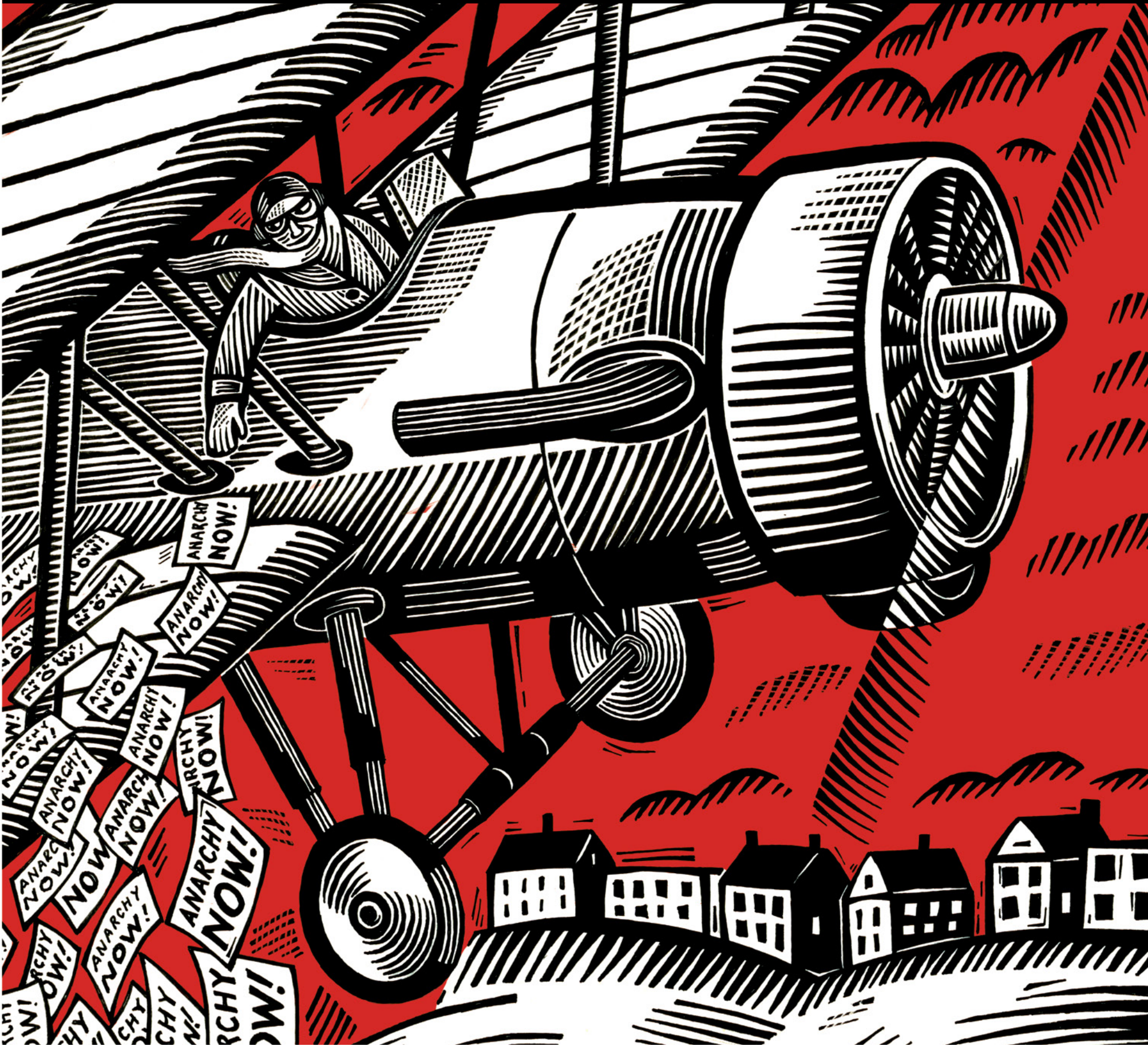


SPECIAL EDITION



DOPE Magazine is published in solidarity until everyone has a home and nobody lives in a cage.
dopemag.org

“

In a world where you’ve got so much free literature - Metro, Evening Standard, City AM - all publishing all sorts of malarky, basically trying to sell you stuff, here’s something that’s not trying to sell you anything, just trying to say ‘look, there’s some stuff going down and it ain’t quite right.’

And also, by the way, the person that’s selling it to you, this is going to help them put a roof over their head, potentially stop them from committing crime, feed them, clothe them, maybe help set them up for moving on in their life. Yea, that’s what it did for me. It’s what it still does.

”

Published in London 2024 by Dog Section Press
Registered Workers' Cooperative No. 12472460
Printed by Sharman & Company
ISSN 2515-9011

Published under Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial
4.0 International Public Licence

“Intellectual property is a legally fabricated monopoly, confining culture and science, and violently depriving the poorest and most marginalised from access to critical resources. The fictions of copyright and patent are despotic attempts to monopolise the mind; outrageous constraints on intelligence and creativity; and a destructive protectionist scheme for the profit of power.”



**SOLIDARITY
NOT CHARITY**
THE MAKING OF DOPE MAGAZINE

**WATCH THE
FILM HERE**

SPECIAL EDITION: THE BEST OF ANARCHISM IN DOPE 2018-2024



CONTENTS

COVER
Artwork by Clifford Harper
from DOPE 7

4 ARM THE HOMELESS
Matt Broomfield from DOPE 2
Artwork by Zuzanna Kwiecien

6 ANARCHY IS LOVE
Carne Ross from DOPE 9
Artwork by Clifford Harper

8 WHY I AM AN ANARCHIST
Benjamin Zephaniah from DOPE 6
Arwork by Nick Hayes
Photograph by Camille Aboudaram

10 ANARCHY IN THE UK
Ruth Kinna from DOPE 11
Artwork by Matt Bonner

12
Artwork by Clifford Harper
from DOPE 7

14 RED YEARS, BLACK YEARS
Jessica Thorne from DOPE 15
Artwork by Cut it Out Studio

16 IS THERE A DOCTOR IN THE HOUSE?
Peter Gelderloos from DOPE 12
Artwork by Matt Bonner from DOPE 16

18 ABANDONING OUR HUMANITY
Simon Springer from DOPE 5
Want Some Studio

20 CLASSIFIEDS

22 BOOKS BEHIND BARS
Luke Billingham from DOPE 2
Artwork by Clifford Harper

ARM THE HOMELESS

Matt Broomfield

1993: media in Columbus, Ohio receive a press release from a group styling itself Arm The Homeless (ATH). They announce they’ll be collecting money through a network of mall Santas, and “distributing donated firearms and ammunition to local homeless people”. Outrage flares from the local to the Associated Press, to CNN and talk-radio blowhard Rush Limbaugh’s nationally-syndicated show. “What he is proposing would endanger the community,” rages the head of a local homeless shelter. “I’d like to have him come down here and talk about what the homeless really need to lower their vulnerability – access to shelter, medical care, food and hygiene.”

Arm The Homeless out themselves as university hoaxsters a day later. That the hoax was perpetrated by university students is significant – there is a deep divide between the ‘mainstream’ revolutionary left and those who are actually most vulnerable in our society. (This chasm yawns more colossally in the slogan’s most famous iteration, scrawled on the guitar of multimillionaire Rage Against The Machine singer Tom Morello.)

As the Black Panthers’ ‘Minister for Information’, Eldridge Cleaver came closer than most to actually arming the homeless. His words offer caution against hasty demands made on behalf of those most-marginalised in our society by the rest of us: “There are those who are all too willing to do our thinking for us, even if it gets us killed.”

We are not (yet) arguing for wholesale distribution of lethal firearms to street homeless individuals. Nor are we trying to do their thinking for them. What we are arguing is that any revolutionary programme must centre rough sleepers, homeless people, vagrants and bums: among those whom Marx dismissed as the lumpen-, or ragged-, proletariat.

In Marx’ earlier works, ‘lumpenproletariat’ simply describes the irreconcilable scum of the earth: “vagabonds, discharged soldiers... pickpockets, tricksters... tinkers, beggars.” Unlike the virtuous, hard-working proletarian, they can never achieve class consciousness, and their only significance is that they will likely “sell out to reactionary intrigues” and be used to beat back revolutionary movements.

We see this appropriation of the lumpenproletariat by reactionary elements occurring in a debased, post-modern sense in popular discourse today. Stripped of all agency, invariably figured as white, straight and British, often as “discharged soldiers”, the homeless are used as a rhetorical tool to gainsay support for refugees – a social formation clearly figured as revolutionary by the establishment, whatever their assimilationist intent.

But in Capital, Marx comes to a firmer understanding of the lumpenproletariat as part of the “the reserve army of labour”, the un- and under-employed masses left hunting for work or starving as capital becomes concentrated in fewer and fewer hands.

