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To Hell With the Good Old Days!

What does a woman do when the man she lives with beats her frequently? When she has small children, no friends to help her in a sustained way, and little or no money? Lacking any viable options in the past, most women have had to stay in this very oppressive situation. But, in the last few years women have begun to create mechanisms to help themselves and other women with this widespread problem. Battered women's hotlines, support groups, and shelters have sprung up all over this and other countries.

The women who come to live at the temporary residence for battered women and their children where I staff begin to understand how they have been pressured into accepting some man's abusive treatment and control over their lives; how they were encouraged to believe the beatings were their fault; why our society had left them virtually no options; and how they can work together with other women to create their own options and break out of this self-defeating pattern of living. And, many of them do!

The aspect of this work that I find so exciting is that it addresses basic personal and cultural questions, not just symptomatic issues. For example, staff members don't concentrate primarily on trying to obtain better wages and working conditions for women, although we certainly realize that when women are able to get decent jobs and equal pay, they are less likely to tolerate abuse out of financial desperation. Instead, we ask the question: why are women subjected to all manner of oppressive treatment, frequently involving personal injury and sometimes even death?

As the shelter residents begin to see some of the answers to this question, they lose some of the fear they had of others' power over them. They develop more of a sense of personal power, and they see additional ways to better their lives. And, as they make changes in their lives, others notice, ask questions, and slowly attitudes change.

If we believe that much of what's wrong with our contemporary world stems from the domination of some people by others; and the lack of a strong sense of personal power on the part of many people to affect their own lives, then I think work of this type—work which helps and encourages people to take back some control in their lives—is probably the most important long-range political work we can do.

Others may look back with longing to the good feelings that came from working with multitudes of like-minded people in the many movements of the sixties. While I believe that sort of experience is very important and wish I could get some more of it from time to time, I don't regret the passing of that era too much. I find today and tomorrow with the increasing emphasis on personal power and growth through collective effort much more alive with potential for social change. So . . . who needs the good old days?!

—Ann Kotell

Christine...

We have lost our comrade, Christine Levesque, who died suddenly and unexpectedly in Montreal. She was only twenty-seven. Although we did not know Christine as well as we would have liked, we have always had a special relationship with the anarchist movement of Montreal. Christine was a vital and important part of that movement and she will be sorely missed. We are all the less for her loss.

Anarchists have a zest for life, and this was certainly true of Christine. And this is how we will remember her. Her living meld of anarchism and feminism. Her thirst for freedom even at the cost of personal discomfort. Her presence at the May Day marches, distributing *La Nuit*, her cheerfulness and slightly mocking smile. How she dressed in black with a ribbon around her throat. How she came to Boston in February to escape the cold, hoping to swim in the ocean and watch the waves along the shore. Studying Bakunin to present a critique of the marxism that prevails at the UQAM. Speaking patois French and English in the Prospect over a pitcher. Yes, we are the less for the loss, Christine, but better for having known you.

Christine . . .

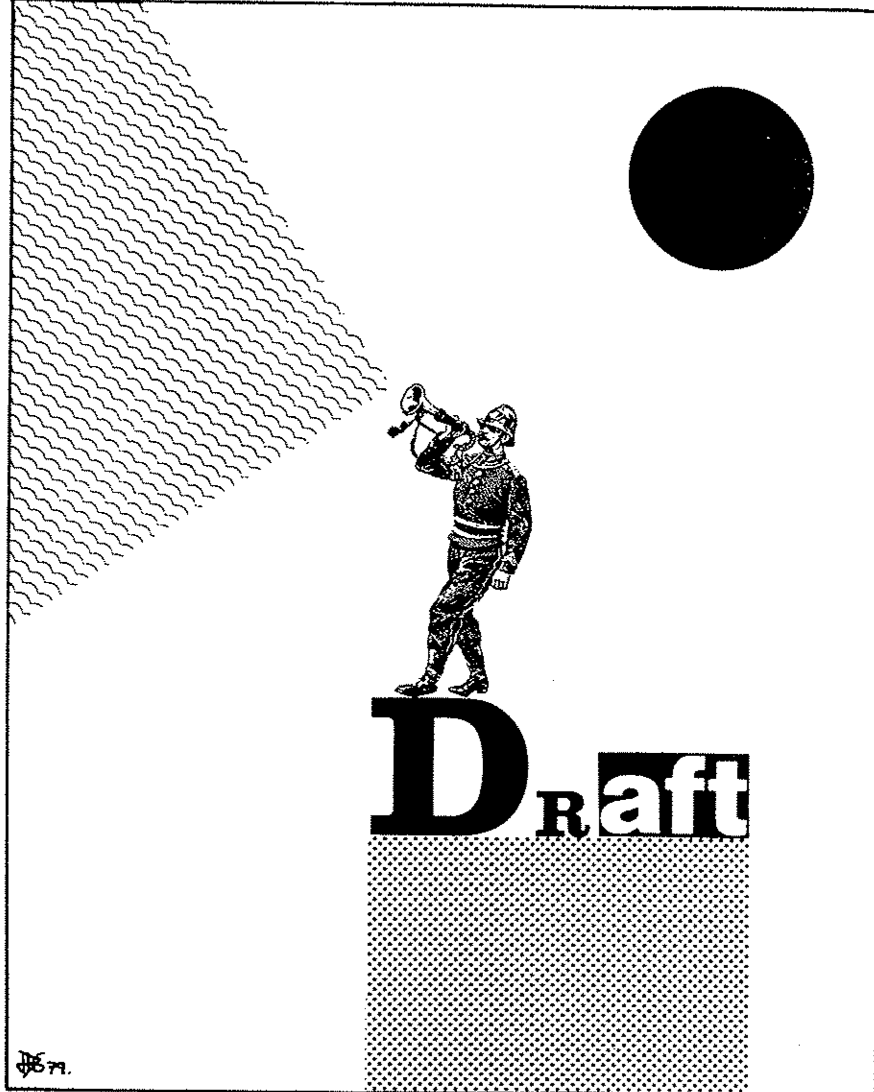
Je voudrais tellement te dire
I want so much to tell you
Si je pouvais, oh si je pouvais
if I could, oh if only I could
toutes les choses que je te dirais
all the things I would say
oh oui, si je pouvais
oh yes, if only I could
je te le jure, je te raconterais,
I swear it, I would tell you
que notre patrie est le monde,
that our country is the world,
notre famille l'humanite;
our family humanity;
que tu as des freres. . . tant et tant
that you have brothers. . . so, so many
que je ne puis les conter.
that I cannot count them.
Et je te dirais
And I would tell you
Cueille les jasmins du jour
pick the jasmins of the day
il faut faire de la place pour ceux de demain,
you must make place for tomorrow's,
cueille-les, au son des cloches du midi
pick them, to the sound of the chimes of noon
ils seront plus perfumes.
they smell better then.
je te dirais
I would tell you
que mai resurgit
that May reappears

tout germine
everything sprouts
tout pousse
everything grows
tout marche
everything advances
rien ne perit
nothing dies
tout revient
everything returns
Les Anarchistes ne meurent pas
Anarchists do not die
ils sement
they sow
ils sont la terre
they are the earth
ils sont le vent
they are the wind
Terre et Liberte
Land and Liberty
Le soleil est a toi
you are the sun
Christine, on t'aime.
Christine, we love you.

Je voudrais tellement te dire
I want so much to tell you
Si je pouvais, oh si je pouvais
if I could, if only I could
toutes les choses que je te dirais
all the things I would say
oh oui, si je pouvais
oh yes, if I would
je te le jure, je te raconterais.
I swear it, I would tell you.

—Libertaria

Notes on the Draft



Frank Brodhead

The return of the draft is upon us. As this is being written, legislation is being smuggled through Congress that would start up the draft machinery again. While the specific issue being proposed concerns only the registration of men, it is clear that this is the thin edge of the wedge for a return to peacetime conscription. Other proposals being discussed in Congress include the registration of women; initiating physical exams, classification and induction; waiving the privacy act to facilitate registration of young people by matching computer lists; and the possibility of a massive program of compulsory national service for all young people.

