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# SOCIAL ANARCHISM

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## ANARCHISM RECONSIDERED

Len Krimerman's case study  
of a worker's co-op that  
failed.

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Frank Lindenfeld  
Glenda Morris  
Howard J. Ehrlich

Richard Hiskes reconsiders  
Benjamin Tucker

Johnson Thomas reviews  
*Sale's Human Scale*

Carol Ehrlich reviews  
Marge Piercy's *Vida*

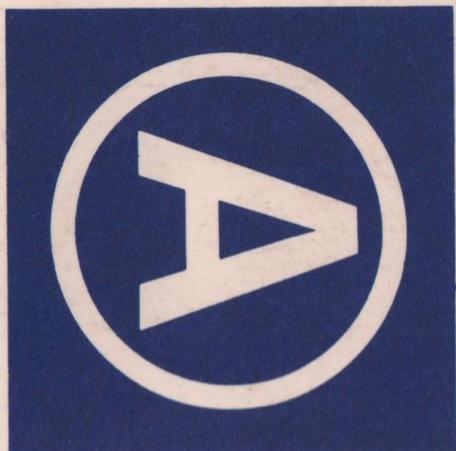
Poetry by Elizabeth L. Johnson,  
R. D. Lakin, and Toni Ortner-Zimmerman



A Journal of Practice and Theory  
Volume 1, Number 2 Winter, 1980

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**Anarchie. Anarchia.  
Anarchismus. Anarquía.  
Anarki. Anarchy.**



**No matter where  
you are, one symbol  
says it all.**



# Social Anarchism

—a journal

*Social Anarchism* is published by the Atlantic Center for Research and Education, 2743 Maryland Ave., Baltimore, Md. USA 21218. It is designed & distributed by Vacant Lots Press and printed by Neuberg Printing, San Francisco. The Journal is issued semi-annually in February & October. \$1.75 per issue, North America; \$2.25 elsewhere.

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Leonard Krimmerman

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Leonard Krimerman  
Anarchism Reconsidered: Past Fallacies and Unorthodox Remedies

Some Preliminaries

In what follows, I raise some doubts about mainstream or orthodox anarchism, my own view for many years and one which, like a grateful child separated from a conventional but loving family, I still feel warmly towards and uneasy about criticizing.<sup>1</sup> I want to present and clarify these doubts in some detail, partly because I believe they are serious ones. But my purpose is not to repudiate or refute anarchism, but to indicate the compelling need for us to strengthen it and to suggest how such a reconstruction might begin. Further, the doubts to be explored are in an important sense my own. They have not been extracted from debates with critics of anarchism nor from the pages of political science journals. They have grown out of difficulties I have experienced attempting to apply anarchism first in education and then in the workplace. And this is a second reason why I treat them in such detail below.

Classical Anarchism: Some Initial Misgivings

What, then, is "classical" ("orthodox" or "mainstream") anarchism, and what were the experiences that weakened my commitment to it? From 1961 to 1975, I considered myself a direct and happy descendant of the anarchist tradition from Godwin and Josiah Warren to Kropotkin, Guerin and Paul Goodman. I believed then that only voluntary and face-to-face communities were justifiable, that a voluntary association was one based on the full and free consent of all members, and that this in turn implied a right to secede without penalty and with a fair share of collective resources. Governments of all varieties, I was certain, were incompatible with consent, drew (unwilling) support through direct and indirect coercion, and should be resisted and disbanded.

The route to a society in which all individuals are free and equal sovereigns was somewhat less clear to me. Still, along with anarchists of all persuasions, I held with Emma Goldman's dictum that the means must be congruent or harmonious with the end. I reasoned that, if what we want in the future is a leaderless and decentralized society, then we must start today by building anarchist organizations that are leaderless and decentralized. We must secede from the institutions of domination and hierarchy which surround us, build new and self-reliant communities, and defend them solely by citizen militias functioning without authority, officers, or uniforms. Anything less would be unacceptable compromise, and would lead down a discredited road to the Bolshevik Revolution and the barbarity of Red Fascism.

Eventually, however, with the end of the '60s and the apparent demise of the New Left, free schools, communal experiments, and so on, it became clear to me that contemporary anarchism had failed to make a lasting difference. Indeed, almost all of what had burst into bloom seemed to vanish without a trace. How many of the hundreds (thousands?) of free schools listed in the numerous New Schools directories of the late '60s still remain? Have they had more than a negligible effect on public schooling? Moreover, looking at the history of anarchism convinced me that this pattern of explosive but fleeting existence -- what can be called our *problem of marginality* -- was a recurrent one. Anarchism has generally been a peripheral voice, unable to establish or win over a single free-standing community. It makes a transitory appearance here and there, but has never managed to consolidate or secure its victories or to develop them cumulatively over a number of decades and generations. The very few exceptions, such as Josiah Warren's Modern Times community, have been parasitic on, or at least far from threatening to, large and authoritarian nation-states.

Little by little, I began to think that my first task as an anarchist was to face this discouraging historical fact. If I were serious about making a real or substantial difference, I needed to figure out why past anarchists had failed to produce a single stable society, why our own recent movements (May 1968, the Provos and Kabouters, the American New Left, counter-culture, free schools, and so on) have been so short-lived, and what could be done to break out of this pattern of historical inconsequence.

My current thoughts on anarchist marginality have come directly from working with International Poultry, Inc. (IP), a poultry processing cooperative in Willimantic, Connecticut. Originally, this project attracted me because it suggested an explanation for the failure of anarchism to survive into the '70s which left intact all of my classical or orthodox anarchist convictions. This explanation viewed our strategic focus in the '60s as misplaced: In concentrating excessively on alternative education, deschooling, children and youth issues, we had been seduced into a dead end. What had instead to be done was to carry the anarchist vision and process -- unchallenged and unaltered -- into the workplace and, with the impetus and resources this

*June 1976:* Menorah Kosher Poultry of Willimantic, CT is forced into bankruptcy; nearly 100 workers lose their jobs.

*September 1976:* Members of a technical assistance organization, the Federation for Economic Democracy, hold a series of meetings with ex-employees of Menorah to discuss the possibility of, and their interest in, a worker-owned co-op.

*October 1976:* Five workers are elected by their peers to coordinate efforts to produce a feasibility study for the prospective cooperative.

*October 1976-April 1977:* Despite a positive feasibility study, every bank and agency contacted (about 10 in all) refuses to help finance the cooperative.

*May 1977-September 1977:* Grant proposals are submitted to conduct a CETA-funded training program which would produce deboned poultry for Connecticut high schools. A proposal is finally accepted in early September 1977.

*October 1977-February 1978:* IP operates a training program for 6 hours a day, 5 days a week which covers "further processing" skills, as well as "how to run your own business" and "what is a cooperative." The 25 workers involved elect their own Board, create their own by-laws, develop production procedures, and hire a manager.

*September 1978:* Financing is finally granted from the Campaign for Human Development (a national Catholic Foundation), the Community Services Agency (Boston regional office), the Industrial Cooperative Association (New England technical assistance group), and the Small Business Administration. Construction and renovations begin.

*May 1979:* Production of deboned poultry begins, with eight workers and two managers.

*September 1979:* A new manager is brought in to create a more "efficient" and "professional" workplace. With the IP Board, he introduces clear job descriptions and lines of authority for managers and supervisory personnel, and a well-enforced code of member responsibilities and on-the-floor obligations.

*October 1979:* A bonus system is introduced by the new manager, with pay incentives for faster and, later on, more efficient workers. In all cases, productivity improves; for some workers by over 100%. The co-op now employs 30 workers.

*March 1980:* Rough times begin: Perdue and other mega-processors jump into the further processing field and small firms like IP find it difficult to compete. This, coupled with seasonal and market factors, forces layoffs and eventually (May 1980), closes the plant.

*August 1980:* IP seeks refinancing from the National Consumer Cooperative Bank and SBA; but despite a few large and loyal customers, prospects seem very grim.

new strategy would provide, move from there to eliminating the other faces of hierarchy and centralization. My initial hope, then, in joining IP was to help create an anarchist workplace, and then a network of such workplaces, and from there to begin once again to launch the entire social revolution.

Far easier said than done, as I need hardly point out. The development of "anarchist" or even self-managed or worker-controlled factories is no simple matter, especially in the midst of predatory capitalist competitors. This much I knew from the start. What I didn't know at first, and only gradually conceded, was that, in a number of ways, the task was made more difficult by my anarchist inclinations. The plant slowly took shape, but it did so despite my classical ideas of anarchist organization, in the end by consciously rejecting and deviating from those ideas. I began to sense that there might be crudities or defects in anarchism which made it an obstacle to the full and healthy evolution of workers' cooperatives.

With this realization, I came face to face with the problem of anarchist marginality in its most severe form. Perhaps it was not, after all, a strategy wrongly focused on education and youth that did us in a decade ago, but something far more intrinsic to anarchism. The microcosm of International Poultry let me see how some of our own central and unexamined assumptions might hinder our efforts, and work to keep us on the margins of social life.

#### Down to Details

The cooperative in which I have worked (in general, as an educational and funding consultant, and for its first four months, on the floor as well) is owned and controlled by its worker-members. Our main product has been "further processed chicken"--boneless chicken cutlets, portion-controlled breast and leg meat, deboned cornish hens, etc.; hence, the work is in the main labor-intensive. International Poultry began production in May, 1979, two and one-half years after Menorah Kosher Poultry, a slaughterhouse which had also operated in Willimantic, was forced to close its doors. Many of Menorah's 100 ex-employees helped to form International Poultry, and we thus saw our cooperative as a potentially effective and duplicatable response to the growing plague of plant closings. The members of IP built most of the plant ourselves, including three large walk-in refrigeration units of varying temperatures and a USDA-approved processing lab. At its height, the co-op has had a workforce of about 30 who together, depending on product mix, can process from 3 - 10 tons of chicken daily.

It is useful to distinguish three separate points at which my anarchist preconceptions and my loyalty to IP parted company -- indeed, where the former seemed to obstruct the latter. These points are much like "developmental stages" in the plant's history: its *origination* (initial vision and energy), *stabilization* (development of a well-functioning workplace), and *proliferation* (building a network of other self-managing worker cooperatives).

*First*, how should such an enterprise get started? From the bottom up, initiated and sustained by those who would be most closely involved with its operation -- so said my anarchist friends and my own anarchist convictions. But in the case of IP this view would surely have kept the co-op from ever struggling to life. The workers had little or no familiarity with cooperatives, and for the most part, distrusted their own capacity to run a complicated business. They were all on welfare or unemployment, and almost none had ever completed high school. Their native tongue in most cases was Spanish. Without some aid from sympathetic outsiders -- mainly university folk with time, resources, ideas, organizational experience, confidence, and contacts, how far could these potential co-op members have come?

Further, and more controversially, financial assistance was necessary. A venture of this sort isn't cheap, and without over \$250,000 in initial capital, we could not have purchased enough inventory, built the processing lab and walk-in refrigeration units, and hired the number of people needed for competitive production. But to obtain a sum of this magnitude meant appealing, ultimately, to banks, corporate foundations, and government agencies. It thus meant, according to scrupulous anarchists, perpetuating dependence in a new form, rather than breaking free of it and constructing something with our own resources and energies.

*Secondly*, once production began, conflicts surfaced over how best to create and maintain a stable enterprise. Within our first three months, it became evident that my traditional anarchist conception of organization would not work. Ideas such as "leaderless groups," or the use of internal sanction (e.g. moral reasoning) rather than external ones (penalties and rewards), and even the venerable principle of rotating positions of authority -- all of these seemed to produce more problems than they resolved. They tended to destabilize IP, for they made our fledgling workplace seem even more uncertain and tenuous, and thus weakened morale and solidarity. Frictions and tensions ran high -- between personalities, racial groups, sexes, and between Board members and ordinary workers. In a real-life version of the hoary free-loader objection to anarchism, they ran particularly high between those who worked long and hard hours, and those who did not. For though the latter were "talked to" and "encouraged," they nonetheless received the same compensation and were not penalized for slipshod or perfunctory work.

In September of 1979, I returned to full-time teaching, and at this point changes previously under discussion were implemented in earnest. The jobs of Floor Coordinator, Business Manager, and Production Manager were delineated, with clear ranges of authority to decide and discipline, and without any provision for rotation (workers could be fired and replaced by the Board). Moreover, a code of member responsibilities and on-the-floor obligations had been developed, mainly by the managers, with specific and well-enforced penalties for noncompliance.

Perhaps most illustrative and significant: A bonus system



was introduced, providing extra pay for faster and more productive workers. According to all of the workforce, this innovation was critical in turning the plant around. Encouraged by the rewards, more skillful processors no longer resented their less productive co-workers, and this in turn eased racial tensions since most of the less productive were "North Americans." The production lab soon hummed harmoniously: piece-work -- an unlikely heroine in an alternative workplace -- had paid off for both individual workers and the cooperative's overall viability. Here, as with the penalty-enforced code and the establishment of firm lines and nonrotating positions of authority, good practical sense had prevailed over pure anarchist principle.

