent, non-believing prankster found a place in such a community. The contrast with the repressive religions of this world is stark, though the clown tradition existed even into the late Middle Ages in Christian Europe, which should prevent us from painting even that period in unambiguous black and white. Remember that such paint was mixed by eighteenth century philosophes and nineteenth century positivists. The rigid dualities that Lev Chernyi protests do not appear to come from that constellation of sacred beliefs we see among primal peoples; rather, they seem to be part of the process by which the Old Ways are suppressed.

This is not to argue that we should mechanistically copy the ways of primal peoples; we are who we are and can do nothing but start from our own historical experience. But I think that the growing recognition of the sacredness of the living Earth, of the personhood of the sky, land and waters, of our familial and emotional connection to the rest of creation, is a fundamental element in

finding our place in the natural world and re-establishing a proper balance with it. It is a necessary component, I think, in what Lewis Mumford called that "profound and ultimately planet-wide re-orientation of modern culture" that it will take to turn the present exterminist onslaught around (*The Pentagon of Power*, p.371). Obviously, we have to be very careful how we express this intuition, we need to act with a certain humility. We can't pretend to have some spiritual program or a new religion; it would be ludicrous and manipulative and end up a horrible simulation of the forms of primal animism without any of their content. But a dramatic renewal of identification with the Earth and revulsion against an instrumental relationship with it seem necessary to break through this civilization and create a new culture.

The situationist image of people making a revolution to realize their own desires is incomplete; they must also establish a community with the land. As Theodore Roszak writes in *Where the Wasteland Ends*, "Until we find our way once more to the experience of transcendence, until we feel the life within us and the nature about us as sacred, there will seem to be no 'realistic' future other than more of the same: a single vision and the artificial environment forever and ever, amen" (p.420).

"It may be that some little root of the sacred tree still lives. Nourish it, then, that it may leaf and bloom and fill with singing birds."—Black Elk

The cult of the sacred

By Lev Chernyi

Among those who still pay attention, there can no longer be any doubt that the technological dream is currently being outflanked by a massively growing crisis of ecological destruction. In the realm of culture there is a rapidly spreading disenchantment with the emptiness of scientific rationalism and the cult of technique. And among radicals there is an increasing realization of the overwhelming scope of the threat posed by capital, technology and the state to every aspect of what still remains relatively freely or directly lived. In such a context, a genuinely radical approach to the possibilities for social change seems to demand a re-evaluation of every aspect of civilization and a complete rethinking of the revolutionary project.

Within the radical milieu the Fifth Estate has been in the forefront of this process of rethinking and re-evaluation. Drawing on the groundwork laid by earlier generations of anarchist, Marxist and other utopian radicals (notably including the Frankfurt School theorists and the Situationist International), the FE has helped apply a consistently radical critique to strategic areas of modern life left relatively untouched by earlier efforts—especially to the development of technology, the sine qua non of modernity. At the same time the FE has been an important voice aiding in the rediscovery and revaluation of "primitive" societies. In the face of the increasingly concentrated symptoms of

our contemporary world crises the allure of the primitive has found a new significance, offering a "new" perspective on the whole modern world and its threatened disintegration. It is within this context that the Fifth Estate's defense of "the sacred" has become an increasingly important foundation for its current ideological development. With FE writers I share a concern with rehabilitating certain aspects of primitive societies and a primitivist perspective. However, I do not share their enthusiasm for the rehabilitation of religion, "primitive" though it may be.

This is why I wrote the letter printed in the Summer '89 issue of FE (#332) under the title of "Anarchy & the Sacred: A Continuing Exchange." In this letter I argued that though much within primitive cultures is "valuable and worthy of our emulation," it will only lead to more problems if we also "uncritically adopt [their] cultural mistakes...in a package deal." As I explained then, I think these cultural mistakes center around the substance and role of religion. And because of its centrality to every religious project, this means the substance and role of "the sacred." As I further argued, the modern faith in technical rationalism is a "direct, though nominally inverted, continuation of the traditions of religious alienation in which it was incubated and from which it was born. For me, the continuities between religion and scientific ideologies are more significant than

their differences." In other words, religious alienation has been the foundation for the modern alienation embedded in capitalist relations and technique. Their essential similarities have long been recognized--by Jacques Ellul, Fredy Perlman and other writers favored by the FE. However, the significance assigned to these similarities has been inexplicably downplayed, ignored or mystified. Rather than drawing the obvious conclusion that the struggle against our modern forms of alienation must be based on the struggle against the religious alienation from which they derive, FE writers have chosen to abandon their critique at the gates of (primitive) religion. In doing so they have succumbed to the popular ideological amnesia involved in the current uncritical revival of "non-traditional" (and even traditional) religion, just when it has become essential to push the critique of alienation to the heart of the sacred.

Dogbane Campion's response to my letter (and to a letter from Feral Faun raising a related question) fails not just to provide any convincing arguments for this capitulation to religion, it also demonstrates exactly how fatal this capitulation can be for the whole critical/transformational project. It demonstrates yet again that once religion is allowed to get a foot in the door, it doesn't matter whether the ensuing sales pitch is low-pressure or hard sell. The sale has already been consummated; the critique of alienation has been replaced by the suppression of criticism.

A battle of traditions, but which ones?

Amongst "alternative" and radical circles it has become increasingly popular to draw a rigid distinction between two opposed traditions whose names vary according to the writer one consults, but whose essence remains remarkably similar. These traditions can be called the religious and the scientific, or the spiritual and the materialist, or even the animist and the instrumentalist traditions. Whatever they are called, though, the theoretical duality they provide has become the basis for a ready-made philosophy of history which inverts that of Enlightenment philosophy.

In its broadest sense Enlightenment philosophy tended to see religion as mere superstition in need of replacement by an increasingly positivist and scientific form of "Truth." This Truth was seen as destined to replace religious mystification through an irreversible historical process fueled by a teleological myth of human progress. But now that progress has gone awry the Enlightenment tradition is beginning to take a beating in some circles at the hands of the still nascent revival of religion. Suddenly, Enlightenment rationalism is blamed for everything from the emptiness of modern life to the ecological crisis. Even radical currents which have historically identified themselves with the Enlightenment project have begun to attempt to distance themselves from it as they seek new grounding. And it is in this context that the FE's embrace of the sacred must be

understood. Apparently having never developed any firm theoretical roots, Dogbane Campion has simply decided to jump traditions following the superficial logic of his rediscovery of the "primitive." Unfortunately, though, this move doesn't necessarily reflect any "deeper" insights. At best it only rests upon a similar set of delusions.

From a radical perspective the problem with both anti-religious, Enlightenment philosophy and anti-Enlightenment spiritualism is that each only confronts the other on a superficial plane of conflict. Neither can ever reach the real root of our contemporary problems. This is because each is more committed to fetishizing its own forms of abstract conceptualization than it is to uncovering the actual bases of the extreme alienation we experience. Anti-religious, Enlightenment philosophy equates more "primitive" societies with immaturity as it seeks to impose the progressive rule of an objective Truth over all of nature and human life. Human experience is subordinated to a fetishized form of knowledge and power. And it sees in religion and spirituality only the nemesis of irrational faith born in ignorance. Anti-Enlightenment spiritualism takes the Enlightenment at its word, only inverting this scenario. Pre-Enlightenment societies become the bearers of a more mature vision of nature and life--whether these societies are supposed to end with the Middle Ages, Ancient Greece, the Egyptian empire, the Sumerian city-states, or with the Neolithic agricultural revolution. Since the Enlightenment accuses it of irrationalism, anti-Enlightenment spiritualism turns this into a positive principle, denigrating all rationality. Making sense of life is subordinated to a fetishized form of obeisance to nature--reverence for the sacred.

A deeper examination of the roots of these two traditions reveals that they are essentially identical in form, if not in content. Both involve a reification of experience which suppresses the priority of that which is directly lived in favor of fetishized abstractions that are viewed as more important and fundamental. The spiritual/religious tradition is generally taken to have grown out of an animist conception of the natural world in which all beings are alive, sharing in a mutual kinship with humans. Yet the religious notion of animism takes this conception one step further. It imagines that there is a separable, sacred spirit standing behind each being and animating its existence. Thus religious animism can be seen as the earliest form of metaphysical dualism, separating the world into animating spirits and animated bodies. There is only a short distance between religious animism and the flowering of polytheism. Certain of the more sacred spirits eventually become enshrined and anthropomorphized as gods, ruling over lesser spirits. And beyond polytheism, monotheism represents the successful consolidation of the powers of lesser gods into one totalitarian, anthropomorphic God. Yet, within the logic of the sacred, the unseen is always considered more real and powerful than that which appears. Thus, as the religious tradition continues to develop, the concept of the sacred is increasingly etherealized. The more obviously human characteristics of the deity are suppressed as mere residues left over from a more primitive era.

Eventually, as the idea of God is increasingly rationalized, some of the more zealous rationalists inevitably discover that "pure" rationalism no longer requires the idea of God! In fact, the idea of God impedes its progress. And thus is born the Enlightenment, which retroactively reinterprets history in terms of the development of rationalism as a tradition in itself (in opposition to the religious tradition, whose own rationalism is progressively denied). Beauty, Truth, Being and Law replace God and inherit the mantle of the sacred as a qualitative rationalism overtakes the religious tradition. Though later on, as the qualitative devolves into the quantitative rationalism of modern technological-scientific perspectives, the sacred is further splintered into myriad ideological, technical and commodity forms.

Of course, all this is by necessity oversimplified, leaving out the parallel (dialectical) historical development of civilization, science, technology and market relations. Yet it should be clear, at the least, that if religion and enlightenment are both really expressions of a single tradition, attempts to play them off against one another may have an occult function. Could this function be analogous to the Cold War fight between Eastern Communist and Western capitalist ideologies, which has for so long prevented the rise of a third force--the anarchic liberation of desire? If so, what is the nature of the third force which has been obscured by this spectacular, yet superficial, battle between religion and enlightenment?

The real counter-tradition

For all the emotional heat generated in the attacks on Enlightenment rationalism, a surprising amount of rationalist "light" remains securely embedded within anti-Enlightenment ideology. It isn't just by chance that Dogbane remains so skeptical--not to say oblivious--towards the possible existence of a third perspective, neither spiritual nor scientific. He naively shares typical Enlightenment assumptions that only rationalism can be rational, that alienation really can be overcome through purely symbolic reconciliation, and that the only alternative to religion is enlightenment metaphysics! Yet he is far, far from alone in this. The superficial level of opposition to the Enlightenment tradition is legion. For example, one immediately thinks of Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno's oversimplified, but landmark study, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Or the contentions of other authors Dogbane cites--like the most sophisticated of the New-Age theorists, Theodore Roszak, or the semi-Marxist anthropologist Stanley Diamond. Despite their own critique, Horkheimer and Adorno remain nostalgic for old-fashioned, qualitative rationalism because they apparently see no other possibilities. Roszak, on the other hand, unapologetically pursues a sacred "single vision" just as cramped in its own way as the Newtonian single vision he so eloquently criticizes. While Diamond, in his book *In Search of the Primitive*, remains so confused over the question that he can only call for a reconciliation of Marxism and the sa-

cred! When some of the finest contemporary theorists have already reached such dead-ends, is it any wonder that these same naively narrow conceptions are now celebrated everywhere as though they had some radical, liberating content?

Although there isn't enough room in this essay to reconstruct an entire, relatively well hidden counter-tradition, its outlines can be suggested. Some theorists have already engaged in a similar project when they have reconstructed a prehistory of the anarchist movement--including millenarian peasant movements, slave revolts, certain of the Anabaptist movements, the early Taoists, and stateless primitives. Yet these attempts at reconstructing anarchist prehistory have often been impeded by precisely this problem of interpreting the pseudo-conflict between religion and enlightenment. And this is largely because, given the extremely fragmented, minority status of the countertradition, it could hardly be expected to have found more than fragmented, partial expressions throughout recorded history. Both the religious and enlightenment traditions have been (at different times and places) ruling traditions, while the countertradition has almost always been fugitive, persecuted and suppressed by both ruling traditions.

The most important "principle" distinguishing the countertradition from the sacred/enlightenment tradition(s) is its emphasis on the abolition of social alienation in the lived experience of the community rather than through a merely symbolic reconciliation. From enlightenment perspectives, the abolition of alienation is a rational process through which living humans are expected to conceptually and practically reconcile themselves with the metaphysical categories of the prevailing philosophy. For Plato this meant adapting one's life to the ideal forms intuited by the philosopher-king. For Hegel this meant adapting oneself to the dialectical process through which Spirit realizes itself. For the Marxists (who brought the Hegelian conception halfway down to Earth) this meant reducing oneself to being a member of an economic class--the proletariat--in the supposed process of abolishing itself as a class. For contemporary industrial-capitalist humanity this means "realizing oneself" through the purchase of commodities and through the adoption of one's own "unique" selection of prepackaged ideologies. From the perspective of the religious tradition, on the contrary, the abolition of alienation involves adapting to, and identifying oneself with, ideas of Spirit, or God, or the Sacred. Big difference! For the countertradition the choice of enlightenment versus religious symbology is completely empty. If one is genuinely interested in abolishing social alienation in lived experience, neither Truth, nor commodities, nor the Sacred is of the slightest use.

The emphasis on the unity of lived experience over the fetishization of symbolic unity doesn't mean, however, that thinking and theory are always "ideological," as too many young anarchists seem to believe. Because one rejects rationalism and theology does not mean that one has to reject all rationality. The difference is between the conceited Logos (religious or ration-

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Talking to ourselves

By Ben G. Price

Voices in our heads: are they the echoes of our thoughts? Are they the gift of inspiration from a personal muse or god? Or are they the neurological chatter between two hemispheres of a brain that has been traumatized by the pressures of a human population epidemic?

Each of us experiences, almost constantly, one form or another of verbal hallucination. It may be manifested as a song that we "can't get out of our head," or as a remembered argument that we keep replaying on a tide of adrenaline, subtly changing the script each time and inserting the witticisms we wish had come to mind, until we are satisfied with the versions we choose to commit to memory. The "voices" may be experienced as the words of a fervent prayer, or as the sound of our own name that makes our heads turn, only to find that no one has called to us and we have constructed the experience from the garbled bits of auditory information that fill a crowded room.

So simple a thing as "thinking" or "remembering" will conjure voices inside of us. Usually, we take them for granted, believing them to be a natural and indivisible part of us. It is only when our attention is forcibly focussed on these "voices" that we begin to feel queasy and self-conscious that the innermost company we keep has been exposed to scrutiny. Our thoughts, ruminations, dreams, and fantasies are "personal." We don't like being held publicly accountable for them.

Popular wisdom has it that the first sign of mental distress occurs when you start talking to yourself. If that's the case, we are all certainly in trouble. Whether vocalized audibly or not, verbal communication with the self is a commonplace phenomenon. Even when we are not talking to somebody else, we continually "talk to ourselves." Prelaryngeal verbalizations, in which we short-circuit the actual speaking of words yet subjectively experience serial vocalizations, comprise what most of us mean when we say we are "thinking." We tend to do this "thinking" using the phonetic representations of "words" that are available in the symbolic coinage of a language generated by a culture.

Subjectively, there seems to be

something valuable and precious about this practice of thinking. Thinking, we are told, validates our very existence. Descartes is credited with dismantling philosophical inquiries prior to his lifetime and replacing what came to be considered metaphysical babble with the simple profundity: "I think, therefore I am." By accepting this opinion of our subjective ruminations, giving them existential eminence, subsequent generations of thinkers have re-conceptualized our ability to experience our own existence and survival as entities as inextricably dependent upon the prelaryngeal manipulation of verbal symbols. This change-of-mind, which really amounts to a revolution in human consciousness, has mesmerized us by attributing deific powers to humanity's most intimate confidant: his own brain.

In a sense, this mental revolution is only a restatement of a primitive mindset that had gods talking directly to men, but it is a new dialectic all the same. In accepting the existential opinion formalized by Descartes, we continue to omit any recognition of the cultural malleability of our mentality. By internalizing the existential identity of thought, we institutionalize our subjective perceptions as being true representations of "what is." This has been the practical outcome and, in part, may account for the rise in the popular sense of "Individualism," as well as the ease with which a growing number of individuals question "official" pronouncements of what is true. That other minds in the past have and presently continue to perceive things much differently does not seem to breach the certainty we espouse for our own opinions. When we are confronted by others who do not share our thoughts but espouse "weird views" that contradict them, we react as though those variant thoughts are frontal assaults not merely on our convictions, but also on our existence and survival. Heresy is, to us, as much a biological threat as an ideological one. It is a logical outcome of our trust in Descartes, and hence ourselves.

How devastating to the ego, to the sense of certainty and security, would be the notion that we are not identical with our own thoughts! Such would be the blasphemy against our fundamental belief and against the self-coronation of

our deified individuality that we would seek to evade the concept at all costs, disprove it through emotional rationalizations, and finally, deny that the subject had ever been broached. Any hint that the chatter going on between our ears might be inaccurate, ungentle, or even delusional is met with hostility, understandably. Given our dogmatic linkage between what we think and what we are, our instinctual reaction is adrenal and defensive. Every ego flies the banner: "Don't tread on my opinions," and defends those opinions with everything from blissful ignorance to violence against non-identical opinions. It is as though our brains have developed an organic defense mechanism to reject transplantation of ideas.

We seem to have no difficulty asserting the invalidity of someone else's mental chatter. We are even willing to go so far as defining disagreeable thoughts in others as symptoms of perceptual malignancy, which we feel justified in treating with "therapeutic" incarceration or mandatory sedation, or a combination of social coercion and restraint. It seems not to occur to us that if one set of perceptions can be judged invalid, so may they all, including our own.