It goes almost without saying that anarchists and libertarians oppose these developments. To our historical opposition to State compulsion of any kind is added a specific opposition to killing or any kind of military service in defense of capitalism. Moreover, there are obvious totalitarian possibilities in compulsory national service, and a clear outcome of registration by computer would be a giant step toward the potential for a massive computer surveillance of the entire population. It is also clear that the revival of the draft is only marginally related to solving manpower problems that confront the military establishment at the moment. Rather, it seems that the revival of the draft is part of an anticipation of future military contingencies, following on the series of setbacks that the U.S. has suffered in Vietnam, Africa and Iran. The escalation of cold war rhetoric, the Pentagon estimate that 500,000 casualties would occur within the first 60 days of a European ground war, and Secretary of Defense Brown's much-publicized statement that the United States was prepared to intervene in the Middle East to assure the flow of oil all indicate that the military hawks are in the ascendency.

I think there is little question, therefore, that the return of the draft is part of a much larger military package, attempting to bolster the military forces and spirit of the United States at a time when the conservatives and many liberals perceive that the nation has suffered heavy blows in the areas of foreign policy and international economic supremacy. Indeed, many conservatives have let it be known that their support for the SALT II treaty is contingent on the Carter administration's support for a wide range of measures to increase military strength, including the MX missile and the draft.

One area that has received little attention from forces opposing the return of the draft is the relation of the present discussions to a national youth program. In addition to the military problems to which the conservatives claim the draft is part of the solution, I think we should also view

the draft within the context of a perceived breakdown of institutions that have traditionally served to contain the volatile energies of young people in their later adolescence. Whatever the merits of the arguments, conservatives perceive that churches and schools have failed to do their work in this area, that the widely-publicized breakdown of the family has been accompanied by a decline in parental authority, and that there is little hope that the economy will ever have room for large numbers of young people to get jobs in the private sector. What I am arguing is that we also have to view the return of the draft as part of the growth of the New Right, and try to relate the campaign for the draft to the larger campaigns against abortion and gay rights. In these areas, conservatives have attempted to defend traditional concepts of sex roles and the patriarchal family, and around these issues have succeeded in creating a sizable political swing to the Right. I think that many of these same issues are present in the debate about the draft, and particularly in the proposals afoot for the establishment of a program of compulsory national service. Let me return to these broader themes momentarily, after briefly outlining what is at stake in the national service debate.

The idea of compulsory national service is an old one, stretching back to the First World War. At that time militarists in both the United States and England proposed what was essentially the merger of the nation's youth movements, such as the Boy Scouts, with a program of military training. National service garnered liberal credentials during the New Deal, when Roosevelt's Civilian Conservation Corps and National Youth Administration created programs to employ millions of young people thrown out of work during the Depression. During the fifties, national service was supported by President Eisenhower in order "to promote physical fitness and self-discipline, provide remedial instruction for those who need it, and instill a patriotic sense of duty and love of country." National Service continued to receive support during the liberal administrations of the 1960s. Though Kennedy's Peace Corps and the VISTA programs of Lyndon Johnson's "Great Society" were voluntary rather than compulsory, both the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Labor proposed that during the mid-sixties that all young people be conscripted for two years of "service."

It is important to recall the context of proposals for national service made during the sixties. At that time "service" activity was a vital part of the civil rights movement and the activities of the student movement. The civil rights movement created voter registration and education projects, tutorial and breakfast programs. The student and anti-war movement created community organizing projects like SDS's ERAP and JOIN projects, and established draft counseling centers and the like. And the women's movement at the end of the sixties not only organized a broad range of consciousness-raising groups, self-help centers and clinics, but also helped to articulate a broad understanding of the relationship between service work and *self*-emancipation. The context of service work during the sixties, therefore, was not whether it should happen, but who would control it and who would benefit from it.

The context of current proposals for national service is radically different. The most highly-publicized proposal is that of Congressman McCloskey, who has introduced "The National Service Act of 1979" (H.R. 2206). Under this plan, all young people would have to register within ten days after turning 17, and would choose among four options: enlistment in the military for two years; enlistment for six months of active duty and five and a half years in the reserves; one year of civilian duty; or being placed in a draft lottery for six years, and if drafted serve two years of active duty and four years in the reserves. In order to encourage people to volunteer for active duty, such volunteers would receive three years of "educational benefits," compared to only a few months for people choosing other categories.

Focusing on McCloskey's bill is useful not because it is likely to pass, but because it illustrates the relation of military to national service. McCloskey has stated that the primary purpose of his bill is to channel people into military service. He believes that it would allow the military to lower service pay, thus offsetting the expected high cost (as much as $23 billion) of a full-blown national service program. The bill also hints ominously that national service conscripts might be used as strike breakers, particularly in agricultural work.

McCloskey's vision of an integration of military and civilian manpower programs for the nation's youth is reminiscent of the notorious "channeling" doctrine of the Selective Service in the mid-1960s. In a document included in a 1965 Selective Service "orientation" kit that made its way into the hands of the anti-war movement, the Selective Service maintained that the provision for occupational or educational deferments served to "channel" the energies of the nation's young people into areas of work or study regarded of national importance. While military service awaited those whose patriotism led them to volunteer, and programs like the Peace Corps or VISTA were available for those

who wanted to serve their country in other ways, "in the less patriotic and more selfish individual [the draft] engenders a sense of fear, uncertainty and dissatisfaction which motivates him . . . in the same direction." As the "Channeling" document noted, "the process of channeling by not taking men from certain activities who are otherwise liable for service, or by giving deferment to qualified men in certain occupations, is actual procurement by inducement of manpower for civilian activities which are manifestly in the national interest." In other words, under conditions where modern warfare allows no real difference between soldier and civilian in maintaining military preparedness, there was also no real difference between military and non-military "service."

In talking to people about national service, I have found that many people are attracted to it. They cite the problems of youth "discipline" and crime, and point to the high rate of unemployment for urban youths, particularly non-whites, and to the lack of "meaning" in most of those jobs that are available. Most interesting to me, though, is the sentiment expressed by white middle-class people that some form of national service would be beneficial in that it would put "advantaged" people into contact with "disadvantaged" people. (I confess I have heard little support for the idea of sending black young people to do community work in rich suburbs.) There is something to this; and reading memoirs of middle-class people who did service work in the sixties one finds expressed again and again the excitement that young people found in overcoming barriers that had separated them from people of other races and classes. Yet it seems unlikely that this or any administration in the near future could possibly run a national service program that would provide "meaningful" work. Far more likely are regimented make-work programs, escalating punishments for slackers or non-cooperators, and administrative chaos generally. The compulsory nature of any such national service program would almost certainly poison it through and through; and indeed when it is clear that we are talking about compulsory programs rather than establishing broad programs with opportunities for young people to enter voluntarily, I have found that support for national service drops sharply.

In opposing the return of the draft, therefore, we have to argue not only against militarism and an imperialist foreign policy, but *also* in favor of the rights of young people to do what they want, and not to be considered merely as a kind of national resource that needs handling and channeling. This later task means taking on the New Right generally in its attempts to revive its mythical patriarchal paradise, and as much as possible to help young people organize for their own defense.

I would like to conclude with some thoughts about what we should do if registration and the draft are re-established. In general, I think this involves not only assessing social and political forces today, but also re-examining the anti-draft movement of the 1960s to see what can be learned from the strengths and weaknesses of that movement. What follows are notes to stimulate discussion.