Finally, how do we go beyond IP to the task of proliferating self-managed workplaces and communities? Orthodox anarchism seems to respond to this question in two ways. On one hand (consider Warren and Goodman), it suggests that this is to be done by the moral force of example: The success of one worker-controlled enterprise will provide a model and encouragement for others, and these will then network and federate together. On the other hand, I have frequently heard anarchists dismiss this whole question as misconceived. There is, they say, no incremental path to large-scale transformation; there is only spontaneous social revolution. Thus, they conclude, it makes no sense to think of building gradually upon any particular self-managing enterprise. But both "exemplary model" and "spontaneous revolution" anarchists reject the path of using centralized institutions, ones already in place or new ones, to bring about social reconstruction -- for example, labor unions, federal or state agencies, political parties, or democratic socialist groupings.

Here we return to the very first point, though in a more complex setting: Like the initiation of a single self-managing plant, the creation of a strong and not merely peripheral anarchist or self-managing sector of the economy may well require assistance from the dominant and non-(or even anti-) anarchist sector. Like it or not, without the resources of an Economic Development Authority or a National Consumer Cooperative Bank, or those of union and public employee pension funds, we may be unable to move beyond our present stage -- a familiar one, and one which is hardly threatening to the system -- of a few (or few dozen) marginal and isolated alternative enterprises. Working with or within such organizations is no doubt precarious and problematic, but what strategy for wide-scale change is not?

*What Can Be Learned from a Single Case?*

I was led to feel, by working with IP, that there are serious deficiencies in orthodox anarchism. Though they took place, of course, within one small factory, the events there seemed to suggest that anarchism may tend to impede social reconstruction; thus, they may also help explain -- at least as a plausible hypothesis -- why it has been so persistently a fringe phenomenon. For what I saw obstructing IP were not peculiar traits of this or that form of the anarchist position nor of some particular

anarchist personality, but general deficiencies in the orthodox doctrine itself. These were largely of two sorts: theoretical crudities or omissions, and strategic rigidity ("purity").

In the first case, just as my own anarchism could only recommend to IP that it reject all forms of hierarchy and disregard external sanctions, so have anarchists generally operated with concepts of "centralization," "hierarchy," "authority," and even "government" that are crude and inflexible. These we have interpreted, for the most part, in "all or nothing" ways, apparently forgetting that concrete choices and institutions always differ in degree, that such differences can be immense, and that they sometimes make all the difference in practical life. More important, nowhere do we find, except very sparsely in Ivan Illich (*Tools for Conviviality*, New York, 1973 esp. Ch. II), anarchist appraisals of different forms of "bureaucracy," "government," and so on, which reveal how less acceptable forms can help promote more acceptable ones which augment the scope of our individual sovereignty and increase the independence and self sufficiency of local communities. Nowhere, in short, has anarchist theory provided even a sketch of *transitional stages*: a plausible "libertarian continuum" of social arrangements by which we can build cumulatively from where we are now to the final or wholly decentralized and self-governing society, free of all forms of domination.

These are serious omissions. On one hand, they blind us to the many situations (for example, IP and other worker-controlled plants) in which "hierarchical" organizations may contribute more to the increased empowerment of their members -- and thus be more desirable even from an anarchist point of view -- than non-hierarchical ones based primarily on mutual trust and internal sanctions. In addition, without some sort of libertarian continuum, even one that is intuitive and exploratory, the abyss will simply be too wide and awesome for most of us to cross. We need the reinforcement of achievable present goals, ones that will in turn nurture additional and cumulative development. So long as this is absent, people will continue to think of anarchism as a position that talks mainly to itself and not to them. They will reject it, and understandably so.

As for strategic rigidity, it was clear to me that by rejecting alliances with non-anarchist groups and institutions, and by stressing the moral influence of exemplary models, classical anarchists would doom IP to a peripheral and vulnerable existence. This hardly seemed atypical. On the contrary, "no alliance" and "exemplary model" appeals were expressions of a credo fundamental to anarchist orthodoxy: that our means must always be in harmony with -- a miniature or embryonic form of -- our ends. I began to fear that "no alliance" was in practice indistinguishable from "no win," and that anarchists were often concerned with preserving their own purity at the cost of failing to build strong, diverse, and lasting constituencies. Seen in this light, strategically pure anarchism was perhaps more an obstacle to, than an ally of, IP, workplace democracy, and other forms of large-scale reconstruction.

There are many situations where anarchist practice seems to confirm the rigidly pure and no-win picture arising from IP. Whether it be in the Civil War in Spain (see Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia*, New York, 1952, p. 62 and Hugh Thomas, *The Spanish Civil War*, New York, 1975, pp. 733, 934-5), Paris in the Spring of 1968 (see Andre Gorz, *Socialism and Revolution*, New York, 1973, pp. 36-41), Makhno battling non-anarchists and anti-Bolshevik Ukrainian nationalists as well as Lenin and Trotsky (M. Palij, *The Anarchism of Nestor Makhno*, pp. 245-253), Paul Goodman's secessionist community of scholars (see the final chapter of his *Community of Scholars*, New York, 1965), or the contemporary hostility of European anarchists (e.g., Cohn-Bendit's lumpen-surrealist newspaper, *Asphalt Beach*) towards self-management and their frequent castigation of the Basque cooperative network in Mondragon, anarchism has often seemed more intent on remaining pure than on winning particular and possibly critical struggles. Whether they favor peaceful communitarian secession or the more direct tactics of social revolution, anarchists have rarely recognized (and most often repudiated) the need to assemble broad-based and inter-ideological alliances so as to dispel common enemies -- a specific dictatorship, workplace stratification and powerlessness, a two-party system wedded to corporate ownership of productive resources, the male and bio-medical domination of health-care resources.

From all of this, I've drawn a two-fold conclusion. First, the bad news: What IP and the more general lessons strongly suggest is that classical anarchism is not merely a thorn in the side of social reconstruction. That would be bad enough. But it is also a thorn in its own side. *There is a stubborn streak of self-destructiveness within the anarchist position*, regardless of what form it takes -- individualist, mutualist, anarcho-syndicalist, communist, or any other. And it is this self-defeating dimension, I believe, that as much as anything else accounts for the marginal and transient nature of anarchist activity. For by remaining pure and rejecting transitional steps, it also remains isolated from the capacities and needs of ordinary (i.e. pre-anarchist) individuals: individuals who need the assurance and reinforcement of incremental development, who accept hierarchy, authority, and centralization (in some forms) as useful and legitimate instruments (e.g., against free-loaders, to secure stability, to augment equality or self-sufficiency); and who are wisely distrustful of those who want support for ideal future goals while refusing to join alliances to root out present injustices. Orthodox anarchism has made itself inaccessible to and disdainful of the greatest portion of humanity, even those who have some sympathy for its long-range vision and with whom it has a bond of solidarity in common oppression. No wonder its appeal has tended to be short-lived and its development at best erratic.

On the other hand, though the flaws are serious and widespread, they are not fatal. Anarchism is salvageable. For this to happen, however, anarchist theory and practice must be deromanticized. If we are to overcome our own self-defeating tendencies,

and the defects which have helped to keep us marginal, some fundamental redirection is required. For a while, at least, we should deemphasize descriptions of the happy and full days after social revolution and "no exit" condemnations of present oppressions which do not reveal how to diminish them. We should demand and develop a less orthodox and more concrete sort of anarchist theory that can help us make real differences -- ones that are substantial, cumulative, and long-lasting.

*Reconstructing Anarchism: Some First Steps*

What would such a reconstructed anarchism be like? I would need another full paper or more to do this question justice, but a preliminary sketch may still be of some use. Three of its features are implicit in the previous critique of classical anarchism: unorthodox anarchists would be "zig-zag," "alliance-seeking," and "transitional," rather than "straight arrow," "alliance-opposing," and "all-or-nothing."

The aim of "zig-zag" anarchists is to weaken our present doctrinaire or "straight arrow" attachment to means-ends congruence. For straight arrow anarchists, the task of anarchist practice is that of building from miniature but exemplary anarchist organizations to larger and eventually all-encompassing ones with the same purified features. This, however, is a very simplistic picture: It is as if we were at the bottom of a mountain, looking for a single uniform path that would take us directly to the top. On the zig-zag view, any such path will occasionally lead to dead ends or over cliffs. It will neglect strategies that require sideways or downwards movement here and now in order to move more fully upward in the future. (Rigid loyalty to pure anarchist organizations, when there are none around of any size or strength, may well help to freeze patterns of hierarchy and submissiveness, making them even harder to resist.)

At this point, I suspect, we should neither affirm nor deny the means-ends principle but give it a very thorough second look. In particular, we need to raise two sorts of questions. First, in what situations does the principle obstruct rather than promote anarchist goals? When a long-dominated group is not yet ready to organize itself without leaders or hierarchy? When specific institutions or elites stand in the way of any significant libertarian progress but cannot be overthrown by anarchists alone? And second, what exactly does means-ends congruence (or harmony) amount to? Through years of neglect, the criteria for this have become hazy and ambiguous. Should we insist on a strict identity, the only allowable difference between means and ends being that of scope or size, or should we zig a bit and concede that means can resemble ends much as embryos resemble fully-matured organisms? In brief: Emma Goldman's dictum needs to be rethought, not merely to identify occasional exceptions on its periphery, but to determine the central core of what it means to accept and to reject.

Secondly, unorthodox anarchists are coalition-seekers, and

do not assume that linking up with "marxists," "socialists," "progressive democrats," or other non-anarchist groups is automatically a form of treason or suicide. But this raises the theoretical issue, dismissed by classical anarchism, of what makes an alliance with non-anarchists acceptable. One possible criterion is that of respecting the right of coalition members to independent action. Groups which join together pledge to support certain common initiatives, goals, and decision-makers. But they do not closet their own special priorities nor accept as binding the coalition's judgment on when or how to pursue them. Another test would appeal to the "libertarian continuum": Alliances which steadily decrease their own authority and empower their constituencies should be more worthy of anarchist trust than those that keep a tight rein on power and prerogatives. And we might further ask whether the alliance confronts a form of centralization and privilege, for example, corporate control of life-support resources or the two-party system, which must first be dislodged before any other libertarian goals become achievable.

Transitional anarchists would work within what I have called the "libertarian continuum": a series of stages by which sovereignty -- final authority -- would be transferred incrementally from a centralized state to regional and eventually face-to-face local communities. This of course involves identifying intermediate forms of authority and government, and ones that facilitate (provide access to preconditions of) cumulative development. Here, I believe, anarchist theory is in a virtually pre-historic condition. We have hardly any common or settled idea of (1) the multiple criteria for deciding when sovereignty is shared or centralization diminished, (2) what counts as a greater or lesser transfer of sovereignty or reduction in government, or (3) what sort of resources or pre-conditions are necessary or fertile for keeping the cumulative process ongoing.

In *Drawing the Line*, Paul Goodman may provide us with some valuable clues. For he speaks there of the *natural authority* of parents and teachers.<sup>2</sup> This, he claims, can be distinguished from the coercive authority of government in that it aims at its own demise by empowering the child or learner as an independent agent. If teachers and parents transfer sovereignty by increasing self-direction and control over resources, why not also larger-scale institutions? Andre Gorz has already broken ground here in his discussions of non-reformist reforms (*Strategy for Labor*, Boston, 1968) and of the relation between "external" and "internal" vanguards within a revolutionary party "which leads people to organize their own liberation and to rule themselves collectively" (*Socialism and Revolution*, New York, 1973). And there are numerous concrete illustrations worth exploring as potential models of shared sovereignty: certain voucherized systems of public education (as in Denmark);<sup>3</sup> Peter Barnes' idea of a state land bank that would tax large corporations and realtors to provide funding for the purchase of land by individuals and local communities (*The People's Land*, Emmaus, PA, 1975, pp. 228-234); Congressman Ron Dellums' 1977 proposal for a (somewhat) community-

controlled and de-hierarchized National Health Service and the recently-formed Citizens Party which in a campaign flyer advocates a "democratically managed economy aimed at supporting viable local neighborhoods and communities" and would provide a "grass-roots process" whereby rank-and-file members participate in developing platforms and selecting nominees.

These of course may be to some extent imperfect as transitional or intermediary models: They may retain too much (or too little) authority or contribute only minimally to future self-governance. Nonetheless, they -- and others in the same family of shared sovereignty arrangements -- seem to me to be real sources of hope.<sup>4</sup> For unlike orthodox anarchist options, they can bring together large constituencies and can substantially undermine unredeemable and extremely widespread forms of domination. In addition, while they rely on familiar and stable patterns of organization, they also provide resources for overcoming dependence on those patterns. For transitional or unorthodox anarchists, these would be accomplishments worth celebrating, even though they would leave most of the battles still to be fought.

Here a difficult question surfaces which has important implications for how we see the relation between orthodox and unorthodox anarchism: Do they differ solely in the means or strategies they adopt to reach agreed-upon ends? So it might seem, given -- as indicated above -- that unorthodox anarchists have more flexibility about the means they can utilize and that their strategies include working with certain alliances and intermediate institutions rejected by the mainstream. Certainly, there is this side of the contrast, but it seems to me there is another and possibly deeper dimension as well.

To see this, consider the following much-attenuated example. Imagine any current nation-state, in which there is the usual minimum of local (town, neighborhood) autonomy. As anarchists, we would like to change this, but after inspection we can find only two ways to do so. The first would enable a small proportion (say, 10%) of all local communities to become entirely free of their previous political domination, to the point of gaining full independence. And thus liberated, they would -- we can further imagine -- respect the sovereignty of their own members as well. On this option, which we can call *full sovereignty for some*, the remaining 90% of the original nation-state would in no way be altered or improve its condition.