Another thing that does not seem to occur to us regularly is that our thoughts, the very ones we defend so vigorously, are not our own in large measure. They are bestowed on us, defined first in their form by the grammar and rules of expression. Secondly, our thoughts are defined (given finite bounds) by the limited variety of symbols in our language. In essence, we are too often left at a "loss for words." The third and most hideous way that our thoughts are defined and formed by something other than "ourselves" is through social intervention into the individual psyche. The mandatory admission of certain "truths" and the strict adherence to certain "taboos" effectively box-in any longing for creative and individualized mentation. Fourthly, the conscious blurring of distinctions between what symbols we are left to reason with is a familiar rhetorical tool used by the influential in order to manipulate the thoughts we do manage to put together in our heads. A quick reference to George Orwell's appendix to his novel 1984 will be quite instruc-

tive.

Each "healthy" individual, as defined by society's sycophants, acts as a resonator of socially acceptable thought. Mental health is recognized by the A.M.A. and syndicated psychological columnists as the ability of the individual mind to vibrate sympathetically, like a tuning fork, to society's "keynote" speakers and authorities.

That the music of our cranial spheres does not emanate from the gods, nor leap heroically into existence out of our very being, is a disconcerting thought to some. If we are conditioned to think certain thoughts on cue, as was Pavlov's dog conditioned to the dinner bell, are we any better than trained dogs?

The authorities and experts don't want us to know it, but when we identify our true selves with the mental constructs into which we have been "educated" and conditioned, without being aware of the real source of those mental constructs, we sow the seeds of paradox and personal turmoil. Professional psychologists frustrate themselves trying to eradicate from popular consciousness the idea of a "split-personality" as the hallmark of severe mental illness. For as much as they try to impress upon us that this is an erroneous popular understanding of psychological disorders, there is strong popular identification with the notion that a mind can be at odds with "sane" society, and thus "split." What is at odds in such cases is the perceived self-interest of the "patient" and the attempted imposition of pre-fab perceptions by society. Psychosis may be the healthy reaction of a mind defending itself from forceful obliteration.

Are the thoughts we have the thoughts we are allowed to have? And if our thoughts are who we are, then are we merely who we are permitted to be? Have they, as Thomas Pynchon put it, busted the sod prairies of our brains, tilled and sown them, and subsidized us not to grow anything of our own?

The "talking heads" of television anchormen, as they interpret and critique for us the doings in the world out there, are but relay stations, transmitting the communal image to be subjectively experienced as the world "in-here," that is, in the talking heads we carry around on our shoulders.

The voices that are allowed to reverberate in our heads are catechetical and instructive as to permissible attitudes, perceptions, and behavior. Society is the brain's F.C.C., and it will take away our license to receive and transmit if we break its rules.

Most of us are true believers of one stripe or another, believing in any dogma, any expert, any cause as manifestly more legitimate than our own unfiltered perceptions. We are conditioned to live the catechetical rather than the gnostic life. We can't "hear ourselves think" over the constant chatter of internalized injunctions and propaganda. We are all talk. Subtly, we have been taught that life is not a participatory sport.

"Talking to ourselves," or "thinking," according to the hypocritical defenders of the consensus, is one of the healthiest things we can do. It actively reinforces, through repetition, our verbal social conditioning. "Reality-testing" among suspect clients sets off alarms in the suspicious minds of society's watchdog "mental health professionals," who



Photo by Mikell Zhan

don't know that the "reality" they inquisitorially defend against close scrutiny by the "insane" (unsanitary thinkers) is a mere consensus, not an absolute.

The more intrepid among us may prefer to challenge the consensus, despite the dangers of openly doing so. There is good evidence that once a mind becomes convinced that the greater portion of its thoughts and opinions have not been self-generated, but in fact comprise a cultural artifact imprinted upon the organ of perception, this knowledge is sufficient to begin a process of self-discovery. The Socratic dictum to "know thyself" loses some of the tarnish of a cliché and takes on new life once there is a realization that thought is not necessarily "self." Coincidentally, the discomfort of becoming "self-conscious" when one's "private" thoughts are put under the spotlight is not so much traumatic as it is revealing. The process of "brainwashing," opinions of society to the contrary notwithstanding, can indeed have a larval effect. Becoming conscious of one's true self would seem to be a liberating experience worth pursuing.

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The cult of the sacred

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alist) which claims to order the world, and the relativistic, situated discourse which takes place between humans in community without any claim to finality. The pretense to absolute or (unsituated) objective knowledge is always totalitarian. For the counter-tradition, on the other hand, rationality is always seen as an outgrowth of life and nature—reflecting its origins rather than prescribing the nature of reality. This form of rationality is skeptical (in the original philosophical sense of the term) of all metaphysics and theology. It is dialectical and phenomenological rather than transcendent. It is always bound to finite living, social and historical beings, their desires and their worlds, not to any supposed transcendental realities in which everything is perfectly unreal.

The anthropology of primal societies

As Dogbane mentions, the search for the "flaws" of primal society...says more about our society than it does about theirs." Yet this obvious point could never destroy the legitimacy of the questions we must bring to our encounters with the "primal." For if we are not allowed to question it, our only course would be to mindlessly recon-

struct an image of the primal, or else to mindlessly reject it. Certainly, the search for the origins of our social alienation says more about us—precisely because it is our search!

The overwhelming fact which confronts us, though, is that we **do not and cannot know** how humanity actually lived before the advent of recorded history. And even recorded history must remain problematic, a question of interpretations, biases, selective attention and deliberate inattention. Thus anthropology, as well, can hardly be trusted. This specialized form of academic inquiry grew out of the unavoidable necessity for civilization to come to some kind of (generally self-superior) understanding of non-civilized societies. It certainly does not grow directly out of the liberatory practice of anarchic movements! Rather it is a product of the Enlightenment's project of dominating nature and the religious project of saving souls. Thus, while Dogbane would like to imagine—with the anthropologists—that primal societies have always been essentially the same as those that are being investigated now, I see several huge problems with this assumption. First, as even Stanley Diamond acknowledges, for anthropology the very concept of the primitive is mediated through Enlightenment (and also to some degree religious) metaphysics; to the extent which anthropology knows anything about primal societies, that knowledge has already been filtered through a non-primal perspective. Secondly, the knowledge we have of primal societies is almost always second, third or even fourth-hand. Especially at the level where anthropo-

logical generalizations are made, there are so many assumptions and interpretations made by so many individual observers that one can never be certain of what was actually observed. Finally, every primal society that has been investigated by anthropologists is also in the process of being, or has already been, invaded by civilization. There never will be any "pure," untouched primal societies which we can point to as "true" representatives of the primal condition of humanity for, as Dogbane quantitatively puts it, "some ninety-nine percent of human existence—in contrast with our eyeblink of history."

Interpreting anthropology is thus highly problematic. Dogbane flippantly misquotes my statement that "the defense of the spiritual and the sacred in the pages of the FE...seems to have no justification save the close association these concepts have established with the **anthropology** of primitive societies," inexplicably leaving out the crucial phrase (which I've emphasized here). But this is no small objection. At one time anthropologists insisted on interpreting primitive social relationships in terms of civilized political concepts—e.g. laws, the state, kings, political chiefs, etc. Only lately they have come around to the realization that these civilized conceptions are actually quite out of place in describing primitive social arrangements; the idea of stateless, anarchic communities has become more prevalent. Does this non-political revisionism foreshadow a coming non-religious revisionism? I don't know, yet I can't help but question the automatic recourse of

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Columns

A's for Attitude

The breakdown of sexual roles

A man must play his role as a man. Or so they believe. He must therefore convey his masculinity by any means acceptable. Behavior doesn't tell it all; one must look the part too. And while so-called feminine behavior might be dismissable, a man who looks or dresses like a female is automatically condemned as strange. What's strange to me is that there is such a thing as women's and men's fashions.

"What will the neighbors say?" is what they told us when we left the house in our outrageous creations. I was very definitely unlady-like: I left with a shaved head, shapeless clothes and combat boots, while my friend, a male, wore my best pink dress that was given to me as a gift in my relatives' attempt to normalize me. We didn't care about the stares or remarks, and knew that all the negative things they were thinking about us were probably not all that incorrect, and probably not all that negative. As we walked down my suburban working class street to his bourgeois one, we knew that we had not only achieved a high level of shock value, but something much more; we ridiculed our sexual roles and the costumes they identify with them. Not only that, but we flaunted it and arrogantly pushed it back in their faces. And no matter what effect it had on them, we knew that it affected us by giving us pride because we had stood on its head a concept that we hated.

I thought for a while about giving up skirts 'cause maybe I would be playing up to my expected sexual role if I wore one. And besides that, men enjoy the advantage of seeing more of the female body. But hell, I like them; I soon realized that I was mad that men refuse to wear them. There's where the distinction is created. I hear all sorts of bullshit reasons for why they won't wear them, too. They're too sheer. They're not comfortable. Same goes for jewelry and makeup. Then I turn around and watch them look in admiration at women who wear skirts and lace and jewelry and makeup. Do they admire those objects or those objectified in them?

People have become way too comfortable with the established differences between men and women. Any refusal to recognize these can jeopardize the comfort; the closer the affront to these divisions the more threatened they become. The breakdown of sexual roles leads to a natural breakdown of the mystique of heterosexuality; homophobia prevents the elimination of separate genders in favor of one common one. Biology has little to do with what we do, whereas socialization has a lot to do with our biology.

Women have been obligated too long. To fit the feminine appearance, they have bound their feet, gone on starvation diets and shaved their body hair. All this to fit some standard of beauty. And while nothing is wrong with shaving your legs, something is wrong with aesthetics that require women to do it, but condemn as freaks the men who do the same.

Society will continue to pressure people into doing all sorts of things as long as the people demonstrate that they're afraid of it.

I've always liked to wear all sorts of makeup and jewelry; the bright, theatrical colors are just my style. I don't see a reason to quit if it's for me that I'm doing it. I'm not a peacock hunting men, even if that's what some men think I'm doing. I just tell 'em straight or tell 'em off. I'm not an avid consumer of the latest commodity; I realize that fashion often undermines utility, but if we enjoy some frivolity, why not? Besides, the most fun things are often made, found or stolen objects anyway. I'm just waiting to see men stop taking their masculinity so seriously; I certainly have.

I'm not making a tirade against men, nor am I ignoring the complicity of women in all this crap. Others have carried on what others have carried on,

and so it goes. Or does it? Look at some of the ideas about men and women from a previous time in our own cultures: men were strong and didn't cry, women didn't receive educations and never sat around the table after dinner and talked politics, etc., etc. Many of these concepts seem silly now; others were simply barbaric. There is no excuse; what is silly now was also silly one hundred years ago. So unless we don't expect society to change, then we can't ignore that there must be silly concepts around us. And if they are to change, let's speed it up a little. Massive complacency will only slow it down.

Maybe one day soon I'll see scores of men walking down the street in skirts, pants, necklaces and so forth. I only hope that if that happens it's the result of goodwill between the sexes and not massive advertising campaigns against them.



John Zerzan

The nihilist's dictionary

Progress (prog'res) *n.* 1.[archaic] official journey, as of a ruler.
2. historical development, in the sense of advance or improvement.
3. forward course of history or civilization, as in horror show or death-trip.

Perhaps no single idea in Western civilization has been as important as the notion of progress. It is also true that, as Robert Nisbet has put it, "Everything now suggests that Western faith in the dogma of progress is waning rapidly in all levels and spheres in this final part of the twentieth century."

In the anti-authoritarian milieu, too, progress has fallen on hard times. There was a time when the syndicalist blockheads, like their close Marxist relatives, could more or less successfully harangue as marginal and insignificant those disinterested in organizing their alienation via unions, councils and the like. Instead of the old respect for productivity and production (the pillars of progress), a Luddite prescription for the factories is ascendant and anti-work a cardinal starting point of radical dialog. We even see certain ageing leopards trying to change their spots: the Industrial Workers of the World, embarrassed by the first word of their name may yet move

toward refusing the second (though certainly not as an organization).

The eco-crisis is clearly one factor in the discrediting of progress, but how it remained an article of faith for so many for so long is a vexing question. For what has progress meant, after all?

Its promise began to realize itself, in many ways, from history's very beginning. With the emergence of agriculture and civilization commenced, for instance, the progressive destruction of nature; large regions of the Near East, Africa and Greece were rather quickly rendered desert wastelands.

In terms of violence, the transformation from a mainly pacific and egalitarian gatherer-hunter mode to the violence of agriculture/civilization was rapid. "Revenge, feuds, warfare, and battle seem to emerge among, and to be typical of, domesticated peoples," according to Peter Wilson. And violence certainly has made progress along the way, needless to say, from state weapons of mega-death to the recent rise in outburst murders and serial killers.

Disease itself is very nearly an invention of civilized life; every known degenerative illness is part of the toll of historical betterment. From the wholeness and sensual vitality of pre-history, to the present vista of endemic ill-health and mass psychic misery—more progress.

The pinnacle of progress is today's Information Age, which embodies a progression in division of labor, from an earlier time of the greater possibility of unmediated understanding, to the stage where knowledge becomes merely an instrument of the repressive totality, to the current cybernetic era where data is all that's really left. Progress has put meaning itself to flight.

Science, the model of progress, has imprisoned and interrogated nature, while technology has sentenced it (and humanity) to forced labor. From the original dividing of the self that is civilization, to Descartes' splitting of the mind from the rest of objects (including the body), to our arid, high-tech present—a movement indeed wondrous. Two centuries ago the first inventors of industrial machinery were spat on by the English textile workers subjected to it and thought villainous by just about everyone but their capitalist paymasters. The designers of today's computerized slavery are lionized as cultural heroes, though opposition is beginning to mount.

In the absence of greater resistance, the inner logic of class society's development will culminate in a totally technicized life as its final stage. The equivalence of the progress of society and that of technology is becoming ever more apparent by the fact of their immanent convergence. *Theses on the Philosophy of History*, Walter Benjamin's last and best work, contains this lyrically expressed insight:

"A Klee painting named 'Angelus Novus' shows an angel looking as though he is about to move away from something he is fixedly contemplating. His eyes are staring, his mouth is open, his wings are spread. This is how one pictures the angel of history. His face is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. This storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress."



Columns

The Iconoclast's Hammer by Feral Faun

The cops in our heads:

Some thoughts on
anarchy and morality

In my travels over the past several months, I have talked with many anarchists who conceive of anarchy as a moral principle. Some go so far as to speak of anarchy as though it were a deity to whom they had given themselves--reinforcing my feeling that those who really want to experience anarchy may need to divorce themselves from anarchism.

The most frequent of the moral conceptions of anarchy I heard defined anarchy as a principled refusal to use force to impose one's will on others. This conception has implications which I cannot accept. It implies that domination is mainly a matter of personal moral decisions rather than of social roles and relationships, that all of us are equally in a position to exercise domination and that we need to exercise self-discipline to prevent ourselves from doing so. If domination is a matter of social roles and social relationships, this moral principle is utterly absurd, being nothing more than a way of separating the politically correct (the elect) from the politically incorrect (the damned). This definition of anarchy places anarchic rebels in a position of even greater weakness in an already lopsided struggle against authority. All forms of violence against people or property, general strikes, theft and even such tame activities as civil disobedience constitute a use of force to impose one's will. To refuse to use force to impose one's will is to become totally passive--to become a slave. This conception of anarchy makes it a rule to control our lives, and that is an oxymoron.

The attempt to make a moral principle of anarchy distorts its real significance. Anarchy describes a particular type of situation, one in which either authority does not exist or its power to control is negated. Such a situation guarantees nothing--not even the continued existence of that situation, but it does open up the possibility for each of us to start creating our lives for ourselves in terms of our own desires and passions rather than in terms of social roles and the demands of social order. Anarchy is not the goal of revolution; it is the situation which makes the only type of revolution that interests me possible--an uprising of individuals to create their lives for themselves and destroy what stands in their way. It is a situation free of any moral implications, presenting to each of us the amoral challenge to live our lives without constraints.

Since the anarchic situation is amoral, the idea of an anarchist morality is highly suspect. Morality is a system of principles defining what constitutes right and wrong behavior. It implies some absolute outside of individuals by which they are to define themselves, a commonality of all people that makes certain principles applicable to everyone.

I don't wish to deal with the concept of the "commonality of all people" in this article. My present point is that whatever morality is based upon, it always stands outside of and above the living individual. Whether the basis or morality is god, patriotism, common humanity, production needs, natural law, "the Earth," anarchy, or even "the individual" as a principle, it is always an abstract ideal that rules over us. Morality is a form of authority and will be undermined by an anarchic situation as much as any other authority if that situation is to last.

Morality and judgment go hand in hand. Criticism--even harsh, cruel criticism--is essential to honing our rebellious analysis and practice, but judgment needs to be utterly eradicated. Judgment categorizes people as guilty or not guilty--and guilt is one of the most powerful weapons of repression. When we judge and condemn ourselves or anyone else, we are suppressing rebellion--that is the purpose of guilt. (This does not mean that we "shouldn't" hate

or wish to kill anyone--it would be absurd to create an "amoral" morality, but our hatred needs to be recognized as a personal passion and not defined in moral terms.) Radical critique grows from the real experiences, activities, passions and desires of individuals and aims at liberating rebelliousness. Judgment springs from principles and ideals that stand above us; it aims at enslaving us to those ideals. Where anarchic situations have arisen, judgment has often temporarily disappeared, freeing people of guilt--as in certain riots where people of all sorts looted together in a spirit of joy in spite of having been taught all of their lives to respect property. Morality requires guilt; freedom requires the elimination of guilt.