First, it is obvious that registration and the draft have only shaky support in Congress, and that the more discussion there is on this issue, the less support it has. It also seems likely that any program to register men only, or to conscript in peacetime, or to conscript for compulsory civilian service, would be met by legal challenge. At a minimum this would create delays in implementing conscription or national service, and would give us more time to reach people with our arguments. So I think the first priority is to work to repeal or overturn whatever registration or draft legislation emerges from this Congress.

Second, it will be important to force open as wide a legal avenue as possible for people to become conscientious objectors. Whether or not this will be possible in regard to registration or national service, and to what degree this will be possible in regard to conscription, is up in the air. During the Vietnam War the courts were increasingly inclined to support "moral" objections as well as traditional "religious" objections.

Third, preliminary investigation shows a fairly widespread opposition to even registration on grounds of general anti-authoritarianism and hatred of the state machine, and there will undoubtedly be a significant number of people who refuse to register, both on moral principles and in the hope of escaping undetected. In fact, the Pentagon study released last winter, *America's Volunteers—A Report on the All-Volunteer Forces,* shows that the military itself fears massive non-cooperation with any program of registration or conscription. "Enforcement is a key issue in peacetime registration," observes the report. "If most young men registered, then costs could be low and enforcement could be ignored except for isolated instances of flagrant violation such as public display of resistance. Should the registration meet widespread resistance and strict enforcement be ordered, costs could be very high." In fact, an AFSC staff worker who attended some of the hearings on draft registration, reported to the Boston Alliance Against Registration and the Draft that the main question on the minds of Congressmen seemed to be not the morality,

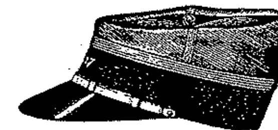
legality, or military necessity of the draft, but whether or not people would cooperate. As it seems likely that traditional pacifist or religious anti-war organizations will undertake the defense of non-cooperators who oppose registration on religious or moral grounds, I think we should be sure to provide a voice in defense of those who refuse to register because they don't want to. This leads to the further question of whether we should attempt to advocate or organize non-registration, or non-cooperation generally. I think it is clear from the above that the *threat* of non-cooperation may be the most effective means to prevent the legislation from becoming a reality. Whether we should go on to organize non-registration after such legislation is passed is a difficult question to answer without reference to local conditions; but I think it is likely that large numbers of young people will refuse to cooperate without any advice from us, and our role will be to support them in their decision. Certainly if registration is to be done in person rather than by computer matches there will be the need for producing and distributing educational material geared to high school as well as college students.

Fourth, it seems to me unlikely that registration, conscription, or national service will get very far while excluding women. If women are not required to register as well as men in any new legislation, I think it possible that the courts will require them to do so, following the recent inclination to defend the "rights" of white males established in the Bakke and Weber cases. The liability of women to be drafted will make an important difference in how we organize ourselves to oppose the draft. Here the lessons of the sixties are mostly bad ones, for in the absence of a strong women's movement and with women excluded from the draft, male supremacy generally did its work in anti-draft organizations. Today the situation is likely to be far different, for at the moment women's organizations are probably the most political and experienced on the left. Moreover, if I am right in thinking that the return of the draft is closely linked to the sexual politics of the New Right, women will be far more likely to provide leadership in this area. Finally, the involvement of women in the anti-draft movement will raise issues of sexual politics in two crucial areas: within our own organizations, and in the relationship between feminist organizations opposing the draft on roughly left-wing grounds and those women's organizations which oppose the draft for women on patriarchal grounds, asserting that women's traditional role should exempt them from military service.

Fifth, it seems to me that during the Vietnam War there were two separate movements, a white movement based on anti-draft work, and a black movement based on GI resistance. To the extent that 18-year-old registration will force us to organize high school students rather than college students, as was generally the case for draft resisters during Vietnam, there is a chance to overcome the racial blindspot which generally characterized anti-draft work during the Vietnam era. Still, the record of white radicals in overcoming the racial segregation of our society is not encouraging, and we have a lot to learn about this.

Sixth, to the extent that the return of registration and the draft actually encourages or allows the Pentagon to lower soldiers' wages and withdraw some of the benefits which the All-Volunteer Army is forced to offer, we can expect increasing discontent among enlisted personnel. Though the evidence isn't very clear cut on this, it seems that the greatest amount of GI opposition to the Vietnam War came from enlistees, and not draftees. If cutbacks in military pay and benefits under conscription actually do increase organized discontent in the military, the anti-draft movement will have to put a lot of thought into how we can support dissident GIs. Because so much of the anti-war sentiment of Vietnam era GIs reflected the particular nature of the war, we will have to sift through the lessons of that era very carefully.

Finally, it seems to me that anarchists and libertarians will be in a position to make an important contribution to whatever anti-draft movement emerges. However few our numbers, anarchists have given considerable thought over the years to developing a theory and practice of anti-statism, to making organizations work democratically, and to recognizing that there can be no sharp divisions in our work between "economic" issues and sexual or cultural issues. If I am right in thinking that the anti-draft movement of the future will emerge from a generalized anti-authoritarianism toward a discredited state power, that it is likely to be organized under feminist leadership, and that its main opponent will include the sexual politics of the New Right as well as the militarism of the Old Right, then anarchists will be in a position to play a positive role in developing this movement far out of proportion to our numbers.



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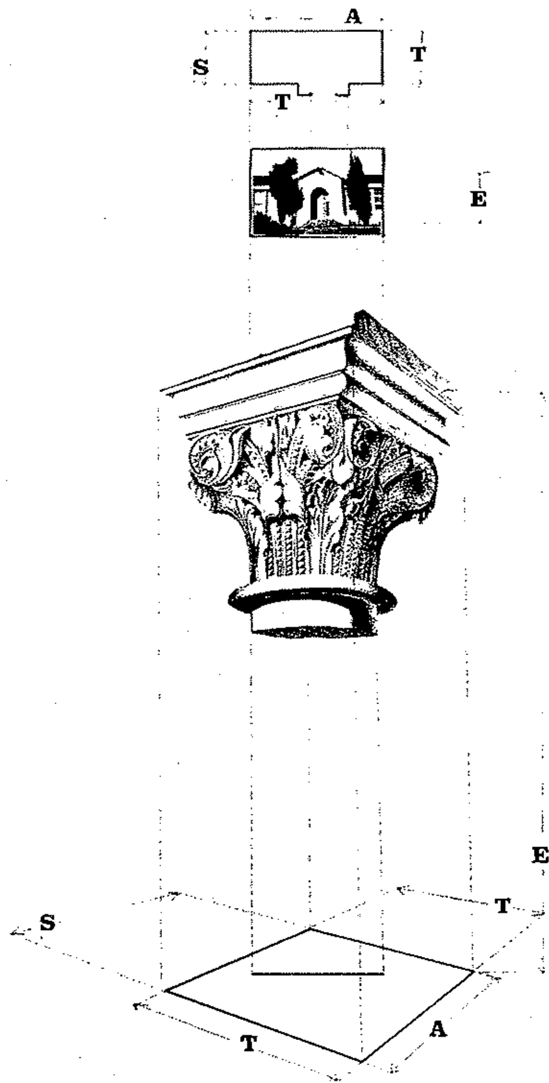

Some Recent Discoveries Concerning the Modern State

Lester J. Mazor

Although the modern state is difficult to comprehend, given the lack of a referent in common experience, the duty to avoid its reappearance and the responsibility of periodic intercourse with creatures living in states in other parts of the galaxy justify the effort to describe the circumstance of its dissolution, its characteristics during the period of its terrestial hegemony, and the conditions of its initial establishment. In addition to the difficulties arising from cultural distance, the inquiry is hampered by the fact that few records were preserved during the waves of actions against information retention at the end of the Modern Ages. Moreover, of the existing documents, most of those which were "official" or "corporate" in origin are considered unreliable, since it is known that they were often falsified to serve the immediate purposes of particular factions. For this reason the attempt to sketch the main outlines of the modern state which follows is based upon inferences drawn from scattered and fragmentary writings of a theoretical nature, which apparently survived because they were considered to be of little consequence.