On the second choice, no community would become self-governing, but all, or almost all, would gain a great deal in transferred sovereignty. For example, 50% of all federal tax money now spent by the National Congress would be returned for uses determined at the local level; corporations would be licensed and taxable by, and accountable to, local authorities (energy companies would be publicly owned and locally managed); neither the nation's legislature nor its executive could declare war, but only a 2/3 majority of all communities, voting directly on the issue in referendum fashion. This option can be called,

*substantial empowerment for many.*

No doubt, it would be best to achieve full sovereignty for all, or failing that, to realize *both* full sovereignty for some and substantial empowerment for most. Unfortunately, life is sometimes cruel, and what is best or even second or third best may be out of reach. What then? If a choice must be made between full sovereignty for some and substantial empowerment for most, which goal does an anarchist pursue?

It is here, I believe, on the issue of *how to rank goals or ends* -- as well as which means are acceptable -- that classical and unorthodox anarchists divide. Thus, in cases like our example, what matters most for orthodox anarchists is not how far along the continuum or from a starting point a community travels towards liberation, but whether it reaches the *destination of full sovereignty*. The achievement of this goal, even for some people, overrides whatever other gains may be made by most. For reconstructed anarchists, however, failure to achieve full sovereignty is not decisive and can be more than compensated for by *distance travelled*, that is, by *increases in shared sovereignty*. In describing their goals, or how they rank goals, we can thus speak of classical anarchism as "final destination" anarchism, in opposition to the "distance travelled" position of unorthodox anarchists. (It is important not to forget that this clash arises only in situations where a choice between these goals must be made.)

This contrast between the goal-rankings of orthodox and unorthodox, classical and reconstructed, anarchists has two intriguing implications, on which I can only comment very briefly. First, understood in this way, it seems to me that these forms of anarchism are not so much contradictory or antagonistic, but *complementary*: Like two dancers, they frequently, though far from always, need to rely on the other for their own full expression. Thus, classical anarchism, by itself, runs the risk of marginality by becoming isolated from both the needs and accomplishments (such as gains in shared sovereignty) of most of humankind. But by concentrating exclusively on distance travelled, unorthodox anarchists may get trapped in intermediary and compromised positions, and may overlook opportunities for direct appropriations of full sovereignty. Together -- as part of a diverse, scrappy, but mutually nurturing family -- they can soften and occasionally eliminate each other's excesses or deficiencies.<sup>5</sup> To illustrate: rather than scorning the Dellums NHS proposal, "final destination" classical anarchists could work to reshape the bill so as to help ensure that (1) local communities exercised final control over certain kinds of health priorities and standards of appraisal (or at least that some did, as a pilot project); (2) the licensing of health professionals by government agencies would be eliminated; and (3) resources for self-care, in both treatment and prevention, were provided to consumers. In these three ways, "demedicalization" could be made a priority of the NHS. And, rather than seeing the Citizens Party as dead-end electoral reformism, orthodox anarchists could attempt to turn it toward accepting the ideas

that (1) political parties not only run candidates but also help develop and support ongoing community organizations that are the seeds of a decentralized commonwealth; and (2) various forms of full sovereignty, for example, having local referenda, rather than centralized agencies, should determine nuclear power plant policy or even whether the country declares war.

The second implication of seeing the contrast between orthodox and unorthodox anarchism as one between clashing but complementary rankings of anarchist goals is that it allows us to re-read our own history. That is, by understanding anarchism as an "extended family" which includes both of these sharply divergent but supportive views, we can see that it has played a much greater role than might appear at first or second glance. For those who rank "maximum empowerment for most" or "distance travelled" as key priorities may often turn out to have good anarchist credentials, even though their ends and means differ from the orthodox and even though they may never have thought of themselves in this way. Some may wish to call this part of the family, "incipient" or "implicit" anarchism. This seems to me unimportant. What counts is that we can now see a way out of the problem of marginality. Given the "extended family" criterion, anarchism has provided (as least intuitively) transitional stages, has helped to shift or transfer sovereignty, and has taken seriously the needs and capacities of ordinary disempowered individuals. Though far from beyond criticism, many progressive-populist, 4th World, and local self-reliance efforts can be seen in this light; so also may the village socialism introduced in Tanzania.<sup>6</sup> Examples abound in history as well as contemporary life of people and groups for whom "substantial empowerment for most (or all)" was (or is) a priority of the highest rank.<sup>7</sup> (What is needed is to bring these folks together and to link them up with more orthodox anarchists.) And if this is so, can it be any longer maintained that anarchism is marginal and self-defeating?

*Recapitulation: Have We Made Any Progress?*

To answer this question, it will be useful to retrace our steps. We began with the problem of anarchist marginality and located one source of this problem in the isolating purity and theoretical shallowness of classical anarchism; these we found exemplified in its unbending and unnurturing attitude toward IP and towards other worker cooperatives. Orthodox anarchism, I maintained, has been self-defeating, hampering social reconstruction and keeping itself inflexible, inaccessible, and peripheral. To overcome this internal source of anarchist marginality, I proposed a fundamental reconstruction of anarchism: the creation (or recognition) of unorthodox forms which (1) break away from axiomatic adherence to means-ends congruence; (2) are open to alliances with non-anarchist organizations; (3) accept the need for a libertarian continuum of cumulatively evolving transitional stages; and (4) rank "substantial empowerment" and "transferred sovereignty" as important anarchist priorities.

Here, paradoxically, it might appear that our original

problem has simply dissolved. For once unorthodox anarchism is seen as a live possibility -- indeed, as a host of already living actualities which can be integrated with our mainstream, then anarchist marginality may seem no more than a simple-minded misconception or a piece of government rhetoric. If we reject the orthodox definition of what counts as anarchism, then whatever relies on that definition, for example, that anarchism has never achieved anything long-lasting or substantial, becomes problematic at best. Once the anarchist family makes room for distance travelled and shared sovereignty varieties along with those stressing final destination and full sovereignty goals, anarchism thus extended can scarcely be deemed marginal or inconsequential.

There is some truth in this, a great deal actually, but not enough to fully dissolve our marginality. For even in our extended sense, where are the "anarchist" societies -- for example, ones that progressively empower their citizenry -- which survived more than one or two generations? (Denmark may come close.) And certainly we have yet to rout the vast nations, empires, religious orthodoxies and bureaucracies which have always controlled almost all of the world's resources and, hence, most of everyone's choices. The original problem cannot be so easily conjured away; it remains with us. But not, I believe, in the same crippling and insurmountable way. Our circuitous journey and its proposed reconstruction of anarchism has produced substantial grounds for hope. Though we may have nowhere, or for any significant length of time, exercised decisive influence, we can no longer be dismissed as simply or wholly marginal. Nor is anarchism, as extended, flawed by self-defeating isolation or inflexibility. Containing many forms of unorthodox or incipient (e.g., distance travelled) anarchism, it is already a lively voice within human history. And by building bridges between and among these and to the more orthodox forms as well, extended family anarchism can even further decrease its marginality.

Thus, the new problem of anarchist marginality, which arises on the heels of our reconstruction of anarchism, is by no means irreversible, but contains the seeds of its own progressive elimination. It contains, that is, good news within the bad. This good news is not merely that there is more than one type of success (or worthwhile priority) open to us, nor that there is a widely flexible range of acceptable means to achieve those augmented goals. The really good news is that we can put aside -- let go of -- an enormous and incapacitating burden: that of reconstructing social life by ourselves, of working for anarchist goals that lack a popular or widespread constituency. Given unorthodox and incipient forms of anarchism, we need no longer see ourselves as alone, or as bearing the primary responsibility, in a futile battle against domination and hierarchy. In addition to nourishing and transforming the world, we can also be nourished and transformed by energies outside of our own; and we can accept this nourishment and transformation without any sacrifice of integrity or compromise of principle. Thus, we should not see ourselves as cut off from or as having to fundamentally re-educate all of those who accept "government" or "hierarchy" or

"centralization": Some may well be allies from whom we can learn about anarchist priorities, who can supplement and enrich our efforts with their own (unorthodox or incipient) forms of anarchist creativity.

In this light, anarchist marginality is immediately and substantially reduced. Moreover, the task of reducing it even further becomes a concrete and manageable one: how to locate these new allies, how to reach out in order to complement or fuse our efforts with theirs; how in these ways to steadily increase the scope and resources of an empowered anarchist family. Thus, though our marginality persists, we have travelled to a new point, beyond the narrow framework of orthodox anarchism. And from here, I believe, we can see our struggle in a new light: as more diverse and flexible, more shared and evenly matched, more sustaining and hopeful. □

## FOOTNOTES

1. This paper, in a much-condensed form, was presented at the "Anarchism: A Sharing of Past Experiences and Future Strategies" workshop of the First International Symposium on Anarchism, held February 1980 in Portland, Oregon. I learned, and have tried to incorporate, a good deal from the spirited general discussion which followed my talk. In particular, that discussion forced me to rethink (and discard) one of the earlier paper's implicit assumptions: that new and unorthodox forms of anarchism should replace the more familiar and classical varieties. My modified view shows up in the final two sections of the present paper. I now see classical and unorthodox anarchists as complementary members of an "extended anarchist family" -- one which contains diverse, discordant, but mutually nurturing, groups. (The notion of such an anarchist family was given a very concrete sense for me by the entire Portland Symposium, at which, over a full seven days, a small community of sorts formed and managed to sustain a rich mixture of anarchist voices, concerns, and processes. Many of the ideas expressed here grew out of continuing conversations over the past year with my close friend and collaborator, Armando Sosa. I am also grateful to other anarchist comrades, both orthodox and unorthodox, who gave me useful criticisms, encouragement, or both: John Clark, Susan Corrente, Eric Gordon, Phil Jacklin, and Marian Vitali.
2. Goodman, P. *Drawing the Line*, New York, 1962; pp. 14-16. Goodman shies away from applying his distinction beyond the family and the teacher-pupil relationship.
3. These are discussed in detail in a working paper I wrote with Jeff Walter, "Should Education be Compulsory?"; available from the author at U-54, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT 06268.
4. The self-management movement has produced a wealth of material relevant to unorthodox anarchism and to its task of identifying incremental paths to anarchist goals. See here, for example, Severyn Bruyn's *The Social Economy*, New York, 1977; especially chapters 3-7 and Paul Bernstein's *Workplace Democratization: Its Internal Dynamics*, Kent State University, 1976. Recently, the New School for Democratic Management in San Francisco has published a comprehensive and selective bibliography on "workplace democracy."
5. The saddening effects of viewing classical and unorthodox anarchism as mutually exclusive rather than as parts of a single allied family are well-illustrated by David Morris' dismissive attack on Karl Hess' notions of community technology as "romantic idealism." See *Self Reliance*, Washington, D.C., issue #19, May-June 1979, pages 3 and 10-11.
6. Examples of these efforts can be seen in: John D. Hicks, *The Populist Revolt, A History of the Farmers' Alliance and the People's Party*, University of Nebraska, 1961; Henry D. Lloyd, *Wealth Against Commonwealth*, New York, 1899; Frederick C. Howe,



Frank Lindenfeld  
Commentary: Anarchism Reconsidered

I share many of Len's doubts about "orthodox" anarchism. Like Len, I have also been involved in setting up alternative business organizations, so my comments derive from similar experiences.

One issue concerns the nature of authority in work organizations. This is related to organizational size. Large-scale work organizations with dozens and even hundreds of members are reasonable ways in which people can get together to satisfy some of their needs. In small organizations with typically half a dozen members the anarchist ideal of no division of labor, equal authority, and equal reward can probably work. This presupposes some degree of equality of background so that all members are more or less equally competent. Participatory democracy and collective decision-making may work in a collective of three or four members, but would it work as well with 30 or 50? The collective form is appropriate for small-scale organizations, but a more complex type of democratic management seems more appropriate for larger ones.

Workers' control, democratic management, participatory democracy, or anarchist social organization do not necessarily mean that there are *no* managers and *no* delegated authority in an organization. I agree that means should be in harmony with ends and that the means we choose influence the nature of those ends. But why not a council system for larger organizations, where each group of 12-20 workers elects a "link pin" delegate to a managing or coordinating council? A larger organization of 200 members might consist of a dozen subunits, each with 15-18 persons, with each subunit sending one delegate to the coordinating council. Such a council would meet regularly and frequently, and act as a policy-making body to review decisions of a democratically elected manager (who could be hired and fired by such a council, subject to veto by the membership).

Socialists and anarchists have debated for many years whether people should be paid according to their work or according to their needs. In the best of all possible worlds, all necessities would be freely available and there would be no need for money. The kibbutz system in Israel shows that this is indeed possible. But suppose all members of an organization -- even an anarchist organization -- do not have the same high level of consciousness and altruism. Usually peer pressure is effective, but not always.

In that case a bonus system can actually help maintain social harmony by preventing less conscientious members of the organization from ripping off their fellow workers.

Material incentives may diminish in importance as the level of consciousness of members increases. In every known case of increasing workers' control, wage differences have become less over time. This is a normal tendency, and the existence of a bonus system for extra work would not necessarily impede the movement of an organization in the direction of ever decreasing wage differentials.

Similarly, positions of authority are desirable (though they should be temporary) when members have a minimal degree of competence. Such competence is required for managerial positions; otherwise, the whole organization may fold. It is desirable that organization members share their knowledge and skill with one another, but even if this is done to the maximum extent possible, it may not result in everyone having the same degree of ability to function in every position of responsibility. Yet all members can and should vote on the appointment or removal of those entrusted with managerial responsibilities.