A dadaist once said, "Being governed by morals... has made it impossible for us to be anything other than passive toward the policeman; this is the source of our slavery." Certainly, morality is a source of passivity. I have heard of several situations in which fairly large-scale anarchic situations started to develop and have experienced minor ones, but in each of these situations, the energy dissipated and most participants returned to the non-lives they'd lived before the uprisings. These events show that, in spite of the extent to which social control permeates all of our waking (and much of our sleeping) lives, we can break out. But the cops in our heads--the morality, guilt and fear--have to be dealt with. Every moral system, no matter what claims it makes to the contrary, places limits on the possibilities available to us, constraints upon our desires; and these limits are not based on our actual capabilities, but on abstract ideas that keep us from exploring the full extent of our capabilities. When anarchic situations have arisen in the past, the cops in peoples' heads--the ingrained fear, morality and guilt--have frightened people, keeping them tame enough to retreat back into the safety of their cages, and the anarchic situation disappeared.

This is significant because anarchic situations don't just pop out of nowhere--they spring from the activities of people frustrated with their lives. It is possible for each of us at any moment to create such a situation. Often this would be tactically foolish, but the possibility is there. Yet we all seem to wait patiently for anarchic situations to drop from the sky--and when they do explode forth, we can't keep them going. Even those of us who have consciously rejected morality find ourselves hesitating, stopping to examine each action, fearing the cops even when there are no external cops around. Morality, guilt and fear of condemnation act as cops in our heads, destroying our spontaneity, our wildness, our ability to live our lives to the full.

The cops in our heads will continue to suppress our rebelliousness until we learn to take risks. I don't mean that we have to be stupid--jail is not an anarchic or liberatory situation, but without risk, there is no adventure, no life. Self-motivated activity--activity that springs from our passions and desires, not from attempts to conform to certain principles and ideals or to blend in to any group (including "anarchists")--is what can create a situation of anarchy, what can open up a world of possibilities limited only by our capabilities. To learn to freely express our passions--a skill learned only by doing it--is essential. When we feel disgust, anger, joy, desire, sadness, love, hatred, we need to express them. It isn't easy. More often than not, I find myself falling into the appropriate social role in situations where I want to express something different. I'll go into a store feeling disgust for the whole process of economic relationships, and yet politely thank the clerk for putting me through just that process. Were I doing this consciously, as a cover for shoplifting, it would be fun, using my wits to get what I want; but it is an ingrained social response--a cop in my head. I am improving, but I have a hell of a long way to go. Increasingly, I try to act on my whims, my spontaneous urges without caring about what others think of me. This is a self-motivated activity--the activity that springs from our passions and desires, from our

suppressed imaginations, our unique creativity. Sure, following our subjectivity this way, living our lives for ourselves, can lead us to make mistakes, but never mistakes comparable to the mistake of accepting the zombie existence that obedience to authority, morality, rules or higher powers creates. Life without risks, without the possibility of mistakes, is no life at all. Only by taking the risk of defying all authority and living for ourselves will we ever live life to the full.

I want no constraints on my life; I want the opening of all possibilities so that I can create my life for myself--at every moment. This means breaking down all social roles and destroying all morality. When an anarchist or any other radical starts preaching their moral principles at me--whether non-coercion, deep ecology, communism, militantism or even ideologically-required "pleasure"--I hear a cop or a priest, and I have no desire to deal with people as cops or priests, except to defy them. I am struggling to create a situation in which I can live freely, being all that I desire to be, in a world of free individuals with whom I can relate in terms of our desires without constraints. I have enough cops in my head--as well as those out on the streets--to deal with without having to deal with the cops of "anarchist" or radical morality as well. Anarchy and morality are opposed to each other, and any effective opposition to authority will need to oppose morality and eradicate the cops in our heads.

An imagining passion by noa

Lantern magic

There was little else to do in the town called something close to the Dutch word for Sawmill and the Orpheum Theater is closed now, but it took me beyond that little town and week after week I'd walk out of the 2:15 matinee as a different hero. Who knows if this larger than life sense of self and destiny was the aesthetic drawing me into the anarquiste fantastique many years later, but the feeling, the reach, the passion--they were all there.

I still go to the movies looking for my self. The self beyond Sawmill, beyond day after day. The reviews--whether they be the godawful ones in the *Columbia Daily Tribune* or the sometimes wonderful ones in the *Village Voice* or the radical purist lunkhead pieces (like the review of *The Thin Blue Line* which appeared in *Anarchy* #20/21)--are point of view shots, letting me in on brilliant or banal distortion systems. The films either let me run away with my imagination or leave me sitting stupid as ever.

Here's a few things old and new that you might try out. Two of my all-time favorites are American films from the mid-fifties (which I haven't been able to find at video stores). *The 5000 Fingers of Dr. T.* is a surreal film with screenplay by Dr. Seuss which carries the issue of forced piano lessons to its terrifying and laughable hilt and, by extension, is a metaphor for authoritarian pedagogy and its overthrow. It's much wittier and less painful than other treatments of the same subject such as Jean Vigo's *Zero for Conduct* or Eugene Ionesco's play *The Lesson* and of course midcentury Hollywood's idea of a happy ending is (again) "There's no place like home". The ending might be more annoying if it wasn't so hokey, even a little camp. Incidentally, this reassuring sentimentality is the same thing a friend of mine complained about after watching the premiere episode of Matt Groening's Fox TV cartoon *The Simpsons*. The life-in-hell alienation is whitewashed by an "after-all-is-said-and-done they're one big happy family" denouement.

Interestingly, you don't find this same homeostatic resolution in the five *Simpson* shorts which are included in the *Second Animation Celebration* anthology of animated shorts which is deliberately funny and accessible with no loss of intelligence or creativity. My

Continued on page 10

Letters

We would like to encourage readers to write us in order to continue this dialogue both with those who are sympathetic and those who are critical of anarchist theories and practices. All letters to **Anarchy** will be printed with the author's initials only, unless it is specifically stated that her/his full name may be used, or that s/he wishes to remain anonymous, or the name already appears in the paper—as in the case of an author of an article printed in **Anarchy**.

We will edit letters that are redundant, overly long, unreadable or excessively boring. Please limit length to four double-spaced, typewritten pages. Address your letters to **Anarchy**, c/o C.A.L., POB 1446, Columbia, MO. 65205-1446. We look forward to hearing from you all!

Orange County anarchists

Dear **Anarchy**,

I am writing to you on behalf of the group O.C.A.M. (Orange County Anarchist Movement). We are interested in many political, social and environmental issues. We believe in taking an active role in the force of change. We also hope to set up an information network from which people will be able to draw.

Please send us any ideas, advice, addresses, publications, and information that you may find useful to our goals as well as yours. We are very interested in finding out more about your group. Please feel free to put us on any mailing lists that you may have. Also feel free to pass our address on to any other groups that you may find useful. All information will be greatly appreciated. Please send all information to:

O.C.A.M.
POB 1273
Cypress, CA. 90630

A.F.R.O.D.I.S.I.A.C.

Dear C.A.L.,

Thank for putting out such a fine journal. We ordered them (#18 & 19) from the **Fifth Estate**. This note is being written after reading the #19 (May-July) issue, so we still haven't had any news about the S.F. gathering. We hope it went off with a hoot. Australian anarchists are having the 4th gathering in 6 years on Easter 1990 at Melbourne. Anyone from North America would be more than welcome. Maybe you could have a raffle or something to send someone over with bags of information, etc. And I do think we have things to bring up, that are not getting mentioned in the current debates.

Some forward thinkers, notably Bookchin & Bradford (etc.), still talk about a hole in the ozone layer, when it's been accepted for awhile that this is all a scam & that there isn't even an ozone layer. Another subject in the search for liberation is the eating of fruit. I won't go into it here but anyone who is interested in freedom (inside as well as outside) of the body should look into this way of eating. When you eat live food for even 6 months the ramifications are incredible (mentally, physically & spiritually), and it completely alters the discussions on Malthusianism, technology, rape, menstruation, agriculture, work, etc.

Some of us A.F.R.O.D.I.S.I.A.C.s (Anarcho-Fruitarians Rely-

ing On Desire In Stead of Ideology And Commodity) recognize the anarchist implications of Christian discipleship thank to the active Christian-Anarchist community in Brisbane, but would not call ourselves Christian or religious (even though some people call us spiritual or fruitcakes, when after a fast we dance all night and gorge into some melons).

Included is \$20 for a subscription & 4 back issues (#14,15,16 & 17) and **As we see it!** & anything else you can fit in.

Thank again for your apathy-crushing effort in producing this journal which seems to bring conflict out for an attempt on understanding.

ooh-a-roo,
D.G., Wooloongabba, Queensland
Australia

Ps. It would be good if in a future edition of **Anarchy** you put a map of North America with numbers representing Anarchist Activity, etc. Like the map of Greece in the 18th issue of **Anarchy**.

Pps. A poem you might like:

There is a date palm tree
up the road, visited
each evening, sundown,
by a crowd of noisy mynas.
Both Indian. But no relevance
in that, being bird and tree.
No homesickness, nostalgia,
grouping together to retain
identity. Nothing. In the
twilight just a tall, dark
shape; the roundness
resonating.

--J.H.

Ppps. "The Ancient Greeks, before the time of Lycurgus, ate nothing but fruit" (Plutarch) and, "each generation reached the age of 200 years."

—Onomacritus of Athens

Anarchist premise untrue

Dear **Anarchy**,

I'd agree that anarchy would be an ideal social structure in which the needs of every human, psychological and physical, could be successfully fulfilled while still maintaining personal happiness and general peace of mind if the basic premise of anarchy were true. That is the belief that individuals would not soon turn to violence in order to obtain power. I believe that it would only require one persuasive, greedy, power monger to learn that a dictatorship could easily rise in an anarchy situation.

I avidly support the fight against censorship, the critique on the governments of the world, and state of our nation, the fight

against the uprising far right, reactionary religious movement which is trying to censor all that they disagree with.

Too many Americans are too quick to look the other way when it comes to such issues. When people see words like Anarchy, Atheist, or pagan, even liberal, their minds close up, the thoughts programmed into their sheltered minds for so long are being counter-attacked, and they'd rather turn to the religious thought police or the reassurance of some apathetic, money hungry politician, than open their minds to the possibilities of a minority viewpoint.

This blind obedience to authority, and the avid support of corrupt commercial Christianity is what scares me the most. When people like Pat Robertson, who says that the first amendment "only applies to Christians," become presidential candidates, I worry. Or when I hear of bans placed on books, movies, records, or any curtailing of our right to free speech or expression, or of the press. The first constitutional amendment is one on which an anarchist publication like this could not exist without.

I hope **Anarchy** continues to publish quality material, and alternative viewpoints and keep the dream alive for those of us who dare question the existing establishment, and reject all the bull so generously spoonfed to an all too trusting public.

D.R., St. Charles, MO.

[Note: Your concern over new dictators arising in an anarchist society is not without merit, however, there are a few simple steps which can prove—and have historically proven—somewhat effective in avoiding this type of situation. For one example, the ancient Athenians (as well as some other Greeks) made a practice of exiling those who were perceived by the populace as having accumulated too much power. They used this social power frequently. And when this type of "democratic" persuasion fails, there is always the alternative of tyrannicide. Anarchists have assassinated many tyrants, and made failed attempts on the lives of many more (for instance Hitler and Mussolini), and one could probably be quite certain that in any truly anarchist society any would-be dictators would be highly likely to end up dead dictators. The real problem, I'm afraid, isn't preserving an ongoing anarchist society, it's getting there in the first place from a slavishly servile one like our own!]

Not enough room

To whom it may concern,

I am typing the survey you included in issue #19 because you did not leave enough room to respond to the questions.

Q. What kind of topics would you like to see us cover in future issues?

A. Sex, freedom, sexual freedom, natural life, getting back to nature, and any new, unusual viewpoints and philosophies you can offer, no matter how off the wall or away from the mainstream they may be. Just be sure that you do not promote violence. I support nonviolence and nonviolent revolutions.

Q. What else could we do to

make **Anarchy** more readable and interesting for you?

A. Include the freshest ideas, philosophies, and viewpoints you can.

Q. What annoys you most about **Anarchy**? What other complaints do you have?

A. I find the anarchists' philosophy in general to be too extreme and unrealistic. (I do not consider myself an anarchist, just a free thinker with an open mind.) Despite this I think it is good to present such ideas because they may have some merit, even if they are unrealistic. Basically, I have no real complaints about your magazine even though I am not an anarchist and do not agree with some of your ideas.

Q. What do we do best?

A. You present a very unusual and fresh outlook on things that can be very valuable and interesting. I also like the informal nature of your magazine and the fact that you have an anticopyright and no advertisements. You may want to allow some carefully selected groups to advertise so that you won't be in such a financial bind.

Sincerely,
C.P., Aspen, CO.

Bullshit at Big Mountain

Anarchy (in particular those who fight for it in Columbia), and/or Lev,

How are you? Could you send me *Neutron Gun* and some of the next issue when it appears. Hopefully, effectively this time I was able to get a number of your publications abroad via a friend of mine to contacts in U.S.S.R., Poland & South Africa.

The issue on relationships was good stuff, important info. for people who don't define the context of their lives by whatever aspect of capital they oppose but are shooting for real freedom; means and end. Personally, I have experienced a change in a 4½ year monogamous relationship into a rich non-monogamous one and I feel much freer and more powerful, closer to my instincts and natural traits.

I enjoyed your letter to **FE** [Fifth Estate] way back about the Black Hills gathering. I've found around the Big Mtn. situation an immense amount of authoritarianism and bullshit. Most of it comes from acculturated macho "warriors" and those whites who attach themselves to the network of gangs hovering around the issue. It's hard to tell with those 2 groups who's sucking more off the other but as one they deceive, drain, demoralize, divert, and discipline those who are seeking to halt the juggernaut of capital.

One thing I've wondered within this context is basically the intrinsic value of "traditional cultures." Sure they could be self-sufficient (if the government wasn't trying to bust them up) and there's a much higher communitarian sentiment & strength and awareness of ecology among traditionalists but there's also intense family, monogamy orientation, homophobia, animal brutality & neglect and nothing per se that seems to encourage a coherent

consciousness of what capital does, and the content of the various legalistic, nationalistic, reformist, and manipulative groups that are clowning around with the issue. Many people are involved "for the elders" and engage in activities that they imagine to be good for them. And the elders are just hanging on for themselves, for "their ways" and the whole thing just grinds on with everyone in their assigned roles (to not accept them would be "disrespectful") and communication and creativity and personal responsibility at an all time low. A big posture of resistance but more like enduring attrition and an effort of liquidation by the state. All communities on the globe are being fucked over by capital, what makes Big Mountain so unique? It is truly spine-chilling to see the effects here of the slow planned genocide or wherever the blade of civilization is cutting hard into people. Many of the Diné are hard as nails, but not as hard as the saw blades which need to be stopped and destroyed. The resistance at Big Mountain and everywhere is "admirable" but the whole beautiful loser thing really depresses me. I'd rather have some bizarre and zany experiences. Resisting the machine may be morally correct but I say we go for the throat wherever that is.

I don't want an absence of vomit being sprayed on my existence but want an explosion of life and chaos. Every "cause" I've experienced has been like a self-imposed mental forced labor camp for droves of would-be rebels. Let's find the key to turning back Western Civilization and jam it in its throat.

Chaos, Revenge
& Insurrectionary Joy
P.K., Flagstaff, AZ.

Talking about survival

Dear C.A.L.,

The few issues of **Anarchy** I have read have been very stimulating for me, especially out here in the sticks. I do have two questions. The first deals with the assumptions made by Lev in **Anarchy** #20/21 in his article "Clean and Sober" [Note: this is a reference to "Clean, sober & obedient; Behind the anti-drug witch-hunt" by Jack Straw]. Could you document the "plentiful evidence" on the statement "During the '60s, the C.I.A. brought in heroin from Indochina and funnelled it to restless ethnic ghettos and counterculture communities"? Maybe you could also elaborate on your idea that heroin is one of the government's "few lucrative enterprises."

The second question is actually a request. It seems to me that for most of us, making enough money to pay the rent and feed ourselves is unfortunately one of the first priorities of our waking lives. I'm not talking about "shopping." I'm talking about survival. Few of us own land we can farm, and a lot of us find ourselves in the position of having to get a "job" for income. Personally I feel working for pay is the most effective means this culture has of social control and repression. I'm really pissed off that I can't shake





feeling stressed-out over needing to come up with next month's rent again, and that the only way to earn the bucks to pay it seems to require working for low pay in an inhumane and utterly stupid consumer environment. I resent having to consider getting a job, particularly when I can't find one where I'm not required to fit in with mainstream america. Due to the intense competition for jobs, one is coerced to disguise their true feelings in order to convince a prospective employer that you are worthy of the privilege of working in their pathetic business. Poverty sucks; there's no integrity, mobility, or freedom when you're not wanted in the "job market" and can't find an alternative way to survive. The request is this: I would like to see articles and letters from people with ideas of how to deal with the nature of jobs and work, and alternative ways to living with the least amount of compromise. I find it strange that *Anarchy* hasn't published much on this subject, and I often wonder how people who consider themselves anarchists deal with these issues. Please send me a copy of Bob Black's article "The abolition

of work," the only article *Anarchy* has published, so far as I can tell, dealing with the function of work in this culture.

Thanks, and please include my full name and address if you print this letter, because I would like to hear from people.

Keith Ostertag
RR.1, Box 46
Pownal, VT. 05261

[There have been several good books published on the subject of the heavy C.I.A. involvement in the Southeast Asian heroin trade, however I don't remember their titles. Can any readers help out on this? As far as the subject of survival without working is concerned, there are any number of scams some people use, supplemented with judicious shoplifting, dumpster-diving, etc. And there are many collective/cooperative forms of living which can ameliorate the need for excessive participation in the cash economy. One needn't necessarily "own" land to farm. And, of course, there are some cash crops that don't require much in the way of land for cultivation, i.e. marijuana. There have been several books written on disengaging oneself from the cash economy, though, once again, I'm not familiar enough with them to be able to recall their titles. Any ideas, readers?—Lev]

Behave nobly

Dear *Anarchy*,

I'd like to share a few thoughts on the question of desire vs. morality. Oscar Wilde's mother is supposed to have said "the only thing in life worth living for is sin." But what is sin? If we look beyond the simple answer, "anything forbidden by authority," we can see that sin should mean "anti-social acts." So that rather than egotistically sinning and trying to get the maximum pleasure from life, we should perhaps restrain our desires and strive to behave nobly towards others.