From these materials it appears that the state was a form of human association, consisting in a plurality of persons. Claims to statehood by a single person occasionally seem to have been made (l'etat, c'est mois), but these were not acknowledged, although particular persons were believed to exert great influence in the affairs of states. Small groups also were not permitted to be states. Statements that even "the smallest are too large for assembly government" and that the population of a state "can be even tens of millions" (Bobbio 1978: 26, 18) may seem incomprehensible, but are supported by innumerable references to the state as "large and complex." States often sought to increase their populations by conquest or by the introduction of various measures to increase human reproduction. No simple formula has been found, however, for the relationship between population size and rank in the hierarchies which obtained among states.

Exclusive control of a substantial territorial area also appears to have been a prerequisite of statehood. Though no explicit criteria for minima of population and territory have been discovered, ridicule of states for being unduly small and the treatment of groups claiming autonomy but lacking a bounded territory suggest that they may have existed. The frequency of conflicts over territory indicates that expansion often was considered advantageous. There is abundant evidence to support this finding, despite the fact that gigantism was a major factor in the decline of the state. There were even a few states whose dimensions approached continental scale, though these appear to have been unmanageable, and proposals were made for the creation of a world state as a response to incessant interstate conflict and lack of coordination. However, these proposals received little support, since they were made at a time when the state already was losing acceptance as a viable political form.

Demographically, a state consisted of one or more (often several) areas of moderate population density but enormous area, set within a larger, much more sparsely populated territory. The principle of location of the denser areas has not yet been determined; it follows no discernible ecological pattern. The areas of greater density were the sites of "the urban crisis" (Castells 1976:2-3), while sparsely populated areas were often referred to as "underdeveloped" or "areas of rural impoverishment." In this arrangement large numbers of people were divorced from the land, were ignorant of its needs and cycles, and did not participate directly in nutritional maintenance. In fact, some states derived a substantial part of their nutritional support from others. This was accomplished both by direct seizure and by estblishing relations of economic dependence. For urban dwellers, living conditions tended to be personally hazardous and often culturally barren. Yet persistent shifts of population from rural to urban areas indicate that, even when people were not directly driven from the land, conditions of life in rural areas had become unacceptable. The state was deeply implicated in these demographic arrangements, maintaining by force the exclusiveness of landholdings by a small number of persons; supporting a structure of finance under which small landholders frequently lost their land; encouraging patterns of distribution which favored massive, energy consuming and ecologically destructive forms of agriculture; and adopting numerous other measures which fostered urbanization and industrialization. These aspects of state policy were supported by the belief that it was both possible and desirable for human beings to dominate and exploit their environment—which complemented the view that social relations among persons should be hierarchical. Although eventually the full extent of the destructiveness of these beliefs became known, the development of this understanding was retarded by efforts of the state to maintain these myths in order to sustain the system of power relations.

The pattern of interaction among persons was based on an elaborate and multiple arrangement of relations of domination and subordination (Giddens 1973). Although most of the sources indicate that the overall shape of this arrangement was pyramidal, the issue is confused in the literature, which sometimes suggests that there were three distinct classes consisting of approximately equal numbers of persons and which even contains claims that there were no classes at all. However, frequent references to distinctions based on age, gender, skin color, wealth, language group, belief system, technical skill, general knowledge or other characteristics demonstrate that the population of states must have been highly stratified. Apparently, many of the hierarchies were mutually reinforcing, though some were crosscutting. Because there was little fluidity in either the relative significance of the hierarchies or within each one, the entire arrangement had a static quality.

Detailed and minute knowledge of the behavior of persons within the state appears to have been one of its major preoccupations. Persons living within a state were considered its "subjects," although some of them were also called "citizens" in most states. The state claimed the power to limit entry and exit, to define permissible behaviors, to demand expressions of allegiance, to impose obligations to contribute labor or even life, and to support these and other demands by a system of education, habilitation, and incarceration which was more generally called "discipline" (Foucault 1977).

The state was consistently involved in efforts to create and maintain the expansion of material production, especially by industrial means, with little regard for the burdens this imposed upon both persons and environment. In some states this entailed direct management by members of the state apparatus, extending to the control of communication, transportation, housing, nutritional production, entertainment and many other activities. Since in many of the states of this type it was held that the state was merely a transitional form of political life, extensive state management coexisted with efforts to prepare for the disappearance of the state, though details of the latter effort are lacking. (Chkhikvadze

1972). Another set of states adopted what was called a "corporatist" organization of society in which major economic decisions were made by monopolies supported by a state planning apparatus, labor union representatives guaranteed the acquiescence of workers, wage and price controls were imposed, restrictions on information, communication and assembly were instituted, and political participation was reduced to a charade. (Wolfe 1977: 340) It was widely believed that these states had as their main purpose the perpetuation, maintenance and support of class rule, although it is unclear whether the state apparatus was directly manipulated by the ruling class, was semi-autonomous as a means of controlling divisions within this class and defining interests of the entire class, or was primarily an agent engaged in crisis intervention (Burawoy 1978: 60). In any case, it is not readily apparent what difference these distinctions might have made, although they may have been consequential to the strategies proposed by rival factions seeking to justify their particular political stance.

The political vitality which began to emerge at the end of the Modern Ages was first recognized in the form of "the hoarding of political power from the state." (Wolfe 1977: 344) It had become clear that enormous suffering and ecological damage would be done by elites reluctant to yield control (Offe 1972: 486). During the crisis period, the state became immobilized as it was called upon to solve a limitless number of problems, produced by its own activities and by those which it supported, at the same time that the willingness of people to respond to the demands of the state was declining. The situation was one in which there appeared to be both "a substantial increase in governmental activity and a substantial decrease in governmental authority" (Huntington 1976: 11). The state could not both meet the demands of promoting efficiency (accumulation) and for amelioration of its effects (Connolly 1978). Hence, there was "simultaneous need for but despair of bureaucratization (Wolfe 1977: 264), as the state absorbed an increasing proportion of human effort. Despite the vast state apparatus and the penetration of the state into almost every aspect of daily life, the "coexistence of poverty and affluence" (Offe 1972: 479) was highly visible in most states and was a salient feature of the differences among states. While some people recommended resignation in the face of an intractable condition, others sought to make the state an object of worship by endowing it with personal, mechanical or epic characteristics (Wolfe 1977: 278-87).

A state whose claim to validity as a political form rested on its promise to provide a satisfying and fulfilling life to its subjects could not survive at the limit of its capacity to export misery, exploit the environment, and postpone the question of the meaningfulness of the existence it had to offer. Had the state been able to achieve an ethical character (Hegel 1952: 155), it might have persisted, but this could only be asserted, not accomplished (Marx 1977: 26-35, 63-74), since the state could establish neither community nor universality (Unger 1975: 284-89). The attempt to found the legitimacy of the state upon democratic premises had foundered because of the obviously undemocratic nature of its bureaucracies, the impossibility of conducting its affairs openly, and its unwieldy scale. The transnational state of the late period had so slender a democratic foundation (Wolfe 1977: 241-44), that it did not even claim to be grounded in participation; indeed, it often saw participation as undesirable (Huntington 1976: 36). The earlier attempt to maintain on the one side a visible face of the state, an arena of public controversy open to view if not to involvement, while on the other concealing large segments of the state machinery, including those of greatest consequence, failed as revelations inspired by factionalism and the sheer size of the covert operations made it impossible to keep their existence from becoming a factor in political consciousness. Public distrust for the state already had risen substantially at the point at which the state had sought to sustain itself and its principal roles by delegation of large portions of its activities to "quasi-private bodies." But the distinction between public and private spheres proved to be untenable (Wolfe 1977: 204-13, 165; Unger 1975: 175-76). Expansionism also did not suffice to maintain belief in the state, because the finiteness of territory revealed its limits, because it risked overextension of state resources, and because of the excessive demands it placed upon the populace (Wolfe 1977: 100-07).