We should not confuse coercion and imposition of power with leadership and the exercise of democratically delegated authority. Informal leadership and formal authority are both possible in a democratically organized workplace, without coercion as it is exercised by states. If you don't produce as much as the next person, you might be paid less under a bonus system, and if you don't produce at all your co-workers will approve of the manager's firing you. But if you don't do what the *state* says you may have to pay a fine, and if you don't pay they lock you in jail. In the final analysis, if those who control the state don't like what you are doing, they can kill you. This is an extreme form of coercion that really does differ from being docked an hour's pay for showing up late. We object to sanctions imposed by the state in part because there is no way to "opt out" of the state except to go to another one, and because of our feeling that the state's sanctions are often unfair. We might not object to state sanctions vehemently if the states were not dominated by small social groups which use the administrative machinery of government to further their own interests and to perpetuate social inequality.

The battle is not against managerial forms of social organization, since these can be consistent with democracy, but against unjust domination. Managers with authority delegated to them by the members in fact provide more freedom for those members than lack of structure does. For example, members of work organizations do not want to spend endless hours reaching consensus on minor details that can be delegated to committees or managers. A second example: the fact that an elected chair calls on members to speak at meetings helps guarantee that more persons can be heard, that more persons are empowered, than if there were no such chair.

Another issue is how anarchists can exercise more influence to change the societies in which they live in the direction of

anarchism. Here I agree with Len that we need to keep in mind the desirability of helping empower more persons, at least to some extent. For this reason, I support coalitions with others in the society who share some anarchist goals, so that more and more members of the society are able to exercise more and more control over the institutions that affect their lives. The goal of substantial empowerment for many will be reached only through continuing struggle, and such struggle will have to involve coalitions with non-anarchists if there is to be any hope of success. In such coalitions, we do not have to give up our principles or our ideals. It is certainly not likely that a few anarchists can achieve the task of social reconstruction by ourselves. If we could, it would be contrary to the anarchist principle that changes should not be imposed by small avant garde minorities but must have some support from the majority.

I endorse and applaud efforts of comrades like Len to help launch self-managed ventures like International Poultry (though I am a vegetarian myself). Helping form such organizations is part of the process of social reconstruction and movement toward a better society. However, merely to focus on alternative work organizations with the hope that others will copy viable models may be naive. We will have to continue the struggle on the political and every other level. There is no one best road to social change, and the formation of democratic work organizations should be seen as one of many means by which we help the movement toward a better society and a better world.

By organizing ourselves, and using our own resources, it may be possible for more and more of us to cut loose from dependence on big government and big business jobs. If the customers of a big supermarket got together they could organize a consumer's cooperative. If the customers of a bank put their money instead into democratically organized credit unions, more funds could be made available to help finance alternative business organizations. Union members might invest their pension funds to help buy plants shut down by conglomerates in search of ever higher profits, and transform them into self-managed workplaces. The movement toward a more democratic society could be accelerated most by the establishment of thousands of democratic workplaces. Such workplaces could organize into regional federations, which would constitute a third economic sector, neither big government nor big business. This would constitute a very real step toward the society of substantial empowerment for many.

The existence of such alternatives will not by itself cause big government and big business to wither away, but it would help promote some healthy competition and advance us towards the achievement of anarchist goals on a modest scale.□

Glenda Morris

### Commentary: Anarchism Reconsidered

Krimerman seems to have naively jumped into workplace organizing. He wanted to help build a self-reliant community, but chose a workplace that required dependence on outside sources of funding. Further, he overlooked the fact that the people who join an anarchist community or workplace should know anarchist principles, should want to join the community, and should feel free to leave at any time. The workers at IP were, as he said, unfamiliar with cooperative work. They joined because they needed jobs. To conclude from this experience that anarchism doesn't work seems harsh. The conditions at IP were hardly a fair test of these principles.

What I most object to, however, is Krimerman's definition of orthodox anarchism. All of the so-called orthodox anarchists, with the exception of Kropotkin, are people I would consider to have anarchist or libertarian tendencies. But they are not social anarchist theoreticians. Even Kropotkin has glaring deficiencies. Certainly one of the major ones (and one shared by most libertarian and anarchist theoreticians) is neglecting to extend the anarchist principles of freedom and equality to women. To effectively build a voluntary community requires expansion of anarchist theory to take into account current unequal power relationships between women and men and between people of different classes and racial/ethnic groups. (Many feminist and a few anarchist writers have already done this.) That failure to recognize and constructively deal with these differences seems to have caused some bitter conflict among the workers.

Krimerman says that one of the failures of anarchism has been its focus on children, schooling, and youth issues. I don't agree. With the exception perhaps of Paul Goodman, most of the people Krimerman cites did not deal with youth issues. Further, during the 1960's and 1970's there were attempts to set up alternative workplaces and services consistent with anarchist principles. These institutions were run by people who worked collectively--sharing the work and decision-making equally. Some examples are health clinics, bookstores, restaurants, coffee houses, crisis hotlines, presses, newspapers, food co-ops, magazines, and credit unions. Their failure to survive (although many have) is probably due more to the difficulties of surviving in a capitalist system than to defects in anarchist theory. (The final blow to IP was the competition from large producers, not some problem within the organization.)

Further, Krimerman criticizes anarchists for concentrating on depicting the happy days "after the revolution." I thought that one of the differences between anarchist and marxist thought was that anarchists saw "the revolution" as a continuing process, not some distinct historical event. Anarchists, I thought, are to live their lives in ways that change social relations here and now rather than waiting for the future.

I do think Krimerman is correct in saying that there is a family of anarchist thought (although I wouldn't label any as orthodox). I do think that anarchists should work any way they can to change society for the better, but they should always keep a clear idea of where they want to go and how they want to get there so that they don't find themselves strengthening the state or power relationships among people. They may not take a straight and narrow road, but they should try not to jump off any cliffs.□

*Howard J. Ehrlich*  
**Commentary: Anarchism Reconsidered**

1. As an editor I chose to publish this essay not because I agreed with it--I do not--but because I think that the author has directly and honestly grappled with many of the major concerns of anarchists. We must all be able to speak to the issues he has raised.

2. A worker-owned and managed cooperative is not necessarily an anarchist organization. IP surely demonstrates the truth of this statement. Even though Krimerman has asserted that IP's failure was a failure of the theory of anarchist organization, it was not. It was a failure of an economically fragile business. And even had IP survived economically, it is not at all clear that it would have matured into an anarchist organization.

3. IP started wrong. Krimerman states this quite frankly. But he argues that if he had followed strictly his "own anarchist convictions," this "would surely have kept the co-op from ever struggling to life." However, if he had followed his own anarchist convictions it might have kept the co-op from struggling to its death. To be sure, we need to learn from our failures; but in order to do this we need to understand where the failure lies. This case study, the failure of IP, highlights for me not the failure of theory, but the great problems of applying this theory to a business enterprise within a capitalist society.

4. Like most new small businesses in this country, IP didn't make it. I know what the problems of capitalism are in macrocosm. And even at this lower level--that of the individual business enterprise--almost 15,000 declare bankruptcy annually. If anything, I see Krimerman's report as a confirmation of a theory of capitalism and not as a disconfirmation of anarchist theory.

Remember how IP started. A group of anarchist workers did not band together into a worker cooperative. A group of anarchists did not try to apply anarchist principles of organizing, only to find that they didn't work. There was no prior consensus, no political commitment. And so, "once production began, conflicts surfaced."

5. In his search for transitional models, Krimerman has mistakenly looked to various proposals which involve the federal government as an agent of change. The proposals he cites may indeed have radical import. But Krimerman misconstrues the role of state managers. For these managers, liberal reformist proposals are permissible (up to some point). "Proposals" provide the appearance of the possibility of genuine change. But this appearance is not reality: Submitting such proposals, then, serves to encourage people to keep their faith in the political system.

6. "Nowhere. . . has anarchist theory provided even a sketch of transitional stages." I think Krimerman's assertion is basically correct, although we should not overlook the many partial proposals that have only recently been put forward. (We--Carol Ehrlich, David DeLeon, Glenda Morris, and I--tried to collect some of these sketches in *Reinventing Anarchy*.) The issue of how we get from here to there is, of course, the fulcrum of revolutionary theory and is beyond both the case study and this commentary. One of Krimerman's proposals, however, is instructive because it allows us to identify a conceptual error in his analysis.

Seeking the goal of the "increased empowerment" of the IP workers, Krimerman asks if at times a "hierarchical" organizational model wouldn't have been better, for them and for other worker-controlled plants. My gut reaction to the question was an instant "no." On reflection, the answer remains. But look at what his loose conceptualization has done. We are all for "increased empowerment." We can all recognize that it didn't occur at IP, and we all know of failures in other cases. But what is it that didn't occur? Did we want people to become more skilled at their jobs? Learn how to do other jobs? Gain greater knowledge of group dynamics? Develop a more favorable self-attitude? Surely, these are some of the elements of "increased empowerment" that we would like to see. But each of these calls for a rather careful examination of precisely what it is we want. For each there may be, in fact, numerous methods of achieving our goal. To conceptualize the issue as being one of hierarchical vs. nonhierarchical models of organization is to obscure the complexities of analysis.

7. Krimerman's call for examining the potential of "transitional stages" leads him appropriately to question a principle of anarchist thoughtways, that means and ends be consistent. He writes: "The criteria for means-ends congruence remain hazy and ambiguous." I agree. We need to give careful thought to what it is we really want to do and how well the process we employ will bring that about. However, I certainly see no reason to reject this critical ethical principle just because of the difficulty we may have in articulating the means-end connection.

8. There is a matter that does not appear in Krimerman's essay--one that is highlighted by the consideration of transitional stages and the congruity of means and ends. That matter is *revolutionary change*. To me a worker co-op is either a revolutionary project or is merely one alternative within capitalism that may make the lives of a group of workers more bearable. I

would certainly not oppose such an alternative, but neither would I extend it much support. A workers' cooperative in which politics are not in command is unlikely to become a means of revolutionary change.

9. Krimerman's repeated regrets about the marginality of anarchists deserve comment. I think that all of us who have moved to a revolutionary perspective share some moments of ambivalence over the personal costs of being an anarchist in a capitalist society. But we also should know that our marginality is inescapable. (Krimerman seems to be saying that he wishes it were not so.) We are required, as revolutionaries, to live our lives as persons marginal to the society and culture we seek to change. □

Kirkpatrick Sale  
Human Scale  
Reviewer: John Thomas

Kirkpatrick Sale has written an over-size book on the evils of bigness and the natural virtues of smallness. It is ambitious, informative and often impressive, but finally it is a disappointing work and one which will be irritating, even exasperating, to anarchists, socialists and to social scientists alike. The book is a mountain of data glued together with the optimistic bluffs and asides of a liberal publicist, but it lacks analysis and concrete proposals. It never tells us what we most need to know: how to create the ideal condition out of our present position of crisis and struggle.

Sale begins by reciting our woes and the symptoms of our disorders. Our systems of producing, marketing and governing have cut deeply into our freedom, our pocketbooks and the health of our planet. The crises that are tumbling in upon us cannot be solved by another device from modern technology, a new miracle chemical or flashy piece of plastic. We have lost any guiding principle other than the desire for power and consumption at an ever increasing rate (". . . making more and more of worse and worse, as the pioneer city planner Patrick Geddes wrote).

Sale offers a very general direction for change: a total reordering of our lives, the reorganization of systems and institutions, "an appreciation of the central role of the human within the society," an end to the mistreatment of nature, an attitude of respect for the related life systems. His device is "smallness" as the base for a sane existence, and his measure for smallness is the individual human. His stated purpose is "to demonstrate for the three main sectors of our lives -- our society, economy, and polity -- that smaller and more people-sized institutions and arrangements are not simply necessary and desirable but first-out possible . . ."



The author's operating standard is the scale of the human form. The book's opening illustration and closing point of reference is the Parthenon, a monument built 2,400 years ago to the architectural measure of 5 feet 7½ inches (the ideal Athenian male adult?) -- but today being eaten away rapidly by sulfuric acid billowing up from Athens' auto traffic and industrial pollution. In ancient Greece the highest human achievement was held to be the perfect mind in the perfect body, wholeness and reason above all else (but again as judged by "social man"). In architecture the concept of scale grows from the relationship of this human with the form, proportions and utility of a structure, as well as that building's site and situation in its terrain. In one word, appropriateness.

The negative, inappropriate image Sale offers us as a measure is his "Beanstalk Principle," taken from the children's story of "Jack and the Beanstalk." The giant in the tale is by our human eye ugly, fearsome and certainly unwholesome. He proves to be so large that he is also inefficient, clumsy and fragile. In his scary size lies his destruction, because he is five times taller than Jack, but also five times wider, five times greater in each dimension; thus he is not simply five times larger but five-to-the-third-power times as large, making him fully inappropriate for this earth and easily destroyed by a fall that would not have made a kitten blink. Sale's principle and its corollary can be stated in this way: "For every animal, object, institution or system, there is an optimal limit beyond which it ought not to grow; beyond this optimal size, all other elements of an animal, object, institution or system will be affected adversely."

To show the evil and foolishness of out-of-scale ventures, the author draws on an impressive variety of disasters, from the 1977 blackout in New York City to the quality of meals in fast food restaurant chains (even Col. Harland Sanders is unhappy over a product he can't control!), and from large scale agricultural flops destroying huge acreage to the federal bureaucracy and mass-produced automobiles.

