

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

#27/Winter '90-91

\$2.00

# *Anarchy*

*A journal of Desire Armed*



Collage by Freddie Bear

## **Free the Kids!**

*Special issue on Children & Anarchy*





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## Openers

### Anarchy notes

Welcome to our special issue on kids & anarchy! Unfortunately, it isn't very often that kids are the focus of attention in the anarchist press. For that matter, it isn't very often that they're the focus of attention anywhere in this society—except where "disciplining" and indoctrination are concerned. We've collected some fine libertarian writing on the current dismal situation of kids for this issue including a chapter of Su Negrin's book *Begin At Start* on "Ageism," Robert Cooperstein's pamphlet titled *Some notes on the Reproduction of Human Capital*, and Wendy Ayotte's pamphlet titled *As Soon As You're Born, They Make You Feel Small*, along with Joel Featherstone's essay "Hearts and minds" reprinted from *Uncommon Desires* and Shaun Perry's "Child/adult sex: A continuum" from *ApaEros*. And another chapter from Raoul Vaneigem's *The Revolution of Everyday Life* rounds out our features for the issue. This issue also features more excellent collage work by Freddie Baer and Johann Humyn Being, as well as contributions from many other graphic artists. Unfortunately, Mikell Zhan has announced that due to other pressing commitments, it will be quite awhile before she'll be able to contribute her photography to *Anarchy* again. I'm sure we'll all miss her work, and will look forward to seeing its return in the future.

#### North American Anarchist Review

With our next issue, we'll be publishing the fourth edition of the *North American Anarchist Review* as an insert. We believe it is extremely important to bring together more libertarian publishers and readers as the possibilities for the development of a wider libertarian resistance continue to develop. Due to an increase in support and interest in *NAAR*, the next issue will return to 8-pages and will have a print run of 2,000, besides the 5,000 which will be included as supplements inside *Anarchy* #28. If you're interested in helping with this effort by contributing to, distributing, or advertising in *NAAR*, please contact us as

soon as possible.

#### Thanks for your support!

As you can see this issue is back to our usual 36 pages. As a result we've had to cut out or leave till later some of the material that we'd have liked to have printed in this issue. As we gain more subscribers, we hope eventually to increase the size of each issue in order to get more information published in a more timely way. New subscriptions have slowly but steadily coming in...to the point where it now seems that our financial position is stabilizing. We now mail each issue out to over 850 addresses on our subscription list, as well as sending out about 450 sample issues every two months. We send about 1,600 copies of each issue out to newsstands and distributors as well. I've never liked making appeals for contributions in these pages, but I'm happy to say that thanks to those who have responded to my recent requests, it looks like *Anarchy* will continue to be around for awhile in its present form.

#### Sustaining contributors

And once again we want to thank all our current sustaining contributors (as well as those who have sent smaller donations) for their special contributions! These contributions make it possible for us to continue publishing by lessening our financial worries. Our current sustainers include: B.K. of Canoga Park, CA.; B.B. of Numazu-shi, Japan; L.C., T.O., A.H., A.D. & S.H. of Columbia, MO.; G.M. of Yellow Springs, OH.; A.M. of Farmingdale, N.J.; D.A. of Carbondale, IL.; A.H. of New Braunfels, TX.; A.G. of Paris, France; L.P. of Detroit, MI.; P.B. of Alexandria, VA.; E.M. of Providence, RI.; L.A. of Chicago, IL.; S.S. of Lake Orion, MI.; P.K. of Providence, RI.; E.K. of Edmonton, Alberta & T.D. of Manhattan Beach, CA. Thank you all for your special support! Sustaining contributors to *Anarchy* donate \$50 to \$100 per year—which includes a First Class subscription.

—Lev Chernyi

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*Anarchy*, c/o CAL, POB 1446,  
Columbia, MO. 65205-1446

### 1991 Youth Lib Gathering

The Youth Liberation Network is hosting a Youth Lib gathering between the end of May and the end of August, 1991 in Ottawa, Ontario. The gathering, still in the planning stages, will probably be 3 to 4 days long and will possibly include a picnic, a day (or days) of workshops and films, extensive networking, and a gig. If you are interested in participating (performing, organizing a workshop, etc.) or just want more information, contact the Youth Liberation Network, c/o Uri, POB 4402, Station E, Ottawa, Ontario K1S 5B4, Canada.

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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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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!



R. COBB  
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# AS WE SEE IT!

*Perspectives on ourselves, our world and social change*

C.A.L., POB 1446, Columbia, MO. 65205-1446

**1** Throughout the world the vast majority of people have no control over the most basic social, economic and political decisions which profoundly and directly affect their lives. We are forced to live, work, consume and die according to the dictates of hierarchical organizations—from schools, churches, corporations and unions, to their culmination in the nation-state.

**2** The hierarchical and alienating organization of social life imposed upon us by these dominant institutions creates continual crises in every person's life, and in every realm of human activity.

**3** The poverty, the meaninglessness and the alienation of everyday life in the modern world are not accidental by-products of an otherwise sound social system. They are the inevitable and primary products of a system which at its core is not only disastrously counterproductive, but in its present nuclear phase is increasingly suicidal. This system consists of a relatively coherent structure of self-reinforcing social relations of compulsion, hierarchical authority and commodity-exchange whose common basis can possibly be most easily understood using the concept of "alienation."

**4** The current crisis of massive ecological destruction can be seen as one of the unintended results of the relatively unchecked progress of modern social alienation. Not only have we been made slaves ourselves, but much of the natural world is now treated as a slave to our dominant institutions. This partial "enslavement" of nature has been made possible by the progressive development of an alienated modern science in conjunction with the exponential growth of an extremely alienated economy and technology.

**5** According to the classical description of alienation in the realm of work under capitalism, when people's labor-activity is sold to capitalists in exchange for a wage, this labor-activity is alienated. It is controlled by the capitalist (whether the capitalist is a person or an institution such as a corporation or the state) and not by the individual or community. So the individual worker finds her/himself acting according to the dictates of a logic that is externally imposed. S/he becomes a mere cog in the machinery of a productive apparatus which has a purpose above and beyond those of all the people working within it.

**6** Ironically, it is people's own alienated gestures, thoughts and labor-activity that make up the actual substance of the institutions which in turn oppress them. And the same process of alienation takes place not only in the realm of production and the "domination of nature," but also in every other sphere of social activity.

**7** Social alienation is not only grounded in our institutions. It is embedded within the very fabric of our social and (what is left of) communal life. It pervades everyday activity and its discourse. Our social traditions, customs, mores, conventions and sensibilities have been steeped so consistently and for so long in the stew of reification and hierarchical relations that it can often seem that all of society stands against us as an alien entity.

**8** People are never merely the passive victims of an externally imposed repression and manipulation. Through our "socialization" (our social conditioning) into this society, we have each learned to participate to differing degrees in our own self-repression and self-manipulation. Our conformity is enforced, not only by the bosses' orders and the policeman's gun, but by the internalized boss and policeman of our own behavior that each of us carries within us, and which we call character.

**9** Ideology is the manifestation of character in the realm of logic, language and symbols. It is the means by which alienation and hierarchies (and thus character) are all rationalized and justified through the deformation of human thought and communication. All ideology in essence involves the substitution of alien concepts or images for human subjectivity. Ideologies are systems of false consciousness

in which people no longer see themselves as subjects in their relation to their world. Instead they see themselves in some manner as though they are subordinated to some type or other of abstract entities which become the "real" subjects or actors in their world.

**10** At the epitome of ideological mystification lies the spectacle. The spectacle is the organization of appearances made possible through all the modern media of communication. The ease with which images can be detached from their sources and reorganized for representation in these media in accord with the ideologies of our dominant institutions forms the technical basis for the manipulation of not just isolated images and ideologies, but of the appearance of reality itself.

**11** If our institutions, culture and social relations were really direct expressions of our own collective desires and needs they would rarely be questioned. There would be little opposition to them since they would be fulfilling their purposes. But whenever a system of alienating social relationships is imposed upon people as ours is, it inevitably engenders widespread resistance.

**12** It might seem intuitively obvious that any act of resistance to a repressive and alienating social system is a step (no matter how small) in the direction of creating a new society. However, such an assumption is far from the truth. In practice, it becomes obvious that many acts which superficially appear opposed to hierarchy and capital are in actuality quite compatible with them. These acts can be classified as only **partial** opposition, **false** opposition (in appearance only) or **spectacular** opposition (an image of revolt). Radical opposition, on the other hand, attempts to subvert hierarchy and alienation at their roots.

**13** The absolute elimination of all social alienation is probably an impossibility, and those who demand the attainment of such abstract absolutes are most likely dogmatic fanatics to be avoided. They are the would-be Robespierres of future reigns of terror. However, between the Scylla of fanaticism and the Charybdis of an unprincipled and opportunistic reformism, lies what we believe to be a realizable and viable conception of a qualitatively more free, equitable and enjoyable social system.

**14** Anarchy literally means "no ruler." In its best sense it signifies a social system in which political hierarchies and authoritarianism are not tolerated. Instead of hierarchical rule by monolithic institutions over the general public, anarchy in this sense demands the most complete, widespread and effectively direct control possible by all those who are involved.

**15** Any genuine resistance and opposition to hierarchical society—any movement which seeks to make a real and significant qualitative change in the way society is organized—must be a self-consciously and critically radical social movement. And any such movement must involve as its central feature a prefiguring of the type of society which it seeks to create, both in its own organization and in the quality of the everyday social relationships which it fosters.

**16** We understand that the conditions of our lives and our experiences in the dominant social institutions constantly drive us to question, resist, and find the methods of organization which challenge the established social order and established patterns of thought. On the other hand, we recognize that as radicals we are fragmented, largely dispossessed of the means of communication, and we are all at different levels of awareness, consciousness and practice. The Columbia Anarchist League is one small self-organized group within a worldwide movement of people who are committed to changing their lives and transforming their world.

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**Anarchy, c/o C.A.L.**  
**POB 1446**  
**Columbia, MO. 65205-1446**

## Anarchy #27

Winter 1990-91

Press run: 5,000

**Anarchy** is a quarterly publication of C.A.L. press. We sell no advertising, have no paid staff, and finance this journal entirely through donations, newsstand sales and subscriptions.

**Subscriptions are currently:**  
**\$9.00U.S./six issues** in the U.S. (unwrapped, 3rd Class bulk mail)

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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, etc.) 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 deadlines for submissions are Feb. 15th for the Spring issue, May 15th for the Summer issue, Aug. 15th for the Fall issue, and Nov. 15th for the Winter issue.

**Editorial advisory group:** A. Hacker, Shagbark Hickory, Toni Otter, Noa, Mikell Zhan, Avid Darkly, Emma Kollwitz (poetry editor) and Lev Chernyl.

Many 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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**Anarchy** is indexed in the Alternative Press Index (POB 33109, Baltimore, MD. 21218), and is a member of the **Anarchist Media Network**.

C.A.L. is a member of **COSMEP** (POB 703, S.F., CA. 94101), the International Association of Independent Publishers.

"The whirligig of time has its revenges."

—B.A.G. Fuller

## The Sad Truth

# Yugoslavia

## A Few Words of Advice to U.S. Investors, Congressmen and Leftists

There has been no change-over from a totalitarian regime to democracy in Yugoslavia, with the possible exception of the Republic of Slovenia. What there has been is a change-over from a Communist to a nationalist regime.

There were proposals from the Society for a Yugoslav Democratic Initiative, a group formed by intellectuals, academics and Praxis scholars, to establish a "bill of rights" and add it to the Constitution, in order to guarantee basic rules of democracy prior to holding elections. The proposals were ignored by the Communist League leaders, who rushed to hold elections before the new political parties had time to become popular. The Communists thought that way they would win, because they had the offices, members and money, and afterwards, when they were legitimately and democratically elected, they could act and rule the same as before. They were mistaken.

Mr. Tudjman, a former Yugoslav army general and member of the Communist League Central Committee, organized a nationalist movement named the Croatian Democratic Alliance, appealing to people's "national being" and their resentment of others. He raised \$5 million from Americans of Yugoslav/Croatian origin, a lot of whom were Nazi collaborators during World War II. He made a strong campaign and won the election. Now he is "all mighty," because there are still no democratic rules and regulations to limit power.

He has already hired a former colonel of the Communist state secret police to be his security chief. He plans to give formerly powerful

Communists the opportunity for revenge on the current Communists who replaced them. His political program is based on nationalism, and not on plans to solve the economic problems in the country. So most of the changes we are seeing are literally from Stalin to Hitler. The content of ideology has changed, but the same simple-minded officials, absolutist structure and method of enforcing ideology—the totalitarian method—remains.

Inseparable from nationalism in the tiny nations that comprise Yugoslavia, are the following: anti-communism, sexism, racism, Nazism, anti-semitism, expansionism, chauvinism, religious exclusivity, "pro-life," "anti-gay," strong state control, decrease in democratic rights by limiting rights by "if" laws related to the sacred nation (for example, you can have free speech "if" you don't offend the "national being"), hatred of other nations, and threats to tear apart the country and/or cause a civil war or a military coup.

Instead of solving the huge economic crisis, the ruling Croatian nationalists' prime idea is to blame the crisis on different social groups: youth, women, Gypsies, Serbs, Jews, Leftists, Yugoslavs, the unemployed, environmentalists, gays, etc.

Most youth today accept Western values, are anti-Communists and dream of living in the America of the 1950s and '60s. They want to be entrepreneurs, and want to emigrate to the U.S., even if they have to work there illegally. Many youth are soccer hooligans with strong feelings of tribal bonding, like punks and skinheads. Internationalism and socialism are "out of fashion." The nationalists use the youth

as big supporters, but don't give them anything besides non-edible national pride.

Although in the Communist League 30 percent of the membership was women, in the new political parties women are rare beings. In the 33 parties involved in the Spring elections in Croatia, there were fewer than 10 women among the candidates and on the executive boards of all of them together. The least presence of women is in the Croatian Democratic Alliance: zero among the leaders. Their plans for women's duties in the new Croatian society are to bear more little Croatians. The winning party has pledged to make abortion illegal.

Gays are considered by the Alliance as not normal, and so homosexuality will be treated like other social misbehavior such as alcohol and drug abuse.

Plans for the Gypsies (of whom there are more in Yugoslavia than any other country except India) will probably include their losing the rights they had under Communist minority policies, such as free schools and housing.

Serbs: the major problem in Yugoslav national relations is the ambiguous relations between the two major nations, Croats and Serbs. The issue of Serbs in Croatia (and Croats in Serbia) is as explosive as the issue of blacks in the U.S. Mr. Tudjman nominated a Serb for vice-president of his party and proposed some for vice-president of Congress. However, Serbs in Croatia, most of whom live in underdeveloped rural areas, are fearful because of unofficial rumors that the Croatian Democratic Alliance wants to throw them out of Croatia to make room for Croatian immigrants from Romania.

The nationalists have convinced people that low productivity is not the fault of their workplace, but of those in the other republics and provinces, so Croats think they will have a higher standard of living than in the Yugoslav federation, and Yugoslavs are not welcome.

Under the new order, bankrupt factories will close, and unemployment may rise to 20 percent or more. There will be a lot of "wild jobs" for slave wages, offered by the people who make money in the "grey economy," the black market or by bribe-taking under the Communist regime. People who refuse the

generous offer of such jobs will be suspect as criminals, because work and order are part of the new ideology.

Workers blame the Communists for their poverty, and so support the clear and simple anti-Communism of the nationalists. Workers in one republic are convinced by the leaders that they are being robbed by the inefficient workers in the other republic. They support closing bankrupt plants because each nationality thinks it is the others who will be the unemployed. They are not planning workers' unions.

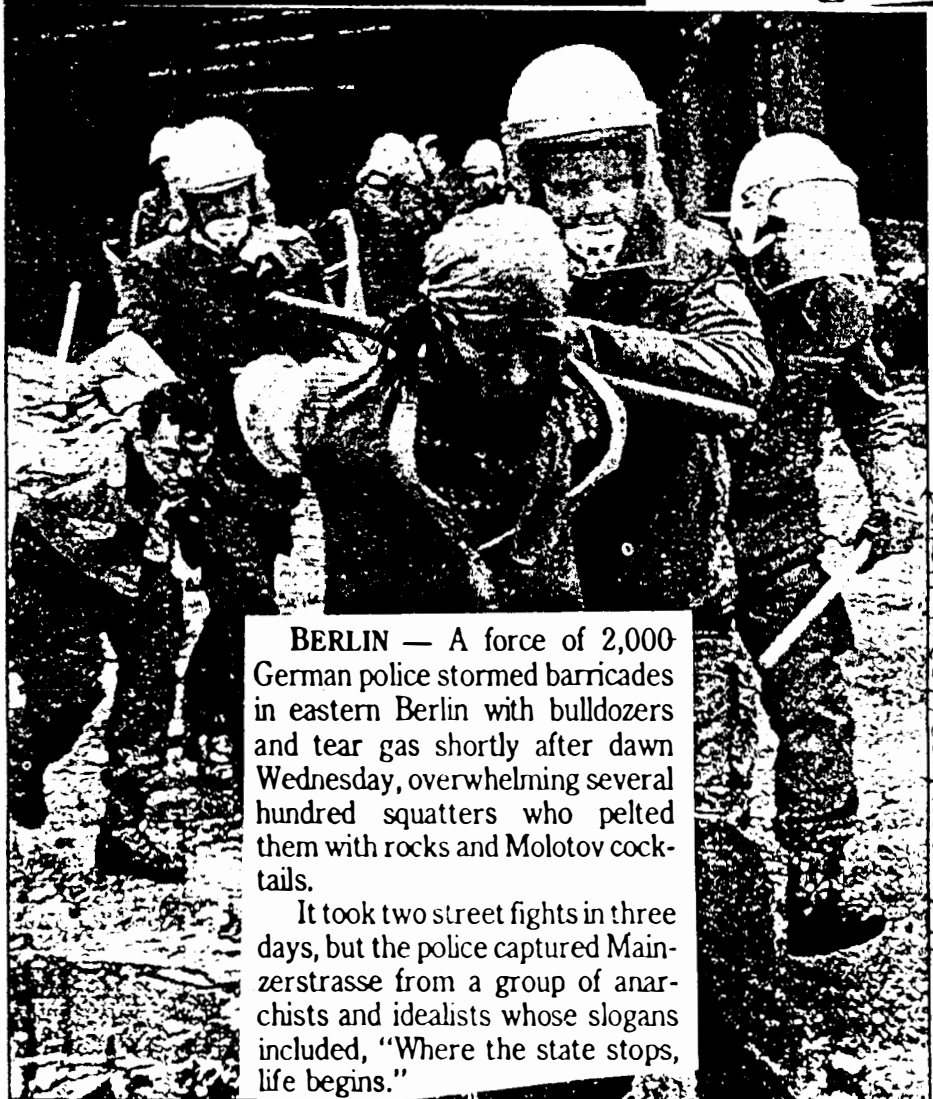
Sixty percent or more of all Yugoslav industrial capacities are underproductive and in debt, so they are close to bankruptcy. The bonds they will attempt to sell will be junk bonds that nobody except Western speculators will buy. There will be skyrocketing unemployment, or Western purchasers will lower wages, void social benefits, decrease worker safety, and ignore environmental protection. This will cause deep dissatisfaction among the workers and turn them against the leaders. Yugoslav workers will not adjust to free enterprise, having grown up in a society with job security, social insurance and low-rent housing.

The federal government wants people to buy the "society owned" apartments they now get for low rents from their employers. This is about 60 percent of the country's real estate. Almost no one wants to do it, especially those who got their apartments in exchange for the expropriation of their private houses. One old man said, "You first took our building, and you gave us an appropriate apartment according to Communist rules; now you want us to buy the apartment according to free enterprise rules. If we are going back to capitalism, then we want our building back so we don't have to buy the apartment. Mr. Tudjman lives in one such house that was owned by somebody else."

I expect big workers' strikes in the future. The ruling nationalists will take police state action and appeal to national unity. There is no political organization representing the workers. All the parties are made of intellectuals, academics and lawyers, and are more clubs about theory than practical politics. The nationalists have no real opposition.

Everything left of the Alliance is labeled by it as Communist or Marxist; after 45 years of so-called Communism, that is enough to make people hate them. It is impossible to hold a meeting to discuss the differences between the Communist regime, communism, Marxism, Marx's thought, socialism, social democracy, anarchism, anarcho-syndicalism, unionism, and social liberalism, without having the meeting disrupted by the nationalists. This makes me sad, because I don't want to have to fight the 19th Century's battles over again. I want to fight for one new world.

## Where the state stops, life begins.



**BERLIN** — A force of 2,000 German police stormed barricades in eastern Berlin with bulldozers and tear gas shortly after dawn Wednesday, overwhelming several hundred squatters who pelted them with rocks and Molotov cocktails.

It took two street fights in three days, but the police captured Mainzerstrasse from a group of anarchists and idealists whose slogans included, "Where the state stops, life begins."

## Be prepared for the cops

With each successful movement comes government repression; of this there can be no doubt. Two recent books prove the case against the government and its so-called forces of law and order. These thoroughly-researched and well-documented texts are a must reading for every movement activist. They prove—surprise, surprise—that the government and police have used, and continue to use, "legal" and extra-legal force and violence against North American activists who oppose official genocide, both at home and abroad.

The first book, *Agents of Repression; The F.B.I. secret war against the American Indian Movement and the Black Panther Party*, is written by Ward Churchill and James Vander-Wall [Note: see *Anarchy* #18 for a review of this book by Toni Otter]. It proves that from the Red Scare of 1919-1920 to the McCarthy period of the 1950s, and from the COINTELPRO (Counter-Intelligence Program) era of the 1960s to today's F.B.I. infiltration of the Central American Movement, the F.B.I. has operated primarily as North America's political police. F.B.I. operations conducted against the American Indian Movement and the Black Panther Party, including murder and a wide range of illegal activities, reveal the lawlessness of the "law enforcers."

The second book, *War at Home; Covert Action Against United States Activists and What We Can Do About It*, is by Brian Glick. It will help movement activists to better understand, and withstand, future COINTELPRO attacks,

including infiltration, psychological warfare, harassment through the legal system, and violence. Among Glick's invaluable suggestions regarding coping with harassment through the legal system...are:

1) Don't talk to the F.B.I. or city or state police. Don't let them in without a warrant. Keep records of their visit and what they say and do. Tell others of their visit.

2) If the police have a warrant, you still don't have to tell them anything. In fact, you don't have to talk with them in your house, on the streets, or even in jail. Only a grand jury subpoena puts an activist in the dilemma of whether or not she or he will talk to anyone or prefer to go to jail.

3) If the F.B.I. or city or state police harass you or your comrades, get the word out and tell everyone to refuse to cooperate. Cooperation with cops is the enemy of the movement and the mainstay of the government.

4) If a movement person is subpoenaed by a grand jury for political reasons, discuss it and then try to arrange for a sanctuary, perhaps in a church or synagogue.

5) Remember, anything you say to an F.B.I. agent and/or other member of "law enforcement" agencies may be used against you and other people.

6) Don't try to outwit the F.B.I. or other police, even though most of them can be easily outwitted. You can never tell how a seemingly harmless bit of information can help them hurt you or someone else.

7) Don't be threatened or intimidated by the



## Radical news

### Mutiny in Greece

Following a recent 48 hour general strike in Greece, workers occupied their workplaces in several towns. One mine on the island of Mantoudi has been occupied since August 31st. In Halkida the doors of the courthouse were broken down by supporters on Oct. 2nd, and the trial of arrested people from the mine was stopped. In Patra the Patraika textile factory is still occupied by its workers protesting against privatization and austerity. Both occupations are flying red and black flags.

Whilst the new right-wing government was still recovering from this massive resistance to its austerity measures, a huge wave of resistance from prisoners broke out. Starting on October 9th in the Alikarnossos prison on the island of Crete, the mutiny soon spread across Greece. In Stefanos (Patra), Korydallos 1,000 prisoners mutinied. The youth prison in Athens

and the women's prison in Pirias also joined the mutiny. By Oct. 19th the prisons in Komotini, Halkinda, and Larissa had also mutinied. Prisoners in Hamia, and Meapolis refused food in solidarity.

The demands of the prisoners include: the right of appeal for lifers sentenced before the right of appeal was introduced in 1979, the release of lifers after serving 15 years subject to a suspended sentence of 5 years for the rest of their term, the abolition of the youth prison, medical help for drug addicts, a doctor in every prison, the end to detention without a stated charge, access to outside psychiatric clinics, and the abolition of all financial costs imposed by the courts in obtaining documentary evidence.

Supporters have held solidarity demonstrations outside some of the prisons. On Oct. 20th 1,000 anarchists marched to Korydallos prison. There were also demonstrations in Athens, Alikarnossos, Halkinda and Hamia.

Three prominent prisoners involved in the mutinies are anarchists. Information on these prisoners and up-to-date news can be obtained from Athens ABC (8 Aristidou St., 10038 Athens, Greece).

SOURCE: *Counter Information* #29/Nov.-Jan. '90 (P/H C.I., c/o 11 Forth St., Edinburgh, EH1, U.K.).

### Text of the foundation agreement of the Association of Self-Managing Trade-Unions "Resistance" (Soprotivlenie)

Passed at the foundation conference in Moscow, June 3, 1990

The Association of Self-Managing Trade-Unions "Resistance" (hereafter ASMTU) is:

**Free**, that means independent of state and party organizations and administration. Any relations with these bodies are built on the basis of dialogue, not subordination. Delegates to ASMTU are independent of other organizations they may be members of. They are obliged to fulfil their mandate given by members of ASMTU and may be recalled at any time. ASMTU does not support any political party and doesn't participate in parliamentary elections.

**Self-managing**, based on the full autonomy of grass-roots union organizations. These form coordinating bodies made from their delegates and determine the powers of these organs by mutual agreement. Grass-roots union organizations have the right to set the policy of their delegates and recall them at any time.

**Syndicalist**, striving for the gradual elimination of administration through self-management and independent, federally-oriented modes of organization. Means of production should pass into the hands of those who work on them. ASMTU actively participates in workers' political life and economic struggle.

ASMTU "Resistance" has the rights and obligations stipulated under the International Convention on Workers' Organizations. Each union organization in ASMTU determines its own finances and membership conditions.

To realize their goals, grass-roots union organizations unite voluntarily in the ASMTU federation on territorial, industrial and other bases. ASMTU's financial works, its coordinating and representative function, are implemented by its federal councils.

Delegates composing the federal councils are elected on a proportional basis.

Grass-roots union organizations in ASMTU enjoy full control of their own property and finances.

Federal councils pass decision by majority vote of their full complement. They form ongoing and special commissions for the realization of concrete programs and for determining the competence of such commissions.

The finances of ongoing commissions set up unanimously by the federal council are determined by majority vote of delegates.

Finances are provided in part by the grass-roots union organizations and by fund-raising activity of the relevant commission.

Translated from Russian by Will Firth.

F.B.I. or police pretending that they have information about you or your comrades. Let them rave; let them lie; let them make up stories. It means nothing.

8) If you are nervous about simply refusing to talk to the agents of the state, you may find it easier to tell them to contact your lawyer. More often than not, once an attorney enters—particularly a movement attorney—the F.B.I. and police usually pull back because they know they can no longer intimidate you.

9) If you anticipate arrest, don't carry address books or any other materials that can help the government. Remember, anything and everything you record, if it falls in the wrong hands, can hurt you and the movement.

Regarding "Coping with Extra-Legal Force and Violence," Glick advises:

1) Establish movement security procedures appropriate to your needs, including control over access to keys, files, letterheads, funds, financial records and mailing lists.

2) Keep duplicates of all your valuable records and files away from your home or office.

3) Remember, homes and cars are easily broken into (especially trunks) and that your trash can easily be searched.

4) When harassed, don't go on the defense—take the offense. Go public. Spread the word.

5) Keep records of break-ins, thefts, bomb threats, raids, brutality and suspicious/conspicuous surveillance, and share your information with other movement groups.

6) Be sure some members are well trained in first aid and keep medical supplies up to date and lists of sympathetic doctors and nurses.

7) If you have particularly key people in positions within the movement and if they are busted, do not allow a vacuum to develop. Have other women and men trained and prepared to take their places.

Remember: the machinery of the state will stop at virtually nothing in pursuit of the shameless and greedy policies of the powerful few who control and exploit the many. In any movement, it is as important to learn as much about your enemy, as it is to know about yourselves. Know the enemy and learn from the mistakes of sisters and brothers who have fought the state and paid the price in the past.

-By Carl Treasurer

Reprinted from *The Shadow* #8/Dec. '89-Jan. '90 (POB 20298, New York, N.Y. 10009).

# A Journal of Desire Armed

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!*



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**Compiled by Lev Chernyi**

**Continued on page 9**



# Alternative Media Review

## Anarchist press review

Compiled by Lev Chernyi

**DEMOLITION DERBY #2/undated** (C.P. 1554, Succ. "B", Montréal, Québec H3B 3L2, Canada) is the fascinating & nicely-produced second issue of this 40-page anti-civilization tabloid. This issue features "harsh critiques" of feminism including "Twenty years later, as always; or, As long as there are men and women" by Dominique Fauquet, "Gynocracy song" by Annie LeBrun, and excerpts reprinted from the excellent pamphlet *I Claudia, Feminism Unveiled*. Also included in this issue is the fairly accurate essay "Militancy: The highest stage of alienation" by l'Organisation des Jeunes Travailleurs Révolutionnaires, analysis of the "Mohawk resistance at Kanehsatake and Kahnawake" by Doug Imrie, pages & pages of letters continuing the dissection & post-mortem of anarcho-syndicalism, followed by reviews from Feral Faun, Michael William & John Zerzan. Highly recommended. No subscriptions are accepted, but sample copies can be obtained by "sending a few dollars or international reply coupons (IRC's) (no checks or money orders)...but [this] is not absolutely necessary." In other words free copies are available if you don't have the money to send a contribution.

**ALIVE; INTERNATIONAL LIBERTARIAN NEWSLETTER #0/undated** (c/o J. van Lennepkade 122, 1053 MT Amsterdam, The Netherlands) is the 20-page pilot issue of a new publishing project which aims to "improve international communication." This issue seems to consist largely of anarcho-syndicalist news, with articles including one on the 24th congress of "SAC" (the Swedish reformist/libertarian socialist union which still counts many anarcho-syndicalists in its membership), "A New York experience" (a description & critique of the New York anarchist scene) by Eliza Blackweb, a short description of the Russian anarcho-syndicalist "KAS" by Vladimir Gubarev, a long report on the "Berlin anarchist meeting" (on international communications) by Stephan Wray, "Anarchism in Hungary," and a report on the 7th convention of the tiny U.S. "Workers Solidarity Alliance" (more anarcho-syndicalists), along with other news shorts from Hungary, Spain, Italy, Bulgaria, etc. Subscriptions are \$13/year (4 issues).

**THE ANARCHIST AGE #2/Dec. '90** (Mutual Aid, POB 20, Parkville 3052, Melbourne, Australia) is a very nicely done, 48-page magazine complete with a full-color slick cover. This issue begins with an editorial by Joe Toscano subtitled "The 1990s, the anarchist decade." Also featured are articles like "Strategy for change in the 1990s" by the Libertarian Workers group, "The anarchist as a sexual being" by Cath Williams, Joe Toscano on "Anti-electoral strategy," Joan Gaunt on "Deep ecology—the anarchist rationale," and "The Chinese democracy movement" by Mok Chui Yu and Y.S. Lee. Recommended. Subscriptions are \$16/2 issues.

**FIFTH ESTATE: #335/Winter '90-91** (POB 02548, Detroit, MI. 48202) is the "25th Anniversary Issue!" of this 32-page tabloid which shouldn't be missed. The issue begins with a long & involved cover essay titled "Detroit: Demolished by design; Violence, racism and collapse of community" by Lynne Clive, and a piece on the "War in Iraq: Imperial death trip to nowhere" by George Bradford. It continues with a somewhat wishy-washy account titled "Redwood Summer—Anatomy of an action" by Estelle Fennell, a reprint of Colonel Robert Heintz's "The collapse of the armed forces" (on war resistance in the ranks during the Vietnam War), Jim Campbell on the "Canadian Army vs. the Mohawks: Indian Summer," and a reprint of Ward Churchill's "The Sand Creek Massacre." Also included are good pieces titled "As the old regimes collapse: The anarchist spectre in Eastern Europe" by David Porter, "They just said 'No'" by D.M. Borts (also on Eastern Europe), and possibly the most interesting section titled "A challenge to the *Fifth Estate*." Environmentalism and revolution (including a well-written letter from J.B. and no less than three responses of varying degrees of coherence from *FE* writers). Hakim Bey's review of John Moore's *Anarchy and Ecstasy* pamphlet brings up the rear of another important issue of this essential newspaper. Always recommended. Subscriptions are still \$5.00/year (4 issues).

**DHARMA COMBAT #10/undated** (POB 20593, Sun Valley, NV. 89433) is primarily a large-format, 32-page, tongue-in-cheek "maga-

zine about spirituality, metaphysics, reality and other conspiracies," which happens to also contain a preponderance of anarchist-oriented articles. This issue includes "The Sefiroth; A radical interpretation" by Wayne Anderson, a large graphic charting the interesting "Migrations of the Tribe of Ishmael," "Neoism: The great confusion manifesto" by Karen Eliot, "Might makes rights" by Jarod O'Danu, "Evil eye" by Hakim Bey, a long article titled "The secret government" by John Judge, Bob Black on being bombed, and a reprint of Dee Rail's new pamphlet "Autonomystics: An essay on anarchism and mysticism." Like the semi-subversive Church of the Sub-Genius—which shows up quite a bit here—most of this stuff doesn't seem to be meant for taking seriously—and if it was, its seriousness would be simply funny, anyway! Subscriptions are \$10/year (4 issues); samples are \$3.



### ALSO RECEIVED:

**Bulletin of Anarchist Research #19/Dec. '89, #20/April & #21/July '90** (T.V. Cahill, Dept. of Politics, Univ. of Lancaster, Lancaster LA1 4YL, England) is the 36 to 40-page newsletter of the Anarchist Research Group. Issue #19 includes reports on the London Anarchist Book Fair, reviews of Alan Ritter's *Anarchism: A Theoretical Analysis* (by Gareth Bellaby), Mark Shipway's *Anti-Parliamentary Communism: The Movement for Workers' Councils in Britain* (by David Goodway), Lawrence Ferlinghetti's disgusting *Seven Days in Nicaragua Libre* (by Bob Black), among many others. It also includes a reprint of Janet Bleih's interesting—though flawed—essay titled "The politics of myth," along with a halfway useful, halfway cranky reply by John Moore titled "The myth of politics." Issue #20 includes "German anarchism today" by Shaffner, reviews of Elayne Rapping's *The Looking Glass World of Nonfiction TV* (by Bob Black), Angerford & Lea's *Thunderspeak, of Confessions of a Right Wing Anarchist* (by John Moore), and Peter Marshall's *William Blake, Visionary Anarchist* (by Leigh Burton). Issue #21 includes many more book reviews—including Richard Sonn's *Anarchism and Cultural Politics in Fin de siècle France* (by Sherif Gemie), a bizarre & highly moralistic review of Victoria Moran's *Compassion, The Ultimate Ethic: An Exploration of Veganism & Marjorie Spiegel's The Dreaded Comparison: Human and Animal Slavery* (by John Moore, who thinks "veganism can be regarded as dietary anarchism!"), along with one more typical misreading of Max Stirner—this time by Brian Morris in his essay titled "A note on Stirner's radical individualism," and Karen Goaman's somewhat interesting "research summary" titled "Oppositional cultural currents and contemporary anarchism." Worth checking out. Annual subscriptions are £7/6 issues (checks must be in Sterling, or send the equivalent in cash).

**Current #5/Corporate Fall '90** (Big River EF1, POB 189, Pacific, MO. 63069) is an Earth First! paper aimed primarily at those in the Mississippi River Valley region. Issue #5 is now a lively 16-page tabloid with an account of the Shawnee National Forest blockade by Orin Langelie titled "Shawnee Summer," an article on the "World's largest toxic

incinerator planned at Times Beach" also by Orin, a piece on the "Catalyst" student environmental conference by Rose Ritter, lots of letters, and pieces titled "Listening to the wild earth" by Cecelia Ostrow & "A short treatise on the knowable universe" by Steve Taylor. Recommended. Subscriptions are \$3/year (4 issues).

**Discussion Bulletin #44/Nov.-Dec. '90** (POB 1564, Grand Rapids, MI. 49501) is a 28-page assortment of letters and reprinted articles primarily from the anti-market, non-statist radical milieu—notably from the many varieties of DeLeonism, although there also seem to be an increasing number of letters written from an anarchist or anarcho-syndicalist perspective. Issue #44 includes an extended criticism of the "partyism" of the International Communist Current (ICC) by editor Frank Girard, as well as letters from Henri Simon, Neal Keating, Monroe Prussack & others. Subscriptions are \$3/year (6 issues).

**The Shadow #14/Oct.-Nov. '90** (POB 20298, New York, NY. 10009) is an energetic 20-page tabloid covering the squatting, homeless and Tompkins Square Park scenes on the Lower East Side in New York. Issue #14 includes articles like "Squatters threatened!," "Anti-warehousing demo results in mass arrests" by Jack Dawkins & Stuart Frankel, and critical accounts of anti-war protests under the title of "New anti-war movement kicks off with October 20 rally." Subscriptions are \$10/year (? issues).

**Alternative #5/undated** (Resistance Prod., POB 426, 8026 Zurich, Switzerland) is a huge 164-page "Anarcho-Punk-Zine." This issue includes "Right-wing extremist sects," interviews with the bands Indian Dream and Scrape, articles titled "Poland resist" & "Wild plants," and lots of reviews. Send a contribution for a sample copy.