This progression in Marx’ thought resonates in today’s distinction between rough sleepers in particular and the homeless in general.

In 2012’s the Communist Horizon, Jodi Dean follows Etienne Balibar in leaving aside the proletarian as a static class in favour of “proletarianisation” as a dynamic, something continually being done to struggling and marginalised people by capital.

Only about 10,000 of the 300,000 homeless people in London are actually sleeping on the streets, for example – precarity is a watchword of the era, and those who’ve lived sofa-to-sofa or in squats or B&Bs know how close the street can seem.

Dean concludes by discussing the Occupy camps as a vanguard moment where a self-willed class she terms “we as the rest of us” broke the consensus of communicative late-capitalism. Of course, Occupy then collapsed into over-horizontality, impotency and disarray – Tom Morello’s vocal support notwithstanding.

If Occupy ever did establish a break in capitalist consensus, it was literally through members of the precarious classes – students, workers, activists, in messy intersection – entering into a condition of voluntary “lumpenness,” becoming ragged and unwashed, camping out on the street.

Yet I’ve spoken to Occupy organisers who note that the presence of increasing numbers of actual street-homeless people in the camps hastened their demise, bringing with them ethical responsibilities the camps could not bear, along with harsh media attention.

Here, homelessness takes on a charged potential – radical in one moment, counter-revolutionary in the next. A truly revolutionary vanguard will be strengthened, not weakened, by “lumpen” street homeless joining its ranks.

The Black Panthers actively sought to build their base from among the lumpenproletariat: “we began, as always, by checking around with the street brothers,” Huey P Newton writes in his account of the Panthers’ formation as an armed check on police brutality. He’s not talking about the street homeless necessarily, but the unemployed, often criminalised under-society of the “Black American ghetto- dweller” is not so very far away.

Guns were the most visible way the Panthers armed the ‘street brothers’, a means to command attention and show the party were “more than talk.” But as Bobby Seale makes clear, “Revolution is not about shootouts... revolution is about the need to re-evolve political, economic and social justice and put power back into the hands of the people.”

The majority of their income always went into their “survival programmes,” health clinics, educational opportunities and free-food distributions. We are talking about “arming” in a broader sense than merely

dishing out guns, about direct empowerment from the street-level up. Our political movements must offer breakfast first and talk of revolution second.

An ideology of arming the homeless and precarious, of empowering them with the skills they need to enact meaningful resistance to capital, finds one endpoint in the squat. I know former street-homeless addicts who’ve come up through squats and ended up heading crews and cracking buildings on their own, providing shelter to rough sleepers currently in the same tough spot they were in a couple of years before.

More specifically, we can look at America’s National Union of the Homeless, which used squatting and criminal direct action to win 24-hour intake in city shelters, the right to vote and public showers (by holding “bathe-ins” in public fountains). Co-ordinated squatting of federal buildings across multiple cities won housing provision for hundreds of members.

Like the Panthers, they used criminality as part of a broad social programme, deploying “lumpen” skills and activities toward a socialist end.

Rough sleepers are an embodied threat to the precarious working classes under capitalism, even as they embody capitalism’s failures. Spiteful campaigns framing begging as a “criminal behaviour” seek to establish them as a class outside, not contiguous with the virtuous working poor.

It’s a false narrative, taking rough sleepers as an excluded “other” even as labour casualisation and precarity are pushing every worker into contingency. As J. Moufawad-Paul writes, whether we acknowledge it or not we are all becoming part of the lumpen “reserve army of labour.”

“Now the papers are going to call us thugs and hoodlums,” Panther Bobby Seale said. “But the brothers on the block, who the man’s calling thugs and hoodlums for 100 years, they’re going to say: ‘Them’s some out of sight thugs and hoodlums up there! Who is these thugs and hoodlums?’”

Two decades later, the NUH’s discourse deliberately targeted precarious workers with slogans like “you are only one paycheck away from homelessness.”

When “we as the rest of us” next come together on the street, we must be prepared to centre and support those whose world we are encroaching on: hoodlums, “street brothers,” rough sleepers. Their presence should not be a hindrance or a distraction, but serve to make our demands unavoidable.

Through deeds and not words, we must claim them as our own, providing an answer through socialist programmes – and drawing on criminalised skillsets to socialist ends.

Under the pavements, the beach: lying overlooked on their cold surface, an army capable of tearing them up.

Matt Broomfield is an award-winning poet, writer and activist. *On An Execution Morning* – his fictional account of a real squat eviction in London – is available on Mount Analogue Press.



ANARCHY IS LOVE

Carne Ross

I used to think that anarchism was “just” a political philosophy. I was wrong. It is much, much more than that.

By political philosophy, I mean a way of thinking about politics, institutions and decision-making. How people arbitrate their business with one another, theories of government – or self-government – or the abolition of all hierarchy. I liked to boil down anarchism into a few pithy phrases like, “anarchism is about no one having power over anyone else.”

I was not wrong. Anarchism is indeed about all of these things. It is indeed a political philosophy. It is indeed about how people take decisions together and manage their affairs collectively. But I thought this was its philosophy in toto, that there was nothing more to it. It was a way of thinking that was separate from our interior realities. It is an external philosophy, above all about how we behave towards one another.

These ideas take you far in analysing the current political and economic situation and working out how to reform it and replace it. In place of a top-down system of government, we need a system where decisions are made by the mass, including everyone with a stake. In place of an economic system controlled by the few with massive wealth, we need one where shares are equal, both in terms of wealth but also in terms of agency – where everyone gets a say over the economic affairs that affect them, whether in the workplace or society at large. The individual and society are at the heart of this idea. Individuals must be free to act as they please, but always taking into account the needs of others – a fair and equal negotiation (this isn’t the most purely libertarian form of anarchism, of course, more socialist libertarianism).

But who is that individual and how do they think? Anarchists are sceptical of formal religion, seeing it as another form of social control where agency is denied the individual in favour of a rigid orthodoxy enforced hierarchically – most often by men. The claim that god exists is seen as a veil, used to conceal many human wrongs and injustices, excused as a universal salve and explanation. Anarchism rejects religion: no gods, no masters.

Thus, I had been sceptical of those who sometimes called themselves spiritual anarchists. What is spiritualism but another kind of religion that confuses and misleads us from our earthly realities? I saw what can loosely be called spiritualism as narcissistic and selfish, with its focus on the individual soul and its needs and expression. Some of those I saw talking of spiritualism retreated from the battleground of society into drugs and other forms of refuge, both physical and mental. The battle is in our cities and streets, here and now, I argued crossly.

But those same ‘spiritualists’ claimed to me that there could not be revolution of the whole of society without revolutionising the way that individuals think within it. You couldn’t expect that society would adopt practices of equality, respect and inclusion unless we ourselves were transformed from the rationalism and analytic thinking that sees everything as structure or transaction. The interior needed to be reformed too. You couldn’t have revolution in one without revolution in the other.

I have come to think that they might be right.

At the heart of all anarchism is how we treat other people. Anarchism demands that this treatment is always respectful and egalitarian: no one can coerce another, whether by overt means or subtle. My kind of anarchism demands that we treat others as they wish, not as we wish (which is, by the way, an explicit rejection of the so-called ‘golden rule’, under which we treat others as we would wish to be treated. Instead we must attend to what they say they want, not what we think they want). We must give up all notions of domination, of influence and getting others to do what we want. We must give up all power.

I once worked in government. I was agog with power, convinced that I worked among an elite few who understood the needs of society – in my case, in foreign policy and diplomacy – better than society understood itself. This fed my ego and structured my life around career and status. It has been a hard road to abandon these pillars of my sense of worth and self. If I don’t have power, what am I? If I cannot tell others what to do, what value do my ideas and wishes have? If it’s just me, what am I?

I have found that I need to believe in something. I’m not sure what I would call it. But I suspect my spiritualist friends would call it just that: spiritual need. It’s a belief that there are values and meanings outside ourselves but which animate and inspire our interior realities. Religions might name this thing god, expressed through litany. But my litany is anarchism, and I’m not willing to call that guiding spirit god. It is more earthly, it is more human.

I identify it by observing the core of anarchist practice: the interaction with others. How we treat other people. In anarchism, that interaction must be guided by consideration and caring, the putting of the needs of others on an equal footing to our own. At least: in its most extreme iteration, it is the erasure of self. Lao Tzu talks about this in the Dao te Ching. It is having power by giving up all power. He reached this conclusion thousands of years ago. It is a harmony between how we see and treat others and how we treat ourselves. There is a word for this practice: it is love.