A firmer ground for the legitimacy of the state had seemed to be its capacity to provide a framework within which a society of freedom and equality could be developed (Rawls 1971), but this had not been sustainable, since freedom was either given only a completely abstract content or consigned to arbitrariness (Unger 1975: 83-88), equality was either reduced to formal equality before the state or interpreted as homogeneity, and both freedom and equality were held to be in competition with each other. At one time it had appeared that the state could claim to be justified on the ground that it was supremely just, issuing from "the general, united will of the people" (Kant 1970: 77), but this had been possible only

so long as it seemed plausible that this "freedom, equality and *unity* of the will of *all* the members" somehow could be equated with a decision reached by a majority vote of delegates of a citizenry defined to exclude almost all of the population—children, women, and those who labor for their livelihood (Kant 1970: 77-78). This theory had the advantage of avoiding any obligation of the state to justify itself by contributing to the happiness of people (Kant 1970: 73), precisely the notion on which the state finally lost its claim to legitimacy, a danger which had escaped some advocates of the state (Hobbes 1967).

The pessimistic version of the argument from happiness, which saw the state as necessary to provide security in a society in which human relations were reduced to "a series of market relations" (Macpherson 1964:264-65), was willing to concede "extraordinary powers" to the state (Wolfe 1977: 279). The optimistic version sought to model a society in which a panoptic state could "induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power," a state in which "he who is subjected to a field of visibility and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relations in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection." (Foucault 1977: 201, 203).

Despite its various facades, its efforts to depict itself as inevitable, necessary, perpetual, protective, paternalistic, adventurous, the unifier of separate interests, the guardian of fundamental rights and peaceful order, the state consistently held to its role of maintaining control. Though this might at some times have appeared to have purpose, to be of benefit to the few, ultimately it claimed no other end than control itself, holding close to its origins in patriarchal power (Bodin 1955; Allen 1951). But the power of the state never was merely negative, for "power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth" (Foucault 1977: 194), including those which lent reality to the state. The existence of the state was contingent on the view that power could be centralized, that it could be held at the top of hierarchies, that it could descend from the heights to permeate every corner of the society and permanently stifle opposition. The struggle for the lifting of the veil of ignorance which sustained these myths, for the recognition that power is dispersed, that it resides in all relationships, and that it could be assembled horizontally rather than vertically, stands between

the political vitality of our own epoch and the iron cage which once was the modern state.

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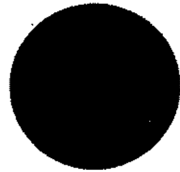
Interview



Richard Cloward / Frances Fox Piven

One of the most important reasons for (re)creating Black Rose *magazine was to create a forum for new thinking and discussion of the means for affecting social change. Thinking that wouldn't be based on the usual preconceived notions and methodology and rife with the usual jargon. Thinking that would take into account the realities of the contemporary world.*

Richard Cloward and Frances Fox Piven have spent a large part of the last dozen years struggling to develop a realistic strategy to achieve social goals, and to a large extent, we feel, have avoided the pitfalls mentioned above. They discuss in their books— Poor People's Movements, The Politics of Turmoil *and* Regulating the Poor*—and in their numerous articles, many of the questions we're struggling to answer. Since we share some of their ideas and concerns, we were interested in exploring their criticisms of Left thinking. Of particular interest to us is their skepticism about the value of both mass-based organizations and the use of an electoral politics strategy to achieve radical social goals. So. . . we decided to interview these well-known, controversial, interesting people.*

The interviewers are Stephen Amberg, Ann Kotell and Paula Rayman.

—Editor

SA: In *Poor People's Movements* and elsewhere you support the idea and stress the necessary spontaneity of poor people's movements against would-be political leaders. You've also argued against New Left and anarchist thinking while insisting upon a material analysis of strategy. What is your conception of social movements which reconcile these positions?

FFP: I think that we've often been accused of worshipping spontaneity, and that's misleading. The accusation arises out of our insistence on searching for the actual possibilities for mobilization that will arise within the experience and the situation of poor people, in contrast to a frequent Left emphasis on correct organizational forms. But the term spontaneous is misleading because we think that mobilizations, when they occur, are determined events. They are determined by the situations people experience and their interpretations of them. It is the situations that people find themselves in, and the opportunities for action that emerge in those situations, that we think should be analyzed. What is called our emphasis on spontaneity really is an emphasis on an analysis of the actual possibilities for protest mobilization that exist for people in their situation.

RC: I think that the issue of spontaneity is entirely misplaced. We say that mass protest wells up out of certain institutional conditions which generate high levels of anger, indignation and disaffecton with the legitimacy of the social system. And in that sense it is socially determined. It's not just a spontaneous event that occurs out of the blue. The issue of spontaneity really arises at a different juncture. It arises at the point where potential leaders, organizers, are confronted by this welling up, this bursting forth of new political energy among the masses of people, whether industrial workers of the 1930s or the blacks of the post-World War II period. The issue is how organizers and leaders approach that situation. They can take the traditional path, they can try to harness it, channel it, fashion, shape it, form it into mass-based bureaucratic membership organizations. It was that which we took issue with. We tried to raise the question of whether there were other strategies for channeling and harnessing this energy that would be more effective. We point, for example, to experiences of the civil rights movement in the American South. We pointed out that the organizers who participated in that movement, whether in SNCC, or CORE or SCLC, did not emphasize building mass membership bureaucratic organizations. They employed what we called in *Poor People's Movements* the tactic of concerted mobilization. They

tried to move with this mass of energy, and tried to enlarge and buttress it rather than to turn it toward bureaucratic organization. And I think one can see the same type of concerted mobilization in a variety of other movements that we've seen in recent years. The environmental, anti-nuclear, and anti-war movements—they've all emphasized the mobilization of great numbers of people for demonstrations, for example. So, the issue for us was organization versus the natural ways in which people are sometimes led to respond as a consequence of the social conditions that confront them.

SA: **After the wave passes and the conditions of that situation pass, are there no possibilities for poor people? Is it possible for poor people to win things cumulatively on a permanent basis?**

RC: We tend to think not. Our reading of the history of poor people's protests is that they tend to be episodic. They tend to arise out of particular convergences of various institutional forces which generate anger and indignation and cause people to rise up in the streets. But even as that process is initiated it sets in motion other forces in the society which eventually tend to undermine and to restore some measure of equilibrium. We don't know of any historical examples of mass-based organizations that outlived those periods of turbulence, other than the labor movement. And that's a special case. If you look at other categories of people who have been turbulent it is very difficult to motivate them to any kind of action in periods of quiescence. That led us to the conclusion that what's done during the periods of mass unrest is itself the crucial question, not what can be done between periods of mass unrest.

AK: **Have you noticed that some tactics people use during periods of mass unrest are more successful than other tactics? Can you isolate certain tactics or strategies and say: these have tended historically to create larger, more positive social movements?**

FFP: There are two issues. One has to do with the forms of defiance that are available to people, with whether or not they act to withdraw the cooperation that they otherwise offer to important institutions in the society. It is there that the core of their power resides. So the first issue has to do with understanding and identifying the institutional position of different groups, trying to analyze the kind of power that is available to them if they were to become defiant. This will vary from one group to another.

The second issue has to do with the kinds of movement action that seem to characterize the rising crest of a movement in contrast with kinds of action that tend to be imposed by elements of leadership that are preoccupied with forming stable, mass-based membership bureaucracies. Within the history of any movement you can distinguish between the exercise of mass defiance as people acquire the capacity and the motive to do so, and the form of action that tends to be imposed by leaders who become preoccupied with organization building and making connections with elites. In the labor movement you can distinguish between the rank and file strikes which characterized the upsurge of the movement and the preoccupation of CIO leadership with preventing strikes after 1937 or even before. They thought continued strikes would jeopardize the organization, and they would have, because the crucial condition attached to unionization was the prohibition of strikes, a condition intended to prevent spontaneous stoppage.