To demonstrate the virtues and possibilities of the polity and practicality of human scale, the writer pulls material from a staggering number of collective, communal and decentralist manufacturing, agricultural, marketing, educational and community experiments. We learn of workability in Spain's Mondragon collectives, the worker-run Puget Sound Plywood Cooperatives, the Worgl community efforts in Austria, the new Briarpatch Network. It is inspiring and impressive, and these listings are certainly the best, the most meaty portions of the book. (His three long chapters on ownership, control and community in workplace democracy are worth the price of the book for people with little or no knowledge of that area.) Additional and interesting are his statistics on a variety of related matters: the optimum size for cities, the relationship between inflation, wars and the growth of government (from 1100 A.D. to the present), the ideal size of a community (500 persons, say all the "experts"). These are helpful data and no one will doubt Sale's ability to sort through large amounts

of material. This was certainly obvious in his successful handling of a great jumble of events, personalities and documents making up his full-length 1973 history of Students for a Democratic Society. *Human Scale* will also nourish his reputation as a reporter.

But as the reader moves punch-drunk and reeling with facts and figures past page 500, one begins to feel let down by the author. Is size or scale really the key? Has he offered us a real insight into what makes "community" possible? Where are those bigger answers concerning the conflicts within the divisions of social human, economic human, psychological and sexual human? Where is the better battle plan? The integration of materials with solutions? How can these small-scale experiments guarantee a more just society free of power struggles? What is the ingredient in "smallness" which fosters an uncorrupt social relationship? (Aren't Mafia-dominated villages in Sicily small, council-run and often even environmentally simple and clean? If communities can be run best by their residents, then what about the block and neighborhood control that is exercised by youth gangs in the Bronx?) Does decentralization always make sense? How much capitalism or collaboration with capitalists can be tolerated? And why? And finally if bigness is so awful why are so many attracted to it?

I believe Sale has a real problem with his unwillingness to carry forward his material with a serious analysis of the social and ethical particulars. Troubling also is the lack of any treatment of the psychology of domination, the place of property, and the monopoly of social wealth. Anarchists will tear their hair as they realize they have read it all before -- and often more elegantly presented -- in Kropotkin, Mumford, Rene Dubos, Fuller and Theodore Roszak. I am afraid the ambitious scale, the sheer bulk, of this work prompts the reader to expect a synthesis, or at least concrete proposals for swinging contemporary society toward a greater ecological sanity.

For all of Sale's stated belief in a new direction for society, it is not apparent that he would agree with anarchists or persons of a radical progressive perspective about the present need for revolutionary social reconstruction in the industrialized nations. There is a certain blithe coloration to many of his references and judgments, an apparent inclination to be impressed easily by a small success, which suggests to this reviewer that a little reform might fulfill many of his strongest expectations. In the opening paragraph of this review I identify Sale as a "liberal publicist." It is not a very flattering descriptive phrase to use today, as it indicates an imprecision of thought and perhaps too much trust in the good intentions of others. But I believe other anarchists will identify the author in just this way should they read *Human Scale*.

Often in this book Sale cites conditions or behavior he considers worthy or beneficent. Three examples will indicate his easy tolerance. 1. He is impressed by the action of the 55 great

feudal families of Japan who in the 1870s gave up portions of their wealth and property to help create the means to make Japan a modern industrial power. Sale does not report that this led to the creation of the ten great family corporations which today control that nation's economy and much of the world markets. 2. In discussing the scale of warfare he points to the small number of real wars (as we know them in this century) which were fought in Germanic Europe before unification under the Prussians. This to Sale illustrates not only the virtue of small states but that smallness tends to produce smaller violence. Historians could shower the writer with contrary examples, and anyone who has experienced the justice of the lord of the manor or a little ruler's small-scale violence may be tempted to laugh. 3. Finally Sale writes that the American South in the last two decades "has changed by its own efforts" to become a society engaging in a partial reordering of power that was unthinkable in the 1950s. While there are decided cosmetic changes in the Deep South -- and these largely because of economic realities -- this reference to the status of black people ignores the subtle rearrangement of conditions to allow for easier power holds by the wealthy and privileged and for legal, tighter means to bring re-segregation.

As I read through the conclusion of this book, realizing that the strong summary I was seeking would not be found, I began to hope that anarchists would indeed wade through this lengthy and often frustrating study. The experience may well prompt one to give form to a sound appraisal -- in 100 pages or less -- of just how today, in our painful and dangerous set of conditions, we can use the data of the human scale success stories to bring into reality the human community we desire. □

*Human Scale* by Kirkpatrick Sale. 558 pages. \$15.95

New York: Coward, McCann and Geoghegan, 1980.



Marge Piercy is the author of five other novels.

Marge Piercy  
Vida  
Reviewer: Carol Ehrlich

As Abbie Hoffman bursts out from underground in a blaze of publicity, as lesser-known political fugitives from the 1960s and early 70s are captured or turn themselves in, political activists who were never in their situation wonder -- How did they become outlaws? Why these people in particular -- Hoffman, Susan Saxe, Huey Newton, Pat Swinton, the thousands of draft resisters, the deserters from the military, the hundreds of draft-board raiders, Panthers, Weatherpeople, and so on? How and why did they make their choices? To what extent did some of them not choose their actions but instead were provoked into them by agents of the state? Either way, what were the political and personal consequences for them? What was life like for them underground? What political lessons are there for the rest of us? Did their actions make a significant political difference?

It is almost impossible to get straight answers to these questions today. Most books (fiction and nonfiction alike) which purport to be about the radical activism of the 60s and early 70s distort and trivialize it. There are pop psychological explanations of male radicals in revolt against their fathers; or of amoral types creating media spectacles; or of dangerous personalities who would stop at nothing to destroy the America we all know and love; or of neurotic females with a twisted and irrational hatred of men. If there were any real injustices to be fought, we seldom hear of them.

These are the standard media treatments of the genuinely political radicals. Another distortion (more subtle, but no less dishonest) is the media focus on activists who sold out, or who gave up and accommodated to the system. Such writers are delighted to find the Jerry Rubins who became converts to est and to Wall Street; the Tom Haydens who want to be U.S. Senators; the former militants who now endorse Republicanism and fundamentalist religion. Almost every newspaper "retrospective" on the 60s and 70s features at least one junior executive or salesman with short hair and business suit who says something like, "I tried marching and demonstrating, and it didn't work. Capitalism is where it's at."

After being inundated with all this garbage, it's a relief

to find writers who represent that period as it truly was. So when my favorite political novelist/poet/essayist/playwright, Marge Piercy, came out with her sixth novel, *Vida*, last year, I dashed off to get it. *Vida* did not disappoint me -- but then, Piercy has seldom disappointed me.

In part this reflects my own political and literary tastes: I like reading and thinking about the women's movement, the radical left, and ways in which we might build a good society based on anarchist-feminist principles. But Piercy does more than just document movements -- any left journalist can do that. Piercy combines these subjects with a high level of artistry. This is incredibly difficult: How many good political poets and novelists can you think of? Such a writer has to fuse art and radical politics in a way that is both an authentic reflection of the writer's political experience and a transformation of that experience into fiction and poetry that succeeds as literature.

The result is very different from a nonfictional treatment of the same subjects -- after all, a novel is not a position paper; a poem is not a manifesto. With very few exceptions in her large body of work, Piercy has succeeded in translating her political experience and passionate commitment into art. Her work is genuinely "from the Movement, for the Movement," to cite the epigraph for *Hard Loving*, her second collection of poems.

Piercy's personal experience spans many of the major organizations and movements of the 60s and 70s. She was active in Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), the major national campus-based New Left organization; in its short-lived successor, the Movement for a Democratic Society; in the North American Congress for Latin America (NACLA), a radical research and publishing group which is still active; and, since 1969, in various women's liberation groups.

I first became acquainted with Piercy's work in 1969, when a blurred mimeographed copy of "The Grand Coolie Damn" passed from hand to hand in the Iowa City Women's Liberation Front. This essay criticized the men of the New Left for the rampant sexism that was forcing embittered women out of organizations such as SDS. In that year I first defined myself as a radical feminist, and found what she said to be true of our own local chapter of the New University Conference (a campus-based offshoot of SDS). The essay helped me understand the anger I felt and gave me a broader political context into which to put what had before seemed to me the peculiar problems of our group. About that same time, her poetry began appearing in the feminist periodicals I read; and it had the same effect on me. Here was a writer who spoke to (and for) me, and for many of my sisters (even for a few of my brothers).

Over the past eleven years, this prolific writer has published numerous political essays, seven volumes of poetry, six novels, and (with Ira Wood) a play. All, with the exception of her fifth novel, *The High Cost of Living*, have explicitly political themes. The poetry and two of the novels have been widely read by move-

ment people. Her third novel, *Small Changes* (1973), has been read and reread by many feminists, and with good reason. Piercy has described it as being for women who weren't in the women's movement, to serve as a consciousness-raising group would. For women who were in the women's movement at that time, the novel is an authentic recapitulation of why we were there, and the struggles we went through, both political and personal. Piercy's fourth novel, *Woman on the Edge of Time* (1976), has been read and discussed by almost all the women and men I know who are part of the anarchist/nonauthoritarian left. It is the only novel I can think of that is used in political study groups as a means of generating discussion of what a good society would look like.

*Vida* is not nearly that well-known, and it should be. This book should be read by anyone who wants to know what it was like to be active at that time, when it seemed that the American system would immediately fall. And we knew that when it did, we could build in its ruins a genuinely human and egalitarian society: One in which no one would try to exert domination over anyone else, and in which no militaristic government would exist to war on the people of Indochina or anywhere else.

*Vida* is also important reading for activists from the 60s and 70s. It should be read by the burnouts and dropouts, who need to be reminded that their work did count for something. And it should be read by those of us who still work for radical change--even if at our low points we don't always remember why.

This novel is a political history of that time--of the rise and fall of a mass anti-war movement patterned on SDS (here called SAW, or Students Against the War). We read of it first in the mid-60s when it was not yet fragmented by sectarian battles, not yet infiltrated and crippled by agents and informers. It was a movement made up largely of young people angry at being deceived by the Kennedys' Camelot rhetoric, organizing against the war; it was a blend of middle-class students and counterculture street people. Sexism was not yet seen as a political issue, and an anti-imperialist analysis was just beginning to be formed.

The story focuses on the activists who, seeing that petitions, rallies, mass demonstrations didn't end the war and didn't bring down the government, went one very large step further: into violent direct action. The call was to "Bring the War Home": Groups such as the Weather Underground and the affinity group around the Armstrong brothers in Madison, turned to paramilitary actions. The attempt (not always successful) was to destroy property and not to kill or injure people--and so there was a scattered wave of actions: The "days of rage" in Chicago, in which buildings on the elite "Gold Coast" were attacked, and bombings of corporate headquarters, government buildings, military research labs. *Vida* is a fictionalized version of part of this history. It is about one such affinity group of five people (here called "The Little Red Wagon") and about what happened to them when their actions didn't bring down the government, and when they were forced underground--there to be isolated from what remained of the movement.

Throughout the book Piercy recalls the internal movement conflicts of that time: The struggles to define political priorities, to agree upon who makes the revolution and how it comes about, to decide whether theory or practice should be primary, whether the movement should emphasize international struggles or conditions at home, whether the focus should be on "mass" or "cadre" (remember those terms?) organizing. She spends considerable time on the ways in which groups such as SDS and Weather Underground succeeded or failed in seeing sexism as a major political issue. She recounts the difficulty for many of the men, and some of the women, in seeing that the continuation of male-female roles, lack of day-care facilities, male domination, forced heterosexuality, rape, battering, control of one's own reproductive capacities, and all the rest of it, were political issues.

As I remarked earlier, a novel is not a position paper. Piercy presents these political events and issues through the lives of a marvelously real set of characters. The major characters are Vida Asch, who went from being a movement star in the mass organization SAW to a fugitive; Vida's half-sister Natalie, whose political work focuses on feminism, and who is primarily responsible for Vida's moving away from a mechanical Marxist-Leninist belief that sexism is a "secondary contradiction"; Leigh Pfeiffer, Vida's husband (later, ex-husband), an egocentric, charismatic leftist radio producer for a station which seems to be modelled on the Pacifica outlets; and Joel White, an army deserter who becomes Vida's lover while they are underground and on the run. Surrounding these four are other fugitives, relatives, former activists now living comfortable lives, informers, and supporters of the network of fugitives.

Vida and two other surviving members of the Little Red Wagon collective went underground in 1970 because one of the original five was an informer who infiltrated and provoked the others into a bombing. When the novel opens, almost a decade later, Vida is still on the run. One of the others has just been captured, another was murdered by police several years before, and the fourth (who didn't go under) has never been the same since serving a prison term. Vida is the only one still a fugitive.

Piercy takes us back and forth in time from 1967 to the present, gradually filling in the story of Vida's (and the movement's) life during that time. For me the most striking part of this intensely absorbing book is the picture it gives of what it means, from moment to moment, from day to day, from year to year, to be a fugitive.