**Anti Clock-Wise #3/undated & #7 thru #12/undated** (POB 175, L69 8DX, England) is a relatively new & interesting 12-page, situationist-influenced bimonthly. Each issue runs the slogan "Nihilists, one more effort if we are to be revolutionaries!" on the cover, and an anti-time theme permeates the paper ("Time is the enemy. Pleasure is the aim!"). Issue #3 is an "Anti-Art issue," including "Art...for Christ's sake!," and "Dada—Nihilist anti-art: Chaos, spontaneity, chance!" Issue #7 centers on the issue of violence, with articles like "Thatcher's children: Football mania" by Rick, "Terrorism" reprinted from Larry Law's *Bigger Cages, Longer Chains*, and "Nihilism" reprinted from Chris Gray's *Leaving the 20th Century*. Issue #9 includes "Confessions of a football hooligan." Issue #10 includes "Organic intellectuals emerging" by Stefan Szczelkun, and Jack Shamash with a mixed-up piece on "How to have fun blowing things up" (on "situationism"). Issue #12 includes a piece on "Fear and loathing in...Liverpool," and "art-strike" info. Individual copies are 40p plus postage.

**Bayou La Rose #34/Late Fall '90** (302 N. J. St., Apt. #3, Tacoma, WA. 98403) is an irregularly produced 40-page tabloid. This issue includes extensive coverage of the Canadian confrontation with & repression of the Mohawks in "Mohawk resistance," "In the spirit of Crazy Horse," and communiques, letters, & other reprints on the subject. Also included is a reprint from *Black Flag* titled "Defend the Trafalgar Square 500," Hannah Kpons "The plight of African widows," Kamalia Laqueta's "Redwood Summer report," Jeanne Northrop on "Imprisoned Native American cultural groups and support groups," as well as pages and pages of news shorts. Subscriptions remain \$7.50/4 issues.

**Profane Existence #7/Dec. '90** (POB 8722, Mpls, MN. 55408) is now an impressive monthly 40-page anarcho-punk fanzine. This issue begins with the new "North America gig directory" (which will open each issue from now on), followed by a couple pages of "Echomedia News," "The anti-authoritarian movement & political prisoners" (focussing on the case of Larry Giddings), lots of letters, a couple columns, part 7 of Professor Felix's brief history of anarchism: Italian anarchists, part 4 of Alicia non Grata's "Take back your life: A wimmin's guide to alternative health care," interviews with Oi Polloi & Neurosis, as well as the usual record & zine reviews. Subscriptions are \$18/year (12 issues).

**Our Generation Vol.21, #2/Summer '90** (Suite 444, 3981 boulevard St-Laurent, Montréal, Québec H2W 1Y5, Canada) is a 128-page, academically oriented "independent semi-annual journal dealing with contemporary anarchism and libertarian socialism." This issue features Murray Bookchin on "Radical politics in an era of advanced capitalism," Claire Culhane on "Decriminalization of the prison system: A citizen's view," Marian Leighton's depiction of "Anarcho-feminism and Louise Michel," a historical analysis of "The bitter fruits of Hungarian dissent" by

Bruce Allen, Stephen Dankowich on the anarcho-syndicalist K.A.C. in the Soviet Union, as well as a long article on "Monopoly capitalism and the rise of syndicalism" (largely on the I.W.W.) by Mark Leier. Subscriptions are \$25/2 years (4 issues).

**Class War #42** [undated] (POB 39, SW PD0, Manchester M15 5HN, England) is the militant 16-page, "bash-the-rich" tabloid of the English Class War Federation. Simplistic writing in a supermarket-tabloid style with a crystal clear message—the cover slogan is now "Britain's most unruly tabloid." Articles include "Bailiff busters," "The Gulf war," and "No war but the class war." Much improved. International subscriptions are £4.00/5 issues.

### OTHER SMALL PERIODICALS RECEIVED:

**The Monthly Meander Vol.3, #1/Aug.-Sept. & #2/Oct.-Nov. '90** (Carl Bettis, POB 32631, Kansas City, MO. 64111) is a 3 to 4-page "Newsletter of evolutionary anarchists" consisting of several letters from contributors, a few of whom argue for authority and government. Send a contribution for a sample copy.

**Ecomedia Bulletin #83/Sept.4, #84/Sept.25, #85/Oct.9, & #86/Oct.23, '90** (POB 915, Stn. F, Toronto, Ontario M4Y 2N9, Canada) is a 4-page fortnightly anarchist news bulletin. These issues include more news of the Mohawk Akwesasne/St. Regis conflicts, and other Canadian news. Subscriptions are \$15/year (26 issues).

**Little Free Press #79/Oct. & #80/Nov. '90** (Rt.1, Box 102, Cushing, MN. 56443) is a 4 to 8-page description of Ernest Mann's own individual solutions to living as far outside the money economy as he can, along with his ideas for instituting a Priceless Economic System. Issue #79 includes his contemplation of some self-doubts about continuing with this project, along with some letters & replies. Issue #80 includes a consideration of why he has chosen not to go "primitive," along with thoughts on finding a new mate. Send an SASE for a copy of his newsletter.

**Poison Pen** unnumbered/undated (POB 71 Hastings, E. Sussex, England) is an 8-page newsletter with a front page essay titled "Solidarity...not war," and other contents opposing the intervention against Iraq. Send a contribution for a sample copy.

**Green Perspectives #20/Nov. '90** (POB 111, Burlington, VT. 05402) is a 6-page "Left Green" publication featuring Murray Bookchin's essay "The meaning of confederalism," another restatement of his libertarian municipalist perspective. Subscriptions are \$10/10 issues.

**Dumpster Times #6/Aug. '90** [double issue] (W.S.D., POB 80044, Akron, OH. 44308) is an eclectic 40-page zine. This double issue features an interesting commentary on "The National Women's Studies Association Conference" by WSD, "The EpHeMeRaL-IST" by Dr. Paradise, "Fuck Art! (A play in three scenes)" by Dave Schall, plus reviews, scattered poetry, etc. Send \$2.00 or equivalent for a sample copy.

**Eco-War is Class War #1/undated** (published anonymously, no address given) is a 4-page bulletin critical of the recent Earth First!-organized "Redwood Summer" activities in California. The first article is a satirical critique titled "Earth First! is a timber industry front group." Copies are available from *Anarchy* in return for an SASE.

**The Hyperborean #1/Nov. '90** (Richard Gaska, 2024 N. Manor Dr., Erie, PA. 16505) is a 30-page photocopied zine consisting largely of reprints from *Anarchy*, from *Mother Earth* (on John Most), and from *The Bible Exposed* by Erasmus. Subscriptions are \$11/year (6 issues).

**Counter Information #29/Nov.-Jan. '90** (Pigeonhole Cl, c/o 11 Forth St., Edinburgh EH1, Scotland) is a 4-page newsheet. This issue has a cover article titled "No blood for oil! No war but the class war." Send a contribution for a sample copy.

**Refuse and Resist #5/'Last 1/4 '90** (POB 239, Glasgow G3 6RA, Scotland) is a 12-page paper subtitled "News from Local Anti-Poli Tax Groups," with articles like "Shoot the sheriffs; Bash the bailiffs." Free; send a donation for a sample copy.

**Brick #5/undated** (POB 1153, Russellville, AL. 35653) is an 8-page streetsheet; this issue has a short piece on the "Oil war." Send 50¢ for a sample copy.

### OTHER NON-ENGLISH-LANGUAGE PERIODICALS RECEIVED:

**Le Libertaire; Revue de Synthèse Anarchiste #108/Juillet, #109/Oct. & #110/Nov. '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).

**Rojo y Negro #16/Enero, #18/Abril-Mayo, #19/Junio & #20/Julio '90** (Sagunto 15, pal., 28010 Madrid, Spain) is 16-page, Spanish-language newspaper of the reformist anarcho-syndicalist C.G.T. (Confederación General del Trabajo), better known outside of Spain as the "Renovados" (a minority split from the more traditionally anarcho-syndicalist C.N.T.).

Continued on next page



# International Anarchist News

## A Press Books Project

Dear Friends!

We are an anarchist group from the capitol of Poland, Warsaw. Until now our social activity was limited to the participation in actions/manifestations, pickets and so on, organized by the local Alternative Society Movement. We have edited the paper **Anarcholl** since August 1989, whose main aim is creating a platform between anarchist-libertarian ideas and their practical aspects. Until now our paper was published irregularly, but since the 5th issue it has become a quarterly. We try to keep up a circulation of 1,200 copies. It isn't much, but in Polish conditions it's quite a good circulation. Besides the paper **Rewolta** it has the largest circulation of the anarchist papers Poland.

In consequence of 60 years of totalitarian rule (first, since 1926, Pilsudski's Socialist Party dictatorship, and after the war Communist totalitarianism) there hasn't been any "market" of libertarian ideas in our country. All belonged to the state, which limited social thought to the uniform Marxist policy. Before the war, pacifism as a libertarian trend was considered as fascism or even more destructive than fascism. Therefore it can't be said that the present Polish anarchist/libertarian movement had any theoretical ground for progress. On the other hand, street activities of the anarchists extend from day to day. On account of this situation, we (the editors of **Anarcholl**) have decided to found the first Polish anarchist publishing project, and perhaps even the first in the Eastern bloc, A Press Books. We are going to publish what is most interesting on the libertarian "market," both historical essays and ideological books. We'd like to approach the reader with the works of the first anarchist ideologists, because apart

from the critical essays on Bakunin and Kropotkin nothing else has been published in Poland.

In connection with our project we have a request to make. We need anarchist and libertarian books in English that we can translate and edit. We can't buy these books, because they are too expensive for us. We prefer to designate the money for printing and we hope that we get your understanding. We feel sure that together with development of A Press Books, the young anarchist movement in Poland will develop, and for sure would gain experience. Since what is social activity without a theoretical grounding? Also, we especially welcome every donation from your side, because we need money to invest in this project. The supporters list will be announced in **Anarcholl**. You can send money in three ways: (a) by letter with a check, which takes three months to cash in Poland, (b) by letter with carefully concealed cash—our Post Office often steals, so only include a little at a time, or (c) by transfer on account, which takes only about a month.

We welcome all support. Maybe in the future we can return your service. We oblige ourselves to give an account of our publishing activity to all of our supporters.

Thank you very much!

Address:

Darek Misiuna  
Guliwera 29  
03-610 Warszawa  
Poland

Account:

Bank PKO SA 3 ODDZ.  
Warszawa, Traugutta 7/9  
A-13208464

## From Solidarity to anarchy: Polish Anarchist Federation

**H**istory of the new wave of anarchism in Poland started with the forming of Solidarity—a trade union of anarcho-syndicalist nature. During the 1980-81 rebellion Solidarity propagated ideas of self-government in factories, schools and in local communities, and proposed forming cooperatives, associations and federations. Unfortunately, today's red-taped "Solidarity" has nothing to do with the legendary trade union from the times of great rebellion against the totalitarian state, communist dictatorship and all-embracing, corrupted bureaucracy.

The next stage of anarchism in Poland is connected with the Alternative Society Movement (Ruch Społeczeństwa Alternatywnego, or RSA), which was formed by a group of anarchists from Gdansk in June 1983. RSA stood in a double opposition to the ruling communist party dictatorship as well as to the majority of oppositional forces which were connected with the Catholic Church or national movements and organizations. In summer 1988 Gdansk anarchists, also involved in activities of TOTART, WIP (Freedom and Peace) and RSA, took the initiative of forming a special network of contacts—the so-called Anarchist Intercity (Miedzynastowa Anarchistyczna, or MA), which was to enable distribution of papers and handbills, exchange of information and ideas. Later MA was to be transformed into a federation. This took place during an anarchist conference in June 1989. Although MA generally integrated groups and individuals identifying themselves with anarchism, it was strongly connected with the Polish subculture, so people who wanted to act "more politically" decided to create a new federation to take up

social and economic problems. In this way the Anarchist Federation (Fedracja Anarchistyczna) was brought into being during the last national conference in November 1989. Besides the Federation most anarchists are involved in other activities (sometimes even not strictly anarchist ones) like WIP, PPS-RD (Polish Socialist Party—Democratic Revolution) and ecological and animal liberation movements. Anarchists organize and participate in such initiatives as protests against the Soviet Military presence in Poland, the boycott of military schooling at high schools and universities, actions for abolition of compulsory military service, and actions on behalf of deserters and better conditions of civil service for objectors. Anarchists also participate in numerous actions connected with the protection of the natural environment, against construction of a nuclear power plant in Zarnowiec, against bloody sport-hunting, actions promoting self-governments at schools, factories and local communities, actions against passport restrictions for activists of alternative movements, etc. What anarchists in Poland find very important are the ideas of self-managed society elaborated by Edward Abramowski (1868-1918) who is considered to be the most important theoretician of Polish anarchism. He propagated the idea of mass denial of the state by means of a boycott of authority and official institutions, and the wrenching out from under the control of the state of as many spheres of social life as possible. This was to be achieved by the self-organizing of society in order to create a Commonwealth of Cooperatives.

—Piotr Salwowski, Warsaw

## The anarchist press in Poland

Some of the magazines listed here do not necessarily qualify themselves as strictly anarchist, but it's not the label you attach to them that allows them to appear on this list, just their contents and the outlook upon life of the editors.

Practically all of these publications are produced on an irregular basis, simply when funds are raised to put them out, but these are not just sporadic and single attempts as we always work hard to keep the work up and expand our activities.

This list is not closed; it's constantly renewed since all new projects worth mentioning are at once included—the new edition is produced every six months.

For more information about each of the publications listed, please contact editors directly.

**Anarcholl**  
Dariusz Misiuna  
ul. Guliwera 29  
03-610 WARSZAWA  
A5, 20 pages;  
An anarchist publication by Warsaw anarchists, English summary for foreign readers included.

**Atak**  
Marcel Mularski  
ul. Morska 64/8  
75-234 KOSZALIN  
A5, 12 pages;  
An anarchist magazine produced by a group of Koszalin based anarchists.

**Awers**  
Jarosław Bednarek  
ul. Kniwskiego 3B/3  
75-445 KOSZALIN  
A5, 8 pages;  
A small organ of the Polish Alternative Youth Movement (RAMP).

**Beek**  
P.O. Box 67  
81-806 SOPOT 6  
A4, 15 pages;  
Magazine by vegetarians dealing with animal rights and libertarianism.

**Biuletyn Informacyjny FA**  
Marek Kurzyńcuk.

**Smolensk 16/8**  
31-112 KRAKOW  
A4, 4 pages;  
Information bulletin of the Polish Anarchist Federation, produced in Cracow for internal information.

**Clach!**  
Robert Zadra  
Zabrzewski  
ul. Zwirki i Wigury 7B/21  
05-823 GRODZISK MAZOWIECKI  
A5, 20-60 pages;  
A magazine of music and subculture. Strongly anti-authoritarian.

**Fratemite**  
Piotr J.K. Tyminski  
Al. Rewolucji Pazdzier-  
nikowej 97/19  
01-424 WARSZAWA  
A5, 20 pages;  
An anarchist magazine on various aspects of libertarian thought presenting history and theory of anarchism.

**Homek**  
Janusz Waluszko  
ul. Stare Domki 6/9  
80-857 GDANSK  
A5, 2-4 pages;  
A small newsletter by Alternative Society Movement (RSA) activists from Gdansk.

**Mat Paryadka**  
P.O. Box 67  
81-806 SOPOT 6  
B3, 20 pages;  
An anarchist magazine presenting wide selection of articles on libertarianism and anarchism.

**Acapella**  
Adam Jagusiak  
ul. Grunwaldzka 33/3  
SOPOT  
A4, 16-18 pages;  
An anarchist magazine produced by Freedom and Peace (WIP) activists.

**Rebellant Poranny**  
Stanisław Gorka  
ul. Energetykow 8/9  
41-76 RUDA SLASKA  
A5, 12 pages;  
An anarchist magazine by Silesia region anarchists.

**Rewolta**  
Piotr Salwowski  
ul. Mieszka 1 48  
05-090 RASZYN k/o W-wy  
A5, 16 pages;  
An anarchist magazine produced in Warsaw by Alternative Society Movement/Anarchist Federation activists.

**Spartakus**  
Janusz Waluszko  
ul. Stare Domki 6/9  
80-857 GDANSK  
A5, 30 pages;  
Magazine of libertarian politics and culture.

**Szajba**  
Andrzej Tokarski  
ul. Wolnosci 17/1  
67-120 KOZUCHOW  
A5, 20 pages;  
Anti-authoritarian magazine containing numerous articles presenting libertarian/anarchist viewpoint.

**Action**  
Piotr J.K. Tyminski  
Al. Rewolucji Pazdzier-  
nikowej 97/19  
01-424 WARSZAWA  
Information bulletin on anarchist activity and actions taken. Produced in English with a view of distributing it worldwide.

**Kulturka Press**  
Rafal Kasprzak  
ul. Bieruta 17/40  
64-920 PILA  
A5, 20 pages;  
A magazine of publications, music and reviews from anti-statist position.

## Anarchist press review

Continued from page 7

in Spain). Lots of union and strike news, along with criticisms of rival unions like the (Communist Party dominated) C.C.O.O. and the (Socialist Party dominated) U.G.T. Subscriptions are 1,000ptas/year (12 issues).

**Solidaridad Obrera** #209/Mayo 15, #210/Junio, #211/Julio & #212/Oct. '90 (Pza. Medinaceli, 6, pral. 1\*; 08002-Barcelona; Spain) is the 12 to 28-page, Spanish-language regional newspaper of the anarcho-syndicalist C.N.T. in Catalonia. Issue #209 focusses on reporting May Day activities & history, along with pages & pages of resolutions from the seventh congress of the C.N.T. Issue #211 covers the apparently ongoing "Huelga de sanidad." Issue #212 includes lots of anti-war coverage with articles like "La guerra ¿una necesidad o una excusa?" and "Sangre por petróleo," both by Hades. Cover price: 65ptas plus 20ptas postage for a sample.

**Anarkia** #18/May '90 (P.B. 26050, T.K. 10022, Athens, Greece) is the 12-page, Greek-language monthly newspaper of the Greek Union of Anarchists carrying extensive news coverage and commentary. Issue #18 includes "End of Ideology; Start of leveling" (on the situation in Greece related to the recent changes in Eastern & Western Europe, including the intensification of state repression around the axes of "terrorism" and "drugs") Cover price is 100 Drachmas.

**Lavanderia Kaos** #9/undated (Aptdo 207, 13300 Valdepeñas (Ciudad Real), Spain) is a small-format, but lively-looking 48-page, Spanish-language "fan-zine." Single copy price is 125ptas.

**Germinal** #55/Maggio '90 (Via Mazzini 11, Trieste 34121, Italy) is a nicely-produced 8-page, Italian-language paper. This issue reports on the East-West Trieste anarchist gathering of last Spring. Single copy price is 1,500 Lire plus postage.

**Nouvelles de nulle part** #0/Juin '90 (c/o CNT, 33 rue des Vignes, 75020 Paris, France) is a new 16-page, French-language "Bulletin d'informations libertaires Est-Ouest," with an emphasis on the syndicalist side of the movement. Single copies are 10 Francs plus postage.

**The Anarchist** #34 & #35 (Y. Kastanaras, Argiropoleos 27, Athens 11471, Greece) is a 6-page Greek-language street-sheet from Athens featuring anarchist news. Send a contribution for a sample.

**Brand** #34/Feb., #35/April, #37-38/Sommaren [double issue], #39/Sept. & #40/Oct. '90 (Box 150 15, S-104 65 Stockholm, Sweden) is the only anarchist monthly magazine in Sweden. This is a very

lively and interesting Swedish-language magazine with some of the best photography of any radical publication I've seen, published since 1898. And for English subscribers, there is usually an English summary of contents included in each issue. Double issue #37-38 includes articles on several anarchist blockades of Shell stations, the successful occupation of a large house in Malmö by squatters who threatened to defend it with molotovs, the unsuccessful attempt at squatting a house in Stockholm, and the formation of a new "Stockholm anarchist federation." Issue #39 includes "Nyliberalismen pensionerad ideologi" (criticism of "anarcho-capitalists") by Jacques Wallner, and articles on the South African A.N.C., Colombian (South America) anarchist Biofilio Panclasta, squatting news from East Berlin & Barcelona, and an interview with the Class War group concerning resistance to the English Poll Tax. Send a contribution for a sample.

**Homo Sapiens** #7-8/undated [double issue] (C.P. 705, 70121 Bari, Italy) is a nicely-produced 64-page Italian-language journal. This issue includes "La paura della morte" by Luigi De Marchi, and "Il fantasma di piazza Tian An Men" by Attilio Mangano. Subscriptions are L.15,000/year (3 issues).

**Liberecana Ligilo** #69/J. & #70/J. '90 (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. Issue #69 includes an article on "Anarkismo kaj postmodernismo." Issue #70 features "Forigu murdstatojn el la Persa Golfo!" Send a contribution for a sample copy.

**CIRA Bulletin** #46/May '90 (avenue de Beaumont 24, CH-1012 Lausanne, Switzerland) is the 16-page bulletin of the library of the international Center for Research on Anarchism (C.I.R.A.), including listings of the over 200 current publications catalogued. Subscriptions are \$25.00/year (including library loan privileges).

**Anarcholl** #5/Maj '90 (Dariusz Misiuna, ul. Guliwera 29, 03-610 Warszawa, Poland) is a 20-page Polish-language journal by Warsaw anarchists with an English-language summary of contents included. This issue includes articles on "Homo politicus and his alienated consciousness" by Darek Misiuna, "Involved art" by Rafal Nowakowski, as well as pieces on vivisection, housing, the Trieste East/West anarchist meeting, and other news. Send at least U.S.\$50 for a copy.

**Pasado de Rosca** #2/undated (Apartado de Correos 999, 08080 Barcelona, Spain) is a 26-page "fan-zine libertario" apparently affiliated with the Spanish CGT (breakaway reformists from the anarcho-syndicalist CNT union). Send a contribution for sample copy.

**Umanita' Nova** Vol.70, #26/Aug. thru #31/Oct. 21, '90 (Cas. Postale 2230, 40100 Bologna, Italy) is the 8-page weekly newspaper of the Federazione



# International Anarchist News

## Soviet anarcho-syndicalism

### An interview with a member of the KAS

This interview with Mr. Muraviev (Konfederacja Anarcho-Syndykalistov) was published early this year in *Robotnik—the central organ of the Polish Socialist Party—Democratic Revolution*.

**QUESTION:** What was the beginning of KAS?  
**ANSWER:** Just after "Perestroika" in the USSR had begun, many informal groups appeared, most of them leftist ones. Little by little, two currents became visible: the one proposing reforms within the framework of the existing system organized itself in the Popular Front in Moscow, others—rejecting both the post-Stalinist system and capitalism—underlined the urgency of finding a third way, finally described as anarchism. Although this term was understood in many different ways, working out a common platform proved possible and enabled representatives of various groups to meet in spring of 1989 and create the Confederation of Anarcho-Syndicalists.

**Q:** How many people attended this meeting? How many of them joined KAS?

**A:** The conference was a great celebration. Old veterans read M. Woloszyn's poems. A delegation of Swedish anarchists was present. Some 30 delegates from various parts of the country appeared (from Leningrad, Charkov, Dnepropetrovsk, Rostov, Novochersk, Irkutsk, etc.)—a full list was published in *Obshchina*. Lately KAS has risen in numbers due to some disruptions in the Democratic Union. At present KAS has about 1,000 active members.

**Q:** What is your ideological tradition?

**A:** We've got ideological pluralism in KAS, though there are some basic rules which are

accepted by all of us. One of them is rejection of the present system as such. We are much influenced by anarchist classics, i.e. Bakunin, but it's really hard to say who is the most important. I can tell you what anarchism means to me. There is a huge puddle just in front of the block of flats I'm living in; it's impossible not to step into it. People go to work, then get back and are all complaining about dirt and inconvenience, but nobody does anything—they did not even put some planks or something there. I do understand these people; I know they are all waiting for the state to do something for them and believe it's the only power able to act on their behalf and that's why it has legal rights to dispose of their lives. Anarchism is not just some political movement, it's also a strong pressure towards self-reliance.

**Q:** Do you strive for abolishing the state as other anarchists do?

**A:** After some talks with Polish anarchists, I understand that they intend to abolish the state at once. In our opinion some longer process is required. When it comes to methods, we reject violence. There is a stereotype, deeply rooted, of the bomb-throwing anarchist or "Batko" Makhno burning villages to the ground and executing red commissars. Methods, being accepted at the given moment, become a part of the final result. We are on the eve of the greatest economic and political crisis in Russia. It's already hard to make ends meet now, but people are not yet exhausted enough to make a revolution. But if prices keep on rising and if these few products which are still available disappear, and if Communists prove unable to improve the situation, serious popular rebellion will come. I'm no prophet; I can't tell you when, but surely the old question "what to do?" will appear. It will be clear there's no going back to Stalinism. People will need some firm proposals then, without forcing them to accept any rules. It will be necessary to organize strikes, press-campaigns, TV should also be included if possible. We will try to direct this social movement to the alternative third way. For the time being, we carry on active propaganda.

**Q:** What were the problems discussed with Russian workers? How did you talk to them?

**A:** I do not overestimate my abilities as a propagandist. First of all, we distribute our paper *Obshchina*. At the time of Summer strikes, the creation of independent workers' representatives was one of the most important demands. We find self-managed factories to be the most effective remedy for economic problems. These autonomous representatives could, let's say, appoint managers. Only by means of delegating their representatives can workers control their factories and directly influence their own life. Now the existing system of self-management is a total fiction. Worker's representatives will never be independent if they are not able to decide about distribution of produced goods. It's impossible to put single factories on their own accounts; it's also impossible to do it all over the country now. We aim at worker's self-defence then, and in organizing workers' unions able to defend the rights of working people. I do not think that any radical change is possible if we try to settle all these matters separately. Everything should be done at once.

**Q:** What kind of property is preferred by KAS?  
**A:** Well, it's a difficult question. There are many systems of property in the Soviet Union. The latest invention is the cooperative movement. Obviously, it has nothing to do with the traditional understanding of cooperation. In fact, such enterprises belong to single individuals who are real Russian capitalists. Of course there is state property too, but you know it well, so there's no need to talk about it. There is also another type of property—the one closest to anarchism—collective or group property; it's probably the only form comparable to cooperatives. People working in such factories can effectively influence the shape of their work. We prefer this form but we would like to stress that all forms of property are in fact acceptable except monopolies, as monopoly—no matter: private or state-run—is a disaster both for people and economy.

**Q:** How did it happen that you and your friends joined KAS?

**A:** People who created the *Obshchina* club and then KAS came out of the Movement for International Solidarity. For a long, long time it was the only way to act legally. Obviously, there were dissidents, too, but this meant repression and special propaganda which often made people believe that they were real enemies. That's why young people did not join them and those who were still eager to be active had to choose between "international brigades" and "interclubs"—a whole network of these was created in the last decade. What counted, was solidarity with Chile, Salvador or Nicaragua—just those countries which were pointed out by the authorities. Young people took part in meetings, demonstrations (obviously, these were carefully arranged), etc. People from El Salvador used to come, saying: "Thanks, friends, you helped us a lot." I do not mean that this kind of activity was not treated seriously. I can still remember some letter which came somewhere from the depths of Santiago jails: "When we listen to the Voice of Moscow we realize that there are people who remember us and it really helps us." For those involved and those oppressed, it was serious. Day by day, along with Perestroika, some discords between people and authorities began. Voices could be heard: "Look at our Middle Asia! It's really much worse than in Bolivia!" At the beginning I could not believe it, at least till I went there. Then I could not believe that people could live like that. In August 1987 the first national conference of non-formal organizations took place and for the first time such things were discussed aloud. Influenced by these events we joined the *Obshchina* club, from which KAS later emerged. What do we do? Well, when Khomeini decreed death to Rushdie we signed a letter to the Highest Council (knowing perfectly this would not have any effect) demanding some pressure on Iran as well as giving Rushdie possibility of political asylum in the USSR (not to mention the possibility of publishing his book). We tried to show there was someone who opposed to the pro-Iranian policy of our government. Over 550 signatures for the purpose of this letter were collected in just one day. We also organized a boycott of voting in March,

which was to be made by crossing out all candidates. It was an active form of boycott, as nobody would notice anything if we had not voted at all. At the same time we organized numerous demonstrations against voting.

**Q:** Do you sing the "Internationale" during your manifestations?

**A:** Of course we don't! We sing "Warszawianka 1905". You must know the words, don't you? "...unfriendly winds blowing..."

**Q:** Sure I do...

## Alternative press review

Continued from page 6

issues, published at the University of California in Davis. Issue #1 includes an interview with Native American student Daryl Wilson titled "A challenge to 'America'." Issue #2 includes "La causa Chicana" by Annalisa Alvarado, and "The true legacy of Columbus" by Daryl Wilson. Issue #3 includes Elias Rashmawi on "The politics of confrontation: An analysis of student movements" (a "popular front" approach), Kathy Rosenmeyer-Mail on "John Brown and the revolt at Harper's Ferry," and Anna Schildgen on "El Salvador: A history of struggle" (a leftist history). Issue #4 includes "U.S. uses Iraq to avoid domestic crisis" by Anna Schildgen, and "Read my lips, 'No civil rights'" by Richard Lu. Send an SASE for a sample copy.

**Anthem: The Journal of (Un)Popular Culture** Vol.3, #4/ Autumn '90 (POB 158324, Nashville, TN. 37215) is a 46-page zine looking for new contributors. This issue features "Things that go bump in the night" and "Sympathy for the devil: Literature of the occult" both by Keith Gordon, along with a Jello Biafra interview titled "The high priest of harmful matter." Subscriptions are \$7.50/year (4 issues).

**New Options** #70/Sept.24,'90 (POB 19324, Washington, DC. 20036) is an 8-page newsletter synthesizing New Age, green and "postliberal" perspectives. Issue #70 features "You don't have to be a baby to cry," in which the editor, Mark Satin, expresses his frustrations that the bumbling Green Committees of Correspondence hasn't become a powerful political party. Subscriptions are still \$25/year (11 issues).

**Storm Warning!** #16/Oct.'90 (VVAW-AI, 4710 University Way NE., Suite 1612, Seattle, WA. 98105) is a 28-page anti-imperialist veterans newsletter (fronting for the R.C.P. as I hear). This issue contains statements from three soldiers who have refused to participate in the moves toward war with Iraq, along with an article on "Recruiter free zones." Subscriptions are \$10/year (?) (10 issues).

**Out Your Backdoor** #2/Autumn '90 (817 Granger St., Ann Arbor, MI. 48104) is a completely produced 24-page zine, subtitled "An informal magazine of adventure." This issue includes articles like "Speed skating," "Oh, no! XC ski training!," and Chris Bushell's "A bike messenger in Vienna." Subscriptions are \$15/year (?) (2 issues).

**The New Catalyst** #19/Fall '90 (POB 99, Lillooet, B.C. V0K 1V0 Canada) is a 16-page "bioregional" tabloid cum booklet, newly affiliated with New Society Publishers—the leftist/pacifist publishing house which grew out of the now-disbanded Movement for a New Society. This issue includes "Let B.C.'s forests live!" Free; or subscriptions to the paper are included in subscriptions to "The New Catalyst Bioregional Series" of books at \$16/year (2 books).

## The anarchist scene

Compiled by Lev Chernyl

**ANTI-COPYRIGHT** (POB 368, Cardiff, Wales CF2 1SQ, U.K.; or Waldenburg Str.4, Braunschweig 3300, West Germany; or POB 162, Oakdale, IA. 52319) is a compilation of listings & descriptions of agitational and generally scurrilous art/posters available for SASEs, IRCs and/or donations.

**SNAKE IN THE GRASS** (4053 Harlan St., Unit 104, Emeryville, CA. 94608) has a 1990 screen print T-shirt catalog including unusual anti-war, anti-cop and anarchist designs.

**A NEW ANARCHIST GROUP & BOOKSTORE** are forming in Rockland and Westchester counties of New York state. If you'd like to get involved in the formation of the group, or in the establishment of the anarchist/anti-authoritarian bookstore (Perennial Books), contact John Petrovato (94A-1 Lake Rd., Valley Cottage, NY. 10989).

**CONSPIRACY M.E.D.I.A.** (POB 158324, Nashville, TN. 37215), publishers of *Anthem: The Journal of (Un)Popular Culture*, are also attempting to start a book publishing arm as well as a pure anarchist zine and would like input and contributions of articles, essays, poetry and such.

**CHARLES H. KERR** (1740 W. Greenleaf Ave., Chicago, IL. 60626) has a new tabloid catalog of its labor/leftist books available, including many titles of interest to anarchists like: Voltairine de Cleyre's *Written in Red*, Paul Lafargue's *The Right to be Lazy*, and Peter Kropotkin's *An Appeal to the Young*, along with the line of books published by the anarchist Freedom Press in London.

**REDWING BLACKBIRD** (POB 2042, Decatur, GA. 30030-2042) has a new mailorder catalog

available for \$1.00 (cash, check, money order or stamps) listing anarchist periodicals & books, including the *Semiotexte* Foreign Agent Series.

**BOUND TOGETHER BOOKS** (1369 Haight St., San Francisco, CA. 94117), the anarchist bookshop which was at the center of organizing for the 1989 Without Borders gathering, recently had its large streetfront windows broken for the second time in the last six months. The bookstore collective could use donations to help replace the windows and acquire insurance. So far they've raised \$550.00 in donations and have borrowed \$2,000 from a local food co-op to speed up their replacement. Give them your support!

**BLACK & RED** (POB 02374, Detroit, MI. 48202) reminds us that they are the publishers of—and have a booklet available for—many of the books reviewed in *NAAR* #2. Their booklet is available for an SASE, and includes low prices which reflect only the cost of materials with all labor donated. For example, the highly recommended *Having Little, Being Much: A Chronicle of Fredy Perlman's Fifty Years* is available for \$3.50 plus postage.

**WENDY S. DUKE** (POB 80044, Akron, OH. 44308), publisher of *Dumpster Times* (see the "Anarchist press review" in this issue), also has a hilarious radio/performance cassette available, called "Audio Anarchy." (If I remember correctly). Send an SASE for more information.

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.

**Anarchica Italiana.** With issue #26 the editorial group has begun including an English-language summary of the contents in each issue. (And they'd like to get some encouragement for this if they are to keep it up. You can write to the editorial group at: U.N., via E. Rossi 80, 57100 Livorno, Italy.) Issue #26 includes reports on repression in Modena, an anti-clerical meeting in Fano, the temporary re-occupation of the Germinal group's building in Carrara (from which they had been evicted last March by a huge police attack), stories on oil, the Kuwait invasion, & anti-militarist activities. Issue #27 includes reports of the 19th congress of the Italian Anarchist Federation, the situation in Iraq, and plans for an already banned "Festival of Free Thought" in Pisa. Issue #28 includes articles against an "oil war" with Iraq, on the renewal of Italy's nuclear power program, and on a blockade of the streets over a planned waste deposit basin near Carrara. Subscriptions are US\$55.00/year.

**Mordicus** #0/Oct.'90 (BP 11, 75622 Paris Cedex 13, France) is the premier 8-page issue of a lively new paper featuring articles on "La guerre c'est la paix" and "Guerre des pauvres au royaume desu!" (both unattributed). In commenting on London's recent Trafalgar Square/anti-Poll Tax riot, one headline announces "Un spectre hante la city; Il s'appelle Wat Tyler." The cover price of this issue is 10F.

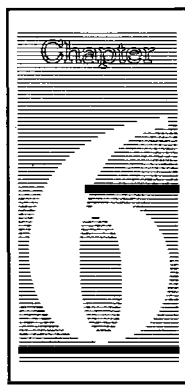
**Guáncara Libertaria** Vol.11, #43/Verano '90 (ISHSS, POB 1516, Riverside Station, Miami, FL. 33135) is a nicely-produced, 32-page, Spanish-language journal produced by Cuban anarchist exiles. This issue includes the reprinting of a 1960 "Declaración de Principios" of the Agrupación Sindicalista Libertaria in Havana, Cuba. Send a donation for a sample copy.

**CNT** #119/Oct.-Nov. & #120/Nov.-Dic.'90 (CNT-Periódico, Apartado, n.º 282, 48080 Bilbao, Spain) is the 20-page, Spanish-language newspaper of the anarcho-sindicalist Confederación Nacional del Trabajo (National Confederation of Workers union) in Spain. Issue #119 includes articles like "Existen poderosas razones para la abstención," "Los otros Kuwait: el caso del Tibet" by Manel Mas, and "Paideia, doce años de enseñanza alternativa" by Josefa Luengo. Issue #120 includes "El fascismo incrustado en la OTAN," an interview with Noam Chomsky titled "Perestroika, guerra fría y reestructura del poder," and "A propósito de la votación contra las nucleares en Suiza." Subscriptions are 1900ptas./year (12 issues).

**Rosso e Nero** Vol.2, #14/Ottobre '90 (Via del Campani n.69, 00185 Roma, Italy) is an 6-page, Italian-language newsletter. Send a contribution for a sample.

**Solidaridad** #29/Nov.'90 (Magallanes 1764, Código Postal 11800, Montevideo, Uruguay) is a 16-page, Spanish-language tabloid "Periódico Obrero y Popular." Single copy price is N\$750.

# The Revolution of Everyday Life



by  
Raoul  
Vaneigem

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

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

## Decompression and the third force

Up till now tyranny has merely changed hands. In their common respect for rulers, antagonistic powers have always fostered the seeds of their future coexistence. (When the leader of the game takes the power of a Leader, the revolution dies with the revolutionaries.) Unresolved antagonisms fester, hiding real contradictions. Decompression is the permanent control of both antagonists by the ruling class. The third force radicalizes contradictions, and leads to their transcendence, in the name of individual freedom and against all forms of constraint. Power has no option but to smash or incorporate the third force without admitting its existence.