Both issues are very important. The first has to do with forms of defiance that are available to people given their situation, given the interdependencies that exist between them and the institutions of the society. What leverage do they have? And the second issue has to do with the different kinds of movement action that occur within the history of any particular movement as a consequence of the emergence of different influences, the first influence being the welling forth of defiance and the second being the preoccupation with organization building and electoral effectiveness that tends to become dominant as a consequence both of leadership doctrine, and the interest of elites in supporting that doctrine.

AK: **Given what you've already said, I think you would say the women's movement is on the right track because they're not out to build anything huge or bureaucratic, but are concentrating on expressing themselves and changing their own lives. Do you feel the women's movement possesses the potential for bringing about a broad-based social change?**

FFP: Not as it now exists. I think you're correct that there was a tendency in the women's movement that was not organizational. The transforming power of the consciousness-raising group on the lives of better educated women was not organizational. On the other hand, there are also elements of the women's movements which are preoccupied precisely with organizational and electoral politics, particularly with ERA and anti-ERA. However, the difficulties of the women's movement at this stage don't arise primarily because of its organizational form. They arise because of

the character of its base. The movement has divided women of different classes, interests and ideology. In fact, the women's movement has helped to create a broad-based, authentically popular movement which is very hostile to the women's movement: the pro-life movement.

AK: **Do you see this as a tactic on the part of the patriarchy to divide women in the classic way movements are usually divided, where people are set up to work against one another?**

FFP: The patriarchy, the Catholic hierarchy particularly, is certainly involved. But that doesn't explain the large number of women who feel the issues of the women's movement are not their issues. They see the movement as threatening to them. Many women don't have the opportunities of better educated women. They don't see forfeiting the grace of motherhood as a gain at all. They don't see going out and working just like men as particularly attractive, because the men they know collect garbage or work in the mines. So, in a way all women, or women in both movements, are responding to the erosion of the traditional feminine role in the family. The family is changing. But, for lower middle class and working class women that has not been accompanied by the availability of opportunities to enter into more prestigious occupations. For lower middle class and working class women, the erosion of the family is threatening. The only thing they can do is waitressing or something of that sort. They've tended to cling to whatever grace and respect their families afforded them.

AK: **What do you think people can do to combat that? Do you see this response as such a broad-based popular movement that there's nothing effective we can do at the present time?**

FFP: The women's movement could take up the issues that are central in the lives of these women. ERA doesn't mean anything to most women. It's ominous and threatening because it suggests their protections will be taken away. NOW has undertaken some litigation for equal pay, but that's really swamped by the other stuff they were doing.

RC: What has struck me is the extraordinary conventionality of the tactics the women's movement has employed. It has relied, as far as one can see, mainly on litigation, on various forms of electoral politics, petitioning, things of that sort. And if there's one point that an analysis of protest movements leads to, it's that these are not tactics that generally yield

much. My own feeling is that the movement is much more likely to make progress were it to employ more disruptive tactics, tactics of civil disobedience and so on. We have the recent experience of the civil rights movement as a testimony that this is what it takes to overturn institutional patterns of any kind.

FFP: The women's movement has probably made its greatest gains in an institutional arena where I suspect there's been a lot of defiance—in the home. It's hidden and we can't see it, but I suspect there's been a lot of cracking of roles. Women's roles in the family, at least among better educated women, have changed dramatically.

PR: **An historical thought on the tactics of the women's movement. During the early part of the century the women's movement was going after the vote and used militant tactics such as strikes, civil disobedience and hunger fasts. It wasn't a mass movement, it wasn't a great outpouring, but it was a strong minority. They were successful. They were much more successful using those tactics. But the goal was the vote.**

AK: **Do you think having the vote makes people feel they have a vested interest or power in the system? Do you think that's why movements die as soon as people are enfranchised?**

FFP: That's one reason. But you have to treat that sort of critique rather delicately. A critique of a movement because it has the wrong goals. Those goals don't emerge just because somebody said, "Well, this is what we should go after." Goals emerge out of very deeply imprinted understandings that people have of what's wrong with their situation, understandings that also tend to be fostered and encouraged by their interaction with elites. The black movement went after the vote because the most powerful spokespersons in America said that's what you need. And that was also consistent with an American ideology which black people shared. You can't change that easily, and there come times when people are going to go after reforms which you can see will contain the seeds for their co-optation. But that they do so reflects their fundamental understandings, which can't be wished away.

SA: **You mentioned earlier that labor was a special case and the situation of poor people as different. Do different class groupings, different strata, have their own goals? Can labor change its situation permanently while others cannot?**

RC: The issue to which I was addressing myself when I made that comment was the question of the conditions under which an insurgent group can or cannot form some kind of permanent organizational structure which outlives the period of turbulence. What I intended to convey was that for labor it was possible. For most groups it is not. And the difference is that labor organizations were formed within the context of an institutional structure—the factory system. That structure existed and that structure is permanent. Labor unions could themselves develop permanency by drawing upon various of the resources which the structure of the factory system provided. For example, they could get the automatic dues check-off. That meant they could collect enormous amounts of money without any organizing input. In what other situation is that possible? Organizers who try to form mass-based organizations outside the labor context are constantly knocking on doors trying to get people to pay their dues. Labor could also gain concessions that put management in the position of having to coerce membership—the closed shop, the union shop. Where else is there a structure that organizes and can draw upon a coerced membership? So in those and in other ways you cannot generalize from the labor experience. The institutional context is a decisive determinant of a variety of features of these movements and certainly a decisive determinant of whether or not the movement can be institutionalized and made permanent.

SA: I wonder whether National Welfare Rights Organization (NWRO) was faced with a similar situation with the family assistance plan. There was a possibility of having a guaranteed income and recognized entitlements that would have changed the structural base. But apparently in the dynamic of mobilization it was far from clear that it would have had these results. That there might be some time when working class organizations could find some common ground with poor people's demands I think is part of what many people still believe.

RC: I don't think the enactment of Nixon's family assistance plan would have affected either the institutionalization of NWRO or facilitated the growth of a cross-class coalition. I think it would have probably helped spell the demise of the movement. There was nothing in the nature of that concession that would have enabled NWRO to become institutionalized.

FFP: If you think about the kind of welfare structure that would have been created it's hard to see anything that would have made possible the classic coalition with the working class. It would have nationalized certain decisions to a substantial degree perhaps. But what we argued was not that NWRO should have resisted FAP because of its organizational needs, or that they should have used FAP to set the stage for a new political movement, but that they should have ignored it. Whatever effect NWRO still could have had was at the local level by trying to revive the sorts of defiant actions that had characterized the early years of that movement. What the family assistance plan signaled for NWRO had nothing to do with whether it was good or bad welfare policy. As a matter of fact NWRO had trouble deciding whether it was good or bad, but what was always clear from the beginning was that they were going to get involved in it, and they were going to use the occasion of the legislation to make themselves prominent. They also did it because they felt that was the way to go.

RC: NWRO went to Washington. You never saw one of the leaders in a welfare center again. They substituted symbolic resources for a mass base. They had no mass base left nor did they make any concerted effort to try to revive it.

SA: Part of the goals of NWRO was to achieve immediate economic aid and a national income standard. If those goals were achieved they would presumably change the conditions of poor people. They would not be as readily seen as pariahs, the status of poor people would change, which would be a major change.

