

“Anarchism is the only philosophy which brings to man the consciousness of himself; which maintains that God, the State, and society are non-existent, that their promises are null and void, since they can be fulfilled only through man's subordination. Anarchism is therefore the teacher of the unity of life; not merely in nature, but in man. There is no conflict between the individual and the social instincts, any more than there is between the heart and the lungs: the one the receptacle of a precious life essence, the other the repository of the element that keeps the essence pure and strong. The individual is the heart of society, conserving the essence of social life; society is the lungs which are distributing the element to keep the life essence – that is, the individual – pure and strong.”

– Anarchism: What It Really Stands for.

Emma Goldman



First published 1910. Published as a pamphlet by The Freedom Shop, Te Whanganui-a-Tara, 2026
freedomshopaotearoa.blogspot.com

Anarchism:



What It Really Stands For

Emma Goldman

Anarclassics series No. 6

a hundred forces encroach upon his being, and only persistent resistance to them will finally set him free. Direct action against the authority in the shop, direct action against the authority of the law, direct action against the invasive, meddlesome authority of our moral code, is the logical, consistent method of Anarchism.

Will it not lead to a revolution? Indeed, it will. No real social change has ever come about without a revolution. People are either not familiar with their history, or they have not yet learned that revolution is but thought carried into action.

Anarchism, the great leaven of thought, is today permeating every phase of human endeavour. Science, art, literature, the drama, the effort for economic betterment, in fact every individual and social opposition to the existing disorder of things, is illumined by the spiritual light of Anarchism. It is the philosophy of the sovereignty of the individual. It is the theory of social harmony. It is the great, surging, living truth that is reconstructing the world, and that will usher in the dawn.

Notes

1. As this is intended to be read as a historic text, we've kept the sexist language of the original.
2. This is presumably a reference to the statement by French general, politician and diplomat Horace Sébastiani that "Order reigns in Warsaw" following the violent oppression of the Polish population by the Russian Empire after the November Uprising of 1830. The utterance was widely derided for its cynicism.