Without this ‘spiritual’ core, anarchism struggles to make sense. If it is judged in the terms of current capitalist culture, it is not necessarily a more efficient or productive practice: it does not necessarily produce more goods or make more money. What it accomplishes is in fact of infinite worth: the beauty of humans living with one another in love and respect and equality. These are abstract, ineffable things that cannot be measured in euros, pounds or dollars. Indeed, this stuff is beyond all terms themselves – and this is why it’s hard to put it into words too. It is on a plane above all that. And if you want to call this a ‘spiritual’ plane, I am happy with that. What goes on in the spirit or the soul matters, for it matters to the exterior reality too. What we believe in ourselves is intrinsic to how we engage with the world. One doesn’t work without the other.

Carne Ross is a former British diplomat, author of *The Leaderless Revolution: How ordinary people will take power and change politics in the 21st century*, and the subject of the film *Accidental Anarchist*.
accidentalanarchist.net



WHY I’M AN ANARCHIST

Benjamin Zephaniah

I got political after I suffered my first racist attack at the age of seven. I didn’t understand any political theory, I just knew that I had been wronged, and I knew there was another way. A few years later, when I was fifteen, a marked police car pulled up to me as I walked in Birmingham in the early hours of the morning, three cops got out of the car, they pushed me into a shop doorway, then they beat me up. They got back into their car, and drove off as if nothing had happened. I had read nothing about policing policy, or anything on so-called law and order, I just knew I had been wronged. When I got my first job as a painter, I had read nothing on the theory of working class struggles or how the rich exploited the poor, but when my boss turned up every other day in a different supercar, and we were risking our lives up ladders and breathing in toxic fumes, I just knew I had been wronged.

I grew up (like most people around me) believing Anarchism meant everyone just going crazy, and the end of everything. I am very dyslexic so I often have to use a spellchecker or a dictionary to make sure I’ve written words correctly. I was hearing words like Socialism and Communism all the time, but even the Socialists and Communists that I came across tended to dismiss Anarchists as either a fringe group, who they always blamed if there was trouble on demonstrations, or dreamers. Even now, I just checked a spellchecker and it describes Anarchy as chaos, lawlessness, mayhem, and disorder. I like the disorder thing, but for the average person, disorder does mean chaos, lawlessness, and mayhem. The very things they’re told to fear the most.

The greatest thing I’ve ever done for myself is to learn how to think for myself. I began to do that at an early age, but it’s really difficult to do that when there are things around you all the time telling you how to think. Capitalism is seductive. It limits your imagination, and then tells you that you should feel free because you have choices; but your choices are limited to the products they put before you, or the limits of your now limited imagination. I remember visiting São Paulo many years ago when it introduced its Clean City Law. The mayor didn’t suddenly become an Anarchist, but he did realise that the continual and ubiquitous marketing people were subjected to was not just ugly, but distracting people from themselves. So more than 15,000 marketing billboards were taken down. Buses, taxis, neon and

paper poster advertisements were all banned. At first it looked a little odd, but instead of either looking at, or trying not to look at, advertising boards, I walked, and as I walked I looked around me. I found that I only purchased what I really needed, not what I was told I needed, and what was most noticeable was that I met and talked to new people every day. These conversations tended to be relevant, political, and meaningful. Capitalism keeps us in competition with each other, and the people who run Capitalism don’t really want us to talk to each other, not in a meaningful way.

I’m not going to go on about Capitalism, Socialism, or Communism, but it is clear that one thing they all have in common is their need for power. Then to back up their drive for power they all have theories, theories about taking power and what they want to do with power, but therein lies the problem. Theories and power. I became an Anarchist when I decided to drop the theories and stop seeking power. When I stopped concerning myself with those things I realised that true Anarchy is my nature. It is our nature. It is what we were doing before the theories arrived, it is what we were doing before we were encouraged to be in competition with each other. There have been some great things written about Anarchism, and I guess that’s Anarchist theory, but when I try to get my friends to read these things (I’m talking about big books with big words), they get headaches and turn away. So, then I turn off the advertising (the TV etc.) and sit with them, and remind them of what they can do for themselves. I give them examples of people who live without governments, people who organise themselves, people who have taken back their own spiritual identity – and then it all makes sense.

If we keep talking about theories then we can only talk to people who are aware of those theories, or have theories of their own, and if we keep talking in the round about theories we exclude a lot of people. The very people we need to reach, the very people who need to rid themselves of the shackles of modern, Capitalistic slavery. The story of Carne Ross is inspiring, not because he wrote something, but because he lived it. I love the work of Noam Chomsky and I love the way that Stuart Christie’s granny made him an Anarchist, but I’m here because I understand that the racist police who beat me have the state behind them, and the state itself is

racist. I’m here because I now understand that the boss-man who exploited me to make himself rich didn’t care about me. I’m here because I know how the Marrons in Jamaica freed themselves and took to the hills and proved to all enslaved people that they could manage themselves. Don’t get me wrong, I love books (I’m a writer, by the way), and I know we need people who think deeply – we should all think deeply. But my biggest inspirations come from everyday people who stop seeking power for themselves, or seeking the powerful to rescue them, and they do life for themselves. I have met people who live Anarchism in India, Kenya, Jamaica, Ethiopia, and in Papua New Guinea, but when I tell them they are Anarchists most will tell me they have not heard of such a word, and what they are doing is natural and uncomplicated. I’m an Anarchist because I’ve been wronged, and I’ve seen everything else fail.

I spent the late seventies and the eighties living in London with many exiled ANC activists – after a long struggle Nelson Mandela was freed and the exiles returned home. I remember looking at a photo of the first democratically elected government in South Africa and realising that I knew two thirds of them. I also remember seeing a photo of the newly elected Blair government (New Labour) and realising that I knew a quarter of them, and on both occasions I remember how I was filled with hope. But in both cases it didn’t take long to see how power corrupted so many members of those governments. These were people I would call and say, “Hey, what are you doing?”, and the reply was always something along the lines of, “Benjamin, you don’t understand how having power works.” Well I do. Fuck power, and lets just take care of each other. Most people know that politics is failing. That’s not a theory or my point of view. They can see it, they can feel it. The problem is they just can’t imagine an alternative. They lack confidence. I simply blanked out all the advertising, I turned off the ‘tell-lie-vision’, and I started to think for myself. Then I really started to meet people – and, trust me, there is nothing as great as meeting people who are getting on with their lives, running farms, schools, shops, and even economies, in communities where no one has power.

That’s why I’m an Anarchist.

Benjamin Zephaniah was a writer, poet and anarchist (1958-2023).



ANARCHY IN THE UK

Ruth Kinna

The Sex Pistols’ anthem, once so central to anarchist imagery, used to provoke outrage and delight. Now it’s part of the cultural landscape, maybe still capable of raising a nostalgic grin but, for a whole new generation, quintessentially 70s. The historicising of the past is not the worst kind of put down, but it’s sobering to witness the recategorisation of rebelliousness. In the case of the Sex Pistols, the relationship between the band and punk was always overplayed, especially by the tabloids. Phony disgust with punk aesthetics and profanities uttered on tea-time TV was the easiest sell: why bother looking at any punk-inspired movements? When in 2012 John Lydon said he’d never been an anarchist, who cared? No one in Fleet Street had been interested in the politics anyway.

Seen through the spectacle of the Sex Pistols’ raucous rise, and dramatic fall, anarchism’s history in the UK seems very short; however, the saga of the band is no more reliable as a guide to anarchism’s past than it is to the rise and rise of punk. In fact, there is a strong tie between punk and anarchism. And it’s part of a magnificent, sustained story of rebellion, creativity, solidarity and defiance.

Starting points are usually arbitrary and often misleading, but it’s standard practice to kick-off the history of anarchy in the UK with William Godwin, the eighteenth-century seditious philosopher, pamphleteer and novelist. Today, when he’s remembered at all, it’s usually as a footnote to the life of Mary Wollstonecraft, the republican feminist author of A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, or as the father of Frankenstein’s creator, Mary Shelley. But in the years following the French Revolution he was a prominent intellectual and fearless government critic: author of Political Justice, a book that exposed the tyranny of all religious and political institutions, and Caleb Williams, a novel that brilliantly described the injustice and terrors of arbitrary rule.

Godwin didn’t call himself an anarchist. Like his son-in-law, Percy Bysshe Shelley, he associated ‘anarchy’ with disorder. The difference between them was that Godwin described anarchy as a temporary but inevitable response to the removal of oppression, a celebration of freedom that gets out of hand, and Shelley linked it to brutal, deliberate government violence. The 1819 Peterloo Massacre was the model.

Nevertheless, the principles of voluntarism, independent reasoning and self-government that Godwin defended were akin to the anti-capitalist, anti-authoritarian ideas that later activists called anarchist.