FFP: There were certain goals that were impossible, precisely because they would have had the reverberations that you predict. It's no doubt true that a decent income maintenance system that allowed people who were not working some degree of self-esteem, and that allowed them a minimally decent income, would change the meaning of poverty. It would change the material condition of the poor and it would also change the meaning of being poor. But that is also probably why it can't happen. A related reason that it can't happen is that then the meaning of low wage work would also change. Low wage work would no longer be enforced by the fact that there was a fate even worse than being a dishwasher in a crummy little restaurant. Or in a similar way, the original Humphrey-Hawkins bill, which would have guaranteed government employment to everyone on demand when unemployment rose above 3 percent, would

have had enormous reverberations. It never could happen simply as legislative innovation for that reason. The structural opportunities for reform don't derive simply from our good ideas. When we fix on a reform that will have widespread reverberations, we have to expect that the other side has a capacity for understanding those reverberations. When Senator Long said in the hearings on FAP that "If a family could be guaranteed $1,600 a year in the South, who was going to wash his shirts?", he understood the connection between low wage work and welfare. Just for that reason the structural opportunities for welfare reform are limited.

AK: **I've felt for a long time that the electoral strategy is a dead end and that most people who use it in an attempt to affect social change are manipulated by those controlling the system.**

RC: The civil rights movement, after winning the vote in '65, left the streets and went into electoral politics. It was a mindblowing transformation that occurred between 1965 and 1970.

There was unwarranted optimism. An illusory optimism about the possibilities of electoral politics. What they had won they had won by protest. Now suddenly they decided they could take on all the economic ills of the black community, its low wages, its lousy housing, its unemployment, these really difficult problems, far more difficult than the winning of political rights, by a much softer conventional sort of political action. It just seemed to us that was a contradiction in terms. Look at what they had to do just to win the vote. Look at the tactics they had to employ. Now they are going to undertake a genuine class struggle, a struggle against various forms of economic deprivation and inequality which were deeply rooted in the American social structure. And how were they going to do it? With votes. It seemed to us incredibly naive. When people say we are pessimistic, I feel quite the opposite. I think we have a certain optimism about the use of non-conventional tactics, and we think that the optimism displayed by those who employ conventional tactics is simply misplaced.

FFP: The black leadership that went into electoral politics demonstrated an outward optimism about electoral politics. At least you can say for them they had a certain self-interest in being optimistic because they got elected. Or appointed, or whatever. So it served them well. But in general when the Left calls us pessimistic what they mean—they mean two sorts of things I suppose—is first that we don't talk about how to get total, radical social transformation, how to get socialism. We don't say much

about how to do it. We even seem to be saying that the best you can hope for is smallish gains. And I suppose the second dimension of our "pessimism" has to do with the fact that we don't believe in the doctrine of how to get those gains—working class organizations contriving certain formulae about organization and indoctrination. We would say that they're not optimistic, but rather doctrinaire and contemptuous, that they haven't evaluated their own strategy against contemporary experience, and that's mindless! Also, when they dismiss the struggles of the sixties generally, they're contemptuous about the situation of actual people.

RC: I have yet to see a critic of the black movement of the sixties who acknowledges that blacks in the South won an historically important victory. They won a major reduction in the use of terror as the means by which they were controlled. That was the real meaning of the winning of political rights in the South, the right to sit on the previously all-white juries, and so forth. The vote did have some important consequences with respect to the terror question—blacks can vote out terroristic sheriffs and other public officials. Now from our point of view, anytime a group succeeds in weakening the use of terror to control it, it has made a major gain, it's just not to be dismissed. . . . It may not be utopia, but that doesn't mean it isn't extraordinarily significant. And if you talk to ordinary black people in the South today, that is what they talk about; they don't have to kow-tow nearly as much, they don't live in fear nearly as much; and in their lives, that's an extraordinary gain.

PR: **I haven't seen very much mention in your work of the nonviolent movement. Nonviolent organizations tend to be highly decentralized and use mass protest, staying out of electoral politics. You haven't given that very much attention or applause. Is there a reason for you neglecting this movement? It's complementary to a lot of things you're saying, and falls into your perspective more closely than many of the other movements with which you deal.**

RC: Do you mean the use of nonviolent civil disobedience?

PR: **I'm talking about nonviolence not just in terms of strategy and tactics, but as a movement: it has been a movement in U.S. history. It certainly was an organizing force and very anti-legislative. I see it as the movement which comes closest to fulfilling some of the ideas you put forth.**

FFP: That's probably so, but it had to do also with our understanding of the issue of violence, a term which is misunderstood and misused. Violence is a peripheral issue to us. Whether or not a movement is violent has to do more with its strategic opportunities. We are not against violence, in general or in principle. We think that it is not accidental that most popular movements in the U.S. have not been violent, because they've understood their extreme vulnerability, the repression that violence would bring down upon their heads. On the other hand, most popular movements have resulted in violence, and we don't think that's accidental either, but is very much a strategic question. The Southern civil rights movement consistently precipitated violence, and it knew what it was doing. It selected or targeted cities where violence was most likely and did so because it understood that Southern violence would add to their national support.

PR: Do you really think they picked those cities just because the violence there would be most publicly useful?

FFP: Yes, look what they were doing—they were exposing the Southern system before the eyes of the nation, so Washington would have to intervene. Those were the fundamental elements of their strategy.

PR: Perhaps they went to those places where injustice was most systematic, so that the violent confrontation was not the compelling reason to go to these cities.

RC: It depends on which city and which episode. Sometimes the movement massed in certain cities because something boiled up in that city, and they responded to it. That was true in Albany, Georgia, in '61 and '62. But when they picked Birmingham in '63, they did it very deliberately. They knew it was probably the most racist city in the South, with the most repressive police force, and they expected a great deal of bloodshed and arrests.

PR: It seems to me that it is recognized that state violence depends on a highly centralized form of organization, and that it's one of the compelling strategies of violent action to demand a high degree of centralization and to demand a certain kind of organization to perform in a certain way. Nonviolent action in fact is based on a very decentralized view of organization; a very different set of tactics and goals are attached to the nonviolent strategy. What I'm asking is if the kind of things you're suggesting

in your writing wouldn't be much more compatible with a nonviolent strategy.

FFP: I don't think a high level of organization and centralization is inherent in violence or nonviolence. What of the numerous occasions in American history when strikers have had the ability to keep out scabs by violent means, with the result that they sometimes won?

PR: No doubt; violence has won sometimes, nonviolence has won sometimes. I think the point is though it's a level of organization, a kind of centralization that's necessary.

FFP: But you can keep out scabs by violent means without a centralized organization. There can be that degree of infrastructure and consensus in the community of workers, and basically that's how miners understand to this day how to keep out scabs. You threaten them. And you shoot them if you have to.

PR: I think the way in which miners have been engaged is a more spontaneous "case" kind of effort. . . . You've got to think in terms of strategy, especially in the U.S. which is such an inherently violent society. That has to be dealt with in terms of sustained struggle. What we're up against is so sustained, so planned, and we're constantly going through cycles of being stilled and then rising up. How do we get out of that kind of cycle and create a more sustaining culture, without necessarily falling into the pitfalls and becoming highly centralized, doing the kinds of things you have suggested?

FFP: I don't think we can get out of the cycles. Movements set in action the forces that lead to their demise. But we can try to develop a popular culture of rebellion, a culture which carries the memories of earlier struggles. Still, it's hard to develop a popular culture in contemporary America that has any degree of autonomy—the capacity of people to remember their own experience and interpret their own experience has been virtually obliterated by the propaganda forces of modern society. But the Left could try to develop a reservoir of popular experience to keep it intact for people. We think that what the left has really done is to get it all wrong—that the left has developed a series of myths about the past that are consistent with Left doctrines but give people very little credit and also draw the wrong lessons about past experiences. This is true, for example, of the sorts of understandings that are available of what really

happened in the 1930s and later struggles. "Well, the CIO went out and organized industrial workers and then the industrial workers were all organized and they were happy ever after." But it didn't happen that way, even the organizers don't think it happened that way, and the version that is passed down gives workers themselves far too little credit. That's one problem. The other problem is that if you tell it wrong, then people learn the wrong lessons. So, we don't have a big answer, a total solution to the problem of the cyclical pattern of popular struggles. Our only answer is that we could do better in trying to build on past struggles. If you look at the history of struggles by French working people and peasants in the nineteenth century, you can see clearly marked the memories of each struggle on the next. That doesn't happen in the U.S., both because the Left has not cultivated this tradition and because people's capacities for developing their interpretations are being rapidly overtaken by the mass media.