Take the thief, rapist, murderer for example. These are people who pursued their personal desires at the expense of others. And at a less extreme level, imagine you're at a pot luck dinner and there's not enough food. Should you follow your desire and eat your fill, or restrain yourself so that everyone gets at least a little? Only if people practice self-discipline can we hope to abolish authority, because people would rather have authority than crime, even risking the fact that authority

has at times committed some of the worst crimes.

I like the slogan I read on the cover of *@capella*, a Polish anarchist paper, "Break religion's monopoly on morality."

Sincerely,
E.S., Lawrence, KS.

Lev responds: Authoritarian assumptions

It's somewhat amazing that this same question keeps arising for people who read this journal. Despite the fact that it's been explained repeatedly that we do not share the dominant (authoritarian) prejudice that people are by nature "sinful" or "fallen," this assumption is obviously held by many otherwise thoughtful people—including many, many anarchists. This only shows how widespread and ingrained this form of conditioning and ideological confusion really is.

If one does not accept authoritarian assumptions that humans are "bad" and in constant need of supervision, discipline

and control, this whole level of conditioning simply makes no sense. If it is instead assumed that human beings are nearly all capable of understanding how to live together cooperatively without bosses (either external or internal) telling them how to do so, then the question of "sin" becomes meaningless. What is "sin" but the arbitrarily chosen justification for the exercise of authority. For example, most anarchists would probably understand that to be a thief in a society based on the institutionalization of private property is not necessarily dishonorable. It depends completely on what one has stolen and from who; most "property" has already been "stolen" at some stage of the way anyway, and often at many stages.

Rape and murder are certainly less often justifiable than theft, but once again, from an anarchist perspective these would not be "sins"—i.e. transgressions of some sort of absolute morality or law. In most cases they are simply types of behavior that most people (and especially anarchists) would rather avoid. What difference does it really make whether someone murders because s/he has a "personal desire" to do so, or because s/he believes s/he has a moral right to do so? People are dead in any case, though many more people are probably killed for "morally correct" than for ostensibly "personal" reasons (look at the justifications for the mass-killings of any war, for example). In any case to simplistically blame the pursuit of desires "at the expense of others" for all murder or rape is as meaningless as blaming the existence (rather than nonexistence) of human beings for the fact that wars exist. In either case, certainly the reason that particular murders or particular wars do exist must be explained by more proximate factors!

It is the claim of this journal that most of what could be genuinely called "anti-social" acts stem from the dominant system of authority and social hierarchy, and from the alienating way of life forced on all the victims of this dominant system. Morality is simply one (from among many) of the props which maintain this authority and social hierarchy in existence, and as such it is contradictory to any thoroughly anarchist conception of life. People who haven't already been forced to think of themselves as isolated monads, don't need morals in order to share food during a social feast! And neither does self-discipline necessarily have anything at all to do with morality. One can easily make choices between conflicting desires without needing the force of some authoritarian morality or internalized cop to impose "self-discipline." Instead one can simply make choices based on the situation, taking into account one's personal and social desires. It is only a moralistic myth that all desires are purely selfish in the sense of ignoring other people or the rest of nature. And that's

Continued on next page



Collage by Johann Humyn Being (San Francisco, CA).

Letters

Lev responds

Continued from previous page

about all that morality has to base itself upon, the ignorance of myths.

Life in the U.S.A.?

Dear people,

How is @ life in the U.S.A.? How is the plan for a "nation"wide @ paper continuing? What surprises me is the number of articles on bioregionalism, "nature," eco-feminism (sounds a bit like new age trends), and that is quite different from the usual @ papers I know in Britain, Netherlands, Belgium, F.R.G., France and Italy. Or is the destruction of the earth going faster in the U.S.A. than over here?

I am still involved in the just surviving (money) @ publication **Raaf (Raven)** from Amsterdam and in @syndicalist activities in and outside the I.W.A.

K.M.K.

Postbus 61523,
Den Haag 2506 AM
Netherlands

Ps. Do you have contact with the people behind **The Torch** (Rev. Soc. League) in N.Y. and **Demolition Derby**--Canada? All the best. Let the anarchy grow, as it does in Eastern Europe.

Homosexuality & homophobia

Dear Lev Chernyi,

Hi, how's it going?....

One of the things that I would like to see in **Anarchy; A Journal of Desire Armed** would be an article (or two) on homosexuality and homophobia--especially homophobia. In our present witchhunt atmosphere, homosexuals are treated in the most horrible manner (as you well know). It was hard enough for homosexuals before now and it's just getting worse--caused by even more intense right-wing (fascist) indoctrination, etc., etc., etc. It would be nice to see an article in your publication that would destroy homophobia and the "beliefs" that keep it alive (and reanimate it over and over). Hell, some homosexuals even police themselves....

Also, I was wondering what you think of Dada and Surrealism. Well, this is about all for now. Keep up the great work.

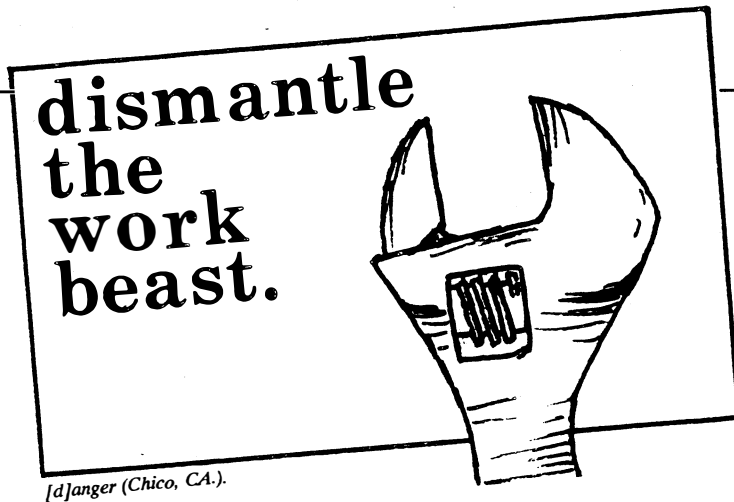
Sincerely,

C.J., Shreveport, LA.

Anarchism is a joke

To **Anarchy**,

I think it's ironic that Michael William thinks my review of *High Weirdness by Mail* is "ironic." As an anarchist, accustomed to referring every question to the test of one single timeless truth, he finds it difficult to follow the passage of a few people through a rather brief period of time. My favorable review of SubGenius preceded my unfavorable review of *HWM* by six years. Since *HWM* is not part of the SubGenius canon, although it contains countless plugs and traded favors



related to SubG as I pointed out, I see no reason why a brief criticism of *HWM* endorsed by M.W. himself has to incorporate the modest SubGenius dimension of my intellectual trajectory. I've gotten over worse mental maladies, notably one M.H. (despite disclaimers) is tragically afflicted with, anarchism.

I think it's "ironic" that M.W., in his tabloid **Demolition Derby**, doesn't settle accounts with anarchism as he implies I have to do regarding the still more infinitesimally trivial doctrine of SubGenius, which at least started out aware it was a joke, a realization only Type 3 anarchists have come to relative to William's (and your) affiliation, i.e., anarchism. You say you're post-this and post-that. I say anybody who's not post-anarchist isn't post-situationist, post-modernist or post-anything that exhibited vital signs anytime recently. At least the sits had some smarts. Most anarchists are morons. They are, so to speak, sub-geniuses. On their best days.

Yes, the ironies abound like gazelles. Five years ago, "anti-authoritarians" at **Processed World** were repressing, with lies, with law, with fraud and with force a variety of less authoritarian San Francisco anti-authoritarians including myself. You (=Anarchy) know this very well because you, like M.W., sat that one out with your Hamlet-like hand-sitting. Yes Lev, I mean you. In his tabloid, M.W. has carefully documented the dirt on the authoritarians at **PW**, their syndicalist allies like Bufe and Wetzel at **Ideas & Action**, etc., etc. I documented all this four or five years ago. You and he were well provided with the evidence **PW** tended to withhold. But only stage whispers of any of this ever aired in **Anarchy** when it might have made a difference. Ditto for **D.D.** Unless and until you and M.W. (and his fellow pussy-whipped Canadian nationalist anarcho-feminists) consign anarchism (and--gasp!--feminism) to the same trash-can history has for syndicalism and cybernetic socialism and, to make a too-long story as short as possible, **Marxism**, you can expect to continue your debates in the dumpster with that sort. This is classic M-L Newspeak. I was right but I was right too soon, and so I'm wrong. Oceania was always at war with Eastasia, as of yesterday. M.W. and you were right (or at least hypocritically open-minded) about aggressive workerist scams like **PW**, W.S.A., I.W.W., N.M.H., I mean is this leftist? It agonizingly is. 'Nuff said.

A final note, M.W. may not consider my review sufficiently far-

reaching (has he considered venturing his own? I don't recall his ever publicly responding to SubG--then again it took him five years to mention the now moribund **PW** scam even in footnotes) but the field is open and I have other problems. On November 22, 1989, somebody--probably a SubGenius--mailed me a bomb at a home address very few people are supposed to know. Anybody curious about the episode, or why I suspect a SubConnection can send me a stamped envelope at PO Box 2159, Albany, NY. 12220, USA. To my knowledge this is a first in the anarcho-marginals milieu (which should perhaps be dispersed as soon as possible). Even **PW** never went this far previously. Unable as I am to disarm bombs like the one

in my flat I had no choice but to bring in the authorities. Smith/-Stang parades his contempt for anarchism, so I presume he has no objection to police attention for a failed hit I can relate to SubG snitches locally. It's a wacky world we live in, isn't it?

Bob Black, Albany, NY.

[I have since learned that M.W.'s letter printed in our last issue was not really meant for publication (Hint for letter-writers: mark your letters "not for publication" if you don't want them published!). But I can say that I do agree with its message. And even if it were true that "most anarchists are morons," they still fare far better than any other population subgroup that I can think of in the intelligence department, though there are always going to be a lot of nuts in marginal milieus. The far greater population of nuts in the mainstream just don't stand out as much since their problems are less colorful (unusual). And while there is undoubtedly much to be criticized and overcome in the anarchist milieu, at least a growing minority is trying to do so. From my perspective anarchism, as a rationalist ideology which puts an abstract concept of Freedom or Statelessness above all else, isn't worth defending. But it would seem to be rather difficult (and not worth the confusion) to dismiss the nation-state, capitalism, communism, etc., while also denying that one is an "anarchist" in at least some common sense of the word!]

Letters on the children's sexuality issue

Challenge the 'child protection' crusade

Dear @narchy,

...It is important that anti-authoritarians challenge the child protection crusade. I think its main hidden function is to try to prevent the erosion of the nuclear family and its consequent loss of control over the young. The result is new repressive laws and precedents which will be expanded upon and expanded upon until they are eventually used against the Left. The point is not to argue that all sex is liberating or to make children more available to adults who want to have sex with them. Children in the nuclear family are already too vulnerable and available to the sexual advances of their parents (mothers as well as fathers). Most sex abuse occurs within the family, a fact which the "Missing Children" hoax and the disinformation campaigns about a non-existent multi-billion dollar child-porn industry preying upon "1.2 million children per year" fail to mention. Actually, the missing children are overwhelmingly kidnapped by parents in custody disputes or are runaways. Clever, isn't it, how two symptoms of the breakdown of the nuclear family, divorce/custody battles and runaway teens, were transformed by the mainstream media into what appeared to be outside threats to children and families? Clearly a desperate gambit to try and hold the family institution together by fear and squelch any serious development of alternatives.

Are you familiar with the federal and Missouri child porn

laws? If not it probably would be a good idea to learn them. If you keep publishing views on child sexuality and sexual freedom which go against the grain, the feds may try to trick you into receiving material classifiable as "child porn." Any photographic image which demonstrates or even strongly implies that persons under the age of 18 have sexual feelings is chargeable as child "pornography" under the law, even if it is not titillating and/or was produced for a legitimate artistic, scientific or social purpose. The F.B.I. busted Russell Zangger (Box 47, Larchwood, IA. 51241), an anti-circumcision activist, for sending a non-sexual photo through the mail which showed the penises of two little boys. He is a totally legitimate activist--a crackpot, it's true but a crackpot for a good cause. The photo was not pornographic at all, but that was not the real point. Simply busting him for "child pornography" so ruined his reputation and credibility (even after the charge was dropped), and he spent so much of his savings fighting for his freedom, that he is now effectively neutralized as a voice in the fight to end the culturally-sanctioned genital mutilation of babies. *Show Me!*, the sex education book you reviewed in #19 constitutes child "pornography" under current federal law, despite its obviously non-pornographic intentions and in spite of the many awards it has won, etc. It is a federal crime to receive this book in the mail, to transport it across state lines, to send it to someone by mail, and so forth. Federal law does not forbid some-

one to simply possess a copy as long as they don't give or lend it to anyone else. However, a number of states have passed laws making even simple possession a misdemeanor. The fact that the book depicts a teenaged girl touching a little boy's penis ("fondling") and depicts a male child's erection ("lewd exhibition of the genitals") makes the book illegal. Interestingly enough, although the laws are worded such that no exceptions exist for research or other scientific purposes, technical journals for child abuse professionals continue to depict lurid close-up shots of anuses and genitalia of young children from time to time and appear to be immune from prosecution. Meanwhile, researchers who question the orthodox line, by studying consensual child/adult relationships or asking other taboo questions, are getting arrested and harassed right and left. (For a recent summary of police actions against radical sex researchers see David Sonenschein's article "On Having One's Research Seized" in *The Journal of Sex Research*, Vol. 23, #3, pp. 408-414, August 1987.) It is the child "pornography" laws which are being used to attack research which threatens to undermine current dogmas about the asexuality of children and the inevitability of harm from even the mildest kinds of sexual contact between adults and minors or between two minors more than 5 years apart in age.

Under some state laws, a photo is child "pornography" even if there is nothing sexual about it at all. All that is required is that the person depicted therein be a) nude, and b) under 18. How old was the nude guy in the photo from the Without Borders 1989 conference which you printed on the cover of #22? Is Missouri one of the growing number of states which has passed laws banning the transfer of non-sexual nude photos of minors through the mails? Who knows, perhaps the **Anarchy** editorial staff are all "child pornographers" and subscribers are all "child pornography" consumers already!

In solidarity,
S.P.

Ps. If the feds try to entrap you into breaking the child porn laws, they will probably pose as radicals by mail and will attempt to get you to request that they send you some photo or photos of a chargeable nature under some anti-authoritarian pretext or another. Be warned.

Pps. In Massachusetts the law provides for a mandatory ten year prison sentence for anyone merely proven to have intent to mail any photo of anyone under 18 nude. No sex need be depicted. Please check Missouri law if you haven't already done so.

Empowerment of all sexualities

Dear Lev,

Thanks for issues 17-22 of **Anarchy**. I was out of town myself for a few weeks when they arrived and so I am only now getting to looking at them. I am very pleased to see a commitment in the



Letters

journal to empowerment of all sexualities—gay, straight, pedophilic, and adult, adolescent, and child. This is a refreshing change. (The journal does appear to need an article on s-m—I would suggest a contribution from Pat Califa or Gayle Rubin on lesbian s-m, for instance.)

Much lip service is given to "sexual equality" by feminist and gay leaders and theorists these days, but often what they mean is that they wish to be accepted by heterosexual authority. (Hence, the emphasis on "responsible" monogamy v. "irresponsible" promiscuity in gay relationships.) The "responsible" gay relationship—unthreatening to the social order—thus joins heterosexual monogamy in the realm of "non-deviant" (i.e. "acceptable") sexual expression.

As for self-proclaimed "sex radicals," many have accepted at least the possibility of man-boy love (or woman-girl love), but few have seriously allowed for the possibility of man-girl love. What is missing, of course, is an analysis of child female sexuality and the particular forms of control which men and women exercise over female child sexuality. (It is always surprising to me to see some feminists play directly into the hands of patriarchy with protectionist rhetoric. Were girls actually sexually empowered, they would not only be molested less, but they would have and seek out sex more.) Too often, what I see is not reasoned analysis based upon a gathering of information, but generalizations from women's experiences of incest and rape. While these may apply to some man-girl contacts, they are far from exhaustive analytically, as can be seen from anecdotal reports of both women (who as girls were involved in sexual relationships with men) and men (who have been involved in sexual relationships with girls). Notions of childhood sexual "innocence" die hardest where girls are concerned. (Boys will, after all, be boys.)

One pitfall I hope *Anarchy* will avoid in exploring the issues around sexualities is that of sexual labeling. While labeling may be a "natural" way of organizing human knowledge, particular labels are most often used to split people off from each other—to alienate and control. Social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists, sex researchers, lawyers, and law enforcement officials have little idea what "pedophilia" means (is it a sexual behavior, a state of desire, or a sexual identity?), but all attempt to use the label for their own ends (i.e. to increase their funding and power). I point this out because the excerpt you re-printed from *Girl Love* in issue #19 used the word "pedophile" rather defiantly, as if the writer thought he could somehow seize the meaning of this word to his advantage! (I, too, have been guilty of the same misuse.) However, if a breakdown of the patriarchal, monogamous, heterosexual, authoritarian system is to be achieved, the eradication of sexual labeling must be among the first of many steps. This is not merely a "conceptual" exercise. Once one refuses to accept a sexual label ("gay," "pedophile," etc.), one is forced to confront and

describe human beings in human (or inhuman) relationships and situations—the result being an humanized anarchy of desire, rather than a dehumanized world comprised of "normal" people over and against fixed diagnostic categories of perverts ("paraphiliacs")....