Seventy-odd years later, Peter Kropotkin and Rudolf Rocker spotted the similarity. Both described Godwin as the father of British anarchism. By this time, the UK was home to an international émigré

movement, organised locally and networked globally. Joseph Conrad’s The Secret Agent remains one of the most powerful reference points for the Victorian scene, but his murky picture of intrigue, conspiracy and espionage is distorting. Special Branch, then a new outfit, ran plenty of spies and bank-rolled bomb-plots in London and the Midlands – the Greenwich explosion of 1894, fictionalised in Conrad’s story, was one of these. But anarchists were interested in pursuing the principles of self-government that Godwin had championed, not covert plotting. Having escaped imprisonment in Russia, Kropotkin exposed Tsarist state terror and anti-Semitism, campaigned against the torture of anarchists in Spain, promoted anti-authoritarian educational experiments and outlined a communist system of ‘no-government’ economics. Rocker, a refugee from Bismarck’s Germany, was the anarchist-syndicalist editor of the Yiddish-language paper Arbeter Frait. Calling on workers to organise independently of union officials and socialist party apparatchiks, in 1912 he rallied 13,000 sweat-shop workers in London’s Jewish East End to strike in solidarity with non-Jewish West End tailors.

William Morris, a friend of Kropotkin and Rocker, was the inspirational figure for hundreds of libertarian socialists. Nearly everybody warmed to the anarchy he imagined in News from Nowhere and anarchists uniformly shared his anti-parliamentary stance. Morris refused to label his brand of communism ‘anarchist,’ but he had links with The Torch, an anarchist paper, and James Tochatti’s Liberty. One of his fervent admirers, Guy Aldred, fully anarchised his politics to promote free speech, free love and anarchist syndicalism.

Styling himself as “the man they all dread,” he rejected the vote as a pointless distraction and adopted direct action to meet injustice head-on: as an antimilitarist, he refused to enlist and protested against the brutal treatment of conscientious objectors throughout the 1914-18 war.

His partner, Rose Witcop, was another direct activist: having put up with heaps of abuse for daring to live as a single mother, she married Guy after they had separated in order to avoid deportation to Soviet Russia – a place deeply hostile to anarchists.

In the interwar period, Tom Brown kept the anarchist-syndicalist flag flying, combining it with militant anti-fascism and fighting black shirts on the streets with rough-and-tumble-activist Albert Meltzer.

Meltzer later joined forces with Stuart Christie to revive the Anarchist Black Cross, a prisoner support organisation. Christie’s activism describes a good deal of post-war anarchist social action. A publisher and prolific writer, he was involved in the anti-nuclear

Direct Action Committee. He miraculously escaped a death sentence after attempting to assassinate General Franco, the dictator who crushed the 1936 anarchist revolution and then used mass execution and forced labour to quell internal dissent. Acquitted of involvement in the Angry Brigade, Christie was as enraged as the Brigaders were about the depoliticised promotion of Spain as a tourist destination. And he voiced a related critique of post-war imperialism and materialism. The so-called ‘free society’ was in fact class-riven, repressively atomised and simultaneously prurient and puritanical: televised 60s culture glamorised misogyny while demonising sexual liberation as deviance. Nicholas Walter, who published secret government war-plans as a member of Spies for Peace, used the term ‘warfare state’ to describe the new social contract. It bargained welfare against nuclear technologies, concealing the deal behind sparkly, clean programmes for economic growth. These, too, were internally contradictory. Equal opportunity and self-advancement meant regimented schooling, restricted access to HR-managed careers, and income to dispose on endless consumables: boredom, waste and unfairness. Colin Ward and others dusted-off Kropotkin to present new critiques of policing, prisons and punishment, and explore anarchist alternatives in education, health, urban design and housing. Ward, especially, advocated squatting and other acts of everyday defiance to attack the grotesque wealth inequalities created by private ownership.

What’s all this got to do with punk? The answer is that punk provided a new platform for anarchism in the 70s, radicalising a good number of those who had been drawn to its irreverence and D.I.Y. culture. Punk also turned into something other than a music genre or transient cultural turn: a direct-action movement committed to not-for-profit production, copyleft and ‘do-it-ourselves’ ethics. Anti-poll tax protests, Stop the City, climate camps, anti-gentrification campaigns, food sovereignty and animal rights activism all have strong links to punk anarchism.

Anarchists know what they want and they know how to get it: by co-operation and bottom-up organising. Doubters look at experiments like Occupy and say anarchy will never work. What does that mean? The history of anarchy in the UK is a history of resistance, not control. Control is the murderous mask of anarchy that Shelley condemned. Control is for The Establishment. Anarchy is for the rest of us.

Ruth Kinna is a professor of Political Theory at Loughborough University, working in the Department of Politics, History and International Relations where she specialises in political philosophy. Since 2007 she has been the editor of the journal Anarchist Studies. She is the author of *The Government of No One* (Pelican) and *Great Anarchists* (Dog Section Press).

NEVER MIND THE SEX PISTOLS

HERE’S REAL

ANARCHY



RED YEARS, BLACK YEARS: REMEMBERING STUART CHRISTIE

Jessica Thorne

In 2004, reflecting on a life of political struggle, which spanned several revolutions, prison, and one of the longest criminal trials in English history, Stuart commented:

“All I can say is that we couldn’t know then what we could only know today. Things that appeared possible 30 years ago – and the way to achieve those ends – would not work today. Times change, as do tactics and strategies.”

This quote encapsulates the tight-rope many revolutionaries walk when setting themselves against the existing social and political order of things. Challenge too much, and you risk confining yourself at a safe distance on the margins. Challenge too little and you risk changing nothing at all. Stuart wasn’t the sort of person who spoke of ‘heroes’. But if there was one character perhaps worthy of such status, it was the novelist, historian and poet, Victor Serge. For Serge, history’s course was both set and interrupted by “stepping off established paths.” For both revolutionaries, the deep oceanic swell of the past was located with those alienated from state power. The actions of politicians, while important, formed only the foamy crest – the refuse seen on the line of tidal change also known as ‘scum’.

Stuart was never afraid of the margins. In fact, he had what one would call ‘a nose for it’. Born in Glasgow in 1946, in the working-class district of Partick, he was well accustomed to living life on the brink. It was at the periphery where, from an early age, Stuart found signs of a different kind of society, one shorn – if not free – of the regulations imposed by state and capitalism. Stuart was a child of Glasgow’s smogged-brown-red tenements and was raised here before the white heat of post-war development culminated in mass slum clearances. Scaling the tenement entrances, described locally as ‘caves in the canyons’, Stuart recalled that there was both ‘a happy disregard for anonymity’ and ‘a dynamic community support structure with its own sense of mutual aid’. Without a textbook in hand, Stuart became intimately familiar with the anarchist concept of mutual aid, the need for which was undiminished by the recent triumph of social democracy.

The narrowing political horizons of our own time have had the effect of making the post-1945 arrangements in Britain appear Utopian. In many ways, this reflects the impoverished political surroundings of our present. Certainly, economically speaking, the British working class “never had it so good.”

Within contemporary memory, it seems that no episode of the country’s modern past deviated as far from its governmental norms as the Labourism of Attlee,

Bevan, Benn and Harold Wilson. But it was a bargain reliant on complacency as much as compromise, often forcing emergent shopfloor militancy underground or outside the official unions. At 15, Stuart stumbled to the left of the new ‘consensus’, becoming a member of the Trotskyist-leaning Labour Party Young Socialists. It was a fleeting encounter. Once exposed to “the machinations and power struggles within the Glasgow Labour Party,” Stuart’s initial confusion of socialism with the British Labour Party was torn apart by its culture of “office-grabbing,” “local political power plays” and “contending sectarian power agendas.”

Reflecting the revolutionary ferment of the early 1960s, Stuart’s subsequent turn towards anarchism occurred rapidly. After becoming involved in the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, he soon favoured the direct-action approach of the Committee of 100 over routine marches to Aldermaston. In 1963, he tore up his Labour Party card and joined the Glasgow Federation of Anarchists. A year later he was making regular trips to London just as efforts were underway nationally to re-found the Anarchist Federation of Britain. Notting Hill Gate, a seedbed of libertarian and bohemian culture – and a focal point for Britain’s emergent neo-Nazi movement – would ultimately lead Stuart towards the site of anarchism’s most durable and most tragic expression: Spain.

After encountering West London’s community of Spanish migrants and exiles, Stuart became familiar with the revolution of July 1936, the brutal Francoist victory in 1939, and the Allied betrayal post-1945. In the example set by July 1936, Stuart saw an ideal model of workers’ self-management, which challenged the moral bankruptcy of both social democracy in the West and Soviet Communism in the East. It was this seemingly ‘untarnished’ ideal for which Stuart would cross the Pyrenees in 1964.

On Saturday 1 August, 1964, Stuart bought a single ticket for the morning boat train from London to Calais and from there headed to Paris. Arriving late in the afternoon at the Rue de Lancry, Stuart met with exiled members of the Iberian Federation of the Libertarian Youth. Far beyond the more customary exile activity of delivering banned publications, newspapers and leaflets, Stuart was entrusted with transporting a kilo of plastique (plastic explosives).