It means never counting on staying any place, and being always ready to run; having less choice about personal relationships than most people do (having to assume false identities with people who aren't fugitives and being open only with other fugitives); it means gradually losing some formerly close relationships with those you left behind, and being unable to prevent that. It means seeing family, old friends, old lovers (if at all) under the greatest security arrangements--arrangements that include not even letting

them call you by your correct name, for fear that they might at some point slip, and all will be lost. It is a life cut off from others' lives, isolated and suspended in an earlier time. It is having to beg money like a poor relation because it is impossible to stay anywhere long enough, or surface far enough, to get or keep a job. It is learning not to express your feelings too openly, for fear of alienating people you depend on to hide or support you; it means not drinking, or getting stoned, or feeling anger or fear or jealousy, because these get in the way of the clear thinking that is needed in order to stay totally on guard. It is being unable to see those you love when they are ill or otherwise in need; it is being left out of current political activity, except for further isolated actions with other fugitives.

Given all this, it may sound strange to say that Piercy has written a book laced through with a kind of tough-minded optimism. Vida is a survivor, and so are some of the others. She--and they--have a level of strength, integrity, and wholeness that the less political don't share. That's not to say that Piercy has drawn them as superhuman. But Vida is (within the limits of her situation) still politically active, still carrying out small actions, writing, studying, building a network of other political people. If there is a political lesson in this book, it is this: Political activity is important, what was done in the 60s and 70s was important, and what is still being done is important. To build towards a better future, we need to act in the present, as best we can. And when we fail, we are to begin again. Though Vida is, at the end of the book, still on the run--perhaps always to be on the run--and although there are no large gains from what Vida and the others did, what she did (and continues to do) does matter.

Piercy ends with Vida having barely escaped capture, again on her own, leaving for a safer place, and reflecting:

"One thing I know is that nothing remains the same. No great problems in this society have been solved, no wounds healed, no promises kept except that the rich shall inherit. What swept through us and cast us forward is a force that will gather and rise again. Two steps forward and a step and a half back. I will waste none of my life." □

*Vida* by Marge Piercy. 412 pages.  
New York: Summit, 1979. \$12.95

From a Poor Woman

God, I'm tired of doing penance for your sins!

Begging for food--a friend--warmth--love;

Stealing freedom or doing without;

Knowing pain, horror, degradation

Intimately. Hinting I'd like

A dress -- the world! (It wouldn't be

Enough.) A whore, a bitch, a cunt--

That's all I hear about -- that's me.

Trapped in a kitchen overflowing

With grease from the inevitable

Hot dogs; spilled coffee (when we have it)

From shaken nerves; the lacerating

Screams of children stabbing my ears

Day and night; afraid to walk

Out with my daughter after three

In the empty, dreary, macho afternoon.

Elizabeth L. Johnson

WRAP-UP AFTER A CONFERENCE  
DEVOTED TO MARX'S PHILOSOPHY

I sat through boils of revolution  
lanced in 18 different ways,  
absorbed our home truths,  
the vanguard a myth,  
the classes, a non-existent hyperbole.  
The podium revolved to bar,  
and I switched to vodka martinis  
to honor our Russian guest  
who leaned paralyzed in wonder  
by our plans to charge revolts  
on Bankamericards.  
From the top of the 3-ring bar  
I shouted an appeal  
to stay in session forever there  
at the permanent Holiday Inn.

R. D. Lakin



Social Anarchism  
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Water flows without thought  
past the house of many windows

eyes ears nose mouth tongue  
penis vagina toes knees teeth  
elbows wrists won't you dance  
how lovely they all bend  
with such amazing symmetry  
how strange all the parts made  
to go together where are you

the house of many windows can't stop dancing

eyes see the sun  
ears hear the bees' hum  
nose smells forsythia  
mind says spring

tongue runs across teeth  
bones knock  
wrists bend with such amazing symmetry  
how strange all the parts made  
to go together where are you.



Rain falling for days

beads every tree

like jewels

we glimpse our cat Ribbon

in the forest leaping after something which slithers

quick through the tall wet waves of bending grass

when I ran past the honey suckle yesterday

sound of hundreds of humming bees

a dark hole eyes peered out

I pick a snail off your porch

seeing it cannot find its way down to moist earth

gently set it upon a rock

later, the tires of my car

smash the shell of another snail

equally as lovely as the first

you carry the crushed body

cupped in your hands

asking how one life can be saved

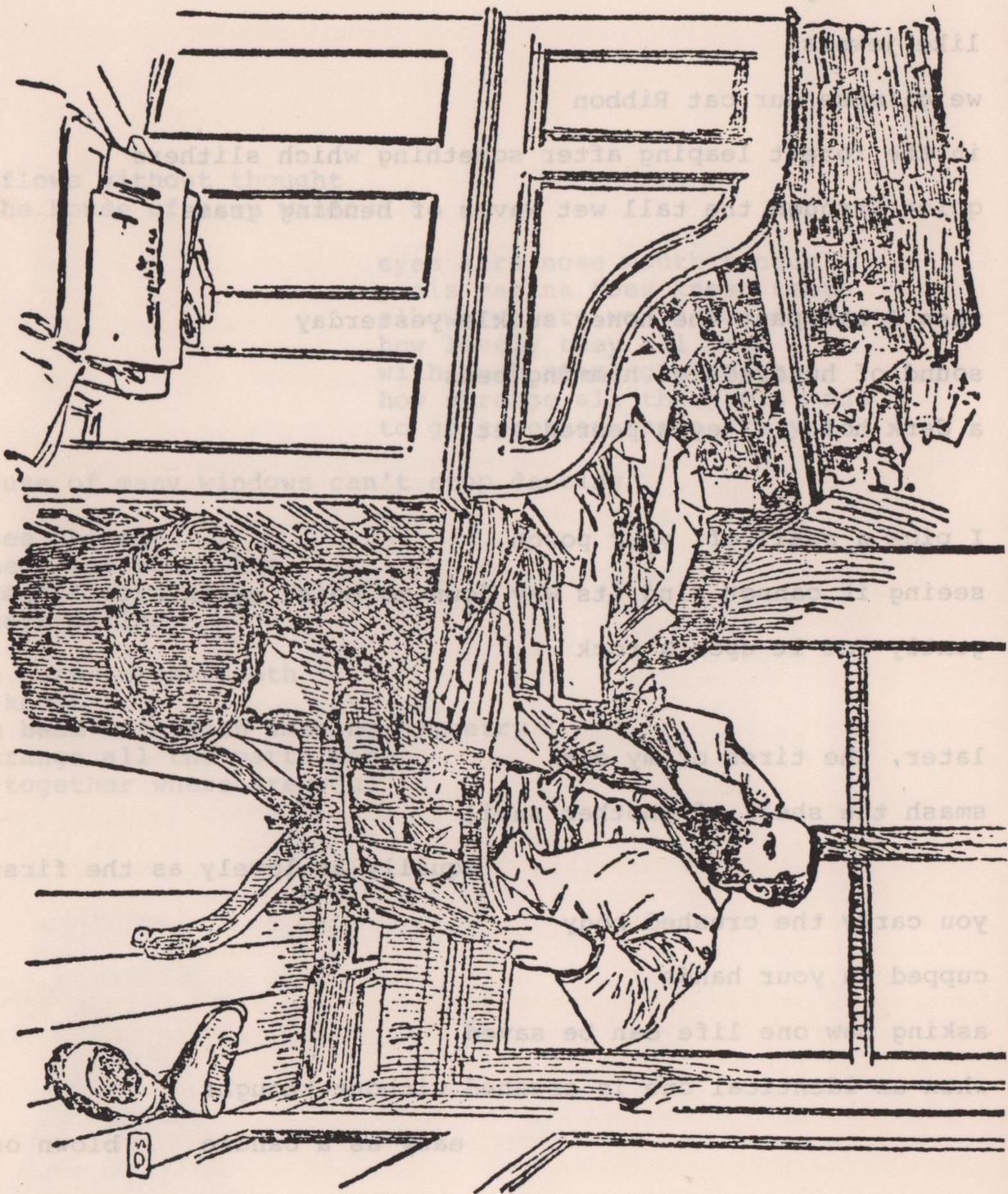
when an identical one is crushed without thought

easy as a candle blown out.

Richard P. Hiskes  
Community in the Anarcho-Individualist Society:  
The Legacy of Benjamin Tucker

It is often remarked that American society and its politics were founded on ideas which for the most part were articulated and developed elsewhere. This is held to be particularly true in the fields of political theory and economy, in which it is frequently maintained that America has produced few political thinkers who do not owe a large intellectual debt to continental theorists such as Locke, Rousseau, or Marx. This short-changing of American political thought is somewhat accurate, but *only* if one assumes that the entire American political tradition can be summed up under the title of "liberalism," with a few periodic outbreaks of Marxism, socialism, or other imports.

There is another side to American political thought, however, one which presents a political viewpoint which is both unique and uniquely American. It is this side of the American political tradition which will be examined in this essay. It is a distinctly radical side, one which matured in the late nineteenth century, and was articulated by individuals who have in large part been either ignored or forgotten. Its representatives include the first American anarchist Josiah Warren, Steven Pearl Andrews, Lysander Spooner, and the cataloguer and publisher of them all, Benjamin R. Tucker. These men referred to themselves occasionally as anarchists, but more frequently simply as "individualists," and with their somewhat less radical colleagues espoused two fundamental principles: the absolute necessity for maximum personal freedom, and the concomitant demand for the gradual disappearance of the state. They expressed what they considered to be the values and principles upon which this nation had supposedly been founded but which had been quickly forgotten or replaced. They were, in Tucker's words, simply "unterrified Jeffersonian Democrats" (1893, p. 14).<sup>1</sup>



Benjamin R. Tucker, as he looked half a century ago at his desk in Boston, Mass., from a drawing by S. G., published in "The Boston Sunday Globe," 1891.

In many ways Tucker was the single most important thinker in this school of individualist anarchism, and in his time was certainly considered its foremost representative. This is true for two reasons. First, none succeeded in expressing the tenets of individualism with more vigor and coherence than did Tucker. His trenchant criticism of the state and frequent vitriol aimed at fellow radicals and non-radicals alike were accompanied by a logic and reasonableness which were difficult to dismiss or ignore. Second, throughout his life Tucker did more to disseminate the ideas of anarchism than any of his contemporaries. As a publisher he translated and printed some of the "great books" of anarchism, including works by Proudhon and Leo Tolstoy. He also published many of the works of his contemporaries such as Warren, Andrews, and Spooner.

By far his most significant accomplishment, however, was Tucker's founding of the journal of radical thought named *Liberty*, which appeared regularly for twenty-seven years and which became a popular forum for the radical ideas of his time. *Liberty* was also the means by which Tucker propounded his own unique version of anarchism. Anarchism for Tucker was not primarily a doctrine of confrontation, but a practical program of cooperation and order. As a pacifist -- a title he frequently rejected but a fundamental motivation he could not shake -- Tucker viewed anarchism as the "mother of cooperation" (1893, p. 365), just as liberty -- the synonym for anarchism -- (1893, p. 63) was in Proudhon's words, "not the daughter, but the mother of order." Tucker's brand of anarchism in fact owed much to Proudhon, as his use of Proudhon's famous aphorism for *Liberty's* masthead would indicate. Yet anarchist principles as enunciated by Tucker were uniquely his own.

In the pages of *Liberty* Tucker succeeded in articulating a theory of anarchism which was both a synthesis of other such theories and yet like none which had gone before. Into this amalgamation of ideas went the mutualism of Proudhon, the doctrine of equal liberty as expressed by Herbert Spencer, and the extreme individualism of his mentor Josiah Warren. It was Tucker's single-minded defense of the individual that distinguished his thought from that of other anarchist theoreticians, and perhaps stamped it as expressly American. All anarchists are individualists, of course, for all insist to some degree upon, in Warren's terminology, the "sovereignty of the individual." Yet Tucker was more individualistic than even most anarchists, and because of this, he is a perfect example to use in arguing the two substantive points of this essay. The first point is an attempt to refute what is essentially the fundamental criticism of all individualist theories from Locke to Nozick: that because of its emphasis upon individual freedom and the liberty to pursue individual self-interest, individualism cannot consistently maintain a strong sentiment of fraternity, or as it will be referred to here, community. Second, community-building will be presented as the practical implication of this unusual brand of anarchism, notwithstanding its powerful individualistic bias.

The single and most troubling statement of Tucker's which portrays his intensely individualistic approach to political and social life is found in a curious summary of what anarchism means. Anarchy is synonymous with individual liberty for Tucker, but even more than this, is summed up by its insistence upon personal freedom. "Anarchism is for liberty," argues Tucker uncontroversially, but adds "and neither for nor against anything else (1893, p. 365). Few if any other anarchists could consistently go along with the latter half of this characterization of anarchism. Clearly, such a statement comes close to sheer egoism as far as relations with others are concerned, and from the standpoint of community is bothersome indeed, for where in this quest for maximum personal liberty is there room for the concern and care for others' welfare that must exist if communitarian relations are to prevail in society?

In order to answer this question it is first necessary to understand what Tucker means by liberty when he declares in the strongest terms possible that he, like all anarchists, is "for liberty." This is made even more pertinent in light of what contemporary theorists such as Joel Feinberg have decided is the "anarchist principle of liberty." Feinberg defines this view as "license," or as a belief that "society and the state should grant to every citizen 'complete liberty to do whatever he [or she] wishes'" (1973, p. 72). Now this certainly sounds anarchistic (and not very communal), though virtually no anarchists -- and especially not Tucker -- would consider it as either possible to live with such a view of liberty or advisable to do so if it were.