Anyway, keep up the good work....

kind regards,
n.s. aristoff
uncommon desires
p.o. box 2377
new york, ny. 10185

Ever been molested?

Dear *Anarchy*,

Who the fuck decides which letters you are going to print? I found most of the replies to your children's sexuality issue to be blind. Have any of the people who responded ever been molested, raped, victims of incest? I'm a 17 year old who was molested by her

father and raped at the age of 15 by one of my best friends. Guess what? It was a betrayal of trust, it did make me feel like shit. Anyone who has the balls to say that this kind of sexuality is "natural" is pretty fucked up and has obviously never been molested. It's pretty pathetic that in trying to appear open-minded people will say or do almost anything regardless of the result.

Maybe I'm being too harsh, and there do exist some cases of parent-child sexuality which were beneficial to the child. However, I have friends who have been victims of incest as well, and none of them ever mentioned this to me. It may be natural for a parent to have lecherous feelings towards their own child (but I can't fully see why. I'm trying to give you the benefit of the doubt here.) Nonetheless, I think that children are better off left to discover their sexuality with whoever they want to. I have never heard of a child approaching a parent and asking

to play doctor, maybe this does happen. Anyway, most people I know did fine by themselves. I, personally, am quite a fucked up individual, due to my father, and this alleged friend of mine. The introduction I received to the wacky world of sex, courtesy of my father, did nothing to smooth out my already neurotic tendencies. Anyone who claims that it was natural and that I should learn from it should fuck off.

ps. you don't have to print this, it was more for information purposes. I wish I felt comfortable giving you my name and establishing a correspondence....no such luck. oh well.

anonymous,
Springfield, MA.

Lev responds: Liberating sexuality doesn't mean rape!

To answer your first question, we print virtually all of the

letters sent to us that are (1) readable, and (2) don't say "not for publication." (Since you didn't specifically say this, I am assuming that it is OK for us to print yours.) As to why we haven't received more letters in the same vein as yours, I can only speculate, since it would seem to me that in general there are far more people (by orders of magnitude) out there who have convinced themselves that they are comfortable with sexual repression than there are people who have much serious commitment to sexual freedom or liberating sexuality. I would hope that the greater number of letters we've received supporting—rather than denying—children's sexual freedom indicates that most of our readers understand the difference between (1) allowing and encouraging children's "natural" explorations of their sexuality, and (2) the obviously coercive, unhealthy, and often physically damaging practices of rape and undesired sexual "molestation."

I can understand that many people who have been the victims of rape or of other types of unwanted sexual contact often have a very emotional reaction to the advocacy of sexual freedom. Despite the fact that most sexual radicals (for that matter, all of the ones that I know of) condemn forced, non-consenting sexuality, many people insist on attempting to tar their pro-sexuality stance with baseless accusations that they support rape, child molestation, forcible incest, etc. Even you should be able to understand how this pattern of willful misrepresentation only serves the purpose of mystifying the real issues and encouraging the forces of sexual repression, compulsory sexual morality, and authoritarian conditioning.

The question of whether those supporting children's sexual freedom have been raped or molested is fundamentally irrelevant (though I can say that some of the pro-sexual-freedom letters were written by people who have been victimized at some point during their lives, as I have been). Those who have and those who haven't been victims are usually equally capable of expressing intelligent opinions on these matters, just as, for instance, both those who have and those who haven't used illegal drugs at least have the potential for understanding the complexities involved in the call for the decriminalization of drugs. That those who call for drug decriminalization aren't demanding that people be forced to use currently-illegal drugs, should be as obvious as the fact that anarchists who call for children's sexual freedom aren't demanding that forced sexual relationships be legitimized! Why do you feel it is necessary to stigmatize us in this fashion?

Has your own victimization made you so bitter that you cannot see that it still remains possible for others (and yourself) to gain pleasure and life-giving experiences from the free expression of our sensuality and sexuality? Do you not understand

Continued on next page



Photo by Paul Forsberg reprinted from *Brand* (Box 150 15, 104 65 Stockholm, Sweden).

Letters

Lev responds

Continued from previous page

that nursing mothers establish a profoundly sexual relationship with the infants they suckle? Is this wrong? Do you think that it makes sense that most people in our culture see violence against children like spanking or slapping as being more "natural" than giving them full-body massages? Do you find the current child-pornography and child-abuse hysteria a healthy phenomenon when it means that we must all be fearful of being nude with our own or other's children--worrying that the authoritarian prudes around us will only be able to see perversion where healthy, natural nudity is involved? I find the currently unchallenged anti-sexual hysteria around us terrifying in the extreme. I think it diminishes all our lives. And I'm afraid it will get much worse before there will be enough of us who begin taking the risk of speaking out and defending sexual freedom again.

Please understand that we wish you only the relaxing intimacy of the sexual relationships you truly desire. But rape and other forms of coercive sexuality are abhorrent to us, not because of their sexual component, but because of the element of force and the absence of consent involved.

Still wondering

I thought your response to S.G. of Portland, Oregon, who found your special issue on children's sexuality "somewhat offensive," was good. Yet I still wonder if S.G.'s main point--that in adult-child sexual relationships the adult will always hold power over the child, due to the child's emotional vulnerability and the adult's greater experience--might not be true. It certainly merits consideration, especially by anarchists for whom questions of power and coercion are central. I notice that in "Save the children" Richard Walters says very little one way or the other about child-adult sex. You say that S.G.'s objection to adults fondling and erotically caressing children "shows at the very least that [S.G. is] completely ignorant of cross-cultural anthropological research on the subject." I'm curious: just what research are you referring to?

B.B., Numazu-shi, Japan

Lev responds:

Not the main point

I have no disagreement that "in adult-child sexual relationships the adult will always hold power over [of some sort] over the child," but I don't really think that this was S.G.'s "main point"--rather, his repressive moralism was. One can certainly acknowledge the truth of the above without calling for the absolute condemnation of every sort of child-adult "sexuality." If he were really interested in this question (without already having a preordained answer to it), he could have explored it in a more sensi-

tive and critical (and valuable!) way, and I might have been excited about what he wrote instead of mostly being annoyed by his moralism.

As far as the anthropological research is concerned, I was speaking of all the observations which indicate that in general "primitive" cultures seem to sanction a far wider variety of sensual/sexual interpersonal relations than does the Christian "mainstream" of our own uptight, civilized culture--which leads to the obvious conclusion that there is no objective standard of sexual "perversity" or "normality." In practice what's taboo in one community is a well-accepted practice somewhere else. And especially where the care of infants is concerned, there is often far more acceptance of genital caresses and naked, whole-body contact in so-called "primitive" cultures, than there is in ours. Whereas Missouri law says you can get 15 years in prison if a child touches a man's penis other than accidentally (and they get 15 years I can assure you), in more relaxed societies the natives could care less. Which is the more healthy attitude?

A.S. Neill's Summerhill

Hello there,

I've liked the last few issues, especially the two after the double-sized issue. But my comments concern the issue before the double-sized one--the issue on "Children's sexuality." As has been stated by Lev within your pages, only an outline of this subject and its social/political consequences was included. For those who are interested in further learning on the subject, a good book to check out is called *Summerhill: A Radical Approach to Child Rearing*,

written by A.S. Neill, who was an associate of Wilhelm Reich (who wrote *Listen, Little Man*). This book is about efforts to run the daily operations of the Summerhill school, which was in Suffolk, England (I'm not sure if it's still in existence). It was basically a non-authoritarian school, very much the "project" of its headmaster (Neill). In the book he goes into depth on most aspects of childhood and what conventional child rearing does and what it helps to develop into neurosis (the learning stages of children not being allowed to come and go according to natural curiosity and instinct). There are several sections on sex, dealing with sex attitudes, instruction, etc. which contain some of the same ideas that were in @, but in my opinion come across a bit clearer. And even if you're not interested in this subject, try to find this book, which is worth reading just for its general context. It was first published in 1960 and is very educational. To give you an idea of the tone of the book, an A.S. Neill quote goes something like "Freedom cures most things." This type of attitude, which seeks to raise children with curiosity, playfulness, and self respect as well as a sense of community, as opposed to raising them with fear and coercion as the guiding hand, makes this book worth a read. And that's all I have to say. BYE.

Strange Creature

Somewhere in Illinois
Ps. For a very penetrating sojourn into the fundamental hierarchy of worldwide uniformity and obedience, see *Dialectic of Enlightenment* by Adorno and Horkheimer, especially the chapter called "The Culture Industry; Enlightenment as Mass Deception," which is one of the broadest and farthest reaching analyses of the machinery of popular obedience that I have ever read.

More letters on the continental newspaper project --Love and Rage

Another account of the planning conference

The @ newspaper planning conference was plagued with loud-mouthed dissent and boredom from the start, notwithstanding Bob McGlynn's parody handout outlining a substantially revised agenda (calling for beer and orgy), and bogus poll. Off to a late start at 11:45 (It was scheduled to begin at 11), Johnnie from Atlanta got us rolling with her inimitably aggressive facilitation style. One of the first issues to be addressed was whether consensus or majority rule would govern process. People seemed to think consensus was preferable, but majority would be relied on if consensus couldn't be reached. John Bekken and compatriot Fred from Resurgence (Champaign, IL.) & Some Chicago Anarchists objected to this, calling for at least 3/4 majority. This, they argued, would compensate for the "stacked deck" of participants, which consisted largely of former

members of the R.S.L. (Revolutionary Socialist League), plus a contingent from R.A.B.L. from Minneapolis. Resurgence maintained that the majority of participants were vanguardists and Leninists, and that the initiators of the newspaper project were selective in who they notified about the conference. Resurgence was excluded from receiving any bulletins, and it was from a third party that they gained knowledge of the conference.

To get better acquainted, we went around and everyone identified themselves and gave a brief introduction of their activities and reasons for coming. As it turned out, 20 people were from the R.S.L. and 7 were from R.A.B.L. out of a total of 47 people. When my turn to speak came, I announced that I had come to keep an eye on the vanguardists.

The entire first day was spent developing the statement of principles which will be printed in every issue of the paper. The

statement of principles was scheduled to be finished at 1pm, though it was not finished until 11pm. Chris Gunderson's statement of principles was adapted with considerable amendment.

The second day was less tense. There was no shouting, though Resurgence continued to voice their concern over the direction that the project was beginning to take. It was decided that the paper will be based in N.Y.C., that Chris Gunderson will be the paid facilitator, with a \$400 a month salary. \$1860 monthly was pledged by participants. During supper, Chris G. approached me and said he heard that I had said that "The Bolsheviks had won." I told him that various people in the @ movement regard him as being a vanguardist, which I agreed with, and that I was bothered by his disproportionate emphasis on streetfighting in R.A.B.L. Rouser. He asked if I just wanted "fucking in the streets?" I replied that for me, revolution had more to do with achieving a materially-based autonomy than with fighting cops. He replied that he viewed street mobilization as a necessary precursor to building alternatives. John Bekken also referred to the R.A.B.L. approach as primarily entailing "suicidal, death-wish demos."

Other noteworthy events were picking an editorial council and a name for the paper. John Bekken nominated "The Torch" (name of former R.S.L. paper), and I nominated "The Militant Anarchist," "NO Masters," "Ecstarchy" & "Quagmire." *Love & Rage* (subscript: "Revolutionary Anarchist Newspaper") was chosen. Tom from Tucson, (though he was the only one present from the Southwest) was rejected by majority vote to be a member of the editorial council. He had maintained, during the adapting of the statement of principles, that Chris G.'s proposal was ideological and leftist-leaning. The margin of votes against him was substantial. A woman approached me and said smiling that she had nothing against one of the men who I had nominated for the council. She voted against him solely in order to maintain a womyn majority on the council.

Such is the sordid tale of the @ newspaper planning conference, told from the situated lips of Karen Eliot.

Officially recorded by the resident scribe of Schiz-Flux Productions, Inc.
Nov. 28, 1989

Love & Rage lives

Dear Lev,

Thanks for your coverage of: "Love & Rage"

"An Anarchist Newsmonthly"

After over two years and despite a few short-sighted obstructionists the framework for our continental newspaper lives.

I quickly point out the last paragraph of the Political Statement as well as stating the position taken at the November conference: "We do not claim to be the Continental Anarchist Newspaper," but as is the subtitle above.

We realized the political statement appeared as a "shopping list" but we consented when it was understood by all present to be in line with one of our previously consented upon goals of building our movement by clear statements of our position. We also agreed it would be an ever evolving statement reflecting our ever evolving movement. (See the 2nd paragraph of the statement [Note: *The Love & Rage statement was printed in Anarchy #23, page 29*]).

The Editorial Council selection was not taken lightly, nor was the process "controlled or directed." We went to great lengths to have as representatively diverse group as possible. We pointedly mandated: A female majority, people from all underclasses, ethnic and cultural groups; multiple sexual orientations, Spanish-speaking peoples, African-Americans, youth, indigenous peoples, urbanites and rural residents; North, South, East and West.

We were also empowered to add to our membership simply by them showing up at the meetings and saying they want to be included. (Free access.) We have already added several enthusiastic people.

All members are available, and do solicit articles, questions, comments, poems, artwork, give publishing/distribution assistance information and access to all.

The first issue (March) and all issues will list Editorial Council members and contact info.

We are committed to making *Love & Rage* into a powerful force and voice in our movement as well as a forum for its evolution and growth.

@ solidarity,

Jimmy
Editorial Council member
c/o @ Collective
4729 Magazine Street
New Orleans, LA. 70115

Flailing attacks

This is to respond to the attacks on *Love and Rage* in your last issue. We (the supporters of the new, upcoming anarchist news-monthly) are taking risks, both personal and political (often the same) to move the anarchist movement forward by providing a tool for communication and organization. Having recently joined the editorial council, I am buoyed by the positivity and clarity of activists involved in this ambitious project. Neither K.P. from Richmond, nor Beth, George and Fred from Chicago, judging from the flailing attacks, seem to have either of these qualities.

First of all, to expose Chris Gunderson in a publication is a deep violation of trust, that dissidents would hope exists among us. The state thanks you much for that move. Fred clearly has never been attacked by the Feds, and doesn't care if another anarchist is. Gunderson is not out to trick, mislead, alienate, or pull power plays over on anyone. His \$400-a-month salary is a paltry sum on which to live in New York. He has been in support of this project for a very long time. But the fetishizing of Beth, George & Fred's projection of his personality com-





pletely discounts other free-thinking anarchists' dedication to Love & Rage.

Before completely disregarding these attacks I want to point out a blind spot in our mythic critics' view of the Chicago conference. Gunderson and Falk did not facilitate the meetings. Rather, they were facilitated by wimmin who big-mouthed Fred chose to ignore, demean, and undermine. That there were also R.A.B.L. wimmin there seemed to have slipped by his perceptions. And that there are more than three groups "conspiring" to move Love and Rage forward. And that R.A.B.L. does a lot more than militant street demos.

The letters that you printed are so full of lies and misrepresentations and snide attitudes it makes me wonder if Beth, George, Fred and K.P. are interested in seeing "our movement" grow and thrive at all. Fortunately, there are thousands of circle A's out there who are.

K.C., Minneapolis, MN.

(Note: It was not our intention to "expose" Chris Gunderson by printing the letter from Beth, George and Fred. We do not approve of the undesired public exposure of anyone's name, which is why we generally print all letters using only the writers' initials unless they wish otherwise. In this case, though, Chris's name has already appeared in so many publications that we assumed, as a fairly public figure, he didn't mind this.)

Fuck that noise; no imaginary cabal

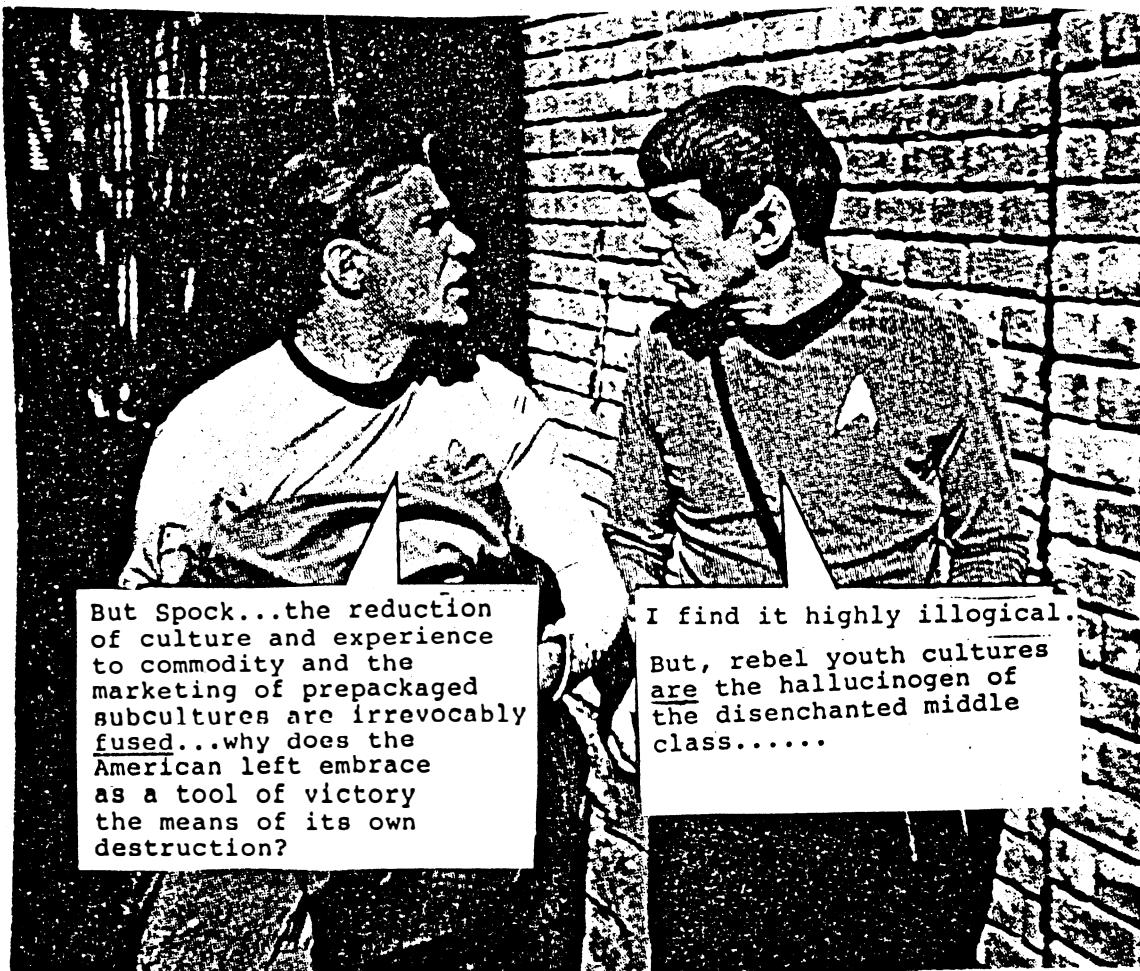
Dear Lev,

Please forgive what must be a lengthy reply to a couple of lengthy attacks against Love and Rage and myself that appeared in the letters column of the Jan.-Feb. 1990 issue of Anarchy. You urged in the last issue that "as with any dispute of this sort, we advise people to listen to as many sides of the question as possible before jumping to judgment." It is a reflection of the quality of discussion that sometimes occurs in the anarchist movement that such an elementary principle needs to be reiterated. The petty, vindictive and unprincipled style that characterizes the letter from Beth, George and Fred (Some Chicago Anarchists) should probably not be dignified with a response. But because it raises claims about Love and Rage and myself that include very destructive outright lies, I feel compelled to reply. While I find much that is disagreeable and false in K.P.'s letter, it at least refrains from the kind of shrillness that makes an honest discussion of issues almost impossible.