“As things turned out, it was fortunate I planned to be away some time and didn’t buy a return ticket,” Stuart later recalled, as he was subsequently apprehended by the Brigada Político-Social (BPS,

Franco’s political police) on 11 August and taken into custody. On 5 September, Christie received a note through his cell door stating the details of his sentence: ‘twenty years for military rebellion and terrorism’. As the fear of death by ‘garrote vil’ – the process of slow mechanical strangulation by an iron collar still in use in Spain until 1975 – subsided Stuart resumed political activity in prison.

The Stuart Christie Memorial Archive, currently in the stages of creation, has received a dozen smuggled letters written by Stuart during his time in Spain. In these letters, we not only found aborted escape plans, we have also discovered how he managed to bypass the prison censor. Stuart sent and received letters on the condition that the outside recipient sent monthly copies of ‘Playboy’ magazine to a certain – not so religiously upstanding – prison officer.

After Stuart’s early release in 1967, Spain would continue to hang over Stuart – not only as a spectre of revolutionary hope and defeat, nor as the inspiration for Stuart reviving the dormant Anarchist Black Cross, but with his card literally marked by the British Special Branch. In 1972, he faced conspiracy charges in the ‘Angry Brigade’ trial, Britain’s (now largely forgotten) answer to the Baader-Meinhof gang. After Stuart was acquitted by jury in 1972, he made the decision, following a ‘tip off’ from a special branch officer, to leave London and head to Orkney. Here he would co-found the anarchist ‘Cienfuegos’ Publishing House with fellow anarchist Albert Meltzer.

In ‘The Wretched of the Earth’, the psychiatrist and political philosopher Frantz Fanon remarked that ‘the presence of an obstacle accentuates the tendency towards motion’. Stuart’s life was one that insisted on motion. Against the dark fantasies of immobility of the post-war era – neo-fascism, fierce anti-communism, and the Cold War – Stuart insisted on the possibility of realising anarchism’s dream. As the final words of ‘Floodgates of Anarchy’ (1970) read: “Backward, indeed, to the free city, with its guilds of craftsmen and groups of scholars, its folk-meeting and loose federal association. But forward to the use of technology in its proper place, at the service of man... Backward to the workers’ councils of the Russian and German revolutions; the free communes of Spain, Ukraine, Mexico; the occupation of the places of work in France and Italy... Forward to the Utopia of William Morris, now well within the reach of man.”

Jessica Thorne is the curator of the Stuart Christie Memorial Archive, held at MayDay Rooms in London. maydayrooms.org/stuart_christie



IS THERE A DOCTOR IN THE HOUSE?

Peter Gelderloos

Anarchists are against hierarchy – but what does that actually mean?

Pop philosophers and liberal commentators think they’ve scored an easy goal when they pull off a little number like this: “Anarchists don’t live in the real world. They wouldn’t let their neighbour perform brain surgery on them, so they recognise expertise, but expertise is hierarchy.” Anarchists have actually been studying and analysing hierarchy for more than a century, so it shouldn’t be a surprise that we’ve answered this exact question many, many times.

The confusion is little more than a word play, conflating the definitions of three very different terms: rank, expertise, and hierarchy. Aside from populists who pretend that all forms of power are the same so they can continue to justify the very worst, most oppressive uses of power, the waters have also been muddied by psychologists with an individualist bias or animal behaviourists who created overly simplified schema for social groups by studying animals in captivity. They were drawn to the term hierarchy, even though (or perhaps because?) that term was originally applied to human society and was being developed by anarchists to distinguish between just and unjust forms of social organisation.

That meanings change over time and across contexts is a fundamental fact of language, but the effect of those changes is far from neutral. There are changes that destroy meaning, that make it easier to manipulate people and harder to speak with clarity. And, for whatever reason, English is particularly vulnerable to such changes – perhaps because it’s the language the advertising industry was invented in, or its abundance of both homonyms and synonyms, or the prevalence of puritanism in the culture.

Whatever the case, we can assert that the aforementioned uses of hierarchy are incorrect, not just because of the term’s original meaning but because those uses make it impossible to analyse oppression and coercion in human societies, which in many cases is the very reason centrists have tried to steal the term from anti-authoritarian theorisations.

RANKING

Ranking is simply a comparative, linear ordering of elements. This could range from someone having favourites, to an athletic competition, to rating people’s skill in a specific activity. This football team is better than that one, she has the best aim,

I like grits better than Cap’n Crunch. The criteria are infinite: there are millions of skills or preferences to compare, and millions of ways to compare them. In the absence of a social hierarchy, ranking does not confer you power over anyone else. Having a high rank can give you status, which can certainly play a role in true hierarchies, but it is not in and of itself a hierarchy. Being #1 at something doesn’t necessarily give you an advantage elsewhere.

EXPERTISE

Expertise is the social recognition of knowledge and capacity. That recognition can be informal – you ask your neighbour to help fix your car because everyone knows she is a great mechanic – or it can be formal, as in the licensing of doctors. When it’s formal, that means a group of experts has organised themselves to confer recognition and perhaps also decide who can practice the profession. This recognises that knowledge is collective and expertise takes a great deal of effort. People are in fact not all equal and in some cases being better or more experienced at something gives you more legitimacy to do that thing, like fly an airplane or mediate a serious conflict. Questions of oppression come into the mix when people are denied access to the education they need to become experts in their chosen field, or when someone’s experience or ability is not recognised because they come from a marginalised group. Again, both of these forms of exclusion require the existence of a social hierarchy, and are not innate properties of expertise itself.

Anarchists won’t have any trouble imagining a society in which professional groups organise their own training, guaranteeing free access and assurances of quality and safety. If you’re going to get surgery, you want to make sure the person performing it is good enough or, if they’ve been dangerously negligent in the past, they won’t be able to do so again. A formal institution that gets to decide who is chosen for training, especially if they have a monopoly in their field, certainly has an authoritarian potential that anarchists would want to watch out for, but there are plenty of ways to organise such institutions to prevent that authoritarianism from manifesting.

HIERARCHY

The original meaning of hierarchy is “rule by priests.” It is a social order in which a closed organisation with internal ranking decides who can join and how they must ascend the institutional ladder. The higher up, the more power they have, over both initiates and the

masses of people outside the organisation. In other words, a hierarchy allows a small elite to control an organisation as well as the values of broader society, getting everyone (inside and outside the organisation) to participate in their domination. Even the elite are not completely free. Though they have the most agency, they still must uphold the logic of the institution that produces the power they wield, and that power tends to accumulate over time, meaning the organisation’s traditions may be stronger than its individual members. In the end, members of a hierarchy are only free to increase the hierarchy’s power, with disputes over how best to do that resolved through the relationship of how much power the hierarchy can mobilise and how much power specific members of the hierarchy can utilise for their own ends against their opponents.

In other words, the President or supreme ruler of a very powerful hierarchy might not be able to win a power struggle against lowlier members of the hierarchy if it means going against tradition (including institutional structures) or the perceived interests of the hierarchy itself.

Conversely, a dictator or supreme ruler who is able to command most of the power produced by the hierarchy may end up destroying it if they dedicate it to irrational pet projects that weaken the hierarchy’s basis.

A further consideration is the role of the people at the very bottom of the hierarchy, external to the institution yet vital to the hierarchy itself. With the weakest hierarchies, like the religious orders that formed some early states, they are not captives but spectators, and technically they could walk away. In these cases, the hierarchical organisation has captured some symbolic central ground, and walking away means people would lose their culture, their social relations, and access to spiritual rituals that had become important to them.

In the case of stronger hierarchies, like all modern states, the people at the bottom are captives. We do not give our consent, we cannot walk away, and the hierarchy of the state can inflict whatever decision on us that it wants, backed by the force of its police and military.

This is what anarchists oppose, and with good reason. And with good reason, apologists for the State try to muddy the waters, because when the involuntary nature of the State is laid bare, its only justification can be brute force.

Peter Gelderloos is an anarchist and author of numerous books, including *Anarchy Works*, *The Failure of Nonviolence*, and *Worshipping Power: An Anarchist View of Early State Formation*.

1 *Voluntary* **AND** **OPEN MEMBERSHIP**

Cooperatives are voluntary organisations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

2 *Democratic* **MEMBER CONTROL**

Cooperatives are democratic organisations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. Men and women serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary cooperatives members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote) and co-operatives at other levels are also organised in a democratic manner.

3 *MEMBER ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION*

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the cooperative. Members usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership. Members allocate surplus for any or all of the following purposes: developing their cooperative; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the cooperative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

4 *Autonomy* **AND** **INDEPENDENCE**

Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organisations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organisations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their cooperative autonomy.