Liberty does not mean "license" for Tucker, but in its purest form simply the absence of force or coercion against the individual. As it stands this sounds like an overly "negative" view of liberty, as well as "anarchistic" in Feinberg's meaning, yet two points should be made. First, like all conceptions of freedom, Tucker's can be interpreted as having both a positive and a negative side in Feinberg's and Gerald MacCallum's "triadic formula" (1967, pp. 312-334). Freedom belongs to the individual as *agent*, exempts him or her *from* the coerciveness of others (particularly the state) without prior consent, in order *to do* what he or she wants. Second, doing "what he or she wants" does not include, as Feinberg fears from anarchy, the freedom "to inflict blows on John Doe, to hold noisy parties under his window every night, and to help himself to Doe's possessions." For Tucker, liberty means "equal liberty," and for the individual this means obeying equal liberty's law of "the largest amount of liberty compatible with equality and mutuality of respect of and for others" (1893, p. 65). Thus liberty in Tucker's view is not "anarchistic" in Feinberg's meaning, is a simple and elegant concept, and is not unlimited for each individual.

But why are anarchists, as Tucker insists, "for liberty," and why are they for it to the virtual exclusion of everything else? Tucker answers this question first by arguing that liberty is not so essential because of any attributes of individuals

which make them especially worthy of it. Natural right is not an argument for liberty, in other words, because "no individual has a right to anything, except as he creates his right by contract with his neighbor" (1893, p. 146). Instead, liberty rests its case on the grounds of utility in Tucker's view because it is "the chief essential to human happiness" (1893, p. 65). Furthermore, the utility and essentiality of liberty is also verified by the fact that it is a social as well as an individual expedient, for the maximization of liberty is necessary if society and social order are to survive. That Tucker believes this to be true is clearly apparent from his acceptance of Proudhon's dictum that "liberty is the mother, not the daughter, of order."

But why is liberty the mother of order? and if it is, why is the preservation of individual liberty a *social* expedient? Furthermore, even if it is true that society must protect the individual liberty of its members if it is to survive, what has this to do with the maintenance of personal happiness by those individual members? Is their happiness so entwined with society's survival that liberty only promotes personal felicity through its provision of social order? The answer to these questions lies for Tucker in the relationship between society as a whole and the individuals who constitute it. In his view, society is more than just an artificial contrivance or instrument created and used by individual persons; it is a "concrete organism," whose life "is inseparable from the lives of individuals" (1893, p. 35). The importance of the organic metaphor in Tucker's thought, especially as it relates to his views of community and the state will be explored in a moment. What is significant here is its connection to his conception of individual liberty as both an individual expedient to personal happiness and as the mother of order.

Philosophers who refer to society as an organism often do so as part of an argument for *restraining* individual liberty in order to maximize a greater good of the "whole." Indeed, some of them, such as Plato, Rousseau, and Hegel, have been accused of incipient totalitarian leanings because of this position. Such a position, scoffed at by contemporary individualists such as Robert Nozick, does seem to be at odds with the fundamental anarchist belief in liberty, especially in Tucker's case, for he employs the metaphor to underscore the necessity of order in society. But social order necessarily involves restraints on individuals; therefore how can Tucker's demand for liberty be reconciled with the prerequisites and limitations on personal freedom which a healthy social order requires? Such a reconciliation is provided by Tucker in his advocacy of what Spencer called "the law of equal liberty."

When Tucker proclaims that he is "for liberty," he is referring not only to his own, but to that of all individuals. This is a very significant aspect of Tucker's libertarian stance, and exonerates him from the charge of egoism which he at times embraces and to which all individualists have been subjected. More importantly, it resolves the problem of how Tucker can consis-

tently defend the individual's claim for perfect liberty while at the same time maintaining that society, and therefore its system of constraints, is, like perfect liberty, necessary for human happiness. Liberty, says Tucker, "is the most important thing in the world, and I certainly want as much as I can get of it" (1893, p. 41). However, other people also want as much as they can get of liberty; and, resolves Tucker, they should have it. How much should they (and I) have? "The largest amount of liberty compatible with equality and mutuality of respect, on the part of individuals living in society, for their respective spheres of action" (1893, p. 65). This is equal liberty, says Tucker, and is to be defended by the anarchist "because it is Anarchism itself."

It is by means of this conceptualization of liberty in terms of equal liberty, then, that Tucker verifies his statement that the life of society and the lives of its inhabitants are inseparable. Furthermore, he also uses this concept of liberty to resolve the conflict between the necessity of maximum personal freedom and the necessity of a peaceful social order which at times must constrain one's freedom. Every individual wants liberty in order to attain happiness, and all should have it, asserts Tucker. Also, every individual should have liberty because if some do not social peace and order are jeopardized. But social order and peace (or simply, society) are also requisites of human happiness. Therefore, because as any game theorist knows, the only way in which all can have liberty relative to each other is if all share equally, equal liberty becomes a prudential imperative both for society and each individual. No rights or moral sanctions are invoked in this proof of the advisability of equal liberty as it is provided by Tucker, only considerations of interest -- the interest of society and of each of its constituents.

The law of equal liberty is central to all of Tucker's thought, embracing not only his fundamental utilitarian ethic, but also his view of the organic nature of society and the imperative of individual liberty. This idea is also the foundation of his anarchism, for it is in contrast to society that Tucker portrays the state, and vilifies it for its flaunting of this most fundamental law. The law of equal liberty casts society as a "concrete organism" in which the individual is related to it as the paw of the tiger is related to the entire animal (1893, pp. 35-36).

The state on the other hand, is not a concrete organism; but in a passage in which he breaks with other organic theorists of society including Herbert Spencer, Tucker declares that the state is merely "discrete" as an organic form.<sup>2</sup> What this indicates about the state and its component members is that "if it should disappear tomorrow, individuals would still continue to exist" (1893, p. 36). This is not the case, however, in Tucker's view, for concrete organic forms such as tigers, or society. Though the state is an organism, it is "imperfect" in that it is not in a condition of total, symbiotic unity, as is the case with concrete organisms. Furthermore, as a discrete and therefore

imperfectly united organism, the efficacy of the state is *prima facie* questionable. It is the life of society, not that of the state, which is inseparable from that of the individuals within it, and the imperfection of the state as an organic form signals both its eminent inferiority and hence dispensability as a method of social organization.

The proof of this inferior position occupied by the state is in its direct and inevitable violation of the law of equal liberty. Government, argues Tucker, is the very enemy of equal liberty, for in order to exist it must abridge personal freedom to a point necessary for the maintenance of a monopoly of power over its area of control. As a result, the state compromises equal liberty in two ways: first it reduces everyone's freedom of action to a considerable extent by the imposition or threat of force. Though the consequence of this action by the state may theoretically be equal, it is not equal *liberty*, for "equal liberty does not mean equal slavery or equal invasion," asserts Tucker, "it means the *largest* amount of liberty" for each compatible with that of others (1893, p. 65).

Second, in actual practice government does not restrict liberty on an equal basis for all citizens, but rather discriminates through its system of political favors and its generally corrupt conduct against certain citizens while it aggrandizes others. Because government must violate the liberty of individuals if it is to sustain itself, Tucker concludes with Spencer that government is born in aggression, and exists solely as "invasion, nothing more or less" (1893, p. 21-61). Tucker fervently urges its abolition and replacement with a system of social organization designed to protect the equal liberty of all. This type of social arrangement is simply anarchy, which as stated before, is in Tucker's mind the very synonym of equal liberty.

The state's violation of equal liberty is not its only sin: There is also its inherent rejection of cooperation, and by extension, community. Cooperation is an essential feature of Tucker's plan for the anarchist society: It is for the sake of renewing true human cooperation that he advances anarchism in the first place. "Anarchy," he points out, "is the mother of cooperation," just as it is of order. Furthermore, it is in his description of cooperation in the anarchist society that Tucker not only fully rids himself of the stigma of egoism with which all individualist theory is said to be marked, but embraces an idea of community which takes a most attractive and pragmatic form.

The extent to which Tucker magnifies the need for cooperation in the anarchist society must be viewed, as must all his ideas, within the context of his criticism of the state. Like other anarchists and radical individualists, Tucker believes that government effectively forecloses the possibility of true (that is, voluntary) cooperation by its reliance upon force. By coercing individuals into cooperating with each other by means of, for example, non-voluntary taxation, government takes away the

impetus for involvement in voluntary, personal cooperative ventures by those same individuals. In other words, by forcibly channeling the cooperative instincts of individuals into government operated enterprises, the state breeds a mentality of dependence upon itself rather than on voluntary associations. Consequently, when concerted action is required, people are much less likely to form their own cooperative associations over which they might retain full control, and much more inclined to resign themselves to a "let government do it" attitude. The result of such resignation is the strengthening of the state and the concomitant weakening of individual freedom and the cooperative spirit. In short, cooperation atrophies in the state; under anarchy it is rejuvenated both as a necessity of life and as the clearest manifestation of anarchist liberty.

Without the coercively provided cooperation found in the state, expediency dictates that in the anarchist society voluntary cooperative associations arise to take its place. The first of these will defend members of society against "individuals who undoubtedly will persist in violating the social law by invading their neighbors"<sup>3</sup> (1893, p. 25). Tucker is no believer in a simplistic view of the "basic goodness" of human nature. He realizes that in the absence of the "long arm of the law," some arrangement must be made to preserve social order in the face of a threat by either an external force or from belligerent members of society. For protection against such aggressive individuals, it is not enough that each person rely upon his or her own strength or coercive power, for not only will such force often be insufficient to repel the invasion, but when exercised in such a solitary manner by everyone, it may lead to social chaos. Therefore, what is needed in lieu of the state is cooperation among several individuals in order to combine their strength to provide for the common defense. In other words, a defensive association is required to protect against and, if need be, repel by force any invasive attempts launched against the members of the anarchist society.

This defensive association which Tucker proposes to take the place of the state has many interesting features, not the least of which is its similarity to the "dominant protective association" described by Robert Nozick in part one of *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (1974). To summarize very briefly the features of this association, Tucker insists that all such defensive associations must be purely voluntary and based upon the free contract of all participating members. Additionally, any such defensive association must preserve the right of any individual within it to secede from the cooperative venture at any time. There are only two types of cooperation -- compulsory and voluntary -- and whereas the state is founded upon the former, defensive associations in the anarchist society will rely solely on the freely offered contributions of subscribing individuals. A contract which does not allow for voluntary secession -- such as the contract which gives rise to the state -- "makes oneself a slave"; and "no man can make himself so much a slave as to forfeit the right to issue his own emancipation proclamation" (1893, p. 48). To ensure that the defensive association

does not become coercive, Tucker urges that there be a considerable number of them in the anarchist society. If defensive associations proliferate, competition will be promoted and service improved thereby, and the potential of each association for authoritarian control over its members will be checked as well.

Besides the inability to bind its members for life, the defensive association as Tucker envisions it cannot exercise absolute dominion over a territory. It does not have the right to coerce a non-member living in its territory to join the association, it may not evict a resident non-member, "require him to pay for any incidental benefits that he might derive from the association, or restrict him in the exercise of any previously enjoyed right to prevent him from reaping those benefits" (1893, p. 44). Finally, the multitude of defensive associations which Tucker foresees do not form a hierarchical pattern of authority in the anarchist society as a whole, and therefore in this final sense are to be distinguished from the differentiable levels of authoritarian control in the state.

Thus Tucker acknowledges the need for cooperation in the anarchist society. But such cooperation does not really seem like community, for it is not all-embracing of the lives of individuals, and it is mainly based on a rather mundane -- though important -- special interest of each individual: the need for defense. Furthermore, such a narrow, self-interested realm of cooperation seems to miss the whole point of community: its fundamental reliance not upon the self-interest of each member, but upon his or her concern for others' welfare and the desire for togetherness and social harmony. Yet, Tucker extends his dream of free cooperation beyond the narrow requirements of personal protection. He insists that cooperation must permeate all facets of individual life; indeed, there must be *social union*. In a lengthy passage he argues that in the place of the state anarchists

. . . have something very tangible to offer -- something very rational, practical, and easy of application. We offer cooperation. We offer non-compulsive organization. We offer associative combination. We offer every possible method of social union by which men and women may act together for the furtherance of well-being. In short, we offer voluntary scientific socialism in the place of the present compulsory scientific organization which characterizes the State and all of its ramifications (1893, p. 365).

The significance of this quotation from *Liberty* as an indication of the communal sentiments alive in Tucker's brand of individualist anarchism should not be underestimated, for here Tucker is expressing a belief in the virtue of social cooperation and togetherness which goes far beyond simply the need for defense. The demise of the state does not signal the end of social harmony, but brings about a new and vital form of it, one that fulfills the absolute human need for association while it resurrects the ideal of personal freedom.

As an anarchist, Tucker describes a type of social union which is considerably different from that existing in the state. For Tucker, communal unity is to be achieved between individuals in piecemeal fashion as more and more cooperative associations are established to meet the needs of individuals in society. In other words, Tucker expects numerous associations like the original type developed for defense to grow up in the anarchist society, each with its own special function and mandate. As individuals join these associations in order to further their own interests, the sense of togetherness and unity between them grows both because of their increasing number of interlocking and overlapping commitments, and because the very spirit of cooperation is strengthened. Community exists in the anarchist society as a mosaic of communal groups and interlocking individual commitments which is non-hierarchical except in the sense in which each individual freely orders his or her own interests and hence the associations to which he or she belongs.