Millions of men lived in a huge building with no doors or windows. The feeble light of countless oil lamps competed with the unchanging darkness. As had been the custom since remotest Antiquity, the upkeep of the lamps was the duty of the poor, so that the lighting waxed and waned with the alternation of revolt and pacification. One day a general insurrection broke out, the most violent that this people had ever known. Its leaders demanded a fair allotment of the costs of lighting; a large number of revolutionaries said that what they considered a public utility should be free; a few extremists went so far as to clamor for the destruction of the building, which they claimed was unhealthy, even unfit for human habitation. As usual, the more reasonable elements found themselves helpless in face of the violence of the conflict. During a particularly lively clash with the forces of order, a stray bullet pierced the outer wall, leaving a crack through which daylight streamed in. After a moment of stupor, this flood of light was greeted with cries of victory. The solution had been found: all they had to do was to make some more holes. The lamps were thrown away or put in museums, and power fell to the window-makers. The partisans of destruction were forgotten, and even their discreet liquidation, it seems, went almost unnoticed. (Everyone was arguing about the number and position of the windows.) Then, a century or two later, their names were remembered when the people, that eternal malcontent, had grown accustomed to plate-glass windows, and took to asking extravagant questions. "To

drag out your days in a greenhouse, is that living?" they began to ask.

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The consciousness of our time oscillates between that of the walled up man and that of the prisoner. For the individual, the oscillation takes the place of freedom; like a condemned man, he paces up and down between the blank wall of his cell and the barred window that represents the possibility of escape. If somebody knocks a hole in the cellar of isolation, hope filters in with the light. The good behavior of the prisoner depends on the hope of escape which prisons foster. On the other hand, when he is trapped by a wall with no windows, a man can only feel the desperate rage to knock it down or break his head against it, which can only be seen as unfortunate from the point of view of efficient social organization (even if the suicide doesn't have the happy idea of going to his death in the style of an oriental prince immolating all his slaves, and taking a few people with him: judges, Bishops, generals, policemen, psychiatrists, philosophers, managers, specialists, planners...).

The man who is walled up alive has nothing to lose; the prisoner still has hope. Hope is the leash of submission. When Power's boiler is in danger of exploding, it uses its safety-valve to lower the pressure. It seems to change; in fact it only adapts itself and resolves its difficulties.

There is no authority which does not see, rising against it, an authority which is similar but which passes for its opposite. But nothing is more dangerous for the principle of hierarchical government

than the merciless confrontation of two powers driven by a rage for total annihilation. In such a conflict, the tidal wave of fanaticism carries away the most stable values; no man's land eats up the whole map, establishing everywhere the interregnum of 'nothing is true, everything is permitted'. History, however, offers not one example of a titanic conflict which was not opportunely defused and turned into a comic-opera battle. What is the principle of this decompression? The agreement on matters of principle which is implicitly reached by the warring powers.

The hierarchical principle remains common to the fanatics of both sides: opposite the capitalism of Lloyd George and Krupp appears the anticapitalism of Lenin and Trotsky. From the mirrors of the masters of the present, the masters of the future are already smiling back. Heinrich Heine writes:

*Lachelnd schneidet der Tyrann  
Denn er weiss, nach seinem Tode  
Wechselt Willkur nur die Hande  
Und die Knechtschaft hat kein Ende.*

The tyrant dies smiling; for he knows that after his death tyranny will merely change hands, and slavery will never end. Bosses differ according to their modes of domination, but they are still bosses, owners of a power exercised as a private right. (Lenin's greatness has to do with his romantic refusal to assume the position of absolute master implied by his ultrahierarchical organization of the Bolsheviks; and it is to this greatness also that the workers' movement is indebted for Kronstadt, Budapest and batichka Stalin.)

Thus the point of contact between the two powers becomes the point of decompression. To identify the enemy with Evil and crown one's own side with the halo of Good has the strategic advantage of ensuring unity of action by channelling the energy of the combatants. But this manoeuvre demands the annihilation of the enemy. Moderates hesitate before such a prospect; for the radical destruction of the enemy would include the destruction of what their own side had in common with the enemy. The logic of Bolshevism demanded the heads of the leaders of social-democracy; the latter hastily sold out, and they did so precisely because they were leaders. The logic of anarchism demanded the liquidation of Bolshevik power; the latter rapidly crushed them, and did so inasmuch as it was hierarchical power. The same predictable sequence of betrayals threw Durruti's anarchists before the united guns of republicans, socialists and Stalinists.

As soon as the leader of the game

turns into a Leader, the principle of hierarchy is saved, and the Revolution sits down to preside over the execution of the revolutionaries. We must never forget that the revolutionary project belongs to the masses alone; leaders help it, Leaders betray it. To begin with, the real struggle takes place between the leader of the game and the Leader.

The revolutionary careerist measures the relation of forces in quantitative terms, just as an officer's rank is measured by the number of men under his command. The leaders of so-called insurrectionary parties dismiss the qualitative in favor of a quantitative expertise. Had the 'reds' been blessed with half a million more men with modern weapons, the Spanish revolution would still have been lost. It died under the heel of the people's commissars. The speeches of La Pasionaria already sounded like funeral orations; pathetic whining drowned the language of deeds, the spirit of the collectives of Aragon—the spirit of a radical minority resolved to sever with a single stroke all the heads of the hydra, not just its fascist head.

Never, and for good reason, has an absolute confrontation been fought through to the end. So far the 'final conflict' has only had false starts. Everything must be begun again from scratch. History's only justification is to help us do it.

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Under the process of decompression, antagonists who seemed irreconcilable at first sight grow old together, become frozen in purely formal opposition, lose their substance, neutralize and molder into each other. Who would recognize the Bolshevik with his knife between his teeth in the Gagarinism of doting Moscow? Today, by the grace of the ecumenical miracle, the slogan "Workers of the world, unite" celebrates the union of the world's bosses. A touching scene. The common element in the antagonism, the seed of power, which a radical struggle would have rooted out, has grown up to reconcile the estranged brothers.

Is it as simple as this? Of course not; the farce would lose its entertainment value. On the international stage, those two old hams, capitalism and anticapitalism, carry on their lovers' banter. How the spectators tremble when they begin to quarrel, how they stamp with glee when peace blesses the loving couple! Is interest flagging? A brick is added to the Berlin wall; the blood-thirsty Mao gnashes his paper teeth, while in the background a choir of



Chinese nitwits sings paeans to fatherland, family and work. Patched up like this, the old melodrama is ready to hit the road. The ideological spectacle keeps up with the times by bringing out harmless plastic antagonisms; are you for or against Brigitte Bardot, the Rolling Stones, small cars, hippies, nationalization, spaghetti, old people, the AFL-CIO, mini-skirts, pop art, thermonuclear war, hitch-hiking? There is no one who is not accosted at every moment of the day by posters, news flashes, stereotypes, summoned to take sides over each of the prefabricated trifles that conscientiously stop up all the sources of everyday creativity. In the hands of Power these particles of antagonism are molded into a magnetic ring whose function is to make everybody lose their bearings, to pull everyone out of himself and to scramble lines of force.

Decompression is simply the control of antagonisms by Power. The opposition of two terms is given its real meaning by the introduction of a third. As long as there are only two equal and opposite polarities, they neutralize each other, since each is defined by the other; as it is impossible to choose between them, we are led into that domain of tolerance and relativity which is so dear to the bourgeoisie. One can well understand the importance for the apostolic hierarchy of the dispute between Manichaeism and Trinitarianism! In a merciless confrontation between God and Satan, what would have been left of ecclesiastical authority? Nothing, as the millenarian crises demonstrated. That is why the secular arm carried out its holy offices, and the pyres crackled for the mystics of God or the devil, those overbold theologians who questioned the principle of Three in One. The temporal masters of Christianity were resolved that only they should be entitled to treat of the difference between the master of Good and the master of Evil. They were the great intermediaries through which the choice of one side or the other had to pass; they controlled the paths of salvation and damnation and this control was more important to them than salvation and damnation themselves. On earth they proclaimed themselves judges without appeal, while submitting themselves to judgement only in an after life whose laws they invented.

The Christian myth defused the bitter Manichaean conflict by offering to the believer the possibility of individual salvation; this was the breach opened up by the Poor Schlemiel of Nazareth. Thus man escaped the rigors of confrontation, which necessarily led to the destruction of values, to nihilism. But the same stroke denied him the opportunity to reconquer himself by means of a general upheaval, the chance of taking his place in the universe by chasing out the gods and their slavemasters. Therefore, the movement of decompression appears to have the essential function of shackling man's most irreducible desire, the desire to be completely himself.

In all conflicts between opposing sides an irrepressible upsurge of individual desire takes place and often reaches a threatening intensity. To this extent we are justified in speaking of a third force. From the individual's point of view the third force is what the force of decompression is from the point of view of Power. A spontaneous feature of every

Continued on page 15



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

# A few words on The child as instrument

By Laure A.

**B**ourgeois morality tells us to lament the child conceived only to be ignored by its parents. In reality they are perhaps the lucky ones. Granted, we have all seen a few seemingly healthy parent-child relationships, however the majority of children in nuclear family culture find themselves in a constant struggle for freedom from their parents. (The very term "parent-child" relationship attaches certain qualifiers which make it differ-

ent from a person-person relationship.) Parents, supported by the weight of parent ideology, go into the venture with a purpose whereas the child is born not of its own will, but that of the parent. It is the will of the parent(s) in conceiving the child that is the foundation of this inequitable relationship.

Children are often wanted; they are desired in the same terms as any objects. Assuming a child is wanted by its parent(s), there exists an underlying purpose to its conception. A parent's actions are often taken in the attempt to realize this purpose; children often receive love in accordance with their fulfillment of expectation and purpose.

Parents use the holy moral buzzword "love" to justify their conception of children; this implies that "love" is a justification unto itself—a sacrosanct concept that claims impunity to any sort of criticism. Were people to express the real reasons they wanted to have children, they would be seen as monsters, moral deficients, or at least callous souls.

Children have developed a sense of their parents' purpose; it is only when they are co-opted into the world of adulthood that they rationalize about ever having that sense. The most common perception is that people have children in some way to supplement their own lives, either by looking to fulfill lost dreams *through the child*, by gaining immortality *through the child*, by

exercising "the superiority" of their judgement *through the child*, by gaining control or receiving the devotion of someone *through the child*, et cetera, ad nauseam. The child therefore is an instrument; the relationship between parent and child is often dependent upon what satisfaction the parent draws from the child. This aspect, of course, is little different from relationships between friends and lovers; the difference is enormous however.

The relationship a parent has to a child is almost like an owner to property; even the husband-wife relationship is not nearly as stringent. Most children are created with the notion of the relationship in mind; unlike a friend, a child is not free to walk away. There is nobody to protect the civil rights of a child; even the so called abuse/child protection acts are a farce; the notion of who are fit and unfit parents often is tied up with material status (or sexual practice), wealth, religious pretensions and race. Parental responsibility has been expanded beyond the minimal necessities to include every notion of moral indoctrination imaginable. This leaves the child in the position of having to struggle for the legitimacy of their own purpose.

What is the human race if it is not a collection of individuals looking to express their own existence? What is a person if denied their expression? Dehumanized.

## Editorial note:

In reading this issue of *Anarchy* you may find we haven't mentioned certain groups, activities, publications, books or concepts which you find vital to the process of children's/youth liberation. Feel free to write our "Letters" section and inform us of what we've omitted!

Two books useful to me have been: *Deschooling Society* by Ivan Illich, and *A Primer of Libertarian Education* by Joel Spring. (One source for Spring's book is via C.A.L., POB 1446, Columbia, MO. 65205-1446, \$8 postpaid)

For books on children's/adolescent sexuality, one source is: The Sexuality Library, 1210 Valencia Street, San Francisco, CA 94110. Send \$2 for a catalog.

*Anarchy* back-issue #19 (still available at \$2.50 postpaid—checks must be made out to C.A.L.) explores the topic of children's sexuality and includes a chapter from Richard Walter's book *Sexual Friendship*.

-Toni Otter

## Kids' lib contacts!

The following addresses were compiled from *Youth Lib Zine* #2, which is published by Syndicat Des Elèves, 2035 Boul. St-Laurent, Montréal, Québec H2X 2T3, Canada.

### AUSTRALIA

**Activate**, POB 509, Melbourne, Victoria 3207. Anarchist zine by high school students.

### CANADA

Syndicat Des Elèves, 2035 Boul. St-Laurent, Montréal, Québec H2X 2T3. Information on child/youth lib. Provides penpals and support for incarcerated minors. Publishes Youth Lib news in *Youth Lib Zine*.

Jeunesse Lambda, CP 5514, succ. B, Montréal, Québec H3B 4P1. Une groupe communautaire axe sur les discussions pour gais et lesbiennes de 25 ans et moins.

**Rites**, Box 65, Station F, Toronto M4Y 2L4. Gay and lesbian magazine.

**New Lavender Panthers**, POB 1110, Adelaide St. Stn., Toronto, Ontario M5W 1X5. Zine for \$2.

**QueerAnarchistNetwork**, POB 6705, Stn. A, Toronto, Ontario M5W 1X5. Zine for \$2.

**Barefoot and Angry**, POB 687, Station Q, Toronto, Ontario M4T 2N5. Anti-school zine.

**Ignorance Is Bliss**, c/o Massimo Panzino, 7182 Aspen Ave., Mississauga, Ontario L5N 5N8. Punk zine.

**Still Angry?**, POB 915, Stn. F, Toronto, Ontario M4Y 2N9.

Justice For Children, 105-720 Spadina Ave., Toronto, Ontario M5S 2T9 (phone 416-920-1633). Adult-run legal aid clinic. Publishes a bulletin.

### ENGLAND

**Shocking Pink**, 23 Tunstan Rd., London SW9 8B7. Radical feminist zine for young women.

Lesbian and Gay Youth Movement (LGYM), BM GYM, London, WCLN 3XX.

**Lib Ed**, The Cottage, The Green, Leire, Leicestershire, LE17 5HL. Anti-authoritarian perspectives on education; periodical.

Children's Legal Centre, 20 Compton Terrace, London, N1. An adult-run legal aid clinic. (phone 01-359-6251)

### FRANCE

**Androzone**, chez B. Peuportier, B.P. 192, 75623 Paris, cedex 13. Le Fanzine anarcho-gai alternatif. 25 FF.

### GERMANY

I.K., Postfach 810361, 85 Nurnberg. Group promoting children's/youth liberation.

### NETHERLANDS

Kinderrechtswinkel, Brouweksgracht 44, 1013 GW Amsterdam. A radical children's/youth legal aid clinic.

### USA

**Homocore**, c/o World Power Systems, POB 77731, San Francisco, CA. 94107. Zine for \$1.

**AQUA**, POB 1251, Canal St. Stn., NY, NY. 10013. Anarchist queers undermining authority. Zine for \$2.

Hetrick-Martin Institute for the Protection of Gay and Lesbian Youth, 112 E. 23rd St., NY, NY. 10010.

Anarchist Youth Federation, POB 8585, Minneapolis, MN. 55408.

Anarchist Youth Federation, POB 241532, Memphis, TN. 38124.

**Growing Without Schooling**, 2269 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA. 02140. Newsletter by adults. Provides information and access to educational materials to parents choosing to teach their children at home.

End Violence Against Next Generation, 977 Keeler Ave., Berkeley, CA. 94708. Adult group working for abolition of corporal punishment, circumcision, and other institutionalized child abuse.

**Bridges of Respect**. Book "creating support for Lesbian and Gay youth" with extensive contact list. Available from American Friends Service Committee, 1501 Cherry St., Philadelphia, PA. 19102.

Oneness Press, POB 830, Pahoa, HI. 96778. Publishes the periodical *Kids Lib News*.

North American Man/Boy Love Association, POB 174, Midtown Stn., NY, NY. 10018.

Emergency Clinic Defense Coalition, Youth Contingent, 5249 N. Kenmore, Chicago, IL. 60640. Pro-choice and abortion defense organization.

Youth Activist Task Force, POB 948683, La Jolla, CA. 92037. Focus on high school, notably a students' legal rights handbook.

National Coalition of Advocates for Students, 100 Boylston St., Suite 737, Boston, MA. 02116. Adult-controlled group which does studies on how young people are excluded from the educational system. Not an anti-school group, but good information on legal rights of immigrant students, other-abled students, etc.

## Alternative press review

Continued from page 9

**Yawn** #21/Oct.24, #22/Nov.6, & #23/Nov.30, '90 (POB 227, Iowa City, IA. 52244) is an interesting 2-page newsletter, usually subtitled "Sporadic Critique of Culture," with content largely involving discussion of the "art strike" and NEA censorship. Subscriptions are \$10/25 issues.

**Reclaiming Newsletter** #41/Winter '90 (POB 14404, San Francisco, CA. 94114) is a 36-page pagan newsletter working to unify spirit and politics. This issue includes "Witch camp then and now" by Sue Westwind, along with Greg Johnson on "Faggot witch camp: A review." Subscriptions are \$6-\$25/year (4 issues).

**Alternative Network Letter** Vol.5, #3/Sept.'89 (96, H Colony, Indiranagar Stage I, Bangalore 560 038, India) is an interesting 12-page newsletter subtitled "A Third World Tourism Critique." This issue includes "Silent country" (on Albania) by Edouard Bailly, along with many short reprints from other publications such as "What price tourism?" by Jaswant Singh (from *Indian Express*). No price is given; the cover states "For private circulation only."

**Ben Is Dead** #10/'90 (POB 3166, Hollywood, CA. 90028) is a better-than-average, 40-page bimonthly punk-zine carrying the usual array of show & record & band reviews, interviews and ads. This issue includes chapter 3 of Jack Marquette's "The art(s) of producing an 'underground' music/art special event" (on "The site"), and Pete Grella on "Are UFOs real?" Subscriptions are \$10/year (6 issues).

**ApaeEros** #30 (John & Kathe Burt, 960 SW Jefferson Ave., Corvallis, OR. 97333) is a small, always fun-to-read, 32-page "unedited reader-written forum about sex, erotica and relationships of all kinds: het, lesbian, gay, bi." This issue includes episode 4 of "Surrender" by J., "Firebird Babydoll" by Ennui Tooloose-LaTeX, and episode 23 of Pat Underhill's "Sensuous Ground." This a.p.a. is always worth checking out. Subscriptions are \$2/issue, but you must also send an age statement (that you are over 18).

### FOREIGN-LANGUAGE PERIODICALS:

**Mertin's Music Box** #3/May '90 (Argiroupolos 27, Athens 114 71, Greece) is a 38-page, Greek-language, alternative music magazine. This issue has articles on Bevis Frond, Screamin' Jay Hawkins, Midnight Men, etc. Single copy price is 250 drachmas plus postage.

**Schwarze Distel** #11/undated? (PF 548, 1151 Wien, Austria) is a 26-page, German-language newsletter including articles on "Anti-Psychiatry," "Ferien in der DDR," and "Kritik der Warenökonomie." Send a contribution for a sample copy.

**Telegraph** #14/Sept.19, '90 (Schliemannstr. 22, Berlin 1058, D.D.R.) is a small format, 36-page German-language publication from East Berlin. Issue #14 includes articles like "Ein neuer Anfang für die Basisgruppen? Protestaktion gegen die Verschleppung der Stasi-Akten" and "Nazijubiläum in Wunsiedel; Antifaschistinnen machen Gegendemonstration" Single copies are 1,50M plus postage.

## 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 be accepted as adequate reasons for inclusion. We are only looking for contacts who are seriously/playfully interested in anarchic communication/action.

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

**Karen Eliot**  
POB 3502  
Madison, WI. 53704

**Trevor**  
POB 23061  
Knoxville, TN. 37933-1061

**Assn. for Ontological Anarchy**

c/o Autonomedia  
Box 568  
Brooklyn, NY. 11211

**Tad Kepley**  
POB 401721  
Brooklyn, NY. 11240

**Bayou La Rose**

c/o Arthur Miller  
302 N. "J" St., Apt 3  
Tacoma, WA. 98403

**David Effigy**

1803 Mission St., #172  
Santa Cruz, CA. 95060

**Attack International**

BM 6577  
London WC1N 3XX  
England

**Wendy S. Duke**

POB 80044  
Akron, OH. 44308

**Eleutheros Prod.**

POB 2265  
Albany, NY. 12220

**"bOB" McGlynn**

528 5th Street  
Brooklyn, NY. 11215

As some readers will notice, this listing has shrunk quite a bit for this issue. From this point on it will be updated at least twice a year to make sure those listed really are interested in being listed, and that they still are answering inquiries. If your name has been removed from this listing, it is because you didn't reply to my latest mailing sent out in October. Let us know once again that you're interested, and we'll return your address to the listing in the next issue.



# Ageism

By Su Negrin

[ā'jiz'em] *n*: adult oppression of children as a group.

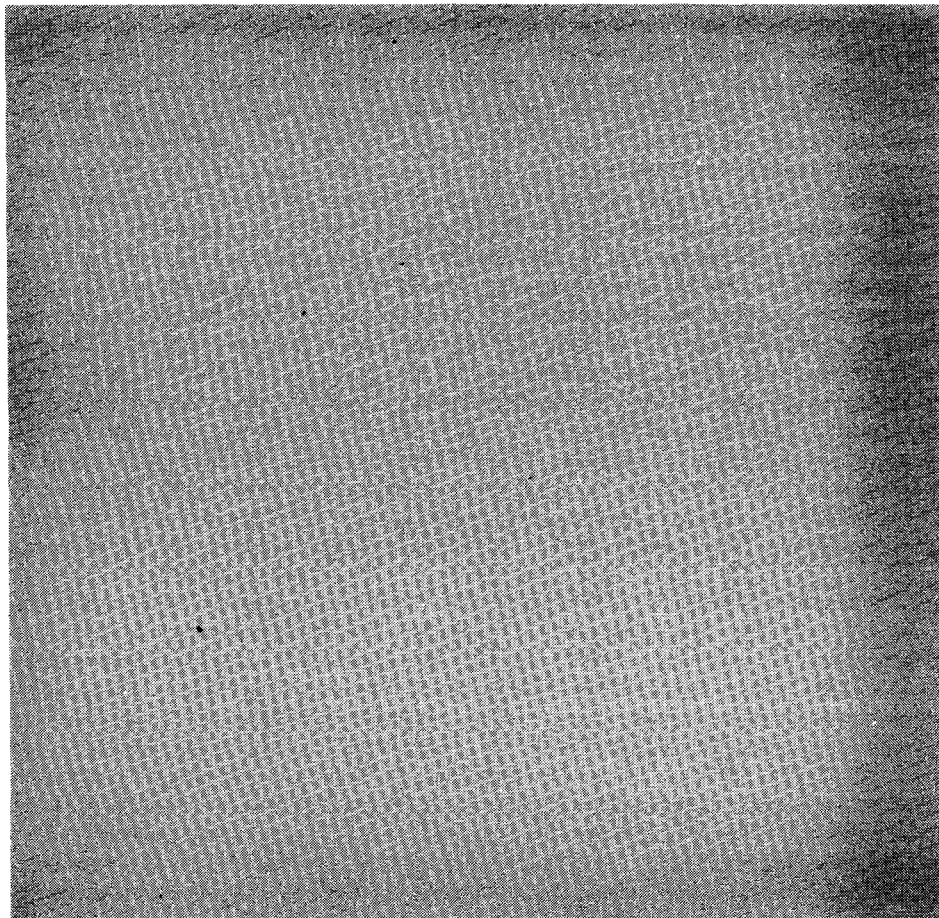
When Paul was about a year old, I came across A. S. Neill's *Summerhill: A Radical Approach to Child Rearing*. It was one of those books that felt like it was written just for me. I was 17 at the time, and my own childhood wasn't too far behind. Also, I was enjoying my own baby, as I had enjoyed my "regular" baby-sitting kids. So I was gratified to find out that, at least in spirit, I was already into Neill's idea of acceptance of kids. But it was his idea of kids' self-regulation, standing in direct opposition to the practices of my mother and aunts and Jewish ladies of the Bronx, that was new. Kids' self-regulation made sense to me, instantly and unreservedly. I set about changing my attitudes, expectations, demands and practices. Paul found he no longer had to finish his carrots, among steadily increasing other things. I then had to deal with my mother and aunts, the Jewish ladies and my husband. Not too much opposition at first—after all, Paul was "just" a baby.

Things went on this way for a while. I found Paul less of a burden to me. Because I had fewer rules, he was less "bad"; because I had reduced my expectations, he "failed" less often; because I left him alone, he became more of a person to me, less of a "miniature-Edward" (his father) I had romantically fantasied him to be. I had another baby, Lexie. Paul dug her, so did I. Her birth triggered my 19th nervous breakdown, we moved to Manhattan, and Paul started nursery school (much to the dismay of his father, who now had to go to work to pay for it).

Paul went to the 15th St. School (at that time the only Summerhill school in the city). Nursery school and next year, kindergarten, passed without incident. But in first grade the shit hit the fan for Paul. The school had gone through reactionary changes. Paul's teacher, Bill Pigman, was fired. And Paul, by coming up with reasons not to go to school, first one day, then two, then three and four days a week, finally dropped out of first grade.

By this time I was divorced and Bill Pigman and I got together and set up the Perry St. Kids School. Bill had distilled Neill's insights and understood that, more than self-regulation, kids needed power. I had lived with kids, I knew a lot about them and I enjoyed them. The kids who came to Perry St. were young enough, so that after a severe and frightening de-conditioning period (no adults to stop their fights or find their shoes), they got their shit together. The dynamic insights, changes and lifestyle that developed at Perry St. really paid off when we all moved up to the mountains outside Woodstock, N.Y.

I have thoughts and feelings about what happened to all of us at Perry St., but for now, I'm just going to say what happened to me. I was prevented, both



Due to the prevailing climate of anti-porn hysteria we have been forced to self-censor the harmless photograph originally introducing this essay in Su Negrin's *Begin At Start*, in order to avoid the likelihood of facing harassment and/or prosecution for revealing the little known fact that children in their natural state actually do possess genitals.

by circumstances and often simply (and oppressively) by Bill, from continuing my normal functioning with kids. My self-image as a hippy, radical Summerhillian (compared to the bourgeois compromising parents at the 15th St. School) was shot to pieces. Compared to straights, I was a freedom-lover alright. But compared to the kids' freedom, that was something else. The "something else" was my line of tolerance—the line I drew, up to which everything was OK, past which nothing was allowed. I made these decisions. Paul and Lexie (and then the other kids) adapted themselves to them.

Neill may have been into "self-regulation," but Perry St. showed me that Summerhillianism left many loop-holes for adult power—we still called the *big* shots.

Another discovery, once I was forced to relinquish control over what Paul and Lex looked like (a fairly insignificant control, one might think), was how much I depended on them to function as positive reflections of myself. Very heavy. Lexie wore nothing but red pajamas that year (and I mean nothing but, and I mean everywhere) and it would take at least 1,000 words to describe

what was communicated to me, her mother, by one look from passersby (especially women passersby) on the street. Then I had to deal with revelations like my preference for Paul and Lexie over the other kids (things like their smell, and other basic preferences I had for them). I had to deal with my (virtually uncharacteristic) hatred of Miles. I had to deal with Paul's first and vehement expressions of hatred for me. I had to deal with Erica's love for me. I had to deal with the discovery of the kids' emotional and intellectual self-sufficiency. (They didn't need me, after all. So now what was I supposed to do with my life.) I had to deal with the kids being bratty and uncooperative, unlike A. S. Neill's kids, who were supposedly more friendly and cooperative with their adult oppressors. The kids started "being themselves" in ways neither Bill or I were prepared for. I found out about people at Perry St. And I found out about power.

Adults have power over kids. The primary political relationship between human beings is that between adults and kids. The quintessential psychological relationship between human beings is that between mothers and their chil-

dren. All adults are, by virtue of age, powerful. All adults, by virtue of their power, are dangerous to kids.

Adults have power over kids. It's no more "natural" or "necessary" or "unavoidable" than the oppressive power that exists in any other political relationship. And, as with other political relationships, we can't just reform the institutions (i.e. "progressive" schools) or improve the personal relationships (i.e. parental "permissiveness"). The power simply has to be re-invested in the child from whom it was taken and over whom it was used. And an authentic relationship between the kid and society itself needs to be established. Dependency on older people, for physical survival, needs to be isolated from artificially cultivated dependency on adults for other things. Society needs to function collectively/cooperatively, so that oppressive adult responsibility for kids (primarily the responsibility of mothers), and its corollary, control, don't develop. The first step is to reveal and destroy the ideology of ageism.

With basic survival needs unconditionally accessible, kids are capable of fulfilling all their needs through their own unmolested interaction with experience. They need other people. They don't need adults, per se.

Kids are capable of making decisions. They know what they want.

Kids are hated by adults because they're (supposedly) idle and solely pleasure-oriented—neither of which is true. The so-called privileges of youth, (as feminists have found about the "privileges" of femininity) are at best compensatory, at worst, they're crippling.

Kids are in touch with their bodies. If not fed superstition or taught anxiety, very small kids can be totally relied on to make appropriate decisions about their food, clothing, and ordinary health care. Kids know they don't need to come in out of the rain.

Kids are people. They aren't empty vessels. Adults can't relate to who kids are, instead we relate to who they are to become. Kids aren't potential adults. Kids are kids.

Kids don't need "good models."

One day, when we all lived in the Catskills, I saw Katie and Lexie hurry up the stairs to Lexie's room. They plowed through the mountains of clothing, toys, tools, creations and found objects, went directly to the third drawer from the top of Lexie's bureau, opened it, shoved some clothes over, and, from the right hand corner, they removed two bolts and went back downstairs. Kids are not disorderly.

Adult "advice" falls on kids like a ton of bricks. There is even more weight (danger) latent in the "advice" of parents. In the last few years I've restrained myself from giving Paul and Lex my advice, even my opinion. But

Continued on next page

# Ageism

Continued from previous page

we're struggling to relate to each other as peers—and as they get older and I get more of my shit together, we are approaching it. Can I tell Paul, as I would tell a friend, how I see his maleness?

Kids are into sex; clitorises, assholes, cocks, shit, pussy smells, semen, nipples, tits, balls, cunts, tongues, adult bodies, kid bodies, their own bodies, animals, soft rugs, bathtubs full of water,....

## Kids can do their laundry.

Adults don't know the first thing about the power relationships in kids' lives—why the kid up the block is always left out, why everybody jumps when a certain kid comes around, why girls get giddy and all of a sudden start wearing their hair in fancy ways. So why did I expect Lexie to patch up the long-standing fight between two of the girls up the road?

Lexie and Paul are 8 and 10½. They each receive an "income check" of \$25 on the first of every month. No strings attached. With this money they take care of all their needs—clothing, furniture, transportation, laundry, entertainment, pet supplies (for Lex), TV repair (for Paul), bike maintenance (for both) etc., etc. They do all their own shopping; they make all their own decisions. They may lose money. They may run out before the end of the month. I no longer notice what they do or do not need because I'm no longer responsible for their needs. And I'm no longer guilty about them. Paul bought some candles instead of sneakers—and I don't feel the need to slip him more money or otherwise provide him with sneakers. He can make his own decisions. Kids can handle money.

Kids are not cute.

Adults rarely have conversations with kids. We virtually never ask a kid's opinion, even (especially?) when something concerns the kid herself. Adults do give orders. One day at the playground, Bill counted 39 commands in 15 minutes—from one mother to one 4 year old child. Under this assault, the kid flinched and tightened visibly every time. Older kids don't flinch—they've become quite numb.

Adult assaults against kids are physically, as well as verbally, violent. The "spanking" is (like wife-beating) an institutionalized form of sadism. Its outgrowth, physical child abuse is, like rape and lynching, a vicious expression of political dominance. Child abuse laws are very rarely implemented. Cases of child abuse are never publicized—on the pretext of being too gory, adults suppress information about child abuse because we know it differs from "spanking" only in degree, not in kind.

It will be some time before we can know for sure exactly what sexual characteristics human beings bring with them at birth. Until that time, though, we can spare infants the affliction of sexual stereotyping via expectation, coercion and environmental conditioning.

"Child psychology" is only 100 years old. It was developed, along with other

"sciences," to stabilize an expanding world population and to keep it in its place (family, school, factory, mental and penal institution, old-age home). "Child psychology" is the adult "scientific" rubber stamp to our oppression of kids.

The idea of teaching kids is only 400 years old. Kids don't need to be taught. The compulsory school is, simply, a prison. The Summerhillian free schools have dropped the academic emphasis, but they persist in believing that kids need adults for emotional education—so Summerhillians still have their political expedient and "free" schools are still prisons.

Parental love (which obscures ageism as romantic love obscures sexism) is (like romantic love) possessive and exclusive. It functions alternately on the level of adult wish-fulfilling fantasy and then, in disappointment, on the real level of suffocating adult need. How does one love an objectified person/possession one doesn't even see distinctly from oneself? How does one love a person one has exploited, brutalized and mutilated??

Kids, like black people, women, and poor people, are neither devils (evil, animalistic, etc.) nor angels (innocent, salt of the earth, etc.). They, like the others, are human. Kids have another similarity to these slave castes—they are heavily into self-denigration. They are instilled with feelings of inadequacy and express its corollary, the demand for authority.

If kids are basically trusted, they are straightforward (and articulate) about their feelings and don't need to be second-guessed.

The other night I took a good look at one of Paul's toys—his miniature "Corgi Moon Buggy." I was surprised to find it was beautiful and interesting. What kind of respect did I really have for Paul if I'd always thought he was interested in garbage?

"Normal" children are not happy. Any crisis will reveal their repression.

The 19th Century morality of respect for parents isn't dead. It's only changed into the 20th Century morality of friendship toward parents. The children of "modern" parents are expected, though nothing in their political relationship has changed, to be emotionally honest, open, spontaneous and giving toward adults. This alienated fuck-over may be even more dangerous than the more overt Victorian authoritarianism.

The nuclear family is only 400 years old. It was not created on the eighth day. It will not last forever. In the family, parents (like the state) introduce the disorder which they then proclaim they have to control. Families of any kind (like a state of any kind) are unnecessary. They'll last as long as does the state—because the family and the state are two levels of the same thing—authority.

Childhood is only 400 years old. (See Philip Ariès' *Centuries of Childhood, A Social History of Family Life*, which describes ageist ideology in the making and so is very handy for the destroying.)

Before the 16th Century there was virtually no attitude toward children at all. That span of life, in so far as it was recognized at all, was seen as a quick transition to adulthood (at about age 7). Those years were unimportant and attention to them was a probable loss altogether, because with infant mortality so high, people didn't necessarily expect their children to live. And with no close family set-up, adults and kids were free



to go about their business without the concern/answerability we have today. "Children" functioned indiscriminately in all "adult" activities. They weren't considered anything special. This doesn't mean they weren't oppressed. It does mean that they had a (comparatively) authentic relationship to society. The 20th (21st?) Century will need to create a liberatory society in which kids develop their uniqueness as people but again are not distinguished by age; in which kids have power over their own lives and again relate to society without intermediaries.

My experience, and my special interest, is in the oppression of small kids—because oppressed children eventually become, as adults, *little people*. But ageism has other aspects.

"Teen-agers" have become a distinct group in our culture only recently—and theirs is an oppression distinct from small kids, although still ageist. Adults are pursuing a policy of childization upon 12 to 18 year old youths. Our current attitude toward them reflects the transition. (Note on vocabulary: "kids" means children, "youth" means teenagers. And I say "we" adults in order not to cop out on my own adulthood—my apologies for thus semantically excluding the kids and youth who may be reading this.) Adults are ambivalent toward teenage youth. We still expect them not to be "childish." We expect them, as adults did years ago, to get jobs, to seriously compete in school, to responsibly prepare for the future. But in an attempt to prolong their childhood, adults keep them attached to the family through numerous dependencies, not the least of which is economic. We prohibit sex, deny privacy, restrict any personal, familial or social decision-making. Society allows youth only "trainee" jobs (cheap, replaceable la-

bor). American teenagers are among the most knowledgeable people in the world—but American adults say "What do you know, you're only a kid." The high school and, more recently, the community college, are becoming increasingly more repressive, militaristic and bureaucratic. "Pre-kindergarten" entraps three and four year-olds, as "student unrest" involves students who are younger and younger every year.

Childization of young people extends even into the 20s. College, graduate and special studies schools continue to expand, yet only "Jr." positions are available to young people with college degrees. And working-class young people have the long wait of the seniority system before them. Abbie Hoffman could very well update his break-off age of trust to "anyone over 40" because "adulthood" (having power in an ageist society) seems to be arriving later and later.

Finally, there is the aspect of diminishing returns in ageist politics—because the very old become powerless and are oppressed by their former victims.

In terms of social space for self-actualization, kids and youth are incredibly deprived. They have no life-style options, no mobility, no independent financial resources, no legal redress, no right to work, no power to make social/political decisions, no choice. With so few resources, so much privatization in nuclear families, so much institutionalization in schools, Kids' and Youth Liberation is the unlikeliest of movements. But it's happening. It's already fairly well-developed among youth who are organizing high school student unions, underground papers, legal, abortion and draft counseling services. Outside of school, Youth Liberation involves more and more teen-agers simply running away (and staying away) from home. Awareness is reaching younger kids too. But, for now at least, younger kids are tied to their oppressors, except sometimes in freak communities (especially on the West Coast). There truancy among grade school kids (that is, not even being enrolled) is wide spread and family structures are loose (few fathers, freer mothers). And kids' accessibility to one another is greater.