All this chattering can only add up to so much. In the end the proof is in the pudding. Either Love and Rage will be a good newspaper or it won't be. People should judge for themselves. Send for a sample copy from:

Love and Rage
3 Prince Street Station
NYC, NY 10012

Before taking up the specific points of both letters I would like to reply to the general claim that some sort of unholy alliance of R.A.B.L., the R.S.L. and Hayday



Tad Kepley (POB 401721, Brooklyn, NY. 11240).

Anarchists ran the show at the Anarchist Newspaper Conference. These were certainly the three largest groups at the conference. But people from a number of other groups were no less involved in the process and just as consistently supported the decisions that were made at the conference. The conference culminated a two year long period of discussion of this project. It should not be surprising that out of those discussions emerged certain positions that most of the conference participants were agreed on. So why, in the attempts to erect some elaborate conspiracy, are people from Minneapolis, Chicago, and ex-R.S.L.ers singled out, when long term supporters of the project from the Bay Area or Atlanta, for example, are not included in this imaginary cabal? Speculating about the motivations of critics is always a risky undertaking. But a few reasons do leap to mind. First, the smaller the number of groups the more sinister everything sounds. Including more groups in the conspiracy would call into question suggestions that preparations for the conference were conducted in secret. But another element is also at work. The Bay Area and Atlanta were represented at the conference exclusively by womyn, and in the macho ego politics of Fred, and others like him, womyn are invisible. It is inconceivable to Fred that womyn might behave autonomously, not as appendages to men. So the cabal is built around the groups with prominent men in them: R.S.L., R.A.B.L. and Hayday. Love and Rage can make no claims to having put all its loudmouthed men in their place but the "conspiracy" to build a monthly anarchist newspaper is committed to womyn's empowerment in the anarchist movement and in society at large.

The linchpin in this con-

spiracy theory is the R.S.L. Their Marxist-Leninist past makes it easy to portray the R.S.L. as a disciplined cadre organization boring its way into the tender flesh of the anarchist movement. It ain't so. The letter from Some Chicago Anarchists claims that the former R.S.L.ers voted as a bloc: "We charted the R.S.L. on several votes, on nearly all every single extrot voted the same. On no vote did more than 3 or 4 vote against the majority. True party discipline." This is bullshit. There were several votes on which only the self-described obstructionists were in opposition. But on every single other vote former R.S.L.ers voted both ways. The fact is that by the time of its demise the R.S.L. was a deeply fractured organization. While a majority of R.S.L.ers supported the general shift towards anarchism, even there they were moving in several directions. Some have a more syndicalist orientation others have oriented towards the anti-authoritarian wing of the Left Greens and still others have oriented towards militant youth. Most are deeply suspicious of any ideology, "anarchist" or otherwise. Aside from being a little more polite, they don't get along with each other any better than any other randomly selected group of 20 anarchists.

The point of the conspiracy theory is to make Love and Rage look like the extended shadow of the R.S.L. Fuck that noise. Contrary to the paranoid fantasies of some, Love and Rage is not going to be a warmed over version of the Torch/La Antorcha (the R.S.L.'s old newspaper). The Torch was generally pretty boring both to read and look at. To the credit of its creators they understood this, saw that they couldn't fix it and threw in the towel. Love and Rage will be a revolutionary anarchist newsmagazine—it will speak to a new generation of

revolutionary anti-authoritarians about the struggles we are active in, the cultures of resistance we are a part of and the world we are fighting to change.

What seems to gall both K.P. and Some Chicago Anarchists is that Love and Rage has placed an explicit emphasis on fighting racism, sexism, homophobia and other forms of oppression. Beth, George and Fred, in their attempts to smear former R.S.L.ers accuse them of attempting to "direct" discussion toward their 'franchise' issues, racism, sexism, and homophobia. Racism, sexism and homophobia are the lived reality of the vast majority of humanity—they are not the franchise issues of any single group. K.P.'s accounting of the attendance at the Anarchist Newspaper Conference held during Thanksgiving weekend was essentially correct. Former members of the Revolutionary Socialist League accounted for a large minority of conference attendees. The R.S.L. held a meeting to disband immediately prior to the Newspaper Conference and about half of the former R.S.L.ers attended the Conference. Consequently the R.S.L. was disproportionately represented at the conference. But those who thought the R.S.L.ers were plotting factional moves within the Newspaper Conference during their meeting to disband would have been sorely disappointed. I walked in on this meeting and can only describe it as something of a cross between a sentimental funeral and a group therapy session. I beat a hasty retreat from this scene.

K.P. claims that R.A.B.L., Hayday and the R.S.L. are in close ideological affinity and were "more or less voting as a bloc on all major decisions." It just ain't so. R.A.B.L. is probably the most cohesive of the three groups, and I know that the four R.A.B.L. members in attendance voted

against each other on all manner of questions. The same was true of Hayday and the former members of the R.S.L. What is true is that decisions were often made by a substantial majority vote, so most decisions had the support of a substantial majority of the three groups. The only group that seemed to vote as a bloc were the self-described "obstructionists." It was they who engaged in the bureaucratic maneuvers. In spite of the fact that several of them were "principled" opponents of consensus decision-making they attempted to require consensus on all decisions. When that move was defeated they pushed for a requirement of 3/4 majority. The purpose of this move was to allow a determined minority to obstruct the desires of the majority and thereby to disrupt the conference. This fact was apparent to everybody. Over 3/4 of the conference participants voted against this explicitly anti-democratic maneuver.

K.P. claims that there was a "deliberate conspiracy" on the part of Hayday "to exclude at least two anarchist groups from the conference." It is impossible to reply to such a vague accusation. But I do not have any difficulty imagining members of Hayday hoping with all their hearts that Fred (from Some Chicago Anarchists) and John Bekken (of Resurgence) would not grace the conference with their sectarian antics. The conference was publicized at events attended by Fred. Bekken attended the meeting at the San Francisco gathering that called the conference but did not, for reasons I will not pretend to fathom, sign up on the mailing list that was used for mailing the three issues of the Anarchist Newspaper Conference Discussion Bulletin that were published prior to the conference. Fred and Bekken have a long history of disruptive and sectarian behavior in the anarchist movement. The Newspaper Conference was organized explicitly for supporters of the project. Fred and Bekken came to the conference with the intention of disrupting the proceedings in much the same fashion the Spartacist League (or some similar obnoxious sect) go to other people's events to disrupt them. But if there was a conspiracy to exclude them it didn't work and I wasn't in on it.

K.P. complains that the discussion of the political statement "should have taken less than an hour" but instead took up the first day. The protracted debate of the political statement reflects the fact that participants in the conference were not the ideological monolith K.P. tries so hard to portray us as and that the conference was not the stage managed affair Some Chicago Anarchists would have people believe it was.

K.P. is annoyed that so much attention was given to the specific oppression of certain groups. He says "It would seem that if we say that we as anarchists oppose all oppression it would follow that we oppose racism, sexism, ageism, etc." I wish it were so. But as the experiences of the San Francisco gathering should have made clear

Continued on next page

by Donald Rooum

Fuck that noise; no imaginary cabal

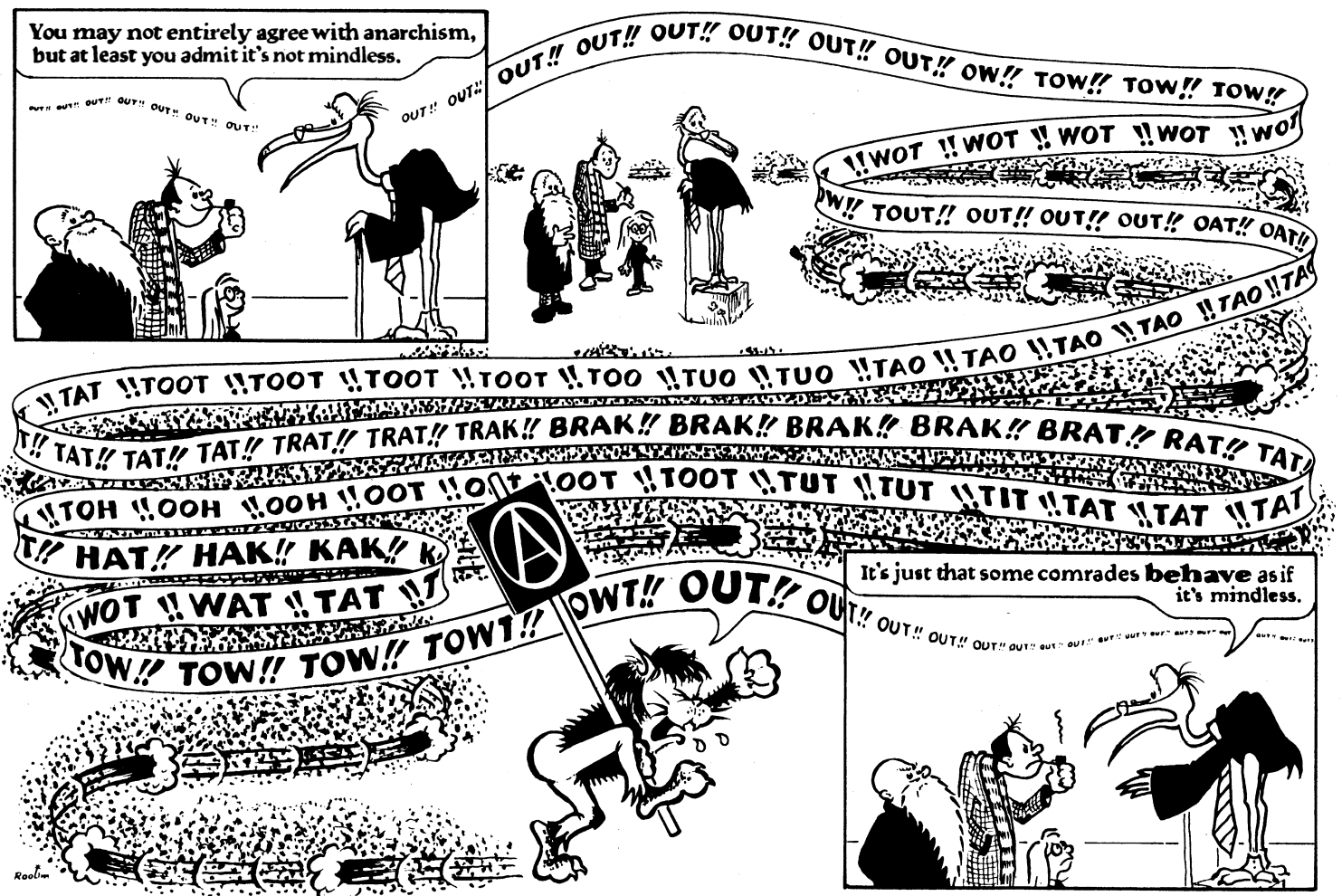
Continued from previous page

enough, the anarchist movement is rife with sexist, racist, homophobic, ageist and other oppressive behavior and ideas. Furthermore, it is not sufficient to simply oppose these evils. We need to understand how they operate if we are to intelligently attack them. The sections of the **Love and Rage** Political Statement on these questions are only baby steps in that direction.

K.P. claims that the decision to locate the newspaper production group in New York City and to pay me the luxurious salary of \$400 a month to work as facilitator for the project was "decided beforehand." This is not true. Certainly it was discussed beforehand in the pages of the **Discussion Bulletin** which was published for just such a purpose. As it turned out, New York was the only city that offered to take the project and I was the only candidate for facilitator willing to move there. I believe a paid staff is a necessary evil for a project as ambitious as **Love and Rage**. I also recognize the tendency of such positions to ossify into permanent positions of power. We committed ourselves at the conference to trying to replace me in the position of facilitator with someone else in about a year. I am committed to this happening. I also am committed to finding a replacement who is not both white and male.

K.P. describes a vote on a proposal asking members of the Editorial Council to affirm the general agreement with the political statement. He describes "those of us who voted against it" as "those of us who did not belong to the R.S.L., R.A.B.L. or Hayday." I voted against this proposal and I am a member of R.A.B.L. I thought it was petty. But my vote doesn't coincide with K.P.'s vision of a monolithic R.A.B.L.-Hayday-R.S.L. cabal, so he just lies about it. K.P. claims that he opposed this requirement because "a newspaper which professes to be the continental paper of the anarchist movement should be open to all individuals, groups and tendencies...." But **Love and Rage** makes no such claims. In fact the Political Statement explicitly states "We do not purport to represent the full spectrum of diversity in the contemporary anarchist movement." What could be clearer?

This is actually the heart of the issue. As long as those who disagree with the politics of **Love and Rage** can convince people that we claim to be **the** paper of the movement they can justify their own efforts to attack and disrupt a project organized by freely associating groups and individuals. I for one don't believe that there can ever be a single paper for the movement and any attempt to create one will meet with disaster. While I hope **Love and Rage** will include ideas and writings that are in disagreement with the Political Statement, there are certainly sections of the movement which I would like to see left behind—in particular those whose main activity seems to be attacking other anarchists.



Reprinted from **Wildcat Anarchist Comics** published by Freedom Press (84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX, England).

K.P. complains about the name **Love and Rage** only after griping about some of the ridiculous names we didn't pick. He says **Love and Rage** "seems more like an appropriate name for a heavy metal band than a serious anarchist newspaper." As a proponent for the comparatively stodgier (or more serious, harumph) name **Direct Action**, I can only say "lighten up, dude."

Many of the points made by K.P. are repeated by Some Chicago Anarchists. Therefore I will only respond to claims that are unique in their letter. Forgive me if I am less polite here. The methods and tone of Beth, George and Fred's letter were outrageous.

When the Newspaper Conference was planned at the meeting in San Francisco it was decided to ask midwesterners to pay a \$25 registration fee to offset the considerably higher travel expenses of those who would be coming from further away. This practice of equalizing travel expenses is a way to make meetings more accessible to people who don't have a lot of money to fly around the country with. Some Chicago Anarchists claim that because they did not attend the meeting in San Francisco they are not bound by that decision. A more honest explanation of the situation would have stated that Some Chicago Anarchists did not intend to pay their fair share for a conference they only intended to disrupt in the first place. After listening to several harangues by the self-described obstructionists I said that, in keeping with the decision of the meeting that planned the conference, those who had not paid the fee should identify themselves and ask that the fee be waived. Some Chicago Anarchists describe this as an attempt to get them "thrown out by bureaucratic methods." My motivations here were considerably less malicious than

Some Chicago Anarchists suppose. I just wanted it to be clear who was attending the conference to launch a newspaper and who was there to disrupt. No attempt was ever made to throw anybody out (although after a few hours of Fred's belligerent antics, I can't say there wasn't some desire in that direction).

Some Chicago Anarchists proceed in their letter to suggest all sorts of nefarious reasoning behind the fact that I often write under a pseudonym. They claim that I took up the name Ned Day to fool people who otherwise wouldn't associate with me. I use a pseudonym for all the same reasons other anarchists do: to keep my job, to avoid police repression, to confuse surveillance and the like. I have never lied about my name or pseudonym in the company of anarchists. The willingness that Some Chicago Anarchists show to betray that confidence in print is a type of sectarianism only a cop could love. I have suffered police beatings and an attempted firebombing on my home in connection with my political activity. The use of a pseudonym is a necessity for me. Some Chicago Anarchists disregard for the security of pseudonyms is despicable.

Some Chicago Anarchists go on to claim that Billy Falk and myself "served as co-facilitators for nearly the entire meeting." This is a flat out lie. What is particularly galling about this particular lie is that Fred continuously ignored the requests of the womyn who were facilitating the meeting when the obstructionists were performing their little circus. It was one of the more grotesque displays of male chauvinism I have seen in an anarchist meeting. It is only made worse by the fact that Fred seems to have conveniently forgotten it. The task of facilitating the conference was frequently rotated.

Beth and Fred left the conference in the afternoon. George, who stayed, knows perfectly well what really happened.