To the criticism often expressed by classical community theorists such as Durkheim and Ferdinand Toennies that such associations are not really communal because they are usually partial in the sense of not embracing the "whole individual" and are thus also short-lived, Tucker responds brilliantly. Though he admits that each particular association is indeed only partial in its mandate, and possibly short-lived as well if it fails in its purpose and is beset by the secession of its members, the spirit of cooperation pervades every facet of social life and ensures that the *system* of cooperative associations will continue. In short, society as a whole is transformed, and regains its natural composition, in contemporary anarchist Murray Bookchin's words, "not of disparate individuals but of associative units and the associations between them (1978, p. 15). It is this system of cooperation which constitutes community for Tucker. And the spirit of togetherness, or in Tucker's words, "the concepts of mutual confidence and good fellowship" found within that system are to be obtained, "not by preaching" or by force, but "only by unrestricted freedom" realized under the "law of equal liberty" (1926, p. 15).

In conclusion, it is clear that within this most extreme expression of individualist ideas and disparagement of the state there remains a strong sense of and sentiment for community. But why is it important to realize this and why has so much time and space been devoted to this discovery? This expression of the communal sentiments alive in individualist thought is significant for several reasons. First, from a purely scholarly perspective, it is worthwhile to study Tucker's thought for the understanding that here is a vital and increasingly relevant part of the tradition of American political thought which has significant things to say about political organization from a highly theoretical point of view. As representative of the broader school of individualist and anarchist concepts in American intellectual history, Tucker's ideas have much to recommend them for continued study as significant contributions to American political thought and to the eventual remaking of American society.

Second, the emphasis which Tucker places upon the achievement of community in the individualist society is somewhat startling; particularly so because individualist thought generally is accused of being unconcerned with anything other than individual freedom and the pursuit of self-interest. As an extreme example of this school of thought, then, Tucker's communalistic ideas serve as a backdrop against which to evaluate this general criticism, especially as it has been repeatedly levied against the most notable of his intellectual inheritors, Robert Nozick. Most reviews of Nozick's book stress its allegedly harsh and unfeeling individualism and lack of concern for the presumed values of fellowship, mutual aid, and the care of the sick, elderly, and poor. But this analysis of Tucker's ideas, which are certainly more extreme than Nozick's in their insistence upon individual autonomy and freedom from coercion, indicates that the individualist in the minimal state must not necessarily ignore the needs of others in order to preserve his or her freedom. On the contrary, it is by means of the voluntary cooperation and communal concern for others that the promise of the anarchist society is to be fulfilled.

Finally, what Tucker has to say concerning freedom, community, and the evils of big government has special, practical significance today for the current political ferment in this country. At a time when citizens are clearly weary of big government and its grasping and seemingly insatiable demands, it is at least worth considering that there is a tradition in America which insists that such need not be the case, and that an alternative is available which values community and fellowship as well as freedom from the coercion of the state. The end of the welfare state need not mean the end of welfare, but only the demise of a particular, and increasingly unpopular, form of it. Individualism can embrace a communal concern for others, and because it can, it is time to stop expressing the same tired objections to its efficacy as a model for political organization. Community is indeed, as Dante Germino states, "the political problem of our time," but it is a problem precisely because its achievement must not come on the heels of "some new collectivist idolatry" (1959, pp. 81-82). The lesson that Tucker and his fellow individualists urge is that cooperation need not be accompanied by force, and community and the concern for others' welfare which it implies is possible not because of government, but in spite of it, and will only truly flourish in its absence. □

## NOTES

1. *Instead of a Book* is a collection of Tucker's articles in *Liberty*, including reprints of his regular column, "On Picket Duty." It was compiled only because of the insistence of his admirers, for Tucker's feelings on the enterprise are clearly set forth in its subtitle: "By a Man Too Busy to Write One." A second collection entitled *Individual Liberty* was brought out by the same publisher, Haskell House, in 1926. It is primarily a condensed version of the earlier anthology, with the addition of some of his post-1893 writings.
2. Tucker borrowed much from Spencer particularly the latter's "law of equal liberty" and his statement that the state is "invasion, nothing more nor less." However, with other anarchists and individualists, Tucker became disenchanted with Spencer's later ideas. In "The Sin of Herbert Spencer" (1893, pp. 370-371), Tucker voices a criticism of Spencer which was echoed by Spencer's continental followers as well, notably Auberon Herbert and Wordsworth Donisthorpe. He accuses Spencer of forsaking his radicalism and becoming a "champion of the capitalist class," by refusing to embrace anarchism. In fact, Spencer was never an anarchist either in theory or practice, though this refusal to embrace anarchism had been camouflaged in his earlier works, particularly *The Man Versus The State*. The ideas which Tucker borrowed from Spencer had come from this and other early works.
3. Such "invasion" in Tucker's anarchist society is allegedly made all the more probable in light of his views on private property. Tucker does not accept any inherent or "natural right" to property for two reasons: first, because anarchism based on "natural right" is, in his view, "out of date" (1893, p. 132). Second, ownership of property is not an "inherent right" because it is a "social convention" (1893, p. 61). As a social convention, however, the ownership of property is acceptable in Tucker's view, with two qualifications: First, property is to refer primarily to the products of one's own labor, or to the products of one's agreements with others not based on force or fraud (1893, p. 60). Second, in the case of land as property, Tucker only justifies holdings "based on actual occupancy and use" (1893, p. 61n.). This acceptance of private ownership constitutes something of a break with other forms of anarchism, of course, and emphasizes the individualistic nature of Tucker's variety. It is not correct to term this variety "anarcho-capitalism," in my view, for two reasons: First, the degree of communal sentiment Tucker expresses as a necessary component of anarchy (and property) diminishes the negative consequences of private property in society. Second, Tucker correctly spends little time on the whole dispute over property, for it is not a major element in his view of the anarchist society.

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FROM AN OLD ENGRAVING

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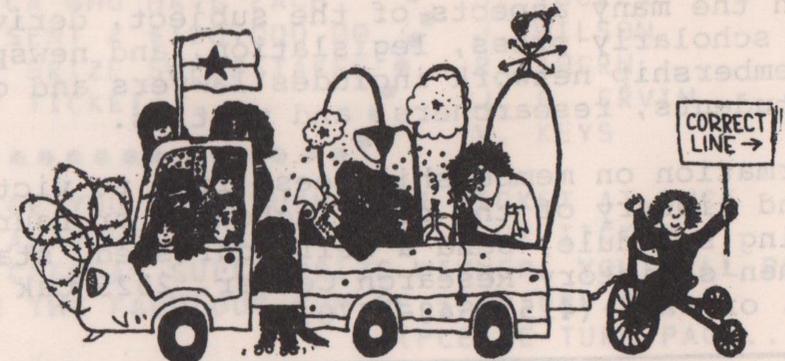
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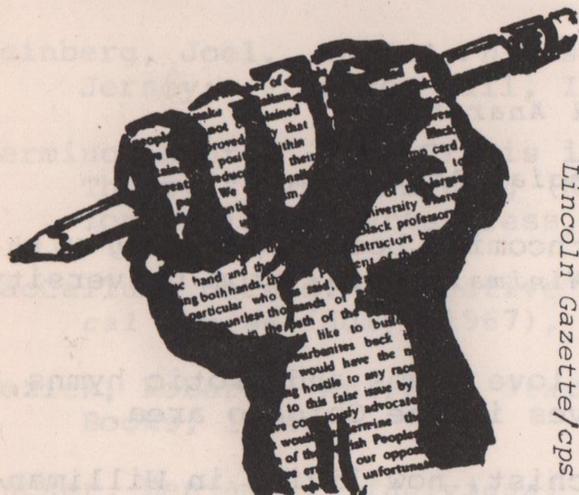
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## NOTES AND MESSAGES TO AND FROM THE EDITORS

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A SPECIAL THANKS TO GLENDA MORRIS FOR HELP IN PRODUCING BOTH ISSUES OF SOCIAL ANARCHISM.

Laura X, of the Women's History Research Center (WHRC) and marital rape consultant/speaker, wishes to invite social anarchists to join the maverick, only-one-of-its-kind-in-the-country Greta Rideout Indicts Marital Rape (GRIMR) project.

The national clearinghouse on marital rape has over 600 files of information on the many aspects of the subject, derived from cases, legal and scholarly press, legislation, and newspaper clippings. Its membership network includes lawyers and other professionals, students, researchers, and victims.

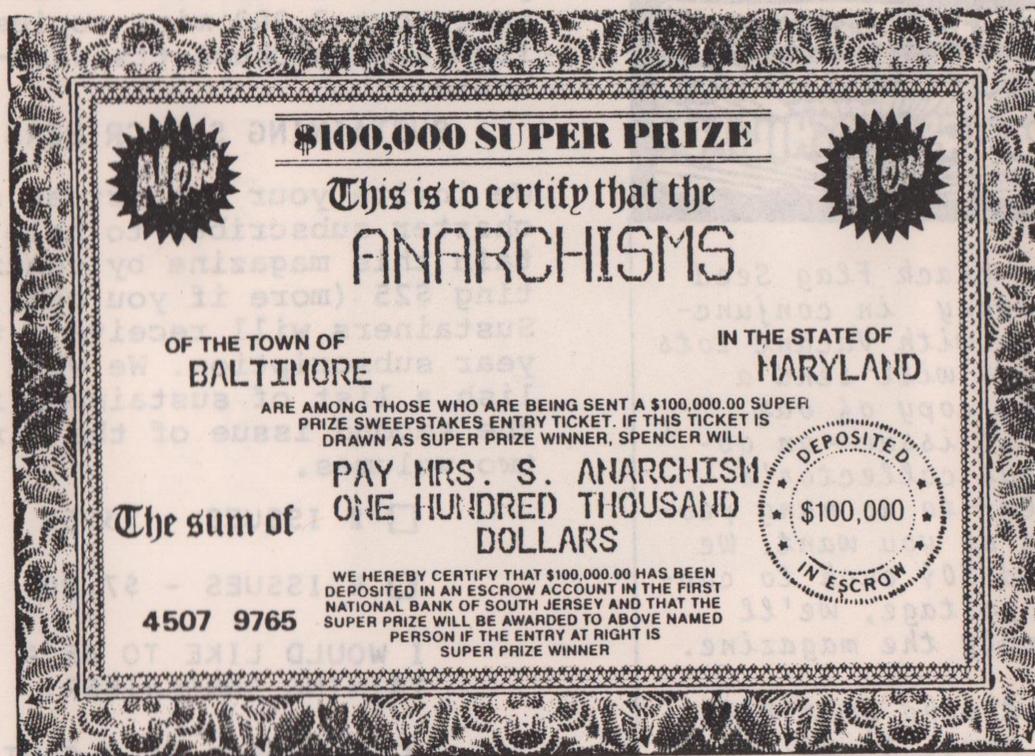
For more information on membership fees (free to victims), use of the network and library of the clearinghouse, or Laura X's consulting/speaking schedule, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the Women's History Research Center, 2325 Oak St., Berkeley, CA 94708, or call (415) 548-1770.

Since we began publishing, we have received a good deal of mail. Many people have taken the time to wish us well and to comment favorably and with helpful criticism. Thank you all.

We also have begun to receive letters of the sort--"Tell me all you know about anarchofeminism" or "Are there any anarchist groups here in---." We do the best we can with those.

We do hope to have a regular section of letters to us and want to invite your comments on the articles in this issue, or anything else for that matter.

Our favorite piece of mail to date came addressed to Mrs. S. Anarchism. It is reproduced below, and we hope you enjoy it as much as we did.



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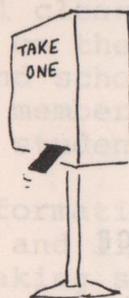
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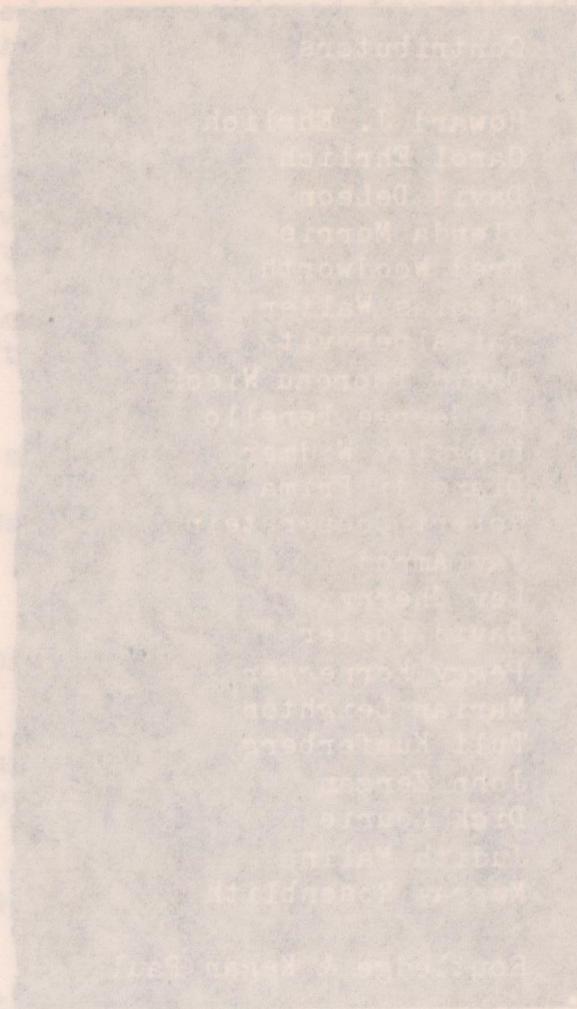
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