Kids' Liberation involves the recognition (especially by the kids themselves) of the vested political interests of adults; it involves the removal of the adult as a factor in kids' freedom. Kids can't allow their lives to be determined by the sensitivity (or lack of it) of particular adults. This adult control is the central limitation of the Summerhillian free school movement—radical in the '60s but only progressive (or reactionary) in the '70s. The removal of the adult (teacher or parent) sounds unrealistic to us. But as the family and school continue to collapse we may again see the bands of vagabond kids that were normal in the middle-ages and functioned even as recently as the Great Depression. Outlaw gangs of older and younger kids may even develop as truants, curfew dodgers and runaways



The Revolution of Everyday Life by Raoul Vaneigem

## Decompression and the third force

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struggle, it radicalizes insurrections, denounces false problems, threatens Power in its very structure. It is what Brecht was referring to in one of his Keuner stories: "When a proletarian was brought to court and asked if he wished to take the oath in the ecclesiastical or the lay form, he replied: 'I'm out of work.'" The third force does not hope for the withering away of constraints, it aims to transcend them. Prematurely crushed or co-opted, it becomes by inversion a force for decompression. Thus, the salvation of the soul is nothing but the will to live incorporated through myth, mediated, emptied of its real content. On the other hand, their peremptory demand for a full life explains the hatred incurred by certain gnostic sects or by the Brothers of the Free Spirit. During the decline of Christianity, the struggle between Pascal and the Jesuits spotlighted the opposition between the reformist doctrine of individual salvation and compromise with heaven, and the project of realizing God by the nihilist destruction of the world. And, once it had got rid of the dead wood of theology, the third force survived to inspire Babeuf's struggle against the *million doré*, the Marxist project of the complete man, the dreams of Fourier, the explosion of the Commune, and the violence of the anarchists.

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Individualism, alcoholism, collectivism, activism....the variety of ideologies shows that there are a hundred ways of being on the side of Power. There is only one way to be radical. The wall that must be knocked down is immense, but it has been cracked so many times that soon a single cry will be enough to bring it crashing to the ground. Let the formidable reality of the third force emerge at last from the mists of history, with all the individual passions that have fuelled the insurrections of the past! Soon we shall find that an energy is locked up in everyday life which can move mountains and abolish distances. The long revolution is preparing to write works in the ink of action, works whose unknown or nameless authors will flock to join Sade, Fourier, Babeuf, Marx, Lacenaire. Stirner, Lautréamont, Léhautier, Vaillant, Henry, Villa, Zapata, Makhno, the Communards, the insurrectionaries of Hamburg, Kiel, Kronstadt, Asturias—all those who have not yet played their last card in a game which we have only just joined: the great gamble whose stake is freedom.



Indoctrination and domestication provided by a mission school.

evade criminal prosecution by "protective" juvenile courts in which they have no legal rights. (Juvenile courts are an exposé story in themselves.) It's a dangerous society for people with so little power, so little combative equipment. Kids will get fucked-over. But Bill Pigman said to me recently (and it's hard to take but I think he's right), exploitation is less oppressive than slavery. Because only when kids get free of adults, only when they can get out into the (however exploitative) mainstream of life, can they begin to develop their own authentic relationship to society. No more adult intermediaries.

Kids are beginning to realize the nature and workings of ageist politics. They're discarding adult-defined self-images. They're becoming not quite as manageable. Kids' and Youth Liberation is connecting with black, gay, women's and other liberation movements and in this way adult consciousness about ageism is also being raised. Adult consciousness of ageist politics indicates the necessity to unbecome adults. The "most revolutionary" thing for politically aware adults to do is to leave kids alone.

But most important to the process of Youth Liberation is the kids' awareness and recapture of their own capabilities and self-esteem.

Ageism and sexism are both aspects of the same system—patriarchy. Kids and women have been privatized and oppressed together, in the family, by husbands/fathers. Within the family, the mother is only the agent of patriarchal oppression. But she is an ageist oppressor in her own right too. In struggling out of the family, mothers will still be responsible for their small children/small children will still be dependent on their mothers. Kids' and Women's Liberation are intimately connected. Women

need to be liberated from the burden of responsibility for kids. And kids need to escape the suffocation of omnipresent motherhood. There is solidarity but there's also conflict between Kids' and Women's Liberation.

There also appears to be conflict between Kids'/Youth Liberation and socialism. Youth, in contemporary socialist societies, is better off because everybody is better off. But the political relationship between kids and adults hasn't even been recognized. These societies continue to forcibly sequester youth in schools. The state is still in control and so, very much so, is its counterpart, the family. It remains to be seen whether "socialism" can make it possible for its youngest participants to experience the freedom these revolutions promise.

I called *Ageism* a tangent in *Begin At Start* because I had to go out of my way to talk about it. I had to go out of my way because the political relationship between kids and adults isn't yet generally recognized. But I've recognized this relationship for a long time; to me, it's very much a part of personal/political liberation.

Kids' Liberation has special significance beyond that of other liberatory developments.

Because of their infant dependency and powerlessness, kids can't (entirely) demand their freedom. Neither can freedom be given to them by "enlightened" adults, because what can be given can be taken away. *Kids liberation is a unique barometer of freedom because it will exist only when we create a society that demands it.*

Kids' Liberation will indicate a utopian mentality that has transcended the need for surety and absolutism. It will indicate an approach to (new) life de-

void of pre-conceptions, expectations and inauthentic interest in the lives of other people. *Kids Liberation will indicate universally shared, basic values of spontaneity, intuition, affinity, authenticity and freedom.*

In a society that spontaneously leaves kids alone, people will discover authentic human nature. I hardly expect this discovery to be made in my own lifetime; millennia of strife, domination and alienation will take more than decades to be overcome. But I've made a small discovery of my own which I think is significant—kids' immediacy in comprehensivity. Kids don't require abstraction, category, fragmentation. Contrary to adult hype (adult projection), kids don't fear change or the unusual. When unmolested by imposed (inauthentic) intermediaries, young kids have profoundly accurate perception of detail and of the whole of which the detail is an aspect. This makes kids' responses appropriate and powerful. People need this powerful capability; Kids' Liberation insures it. Kids' Liberation involves having power over one's own life. It involves power never being removed from its source in the individual. *Kids' liberation will liberate the energy of authentic human power* and people will realize in themselves the godliness they've always had an inkling existed.

We can't train, educate or condition kids to be free. We need to leave them alone. We can't wind up with free people. We begin there.

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# Some notes on THE REPRODUCTION OF HUMAN CAPITAL

By Robert Cooperstein

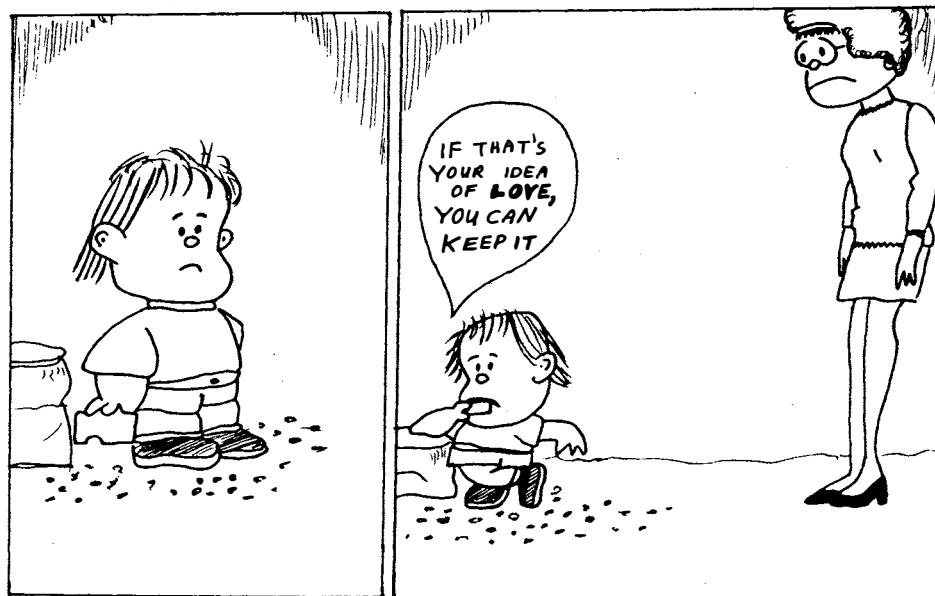
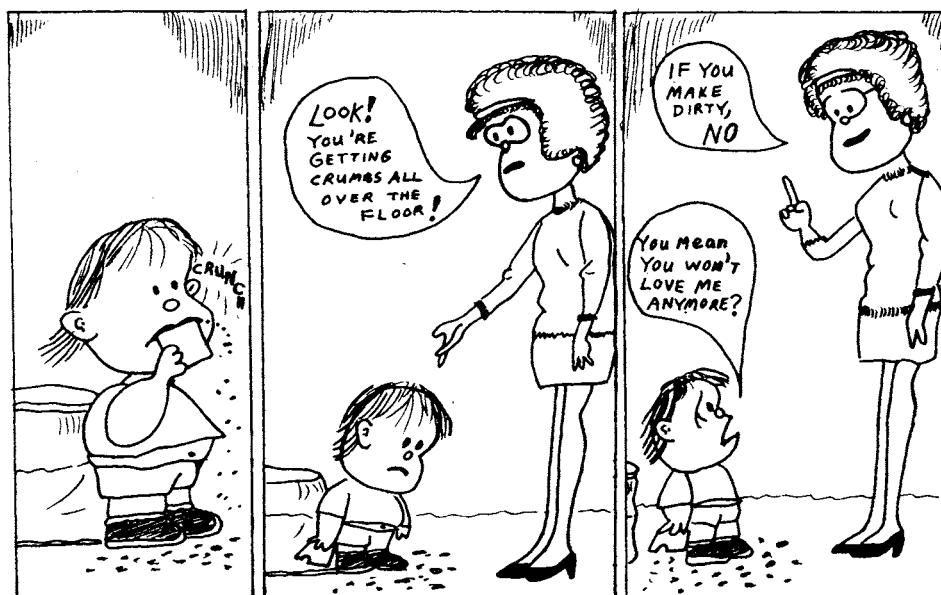
What is truly horrifying about Count Dracula is not that he drains away the blood of his living victims, for that in itself would constitute nought but just another, albeit unusually unsettling, method of murder. If Dracula horrifies, it is because he steals life without killing, transforming his victims by a process of gradual addiction into *undead* predators, into living corpses like himself, who, thus initiated in his vampire army, engage in a total war against the *still-living*.

## Scope and method

The following remarks will pertain for the most part to the child's immediate position within the familial situation, and not to his more extensive relation with the spectacle<sup>1</sup> in its entirety. An expanded critique would consist of an up-to-date account of the family, private property, and the state. Nonetheless, even though he<sup>2</sup> encounters wherever he turns this world's miserable publicity, it makes sense here to focus on family life because it is the mediation through which the child is introduced into the totality, especially in his younger formative years. The family, tentatively defined as any collection of individuals who on a daily basis support and maintain one another in a state of mutual survival, is an essential ingredient of capitalist society. Briefly, it is that first factory of alienation that renders all subsequent degradations possible, while at the same time the sum total of these degradations make the family possible. It must be stressed that the family is not at the center of this process, nor could the capitalist tree be cut down by amputating one of its branches, for it would merely grow back in another form. But while it would be erroneous to base a critique of the totality on one of its details, it would be equally erroneous to neglect it; all of daily life is colonized and all of daily life must be criticized.

The family keeps pace, although usually behind, with all the developments in the production sphere proper, updating its mode of repression in keeping with all the new techniques that work themselves out on every terrain of social life. For example:

1) When the bourgeoisie in the twentieth century reluctantly decides to



abandon direct physical violence in dealing with a rebellious proletariat in favor of more sophisticated forms of thought control, with a time lag the family declares itself opposed to beating their recalcitrant children (morality works better);

2) While capitalism attempts to raise productivity by improving the conditions of work, as part of a larger program to dissimulate any remaining contradictions between leisure time and ordinary work, Montessori-style pre-schools, which improve the efficiency of learning by transforming play into work, come of age;

3) A little bit after the psychologists of industrial relations decree that managers must integrate workers into the organization of their own alienation by granting them a vote in the economic decisions, parents proclaim a "children's liberation front" which announces that "children are people too."

In other words, if the requirements of capital accumulation in the modern epoch give the family both its *modus operandi* and *raison d'être*, then the abolition of the family is just one part of the program to abolish capitalism. Just one part.

## The Dracula effect

Voyer in Reich: *How to Use*<sup>3</sup> shows the functional identity of character structure and value-mediated<sup>4</sup> social relations, which is to demonstrate that character is subjective capital through the use of which the alienated individual produces falsified social relations with others. Since it is an indubitable law of capitalist development that capital must accumulate, growing up in the spectacle requires the progressive intensive and extensive accumulation of character. The vital spontaneity so visi-

bly present in young kids, so much diminished in older ones, and so visibly absent in adults, is the irrefutable proof of it. Growing up is a gradually increasing and forced addiction to value deformation. "Forced" because the dictates of simple self-preservation in the familial cold war obligates the child to adopt the weapons of his enemies who have already mastered the techniques of value warfare; "gradually increasing" because as in any cold war, the maintenance of the balance of power requires an armaments race in which each contestant must continually improve his weapons (the family attains the moment of detente when it substitutes the trading of covert hostilities for the more open attacks, physical or otherwise); "addiction" since the child must swallow ever-enlarged doses of value in order to remain in the same position vis-a-vis his parents, even as it cumulatively drains away his vitality. Value deformation is a remedy which enables the child to bear the illness while aggravating it. It should be remembered that as he comes of age this war of provocations becomes less and less unilateral, which is to say that the child comes to equally characterize his adult masters.

The implements of value warfare, first appropriated in the familial environment, will be found useful later on everywhere, including in the child's relations with his first playmates. Value spreads exponentially.

## The ontogeny of value

Humans had always attributed the characteristics of living beings to inanimate objects, which is to say that for them, *things lived also*. In the current epoch, this primitive animism, like all the old mysticisms, must give way before the new requirements of alienated production. Specifically, it mutates into a developed inanimism: the characteristics of inanimate objects are now attributed to humans, which is to say that *neither do they live*. In other words, the relations of individuals to the others appear not as direct social relations between living individuals, but as what they have become in reality, material relations between persons and social relations between things. The institutionalized ownership of children appears as a particular form of this phenomenon.

\* \* \*

An infant does not (indeed, can not) differentiate himself from the totality; he is all and all is he, he is the subject-



object of his existence. He is also absolutely dependent upon others for even the slightest of his endeavors. The supersession of this situation, the form of which varies according to the form of social production, demands the emergence of consciousness of self (the differentiation of self from exteriority) and with it the beginning of individual autonomy. The infant must become aware of a *relation* to an exteriority with which he had initially experienced only an *identity*. Which means relations with both the individuals and more narrowly defined objects that constitute this exteriority. Hence the moment in which he first enters a conscious *social relation*, usually with his parents or other responsible adults.

In the spectacle, parents *own* children, so that this first social relation takes the form of the *commodity relation*. What could be so evident and yet so sinister with respect to its implications? Later on all thingified social relations will appear to be "natural," and value will seem to be "the human condition." Subjectivity is born *already alienated*; the individual, indeed, comes to separate his being from the totality but only as a separated being—separated because as an object of possession he cannot simultaneously be the subject of his own desires. The alienation of subjectivity can be understood as the process by which an individual is forcibly indoctrinated with the consciousness of self as object, as well as the result of this process. It is no wonder that the infant who experiences the commodity social relation first will *spend* the rest of his life—sincerely or otherwise—trying to "relate" to others. The more persevering will come to criticize spending.

In spectacular ontogeny<sup>4</sup>, the individual never (or only with the most extreme difficulty) supersedes the subject-object identity that he knew as an infant, then natural, now perverted. The only change that occurs on this level is the progressive differentiation (which is an imposed separation) of his own personal-thingness from that of others, each organizing his own particular fragmented totality in which he inhabits his character as a person-thing. He is a subject-object among others. Nor does he supersede his initial condition of absolute dependence upon responsible adults; since growing up entails an ever-expanding introduction into an entire complex of social conditions designed to render the individual passive, learning to "take care of oneself" reduces to moving from a state of absolute dependence on particular adults to a state of absolute dependence upon the generality. Capitalist social life is the vast container in which helpless individuals *circulate* as point-masses in an aimless and endless random Brownian movement, occasionally colliding with either the walls of the container or with each other, only to bounce off and fall victim to a mutual repulsion, because these are the collisions of separate and separated realities.

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And so it comes to pass that even before a kid learns to talk he learns value, so that in the course of his development his behavior must become more and more *exchange-motivated*. Because a thing-possessed must have no internally generated desires which could threaten the jurisdiction of its owners, such independent desires are systemati-

cally deformed into dependent needs; no matter how unconsciously, adults teach value because through it they establish and maintain their *property rights* over a child who, like any *resigned* slave, needs the authority of his masters (fortunately, children rebel also). By means of a Pavlovian procedure (Q: "Mommy, can I have another piece of cake?" A: "What do you say first...") he learns to express himself through the exchange of *his self* in return for another's, while in the same movement spontaneity gives way to premeditated chronicities, passive responses to exterior dictates. After having served their time in the family ("the first factory of alienation") most mature individuals will hardly question the institution of wage-

ously true in the past whenever parents in a state of dire material poverty required the production of humans as a means of capital accumulation, in order to supplement the family income (with respect to industrial child-labor, the condition being that the parents could still extract surplus value from the child even after the capitalist had taken his share; on the farm this did not apply, child-labor was directly exploitable). Furthermore, children could assure economic security later on in the form of a life-long pension to the parents when they would have become economically obsolete. These motivations for human production are still prevalent in the poor countries, and locally in more developed countries.

counseling, family planning centers, etc.);

3) As a trap by means of which one parent can compel the other to form a survival relation in the first place, he having recognized the enormous offensive power of this weapon: child as shared possession, as detailed above;

4) As a vehicle of conspicuous consumption: the attributes of the child (his cuteness, good looks, spontaneity, vitality, precociousness, etc.) are conferred upon the owners, in the same way that money can confer personal wealth upon qualitatively poor people, as detailed by Marx;

5) As a means by which the parents can use self-sacrifice in order to escape the practical task of rectifying otherwise unbearable conditions—that is, parents can realize their own unfulfilled desires vicariously: unwilling to live for themselves, they decide to "live for the children" as a compensatory substitute;

6) As a proof of normality: a childless couple will be thought strange (even in the ecological era where 2.1 children will suffice), and the ownership of a nuclear family is still a vital business asset ("business" must be broadly interpreted since all social life is a business);

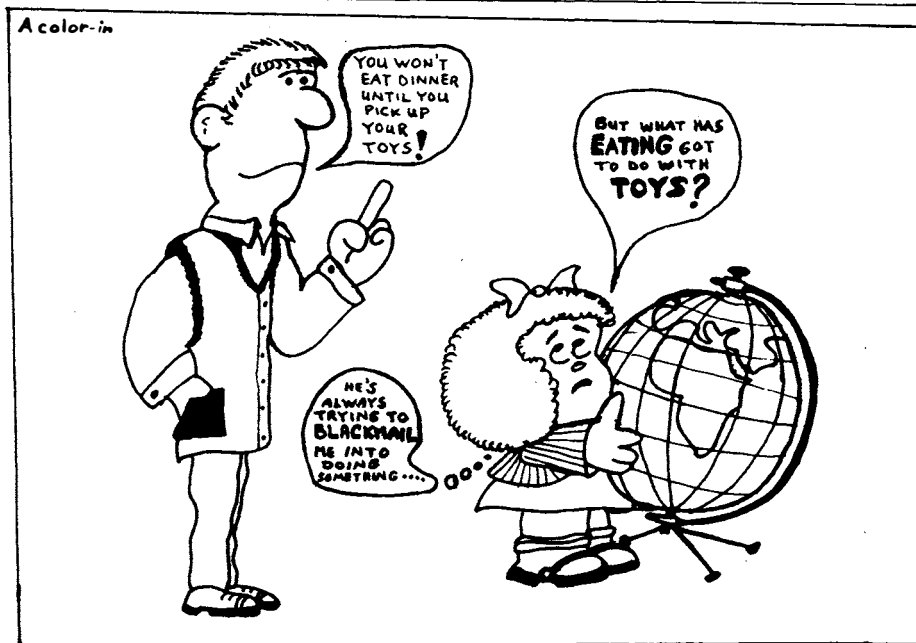
7) As a means by which one can preserve his property in perpetuity, even after death (this is true whether property is defined as material possession proper, which is to say *having*, or as the ownership of an organized appearance, or *appearing*): to the extent you can pass on to him your material wealth and/or character traits, the child eternalizes our existence. (Producing an heir is the spectacular analog of going to heaven. And just as the modern corporation occasionally sacrifices short term profits in return for their long-term security, so the parent bears a child which is expensive in money terms but priceless insofar as it can confer immortality.);

8) As a proof of virility or fertility: those who are creatively sterile and orgasmically impotent can exhibit and consume the child as the *living image* of their potency;

9) As vehicle upon which one who has had his love, care, and affection rejected everywhere else can practice such: the infant cannot reject love if only he can be made absolutely dependent on it—this is the pet syndrome (born of loneliness, children are raised as dogs).

Capitalism has always resolved the contradiction between use-value and exchange-value in favor of the latter. Hence even if humans are not directly-produced for sale in a visible market, their use-value in itself is that of a depository of exchange-value, a subjective money which can buy social recognition, survival, etc., all the returns to human reproduction listed above. Moreover, the slavery of old might reappear, albeit in a more rationalized and humanized form, as the reconstitution of the right to bear a child as a *marketable asset*; the economists have already detailed the plans. Prospective parents are to be issued coupons with which they can either bear children or sell their rights to another couple, which for example is infertile or perhaps desires to produce more than its fair share of 2.1 children per couple. (The social planners find the coupon system by which commodities are rationed in wartime quite suited for turn-

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labor, even if they somehow dislike work. In fact, if growing up means learning value, then a grownup is someone who is old enough to enter the *visible* labor market.

\* \* \*

It's not so much that parents frustrate desires. Not only is a frustrated desire not in itself spectacular, it is the very stuff of which practical creativity is born. They destroy and deform them. The difference is between modifying the exterior to realize one's desires and modifying *them* to realize the exterior.

### The production and consumption of humans

The production of humans differs from almost all other commodity production in that it is still the direct production of use-value. This was obvi-

In the spectacle, direct material necessities only rarely engender the reproduction of children, which nonetheless remains an *economic* decision; here the difference being that the use-values attributed to children take on different forms, often in the sense of developing attitudes formerly possessed in an embryonic form in less wealthy epochs. The following is a list of some of the economic reasons for which humans are produced, or why parents seek to *own* children:

1) As a source of consumable entertainment, like TV;

2) As a shared possession, a kid serves to preserve an otherwise unstable, because miserable, relation between the parents, whose survival instinct compels them to stay together "for the sake of the children" (and of the state as well, which will take any measures necessary to preserve the family: divorce laws, free marriage

# As soon as you're born they make you feel small...

## SELF-DETERMINATION FOR CHILDREN

By Wendy Ayotte

**T**here are and have been places in the world where children are not hit or threatened, where children are welcomed as new members of the community, where they have a place, not separate from but integral to that community, and where differences of size, experience and ability are not grounds for being powerless or unimportant.

Such places are not to be found in Western industrial society, but exist in the ever shrinking margins of what is called civilisation. They are the homes of people who we call "primitives" and their way of life is under threat. The people of the Amazonian rain forests are one such example. Those of you who saw the film "The Emerald Forest" will remember that these forests are being decimated in the interests of local elites and multinationals to make way for "progress" like massive power dams.

The destruction of their home is being accompanied by enforced "civilisation" and all the benefits it brings: disease, alcoholism, poverty, foreign Christian morality. Along with these comes acclimatisation to levels of violence hitherto unknown, let alone imagined, and the idea that wielding power-over-others is natural, human and inevitable. Such violence is internalised as well: self-repression and denial of the body are the other stigmas of civilisation, inseparable from the concepts of sin and guilt.

In the "secular" West we still behave very much in accordance with the Christian idea that children are "born in sin" and must be moulded and tamed into good citizens. If many of us no longer call it sin, it goes by other names like instinct which imply, that without adult discipline and instruction, children would be "wild," selfish and anti-social. I began by referring to cultures where children are not perceived as "demons" to be controlled, in order to raise some questions about children's status in *this* society.

Why are so many of adults' efforts dictated towards control and punishment? Why are children so excluded from public places? Perceived as nuisances and burdens? Why do adults forget so much of the pain and humiliation they endured as children? Why are all the words associated with childhood and youth negative in meaning, synonyms for incomplete, irrational, insignificant, simple-minded, selfish and so on? The phrase "to be treated as a child" clearly means to be ignored,

ishment is still used in many British schools: STOPP, the organisation committed to abolishing it, has recorded many instances of serious assaults on pupils by teachers.

While those 21 and under are excluded from wage councils and working, minors are not protected by minimum

to see the connections between these crimes and the general condition of *all* children's lives. After all, isn't this a "child-centered," "permissive" society? Aren't Western children the best fed and housed, with access to the best educational opportunities and health care?

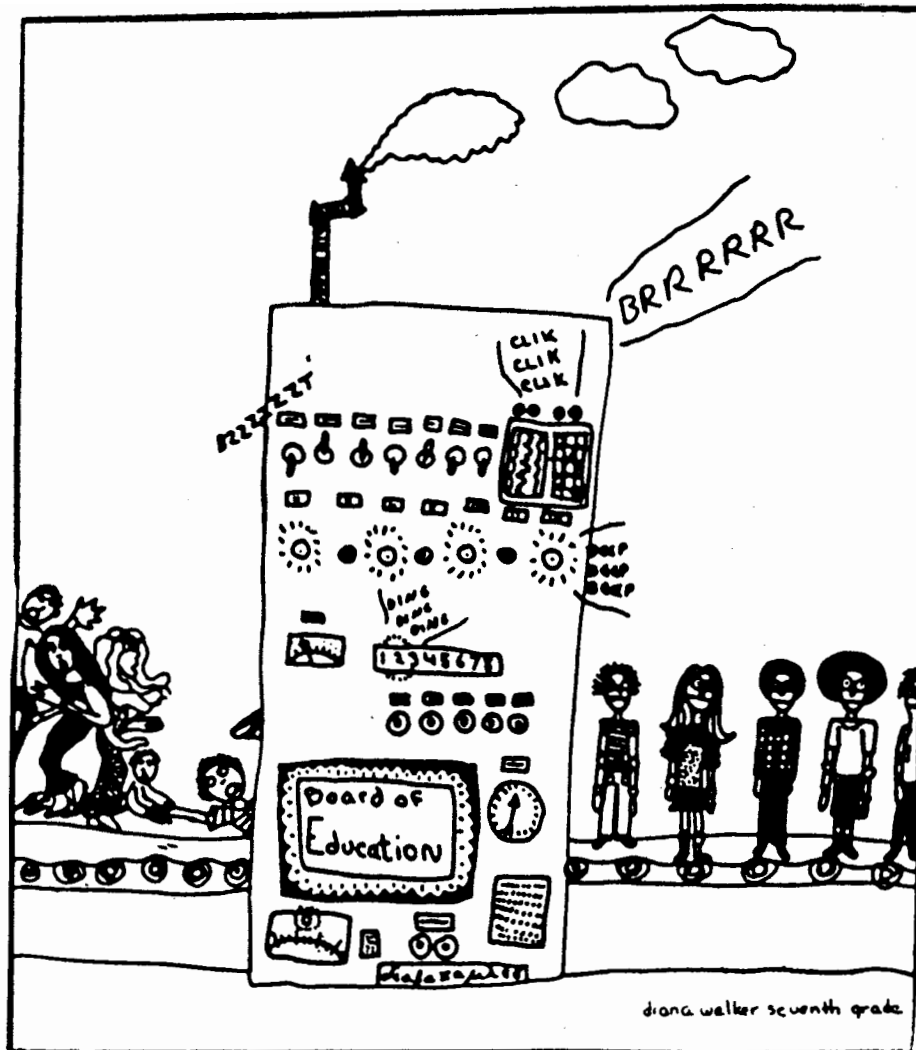
Whether you think these statements are true or not, they do not necessarily mean that our culture likes or respects children, nor that children are content or happy within the environment constructed "for" them.

Any day of the week it is possible to see children being threatened, slapped, insulted, dragged along, pushed resisting into pushchairs, handled like cute dolls or talked about in their presence as though they didn't exist or didn't have feelings. Often there are signs in shops excluding school children and they are generally barred from places where alcohol is sold. It is an unspoken assumption that children can be ignored and overruled, that they should give way, that adults have priority.

It is useful to compare the interactions between adults, to those between children and adults. Adults talk *with* each other, in ways which usually involve respect, equality, being taken seriously. An adult talking with a child is more likely talking *at* or *down* to her/him, and their voice will often assume a patronising or authoritarian tone. Children in the presence of adults can be ignored, told to stop interfering. Children who talk back or just want to engage on an equal level are cheeky, rude, disobedient.

If you believe as I do, that it is the experience of childhood which shapes and limits an individual in decisive ways, then many things are seriously wrong with children's lives today. We all have our first encounter with the world as children yet, for so many adults their childhood experience is vague and piecemeal, summed up by general statements such as a "happy" or "deprived" childhood, as though the experience could be categorised and *put away*. The complexity of feeling and experience is reduced to pat phrases. The first five years is all but lost to memory: a few fragments remain, elusive and shadowy like dreams.

If adults are willing to look at what actually happens to children rather than what is *said* about them: the way they are treated without respect, the expectations that they be obedient, good, manageable, the degrading stereotypes of



By Diana Walker. Reprinted from As Soon As You're Born They Make You Feel Small.

humiliated, patronised, to be seen as less of a person.

It has become cliché to remark on the level of violence in society, in all areas. During the last year in Britain the media has focused on the deaths of many children ranging in age from a few months to their teens. Some were kidnapped, abused and murdered by strangers, while others—and this is by far the greater number, died at the hands of their parents or "carers" (the NSPCC in England estimates as many as 3 children die weekly within the family). Several boys have recently committed suicide while confined to borstals [*reformatories*] practicing the "short, sharp, shock" treatment. Corporal pun-

wage legislation, many employers prefer to hire young people at pay levels on a par with pocket money, rather than salaries. Is it surprising then that more and more young people turn to prostitution? Many of those who have been abused and humiliated at home or "in care" are to be found surviving this way in the streets.

It is still possible to believe that crimes against children are aberrations and name the "villains": psychotic monsters, "subnormal" or deprived parents, perverse teachers and youth workers, lazy social workers, unscrupulous profiteers. By marginalising the evil ones, adults protect themselves from uncomfortable questions and memories, refuse



children which are reflected in language, images, in toys and entertainment—they will find a childhood which is neither "carefree" nor "joyful" but rife with humiliations, lack of recognition and the suppression of creative and sensual drives. If adults were willing to listen to the criticisms, objections and opinions of children, or to their very telling silences, might they not find echoes of their own "lost years"?

And for children, it is perhaps more difficult to question the edifice of childhood; as children, we are painfully dependent on adults and have integrated the values of being good, obedient and child-like. It is so often the only path to approval and survival.

But resistance does occur in small, invisible ways and often collectively, visibly. Such resistances are renamed delinquency, hyper-activity, naughtiness, deviancy; children are sometimes subjected to "treatment" and punishment for these "disorders." These renamings need not blind us, if adults are attentive to both the child within them and the voices of children everywhere.

## Paul's gospel

It is commonly held that when a person becomes an adult, they must "put away childish things" as did Saint Paul when he "became a man." Graduating into adulthood implies, on the one hand, the assumption of a set of characteristics which are not manifested in childhood and, on the other, a rejection of behaviour and desires thought to be childish, i.e., undesirable. The ideal adult is responsible, consistent, rational, controlled, mature, aware of others. They are providers, carers, breadwinners. They possess experience and foresight. They are independent. Children, on the other hand, are associated with a very different image; they are selfish, irrational, irresponsible, immature, dependent and needy.

*Rogel's Thesaurus* cites the following synonyms (words with a similar meaning) for infant, child, youth, etc.: ignorant, incomplete, defective, senile, backward, callow, credulous, unsophisticated, simple-minded, unimportant, trifling and naive. They only positive quality listed was trusting, i.e., being without suspicion. Skill and intelligence are referred to as exceptional, e.g., child prodigy, gifted child.

The word youngster had the following associations: 1) young animals, e.g., puppy 2) smallness, littleness 3) expressions like urchin, brat, little bugger, spoiled, holy terror 4) sexual references to girls: nymphet, virgin, piece, hoyden 5) cutesy words like darling, cherub.

Perhaps dictionary references wouldn't be so significant if everyday language didn't reaffirm them: "don't be so childish," "don't treat me like a child," "how juvenile," "why don't you grow up," etc. To be called childish or adolescent is humiliating and insulting, not only for adults; children also refer to those younger than themselves as "only babies," "just kids." And it is not only verbally that children are portrayed as lacking and insignificant. Visual media and advertising continually project images of children as cute playthings, not to be taken seriously. Political parties, of all colours, exploit the so-called needs of children whom they portray as weak, helpless and in need of *their* intervention. Just look around: t.v., billboards, film, advertising, newspapers.

Where can we see children portrayed as strong, resourceful, caring or intelligent?

## Opposites

The images of child and adult are polar opposites. Where children lack, adults possess; where children are mere trifles, adults are significant. Like all opposition, one does not exist without the other. The concept of femininity doesn't stand by itself; it immediately conjures up that of masculinity; within it is contained the idea of its opposite.

So it is with child and adult. Like all opposition, which only make sense together, they suggest a totality, a unity, which in this case is to be found in the individual. The child becomes the adult; the adult as the child. Together they form a whole human being. Yet what of the rupture, the "putting away of childish things"? How can this be explained? Quite simply by showing it to be, in part, a deception, but one which is constantly reproduced by a social ordering, which maintains separation according to age and adult domination.

The distinctions between adults and children are misleading insofar as they are seen as fixed, as equivalent to a sense of self. The pride of place which our culture grants adults (except the elderly who are often treated like children) is only maintained by the *infantilisation* of children, by the constant insistence that children be something *other* than adults (and vice versa). Children are the absence, the invisible prop which constantly reaffirms the substance of adulthood. This is not to say that it is necessary for adults and children to be *physically* together for this to be true. It is to the *idea* of the child and the *idea* of the adult that I refer, and these are constantly promoted in our culture.

Neither am I saying that real adults and children are coterminous with these ideas, but rather they are symbolic reference points which in part reflect, and in part determine behaviour and real experience.

## Don't feel like an adult

In conversation, numerous adults have told me they don't "feel like adults" all the time. At times they experience feelings of helplessness and humiliation which evoke past childhood experiences, and are in contradiction to the "persona" of the in-control adult. This is interesting to me, because it suggests the realm of the unconscious.

We know that parts of our mental life are normally inaccessible to us. We become aware of the existence of such an unconscious place via dreams and the emerging into consciousness of desires and motivations hitherto inaccessible to us. The existence of this unconscious means that much of what we call the personality is influenced by experiences and needs of which we are unaware, and which stretch back to the very beginning of our individual histories. Thus our "child" experience lives on (as does last year's and yesterday's).

Not only does the unconscious obscure the dividing line between the child and the adult selves, but it throws into doubt notions of a fixed identity. The adults who often feel like children or the children, "mature beyond their years," are not maladjusted: they are simply demonstrating the fluidity of

human identity. While it is true that adult persons in our culture *must* take up the social position or role of adult (unless age or illness is used to infantilise them) this is nonetheless a *limited* truth because individual human subjects never correspond to the category of adult.

Even though the "child" experience which adults carry within them, is normally censored but denied, there are points when they are "allowed" to emerge. Under the influence of alcohol for instance, or in an intimate relationship (where adults can "baby" one another!). Thus we have on the one hand a *social* ordering, determined by age, which prescribes fixed places to both adults and children and, on the other, a sense of self which shifts and changes depending on the circumstances.

## Old for your age

While it remains the case that people below a certain age *must* take up a child's position (i.e. they are legal minors, subject to parental authority, obliged to attend school, etc.) which is socially inferior, children often exhibit "adult" qualities of strength, altruism, independence, and caring. This can be seen in numerous situations—rendered invisible or rejected as "unsuitable"—as when children care for other children, or provide understanding and tolerance for needy adults, or manage on their own.

Of course different criteria and expectations come into play to assess child and adult behaviour; the adult who behaves "childishly" is seen as failing, inadequate. "Childish" serves as an incitement to reassert control, to contain the undesirable emotions.

Children who behave older than their years are seen as overly serious, precocious or "deprived" of the irresponsibility which is supposed to be the "right" of childhood. Or they can be accused of cheekiness, arrogance and put in their place. In this way children are pressed into age-appropriate behaviour. Is it not threatening to see children behave in ways which connote powerfulness, so embedded in our culture is the idea of their powerlessness?

You may now say, "But children and adults *are* different and there are qualities which are valued in children." Both these are true. Amongst the identifiable differences are the critical dependency of babies who alone could not survive, the physical transformations of puberty, the relative lack of experience in many areas. Yet even these differences are by no means absolute. They are critically affected by the environment and assume varying significance.

I have known babies capable of entertaining themselves for long periods and those who could not be alone at all without anxiety. Amongst some African nomadic tribes children walk at 7 months old while in the West the "norm" is one year or more. In Bogota, Colombia, thousands of children survive in groups without adults, while in the West even a 15 year old is not legally entitled to live independently, outside of the family or state institutions.

Clearly differences are relative and difference *is* a fact of life, be it based on age, gender, class, race or whatever. The critical question is how are *certain* differences used to construct and rationalise social inequality. It is not evident to me that differences in size and

experience justify children's inferior status.