The trio go on to complain that the agenda was not available until the first morning of the conference. Again this is a flat out lie. The first proposed agenda was printed in the September (#1) issue of the **Anarchist Newspaper Conference Discussion Bulletin**. A revised version of the proposed agenda was printed in the November (#3) issue of the **Bulletin**.

Beth, George and Fred complain about the Political Statement that "aside from the six brief references to (anarchism) or anti-state the rest...would be entirely acceptable to all the commies on the continent and even to some liberals." This claim is idiotic. The Political Statement includes sections on sexuality, ecology, animals, youth liberation and the Soviet Union that spit in the face of the authoritarian left. They complain that the Political Statement doesn't attack organized religion, but none of them even raised a proposal that it should. Sometimes important things slip through the cracks. I certainly would support amending the Political Statement to include a statement opposing organized religion.

Some Chicago Anarchists claimed that when they raised their claim that Hayday supports the F.M.L.N.(another lie) and sometimes works with mainstream church groups (So what?) that "much hooting and cat-calling interrupted this lucid point." There are a lot of words to describe Fred's bellowings, but lucidity is not one of them. In general, conference participants were quite restrained and listened patiently, but that calm was occasionally broken by some of Fred's more comical and outrageous "lucid points." One of the highlights was Fred howling "I represent the

anarchist movement, not you clowns" as his arm swept to include the whole room. This arrogance characterized his whole performance.

Beth, George and Fred claim that "even the name was fixed." In their account, "less than a handful of people voted for it at first. but after dinner and a womyns' caucus supported it, the faithful majority fell in line to pass it." Those sneaky womyn. In fact **Love and Rage** came in second in a straw poll behind the dull, but to the point, **Revolutionary Anarchist Paper**. After several passionate speeches for the name **Love and Rage**, most of us were persuaded. It is probably inconceivable to Fred that people, after listening to a discussion, might actually change their minds about something except by falling in line. But the comment about the womyns' caucus is revealing. Womyn were among the most active participants in the conference. They won a majority on the Editorial Council. Certainly the discussions that took place in the Womyns' Caucus affected in important ways the direction of the conference. This is something that anarcho-patriarchs like Fred have good reason to fear. For too long anarchist projects have been dominated by loud white men who interrupt and intimidate people in meetings. One of the results of the recent growth in the anarchist movement is that it is more difficult for a handful of such men to impose their will on a larger group of people.

Beth, George and Fred claim that **Love and Rage** "expects us to pay for selling their line." This paranoia runs throughout their letter. **Love and Rage** will be paid for largely by pledges from its supporters. We aren't picking anybody's pockets. They claim that the movement "isn't large enough to subsidize" renting an office and



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paying a staff person a starvation salary. This certainly reflects Some Chicago Anarchists' vision of the movement: perpetually puny and insignificant. **Love and Rage** reflects a more optimistic current that sees the anarchist movement as the most significant revolutionary tendency in the '90s and beyond.

Beth, George and Fred then discuss proposals to open the paper up to pages produced by other groups and thereby decentralize some of the decisionmaking. They claim that, after a break, the facilitators prevented these proposals from coming up again. In fact these proposals will be discussed at the January 13 and 14 meeting of the Editorial Council in Knoxville. They were tabled, not as some bureaucratic maneuver, but for very real reasons of time. More pressing questions (like the composition of the Editorial Council and the name of the paper) still needed to be made. For the record, the facilitator at this point was Billy Falk and he supported at least one of the proposals.

This lengthy account might create the false impression that the obstructionists succeeded in turning the whole conference into a fiasco. In fact the more outspoken obstructionists, Jon Bekken and Fred, made relatively brief appearances at the conference. Overall the conference proceeded as smoothly as any gathering of well intentioned anarchists might hope to. As always, mistakes were made that we can learn from.

Some Chicago Anarchists conclude by claiming that "most anarchist projects are roundly praised when they start," but that this is "a rare exception." Anybody familiar with this group's history of attacking, in equally shrill terms, practically every anarchist project to come down the pike, including the Minneapolis and Toronto Anarchist Gatherings, to name only two, will have to chuckle at this false expression of anarchist unity. Some Chicago Anarchists have proven themselves to be belligerent sectarians at practically every turn. This latest attack on **Love and Rage** should be seen in this context. It was to be expected. I regret taking up so much space responding to this attack, but such a string of lies and distortions could not pass without a complete response. K.P. called for a discussion of this matter. I have made my contribution. But I have no intention of squandering any more of my time or energy on the latest mutterings of proven liars and sectarians.

Love and Rage,
Christopher "Ned" Day
c/o **Love and Rage**
3 Prince St. Station
NYC, NY. 10012

Ps. I've enclosed a correct copy of the **L&R** Political Statement. The version you printed was an unapproved version prepared by the notetaker for purposes of correction. There are several important and several not-so-important differences. We would appreciate it if you would print the correct version. Thanks.

[Note: Despite its great length we have printed this response in its entirety due to the serious nature of

the charges made in the letters printed in our last issue. Now all these charges and this extensive reply have been printed we request that any further contributions to this discussion remain within our usual letter-length guidelines of four double-spaced typewritten pages.]

Vanguard anarchist front

What is the best strategy by which to promote the anarchist revolution? If you were to believe the folks at "**Love & Rage**" we should be forming a vanguard anarchist front to grab up as much (political) power as possible.

The same people at **Love & Rage** have tried to push themselves off as the voice of the anarchist movement before. In Atlanta, for example, several people tried to issue a "statement of principles" for an entire anarchist network, of which about 10% or less were in attendance. Those in attendance who objected to this were told that we (the ones who attended more meetings) really were the anarchist movement anyway. They seem to be espousing some kind of democratic centralism; the people at **Love & Rage** have effectively formed a central committee; the next task is to publicly pass itself off as representative of the entire anarchist movement.

Some people have dismissed this issue as they expect **Love & Rage** to be unsuccessful anyway. On the contrary, **Love & Rage** will most probably pander to a good deal of wayward lefties and socialist rejects; their imitation of political organization will appeal to those who cannot function without a firm agenda. The result will be recruits who do not fully understand, nor are fully committed to anarchist ideas; these people will make up the rank & file supporters while the Gunderson/Day-R.S.L.-trots will assume the position of "ideological leaders." Were any of the aspirations of these revolutionary wet dreamers to take hold, people would come to them for political leadership, which is, in reality, all that these people can offer them. While they espouse building and (re)building the @ movement, there remains no real grass roots foundation to even begin to support the kind of change they would hope to bring about. The people at **Love & Rage** are clever politicians. One person said they were people who never learned the lessons of history; I believe they have—all too well; they probably just have no intention of promoting horizontal, anarchist organization.

In the coming times of rebellion, remember the vanguard wannabes. If the time ever comes to fire upon your oppressors, shoot them before they purge you. You'll be glad you did.

X, NYC, NY.

Statist unity

The Malta "non-summit summit" of George Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev is a fascinating proof of the fundamental unity of ruling classes regardless of which brand of statism they preach. Liberals and conservatives alike cheer the convergence of U.S. & Soviet

interests. The end of the Cold War means the last pillar of false legitimacy of the state has fallen. The unprecedented evil and corruption of modern governments absolutely required the threat of nuclear war to silence anti-statist voices.

Those voices are now being heard. The chants and screams of martyrs in Beijing seem to have sent the winds of change through the Eastern bloc. Poland, Hungary, East Germany, Czechoslovakia and the Baltic States resound with rebellion against statism. The workers inside the U.S.S.R. are now demanding and getting anarcho-syndicalist forms of organization (see **Anarchy** #22).

In view of this, it is no wonder that George Bush gave Gorbachev virtually every economic concession he wanted. Bush has no altruistic concern for the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (C.P.S.U.) or for Gorbachev personally. Bush is concerned with looking good to voters and keeping some semblance of Soviet threat alive by supporting Gorbachev & the C.P.S.U. I believe he is also fearful that anti-statism will spread outside the state communist world.

Bush's recent veto of congressional legislation to allow Chinese students who protested the Beijing massacre to stay in the U.S. is evidence of his fear of their radicalism. It is extremely unlikely that his previous link to Deng et al, or economic reasons, are sufficient to justify the risk to his anti-communist reputation for such a veto.

The massacre in Beijing and the fall of state communism in Eastern Europe, with the possibility of anarcho-syndicalist & anti-statist workers uprising NECESSITATE that Bush support statist hegemony in the state-communist world. Otherwise, the justification for his support for bloody anti-communist dictatorships all over the world will soon fall on deaf ears.

In the end, Bush's apparent fears of global anti-statist revolution are probably justified. It is our job as anarchists to see that Bush's worst nightmare comes true!

H.O., Walnut Creek, CA.

Polish Anarchist Federation

Dear friends,

It's been not so long ago when I've found your address on a list published in the **Anarchist Age** (no.1, July, 1989) by Libertarian Workers for a Self-Managed Society, Australia.

I'm an editor of an anarchist monthly, **Fraternité**, and a member of the Polish Anarchist Federation as well. Although the magazine is a new one it's already known Poland-wide and has a large number of readers.

I'm writing to you hoping to establish firm relationship between us based on the exchange of information, magazines, newspapers, photos, articles, addresses, news on action taken, etc. The only reason why I'm not enclosing any printed stuff now, is that I'm not 100% sure that the address I'm writing to is still actual.

Text of the Love and Rage political statement

Love and Rage is a monthly anarchist newspaper intended to foster revolutionary anti-authoritarian activism in North America. We will provide coverage of social struggles, world events, anarchist actions and cultures of resistance. We will support the struggles of oppressed people around the world for control over their own lives.

Anarchy offers the broadest possible critique of domination making possible a framework for unity in all struggles for liberation. We seek to understand the systems we live under for ourselves and reject any pre-packaged ideology. Anarchism is a living body of theory and practice connected directly to the lived experiences of oppressed people fighting for their own liberation. We anticipate the constant and radical revision of our ideas as a necessary part of any revolutionary process.

Love and Rage is revolutionary. We support the overthrow of all forms of authoritarian social relations and the creation of a society based on cooperation, solidarity and mutual aid. We recognize that social revolution can only be made by the oppressed majority of humanity in a movement that they control themselves. We support the use of whatever means are necessary to emancipate humanity and bring an end to the war, poverty, hunger and misery generated by the existing system. We support the emergence of a fighting movement as a step toward making the social revolution.

Love and Rage is anti-statist. We oppose all states whether they call themselves capitalist or communist.

Love and Rage is anti-capitalist. We support all efforts to overthrow all forms of class rule and state power. We support strikes and other forms of workers struggle for control of the means of production.

Love and Rage is anti-racist. We fight against white supremacy and work for the creation of societies that respect cultural diversity. We support the self-determination of Mexicans, Chicanos, Native Americans and other oppressed groups. We recognize the special oppression of Afro-Americans since slavery to the present and fight of Black people in the U.S. for liberation and self-determination. We fight the resurgence of anti-Asian and anti-Arab racism. We take front rank in the fight against racist Skinhead, Klan, Nazi and Cop terror.

Love and Rage is anti-imperialist. We support the right of self-determination or nationalities oppressed by the various forms of imperialism. We fight to get the U.S. out of Central America, Puerto Rico and all other lands. We support the destruction of the U.S. Federal State. We support the destruction of the Soviet Empire and the liberation of its peoples. We are for the destruction of apartheid, the I.M.F., World Bank, multi-national corporations and other forms of imperialism.

Love and Rage is anti-sexist. We are for the liberation and self-determination of all womyn. We are fighters against patriarchy and for the empowerment of women. This means, minimally, unquestionable reproductive freedom for all womyn regardless of race or economic status and a world free of sexist violence. We recognize that the oppression of women is necessary to the continued functioning of the State. The State will not solve our problems. Our liberation lies in the overthrow of the state.

Love and Rage supports Lesbian, Biaffectionate (Bisexual) and Gay Liberation. We reject the compulsory heterosexuality of the patriarchal family, and support attempts to foster a diversity of consensual human relationships and sexuality.

Love and Rage will support the struggles of youth against their specific oppression. **Love and Rage** makes a special effort to provide a platform for youth. We recognize that the revolutionary future lies with the youth.

Love and Rage supports the struggle against the domination of the natural world. We recognize that the current industrial order, built on the exploitation of the planet and its inhabitants, has given rise to an ecological crisis that threatens the very survival of life on the planet. We support the movements that resist further destruction of the planet. We see the need for the revolutionary transformation of our relations with the planet and the species on it. We want to stop and reverse the destruction of the wilderness. We want to stop and reverse the poisoning of the air, land and water. We are against the exploitation of animals in factory farming and testing systems. We oppose the attacks by the state on the Animal Liberation Movement.

This statement does not attempt to include all issues of concern to anarchists and anti-authoritarians nor does **Love and Rage** pretend to fully understand, or be fully united on, all issues. We do not purport to represent the full spectrum of diversity in the contemporary anarchist movement. We will not shy away from controversy. We will always seek the input of our readers and other activists in our efforts to advance both our own understanding and that of the movements we serve.

I would be extremely grateful if you could supply me with any samples of magazines and newspapers related to Columbian anarchist movement, as I could present them both to my readers and delegates of the Polish Anarchist Federation during our regular

meetings.

If you are interested in further cooperation of any kind with Polish anarchists and in obtaining our press on regular basis, please let me know.

In solidarity,
P.T., Warsaw, Poland

Letters

New Age virus

Dear Anarchy,

I found Janos Nehek's "In search of the new age: The infinite egress of you" (Nov./Dec. 1989 p.14) an incisive and timely statement about an epidemic philosophy in America. As an epidemiological abstract, the *New Age* movement shows itself--and replicates itself--with an unnerving efficiency that borders on the viral. It is this quality that continues to vitalize the subject--irregardless of the many vocal outcries which point out obvious pitfalls of philosophy, theme, value and politics, etc. Nehek only began to explore these concerns.

Nehek proves once again that the passion of any form of philosophical fundamentalism overshadows common sense. This isn't necessarily bad, but in the example of the *New Age* movement things seem out-of-balance so far as proofs vs. critique, and so far as values vs. intent. I feel the true danger of the *New Age* movement--and one which this article points towards in describing "simulated" spirituality--lies in what the Kabbalists/occultists call "tikkun olam," or repair of the world. This idea represents the intervention of man and his desire to gain domination over God's nature.... Also left unexplored in this piece--but again pointed at--are the darker potentials surrounding what Nehek describes as "re-tooled psycho-technologies"...machine man made flesh. The perfect 'editing of our reality scripts with an efficiency never dreamed of...again, without much discernable ethic.

One of the prime tenets of classic alchemy & the hermetic tradition (from which the *New Age* movement draws much of its pedigree) is the bringing of *prima materia* to *prima terra*. Simply stated, this implies drawing the divine realms down to, and establishing them upon, planet Earth. Or at least attempting a simulation in its stead ("creating your own reality").

It may be that the *New Age* movement is less philosophy and more commodity--in this light we all should applaud the stands taken in Janos Nehek's piece. His pointing out the differences between the inspired and the profane in the subject of the *New Age* was a refreshing and important contribution.

Respectfully,
T.L., Boca Raton, FL.

Missing Anarchy

Hello C.A.L.,

I used to live in Columbia but now I'm down here in Gainesville, Fla. I recently came across a copy of *Anarchy* that I brought down here and thought it would be a good idea to subscribe.

While I don't agree with some of what you print I do enjoy reading much of *Anarchy*, especially the international news, Papalagi series, and discussions of important issues such as "deep ecology" and anarchy and religion. So...sign me up and please start with #20 if possible.

Thanks,
D.W., Gainesville, FL.



[d]anger (Chico, CA.)

The critical chicken

A lot of people choose to be vegetarians. I once chose to be a vegetarian for a number of years. I currently am not a vegetarian. Those readers who are thoughtless carnivores or moralistic vegetarians might want to stop right here: what I am going to say will offend you.

I believe that the world is real. I believe it was here before I was born and will be here after I die. I believe it is possible to learn about that world by living in it, playing with it, studying it, and thinking about it. I am part of that world. Chickens are part of that world. The world has shades of grey, and for the purpose of discussing the sanctity of life, chickens are a crucial shade of grey.

I am conscious. I believe, from long observation, that consciousness is closely interwoven with language, symbolic thought, and dealing with the real world. I suspect that some human beings are less conscious than others. They are not merely ignorant, or trained to avoid thinking for themselves, or traumatized, or brain-washed; those may be causes, or they may be results, of a dimming of consciousness.

I do not believe consciousness is something separate from the biological brain. It doesn't hang out in heaven or hell or conception and first communion. It arises because it is a material "thing" or system that is intermeshed with the neurons in the brain.

An awake coyote or monkey is more conscious than a sleeping human being. Mammals, especially the larger ones, are obviously conscious. O.K., it is not so obvious. Maybe they are just robots, biological reaction machines that have no idea what they are doing. Maybe even when they exhibit what I call cunning or planning ahead, that is just some simple neural circuit firing off. But you could say that of human beings, too.

It is an important question. Take the common cockroach. Like myself, it will run and hide when it sees great big things coming towards it. Like me, it will react if touched; it will behave frantically if parts of its body are damaged. Does that mean that it is conscious of its pain? Or are its neurons simply wired to do that, the result of evolution's selective pressure?

I could make, and many people have made, robots that run

away from perceived danger. I can build a machine that if it is tampered with emits a shriek or even the recorded message: "Stop that, you're hurting me." But such a machine clearly is not conscious. The nervous system of a cockroach is a thousand times more sophisticated than such a toy.