5 *EDUCATION, Training* **AND** **INFORMATION**

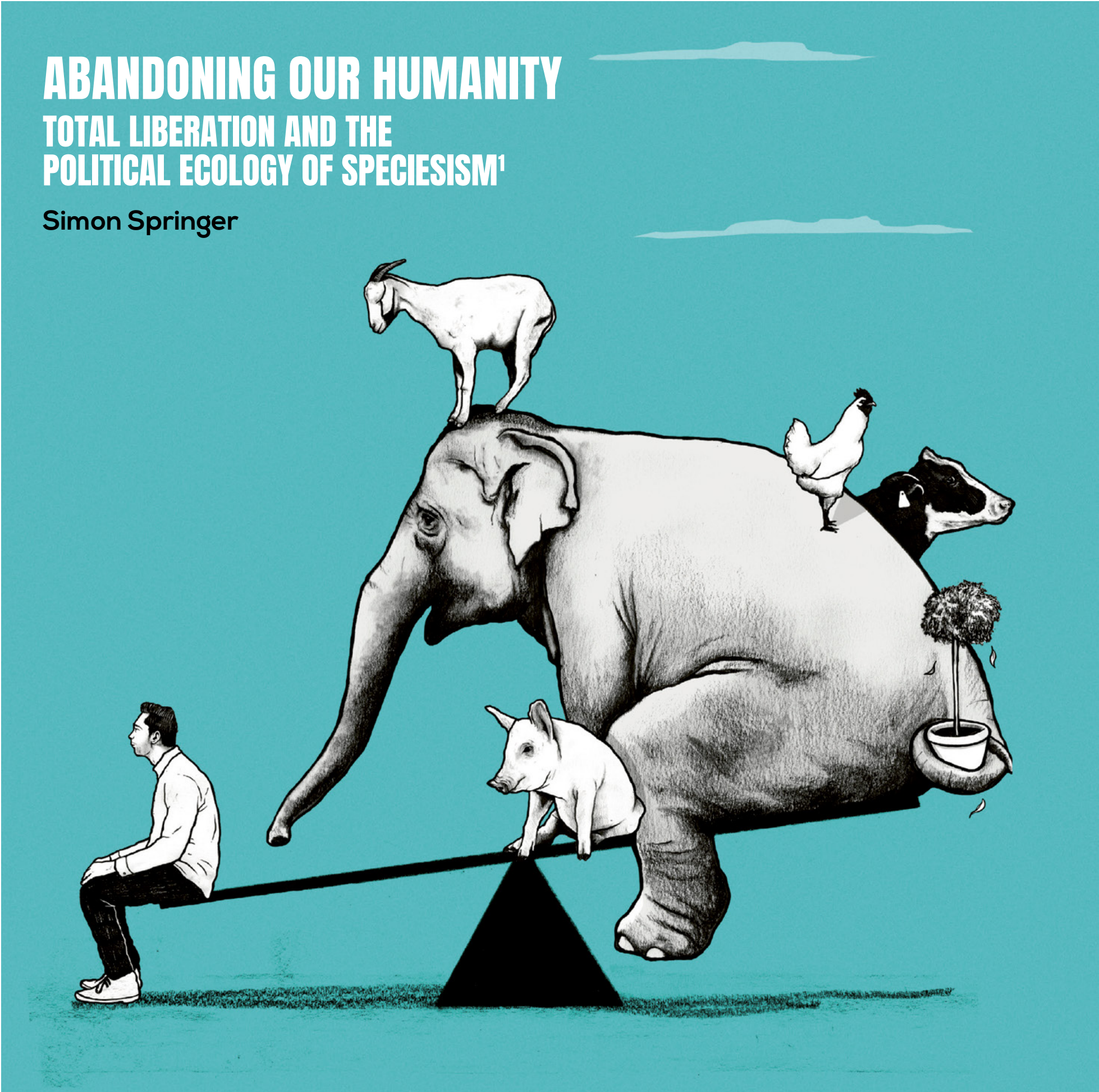
Co-operatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their co-operatives. They inform the general public - particularly young people and opinion leaders - about the nature and benefits of co-operation.

6 *Cooperation* **AMONG** **CO-OPERATIVES**

Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.

7 *CONCERN FOR* **Community**

Cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members.



REFERENCES

Best, S. 2011. Total liberation and moral progress: the struggle for human evolution. <https://drstevebest.wordpress.com/2011/06/22/total-liberation-and-moral-progress-the-struggle-for-human-evolution-3/>
Clark, J. 2001. Contributions to the critique of political ecology. *Capitalism Nature Socialism*. 12:3, 29-36.

Harcourt, W. and Nelson, I. L. 2015. Practising Feminist Political Ecologies: Moving Beyond the ‘Green Economy’. London, Zed Books.
Lorimer, J. 2009. Posthumanism/Posthumanistic Geographies. *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*. 344-354.
Merchant, C. 2005. *Radical Ecology: The Search for a Liveable World*. London: Routledge.
Peet, R., and Watts, M. eds. (1996). *Liberation Ecologies: Environment, Development, Social Movements*. London: Routledge.

Pellow, D. N. 2014. *Total Liberation: The Power and Promise of Animal Rights and the Radical Earth Movement*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
Reclus, E. (1894). *The Earth and Its Inhabitants: The Universal Geography*. London: J. S. Virtue.
Springer, S. 2016. *The Anarchist Roots of Geography: Toward Spatial Emancipation*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Speciesism. Anthropocentrism. Human Supremacy. Anthroparchy. Whatever label you want to apply to this myopic and profoundly violent worldview, it represents nothing less than a planetary atrocity. Given the intensity of the malevolence that humans unleash against other animals in the name of science, industry, labour, and food, it is astonishing that discussions of the problematic legitimization of violence against animals haven’t factored more prominently into the discourse of contemporary political ecology. As a loosely defined area of inquiry, debates have touched upon global warming, declines in air and water quality, soil degradation, deforestation, intensifying greenhouse gasses, species extinctions, and global population growth. Yet the general outlook of political ecology remains decidedly anthropocentric. Above all else, these destructive processes are lamented for their impacts on human societies, where attention to the wellbeing of the Gaia itself is relegated to a secondary concern or externalized to the domain of ‘deep ecology’. Meanwhile the deaths of nonhuman animals are usually framed in terms of the loss of biodiversity and the implications that this has for humans insofar as it represents a disappearance of potential future utility. Scant attention is paid to how factory farming plays a key role in environmental ruination, and even those few studies that do take note seem to downplay or discount the unintelligible mass murder of sentient beings and what this means for the development of a greater planetary consciousness that may be able to turn the tides against ecocide.

In demanding a politicization of environmental issues, most political ecologists have been oddly apolitical in terms of their reflections on the agency and sentience of non-human animals and particularly the othering that underpins the very idea of dismembered and decapitated bodies being euphemized as ‘meat’. There is a distinct need to bring political ecology into direct conversation with the violence of indifference that surrounds nonhuman animals. We must insist on going beyond the confines of contemporary political ecology, with its narrow Marxian focus on class and anthropocentric worldview, to embrace a much wider sense of what I want to call ‘total liberation ecology’. To fulfil its promise as a politicization of ecological concerns I am convinced that political ecology must begin to embrace both a vegan and an anarchist current. If the first principle of radical political ecology is a metaphysics that places humans in nature not above it (Merchant 2005), then speciesism surely should be as big of a concern as class, ethnicity, gender, or any other category of difference. Since the political ecological status of humans is clearly within nature, “one cannot fully grasp the foundations of racism, classism, sexism, patriarchy, ageism, and ableism without also understanding speciesism ... because they are all ideologies and practices rooted in hierarchy and the creation of oppositional superior and inferior subjects” (Pellow 2014). Such

a thoroughly intersectional approach demonstrates the weakness of ‘Richard Peet and Michael Watts’ (1996) so-called ‘liberation ecology’, which seeks to unleash a process of “broadening environmental issues into a movement for livelihood entitlements and social justice.” On first glance this sounds all well and good, but upon closer examination it is simply not enough. It reflects the same anthropocentric framing that guides the bulk of Marxist thought, thereby representing a continuation of Marx’s species imperialism inasmuch as its dialectic fails to consider how certain forms of oppression remain intact, particularly when livelihoods are built on the back of animal exploitation and justice is confined to the social affairs of humans.