The positive qualities, which children allegedly possess include spontaneity, abundance of energy, physicality, lack of self-consciousness, being forgiving and open.

Yet many children, even at an early age, are repressed, inhibited and wary, and in practice adults often *don't* appreciate the positive qualities. They say children are noisy, too boisterous and pose awkward questions. Nonetheless, why is this set of characteristics seen as incompatible with adulthood? Why are they threatening?

Many cultures build on the strengths and attributes of each successive period of life. For them, "putting away childish things" would be anti-social, as it would be for the elderly to be devalued and cast aside. The elderly in Western society are treated similarly to children: patronised, marginalised in "homes", seen as intellectually deficient and burdensome, their feelings and opinions not to be taken seriously. Their skills, experience and knowledge of the past afford *them* no privilege.

By putting into question the categories adult and child we would open up new possibilities for each of us. If we accept that human characteristics cannot be ordered by age and that human identity is far more fluid and variable than the categories admit, we need to look at what maintains the *social* ordering of age. Difference need neither be denied or used as a prop for inequality.

## Getting around

Our physical environment is constructed, by and large, to meet the needs of the "average" sized, able-bodied adult (usually male). Those who are elderly, disabled, or considerably slower, shorter, less strong than this "average," experience, to varying degrees, problems of *mobility, access* and *usage*.

Children, and particularly small children experience all of these. Urban centers, where most of us live, are dominated by traffic which makes it impossible for young children to go outside in the street unaccompanied, and dangerous for older ones who often have no other place to play and congregate. Use of busses and underground [*subway*] is restrictive because of the size of steps, the height of ticket counters, and the crush of crowds in rush hours.

If there is no garden where a small child lives, then she/he is a prisoner inside, unless an adult takes her/him out. It is the way transport and cities are organised which forces children to depend unduly on adults in order to get around, not some inherent attribute of children to travel known routes.

## Made to whose measure?

Access problems are numerous for pre-adolescent children. Were children permitted or able to get around in public, they would find the counter heights of most service points a problem: in post offices, bars, banks, self-service restaurants, supermarkets. Or when purchasing goods, many would be out of reach. Toilets and sinks in public places are adult size. In cinemas and theatres, no provision is made for those whose vision is blocked by those of "average" height.

Continued on next page

## As soon as you're born they make you feel small...

### SELF-DETERMINATION FOR CHILDREN

*Continued from previous page*

At home the problems continue. In the kitchen the counters, cupboards, stove and fridge are all too tall. For children interested in cooking this is discouraging. Even where they are permitted to cook, standing on chairs is precarious and inadequate. As well, baths, toilets and sinks are problematic, as is the height of light switches, window latches and most shelving. Furnishings, especially tables and chairs, are extremely frustrating. Both at home and in public, little if any provision is made for small people.

Size is also a factor in the use of tools and implements. These again are designed for use by "Ms./Mr. Average." They include kitchen utensils and pots, household appliances, tools for all manual skills, for gardening, for bicycle repairs and so on. It is, for example, practically impossible to find a hammer which is the correct size and weight for a child who is under 10 years of age. The hammers and other "tools" made for children are flimsy, ineffectual and not heavy enough.

Clearly, like most toys, they were never meant for "practical use." If a hammer is so hard to find, then anything more complex is in the realm of the impossible, unless of course adults decide that children need a certain item. This is the case with violins which can be purchased as small as 1/16 of the "normal" size. But then of course, it also takes money to buy one.



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### Parent power

The word "authority" may well have its origins in procreation. It derives from the word "author" which means, amongst other things, the person who "originates or gives existence to anything," "she/he who authorises or instigates," "one who begets, a father or ancestor" (Oxford English Dictionary). From this we can see that authority meaning "the power to enforce obedience, the right to command, delegated power," reposes in persons who act, initiate, procreate.

So it is that the parent-child relationship is one of the few, if only, areas where authority is still considered to be "natural" and not contractual. To give life to a new human being also confers considerable power over them. This is confirmed, both legally and socially, as being just and proper. Children are effectively their parents' possessions until they reach majority.

The potential power of parents includes: determining where children live, what they

eat, what they wear, their general appearance, choice of schools, where children go outside of school. They can punish physically, verbally, by withdrawal of privileges, or confinement in bedrooms. They determine pocket money, usually as a favor, and can control monies which children earn or inherit. They can infringe on children's privacy, prohibit friendships and sexual experience.

They can prevent children living elsewhere and get the police to bring them back if they run away. They can label children as delinquents or problem children and force psychiatric or therapeutic "solutions" or confinement in children's "homes." They can foster out when they can't cope and take children back when they feel ready, even after years of absence.

When a runaway child goes to a sympathetic adult, that adult can be charged with kidnapping. Children who run away from home and refuse the punitive alternative of children's homes are forced to live on the streets, where they can be victimised by an array of other exploitative adults. Many of these children end up addicted to drugs or dead, yet it is *illegal* for them to seek out someone they trust.

### State intervention

Parental authority is also transferable to guardians, teachers, and in the case of state intervention, to the courts and their agents, e.g., social workers. Although it is in a sense true that the welfare state weakens parental authority, it can also be seen as an extension of it. The state intervenes when parental authority is seen to break down or be inadequate, or when parental care is thought to be lacking. Thus welfare institutions provide continuity and validation for the idea of authority. Since care is perceived as "knowing what is best for children" or "acting in their best interests," it is not incompatible with authority.

Furthermore, state intervention is normally more systematic and total. The levels of surveillance in children's homes far exceed those possible within the family. Children who are placed in homes because of parental violence or neglect are in effect punished for their own victimisation. Victims of sexual abuse by fathers, usually girls, are regularly removed from their homes and placed in institutions.

### Obedience

Obedience is the flip side of authority, its complement. Obedience is what is expected from children. In no other inter-human relationship is this assumption so uncontested. The "good" child means the compliant and obliging one. This virtue for children is linked to obedience rather than active qualities such as initiative or compassion.

This early training continues to be of relevance in later years, and may explain why adults themselves are obedient in the face of a multitude of authority figures. Obedience is not an act to be shrugged off, but a state of mind. It serves to invalidate individual desires and opinions and to generate guilt. As well it arouses the fear that we might lose the love and approval of those we love and on whom we depend. As children we internalise the values of adult figures and these remain with us.

When adults speak of the "need for discipline" their voices often seem to be coming from somewhere else. When asked why discipline is so necessary they give cliché responses like "children would run wild" or "they must respect their elders."

### Self-regulation

While it's true that children who are normally under adult control and have no experience of self regulation often run wild without concern for others, what of adults who also "let loose"? Alcohol, sex, drugs and sports are all ways in which adults can *permissibly* be self-indulgent, even anti-

social. Might not these voices be those of their *own* childhood experience? After all, adults have all been children; questioning the naturalness of adult power questions not only their present status as adults, but their view of their own past.

Most adults are still trying in some way or another to please their own parents, some of which takes the form of identification with them. This can effectively silence forever the legitimate voice of the child within them. It would appear that adults themselves are still afraid of being bad.

### Legitimate violence

A child is being hit, insulted or dragged along in public. No one intervenes. Such assault is legal, so long as it is "within reason." It is in such situations that the condition of children as property and the power of adults stand out in stark relief. To treat another adult this way would be a criminal offence. It is in public that the privatised nature of children's lives is accentuated. They have no public identity since they are either directly under an adult's control, or assumed to be temporarily removed from it, e.g., school children at lunch time. The family, the school, the playground, the youth club these are the places where children belong.

The family is meant to be a kind of sanctuary from the world, yet the statistics on violence within the family tell a different story.

It would seem that too much is expected from the nuclear family; small and isolated, it is nonetheless expected to provide for the emotional and sexual needs of its members as well as the necessities, i.e., food, shelter etc. Within the family adults can and do control children via a range of emotional, physical, economic and sexual coercions. The intervention of state protectors in extreme cases and the very category of abuse itself as exceptional or distinct, camouflages the abusive nature of adult power.

In other areas of life this power can be named: tyrannical, arbitrary, manipulative. Yet we often hear children described as tyrants and manipulators. Is it really possible to believe that a child, dependent in so many ways on adults can in fact tyrannise them? Children appear to get what they want by manipulating their subordinate status, e.g., by tantrums and rebellion. But they usually pay for these "victories" by feeling guilty or suffering adult resentment.

### The price of respect

To whom can children speak of their pain and suffering, when everything legitimates adult authority, and they fear the loss of adult love and approval? Children not only tolerate an enormous amount from adults, but often assume the blame for their own victimisation. In such a state of isolation they become cut off from feelings of rage, hurt and humiliation. Later as adults they may remember the mistreatment, but are incapable of invoking the feelings.

Thus many adults can laughingly recall incidents which were anything *but* funny. This doesn't mean that the hurt feelings have vanished; on the contrary, they surface in the need to control and punish children in a vain attempt to compensate. Children must respect adults, *regardless*, because adults were not respected as children.

### Minority status

All people under 18 are legal minors. The term itself is an apt description of children's status, meaning "the lesser of two things, species, etc.; comparatively small or unimportant; not to be reckoned amongst the greater or principal individuals of the kind." Being a minor is being less of a person, since you are deprived of a variety of rights and freedoms which are available to major persons.

You cannot live where you want or with-

out parent/guardian; you cannot enter into legal contracts or vote. You cannot hold public office or be protected by minimum wage laws. Under sixteen you cannot work full time, drive or drink, marry, leave school, attend certain films or engage in heterosexual relations. The age of consent for homosexuality is 21 in Britain. Lesbianism is not subject to legislation under British law.

A minor can be legally assaulted by parents, guardians and teachers. The power of parents can extend, as previously mentioned, into a variety of non-legal areas like appearance, friendships, privacy, daily decision making and so on. The sum total of these sanctions result in incredibly galling and artificial limitations for minors, particularly teenagers, and heavy responsibilities for adults.

In theory minors are "not responsible," although in Britain they can be held criminally responsible at 10, and should they fall afoul of adults, they can be subjected to long spells of incarceration in borstals, homes and psychiatric units. Becoming pregnant, being an incest victim or battered child, skipping school, running away, lesbianism/homosexuality are some of the many reasons why minors are institutionalised. These are heavy prices to pay for one's "lack of responsibility."

### Adults as protectors

The idea that adults "know what is best" for young people and that young people must be protected is neither universal, nor historically constant. In many Third World countries, where children's labour is essential to family survival, no one doubts their ability to perform a variety of tasks and to be responsible. In Naples, you can see children as young as 6 working competently as painters, mechanics, etc., and zooming around on mopeds.

Is it their independence and self-reliance which is the "problem" or their lack of resources and opportunities due to poverty, race or gender? It is common for adults to equate children's independence with deprivation. Replacing autonomy, no matter how relative, with dependency, is *not* progressive, but it does satisfy adult needs to see children as helpless and needy. Is there an adult reading this who would deny that they feel gratified every time a child turns to them for help or protection, or asks for money, or permission to do something?

### Protection vs. self-reliance

Protection is never neutral, disinterested or without negative consequences. Sheltering children from the work world has made them totally financially dependent on parents. The daily regime in school reproduces factory discipline. Their bodies, their time and their intellects are monitored by bells, confinement to desks, by exams, grades and punishments, and by teacher surveillance.

Other institutions have arisen to contain those who do not adapt in home or school. With each new outburst of rebellion, there is a cry for more discipline, more specialists. With each new act of brutality against children which comes to light in the press, there is a cry for more protection, more intervention. Is it not time, while keeping in mind the very real vulnerability of children in the current system, to call into question the idea of protection? To ask what has it achieved?

If by protecting children we are making them more dependent and vulnerable to exploitation, then this is not only counter-productive, but hypocritical. When adults think of protecting children, it is always against the danger "out there," against other adults since they themselves know "what is best." We seem incapable of realising that a protector can also be an abuser, a person who does not respect a child's integrity or wishes—in short, *any* adult, be they parent, teacher, stranger or youth worker.

Real protection is *self-protection*. Adults need to work with children to confront dangers and problems, to examine what



resources and rights children need in order to be stronger and more independent. And adults need to look at how *they* benefit from children's dependency.

### Yakety-yak: Talking about children

There's a lot which is said and written about children. It has the quality of speaking about someone who is not there, or worse, someone who is there, but has no voice. Looking at the subject catalogue in a library reveals the magnitude of this speaking about. Experts in a variety of fields have developed theories: psychology, pediatrics, education, psychiatry, psychoanalysis, criminology, linguistics, sociology, and so on. The production of these treatises began in the last 300 years and increased dramatically in this century. Previously, writings about children concerned religious and moral instruction, advice on discipline and the appropriate relationship between parents/teachers and children. For example: "Just as soon as children develop awareness, it is essential to demonstrate to them by word and deed that they must submit to the will of their parents. Obedience requires children to, 1) willingly do as they are told, 2) willingly refrain from doing what is forbidden, and 3) accept the rules made for their sake." (J. Sulzer, 1791)

Such manuals are of course still being produced. Their approach varies from the overtly disciplinarian to the subtly manipulative, but the intent is similar, to mould children in a desired image.

The effect of the theories is rather different. They propose to talk about what a child is: to observe, describe, dissect, to uncover processes of development, of interaction

been adopted for use in nurseries and day-care centers. He is also taught in degree programmes for childcare workers. His ideas, for example, on children's intellectual development are used to structure the activities and materials available to children who attend centers influenced by him. These and other institutions also provide facilities for more research into children's "nature." As well, the theories are popularised for consumption in the home, primarily by mothers.

The theories are often contradictory; what unites them is their treatment of children as objects of study, as creatures who can be known, thus categorised, thus treated "appropriately." They contribute not only to adult views of what constitutes a child, a young person, but also to children's self perception. A two-year-old engaged in an activity which is not "developmentally appropriate," may be told she is "too young" or "too old" to do that, or subtly dissuaded from her efforts.

### School

School is the place where young people spend the bulk of their time. It is the primary institution of childhood. But it is only in this century that schooling has extended to the entire population, for a minimum of 10-11 years in most Western countries. School is the place where childhood is passed; a child over five years of age is a school-child, a student, a pupil. So close are these two identities that those who don't attend, as for instance many gypsy children, are seen as aberrations. What place can there be for them outside school? There is a disturbing feeling that such children are out of adult control. That their time is not being suitably organised for them, and they might "turn

feeling that the more money spent, the better education will become. Where the system fails, it must be adjusted, improved. More and more problems are identified: there are children with learning disabilities, those who are hyperactive, maladjusted, educationally subnormal, and under-achievers. And there are more specialists who intervene around these "problems," more treatments which are developed, like drugs for the "hyperactive."

So much has been invested in the idea of school, psychologically as well as economically, that it seems impossible to address the problem of *schooling* itself. Pre-school children have tremendous amounts of enthusiasm, learn a staggering amount, and acquire many skills. For them, the acquisition of basics like reading, writing and arithmetic should be neither problematic nor lengthy, given the motivation. And yet, it often is problematic, and absurdly time consuming.

### Force fed

What exactly do we mean by learning? Many people believe that if children were not "forced to" they would learn nothing, be lazy and apathetic. This is, in fact, the model of the child or adult whose drive and curiosity have been crushed, rather than stimulated, by school and/or their home environment. Anyone who is or spends time with a young child knows they need no stimulation.

But in school children must follow the adults' agenda. They have no choice but to go, since it is compulsory, and practically no say about what, when or how they study. Tests and exams assess how well they can reproduce facts and ideas which may not interest them and with which they may disagree. In the classroom they must obey the teacher and compete with other students. How can this situation foster real debate and learning? No one can be "taught how to think," or indeed needs to be. They can be given access to information and provided with a supportive atmosphere. They will do the thinking themselves.

### Teach yourself

The numerous experimental schools such as Summerhill (established in England since 1923) of the late 19th and early 20th centuries have consistently discredited the belief that children must be forced to learn. There, children who had not done any formal lessons and decided to pass O or A level requirements were able to achieve this in as little as 2-3 years time.

Those who had not yet learned to read, but had developed a whole range of skills including the musical, mechanical, artistic and athletic, learned to read quickly when this became necessary to gain access to needed information.

What distinguishes many of these alternative schools, is not only the free choice of activity/study and the absence of competition, but the experience of self government and responsibility. At Summerhill, the school is run by a weekly General Assembly of students and teachers. Each person has one vote and the chairperson is normally a student; they range in age from 5-16. Practical decisions are taken, rules established, disagreements are aired and if necessary, punishments are decided upon.

This is hardly "running wild." Rather than waiting for adulthood to be responsible, they are doing it *now*. It is participation in one's community, in the decisions which affect one's life which fosters respect for collective decisions, for others and for one's own worth, not coercion and submission to other people's rules "for your own good."

### Resistance

Children, young people, the world over, are involved in collective and individual acts of resistance, and struggles for change. They are not merely victims who suffer passively,

but people who rebel, subvert and negotiate a space for themselves within their social positions as children. They are participants in many liberation struggles, in campaigns concerning their own particular issues and in relationships with individual adults.

Wherever you find movements for liberation, opposition to colonialism, dictatorship and fascism, you will find children involved from an early age. In the Spanish Civil War they were active and under Franco's regime the legal age of torture was 14. In Nicaragua, the majority of those killed in the fight to topple the Somoza dictatorship were under 20. In Algeria they were message carriers, decoys and ammunition runners.

In Uganda, Eritrea, Guatemala and countless other places you will find them actively involved. In Chile a sit-in by 500 school girls (aged upward from 8 years old) to protest against Pinochet, the dictator, resulted in their mass arrest, detainment and sexual harassment.

In South Africa children and youth are at the very heart of the resistance. In 1976 in Soweto, their protest against the teaching of Afrikaans in their schools, erupted into mass protest against apartheid and thousands of children were killed. Today in South Africa they organise boycotts of schools, of white businesses. In Port Alfred they run street committees which replace the racist municipal organisation. When funerals take place it is they who run about to ensure maximum attendance. They display impressive discipline and organisational skills. Many children cannot return home because they are police targets and must effectively live underground.

Children in South Africa are detained, tortured and murdered *because* they are at the centre of the anti-apartheid movement, not because they are accidental victims of widespread police and army violence.

### On strike

In the autumn of 1985 in Britain students organised a strike to protest against the slave-like conditions of Youth Training Scheme. The response of political leaders was predictably patronising. Neil Kinnock, leader of the Labour Party offered scornful remarks, to the effect that thousands of students were being led by the nose by a handful of labour militants.

Children have been active in the anti-nuclear and peace movements. The post-bomb generation must live with the possibility of no future. In Britain the National Union of Schooling Students has campaigned against corporal punishment and for student participation in the running of schools. The Lesbian and Gay Youth Movement has developed critiques of adult chauvinism; they recognise that sexual freedom for children and youth is conditional upon other changes in children's status. In Germany, a group called the Indianer Kommune run by children and adults extends support to runaways and campaigns for a range of children's rights.

As well, there are many small, "invisible" battles which children fight to preserve their integrity and challenge the limitations/restrictions placed upon their lives.

### Media adulteration

The media normally distorts children's activities and protests. Youth must be seen as helpless and impressionable; the common assumption is that they have been influenced, even brain-washed by adults. This was seen clearly in the recent students' strike in England and is always suggested when children are involved in militant armed resistance.

Many Guatemalan Indian children who have witnessed the torture and death of family and community members decide to join the guerrillas fighting the dictatorship. It is the experience of brutality and injustice which has brought about their commitment to combat the violence. Yet Western jour-

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Reprinted from *As Soon As You're Born They Make You Feel Small*.

with the environment. They have also developed concepts of abnormality and deviancy, disorder and the exceptional. Not only do they suggest that there are truths about children which can be known, but they also establish these "truths" as standards, as signposts of desirable behaviour.

The methods employed by researchers include for example: observation of children through one-way mirrors, without their knowledge, or engaging them in conversations, experiments, and activities from which "knowledge" can be gleaned. How many researchers question current assumptions about children? Or consider the ethics of their methodology? Far from being neutral and objective, as the scientific approach claims, these inquiries are prescriptive and value-full. Imagine how novel it would be to read and hear children's thoughts and opinions not only about themselves, but about adults as well.

Each theory translates into corresponding practices and interventions in real children's lives. These are based on assumptions about children's needs and capabilities derived from the theoretical material. The writings of Jean Piaget, a child psychologist, have

out badly."

Such attitudes reflect the acceptance of children's marginalisation in school as being necessary and inevitable. Yet it has not been so very long since it was commonplace to see children in public places engaged in a variety of activities.

As I said earlier, schools are a very efficient way of monitoring and directing young people's energy and behaviour. They spend long periods seated at desks, their attention focused on a single adult, unable to communicate with each other. They must ask permission even to pee. Bells dictate their movements, even their moments of "liberty" are ordered precisely. Rank and grade predominate: sitting in rows, divided by age, classified by "intelligence" and constantly being assessed by tests, exams and report cards.

This then is the context in which "learning" is to take place. Despite enormous public expenditure for education, more and more students are leaving school, barely literate. There have been swings between liberal and traditional approaches, and currently there are calls from many quarters for more discipline and rigour. There is a

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# Hearts and minds;

## The failure of sex abuse education

By Joel Featherstone  
It is a booming industry. Hundreds of coloring books, audiovisuals, puppet shows, and comics, scores of books, dozens of plays, and an estimated 400-500 curriculae (Plummer, 1986). Much creativity has gone into warning children, in ways that are often entertaining, and sometimes comprehensible, about the dangers of sexual contact with adults.

At the core of this "educational" effort is a concept known as "The Touch Continuum" (Anderson, 1986). The Touch Continuum attempts to teach children to reorganize and define their perceptions of touch into categories of "good touch," "confusing touch," and "bad touch." It also teaches them to act in accordance with a specific "safety" program—for example, to scream "NO!" when experiencing a "bad touch" and to run away. Since teaching anything about sex to prepubescents is controversial, the curriculae do not refer to genitals by their proper names. Euphemisms—such as "your private zone" or "the area covered by a one-piece bathing suit"—abound.

Recent studies have attempted to measure just how well children exposed to abuse education absorb the material, as opposed merely to being entertained by it. According to some researchers, children, especially younger ones, tend not to retain the prevention concepts for any length of time (Plummer, 1984; Ray, 1984); and a considerable percentage do not absorb the concepts in the first place (Conte et al, 1987). The consensus in the literature is that the Touch Continuum is the most difficult prevention concept to teach (Robertson and Wilson-Walker, 1985). In an evaluation of a third grade class shown a slide show about "good" and "bad" touch, Ray and Dietzel (1985) report that the Touch Continuum confused the children and made little long-term impression on them.

Why do even the most intelligent children so often fail to absorb this message of badness and fear in association with all "sexual" touch from adults? It is certainly not due to an absence of victimological zeal. De Young (1988) argues that children's understanding of the Touch Continuum is essential:

*"because of the nature of the sexually abusive [sic] act itself. If it is accomplished gently and without significant threats to the well-being of the child, the sexual touch may feel good; if it is done by a person the child loves, it may not be confusing at all."*

De Young asserts that children under seven can never grasp the concept of uncoerced, pleasurable touch by someone they love and admire being "bad." She cites Piaget (1963), who calls this the "preoperational stage" of cognitive development. Children of this age judge behavior solely by its consequences rather than by the intention of the person judged. Hence, pleasurable touch

with the child's consent by a loving adult is perceived as "good" even if it involves the child's "private zone." No amount of education can solve this "dilemma," warns de Young, who admits having no other solution to offer. She doesn't explain why so many children over the age of seven are baffled by the Touch Continuum as well, such as Ray and Dietzel's (1985) third graders, or the children examined by Conte et al (1985), who included children as old as 10. It doesn't seem to make sense at any age, preoperational or otherwise.

Despite extraordinary efforts to the contrary, there appears to be a persistent tendency for children to view child/adult sex in a manner more consistent with the views of the socially-conscious pedophiles than those of victimologists. Nearly every child will judge a coercive, undesired sexual touch as "bad" even if they haven't been trained to do so (Swan et al, 1985). But victimologists, pedophiles, and children already agree on this issue. The debate over child/adult sex revolves around voluntary, mutually desired relationships, which victimologists claim are categorically impossible. It is precisely in this area that the sex abuse education crusade continues to fail. Children are largely unmoved by warnings about the danger of pleasurable touches with their consent from people they like. Being a kid is tough nowadays—there are too many more important things to worry about.

Here lies the ultimate quandary of the child protection crusaders. Everything appears to be on their side. Public prejudice is on their side. All political parties are on their side (see NAMBLA, 1985). The school boards are on their side (though there have been a few school boards and school board members who have questioned the wisdom of the curriculae). Feminists are generally allied with victimology on this issue, except perhaps those who define themselves as sex radicals (Anonymous, 1988; Califa, 1980; Camilla, 1984; Kelly, 1981; Millet, 1980; Rubin, 1981; Smith, 1986). The scientific community is currently supportive of the curriculae, but only out of sloppy thinking, ideological motivation, or fear of being labeled as "for" child abuse (Kilpatrick, 1987; LaFollette, 1988; Okami, 1988). The executive branch of the federal government and its cash grant dispensing and law enforcement agencies, members of Congress, and the courts support child protection crusaders and their curriculae as well. (The latter in particular have opened up huge gaps in the First amendment through which to launch attacks at the most harmless pedophile publications and nudist magazines, while victimological journals publish crotch shots of preschoolers with impunity (cf. Ricci, 1988). By means of mandatory reporting laws, some state governments have even insured that anyone daring to do a

research study of consenting children in ongoing intergenerational relationships must immediately report such relationships to the authorities under threat of imprisonment.

With so many advantages, what else could an anti-sex crusader need? Just one more thing, as de Young (1988) laments:

*"in cases of 'gentle' molestation [sic] in which there is nonintrusive sexual contact, verbalizations expressing love and care, and no unsettling threats, children will not perceive this type of touch as bad. Further, they will not attribute badness to the offending [sic] person.... Without the ability to judge the touch as bad, the children then have no reason to say 'no,' to run away, and to tell someone."*

Despite their lopsided advantages in all other areas, the one thing victimologists need most is the one thing which eludes them. They have failed to win the hearts and minds of the nation's children.

## Child/adult sex:

### A continuum

By Shaun Perry  
My boyhood neighborhood was a nighttime cruising area for gay men. Often I'd be the target of sexual comments and the occasional grope while walking home after dark. As a result of this treatment I have always been especially sympathetic to women's complaints about sexual harassment. The word "objectified" was not in my vocabulary at that time, but this was exactly how I felt when the men made sucking sounds as I walked past or speculated loudly to one another about the size, shape, odor or flavor of my genitalia.

When I was a young teenaged boy I was raped by a stranger. I was afraid the police would not believe me and that the man would retaliate for telling on him. I was also afraid of my parents' and peers' reactions so I kept my silence. In the 1980s the social climate has changed such that this molester could not operate quite so blatantly. Adults are more likely now to believe a child's complaint of sexual abuse.

When I speak nowadays about my negative early experiences I receive a lot of sympathy and support.

The earliest sexual encounter of my life took place before I had reached puberty. The man, Steve, was known to me and was very respectful and gentle. He made sure that he had my full consent which I willingly gave. The sex consisted of hand/genital contact with me

taking the active role. This was an educational experience for me and one which I look back on with nostalgia.

At age thirteen I became involved with another man, whom I will call Sam, in a relationship which lasted several years. The sex in this case took the form of cuddling/touching and fellatio of me by him. Sam usually initiated the sex but occasionally I did as well. In addition to the sex, Sam and I used to go to concerts and other events. It was nice to have a friend his age who knew so much more about the world and could introduce me to new experiences.

When I speak nowadays about my positive early experiences I receive a lot of hostility and rejection.

Some say that an adult has too much authority over a child for a sexual relationship between them to be valid. I think this is true for adults in positions of formal authority with whom children are forced to deal, but not for adults whom the children seek out on their own. In my case, I could say anything at all to Sam, being smart-alecky and even cruel to him on occasions. He took it all in stride. There wouldn't have been anything he could have done to me to make me obey him, anyhow. I'd had enough of being pushed around, regimented and disciplined by adults in my life. I wouldn't have put up with more of it from him.

Why do so few children talk about



## Some notes on THE REPRODUCTION OF HUMAN CAPITAL

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ing the "population problem" into a population market.) Another more imminent device to ration and control the baby market will be in the form of tax disincentives, the elimination or reduction of child exemptions in income taxes. As always, in short, the legal codification of property rights serves to sanctify pre-existing *de facto* relations of production, in this case, of human reproduction.

\* \* \*

Sometimes parents will desire to produce children for non-economic reasons. Perhaps the possibility of uninhibited play with them, i.e. they "like" kids, but even then this borders on the economic when, perchance, this serves as a compensatory substitute for the inability to play with other individuals, which is to say, the abandonment of the practical task to radicalize existing social conditions. And sometimes, of course, there are bound to be accidents, due to the failure of contraception, or a moral opposition to contraception and/or abortion. In these cases, even though he is not born of economic motivations, the infant will be raised as a commodity anyway.

## The perspective

It will be probably quite difficult to subvert children directly, insofar as their owners determine the entire range of their daily experience, including among their techniques of control an absolute censorship over their choice of comrades and publicity. The critique of the child-as-commodity will come to him primarily through the agency of value-conscious adults, and to the extent that they are able to view their relations with children from the perspective of the totality of capitalized relations of production. A failure on this level, even on the part of those who sincerely want to raise "free" children can only serve to reform the family. It must be reiterated: there is no "good" family *qua* family. Furthermore, the "free" child can only exist as a mental construct so long as the reign of capitalism denies the existence of the free individual, who inhabits this world only as an unrealized possibility. The slogan: "children are people too" must be reappropriated and put in the service of the work of the negative by stripping it of its humanist content, and by those who are willing to begin this task by *practically redefining themselves* as people, which, of course, is not separate from practically opposing the spectacle.

\* \* \*

Ours is the first epoch in human history in which humans are not *obligated* to reproduce, neither due to

directly material economic necessity nor the bygone inseparability of making love and making babies. If they persist in reproducing economically, a particular expression of this epoch's *economic production in general*, that only serves to accentuate the pressing urgency to reinvent the bases of all social relations. The suppression of value entails a global warfare against the *undead*, which will constitute for the more fortunate of them an ordinary *shocking back to life*.

This essay is reprinted from the pamphlet by the same title published in 1974 by the author.

## Editor's Notes:

1. "Spectacle" is used here in the technical sense described by Guy Debord in his *Society of the Spectacle*, available from C.A.L. (POB 1446, Columbia, MO. 65205-1446) for \$4.50 postpaid. Or, for a quick discussion of the concept and its place in liberatory theory, see *As We See It!* available from C.A.L. in return for an SASE.
2. Use of masculine pronouns for gender neutral references is retained from the original text. The *Anarchy* editorial group much prefers usages which better reflect the existence of both sexes, but we have no wish to falsify history by changing author's usages.
3. Copies of Jean Voyer's *Reich: How to Use* may still be available from the Bureau of Public Secrets (POB 1044, Berkeley, CA. 94701).
4. Cooperstein is actually speaking here of exchange value-mediations, however he uses Voyer's somewhat misleading terminology.
5. "Ontogeny" is generally used as a scientific term for the course of development of an individual organism.

positive pedophile experiences? I know I didn't because I would have been punished by the state. A minor can be locked up as a "Status Offender" or a "Person in Need of Supervision" simply for having a sex life, even with an age-peer. The social workers label it "sexually acting out." Also, if an adult is involved, and if the child likes the adult, the child won't want their older friend to go to jail. This is one reason I never told very many of my friends about Sam and told no one at all about Steve. Adults generally don't talk about their positive childhood sexual encounters because such utterances are still very taboo.

Only negative child/adult sex experiences may be spoken about or published these days, (publications such as *Anarchy: A Journal of Desire Armed* being the rare exception). The result is an unrealistic picture in the public mind which equates all pedophilic acts with force or harm. This leads to inappropriate overreactions when a child is discovered to have been willingly engaging in sex with an adult. Such overreactions can cause tremendous amounts of stress, guilt, and psychological upset to the child, especially if he or she is forced to testify against his or her friend in court. The child may lose status with his or her peers and the relationship with the parents can become very strained as well. Yet any symptoms of stress which the child exhibits are attributed entirely to the sex rather than to the ordeal of exposure to society's horrified reactions. If the child insists that he or she likes or loves the adult and consented to the sex, the social worker interprets these statements as proof that the child was sexually traumatized and now suffers from "delusions," "denial," or "identification with the molester." Such children are placed into "therapy" where subtle and no-so-subtle forms of coercion are

brought to bear until the child finally expresses agreement with the therapists' view of the sexual relationship. Once the child has given up his or her own true feelings about the sex and introjected the opinions of the therapists, (or pretended to), he or she is declared to have "integrated the experience" and is released from treatment. Needless to say, I am extremely grateful that I was never "saved" from Sam or Steve. An unwelcome "helping hand" can seem just like a fist!

When a large, strong, sophisticated person engages in erotic contact with a small, weak, naive person, the potential for exploitation is strong. However, this does not necessarily mean that actual exploitation occurred--to find out, further investigation is required, beginning by ascertaining whether or not the child felt abused by the sex. I believe that our culture needs to give a lot more weight to the child's view of a sexual encounter before labeling it abuse. Overbroad definitions of sex abuse diminish the assistance available to the raped and sexually injured young victims who truly want and need such help. My experience has been that child/adult sex forms a continuum with bad experiences at one end, good experiences at the other end, and varying degrees of neutral in between. Sex is sex, love is love, rape is rape, and consent is consent, regardless of the ages of the persons involved. Whether a particular non-violent sexual encounter was degrading or uplifting, oppressive or empowering, or just plain boring, cannot be determined without asking the child. Children should have the right to control their own bodies. Sexual freedom is not just "for adults only."

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## As soon as you're born they make you feel small...

### SELF-DETERMINATION FOR CHILDREN

Continued from page 21

nalists in this and countless other situations speculate about the psychological effects on children who take up arms. They seem to prefer that children suffer the trauma as passive victims rather than respond actively. Again it is the image of the active, self-motivated child which is threatening.

### Children in charge

For adults who wish to work with children in order to question and change the conditions of children's lives, many contradictions arise. Individual adults cannot divest themselves of the social and economic power which adulthood confers on them. It is essential for them to respect the need for children to organise independently, to make their own decisions.

Because of the legal and economic disadvantages which children suffer, adults can be useful in providing support and resources in these areas. Adults must not speak in the place of children. But conflicts are inevitable. Adults can also work at deconstructing and uncovering their own childhood experiences, as well as challenging the attitudes and behaviour of other adults. Breaking down the categories of child and adult is a useful strategy for change.

We need to envision a whole array of strategies which will *empower* children, which will afford a new basis for relationships between adults and children. Equality could incorporate difference rather than the insistence we all be the same before we can have access to the same rights and considerations.

This essay is an edited version of a pamphlet by the same title published in 1986. We asked Wendy Ayotte to edit the main text due to space considerations, and we have omitted copious photos, drawings, quotations, news clippings, etc., which accompany the original text. For a complete copy of the work, send at least \$3.00 to Syndicat des Elèves, c/o Librairie Alternative, 2035 St. Laurent,

## Interrogations for the Human Community

### A contribution to the critique of Marxism and anarchism

Continued from page 25

"production," not "money." If, for want of something better, one could still speak of "production" to signify the human activities devoted to the reproduction of existence, in which our faculties of creation, innovation and transformation would be expressed, the disappearance of exploitation and the abolition of money would signify that production would no longer be determined by the current "necessities" of profitability and competitively (implying wastage and pollution), which are the mutilation of human faculties. This change in the aim would imply an equally profound change in the productive process, in the rediscovery and creation of techniques controlled by humans. People would no longer be subordinated to the realization of production, since they would determine its aims, means and conditions. It would be one of the expressions of their humanity, not stripping people of their other dimensions, such as love, play and dreams.

To conclude, the end of domination, the act of liberation, comes not from things but from humans themselves.

-Gerard

The Interrogations group can be contacted c/o I.S., B.P. 243, 75564 Paris Cedex 12, France.

### ANet/@ Media Net/Anarchist Media Network/@Net/Anarchist Network

is a loosely self-organized, voluntary & international network established to encourage and practice mutual aid, inspiration and support in the conception, production, realization & distribution of anarchist media of all kinds—PRINT, FILM, VIDEO, RADIO, POETICS, MUSIC, COMICS, SOUND RECORDINGS, LIBRARIES & DOCUMENTATION CENTERS, BOOKSTORES & ANARCHIST CENTERS, ETC. Any anarchist-identified project is welcome to join this network by declaring its affiliation (and communicating a version of this notice if possible). No member of the network has any specific obligations to any other members beyond its general adherence to the spirit of this statement as interpreted by that member.

Send an SASE for a copy of our current list of members c/o CAL, POB 1446, Columbia, MO. 65205.

Montréal, Québec H2X 2T3, Canada. Please address any questions or comments about this article to Wendy Ayotte, 1 Osbaldeston Road, London N16, England, and/or to the letters section of *Anarchy*. -Toni Otter.

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# Columns

## *The Iconoclast's Hammer* by Feral Faun

### The anarchist subculture: A critique. Part 2

*"Would it not be an anachronism to cultivate the taste for harbors, certitudes, systems?"*

The structure of the anarchist subculture is largely centered around publishing projects, bookstores, collective living situations and radical activism. These projects and the methods of running them that reproduce the subculture create the methods of anarchist "outreach." What they create in many ways resembles an evangelical religious sect.

Most of the projects that make up the structure of the anarchist subculture are run collectively using a process of consensus decision making. A few are the projects of single individuals occasionally helped out by friends. (On the fringe of the subculture are numerous flyer projects almost all of which are individual projects.) I am putting off a thorough critique of consensus for a later article. For now, let it suffice to point out that the process of consensus does require the subjection of the individual will to the will of the group as a whole and the subjection of the immediate to the mediation of meetings and decision-making processes. It has an inherently conservative bent, because it creates policies that can only be changed if everyone agrees to it. It is an invisible authority to which individuals are subject, which limits the extent to which they question the project in which they are involved or the anarchist subculture.