Brains come in different sizes. Elephant brains and whale brains are the largest around, as far as we know. Human brains are considerably smaller, but we like to console ourselves for having the highest brain to body weight ratio on Earth. Many larger carnivores and herbivores have fairly sizable brains. Rat brains seem a bit puny to us, though duplicating a rat brain with today's computers would be a decade-long project and require tons, if not kilotons, of silicon. Bird and reptile brains are visible, but mostly pretty tiny. Insects don't have proper brains, just ganglions. Worms and other "simple" life forms have neurons but no structures resembling brains. Some animals (protozoa, for instance) that have no neurons at all do a remarkably good job of avoiding danger and seeking pleasure.

Before I plunge further into neurons let me say that I don't mean to be a neural supremacist. There may be totally different systems that are able to support consciousness. However, the example of neurons and brains will suffice for this essay.

I don't believe that protozoa are conscious in any meaningful sense. I believe that human beings are. In between are continuous shades of grey. Consciousness is a matter of degrees, though it may disappear long before we make it to the bottom of the neural ladder. Is a chicken conscious? How conscious? Is it alright to kill conscious things? (Are viruses immoral? Is it O.K. to eat a chicken if that is a biological compulsion, but not O.K. if eating chicken is an optional act?)

Religions are characterized in part by not dealing with reality. Religions all are based on the idea that reality is an illusion. Since those heathen out there are illusions, it's O.K. to kill them. And if someone kills you for your beliefs, fine, you get to go to the real place (heaven, nirvana, paradise). Religions often use food taboos: don't eat pig, or don't eat cows, or at least not on Fridays.

Vegans don't eat any animal products. Lacto-vegetarians eat animal products such as cheese

and eggs. Some "vegetarians" eat fish. I have even heard people call themselves vegetarians when they eat chicken. Now clearly a chicken is not a vegetable. Why eat chickens but not cows, or scallops but not fish?

The fact is that coyotes are more intelligent and conscious than chickens, and not because they are higher on the food chain. Chickens have very limited ability to remember things, to make judgments, and to communicate with other chickens. If you don't believe me, get yourself a few and spend a lot of time observing them. Maybe chickens were not always that way; they may be bred for stupidity; stupid people, I mean chickens, don't cause so much trouble. Coyotes, on the other hand, are smart enough that I wish I could talk to one and hear what it has to say.

Chickens not only have small brains, they have brains that are qualitatively different from the brains of larger mammals. Their brains are devoted almost exclusively to monitoring their bodies and environment and controlling their muscles. They have some capacity to remember complex images, but not much. Unless thought takes place in some other dimension (?heaven) it is safe to say that chickens do not think. Certainly they do not have that peculiar conscious sensation of watching themselves. They watch the world, smell and feel the world, but they do not think about it; they cannot think about it.

Larger mammals (generally) have developed what is called a neocortex. This area of the brain can store large numbers of complicated memories and make comparisons between them; it can think. The thoughts of animals that do not have languages are doubtless memory-thoughts, or imagining (image-ing) the future based on past experiences.

I don't eat dead cows or pigs or sheep, not because I have a problem with eating carrion, but because these animals are, as far as I can tell, conscious creatures. Chickens and fish are not.

Chickens are alive and beautiful. So are sea anemones, snails, frogs, and spiders. But they are not conscious (unless you want to define consciousness differently than I have). Chickens, like cockroaches, are biological reaction machines. They have many things in common with humans, but that does not prevent me from killing cockroaches or eating dead chickens.

It is a funny thing to hear a religious vegetarian advocating the right to abortion after lecturing me on not eating chickens. I have no problems with abortion, though obviously preventing pregnancy is preferable. What is being killed is alive, but up to a point it is not conscious. A baby is becoming conscious, it may even be becoming conscious in the womb during the final trimester, but it takes quite a few months after conception before a fetal nervous system begins to function and reach the complexity of the larger mammals. Babies are precious things, not because "Jesus love the little children," but because they are real, they are vastly intelligent, and they

are conscious.

I think a lot of people understand this: that is why many vegetarians will eat eggs, but not adult chickens. It is why most abortion rights advocates act more humanely towards children and adults than religious anti-abortionists.

The same line of reasoning can be applied to the issue of animal rights and lab testing using animals, though other variables enter into the picture. Even though I doubt that a rat is conscious (though it is a step above a chicken in this regard) I know that most experiments on rats are useless and cruel (that is, the intent of the experimenters is partly one of cruelty). Anyone who would do a destructive experiment on a dog should not be allowed to practice "science"; such a person has not learned the rudiments of thinking and observation. Experiments can be done in non-destructive ways. Careful observation and the use of computer models, combined with studies of animals that die naturally, can replace almost all destructive experimentation. But if an experiment must be performed, it is better to use rats rather than conscious animals such as dogs or monkeys.

Bill Meyers, San Diego, CA.

Food not bombs rally

Lev,

Just got *Anarchy* #22 and found it very interesting. Particularly good was the section on kid's sexuality as well as views of the gathering and this paper project itself. Some pretty bizarre letters. Regarding the S.F. actions everyone is talking about how the Berkeley D.O.A. got fucked up, but forgetting about some other much more successful happenings. On my first day in S.F. I had nothing to do since the myns gathering fell through and I'd be barred from the one across the bay due to my genital configuration and its apparent offensiveness so I caught a ride down to a Food Not Bombs rally on City Plaza. My only preconceptions were of members of the group in Boston being sort of older peace hippie "types." The situation was pretty "mellow" at first meaning that the cops were about but stayed back and the civil disobedience performance of serving food was "the event." It was kind of unnerving seeing a crowd of "protesters" spaced out and passive. One homeless guy urgently told me that some of his friends had occupied a vacant building around the corner but needed help escaping cuz the police were after them; you know, a diversion, a mob, witnesses, etc. But when I tried to urgently communicate this many people acted as if I was talking during a movie; you're not on the program! I finally gave up and found myself talking to a scommie who was telling me how much he supported the "red terror" (Russia 1918-21), and how he was being persecuted because they wouldn't put him on some local ballot!

The police snapped everyone awake by starting to snatch people in far reaches of the plaza. Very awake and very angry a hooting, jeering mob confronted the riot





police in one corner after another. Unlike the D.O.A. (deranged on anarchism?) this all was totally spontaneous and I'd say successful. Nobody had their padded suits, jousting poles, or circle ay guns but for several hours it was a riot of humanity all colors, linguistics, and sexual preferences saying "Fuck the Police" with an immediately understood feeling of anger and humor. The highpoint came at the end when a Bolshevik paper was used to light the flag and exhausted, beaten-looking riot squads filed into City Hall under the ledge occupied by their distraught radio remote controllers. On the shit side several people were arrested and the tent city was demolished at 5am next morning.

There was also the S.F. "creative nonviolent" alternative to the D.O.A. which deserves attention. It was a little dogged considering all the walking around town and lack of confrontation with the riot police who shadowed us and forced us from a symbolic planting in Chinatown, arresting four. However, we got to "see the sites" and flooded into Bank of America, the stock exchange, H.U.D., and Citicorp Cafe hooting and dancing, laughing, chanting crazy chants and making wet spots appear on the pants of all "AmericansTM" in the vicinity. The stop at Citicorp Cafe was particularly refreshing as we jumped in the fountain, heaved water at each other, and let loose a circle of chaos that I'm sure had all security minded folk and yuppie scum headin' to reapply some Butt Mousse. I personally think nonviolence is a lousy way of reaching nonviolence—(i.e. after the revolution and all that) however the D.O.A. looked like a dog from the word go. I have no experience in street fighting but it seems that the more planned and organized (and open) the confrontation gets the more it becomes the domain of masochistic militant cadres. At this stage in the revolutionary struggle it seems we should be sowing seeds of refusal and rebellion and striking at all places so they won't know where its coming from. The small sabotage fiesta group idea is a good one and one that would have kept my spirits higher through the days of oft times disappointing workshops. If the novelty of the Beijing rebels led them to the cremation pit, so goes the military solution of the Salvadoran insurgents. In both cases the pervasive doctrines, nonviolence and guerrillism, show themselves to share common ground in that in neither case is organized power seriously eroded. It's either "softened" as in East Germany or realigned, fascist A.R.E.N.A. vs. Leninist F.M.L.N., with the individual rebel either way saying "oh shit, this isn't what I want!"

I said some people were arrested at demos but that's redundant, all of humanity is "arrested" with the varying zones of capital varying mostly in terms of levels of security, prison conditions, and forms of administration. Us escapees need to figure out what we're escaping and communicate, create community and arm our desires to reach commynism. "The revolution will be a gathering of speed as the living race towards

life." That's from the *Book of Pleasures* and it sounds right on target. I think I'll read it.

Peter Kalberer
P.O. Box S
Flagstaff, AZ. 86002

Ps. This is the official position of the Coconino County Anarchist Revolutionary Radical Anarchist Youth Federation (part of the Beatrice Family).

About desire

Dear C.A.L.,

I loved the double issue you put out for Without Borders. As we see it! was great, and got me going on several subjects I hadn't looked into before, particularly the concept of character. I have a question, though, about your favorite word—Desire. "Arm your desires!" sounds great to me, but just what do you mean? What is the nature of Desire? Where does it come from? Is it psychological? Biological? Social? Existential? Or what? If there's an issue wherein you've treated this topic extensively, please send it out here and bill me.

Keep it up,
D.A., Davis, CA.

Lev on desire: Images of self-expression

Thanks very much for writing. It's refreshing to read some comments on the notion of desire which don't immediately attack it in the name of morality, ideology, society, nature, original sin or the word of god(s)! Authoritarian notions are deeply ingrained in our culture, and it seems to be hard for most people—even for many people who would like to call themselves anarchists—to relinquish their conditioning in this regard.

Anyone who takes the time to observe the society we live in might immediately notice that there is a huge ongoing battle over the meanings and uses of the concept of desire. The notion of desire is just one of the complex of ideas which center around the concept of anarchy. And it's fairly obvious that the meanings of any of the ideas related to anarchy are going to be hotly contested in our society. After all, it is largely organized around the maintenance of authority, hierarchies and all the forms of modern slavery. So it's unlikely that the meanings of words related to anarchy will be unreservedly allowed to express people's yearnings for free and full lives. When those who stand to gain power or profit from authoritarian institutions have the ability to mystify and confuse such matters, you can bet that plenty of their resources will be devoted to just this task.

If people were to clearly understand that there is no sensible reason for them to suppress their own lives—their own desires for living, half the battle to overthrow the modern forms of slavery would already be won. From there it would be but a small step toward formulating the strategies and tactics for overthrowing everything which stands

in the way of these lives and desires. So from the perspective of authority, it is necessary not only to call into question the advisability of living our lives outside the rules and definitions of civilization, it is above all necessary to enlist people in the dirty jobs of suppressing their own lives and desires as if this were a dire necessity to be accomplished at all costs! And how better to do so than to convince everyone that their most fundamental impulses are largely anti-social or evil? Thus the dominant (authoritarian) image of desire: the most primitive, atomistic, anti-social and senseless range of impulse which can be attributed to human beings. And thus the project of civilization: to channel this range of primitive impulse into the construction and maintenance of its own projects—all the structures of repression, domination and reification.

From the perspective of anarchy there is quite another way of conceptualizing desire. This doesn't involve analyzing it in terms of partial categories of life like those of psychology, biology, sociology or philosophy. These partial categorizations largely serve civilization's projects of manipulation—perverting or repressing desire by separating it from life, treating it as a "thing," and redirecting it to its own ends. Conceptualizing desire anarchically instead involves a loose analysis of the flow of our everyday life experience. This everyday lived experience is fundamentally unitary—i.e. as subjects we are totally engaged with the world such that it is not always easy to decide where the abstraction we call the "self" ends and the abstraction we call "the world" begins. Yet it remains convenient to speak in terms of these abstractions as though they were fairly definite ideas. But when one divides the experienced unity of our lives into these two abstract poles of self-identity and world-environment, something would be lost were they left totally separated and without connection. One important aspect of their connection can be conceptualized as desire, as the orientation and relation of our selves to our environment. In celebrating this orientation and relation of our selves and our world in the slogan "Arm Your Desires!", we hope to encourage people to see themselves as active creators of their own lives rather than as passive consumers of the life-roles authority has allotted to us. Instead of an acceptance of the external determination of our activities by authorities of any kind, we encourage people to see their lives as first of all their own self-expression. For if we aren't ever strong enough to express our real desires, how can we ever feel that we've really lived?

Real bullshit

Dear Anarchy,

As a subscriber I am compelled to sound off at some real bullshit that is happening in the Canadian and U.S. anarchist

community's press circles, some shit that I personally want to see come to an end.

I am sick and tired of writing newspapers or production circles and requesting information, sending cash or money orders, and not getting shit in return. I AM PISSED THE FUCK OFF and I want all the paranoid motherfuckers to get off the pot cause I, and a whole lot of other people, want to piss!

If this is a reply to the Fran Tuck case I don't know, but this ain't a secret movement, you'all. If

it is, then don't advertise your publications! Send them to the movement only and let them reprint it without a return address. That's a secret way of sending out information. If someone writes you for a publication, send it or return the money and explain why you could not fulfill the order. PERIOD!!!! Or at least acknowledge the receipt of the money and indicate when the issue should be received or when it was shipped. AS A PUBLISHER I HAVE ALWAYS HANDLED THINGS

Continued on next page

Cool Warmth

Dress rehearsal for Spring.
35 degrees feels warm in January.

The Sun--unbridled.
The ground is brighter than the sky.

All the way across the field--
Let's go--I haven't been there in a long time, it seems.

Cropped-off corn stalks inch up from the snow.
I like your moving profile against the trees.

Here's that log where I sat last week
Reading Salinger by the edge of the swamp.

Part the brush and watch the thorns.
Step through and test the ice.

Laughing, gasping--a half step more.
Brush away some snow, and stomp.

Tall, old broken tree trunks emerge from the ice.
Walking out--vast and flat here in the middle.

Laying our coats on the ice,
We take off our boots, and sit.

Feel the air penetrate our socks.
In our sweatshirts and jeans, we talk.

"The land outlives us," you say,
It shouldn't be bought or sold."

"We remain a part of the Earth
until, and after we grow old."

--Ritt Dalton

Apartheid USA

Last time I went home,
Rocky down the block
greeted my wife and I
with a cave man stare.
He had a spear in each hand:
one for me, traitor to my race,
the other for Carolyn, who's Black

Now my parents live in Connecticut,
far from New York's urban ruin--
a revolution waiting to erupt

Carolyn and I, we still
wander
across this land of hate

We keep searching for a niche:
a zebra couple
waiting for the end
of the stone age

--Bob Slaymaker, New York, NY.

Real bullshit

Continued from previous page

IN THE ABOVE WAY AND THINK MANY IN THE ANARCHIST CIRCLES SHOULD CONSIDER FOLLOWING SUIT RIGHT AWAY.

To the credit of Anarchy my subscription has been handled well. No problems so far. I hope other magazine/newsletter publishers and distributors read this letter and deal with its content. This stuff has got to stop. You can't build anything like this! REALLY, YOU JUST PISS THE REAL PEOPLE OFF, EVEN THOUGH WE WILL FORGIVE YOU IN THE END. People like myself work hard for the cash and don't like dealing with the jerks in the local grocery store, let alone an anarchist that won't even reply to a letter. How childish, amateurish, and immature. If it wasn't for the people's struggle I'd call it what it is—getting ripped off in the mail by some confidence artist. (Strong words, true, but ripping the people off is some serious shit, too.)

Of course I understand that sometimes people are in jail, sick, really tied down, out of the region, etc. So much of this is going on, though, that these excuses cannot be used to justify some real messed up practice on this issue.

And as far as the post office harassment goes, if we all dealt in the right way with publications people would know if the Post Office of the specific county was interfering with the mail. Think about it! PLEASE! Let's end this madness and start to handle requests for information in a people-oriented, consistent manner.

Thanks,

J. (No city listing by request)

Falsely accused

Dear C.A.L.,

Enclosed is an article from the August 30th, 1989 **Louisville Kentucky Courier-Journal** that I thought might interest readers of **Anarchy**.

John M. Hubbard III is my brother-in-law (married to my sister) and is **falsely** accused of setting 13 bombs around Salem, Indiana on July 5, 1988. John became a suspect because of his sparring with a conservative state legislator—Frank Newkirk Jr.—who is a political opportunist. Newkirk happens to be a lawyer, also, who could have made enemies because of his profession.

John is innocent and became a victim because Newkirk used him as a scapegoat to highlight his conservative views as opposed to John's anarchist views.

John Hubbard has been incarcerated since May without bail and the Feds have delayed his trial until October [Note: *Already past by the time of this printing*]

If anyone wants to assist with his funds for defense—please send money to John Hubbard Defense Fund, c/o Farmer-Citizens Bank, Salem, Indiana 47167.

Yours in freedom,
R.C., Salem, Indiana

As the joke goes

Dear C.A.L.,

Enclosed is a check for **Anar-**

chy back issues.... I also very much enjoyed the reprint of Janos Nehk's article on the New Age.

As the joke goes:

Q: What's the difference between the '60s occult movement & today's New Age?

A: About 500 dollars.

Yours,

K.C., Bronxville, N.Y.

Stiff Competition

A Funeral Home that shipped bodies cross-country w/ United Airlines wanted to get frequent flyer miles

—Peter Bauer, San Francisco

**WE ARE THE PEACE PROFESSIONALS!**

Peace is too important to be left to amateurs. That's why we get paid to be peace activists. Peace needs to be properly managed in order to work, and not left in the hands of just anybody or everybody. We don't need anarchy now, do we?! Some folks say that working for peace should be different than working for IBM. To this we say a resounding NO! Wage slavery is neither "scourge" nor "privilege," it's our right! Besides, all of this experience is good for "after the revolution," when we'll be part of that oh-so-correct ruling bureaucracy—society's new, improved ruling class. We are managing peace now, and we're looking forward to managing you in the future. **BECAUSE WE ARE THE PEACE PROFESSIONALS!**

The Creative Core

Poster by Creative Core (POB 12812, San Diego, CA. 92112-3812).

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