The lives of animals remain marginalized as they continue to be conceptualized largely in terms of utility to human livelihoods and wellbeing, rather than considered as having intrinsic and inalienable value in their own right. Insofar as political ecology is concerned, there is consequently a profound importance to adopting the thoroughly integrative approach of a total liberation perspective. For political ecology to succeed as a worthwhile approach, “it must become as radically dialectical as possible” (Clark 2008), at once ruthless in its outlook on capitalism and destructive in its response to the blinkeredness of anthropocentricism, while also caring for the well being of the biosphere as a whole and creative in its placing of humans back within the web of nature. The thoroughly hybrid and relational ethics of total liberation avoids the limited morality of the animal rights discourse, which problematically ignores the nonhuman majority in elevating small groups of species (for example dogs in America and cows in India) to ethical parity with humans and therefore frames the question of animals once more through an anthropocentric lens. What is at stake in political ecology is nothing less than the very fate of the planet. A burden that we often assume must be shouldered alone. Yet thinking this to be the case is to once more assume a position of human supremacy, renewing the hubris that has long underpinned everything from Marxism to modernization theory. Such anthroparchy also rests at the rotten core of capitalism, a form of domination that much of the Left is not well equipped to transcend given the class-centric outlook that has defined much of its formulation. In contrast, the intersectional spaces of feminism and the integral geography of anarchism offer significant promise for the disavowal of such speciesism (Harcourt and Nelson 2015; Springer 2016).

Reconvening the oneness that has been lost in human civilization’s forward march is the only path of hope, and it is irrefutable that the fates of humans, animals, and the Earth are inextricably tied together.

“Progress can no longer entail the zero sum game of human ‘gain’ at the expense of animals and the environment” Stephen Best (2011) argues, “Rather,

a deeper concept of progress must emerge that eliminates the opposition between human and animals and society and nature. Most fundamentally, it would understand the profound interrelatedness of all aspects of planetary ecology”. A total liberation ecology allows us to realize that the future will not be decided solely through human intervention. The providence of the Earth is collective, unavoidably bound in unison by the intersections and evolution of all life forms, identities, and processes. As our land bleeds from the lacerations that come with the clearing of its trees, as our oceans choke from being fed with effluence from rivers of shit, and as our skies converge with greenhouse gases that will eventually suffocate the life out of the planet, hope is difficult to find. We’ve been consumed in the throes of a global bloodbath called capitalism, and as with all great noirs, only in the final revelation do we finally recognize that the enemy is inside. In that final scene all moral ambiguity is stripped away, and we see our own selves reflected in this fatalist mirror. We are the criminals. The antagonists. The executioners. Yet in the grace of humility there exists the potential for a radical transformation of planetary consciousness. Looking within, attuning ourselves to the affective lives of the animal other, and finding the current that flows through all life on this planet is to realize that “what is human and what is natural is always the effect, rather than the grounds for politics” (Lorimer 2009). When we become aware that human interests blend with that of nature, binding us together as a single idea, we can begin to think quite differently. We repair the damages incurred by our predecessors and in this process of having become the consciousness of the Earth (Reclus 1894), we see the beauty of harmony and recognize that love and life are indivisible. Love is the preeminent condition, temporarily shattered only through the falsity of separation. The reflexivity that both veganism and anarchism imply is an attempt to reconnect with this vital frequency and realize the ‘Other’ of nature as ‘Self’. When we establish our politics as a total liberation ecology, the human/nature binary breaks down allowing everything to transform from the assumed fixity of partition to an inherently shared processes of symbiosis and mutual becoming.

This unfolding dance has never been choreographed, and the sequence has no beginning and no end. It is a geopoetics traced in air, a bending of the light of existence, a realization of mutual aid through the process of evolution. So it is not our actions as ‘humans’ that will determine the fate of the world, but paradoxically the abandonment of our humanity. By letting go of our ego we might yet come to learn that love, planetary wellbeing, and the immanence of connection are all one and the same.

Simon Springer is a Professor of Human Geography and Director of the Centre for Urban and Regional Studies at the University of Newcastle, Australia.

CLASSIFIEDS

SOCIAL CENTRES & RESOURCES	BOOKSHOPS	INTERNATIONAL BOOKFAIRS
1 in 12 Club, BD1 2LY, West Yorkshire 1in12.com 56A Infoshop, SE17 3AE, London, 56a.org.uk Ace, Edinburgh EH7 5HA , Scotland autonomous.org.uk BASE, Bristol, BS5 6JY, basebristol.org Black Cat Cafe, Hackney, London, E5 8HB, blackcatcafe.co.uk Blackcurrent Centre Northampton, NN1 4JQ, blackcurrentcentre.org.uk Cowley Club, Brighton, BN1 4JA, cowleyclub.org.uk Decentre. Freedom Building, London, E17QX Glasgow Autonomous Space, Glasgow, G5 8JD, glasgowautonomous.weebly.com Mayday Rooms, London, EC4Y 1DH, maydayrooms.org Liverpool Social Centre , Liverpool, L1 4HY liverpoolsocialcentre.org London Action Resource Centre, London, E11ES Mustan Kanin Kolo, Helsinki, Finland, mustankaninkolo.info Star and Shadow Cinema, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 1BB The Field, New Cross,London, SE14 5HD SUMAC Centre, Nottingham, NG76HX, veggies.org.uk Oxford Action Resource Centre Oxford, OX4 1DD theoarc.org.uk Partisan, Manchester, M4 4FY, partisancollective.net Wharf Chambers, Leeds, LS2 7EQ, wharfchambers.org Warzone, County Antrim, BT2 7JHN, Ireland.	Calton Books, Glasgow, G1 5BX www.calton-books.co.uk Five Leaves Bookshop, London, NG1 2DH fiveleavesbookshop.co.uk Freedom, London, E17QX freedompress.org.uk Housmans Bookshop, London, N1 9DX housmans.com Lighthouse Books, Edinburg, EH8 9DB lighthousebookshop.com News From Nowhere, Liverpool, L1 4HY newsfromnowhere.org.uk October Books, Southampton, SO17 2NF octoberbooks.org People's Republic of Stokes Croft, Bristol, BS2 8JT prsc.org.uk	Amsterdam Anarchist Bookfair agamsterdam.org Balkan Anarchist Bookfair bask2018.noblogs.org Bern Anarchist Bookfair buechermesse.ch Dublin Anarchist Bookfair wsm.ie/bookfair Los Angeles Anarchist Bookfair anarchistbookfair.com Malmö Anarchist Bookfair anarchistbookfairmalmo.ne Melbourne Anarchist Bookfair amelbournebookfair.org Montreal Anarchist Bookfair anarchistbookfair.ca Milan Anarchist Bookfair federazione-anarchica-milanese-fai.noblogs.org New York Anarchist Bookfair anarchistbookfair.net Prague Anarchist Bookfair anarchistbookfair.cz Sao Paulo Anarchist Bookfair feiranarquistasp.wordpress.com Stockholm Anarchist Bookfair anarchistbookfair.se Warsaw Independent Bookfair warsawbookfair.esy.es Melbourne Anarchist Bookfair amelbournebookfair.org Montreal Anarchist Bookfair anarchistbookfair.ca Milan Anarchist Bookfair federazione-anarchica-milanese-fai.noblogs.org New York Anarchist Bookfair anarchistbookfair.net Prague Anarchist Bookfair anarchistbookfair.cz Sao Paulo Anarchist Bookfair feiranarquistasp.wordpress.com Stockholm Anarchist Bookfair anarchistbookfair.se Warsaw Independent Bookfair warsawbookfair.esy.es
BOOKFAIRS	PUBLISHERS/DISTROS	
Bradford Anarchist Bookfair Bristol Radical History Festival brh.org.uk Cardiff Anarchist Bookfair southwalesanarchists.wordpress.com Derry Radical Bookfair derryradicalbookfair.wordpress.com Dorset Radical Bookfair dorsetbookfair.wordpress.com Edinburgh Anarchist Feminist Bookfair edinburghafb.bigcartel.com Liverpool Anarchist Bookfair liverpoolanarchistbookfair.org.uk London Anarchist Bookfair anarchistbookfair.london London Radical Bookfair londonradicalbookfair.wordpress.com Manchester Anarchist Bookfair bookfair.org.uk Newcastle Ewan Brown Anarchist Bookfair newcastlebookfair.org.uk Red and Black Clydeside Bookfair redandblackclydeside.wordpress.com	Active Distro activedistribution.org AK Press USA & UK akpress.org / akuk.com Crimethinc crimethinc.com Detritus detritusbooks.com Dog Section Press dogsection.org Freedom Press freedompress.org.uk Pluto Press plutobooks.com PM Press USA & UK pmpress.org / pmpress.org.uk Stinney Distro stinneydistro.wordpress.com	
	FESTIVALS	
	Crack Festival crack.forteprenestino.net Green Gathering greengathering.org.uk Tolpuddle Martyrs Festival tolpuddlemartyrs.org.uk Earth First earthfirst.uk	Distribuidora Rojinegro, Bogota, Colombia distribuidorarojinegro.blogspot.com.co Ernst Kirchweiger Haus, Wielandgasse 2-4, A-1100 ,Wien,Vienna, ekhaus@med-user.net Hausmania, Hausmannsgt. 34, 0182, Oslo. hausmania.org Het Fort van Sjakoo Bookstore, Amsterdam sjakoo.nl Kafé 44, Tjarnhovsgatan 46, Stockholm 11628 kafé44.org Klinika Squat Centre, Prague en.squat.net Leoncavallo, Via Watteau 7, 20125, Milano leoncavallo.org Red Emma's, 800 St. Paul St., Baltimore, MD 21202 redemmas.org La Rosa De Foc, Calle de Joaquín Costa, 34, 08001, Barcelona, Cataluña facebook.com/libreriariosadefoc Sale Infoshop, Orebítská 14, Prague 3-Zižkov,13000 sale.451.cz Schwarze Risse in Kreuzberg Gneisenaustr., 2a 10961 Berlin, schwarzerisse.de Sto Citas, Radical Bookshop, Gundulićeva 11, Zagreb, Croatia stocitas.org

DOG SECTION **SHORTS** RADICAL PAMPHLET SERIES

DOG SECTION **SHORTS**

ARE YOU AN ANARCHIST?