A large number of anarchists live on their own or with lovers. But many see a collective living arrangement as better, sometimes for as simple a reason as easing everyone's financial burdens (the reason which involves the fewest illusions), but more often to create a living support group situation, to participate more easily in a common project or to "put theory into practice." Having already dealt with support groups, I will only add that living together in a support group will tend to exaggerate all of the insulatory and ideological aspects of support group therapy. A collective living situation can certainly ease some aspects of sharing a common project, from the financial to the trick of getting people together to discuss the project. It can also increase the chances of the project becoming insulatory, feeding on itself, losing necessary critical input. But it is those who claim to be "putting theory into practice" in these living situations who are practicing the highest level of self-deception. Group living situations could possibly be a basis for exploring new ways of relating, but the semi-permanence of such situations tends toward the creation of social roles and structures, and new explorations are not what the households I know of are pursuing. The separation between theory and practice implied by the phrase "putting theory into practice" is evident in the relative sameness of these living situations. Most anarchists believe that there are certain principles that should govern the way people inter-relate. In their living collectives, land trusts and squats, they attempt to live by their principles. Their living situations are not theoretico-practical explorations into new ways of relating, but rather, the submission of individuals to a pre-conceived social structure. These principles are not put to the test in these situations, because the anarchist household is an insulatory situation, a kind of alternative reality in the midst of the world. With the exception of anarchist squats—which do, at least, present a challenge to the authority of landlords and property—these households relate to the world of external authorities in the same way everyone else does: paying their rent (or property tax) and bills, and working or collecting welfare.

These households do little, if anything, toward undermining society, but they offer a structure for people to live in that maintains their *feeling* of rebelliousness and the subculture which gives them a safe place to express this feeling.

The various publishing projects (including periodicals) and bookstores are the main sources of history, theory and information for the anarchist subculture. To some extent, these projects have to plug into the capitalist system and so rarely pretend to be inherently revolutionary. When they are group projects, they are usually run by consensus on the absurd assumption that there is something anarchistic about having to sit through long, boring meetings to work out the details of running a small business or producing a magazine or book. But the aspect of these projects that really bothers me is that they tend to become means of *defining* the framework of thought in the anarchist subculture rather than a provocation to discuss and explore the nature of alienation and domination and how to go about destroying them. To a large extent this lack of provocation is inherent in what is published. Most anarchist publications, whether books or periodicals, are uncritical reprints of old anarchist writings, uncritical histories, rehashing of leftist opinions with a bit of anti-statism thrown in or uncritical modernizations of out-dated anarchist ideas. Such writings reinforce certain standards and models of what it means to be an anarchist without questioning those models. Even those writings which do present a challenge rarely seem to evoke the sort of intelligent, critical discussion that could be part of a stimulating radical praxis. Rather, they are also often taken as a source of standards, models, ways of defining the parameters of revolt. This stems, in part, from the nature of the printed word, which seems to have a permanence about it that is not compatible with the fluid, living nature of thought or discussion. Most readers have trouble seeing through the printed word to the fluidity of thought behind it. So they react as though dealing with something sacred—either worshipping it or desecrating it. Neither reaction pleases me, because both signify that the ideas have been reified, have become commodities in the marketplace of ideas—an image reinforced by the fact that these ideas are mostly to be found for sale in bookstores. Another aspect of anarchist publication is propaganda. This is the advertising side of anarchism—the proof that it is largely just a commodity in the marketplace of ideas. Most anarchist propaganda is an attempt to create an image of anarchism that is attractive to whomever the propaganda is aimed at. Thus, much of this literature seems to be aimed at easing people's minds, at proving that anarchy isn't so extreme, that it doesn't challenge people; it reassures them, showing them that they can continue to have secure, structured lives even after the anarchist revolution. Since most anarchist literature, including this sort, is bought or stolen by anarchists, I wonder if it isn't really an attempt at self-reassurance, and reinforcement of the defining models of the subculture. The structures which make anti-authoritarian literature available could provide a network for challenging discussion aimed at creating and maintaining a truly rebellious praxis, but instead it creates a framework of models and structures for people to follow—the "anarchist principles" to which so many blindly cling—which reinforce the anarchist subculture.

Radical activism is another aspect of the public image of the anarchist subculture, particularly the militant wing. It largely involves participation in leftist demonstrations, though occasionally anarchists will organize their own demonstration on a particular issue. One motive behind much of this activism is to win people over to anarchism. To accomplish this, anarchists must separate themselves as a definable entity and make themselves attractive to those they are trying to convert. At present, most activism seems to be trying to attract youth and, particularly, punk youth. So anarchists tend to be especially loud and rowdy at demonstrations, portraying an image of defiance and showing that anarchists mean "serious business." Since other groups, like the R.C.P., also get rowdy and defiant, anarchist militants have to make the distinction clear by loudly denouncing these

groups and even getting into fights with them—ya kinda have to wonder about these anarchist militants, if their actions are so similar to Maoist hacks, that they have to consciously put out an effort to distinguish themselves. But evangelism isn't the only reason anarchists participate in these rituals of opposition. Many participate because it is the appropriate anarchist thing to do. In their minds, "anarchist" is a role that involves a specific social activity. It is a subspecies of leftist that is rowdier and a bit more violent than most. This allows them to separate anarchy and rebellion from their daily lives. Questions like, "Does this activity help destroy domination, undermine the spectacle and create free life?" are irrelevant since anarchism is by defined participation in militant activities, not by rebellion against everything that stands in the way of our freedom to create for ourselves the lives we desire. As long as one is active in demonstrations in the right way, one is a good anarchist, upholding the image and maintaining the anarchist subculture.

Though some of these structures—especially those dealing with publication—have potential for being part of a truly anarchic challenge to society, the anarchist subculture diverts their energy to maintain and reproduce itself. The subculture offers us "harbors, certitudes, systems," tending to make us cautious, leading us to embrace the known rather than face the adventure of challenging the unknown. So anarchists and anti-authoritarians, thinking themselves rebels, are, in fact, the ones who define the limits of revolt and so recuperate it. The anarchist subculture has undermined anarchy, turned it into another commodity on the ideological marketplace and so made it into another category of society.

(To be continued)

## *A's for Attitude*

### Propaganda and education? Or theatre of everyday life?

In my last column I opened another bag of worms: I claimed to be a propagandist. I also claim to be an educator. And I have no problems with that, because I see that everybody in the world is a propagandist, and an educator, at the same time.

I use the words propaganda and education differently than most: propaganda may be an attempt to influence, and education may be an attempt to help people discover things about the world around them. Neither need involve coercion, dogma or people swallowing what anyone says. Propaganda and education involve throwing ideas out and opening them to investigation. Take for example my last column. The only force I used was forcing ideas into the open. The essay brought up questions: what is propaganda, what is influence and how do we go about changing things, and do we try to change others? I brought out some of my ideas and questions, some of other people's and some that people may have, and I ask, what do you think?

B. Betterlife and I seek to do the same thing: present ideas and perspectives on things around us and ask others what they feel, and what they think. "Why" is the big question. In this way we get our pool of knowledge; we then examine things and sharpen our arguments, then figure out how to live our lives and present these things to others by what we do and what we say. B.'s absolutely opposed to the word propaganda because to her it means a one way street with no exchange. She uses the term "cultural subversion" or "theatre of everyday life." Others have a different concept of what culture or theatre means. Some don't like the word anarchism, because they hate the suffix "-ism." I hate the words spirituality and feminism because they mean something different to me, although people often label a concept I have as feminist or spiritual. Personally, I think this just helps



# Columns

reinforce something I always say: ask people questions. You don't believe in pornography? What do you mean by pornography? You're a feminist? What's that? You're an anarchist? Why do you choose that label? We need this communication and investigation to get down to the basics; words need not tyrannize us.

One could set up a very good argument against words because of this. "Don't tell me you're an anarchist," one might say, "show me what you do." Does this mean that words are hollow unless backed up by action?

I love words (ask anyone). I don't know how many times I've been called verbose. But there's an action behind these words right here on this page; I am making an attempt to communicate and raise questions. And as I write things, (all inspired by my daily conversations and experiences by the way), I think of new ideas, and people share theirs with me. To me that's a lot of action.

## Interrogations for the Human Community

### A contribution to the critique of Marxism and anarchism

I will firstly state that I am situating myself in a communist perspective: that is, in the hope for human community, a world in which relations between human beings would no longer be mediated and represented by structures like the state and symbols like money, which are expressions of human relations implying competition, separation, domination and exploitation.

Generally, adherents of Marxism and anarchism are agreed in explaining the history of humanity, considering that the phenomenon of scarcity appears as the single or at least determinant cause of violence and misery.

The accessible goods and resources exist in limited quantities, insufficient to satisfy the needs and desires of all human beings, who are without choice. Nature's parsimony condemns them to war; scarcity forces their desires to converge upon the same goods, pushing people into rivalries which are certainly regrettable...but basically necessary. Scarcity would therefore appear as a clear and simple concept resting upon the quantity of accessible goods and resources, its "natural" limit being nature's parsimony. By setting up the relationship between this quantity and the breadth of humanity's needs the constraint exercised by scarcity on human activities is established. These needs being defined, on the other hand, as very great, not to say infinite, they form a moving horizon which Progress pursues ceaselessly without ever being able to catch up.

This presupposition of scarcity as an invariant phenomenon with which the human species would always have been confronted allows the responsibility for the phenomenon of scarcity to be projected outside, and also allows the abstraction of the concrete relations between humans, whether these were to rest on cooperation or exploitation. The opposition between needs and scarcity disguises the fact that it is only the expression of social conditions marked by the separation of exploiters and exploited. This amounts to a projection onto humanity's past of a certain type of human behavior which is the result of centuries of domination and, particularly, of artificial or real penury created by the mediation of money in relations between humans. A mediation which by separating the acts of production and consumption, and recomposing them in the market, has formed in us needs corresponding to the demands of the apparatus of production and circulation of goods at a given moment. The impersonal domination of an abstraction, money, has set us in front of the increasingly impor-

tant impossibility of directly producing our lives, for it is always necessary, at one moment or another, to go via money. Human beings have also been led to perceive one another as potential competitors, whose absence of really human relations and activities finds its compensation in the frenzy of consumption of commodities.

At the time when commodity relations were being generalized and nation-states were appearing, various thinkers expressed and justified these upheavals and new divisions by putting forward conceptions in which human beings would be perceived as "naturally" violent and competitive. This "human nature" permitted the justification of the state and money as necessary institutions simultaneously allowing people's destructive instincts to be suppressed, restrained and channelled. In the same realm of ideas, scarcity would produce human violence, this happily being channelled by the development of the economy (capitalism's other name). The competition produced by this development would form a derivative of this violence which would become beneficial, because the development of productive forces would allow the original scarcity to be overcome by allowing humanity to dispose of more and more objects and things.

We all know the old refrain which tells us that the development of forces realized by capital will reach a certain state of contradiction with capitalist relations of production, and this antagonism will allow or favor a social upheaval. Capital would have allowed the creation of an immense productivity allowing humanity to finish with division into social classes, the growth of resources and means from which we "benefit" no longer "necessitating" the mediation of money and appropriation by some people to the detriment of others.

Marxist and anarchist propaganda, through its admiration for the development of productive forces and/or the automation reputed to be liberating us from work, has worshipped at the altar of technological progress. It has thus contributed to the masking of the fact that capital's technological development matches the development of its domination. Against this ignoble "progressivism" it must be declared that it is the relations between human beings which decide what they produce and the means they employ to do so. Today's riches are not human riches but those of capital, ending in human dispossession by the means and/or things which are material expressions of the alienation of human beings. Capitalism being a social system in which commodity relations are generalized, that implies that the search for valorization of money uses any support possible, whether animate, inanimate, material, or immaterial. No matter, the demand being to reduce everything to the level of object, thing, product. For this reason, there is the search for ways of speeding-up the time and reducing the indeterminate part in the production of the product, in order to ensure its interchangeability, to assure the continuation of the process of commodity production, everything having to be submitted to the necessities of the "product." This crazy search always aims at the invention of new "needs," to force submission to new "penuries" and new "lacks" which human beings must fill by accepting the idea of selling themselves to allow themselves to get the money to buy. The only reality in this process is that there is always the tendency to reduce the capacity for initiative, to mutilate human beings' intellectual and bodily faculties.

From manufacture to industrial mechanism, from automation to information and robotics, doesn't one see a cycle rendering people inessential, reducing them to a set of predetermined gestures over which they have no power, even coming to render the simplest relations between them superfluous, all occupied in supervising and controlling an operation which totally escapes them?

The development of productive forces, whose latest avatar is the introduction of new technology, expresses nothing other than the domination of the commodity in its movement of reducing human activity into pure energy output whose results are contemplated by human beings. This development produces neither good, nor community, nor the end of domination, but

solely commodities and our increased submission to abstraction and quantification.

All conceptions glorifying "the liberation of humans by machines," the entire ideology of "Progress," of the development of productive forces leading humanity to an age of leisure, have never contributed to anything other than to banalize, justify and bring acceptance of all the horrors of capital's civilization. In the various currents of Marxism and anarchism it is too often "forgotten" that salaried work or its absence is an activity imposed in the body of a social system where humans are separated. Too often, work has been presented as a "neutral," "natural" activity, certainly sometimes disagreeable...but the generalization of machines will allow the reduction of working time to the benefit of leisure time. One of the origins of these conceptions can be found in Marx for whom, in the domain of production:

*"liberty can only consist in this: the socialized man, the associated workers regulate in a rational way their organic exchanges with nature and force it to submit to their common control, instead of allowing themselves to be dominated by the blind power of these exchanges; and they accomplish them with the least possible effort and in the conditions most suited to their dignity and to their human nature. But this domain is always that of necessity. It is beyond this domain that there begins the flowering of the human power which is its own goal, the true rule of liberty. But this rule can only blossom on the basis of the rule of necessity. The reduction in the working-day is the fundamental condition of this liberation."* (Capital, Vol.3.)

This separation between "necessity" and "liberty" has been reiterated by many who see in the machine of today the means for abolishing work and extending the rule of leisure. Such is truly an important reduction—in relation to Marx's evocation of the sphere of "necessity"—of "conditions the most suited to" human's dignity and nature. In spite of the lies of the "progressivists," this process has reduced the worker (in the sense of the person who works) to a person of docile and obedient hardship following in the actual current evolution supervising and controlling machines. Indeed, it isn't physical effort which kills him or her at age 30, but the absence of activity, monotony and solitude which contribute to his or her cretinization at the same age. And it isn't the Walkman on his ears while he watches the screen which organizes the faculties. The dreams of a society in which imposed activity (work) would be abolished by machines shows the submission to what exists to a very important degree. The incapacity to imagine confrontation with what the humans and things of a mortified civilization exhale is replaced with the fantasy of "machines" liberating us in our place. There is no experience of liberation to be found in such dreams but only the acceptance of the horror compensated by mental mechanisms. As Lewis Mumford said:

*"The idea of abolishing all work, of transferring the hand's abilities, without the spirit's imagination, to the machine (is) only a dream of slavery" and shows "a desperate hope of slavery, but without imagination."* (The Myth of the Machine, Vol.1.)

We must reject this separation between "necessity" and "liberty." The "reign of liberty" to which we aspire cannot base itself on activities in which the flowering of human powers wouldn't be possible. It isn't by placing the greatest possible numbers of machines between ourselves and certain activities that we would accomplish, and be able to have, "free time" allowing us to blossom, but by having the aim of the blossoming of our personalities in all aspects of human activities, and therefore by creating the means which would favor this blossoming.

The abolition of the state and of money and the salariat—as of all forms of domination and commodity relations—are neither slogans nor Sunday discourse, but the hope for a world allowing humans to consciously control their activities, through the relations existing between them and with the rest of nature, implying the creation by humans of new relations determining all other activities. Thus productive activity would no longer be what today is meant by

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# Letters



## Got something to say? Write us!

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!

## Spiritual truths

There are not more than a handful of persons in a boatload with the slightest understanding of revolution, anarchy or true freedom.

Most persons think the state somehow suppresses them and halts their attempts at getting what they want. They have the twisted notion that they should be free to do whatever they want & resent authority. To understand the true foundations of freedom & the choices open to us let's go a little deeper than the usual vision of an intellectual. Let's look to spiritual truths & undistorted history. One of the great historians was the German Rüstö. His monumental *Freedom and Domination* text spanned thousands of years of history & showed an inescapable fact. This fact was simply that no man-made system of government ever endured when freedom of choice laws & ethics were replaced by domination & selfishness. It was as if there was an automatic law at work in the universe which upheld choice & destroyed domination. Civilization after civilization crumbled once the choice of citizens was ignored...or they wanted to embrace domination & get things from others they did not have a right to under the others' choice.

The bounds between free choice & domination are difficult to recognize after years of being under a domination-oriented world. Yet a number of enduring spiritual leaders pinpointed free choice principles in doctrines like the "Golden Rule." "Do unto others..." & grant them their right of choice & your conscience will be clear, some said. Religious texts pointed out that an evil other-dimensional entity was in charge of the systems on our planet & these dominion systems would continue until the needed lessons were absorbed. What did the most ancient records say concerning our lessons & schooling? The typical Hermetic records told of our non-material souls being trapped in matter until we could recognize reality. The "reflection" that we embraced was our allegiance to the dominion perspectives. Once we embraced & granted choice our soul would guide us to inward contentment & eventual immortality. This simple goal of course eluded the majority of persons who clamored for & demanded their freedom. The typical anarchist wanted the freedom to step on someone else's choice & freedom. They wanted the right to freely dominate

others.

The good Christian with visions of making a better world through converting others was simply another self-deluded dominator. The facades were simple to spot & the counterfeits were easily detected once the simple truth could be comprehended. The shocking part is recognizing that very few people or organizations were spiritually what they professed to be.

The great schoolroom of life slowly ground out qualified souls who found out truth the hard way. The world's clever "elite" & domination leaders did their work perfectly, never recognizing that the millions they controlled were willing students as well as slaves. They recognized that the vast majority of persons had little self control & ethics. They felt that their hard-core domination tactics were necessary to upgrading our species & retraining higher civilizations. Paradoxically, the creators' choice system & the planet's dominion systems both aimed at a paradise on earth. They differed simply in the control factors. The graduates of earth's spiritual training would continue in self control & choice while the failures would continue to remain subjugated or choose to eventually lose their spiritual components. By eating of the fruit of knowledge we humans genetically raised a step beyond the instinct level of animals. We were cursed with "choice." We had the right to make our own "heaven" or "hell."

As we come to the end of a recent training cycle, the final choices we make will determine our future for a time beyond time. On your path, you can have clear directions if you can communicate with your soul. Since our souls reject domination principles we only make the contact by embracing the principles of choice. If I can be of assistance in clarifying the truth of such principles feel free to drop a letter & stamp to:

Fry's Incredible Inquiries  
9237 Craver  
Morongo Valley, CA. 92256

## Overestimating desire?

Dear *Anarchy*,

My introduction to your journal was with the March/April 1990 issue, so please forgive me if my questions have previously been addressed in past issues. In the March/April journal Mr. Lev Chernyi, elaborating on the question of "Desire Armed" wrote, "So from the perspective of authority...it is above all necessary to enlist people in the dirty jobs of suppressing their own lives and de-

sires 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?" (p.35)

Mr. Chernyi's views here seem very much like those of the late radical philosopher Herbert Marcuse, who developed much of his theory from an extrapolation of Sigmund Freud's negative analysis of desire (or libido). I think it might be of some interest to discuss Marcuse briefly because if Mr. Chernyi and other Anarchists in fact subscribe to Marcuse's underlying thesis it then becomes valid to ask whether the techno-industrialism of Marcusean thought is also shared by Anarchists. And accepting the premise of Marcuse's "liberated eros" would also, in my opinion, lead one to an obvious cul-de-sac on the question of social and political transformation. Recall that Freud subscribed to the idea that modern civilization is built on the suppression of instinctual gratifications. The antagonism between personal desires and societal demands was fundamental to all of Freud's thought. While Freud considered sublimation (the inhibition of desires) to be absolutely necessary as a precondition to civilization, Marcuse insisted that the repression of desires is only valid within a narrow historical context. Marcuse essentially agreed with Freud's premise of the repressive character of society, but he added a crucial point: that we should see repression as a function of a specific historical organization of society, not as intrinsic to it. "Basic repression was necessary in primitive social organization" in order to utilize human energy in a communally effective way. Advanced industrial society, on the other hand, is predicated on "surplus repression," by which Marcuse meant a set of restrictive moral and social values which are only necessary if some form of social domination and authority is to be perpetuated. In other words, to get us to work hard and produce, capitalist and existing socialist systems repressed the instinct for desire and play, instead keeping us regimented, organized, and disciplined, or so Marcuse argued. He believed that the economy of affluence provided by advanced industrial means of production made repression obsolete though, and the only reason it continues is to act as a kind of mystification to veil relations of power and subordination. He insisted that an authentic uninhibited society, based on post-scarcity abundance, was already possible. Such a society would reduce necessary labor to a minimum and "liberate" the average working-person to live a life of creative leisure, an "eroticizing of the entire culture." Apparently, we'd all be transformed into Michelangelos.

I understand that Marcuse was one of those bizarre manifestations of the Frankfurt School—a Freudian-Marxist. Technology and industrial production, per se, was not anathema to Marcuse's utopia. Now, excuse my parochial understanding of Anarchist philosophy, but am I wrong to assume that the envisaged future Anarchist society

would still be based on post-scarcity abundance? Because technology, and the efficiency principle that accompanies it, is certainly a prerequisite for any society without want. I'm not referring to "artificial wants" that are presumably synonymous with the "Consumer society" to many radicals. Let us overlook the radical-bourgeois-elitism (there is such a thing) inherent in those who contemptuously dismiss the wants of others as "artificial." What I'm talking about in a society without want, is one where poverty and unredeemed exploitative labor are relegated to history books. Is that utopian also? Presumably such a society would utilize industrial automation (to free humans from unnecessary manual labor), solar energy technology (to decentralize utilities thereby rendering P.G.&E. and ConEd. obsolete), creating a comprehensive mass public-transportation system (as opposed to the present wasteful and atomized methods of individual transport), providing free prefabricated condominium housing (which doesn't require massive timber depletions of today); there are many other innovative uses of technology all of which require an advanced post-industrial infrastructure.

Marcuse argued that we do not need to presume that an advanced industrial-based egalitarian society would in any way require the existing work ethos. The base is, in itself, so potentially productive that we can relax and let technology support us—rather than we continuing to support an elite corporate structure as today. This in any case was Marcuse's essential theory. How much of his utopian abstractions were grounded in reality is problematical. I can nevertheless sympathize with his social philosophic vision, no doubt Mr. Chernyi and other Anarchists do also. So my question first of all is, where does technology fit into the Anarchist conception of human community? Is it to be dismantled as the Luddites wanted? Or only decentralized à la Schumacher's "small is beautiful"? Technology and industrial production are forces for both human good or evil. Contrary to what anti-technologists like Jacques Ellul and others have argued, technology is not a "thing" controlling man, it is a neutral methodology which we then apply to constructive or destructive purposes. Certainly, as Murray Bookchin has pointed out, unlimited industrial growth (the prevailing world-view) is ultimately detrimental to mankind and to Gaia, but that does not translate into an indictment of technology itself. I would be very interested to know an Anarchist perspective on technology's connection to the "liberation of desire"?

Secondly, is it not possible that Mr. Chernyi is overestimating the significance that he attaches to desire? Apparently Mr. Chernyi is implying, and please correct me if I'm wrong, that unrepressed desire is intrinsically anti-bourgeois. But it seems to me that what modern capitalist societies have accomplished is the virtual incorporation of this formerly repressed impulse into a technique that nowadays reinforces socialization, a complete

reversal of Freudian theory that unrestrained desire was antagonistic to society. Mr. Chernyi is overlooking the fact that one of the reasons for modern capitalism's resiliency is its ability to reconcile antagonisms and co-opt potentially subversive drives into a liberal status quo. In this age of material abundance, not only is sexual desire and recreations indulged, it is impressed upon the mass consciousness and thereby creates new markets. The ethos of self-indulgence urges people to gratify their desires to be narcissistic (an "oppressed" people certainly cannot struggle and be selfish simultaneously), so for example, sexual permissiveness, becomes a natural accompaniment to materialism and consumption. Since the combination of modern technology and liberalization of mores in contemporary culture does not require renunciation of desires to assure productivity, inhibitions of desires are not insisted upon at all. Hugh Hefner is as much a product of our society (and producer) as Lee Iacocca is. Marcuse himself, in his later writings, recognized this. He conceded that desublimation of desires had occurred but, in his opinion, the forms in which it manifests itself are as repressive as earlier sublimation was because people are satisfying their desires in a "one-dimensional non-creative" manner (abstract as that notion is). He rationalized the new freedoms as "repressive de-sublimation," that is, the sexual and recreational liberty of modern society was actually a subtle instrument of continued domination.

I think to recognize that the consumer culture co-opts or incorporates previously rebellious impulses is to state a fact. But to maintain, as Marcuse later did, that this is further proof of domination is to refine one's critique to the point where it loses contact with the common-sense of everyday people. Similarly, to argue that the liberation of desire means that half the battle to "overthrow the modern forms of slavery would already be won," suggests to me that Anarchists don't really know what they want, and if they knew, they're not conveying the idea very well to everyday people. So when average folks hear Mr. Chernyi saying that unrepressed desire puts us on the path to liberation, it causes more ambiguity than illumination because that notion doesn't correspond to their perceptions of society.

Robert Yamada, Seaside, CA.

## Lev comments: Impoverished vision

Thanks for writing and expressing your concerns. However, as your (slight) reservations in offering your analysis indicate, you have taken on some mighty tenuous assumptions. The fact that they have little to do with my own views invalidates most of your arguments—at least so far as your criticisms of the perspective put forth in this paper are concerned. But let me give you a better idea of where we stand.

In the first place, I do not identify with the work of Herbert Marcuse—one of the weaker of the Frankfurt School theorists. (And I have substantial criticisms of the others as



Like most anarchists, I suspect, we feel that **all** repression is "surplus repression" and that repression has always been "obsolete" for anyone who has desired to live freely. But more fundamentally, we have a great respect for the importance of personal and social integrity to our lives. Before people can be very free, they must achieve some sort of self-integration. In a relatively free society (e.g. "primitive communities") this is a fairly "natural" occurrence; in our own extremely administered and slavish society, unfortunately, it is rare. Social alienation and alienation from nature are so taken-for-granted, that even many anarchists overlook the fundamental importance of overcoming such alienation, or the implications of this kind of struggle. So it isn't too surprising that, in the absence of any wholeness or integrity in personal and community life, people do allow themselves to be treated as machines (or "human resources" in the language of the administrators). Many even come to see **themselves** as no more than machinery in the service of whichever gods they end up serving. That the "ethos" of **narrowly-conceived** "self-

**Continued on next page**



# Letters

## Lev Comments:

### Impoverished vision

Continued from previous page

indulgence" (of an imaginary isolated ego) helps preserve the status quo by allowing at least minimal gratification of people's repressed desires, is hardly a reason for condemning unrestrained desire. And it's certainly no reason to imagine that with genuinely unrestrained desires all people could ever want is available to them under capitalism (for a price, of course). What a pathetic view of humanity this would be!

With regard to the question of technology, we don't fawn over Marcuse's "techno-industrialism," nor are we overly fond of Bookchin's "post-scarcity" formulation. The neo-Marxist perspective which still insists on characterizing capitalism (or in this case capitalist industrialism) as a "progressive force" necessary in order for humanity to achieve a utopian, post-industrial communist order (always at some later date) remains an obscene justification for every historical and current repression. Unlike Freud or Marcuse (or any other theorist of authoritarian systems) we do not subscribe to the dogma that "basic repression" either is or was "necessary in 'primitive social organization'" or in the contemporary world. Nor do we salute the technocratic illusion that "technology, and the efficiency principle that accompanies it, is certainly a prerequisite for any society without want"! That technology is "neutral" would seem to be a belief unsupported by any evidence—although some people do make the lesser claim that science is neutral. Can anyone say that, for example, the automobile is an example of a "neutral" technology. Do the factories, mines, assembly-line labor, petroleum exploitation, urban destruction, anti-ecological suburban development, mass industrial-scale maiming and death, etc. provided by the adoption of auto-technology possess only neutral implications? I would suggest that you obtain some back issues of our sister paper, the *Fifth Estate* (POB 02548, Detroit, MI. 48202), where some of the myths of "primitive society" and of the necessity for modern "technology" have been exposed in detail. See also John Zerzan's *Elements of Refusal*, or Fredy Perlman's *Against His-story, Against Leviathan*, or John Zerzan & Alice Carnes' *Questioning Technology*.

Of course, it would be a mistake for you to believe that all anarchists think alike on just about any question except for their general antipathy towards authority, the state, and social repression. Anarchy is a generic term denoting only the absence of government, though it is pregnant with possibilities. The position of this particular publication, as reflected in its subtitle, is only one among several prevalent perspectives within the anarchist movement as a whole. Yet I would hope that most anarchists would agree with me that your capitulation to the dictatorship of "common sense" only means that you've given up the possibility of resistance even before you've started. Any sort of radical change necessarily will always appear as nonsensical to all those who have been more or less successfully

integrated into the structures of authority and industrial technology. The trick is to help those who are ready to question their integration into a megamachine which is destroying not only their own lives, but the lives of everyone on the face of this planet, along with the human and ecological communities which support this life. If this type of critique "loses contact with the common sense of everyday people" one can hardly blame the critique for failing to interrupt the self-obliteration of these "everyday people." The point must be to both sharpen the critique to make it more easily accessible at the same time as one encourages people to reach towards an understanding of critical theory. The only real alternative—which seems to be what you're suggesting—is to give up.

### Critical theory

Hello Lev,

Here's some ranting which I don't know if you can use or not.

Critical theory is a project to revive an area for continental philosophy against a rampant materialism, empiricism, and pragmatism and other things. People whether they are conscious of it or not, have a set of assumptions that society has in place that are the preconditions for action. These assumptions exist in consciousness. They are a result of institutions, product "culture" and social and physical pressure. In order for there to be any kind of change these assumptions must be replaced with something else. The goal of critical theory is to fill in the gap. Another part is to see society as a whole including the worst end of the deal. By seeing the whole and knowing how it works, people are in a better position to undermine it and also know what to keep and what to throw out.

The value of something depends on the ends. What do people really need and want? From my reading of critical theory it is a process for dealing with the problem of social injustice. Critical theory doesn't seem to answer the question about the ends so in some way it lacks quite a bit, yet maybe the process determines the end? It is also a way of defining what your position is in relation to the dominant reality and how you deal it. It also comes out of a specific historical and social context. How relevant that is for this time and place is also important.

Karen Eliot, Madison, WI.

### Drug wars

Dear *Anarchy* and Lev,

The CIA, an organization known to have been involved in drug running, was formerly directed by George Bush. Could it really be such a coincidence that Bush, as president, has now embarked on a "Drug War" calculated to drive up drug prices (and hence drug profits) for drug smugglers such as Bush's former underlings?

How many people have noticed yet how Bush's "Drug War" contributes to the crisis of global warming? In the past 50 years since hemp cultivation was prohibited (because one of its hundreds

of products was marijuana) we have cut down half of the Earth's trees because hemp prohibition forces the continued felling of trees for paper. Every tree removes carbon dioxide, a "greenhouse gas," from the air, and incorporates this carbon into its woody trunk and stems. Hemp, however, is superior to trees for manufacture of paper and many other products. Hemp can produce every grade of paper at one-fourth the cost and one-fifth the pollution of using trees: textiles from fine lace to heavy canvas and rope, thousands of consumer products now made with petrochemicals, and an essentially inexhaustible supply of high-quality protein. The prohibition against drugs was already an environmental disaster even before aerial spraying of hemp and coca fields with massive amounts of deadly herbicides. Anyone interested in more information on the environmental benefits of hemp should write to the California Marijuana/Hemp Initiative, 5632 Van Nuys Blvd. #210, Van Nuys, CA. 91401.

S.P. (no city listed by request)

### Do I sound left?

Dear *Anarchy*,

Laure A.'s Orwellian distortion of terms, her commie-paranoia, Soviet-phobia, Russia-bashing, Gorbachev-hating: why not just read the *New York Times* for this kind of stupidity?

Hakim Bey's cop-bashing: why not bring back that old time '60s misdirection of anger away from the capitalists & rightist politicians? Uh-oh, do I sound left?

Some people believe in mutual aid aka brotherly love aka fraternity for spiritual reasons, others for humanist reasons. Does it matter? Can't we cooperate anyway?

Love of nature is not necessarily a bad thing.

Fascism implies capitalist dictatorship. Libertarians, while not nationalistic, are still fascistic. Collectivist dictators, for all their faults, are not fascists. A little uncluttering of the anarchist vocabulary might make conversation slightly less than a complete waste of time.

The snide attitude toward the peasants of the world is also worthy of the *Times* or George Bush.

"As to economic conceptions, the Anarchists, in common with all Socialists, of whom they constitute the left wing, maintain that the prevailing system of private ownership in land, & our capitalist production for the sake of profits, represents a monopoly which runs against both the principles of justice & the dictates of utility."

-Prince Peter Kropotkin

Put that in your pipe & smoke it, Comrades. And whose Bible have you been reading?

Yours in Kropotkin,  
E.C., N. Merrick, NY.

### Income augmentation?

C.A.L.,

In #24 (Mar.-Apr.'90) is a letter from J. bemoaning the "rip-off" of paid, but unfulfilled, subscriptions. I've had similar experiences.

In April '90 I sent requests and appropriate sums to: *Anarchy*,

*Zenger*, *APAEros*, *Storm Warning*, *Fifth Estate*, *The Match!*, *Live Wild*, *Shadow*, and *Instead*.

I received responses from all but: *Zenger*, *Storm Warning*, and *Live Wild*—(1/3 of the total requests).

I am asking that you publish these names so as to alert them (and J. and others) to the possibilities of either U.S.P.O. censorship (official or otherwise), or income-augmentation on the part of those local minions of the 800,000 strong postal system. (Some/many of these parasites are very crafty). I employ two Post Offices for this very reason—the most local one here in the Emerald Triangle has a state-wide reputation of being run by a self-styled neo-Christian female fascist slob who does her own selective censoring/filtering. If other victims will send you brief notes of similar experiences, editors otherwise seen as miscreants will be given the opportunity to react (Post Office switch??) and respond.

I realize this scheme makes your pub. the "clearinghouse"—some detail & extra work. If you decide you can do it, my (our) thanks and congratulations for furthering (a) basic human and function(s)—assembly and speech to inform.

Appropriate appreciation, An anarchist, Eureka, CA. Ps. Wishing you continued energy and clear thinking. I am a 57 year old former establishment "executive" deprogrammed. We are, & will be, seeing more enlightened individuals as this Amerikan Empire disintegrates.

[This letter was followed one month later by the following note:]

*Anarchy* greetings,

I wrote you documenting subscriptions paid, but unfulfilled.

Since that writing *Storm Warning*, and *Zenger* have been received.

It appears we all must be patient.

Thanx,

An anarchist, Eureka, CA.

### Lev comments:

#### Allow some time

Those who send for sample issues or subscribe to alternative publications should always realize that many of these publications (like our own) depend on Third Class mail which can be extremely slow and unreliable. The U.S. Post Office openly discriminates against non-mainstream, alternative media by making its requirements for Second Class permits (which are used by mainstream publications) nearly impossible for small, radical publications to fulfill. And it should be remembered that even mainstream publications often take six weeks for delivery.

Beyond this, most truly alternative publications depend exclusively on volunteer labor, and on monetary donations which rarely match the costs involved. Unless you explicitly ask for (and send funds for) First Class mailing in the U.S. or Airmail in other countries, don't be surprised if it takes a couple months or more to receive a sample issue or the first issue of a new subscription. And for quarterly or biannual publications it may well take even longer, especial-

ly when a subscription is to begin with an issue which may not be published for three or four months!

In our own case with *Anarchy*, I've recently run behind in answering requests for sample issues and new subscriptions due to my taking a month off for travel. And in addition, with our unexpected change to a quarterly publication schedule from a bimonthly one, we've undoubtedly disappointed many people who were expecting this issue to appear much earlier. Those who have never published an alternative paper probably don't realize the amount of time and the amount of complexity involved in this type of activity. In most cases I suspect that those involved are doing the best they can to provide timely responses.

### Preying on predators

Dear *Anarchy*,

Oh man I'm not alone. I just got the first copy of your publication. Every page is like you were reading my mind. I do have a more militant view than some of your ass sitting idealists. No Masters, death to anyone who would rule over me and I will quickly pick up The Gun when the call comes. Hell I'll even fire the first shot. The only thing I was put off by was your support of "feminism"—it's just another group trying to dictate their own rhetoric behind the guise of equal pay and respect for women. Which are two things that have to come in our belief.

I'm sending you a poem that I wrote. Am presently in Rahway Prison or East Jersey State Prison as they are trying to downplay the negative of Rahway. Dress up the name not the prison. Like we don't know it's Rahway. I'm here for armed robbery, now get this, of drug dealers. I feel that preying on predators is the only way to feel alive. Predators being drug dealers and organized crime should be fair game besides they got all the cash. If you want to feel alive try it. Back to the poem I wrote it while in the hole for one hundred and five days for not using my earphones. Fuck 'em I got this.

I also want to say don't pay attention to the guy complaining about your advertising in *Une Reader*. It's a good vessel to get the word out. I got it there. Subscriptions are free to prisoners, well please put me on your subscription list. Use this letter and my poem if you please but include my name and number along with the address. I would like to hear from anyone willing to write.

Always,

Jesse Butter S.P.#79197

Lock Bag R

Rahway, NJ. 07065

### Banal omnipresence

Dear *Anarchy*,

How are you guys doin? Hey—I really appreciate the copy of *Anarchy* that you sent...the article by Raoul Vaneigem was particularly illuminating—it's true that a lot of people live lives that are just permeated with inauthenticity (people who are mesmerized by the spectacle, who believe the things that those horrible, foul bureaucrats from hell tell them, who praise







this infernal system which enslaves them, who do things that they don't really even wanna do in order to survive.) The problems of alienation and isolation are even more pronounced in a prison setting. Jean Baudrillard wrote that "Prisons are here to conceal the fact that it is the social in its entirety, in its banal omnipresence, which is carceral." I fully agree—but here there is no dreaming, no touching, no feeling, no caring (all this is done in one's imagination...)—when I attempt to show some other convict that I care for him, he invariably interprets my action(s) as (a) weakness(es).

I am lost in the zen-gray anonymity of this maddening crowd—hordes of human locusts swarming all over each other, but never making meaningful contact. You can print this if you like—I'd like other people to read this because so many of us who are in the penitentiary are totally forgotten.

Yours in freedom,  
T.S., Vacaville, CA.

### Clarification on Bonanno

#### Anarchy,

I would like to respond to the rather slanderous review of Alfredo Bonanno's *From Riot to Insurrection* in the *North American Anarchist Review* #1 (supplement to *Anarchy* #22). Although the reviewer later stated his wish that the review not be published, there hasn't been any clarification of his criticisms of the book. [Note: Not only was this review printed by mistake after the reviewer changed his mind about having it published, but in an additional mistake only a fragment of the review was published at all. We apologize on both counts. We have never seen a copy of this book, and so we have not made any additional comments on it.]

Bonanno does not "construct a future capitalist utopia," as stated in the review, but instead takes patterns that are already well developed and from this presents his analysis: "In the evolution of social contradictions over the past few years, certain tendencies have become so pronounced that they can now be considered as real changes" (from the very first sentence!). The patterns Bonanno is referring to are already well underway; changes in the productive process, displacement of the traditional proletariat, robotics, new technological changes in the workplace, rationalization of productive unites, etc. This is not a "prediction" for the future, as the reviewer goes to such pains to tell us, but a reality that is in place & quickly developing.

Reading the review I am constantly asking myself if I've read the same book as the reviewer, for he continually misrepresents & distorts what is said. Let's look at some of the reviewer's other interpretations: "(Bonanno) constructs a future capitalist utopia. In this post-industrial system a sharp division exists between a privileged yet unhappy working minority and a wretched mass of excluded individuals. The rulers have created a new language and the excluded are ghettoized by their inability to learn or understand this new speech. The eco-crisis has been solved(!)...He (Bonanno) states that the working class is displaced



"Im Ritual Von Sieger Und Verlierer Entzieht Sich Das Wesen, Stumpft Sich Der Sinn."  
Reprinted from *Hotcha!* #67/68 (Urban Gwerder, CH-7243, Switzerland).

and irrelevant...he (Bonanno) refers to the depression of the 1930s being the result of a crisis of overproduction...." Firstly, the "language" Bonanno refers to is that of technology and political-economics. Bonanno clearly states "Here we must not confuse language with 'tongue'...By greatly reducing the utility of the written word, and gradually replacing books & newspapers with images, colours & music, for example, the power structure of tomorrow could construct a language aimed at the excluded alone." Although he states it "could" develop tomorrow, the analysis is derived from developing conditions of today; as a youth of this generation I can clearly see it, where we are continually turning more & more to music, or movies, graphics, etc. & increasingly being incapable of understanding the bureaucratic intricacies of capital & the state... economics, political structures, most people don't even know who their parliamentary representative is, how the law operates, etc. This is a "different language" which many of us are already "excluded" from. As for the eco-crisis being solved, what Bonanno states is that, with a more balanced distribution of productive centres over a territory, ghettos, industrial super-concentration, areas of high-pollution & systematic destruction of the eco-systems, will be reduced: "(Production spread over a territory) allows industrial projects to develop that take account of a better, more balanced distribution of productive centres within a territory, eradicating some of the aspects of social disorder...Capital is now looking forward to an ecological future, opening its arms to the great hotchpotch of environmentalists and becoming a champion of the safeguarding of natural resources, so making the construction seem possible of cities of the future with a 'human face,' socialist or not."

Nowhere can I find a statement in which Bonanno says the working class is "irrelevant": "This (change in production, robotics, pre-eminence of the services sec-

tor, etc.) does not mean that the industrial worker has disappeared or become insignificant; only that it will employ fewer & fewer workers while levels of production remain the same, or even improve." This is one of the most important aspects of the insurrectional project and it's a pity the reviewer simply glossed over this. The main thrust of the book is that the traditional worker has indeed been displaced (not in theory but in practice), & replaced by the technician. What this analysis leads to is that traditional visions of the "great proletarian revolution" with the workers "seizing the means of production" are finished. The displacement of workers in the productive process means they are increasingly incapable of "seizing the means of production," and as well with the rise of technology "workers controlling the means of production" is not only undesirable but against our liberation. What all this demands is a negation of the determinism placed upon workers, & a rejection of the workerist tendencies in anarchism. And this leads us to view revolutionary action in a different setting, the irrational reactions of the excluded, in various forms including riots, etc. are the areas of conflict we should be intervening in & extending, thus the title of the book *From Riot to Insurrection*. The title should not be taken literally either, as it is

only one aspect: "Briefly, we reaffirm that the insurrectionary method can only be applied by informal organisations. These must be capable of establishing, and participating in the functioning of, base structures (mass organisations) whose clear aim is to attack and destroy the objectives set by power, by applying the principles of self-management, permanent struggle and direct action."

I would highly recommend the book, as well as other parts of the insurrectional project which has been developing in Italy & propagated in the magazine *Insurrection* available from Elephant Editions, BM Elephant, London, WC1N 3XX England. I should also like to add that Bonanno, together with Pippo Stasi are currently imprisoned for attempting to rob a jeweller's store in the Italian town of Bergamo, Italy on Feb. 2, '89. It's a sad reflection of the level of internationalism in the N. American anarchist movement, so preoccupied with its own mysticism, that this case has hardly been reported on, never mind any kind of solidarity with the two undertaken. Letters of support & enquiry may be sent to the Elephant Editions address.

G.H.  
c/o *Endless Struggle*  
POB 69601 Stn.K  
Vancouver, B.C.  
V5K 4W7 Canada

### Letters concerning P.A.N.A.L. & Michael Stotts

#### P.A.N.A.L. sincere

Dear *Anarchy*,

This is in response to the two letters that were printed in issue #26 about Mike Stotts. Of course, I have no way of knowing for certain about these peoples' experiences with Mike. I can only relate my own.

I have never met Mike, but

began corresponding with him and talking to him on the phone in early 1989 when he was imprisoned in the federal pen in San Diego. Unless the FBI has gone to unprecedented trouble to give Mike phony documentation of court cases and newspaper articles, it would appear that not only is Mike not an informer, but he has been singled out for abuse by the

prison system because of his beliefs and actions.

This year Mike won an important case in federal court (now being appealed) that put strict limits on the prison's right to open legal mail to Mike. It will serve as a precedent for other prisoners.

Mike has been the prisoner responsible for an extremely useful newspaper, *Behind The Walls*. It is actually published by Ted Beardsley in New York. I highly recommend it as reading material for prisoners and non-prisoners alike. I know many prisoners have found it to be interesting and useful.

I believe Mike is a political prisoner, currently in jail for refusing to cooperate with authorities. He appears to have been railroaded, unfairly convicted of jury tampering in a case where he was being charged with attempted escape.

Maybe it's an elaborate set up of the anarchist movement and particularly anarchist prisoners, but my impression of P.A.N.A.L. and *Behind the Walls* is that the members are sincere and honest.

Please print my full name, not just my initials, as I want people to know where this statement is coming from.

Bill Meyers,  
San Francisco, CA.

### Don't voice allegations without documentation

Dear Lev,

Many greetings from the gulag. I have received *Anarchy* #26 and as always read it with great interest. I hope you are receiving *Prisoners Legal News* OK from our Florida publisher [Note: see the *Alternative Press Review* for a review of *PLN* in this issue]. We have been coming out regularly since issue #2 and are up to #8 as of this writing.

The reason I am writing is because of the allegations you have received concerning Mike Stotts and P.A.N.A.L.

I was one of the first prisoners to receive P.A.N.A.L.'s journal *Behind the Walls*, and have seen it grow from a crudely typed, xeroxed publication with a circulation of 30 to its current well produced zine. I've corresponded with P.A.N.A.L.'s outside coordinator, Ted Beardsley, since its inception. In this time period I think P.A.N.A.L. has done a lot of good and much needed work with regards to prison struggle. Until now I haven't heard anything derogatory about P.A.N.A.L. or its activities.

As to the allegation about Mike Stotts being an informant, I'm a Washington State prisoner and don't know Mike personally. But I've been around long enough to know that there is *always* documentation on a rat's activities. Mr. Falcon states Mr. Stotts led to a friend of his being convicted and sentenced to prison. If this is the case then the friend will have copies of trial transcripts (stamped and with seals from the court reporter) showing this testimony, police reports, newspaper clippings from the bourgeois media, etc.

There is a practice among some prisoners to wrongly hang "snitch" jackets on prisoners they don't

Continued on next page

## Continued from previous page

Dear *Anarchy*,

**Greetings.**

Russellville, AL. 35653

Hi Lev,







I wanted to share some small bits of information re: Michael Stotts—perhaps it will clarify whether or not he is a snitch if it is contradictory to other info you gather.

I read a letter Michael wrote to (I think it was) a publication called the *Merry Mount Messenger* saying he was a prisoner who was losing hope and health and needed some support. I dropped him a note; his reply informed me that mine was his first correspondence with the outside world in many years, that he was the child of an anarchist family that was killed by reactionaries, that he had been arrested for trying to rob banks to bankroll revolutionary struggle of the armed variety, and that as he reached the time of his release he was framed for being a leader of an anarchist conspiracy and was stuck with a bunch more time. He also said most of his time inside he had spent in solitary. We corresponded a couple of times (he was especially pushing for some kind of new legal action around the conspiracy frame-up), then I never heard from him again...I don't know what to think of him...If he is a snitch, it should be made well known, I saw there were people with flyers about him and his case at the S.F. convention.

On a different track, I live on a mountain farm in Eastern Washington, which I would be open to seeing grow into some kind of an anarchist commune. Anyone interested in such could drop me a line.

Take care,  
Breathe  
POB 194  
Carlton, WA. 98814

## Pretty grim

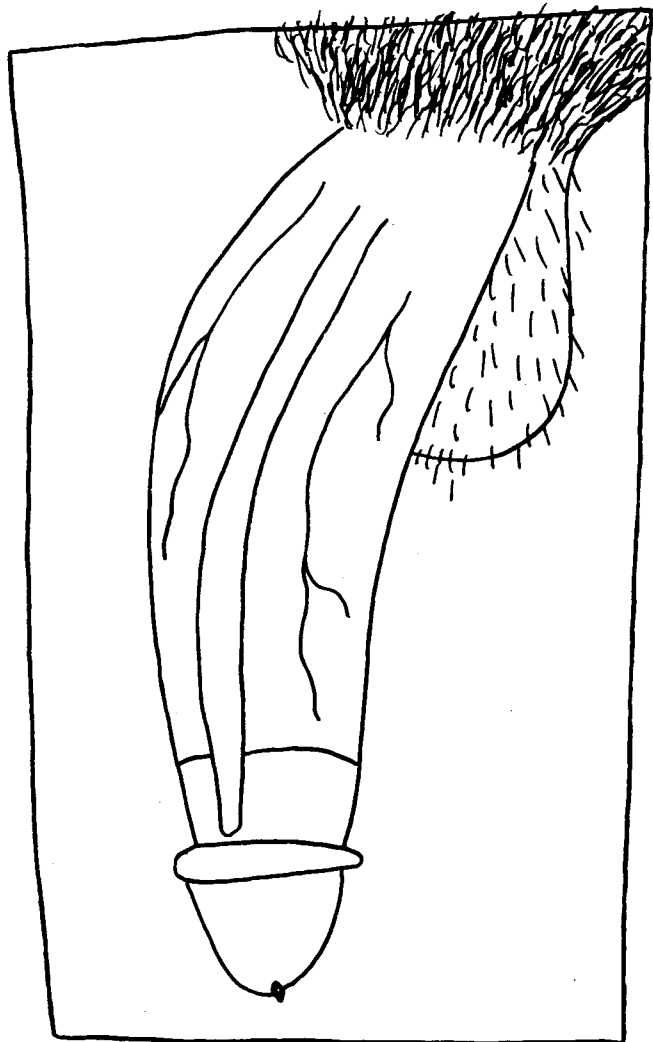
Dear *Anarchy*,

Thanks for the sample copy of *Anarchy*. I was much impressed (issue 24). After reading the letters about the *Love and Rage* paper I was amused to see that sectarianism and infighting is not just a phenomena that is just inherent to the radical left movement in Britain.

Some bad news: the Anarchist Student Network that was set up in Britain last June has promptly collapsed. *Anarchist Student* (which I used to edit) is no more and I can find no-one to take it over (I leave college this June). *Bete Noire*, the Oxford based anarchist student magazine has collapsed. So things here are pretty grim. The trouble is we were too ambitious. We tried to set up some sort of national organization but the local student groups were too small, they often collapsed and the student movement is prone to having a large turnover of members (as most people are only on three year courses). A similar attempt three years ago to set up a national anarchist student network also failed.

I am still writing for other anarchist/leftist magazines and still edit my college magazine, but being one of only 3 anarchists at my college if I write about anarchism too much in my college magazine I tend to get criticized

## The National Well-Endowment for the Arts.



Mr. fish

by the other students.

I was interested to read that most of your contributors are reluctant to have their names printed in anarchist magazines. In Britain we do have an employers' blacklisting organisation (the Economic League), but they are not very effective. Most anarchist groups suspect they are being either watched by MI6 (our CIA or FBI) or have their phones tapped, but there is little direct harassment of anarchists in Britain (despite what you may read in the alternative British magazines, but you should never believe everything you read!). I found it amusing that in America (Land of the Free and all that bullshit) you are more worried about having your names printed than we are over here in Britain. I would appreciate it if you could write me something about political repression/harassment in the U.S. (it doesn't have to be too long) so I can incorporate it into an article about freedom and democracy (or the lack of freedom in a democracy).

Keep up the good work,  
Erik Grigg,  
ex-editor of *Anarchist Student*  
Canterbury, Kent, Britain  
Ps. Have fun burning your flags on June 15th!

## A few comments

@,

Hello, I got issue #24 a while ago already but having thoroughly read its contents by now I have a few comments on it. The Berlin Wall report was interesting, the two art/culture related articles *The*

*Assault on Culture* review and "Boycott cop culture" were both very good, honest and informative & insightful. @ news & the press reviews are always good to read of course. "The politics of AIDS" I was at first hesitant to read because I had a preconceived notion about figures and statistics making it too academic. But the blunt language used was a pleasant surprise (instead of bullshit medical antiseptic terms for specific sexual acts). "Talking to ourselves" was thought provoking, the columns were quite good especially "A's for Attitude" ("The breakdown of sexual roles") and "The cops in our heads." The letter column is always a high point because it's multi-authored. The only part I haven't completely read is the exchange on "the sacred." Some good points are within of course, but when you get into that realm of existence it seems to come down to opinion vs. opinion, throwing heavy conceptual and philosophical terms around on both sides. That's not to say it's not very valid, but that's what I'll read last. Overall a very positive issue with lots of good things to say. As far as "practical info" on detaching oneself to whatever degree from the insanity of modern society and its abstractions that enslave the body and mind is concerned, I agree with the letter that wanted more of this. Practical info to whatever extent is always a plus (although some is common sense).

Keep up the good work!  
Strange creature  
Somewhere in Illinois

## Comments on letters

Greetings *Anarchy*,

...So I was writing to...comment on a few of the letters I read in your #24/Mar.-April '90 issue. Referring to the letter from A.F.-R.O.D.I.S.I.A.C., ooh-a-roo states: "Some forward thinkers, notably Bookchin and Bradford (etc.), still talk about a hole in the ozone layer, when it's been accepted for a while that this is all a scam and that there isn't even an ozone layer." My question is who has accepted it and who is putting out these "facts"? This is the first time I've been exposed to this theory. I was wondering if it could be further elaborated on.

Issue number two has to do with young people. I for one have never read anything by Wilhelm Reich or the Lavender Panthers of Discordia. You see the prison bureaucracy takes it upon itself to censor the mail. After contemplating the issue of children's sexuality for a while, I came up with the conclusion that as long as there is primary consent without coercion, then damn the torpedoes. Maybe it's the element I am in, but most people here tend to agree that as long as it's not forced and that the person agrees to what is going on then it is all right. All the rhetoric is fine and good, but what does one do when confronted by a thirteen year old person, passing themselves off as an eighteen year old? Once the actual act of intercourse is or has taken place and they decide to "come clean" and confess their actual age, it is too late. I personally would continue seeing them if they chose that. I am neither a pedophile nor a pederast, but it is hard living in a society that would foist these names on me because of a passing fancy.

My final issue is of the vegetarian/carnivore type. In the prisons that I have been in, meat is served as the main dish, but in such small portions that it really deserves to be called a side dish. When I was outside I was a very heavy carnivore. I actually thought I could never cut down on the consumption of meat, much less stop completely. Now I know better. I usually fill my tray with vegetables, which I eat first of all, then I eat the meat. I learned that technique out of one of those yoga zines. When I get out I want to build a self-sustaining ranch with alternative energy, and the latest low-energy hi-tech. I plan to raise as many different meat animals as possible, without overtaxing the bit of land they will require, but I also plan to raise many diverse crops. I can understand where the vegetarians are coming from, but I've stopped two unproductive habits in this lifetime, (tobacco and alcohol) so I don't foresee any self-denial in the future. Don't misunderstand, I am not a patron of the fast-food kingdom, but I will be very conscious of my behavior upon release.

When I first began studying anarchy I envisioned the freedom that could result. All I want to become is self-sufficient to the nth degree. Most -topias are fantasies, so I expect I will not build any for myself, but if I begin to I expect someone to stop me. Well, I look

forward to meeting some of you in the future, so take care.

In solidarity,  
V.M., Amarillo, TX.

## Desire politics

When I attempt to consider the range of desires that inhabit my mind and body, and perhaps are my mind and body, I eventually come around to sexual desire. I believe that our focus on genital sexuality in this society is overemphasized; it is probably a result of our cultural conditioning that the incredibly broad range of interaction that could be called "sexual" (at the least anything involving the surface of the human body) becomes so focussed on our genitals. In our early and adolescent years, the concepts of genital sexuality and desire become inextricably linked in our minds, and also in how they manifest themselves in our bodies. Our self-images and behavior as children mirror that of the conditioned adults around us; by a process of play/imitation we internalize the codices of condoned social behavior. And because of this, the issue of desire becomes deeply connected to sex and gender roles, and the attendant limitations of behavior imposed by our massive social conditioning. People are forced (by various means) to adhere to sex role behavior and gender stereotypes. This means that what we come to consider as our desires is fraught with the biases of our culture.

This has a direct bearing on what I refer to as "desire politics." I wish to focus on one major aspect of our cultural conditioning and how it affects desire politics. That aspect is sexism, an inherent part of gender role behavior.

Uncovering the desires and feelings that have been buried under the slagheap of Western civilization can take a lot of time and effort, especially when interaction with other humans is involved. It places one on the shaky ground of unexplored territories. Certainly, one good way to access these desires is to create an environment both internal and external that allows one the most space for spontaneity, creativity, and free expression of all that is inside of the individual. This space should be a safe space for all those involved, so that one person is not expressing their desires at the expense of another (to the degree that this is possible given a specific situation).

Those actively practicing desire politics should be aware that expressing their desires with other humans is a two-way event that strongly affects others. I think a lot of people forget this; I think a lot of men especially forget this. Many of the wimmin I have talked to are leery of desire politics because they do not perceive safe space in which to participate freely with others. (Sexist attitudes and behavior denote unsafe space to many wimmin). In other words, desire politics, like most other activities in our world, runs a risk of becoming a one-way male dominated experience when put into action. I think this is directly traceable to the fact that most men

Continued on next page

# Letters

## Desire politics

Continued from previous page

have not come to terms with sexism and the fact that the dominant (patriarchal) ideology has penetrated into all realms of our lives. In a lot of our behavior we unknowingly reflect the patriarchal biases we have grown up with and so we, as men, affect wimmin in ways we may not realize. Most anti-authoritarian wimmin do not want to attempt to interact in a personal and intense way with someone whom they feel is viewing them as an object to act on, rather than as a human being to interact with. This objectification, whether conscious or not, is historically rooted and culturally enforced; it can only be combatted by men and wimmin taking responsibility for their desires and their actions. Many men, even those of the anti-authoritarian variety, have not come to take responsibility for their desires and the effects they have on others. This is something that must be addressed by those seeking the benefits of desire politics (which I think are many).

Another notion that desire politics must rid itself of is the over-importance often placed on breaking taboos. Ridding oneself of the confines of culturally defined behavior can be liberating indeed, but it only takes one so far. One aspect of the whole avant-garde/punk rock/hip-bohemian milieu that disturbs me is the deliberate adoption of attitudes that are offensive to different groups of people merely for shock value (this goes back at least to the futurists and dadaists). A bit of this attitude can definitely be a good thing; it is when people stop thinking about what they do and act largely to shock others that the whole thing becomes meaningless. At that point the person stops acting on their desires and starts performing. Their actions then become determined by the audience, or by the performer's conception of the audience.

Even behavior in us that doesn't fit the positive-valued social criteria imposed on us is affected by the brainwashing of childhood and adolescence. So just because one's actions break taboos does not necessarily mean they are radical or revolutionary. People should not be afraid to express what they feel they want or need to, but they should be aware of just what they are aligning themselves with when they do. Taboos are broken continuously by those in power—it is the hallmark of their privilege.

Just because a desire exists in us does not mean it is "natural" or that it even originated with us. And it doesn't mean that the desire is good (in whatever terms we might define good) or should remain in us. The individual must examine per [Note: "Per" is a non-gender-specific pronoun] behavior, per feelings, and per desires and decide what per wants to have as part of per self and what per wants to be rid of. Some serious self-study must take place in which we examine our behavior, feelings, and beliefs for the trappings of Western culture. And for men in particular, a large part of this process is confronting our sexism. We

must realize that our behavior often reinforces the same old sex and gender role stereotypes, and so participates in the oppression we are trying to end. This, in my mind, runs directly counter to what desire politics proposes to accomplish.

Dee Rail, Philadelphia, PA.

## What excitement

Dear all my @ friends,

I have yet to finish my way through the most recent issue but am finding everything I've read so far of the most compelling/challenging nature. We should all be reaching for the place in our discussion that can be critical yet not judgmental/moralistic. Many thanks to M. Jakubal for his piece

highlighting this ever so present problem in our ranting.

At our recent community concert coffeehouses we've been distributing *Anarchys & FEs* for donation. *Anarchy* has been immensely popular & what excitement to walk into a conversation with strangers & ask what is being discussed & hear "anarchist theory" as the reply. *Fifth Estate* is now taking on regular bookstore hours. The synthesis of a growing political/cultural movement here in the corridor could mean....

Here is the fresh *Fish* for review & for your pleasure. I'll continue to read *Anarchy* at the *FE*, & probably sell some as I staff the new bookstore hours!

A.S., Detroit, MI.

## Another letter on the "Children's Sexuality" issue

### The child is the best judge

Dear C.A.L.,

When I saw the heading, "An incest survivor," on page 36 of issue #26 atop C.A.'s letter I felt myself tighten up inside. "Here we go again," I thought, anticipating a shrill tirade rehashing all of the predictable, standard dogmas. Instead, I was surprised to find C.A. open to the possibility that beneficial adult/child sexual relationships might exist. She is the first "survivor"-identified person I know of to say such a thing. I had sexual contacts of varying durations with a number of adults beginning at the age of 11, most of them positive or neutral in nature, and I would like to assure C.A. that people like me do exist. We are out here. Although I do not agree with a good deal of what she says, I am glad she shared her views with *Anarchy* readers and hope that she continues to do so in the future. I believe that the child is the best judge of whether a sexual relationship with a particular adult is or is not abusive, and favor doing away with age of consent laws. However, C.A.'s willingness to consider perspectives other than her own challenges me to do likewise. I admit that I have no idea what it would be like to be a victim of incest. I was anally raped at age 15. It took me a month or two to deal with the rape and get myself back on track. (I dealt with the experience alone; a sex abuse victims' support group—minus the "survivor" ideology—would have been very helpful for me during that stressful time.)

In addition to the rape, I also suffered lesser degrees of abuse and sexual harassment from men and the occasional women on the street in earlier years, as well as an assault by a man in his home at age 13 or so. However, my parents' home was a haven for me, at least from sexual forms of pressure and abuse. For my abuser to have been my parent would have been inconceivably awful. Rather than being over in a half a minute or half an hour, the abuse would have continued for years and years

and years with no escape. (This would have been doubly onerous if the abuser had been my mother. Young girls who are pressured into sex by their fathers are at least defined as victims, while young boys pressured into sex by their mothers are labeled "mother-fuckers." Hence, the most potent obscenity in the English language is used to blame the child in certain types of incest.) I was fortunate to not suffer C.A.'s fate. Perhaps if I had, I would be as skeptical about positive adult/child experiences as she.

Part of the problem in attempting to discuss adults and children having sexual relations of one kind or another is that the reified categories "adult" and "child" tend to get in the way. When we think "adult" we think "big, strong, sophisticated, independent, wealthy, competent, powerful." When we think "child" we think "small, weak, naïve, dependent, penniless, incompetent, helpless." When we imagine the concept "adult" in a steamy carnal embrace with the concept "child" it seems as if exploitation of the latter by the former is all but inevitable. Similar reasoning must also rule out sex between whites and persons of color, between women and men, between the physically handicapped and the able-bodied, between the elderly and the hale, or between persons of monied and impoverished economic classes. However, concepts do not have sexual relationships with one another—people do.

In my own experience, it was precisely the greater sophistication, financial resources, competence and independence of my adult friend, coupled with his respectful treatment of me, which made our sexual relationship not only non-oppressive but actually empowering. He was the first adult I ever knew who didn't treat me like I was just a stupid kid. He introduced me to all sorts of books and experiences which I would have been very unlikely to learn about from my eighth grade age-peers. His greater maturity enriched our relationship in myriad subtle ways. And of course, he was not my

parent so I was free to leave him whenever I might choose to do so. Restating this point in symbolic terms: an adult's superior strength can crush a child to the ground, true, but it can also lift a child up upon the adult's shoulders so that the child sees farther than s/he has ever seen before.

Another important point about relationships which often gets lost in discussions of adult/child sex is the fact that social or economic power doesn't necessarily always translate into greater power in the relationship. In any affectional relationship, the person who has the most power is the one who needs the relationship the least, i.e. the one who can most easily leave. In many intergenerational cases, my own included, that person is the child. When I had a man wrapped around my little finger, hanging on my every word, fearful of giving offense, and longing for my favor, his size, strength, social status and financial resources seemed to fade into the background, and hardly put me at a disadvantage with him. If he had been my father or mother, though, the picture would have changed drastically. How could I have denied him/her what he/she wanted? What alternative, realistically speaking, would I have had? Dependent children cannot leave their parents, a key point which I believe goes a long way towards helping explain why parent/child incest is nearly always damaging for the child. Parents own children. They even have the legal right to hit them. An extrafamilial adult whom the child visits of his/her own free will for the purposes of carrying on a sexual relationship is quite different than an incestuous relationship in the child's home with a parent or parent surrogate. I believe that incestuous and non-incestuous adult/child relationships are distinct issues which need to be analyzed separately. Hopefully, future discussions in these pages will not conflate the two, as has been the case at times in the past.

Let me close by commending *Anarchy* and *Lev* for providing one of the only public forums in which all sides of these issues may be debated.

Schaun Perry,  
(no city listed by request)

### Bob Black, FE, Ivan Stang & kids' sex

Dear C.A.L. people/Lev,

I'm enclosing \$5 for the time being to help out for the free issues I got quite a while back. I'm sorry I've taken so long to reply; I've been nearly entirely out of any marginals' correspondence, zines, etc. for quite a while.

In my last letter (I think it was in *Anarchy* #16), there are a number of things I wrote that I no longer adhere to, or seem somewhat silly in retrospect. Regarding Bob Black, I wrote my remarks before I found out what had transpired in Boston in his feud with the local zine & marginal people there. In retrospect, while his "permanent" writings are inspiring, his broadsides regarding the whole affair, long forgotten by the par-

ties now, while in spots amusing, are pervaded by a saddening tawdriness. It seems in Black's "Commune of Kings," his woman friend is consigned to the role of hand-maiden. While it is well and good to criticize the excesses of "Wimmin's Nationalism" as displayed by some of the more tendentious adherents of feminism, not to recognize pure, raw male sex fascism puts one back near (if not at) square 1; I recognize this implication in my previous letter and do a self-criticism regarding it. If Bob Black thinks it "incorrect" to do a self-criticism, should I situationistically meta-self-criticize myself in apology to the Mahatma for my original self-criticism which disavows his position? Nosiree Bob! If an X-tian were to claim to support Black rights, yet spouted virulent anti-semitism or homophobia, I would think something very amiss; a similar situation applies to Black's Stirnerite embrace of the most controversial cases as against conformist Babbity. As admirable as his support is, can not one wonder if this is based on solid ground, or driven by an ideological compulsion for the position of greatest controversy, which might evaporate at any given subjective displeasure Black may feel at real or perceived actions by those enjoying such support. There is no balm in Gilead.

I'm glad you printed the letter I sent in. I had sent a letter several years ago to *Fifth Estate*, they did not print it nor give any sort of response. This is equivalent to them stating "We don't have to listen to whatever it is you have to say." At least in APAs such as *The Connection* and the like, if one spouts silliness, one might be stuck by barbed replies from other contributors in the next issue. For a paper not to reply to a communication creates a black hole sucking in meaning. It is an exemplar of the proprietary attitude that if one does not own the printing press, one is not free to speak.

Regarding Stang and SubG: I was able to talk to him a while ago, and found him quite open and without egotistical humbug; certainly more open than his detractors. I feel what he has accomplished is amazing, yet he himself runs the risk of marring his creation by keeping at it too long.

A context in which one is expected to state everything in a funny or ironic way can become oppressive, in the same sense that one where one is not allowed to use irony is oppressive. Having to say everything in irony is like having to say everything in Pig Latin. In his latest issue of the *Stark Fist*, Stang himself seems to recognize this; in his serious but fairly well-written article "How I finally learned to hate the bomb" he states that merely being "hip," but being aloof is futile, and applies this to the SubG cult as well.

Although I never got a copy/- wasn't aware of it until after, I am very glad you published the children's sexuality issue. This is the issue that separates the "sheep" from the "goats," as it were. I know the "R. of El Segundo" sent a hate tirade to the publisher of an important zine because he had stated that he supports lowering the age of consent. "R." stated that







he would stomp said publisher if he caught him molesting any child, notwithstanding the fact that M.G. (the zine publisher) is happily married. I have read in perusings of zines "R." refer to others as being "homophobic." I find it droll how "political correctness" and Jeri Fallwell type idiocy can coexist under the same roof—it seems "political correctness" in this instance is merely a word game to be played in the pages of various zines.

The so-called concern for the well-being of children spouted by all manner of conformists has little, if anything to do with their actual well-being. In medieval times, rape was considered a crime against the father of the daughter if the daughter was raped: it is the father who was considered to be deprived of possessory interest in his daughter's "purity." Likewise, children are not considered to have rights to their own personal integrity; the "purity" so zealously protected is not for the sake of the child, but is a property value belonging to the ephemeral spook "society."

Recently at a certain children's development center, or such, in New York state, a number of children were hauled into court for "playing doctor" with each other. It seems, that since children cannot legally give consent, it follows that the children were committing "child molestation" on each other. The logical extension of this is that if a boy is caught committing "self-abuse," he is thereby committing "child molestation" on himself!

If someone who is "overage" and a child are caught committing an act of "indecent touching," even if it is with full consent of the child, the "powers that be" allow the expression of self-righteous wrath from crack-smoking daddies who beat their children and spend the family's rent and food money on crack, and would be perfectly willing to allow such persons to form vigilante groups to go after "molesters."

S.G. of Portland, OR. in his letter in *Anarchy* #23 just barely grazes on some valid points by accident, without developing them. In this society, which is permeated with coercion, it is indeed difficult to define what is consent, when children do not have basic rights. While children as a group lack basic human rights, and can be subject to continual harassment, those who are skilled at being bullying, cunning and domineering can get away with inflicting quite a bit of duress on others, often other children deemed "uncoordinated." Such kids, in the atmosphere of the present society, have a virtual power of "lettres de cachet," especially against adults that are socially weak and/or isolated: all such a youth need do is merely hint that something is amiss, for the target to be put in a no-win situation.

S.G. writes that "Nurturing touching means hugs and embraces and excludes fondling and caressing erotically...." Yet it is the present emotional plague that makes people terrified of the very act of hugging and embracing, especially if one is socially isolated and not adept at parroting the

chatter of the banality that passes for normalcy. I would venture to say that people as an entire group, but especially children, have been more damaged by the present climate of fear and emotional terror than would be inflicted by hundreds of Evil Clowns running loose.

Adults can get away with nearly unlimited harassment of and infliction of damage upon children provided they take care not to commit "indecent touching." The circumspect emotional rape inflicted on children by the swarms of social workers, guidance counselors, psychologists and other shit-filled barefoot shrinks makes utterly minute by comparison the mischief inflicted by all the "molesters" in the country, and these are my "gut level feelings!"

In solidarity, and God bless,  
L.N., Sacramento, CA.

### The more subjective, the better

Hey,

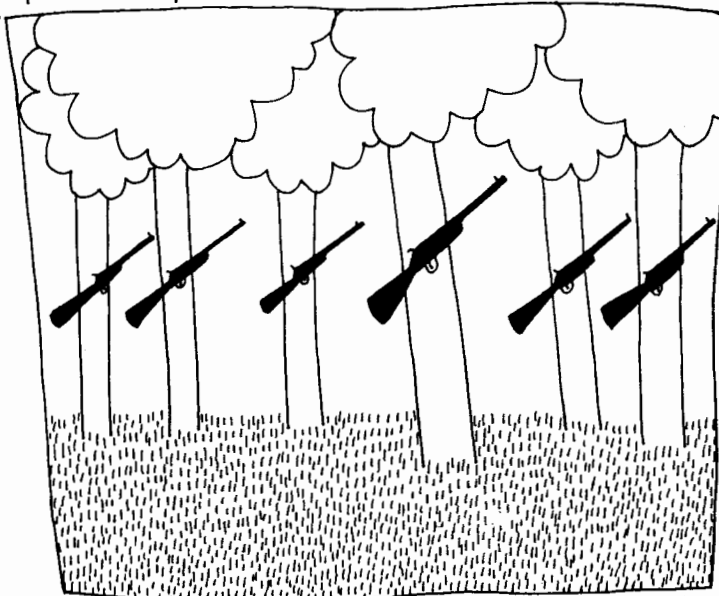
Got the latest @ in the mail a couple of days ago & was impressed w/everything in it, as usual...& since I'm writing, I might as well answer your survey here, so...I basically like the Papalagi series, the columns (except for Interrogations—too wordy & boring), the letters, cover graphics, the press reviews (don't keep doing the same ones over and over, though, unless they're really worth it—i.e. not *Utne Reader*), & the news sections/openers. Sometimes the news stuff can be kinda boring & useless information (like the Poland stuff this ish), but it's good to have. I'm really glad you decided to give Feral Faun a regular column, cuz i've been consistently impressed w/everything s/he's written. The debate on anarchy & religion got to be a real drag cuz it was so long & wordy, & it was probably the only thing I haven't fully read out of all the @ zines I have. But it is an important topic, & I did dig F.F.'s contribution last issue.

In the future I'd like to read less about pro-desire/anti-ideology theory, & more concrete examples from people to explain the ideas & to give us all inspiration ("A boring night out" was along those lines, & a kick to read!). Another addition that I'd enjoy would be a books/etc. list like the FE has—speaking of which, I think *Armed Desire* [Note: a proposed *Anarchy* anthology] is a great idea, & I'll snap one up as soon as I get some \$\$\$. Keep printing all them addresses! That's very essential. Hard to say what annoys me about @, since it's basically the best zine I've run across yet, period. But then I probably need to develop better critical facilities. I think that the more subjectively you edit/publish the paper, the better it'll be. In other words, "Hey, I'm writing this paper, & this is my opinion & I'm not god, but I'm being as fair & honest with you & myself as I can, so take what works for you & leave the rest, but think about it all." Or something like that.

So keep up the good work, cuz I really appreciate it....

Slingshots & smokebombs,  
D.C., Iowa City, IA.

adaptation.



### Progress in the current climate

Dear comrades,

St@tement is a fully autonomous anarchist entity, with the aim of spreading the message of libertarian liberation across Aotearoa [New Zealand] and elsewhere. At the moment, the main thrust of activities here is co-ordinating a nationwide anti-election campaign in time for the general election in October. Conditions are ripe for making some progress. Over the past 6 years the ruling Social Democratic "Labour" Party has followed policies similar to the monetarist ones applied in the U.S., U.K., etc., thus alienating their traditional working-class base. This has resulted in a left-split going by the name "New Labour," which has nothing new to offer. The National Party is divided between monetarists and interventionists, while trying to regain the right-wing part of the spectrum from Labour by stressing strong views on "justice," race and immigration. The various third parties are all marginalized and despite wide support, proportional representation is unlikely to be introduced. So the situation is very fluid, with many people becoming disillusioned with the existing set-up. Though the anarchist movement here is and always has been small and isolated, hopefully we will be able to make some progress in the current climate.