DAVID GRAEBER & WANT SOME STUDIO

DOG SECTION **SHORTS**

WHAT WOULD EMMA GOLDMAN DO?

KOSHKKA DUFF
CHRIS ROSSDALE
& MATT BONNER

DOG SECTION **SHORTS**

WHY I'M AN ANARCHIST

BENJAMIN ZEPHANIAH
& NICK HAYES

Introductions to the thoughts and actions of radicals past and present. Featuring:

**DAVID GRAEBER
KOSHKKA DUFF
& CHRIS ROSSDALE
BENJAMIN ZEPHANIAH
and more**

Each edition is riso printed and features an original illustration from artists including:

**WANT SOME STUDIO
MATT BONNER
NICK HAYES**

COMING SOON TO **DOGSECTION.ORG**

THE SOLIDARITY ECONOMY: A VISUAL GUIDE

By Solidarity Economy Association
Published by Dog Section Press

216 FULL COLOUR PAGES FEATURING:

- The Zapatistas
- Rojava
- The Spanish Revolution
- Workers councils
- The Black Panthers
- Cooperatives
- The NGO industrial complex
- Abahlali baseMjondolo
- And much more...

£8 ON SALE NOW.
WWW.DOGSECTION.ORG/PRODUCT/SOLIDARITY-ECONOMY

"As capitalism and the nation-state destroy the biosphere and produce ever greater human immiseration, the practice of mutual aid and economic solidarity is more important than ever. This beautifully-crafted little book will inspire you to change the world – and give you the tools to do it."

-Debbie Bookchin

Join the Left Book Club

The best radical books

Beautiful unique editions

Affordable subscriptions from just £5.99/month

Great discounts on a massive range of books

Fabulous author events free to all members

Free UK postage

We are the only not-for-profit subscription book club.

Join us and help support political education.

Subscribe or give a gift:
www.leftbookclub.com

20 DOPE MAGAZINE

DOPE MAGAZINE 21

BOOKS BEHIND BARS

Luke Bellingham

Haven Distribution has been sending books to prisoners since 1996. Our founder and Chair, Lee, started our work by packing and sending out books from his North London flat. Now, 22 years later, a few things have changed: we’re based in the East of London not in the North, we’ve got a small ramshackle office, and we’re run by a handful of volunteers, rather than just the one. Other than that, though, much has stayed the same: we’re still guided by the simple purpose of sending books to as many prisoners as we can.

We now send around 2000 books a year, and we’ve sent at least one or two books into every adult prison in the UK. We get books into prisons in two ways: we purchase and send in educational books for prisoners who are studying courses, and we have catalogues of free books (donated to us by publishers) from which any prisoner can request books. Over the course of our history we’ve sent tens of thousands of books into prisons, and have supported hundreds of different courses, ranging from carpentry to criminology, from mathematics to motor mechanics.

THE “BOOK BAN” AND ACCESS TO BOOKS IN PRISON

In 2014, then Justice Minister Chris Grayling infamously instituted what became known as the “book ban” – restricting what could be sent into prisons in this country, including books. It attracted enormous criticism, and did not last long. It’s now been a few years since the ban was lifted, and there’s far less conversation about books in prison. There’s a danger that some may assume all prisoners can now get hold of whatever books they want, which is far from the case. Firstly, not all prisoners have family or friends who are able and willing to send books in for them.

For instance, a prisoner at Wandsworth recently wrote to us after receiving some books, saying: “I cannot tell you how much it means to be able to receive the books. I have no family in the UK so your books mean so much to me.” Secondly, prison libraries – the main source of books for the vast majority – vary greatly, and they do not always have a good range of books, especially educational books.

One inmate said to us recently in a letter: “The library provides books but usually they are damaged or just pulp fiction that is of little educational value.” On top of this, more expensive non-fiction books are usually reference-only, meaning they can only be accessed during inmates’ very limited time in the library.

The prison rules state that inmates should have a minimum of half an hour’s access to the library every

two weeks, but in many cases they get even less than that, particularly when there aren’t enough officers to accompany them.

“Library access is very erratic and prisoners who work hardly ever get to visit the library” – another recent letter. Particularly if you’re studying a course, limited access to the library and the lack of course books can cause huge difficulties. In this context, receiving books from us can have a significant impact on prisoners’ time inside.

THREE WAYS BOOKS CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN PRISONS

1. AIDING (SELF-)EDUCATION

Most books we send in are educational books, in response to specific requests from individual prisoners. With prison education budgets tight, we provide a vital resource for prisoners’ study, particularly given the limitations of libraries. We have good relationships with prison tutors across the country, who often arrange the applications for their students so that they can receive course books they’d otherwise have no access to.

Courses in our prisons are being affected by officer shortages: a prison tutor recently told me that around 40% of their classes were being cancelled due to a lack of officers to accompany prisoners to education. If prisoners have books from us, which they own and can have with them in their cells, they can continue their studies whatever the state of the library, and however much they are kept from attending classes. They can pursue self-motivated, self-education, often the most transformative form of education there is.

Prisons are diverse places, in many ways, and books are one of the few things that can almost match the diversity of people. Literacy levels in our prisons are, on average, very low. Reflecting this, our most popular books are dictionaries, and we frequently receive letters highlighting the role our dictionaries have played in helping prisoners learn to read and write. There is also a significant population in our prisons who do not have English as their first language.

We send in lots of bilingual dictionaries, helping prisoners to both progress in English courses and communicate on the wings. One letter from the Isle of Wight recently said: “Thank you so much for getting my dictionary for me. It is my pleasure because I need it always so I am feeling confidence with the dictionary. As you know English is my second language. I am very happy. Thanks.” Perhaps less well-known is the fact that there are also plenty of prisoners studying undergraduate and postgraduate degrees.

There is great intellectual and academic potential in prisons, and books are a crucial tool for helping this potential to be realised.

A man in Full Sutton wrote to us last year: “I have recently commenced my penultimate study module towards my BSc (Hons) Criminology & Psychology with the Open University. You have previously provided me with numerous books that have assisted me with my study... These have both been invaluable and helped me greatly.”

2. SUPPORTING PERSONAL PROGRESS

Our Radio 4 appeal tells the story of Peter. He had been a serial re-offender, caught in the cycle of crime and imprisonment. Eventually, through a prison education department, he began voluntary work giving housing advice to other prisoners. He found out about Haven, and ordered books to help him in his work, and to assist him acquiring the relevant qualifications. The dictionary and Citizen’s Advice Guide that we sent him were the first books he’d ever owned. They helped him to get an NVQ Level 3 in Advice & Guidance, and on release he got a volunteering placement with St Giles Trust, and pursued a law course to specialise in housing.

Prisoners are often facing the most difficult time of their lives, and books can be an important source of strength for some. We received a letter from HMP Elmsley last month, saying: “If ‘knowledge is power’ then you have surely empowered me, at a time in my life when I have never felt more helpless.”

3. PRISONS IN CRISIS AND BANG-UP

The disgraceful state of many of our prisons has attracted media attention over the past few years – overcrowding, riots, drugs, suicides, violence, escapes. There were more suicides and deaths in custody during 2016 than in any previous year on record. There was an average of nearly 70 assaults in English and Welsh prisons each day that year. In light of this, books can seem trivial.

In many ways, these problems are of course more consequential and more urgent than books. But it’s important to remember the overall effect of these issues: they make it harder and harder for prisoners to have a safe and productive time in prison. In a more practical and concrete way, they also mean more and more prisoners are spending longer and longer banged up in their cells. This makes it vital for prisoners to have something meaningful and beneficial to do during their time locked up. Few things can be more meaningful or beneficial than self-education, and there’s no tool more effective for that – at least within a prison cell – than books.

Luke Bellingham is a trustee and voluteer with Haven Distribution havendistribution.org.uk