Anyway, it would be great to hear from you, as it's always worth making new contacts. If you have any advice on the campaign or can contribute in any way, it would be much appreciated. Naturally, if comrades here can help you in any way, we would be glad to help out. Thanks.

In Solidarity,  
St@tement  
POB 13-056  
Johnsonville  
Wellington 4  
New Zealand/Aotearoa

### Anti-technology?

Howdy, you anarcho weirdos!

The struggle continues. Fightin' Redwood Rapers now! We need activists aplenty. Spread the word.

Be Ragin' at love,  
K., Arcata, CA.

Ps. Read in one issue that you have a back issue which discusses yer anti-technology stance. [Actual-

ly, I think we were speaking of back issues of *Fifth Estate*, POB 02548, Detroit, MI. 48202.] I would like to know more about your collective views on technology. I'm a pretty lo-tech guy. But I'm not sure—I have this contradiction in my personal viewpoint. On one hand I dislike the concept of order, or the maintenance of order by dominant/subordinate hierarchy. Also the maintenance of order by man over nature—"land management." When I think of cops, it makes me wanna jaywalk—OK? So I get a thrill from escalating chaos. I get great inspiration from plants sprouting thru the cracks in the pavement, and also, I find life more tasty when shit happens like doing something you know you shouldn't, something drastic & then dealing with the consequences. I learn a lot like that, by doing.

Then, on the other side, I am a bicycle mechanic by trade. How orderly can you be? Mechanix work mostly deal with restoring order into malfunctioning equipment. I am very mechanically inclined, whereas I see great beauty in the mechanical forms of machines, like bicycles (esp. ones that are efficient, non-polluters) what I find beautiful is the harmonious interaction that brings life into inanimate blocks of metal'n' stuff. I believe there are appropriate uses for technology. Modern industry, dictated by capital, is fucked up, unquestionably, but I wanna understand where the split happened, when "logy" became ugly and sook to put on the false mask to beautify itself? How can people break the techno-addiction? Should we all just stay away from it? I refuse to get computerized. Do you use computers? They have awesome potential, especially for subversion, but they're impersonal. What can we do—I like 2 B slow.

### Lev comments: The end of technology?

Yes, we use computers to produce this magazine. Without them, we couldn't do as much as we do, nor could we do it as well as we do. Although we would like to see a world without electronic computers again (after all, humanity had already done without them for a hell of a long time), we're not averse to using the tools of civilization to further its downfall. There will always be inherent problems with their use,

## Letters

but we look forward to the day when a magazine such as this one is no longer necessary. Then we'll gladly add ours to the post-industrial age recycling heap. I for one certainly have no love for the things.

To get to the point where magazines like this one are no longer necessary, though, will require more than "break(ing) the techno-addiction." More importantly, from our perspective, it will require the recreation of human communities and the recreation of our relationships with non-human nature, along with the celebration of our own unalienated human powers, skills and desires. Of course, all of these things may actually be just pre-requisites for breaking the techno-addiction anyway!

You've written a provocative letter, and I for one would welcome and encourage a discussion of this topic in our upcoming letters columns. Anyone else interested in tackling this subject?

### Learn from our mistakes

*Anarchy* Desire Armed,

Chris Flash's letter in the Summer 1990 issue of *Anarchy* had a strong anti-intellectual tone. This attitude of action now without a theoretical foundation on which to base our struggle may be the greatest threat to the present day anarchist movement. Circling the letter "A" does not build an understanding of anarchism. What point is there to a revolution that destroys the old without any clear vision of a new society? I myself believe and participate in direct action. I've squatted in the Lower East Side of New York and have taken part in numerous actions, but I have seen too many projects fail or never get started because of a lack of commitment to anarchist principles. My criticism of the anarchist movement does not end here. The all theory and no action anarchists are at least as much to blame. The intellectuals rarely get involved in real struggles leaving room for authoritarian leftists to involve themselves in activities that are inherently anarchist such as squatting. The New York anarchist movement is overrun by communists acting in the name of anarchy. It is because of the leftoids that New York's only anarchist bookstore, *Sabotage*, is now closed. I hope we will all learn from our mistakes and prepare for a revolution based on cooperation, mutual aid, and the rejection of all centralized authorities, be they a dictatorship of the proletariat, an elected governing body, or an anarchist vanguard.

D.L., New York City, NY.

### What about patriarchy?

Dear @,

Thanks for your excellent *As We See It!* manifesto. I have a criticism and suggestion, however.

I don't believe that you have described the origin of alienation in the individual consciousness. True, hierarchical organization (armies, corporations, schools, churches) deploy their ideologies in order to maintain the alienated state of mind of their members. But why do we actually crave this humiliating membership? You say that "character" dictates a "com-

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# Letters

## What about patriarchy?

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pulsive self-repression" of real desire. OK, what is the link between this fearful clinging to character and the craving to become a cog for life in the wheels of some hierarchical structure?

Sorry about all the rhetoric/questions, but I'm just leading up to my suggestion, which is that you run (not walk) to a bookstore/library/friend's place to get ahold of a copy of Marilyn French's history of patriarchy, *Beyond Power*. This amazing book traces the origin of alienation both in the individual mind and in history to a disparagement and fear of women and the "feminine" (the arbitrarily determined realm of "womanly" attributes). She also shows how this repression has historically necessitated patriarchy and its basic structure—hierarchy.

Incidentally, *Beyond Power* refers several times to a concordance of its feminist program and anarchism. I'm sorry that your journal has not accepted and benefitted from this concordance by giving more space to feminist discussions of gender, language, sexuality, and by making patriarchy a basic term of reference. Do you believe the critical views of feminists are "marginal" to the "universal" (i.e. male) anarchist critique?

Nonetheless, good luck and thanks for many real interesting issues of *Anarchy* past and future.

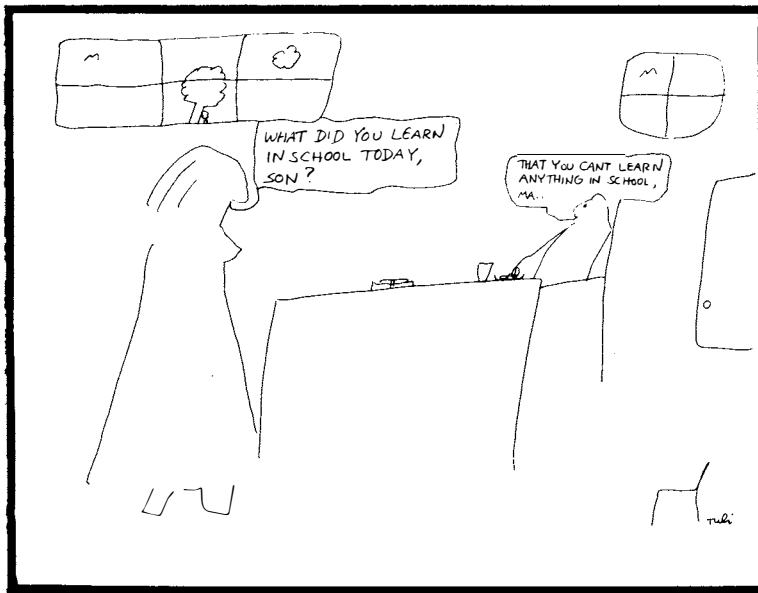
A.M., Courtenay, B.C., Canada

## Lev comments:

### The origin of alienation?

Although I haven't yet had a chance to read through the entire text of Marilyn French's *Beyond Power*, I can agree with you that it is a fairly "amazing book"—certainly better than most feminist and anarchist works. And I would recommend that anyone interested in reading probably the most sophisticated account of the feminist challenge should pick up this book.

However, the assertion of a "concordance" of French's feminist program with "anarchism" seems somewhat problematic to me. While we certainly wouldn't reject many aspects of this concordance, there remain several crucial divergences which would only be papered over by over-emphasizing our similarities. These divergences include the fundamental one (which you sarcastically indicate) of the inappropriateness of founding any sort of "universal" theory (i.e. one including both male and female perspectives) of social alienation on the particularity of gender-based ideology. Feminists can argue that patriarchy is the ultimate foundation of all other forms of alienation, but all evidence I've seen indicates that the patriarchal aspects of social alienation comprise only one part of the whole picture (though it is a highly significant part). The privileging of the "female" will remain tempting for many women; but the path towards a "universal" critical social theory appropriate to both women and men will incorporate feminist insights, not subordinate everything else to the hegemony of feminist ideology. Perhaps this gnawing contradiction is one reason that French has chosen in her text not to discuss the



By Tuli Kupferberg (160-6th Ave., NYC, NY. 10013).

historical anarchist movement or anarchist theories?

There is room for a lot of speculation on the origins of social alienation, but we must keep in mind that it always remains speculation and not historical "fact." In *Beyond Power* French marshals some persuasive arguments, but they aren't yet the whole story. I truly appreciate the subtlety of many of her arguments, surely they are more dialectical and more based in our lived experiences than those of most radical theorists.

We'd certainly be open to including "feminist discussions of gender, language, sexuality" in these pages, especially if they matched the quality of Marilyn French's discourse. However, I hope you've noticed that we have already been publishing discussions of gender, language, and sexuality. Though the (male & female) authors involved have generally not chosen to identify themselves specifically as "feminists," their concerns have still been informed and influenced by feminist movements, among others.

### Projecting dissatisfaction?

Dear Lev,

How do you respond to critics who claim that anarchist theory is merely a means of projecting personal dissatisfaction onto the world at large? I'm in the midst of reading a biography of Bakunin by Aileen Kelly, in which she portrays Bakunin as a tortured, alienated intellectual who saw in radical thought a "simulated solution" to his own personal problems. According to Kelly, Bakunin adapted the repression and impotence (Kelly suggests we take this latter word literally) he felt in his own personal life into a comprehensive world-view with which he sought to legitimize his will to be free, his urge to destroy. Is it possible that the psychologically "well-adjusted" do not suffer from the alienation that anarchists generally claim is inherent in the hierarchical power structure? Is it possible also that the "well-adjusted" do not resent their government, that anarchist sentiment is just an overreaction caused by projecting personal dissatisfactions onto society in general? I prefer to believe that anarchists are simply more aware of the alienation and repression that, though felt universally in governed society, are rarely called into question and commonly taken for granted. At any rate, some eluci-

dation would be welcomed.

Also, what are the roots of the power structure? If our present hierarchical social system is so antithetical to human happiness, if government repression truly causes the widespread inhumanity it claims to prevent, then how is it that government originated in the first place? How did the earliest humans, free and wild, at one with nature, come to establish the precursors of modern government, which now, out of any individual's control, systematically seeks to crush, repress, alienate and domesticate its own originator, the human species? Government, seen in this way, is the ultimate suicide machine, set into motion eons ago by our own earliest ancestry. The theory that some ecological crisis (i.e. drought) forced the early humans to choose between primitive hierarchy and their own death by starvation/predation does not satisfy me. This theory is backed up by no anthropological data that I know of, but more importantly, I find it hard to accept that government, as a human creation, could go so thoroughly out of control that it persisted even when its existence was no longer necessary, victimizing its own creators, humans who proved incapable of abolishing what they themselves, or their forefathers, had originally established simply to ensure their own survival. Unfortunately, I have no better theory as to the genesis of government. I would like to hear your views and those of your readers. An understanding of how power structures originate, and how they begin to take on a life of their own, beyond any individual's control, might be crucial to a thoughtful criticism of government, and to freeing ourselves from its manifold constraints.

Please ignore any pretensions or presumption in this letter. The written word is an inhuman form of communication—it can lend itself to arrogance and stridency when neither is intended. Also, feel free not to print this letter at all, for I know how pressed you have been for space of late. If you could address these issues in any way I would appreciate it.

T.M., Valparaiso, IN.

## Lev responds:

### Consuming the spectacle

How do we respond to apologists for social alienation & domination?

As always, it depends on the particular circumstances involved. In the case of Aileen Kelly, I haven't seen a copy of her book on Bakunin, so I have no way of knowing what her underlying attitude is to her attempt at biography. But I have encountered the type of ideological psychoanalysis you describe in many places, and it is hard to respond to it with anything other than the derisive contempt it usually deserves.

Readers of John Zerzan's essay on "The mass psychology of misery" in *Anarchy* #25 will recognize that Kelly's psychoanalysis of Bakunin is merely one small instance of the broader use of psychology to keep as many potential rebels as possible in line. If one first assumes that people are always condemned (for whatever reason) to suffer social repression and impotence without any chance of escape, then Kelly's views of Bakunin will follow logically. However, for anyone who has experienced more, and who isn't afraid to fight for it, such views will reflect not only her own impotence and self-repression, but more importantly her own complicity in maintaining this impotence & self-repression!

Who are "the psychologically 'well-adjusted'" you speak of? Who defines their attributes? Certainly, only people with slave mentalities could possibly define the "well-adjusted" as those who submit to government & law without apparent resentment, as those who do not question wage-slavery or commodity-exchange, and as those who are completely willing to function as mere cogs in the megamachine of civilization!

The ideological and political content of such definitions is fairly obvious. They are weapons used against those who are unsure of themselves. They are one more image of the pseudo-scientific Reality by which we are institutionally measured. And we are constantly measured—so that we can be found inadequate to fit into the perfectly "rational" plans that political authorities have erected for us, thus perennially proving the "objective" necessity for their "services." Spectacular images of fulfillment and satisfaction mobilized by the mass media are also provided as the carrot which accompanies the sticks of education, therapy & punishment. The "well-adjusted," according to the authorities, are precisely those who best feign contentment in consuming the official spectacles presented to them.

The historical roots of this power structure are probably impossible for us to discover. We can speculate, but our speculations are unlikely to ever penetrate the mists which shroud prehistory. Like you, I find implausible the theories which claim that civilization arose as a result of natural scarcities of one type or another (whether caused by drought, an advancing ice-age, over-population, etc.). Such theories are misplaced attempts to find some sort of "objective or scientific cause" for something which I think it makes more sense to attribute to the variegated contingencies of a prehistory we'll never be able to know directly. Attempts to locate the "cause" of civilization in defects of human nature, in moral flaws or in "original sin" I find even more ridiculous.

In my opinion, the origins of civilization probably consisted of a multi-

tude of choices made at different times, by different people in different tribes for different reasons, all of which happened to coalesce into mutually reinforcing relationships of social alienation. I can easily imagine the possibility that for thousands of years there were similar tendencies which were always successfully stifled by the social solidarity, ecstatic rituals and playful skepticism of tribal life. And I can even imagine that there may have been a few instances requiring that groups in which potential civilizations were germinating were simply and innocently slaughtered, living on only in myths or legends. Yet it is undeniable that at some point civilization did develop, at some point the tendencies towards social alienation were successful in consolidating their hold on tribal societies enough to eventually strangle them.

In *Against His-Story, Against Leviathan* Fredy Perlman gives a fairly convincing account of how Leviathan grew and continued to devour the world once it reached a certain level of development, though I find his account of its earliest stages unconvincing. Still, I would highly recommend this book to anyone interested in these types of speculations as the best vision available in print at this time. I'd also recommend our own *As We See It!* statement (available from us in return for an SASE) for its relatively short and simple analysis of how modern civilization ticks. And I, too, would like to hear the views of any other readers who might like to share their speculations on this subject.

## Pissing & moaning

Dear *@narchy*,

I am an anarchist punk (yes, as in punk rock). I have a few things to say. The way I see it, and tell me if I'm wrong, you've pretty much renounced violence. How do you expect to get anything done?!? Haven't you seen the power of riots in the past? So they didn't overthrow the government, but they did put the police at a loss for what to do. We need violence!

Now, I am opposed to some violence, such as organized war, war by and for authority. I just cannot stand some of the bleeding heart hippy shit I have seen & read in *@narchy* (#24). Sitting around pissing & moaning about how you're getting fucked by the system does about as much as writing your Congressman. So why don't some of you people get off your ass, organize, & fight!

Quite sincerely,

W.E., Lake Worth, FL.

Ps. Despite my views, I do wish to establish correspondence to discuss practices & methods. Please reply!

## Lev comments:

### Can you read?

I would love to find out where you read the "bleeding heart hippy shit" in *Anarchy* #24? If you could point it out to me I might understand a little better why you've written this off-the-wall letter. Did you not notice the news articles in #24 covering the invasion & disruption of the Polish parliament by anarchists, the activities of the Danish "Parliament of the





# Letters

street," or the battle between anarchists and cops in Athens? In any of these articles did we condemn violence per se? Did we categorically condemn violence anywhere in this issue, or any other issue you can find? We remain totally unconvinced by both the hypocritical claims of dogmatic pacifists and all the reckless calls to unspecified "violent" action. For us, the specific liberatory content of any action (or avoidance of action) remains far more important than whether it measures up to some abstract & pointless standard of militancy, violence or non-violence. We have never renounced violence on principle, just as we have never renounced gentleness. We reserve the power to act as we deem most wise in whatever circumstances we find ourselves. We hope others will also consider well whatever action or nonaction they take, remembering that there is little sense to the dogmatic embrace of militance for the sake of militance, violence for the sake of violence, or non-violence for the sake of non-violence.

## Deeply appreciated

### Anarchy,

A scattershot letter in response to your long awaited and deeply appreciated last issue.

The Eastern Europe section was very interesting. Though it would have been good to mention some of the various N.E.N.W. [Note: *Neither East Nor West*] type projects like *On Gogol Boulevard*, *The Bulletin*, some C.U.S.A. paper and *Ferment*. Communicating with and assisting comrades across the barriers of distance and language is hard enough without some coordination. Also why such solitary focus on Eastern Europe when for instance there are many Latin American anarchists suffering from isolation and poverty and Africa is seething with revolt in almost every country?

I like the way *Anarchy* is developing, rigorous critique of a wide range of theories and actions, "cross-pollinating" with other projects, as well as having the ambition to continually expand and enrich the dialogue on how to reach anarchy. Some people seem to get very upset with Lev's critical after-comments; Lone Wolf was upset and *Sound Choice* zine went to slanderous lengths. Why are they so afraid of criticism? Point, counter point; I can make up my own fucking mind. What do they want, some sort of fraudulent unity of our thoughts?

The debate on spirituality over the last 2 years has generally been too boring or dry for me to follow (Feral's contributions aside) but I have been thinking about it in my own life. I think Bakunin's general perspective on god and religion is pretty simple and accurate. Belief in either takes "spirit" away from the individual and puts it in some abstract entity outside and above oneself. Most "spiritual"/religious people I've met tend to have bland personalities and are seeking insulation from the fact that we're in a hideously pernicious state of misery. Chaos and humor seem much more subversive. Religion like more political ideologies seems to be in a perpetual readap-

tation and reapproach to its respective subjects, or perhaps it's like a virus people can't kick so easy. To me it's pretty simple: There's water, earth, sun, and air. "They" interact in truly awesome ways and spread a gorgeous mosaic of life forms throughout the planet. We're one type. Think about this, smell it, feel it, see it, sense it. Have a good time, or don't if you don't want to. No big shit, it's just everything.

I really enjoyed Laure A.'s letter. I've found trying to bring about anarchy in relationships as tumultuous and heavily loaded with conditioned approaches as lovers to be very freeing and interesting, her words, in contrast to words of most people I know, at least make me feel less quixotic.

You're going to print more on *Love & Rage*? Gawd, I'm bored shitless. Whatever the story is with their group. Their paper is just sort of boring and leftoid. But where else can I find A.B.C. updates? And if they're leftist, so how many anarchists aren't? I find *Ecomedia*, *Reality Now*, *Open Road*, *A Major*, *Kick It Over*, *RARA*, *Slingshot*, and all W.S.A. & I.W.W. stuff to be similarly "tainted" with collectivist assumptions, nationalism, feminism, etc. So....? Why not discuss anarchy & the left instead of the clowns at *L&R*? "M" has some fucked up notions but this is symptomatic of some unfigured problems. Look at what happened at Sabotage, or how Black Rose has reformist & statist (and boring) lectures, yet censors Joe Peacock on the subjects of AIDS or drugs. Fight the "virus" not (just) people with it.

Also to John Zerzan, nice article on misery. When you've criticized the *Fifth Estate* for "backsliding" in radical praxis I often wondered, well what do you do? From the references and footnotes in your articles it looks like you're spending most of your time reading newspapers, business magazines, and works of innumerable philosophers. Jeez, really blazing a trail aren't you? You have an interesting vision, so how's the view from your favorite chair?

Well figure I'm about run out of room so I'll stop. I warn you however, Lev, that any lengthening of this letter will be considered my own personal Kronstadt and I'll send General Secretary Ron G. to beat you up as well as put a hex on you!

For the cremation of Lenin and capture and burial of Christ,

P.K., Providence, R.I.

### Lev comments:

### Travelling correspondents?

I didn't mention *O.G.B.* in issue #25 in the Eastern Europe section since it gets mentioned in the alternative press reviews in most issues already, as it was in this issue. The other papers you mention I'm not familiar with (maybe you could send us their addresses?), except that the day after your letter arrived we received the 2nd issue of *Ferment* (see the "Anarchist press review" in the last issue). The "solitary focus" on Eastern Europe was due, of course, to the fact that we didn't get any reports written on/by Latin American anarchists, African anarchists, Asian anarchists, Australian anarchists, etc.

All it would take is someone who can write in English to travel through one (or more) of these areas meeting with people to find out what's happening, and maybe we could dedicate an issue to reporting on one of these areas! Any volunteers to become an *Anarchy* travelling correspondent?

I couldn't agree more with your opinions of the *Sound Choice* review and the reactions to my criticisms by people like Lone Wolf Circles. I'm always quite willing to discuss things in a friendly way, but incoherent attacks, bizarre name-calling, etc. aren't likely to get much in the way of sympathetic replies from me.

I appreciate your comments on "spirituality" & religion.

I'm fairly bored with the *Love & Rage* thing, too. But people keep writing stuff about it, so at least some people are pretty interested in continuing the "debate." I agree that it seems strange to single out *L&R* when so many other anarchist papers are equally (and often even more ideologically or dogmatically) leftist, feminist, etc. I just can't get all that worked up about it. Sure, the elements of leftist/gang mentality & doctrine should be exposed & criticized thoroughly. But let's keep things in some sort of perspective.

## Trashing didn't happen

### Anarchy,

Bekken is dead set on proving he has his thumb up his butt.

There's no doubt that San Francisco's D.O.A. was a poorly tailored exercise in futility and bad P.R. at best; but the assertion that "a soup kitchen was trashed and... homeless people were battled in the streets" suggests that (undoubtedly like all true workers) grad student John gets his info from the tube or On-the-job hearsay. The trashing of the Peoples' Park Soup Kitchen, as near as I can tell, didn't happen...at least while I was looking, and although I saw homeless people arguing with each other over the presence of a bunch of discombobulated masked jerk-offs (myself included) using "their" park for anarchist weekend war games, and shouting at cops and "protestors" alike to keep out of the flower beds, I didn't once see it come to blows. There weren't many "blows" of any kind that afternoon, the U.C.Berk. cops & the genuinely murderous Alameda County Sheriff's Dept. (whose chubby mustachioed rookies were getting to reminisce with the oldsters by jokingly pointing their shotguns at us and snickering "James Rector") didn't really get that many good licks in, neither did the club-wielding participants (except me). No matter, it's very in vogue amongst Bekken and his cronies right now to deal in complete fictions, they're so paralytically distressed over the blatant lack of interest in their stultified ideology that they have no other resorts. It's as if, caught in a lie, the only way to break out is to build more. John, contrary to you and your Keystone posses' assertions, it isn't that people aren't interested in "anarchism" or "serious discussion," they're not interested in your kooky nineteenth century moralism or your self-righteous proselytization. Amidst

accusations of "thuggery" you make suburban-style intimidatory overtures, you invoke "our movement" whilst bashing vanguardists, you denounce the critical faculties of these never-defined "Post-Situationists" (your new buzzword) in contradictory, confused, misspelt and misdirected editorials. You step on your own toes and trip yourselves up constantly, and then blame it on everyone else, when you've got no one to blame but yourselves. John, boldface lies won't help you crawl out of the hole you dug for yourself or win converts, cause as long as you're full of shit people are going to pull the plug.

A response is welcome.

The Brooklyn Bomber,  
Tad Kepley  
POB 401721  
Brooklyn, NY. 11240

## Glorious resistance

### Dear Anarchy,

I'd like to throw in a few comments on Lone Wolf Circles' letter in the Summer '90 *Anarchy* where he exalts his own "physical/primal resistance," "wholism," "primal experience & real opposition," and getting busted for "defending" the forests in order to build a platform to deprecate "theory" & critical thinking. Well.... Not to take too much wind out of Mr. Wolf's sails, but let me fill in some details about this glorious resistance in the Kalmiopsis (a region in SW Oregon). This action is in the most uncritical liberal reformist sacrifice-for-the-media tradition & is typical of much of what EF! does in public (yea! for the anonymous saboteur or mass riot!). Most of those arrested had no intention of doing so—Mr. Wolf included. They were arrested while just standing around in the area waiting for the media. It was a clumsy action even as a civil disobedience goes! There were some participants who chained themselves & blockaded roads & machinery, but such sacrificial passivist pseudo-militancy has yet to lead anywhere meaningful—makes great TV copy, but is hardly wholistic, primal opposition. Personally, Mr. Wolf's accusation of "masturbation" sounds like much more fun to me! It is precisely this type of civil obedience repetitive ritual nonsense that has kept me away from most Earth First! activity. I have no desire to go to jail—those who brag about it should be pitied, not worshipped.

After 30 years of New Left-type protest politics that have got nowhere "wholistic," "primal" or "real" it seems time to try something new. What Mr. Wolf & nearly everyone else who call themselves "activists" will not acknowledge—their blind spot, so to speak—is the "theory" or ideology, as the case may be, behind their actions.

Activism—the ideology of "activists"—contains a whole body of assumptions & premises about the nature of society and current global issues, prescriptions for action, and expected outcomes of those actions. Arrayed around the fringes are heroes, martyrs, famous quotes & writings that are pulled to the front lines to fortify the

barricades when necessary. Most of this is questionable at best, patent bullshit at worst. Activists seem to be caught in the illusion that only what they're "doing" is what is possible. Everything else is just "theory" or "intellectual masturbation." I would like—just once—to see practitioners of civil obedience clearly state the theoretical background to their motions & open it up to scrutiny. If some of us have rejected their way of "doing something!" it's not because we are "safely ensconced from primal experience" (as Mr. Wolf says), but because we have questioned & rejected most of the activist assumptions and feel that they have nothing to do with real primal experience! Mr. Wolf's whole letter is one big diversion, a way to avoid criticism of his own assumptions about activism! Some of us truly desire an authentic, effective trajectory & methodology for changing the entire world, for primal experience, community, a radical de-industrialization of Earth in a time span quick enough to really matter. If we reject both the ready-made solutions put forward in the Book of the Sixties and the notion that "nothing more is possible than reformism," that does not mean our critiques are not valid. If anything, it is only such searching & urgent critical analysis that will suggest new possibilities for actions that actually may bear-out some of the necessary changes. And if we appear to have no "answers" ready-for-consumption, it's because we reject the whole idea that there is an "Answer" in the first place, unlike most activists who need only to turn to Martin Luther King or Gandhi or whoever for their answers. Others have already described in depth the process of evolving a theory & action. I'll finish with one final note.

While I don't wish to excessively drag up old news & beat a dead wolf, so to speak, there is only so much (dare I say it?) revisionism that I can stand. Regarding the flag burning incident at the '89 EF! Round River Rendezvous, Mr. Wolf's claim that fewer than 6 people supported the flag burning is an outright, self-serving lie. A very large majority supported it & before that at least 50 people participated in stamping on it, spitting on it, dancing with it & wearing it during the "tribal dance." The printed statement that was hung up with the burnt flag was the effort of at least 6 people itself. I guess I'll have to fill you in since your memory is failing: the flag was burned the night before the controversy over it, not during the workshop you arranged on anarchy & environmentalism. That workshop was nowhere near reaching any decisions on "concerted action" as you claim. It was mostly a sort of poorly facilitated discussion circle where everyone got to throw in their 2-cents worth, but which never achieved much direction, much less "concerted action" plans. The workshop, furthermore, was 30 seconds from being over & dispersing when someone else pulled down the burnt flag that had been already hanging on the bush with the sign for several hours! Mr.

Continued on next page



## Glorious resistance

Continued from previous page

Wolf, I think you're just jealous that others ended up in the spotlight & not you. And if there was disruption of your "gathering focussing on alliance & ecological resistance" (ha! most people come there for the socializing, dancing & skinny-dipping!) it was because a few people couldn't control themselves & had to make a big stink in front of the TeeVee cameras. It wasn't until the patriots got upset that the controversy started!

See ya!  
Mike

## Oppose the compulsion

Dear *Anarchy*,

Everybody has their head up their ass. The whole human race. *TV Guide* has over 16 million paid subscribers in the United States. *Anarchy* has 750 in the world. And it's in *Anarchy* #25 that appears a thing written that is seriously above the worth of a Nobel Prize, that opens as big a can of worms as has ever been opened. Now in *Anarchy* #26, of page after page of letters from readers, that article isn't mentioned. No, not even once. There is no clue anyone read it. But there is every clue the article spoke the truth. In the letter section the readers are at each others' throats. Not against the government! But against each other. Nobody can deny *Love and Rage* is out to overthrow the government, and nobody can deny the letters column is lined up to overthrow *Love and Rage*. Then there's even a letter yelling the very name of *Endless Struggle* makes the letter-writer sick, which made me sick. Then there's the letter from a man who said he plead guilty to raping his daughter, but that really he was lying and so was she. There's letters trolling for pen pals. There's *Fifth Estate* forever having to defend against vicious attacks—for getting too serious about ecology a while back. Great revolutionaries! Who can't overthrow the government so settle for overthrowing a collective that's trying to save the planet—and then can't even overthrow them either. Anarchists, whose whole position is built on the foundation that man is by nature sociable, cooperative, rational and good (William Godwin, 1793). I can't tell! Bush has the Crips killing the Bloods, the alternative political parties (Ha!) killing the alternative political parties, and the anarchists' movements killing the anarchists' movements, all doing the pigs job for them.

Meanwhile that article in *Anarchy* #25 is a silent scream. A once in a lifetime, or closer to once in eternity, 180° revolutionary incite to what is going on here while our heads are up our asses. I imagine some readers saw the author was John Zerzan and skipped it, burnt out on his prior anti-technology articles and figuring this for more of the same, which it wasn't. (The only thing we resent more than the elite is having someone point out that we too are the elite in the eyes of a third world child, who dies and isn't allowed his or her life because of our technological toys and hamburgers. To that child and mother, we are the elite. But that's OK if we are, eh?

"The mass psychology of misery" helped me personally. And could help you, personally. It's about mental health, and how every cure we ever hear of is really not only not a cure, but part of the problem. Now we look for the problem inside of ourself, when the true problem is outside of ourself. This society.

The ancient Greek philosopher Zeno believed compulsion perverts human nature. Today we definitely have compulsion. We definitely, too, have perverted human nature. We then need to oppose the compulsion, not our fellow strugglers. And I don't blame people for being tired of reading stuff, but you don't want to miss that article in *Anarchy* #25 which was in front of your nose this past Summer, but it seems nobody read it. We need to all support *Anarchy*, and support *Fifth Estate*, and all support *Love and Rage*. These are not our problem, but they may be our solution if we support them instead of impeding their efforts on our behalf.

Wa Salami,  
P.S., Shelton, WA.

## Full of lies

Dear Friends,

Please beware of an 8 page booklet being distributed by a group calling themselves the Black Cat Collective entitled *Whatever happened to Sabotage?*, which purports to explain away the demise of Sabotage Books, the only anarchist bookstore and information center in New York City. Not only is it full of lies, it is also written by the very people who surrendered the lease to the landlord and had the cops come to evict us from the store!! This booklet, which has been sent all over the country, is their effort to cover up what they did. These are the same jerks that stiffed the book dealers and distributors who gave them merchandise on consignment. They say they will start another store soon, so please be aware of who and what they really are. We will have another place set up soon, but it will deal primarily with zines, newspapers and underground/alternative literature.

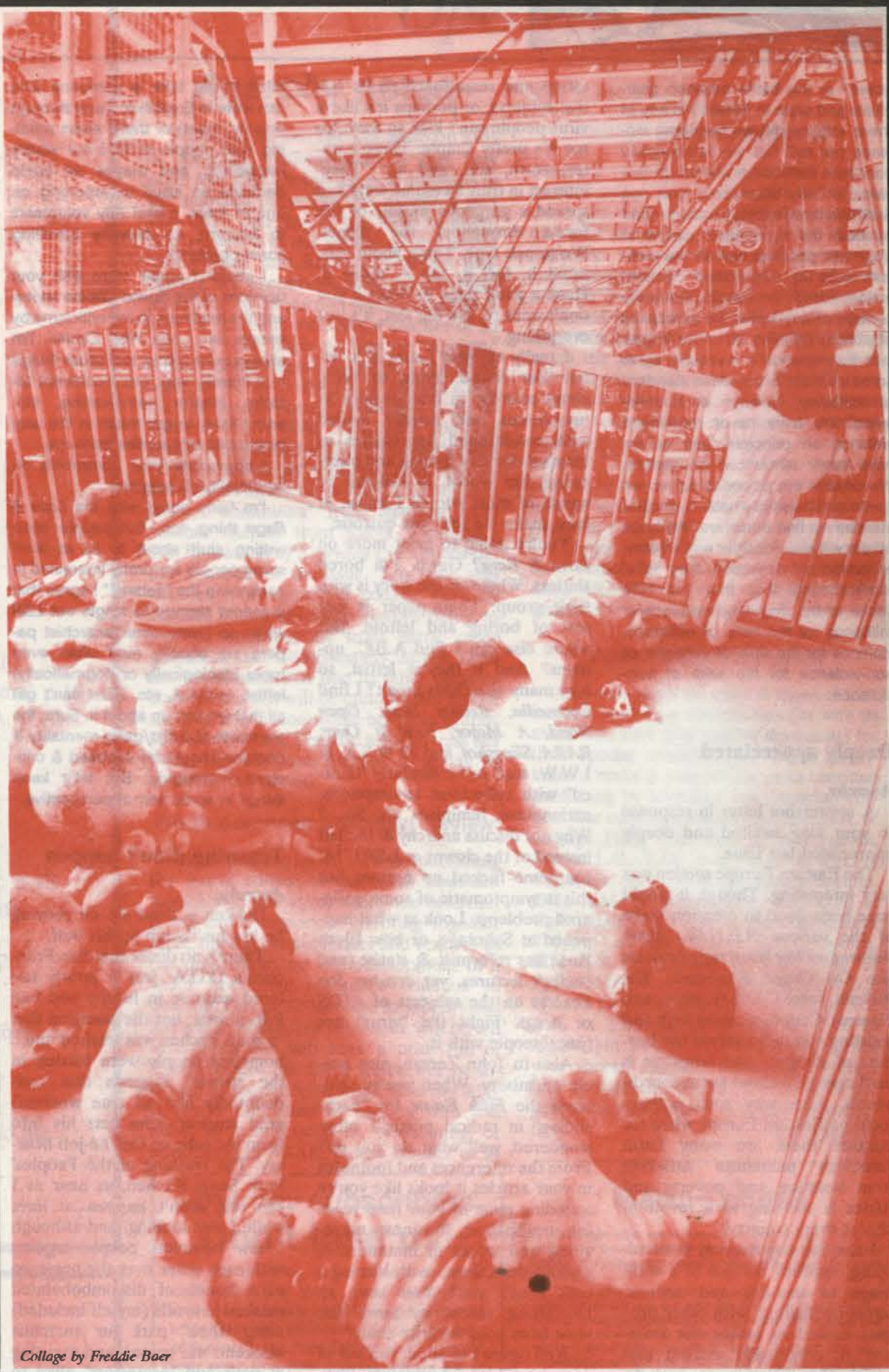
Chris Flash,  
*The Shadow*  
POB 20298  
New York, NY. 10009

[Note: Copies of *Whatever Happened to Sabotage?* are available from Black Cat, POB 1737, New York, NY. 10009. As with any quarrel within the radical milieu, we recommend that people check out the arguments made from both sides before drawing any hasty conclusions. -Lev]

## Directly assaulted daily

Hi Lev,

I've grown weary of exerting my will going about here and there in order to read your fine publication of varied radical thought—besides I'm not blind to your plea for a more expansive subscribership. So put me (us) on line for a 6-issue 1st Class *con* envelope sub. Also, You'll find \$20.00 extra in the money order for the back-issue set deal. Though I've read most of the issues, being armed with a full round might be playful. My (our) tactics: sliding an issue beneath a *Highlights* or a *People* at the den-



Collage by Freddie Baer

tist's office, or perhaps behind the stack of *Mother Jones* in a Waldenbooks. Well, you get the picture. By the way, enjoyed the theme for #26, Anti-Work. A theme I think I'd like to see replayed more in future issues as work serves up the largest platter

of oppression and alienation with which most of us are directly assaulted daily. Perhaps a future theme worthwhile exploring would be "crime," i.e. rape, murder—you know, the types of things that can really disrupt a good running of pleasure. Those sorts of negative

actions and how to deal with the same within a community environment or otherwise doesn't get much theoretical coverage in many radical/anarchist publications. Whatever.

Pass the passion,  
J., Troy, NY.

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