RC: I think another point in the same direction is that a lot of these periods of insurgency by low-income people just pass without being recorded. Take *Poor People's Movements*, for example. We had a chapter on the unemployed movement in the thirties but practically nothing is written about it. That was only forty years ago, and no historian has really turned to it. Let's take other aspects of insurgency which are really quite dramatic—the breakdown of morale in the armed forces in Vietnam, the fragging and so forth. . . . One of the reasons that the American military was finally prepared to allow the defeat to be conceded is because they understood that in some important way they had lost control of their own troops. Now that's a phenomenal story—who's going to tell it? Who's going to go around and find those soldiers and interview them and trace the whole process by which morale broke down, how the legitimacy of the war broke down and how their defiance—court martial type defiance—so weakened the American war effort that it was a crucial variable in the equation that led finally to our conceding defeat. Even the draft resistance movement has not been written about much. Or what about the anti-nuclear movement that's going on now? Are we going to get a history of that, or all these episodes just going to be forgotten?

AK: People put up with a lot of oppressive, unhappy situations in their lives that are created for them by authorities of various kinds—in school, in the workplace, from politicians and other "leaders." I think they acquiesce for a variety of reasons: because they can't imagine society could

function any other way; because they believe the current way to be the only moral way; because they can't see any other way out; and so forth. I think the key to bringing about a broad-based social change is to help lots of people to start thinking they don't have to put up with all the negative things in their lives; that they can develop and use their personal power; that they can begin to feel they can get together with other people and shape some of their own destinies. Do you look at these issues, and if so, how do you approach them?

FFP: We think that the way in which people acquire that sense of themselves, collectively, is by having a degree of power and acting on whatever power they do have. True, one way of approaching that problem is through political education, where you try to change people's sense of themselves. But we think that people's sense of themselves, the power to control their own destiny, is most thoroughly transformed by militant action.

AK: The most important reason for me in deciding to work with battered women at Transition House was the thought that I would be encouraging women who'd actually left a very oppressive situation and had taken that big first step toward saying, "We're not going to put up with that shit anymore." My work was to help them to cement that step. But I want to find other ways to do that same thing. Do you believe when people accomplish some political goal and have a good feeling about it that they probably go away with the feeling that since they accomplished the one thing they probably can accomplish others?

FFP: It depends a little bit on the spirit in which they accomplish it, their understanding of what it is they're doing while they're doing it. That matters. I don't think that the looting thing a couple of years ago in New York, which no doubt yielded a lot of goods, developed a sense of collective strength and a stronger sense of indignation and so forth. They probably thought of it as hustling, and since hustling is life in those communities anyway, that's not as good as other forms of collective action. On the other hand, there were blacks in the South, who in the entire memory of their people, always had to kow-tow. They confronted their masters and oppressors and they said "no more." That must have changed their sense of themselves forever.

RC: The same point, by contrast, did not hold for the welfare rights movement, because they were dealing with an issue that was morally much

more ambiguous, given the American value system. They were asking for the right to be dependent. The civil rights movement was asking for the right to be free, which resonates with American traditions in ways which the right to be dependent does not. There wasn't in the welfare rights movement the same moral spirit, the sense of self-righteousness, that was true of the civil rights movement. There was a problem of moral ambiguity that plagued the welfare rights movement from the first day it was formed.

AK: What do you hope will be the result of people reading your books? Is your priority to help people to see the various opportunities open to them?

RC: One of our main purposes was to try to alter the debate about strategy: To try to undermine the commitment, even among Left leaders and organizers, to electoral politics as the means by which significant changes can be made. Our reading of the history of these movements suggested the contrary. It was only when these movements moved outside the arena of electoral politics to employ militant, disruptive, non-institutional forms of political action, that any chance of winning gains of any kind emerged. So one of our main concerns was to raise a large question of doubt about the use of conventional political channels by groups at the bottom of the society.

FFP: In writing *Regulating the Poor,* I think our orientation was a little bit different. We were trying to cast welfare in a different light. We were trying to make people see it differently, and at that time part of our audience was the welfare rights movement itself. Our analysis was often considered to be pessimistic, in the sense that we did not hold out much hope for "welfare reform." But we don't consider ourselves to be pessimistic. Do you consider yourself pessimistic, Richard?

RC: It's a difference I think between being starry-eyed and being realistic, rather than being pessimistic and optimistic. Why should I be optimistic about the possibilities for significant gains for oppressed groups through the electoral system if I think the electoral system is really controlled by other and more powerful groups? Why is it pessimistic to say that if people are going to make gains they are going to have to move outside that system and use unconventional channels of political influence? That's not a pessimistic statement. I think it's a realistic statement.

LeGuin's "The Dispossessed" and Anarchism

Robert C. Newman

This paper originally began as a presentation to the section on "The Socialist Tradition in Science Fiction" at the Popular Culture Association Convention in Cincinnati, April, 1978. As the section title suggests, popular culture and science fiction are beginning to stake out an important area of concern to those of us who want to see basic changes in the structure of our society. (So too for this coming year the section on "Utopian and Dystopian Thought in Science Fiction.") In fact, I'm beginning to suspect that science fiction may prove to be not only a popular vehicle for transmitting socialist and/or utopian thought but also one which really encourages people to think out concretely what their ideals and aspirations involve. This was my impetus in writing the paper originally; I had read Ursula LeGuin's *The Dispossessed,* taught it several times, and realized—the more I taught it—that it represented an extremely detailed and meticulous analysis of what a future anarchist world would entail, what benefits it might realistically hold, and what problems it might get into. Since then, I've been recommending the book to everyone I can think of; their response has been as enthusiastic as mine. People have been surprised and astonished at the solidity of LeGuin's vision and the complexity of her thinking.

In my original paper, I prefaced my analysis of the novel with what seemed to me scraps of news from the external world relevant to the theme of anarchism. I mentioned a review in *The New York Review of Books* which asked pointedly why it had happened that, among all the revolutions in recent history calling themselves "socialist," none had actually ended up accomplishing their idealistic goals. The reviewer's answer had been that in no case had the revolution carried through on its promise to turn the power they had gained back to the people in whose name the revolution had been fought. I also pointed to brief examples of what I called anarchist naivete (George Woodcock's statement, for example, about how we are going to move from one economic world to anoth-

er—"The old motives of profit and self-interest will cease to dominate economic life. Instead, the incentive will be the good of the members of society, without distinction." [*Patterns of Anarchy* (NY, 1966), p. 41]) and anarchist intransigence (e.g., Raymond Carr's criticism of the Spanish Anarchists on the grounds of their myopia about the actual economic success of the collectives and their intransigence in rejecting mechanisms of elected representation in anti-vote campaigns). [*New York Review of Books*, October 13, 1977, pp. 22-23] To me all this seemed immediately relevant to the twin themes of LeGuin's novel—the first, that a decentralized, anarchistically oriented society would be superior to a centralized, hierarchically oriented society—the kind we have now, and second, that nevertheless, anarchism itself cannot afford to ignore the critique from within that even an anarchist polity might succumb to the temptations of coerciveness and power-mongering, the urge toward "domination" as LeGuin labels it.

Just as I write, however, a fresh instance of this sort of thing has burst in horrible detail before us—the murders of Congressman Ryan and several newspaper correspondents, the murders and commanded suicides of over 900 members of the Jonestown commune. It is with some diffidence that I bring this up; perhaps it is such an extraordinary event that it has no relevance to anything other than to the particular psychology of Jim Jones himself and of his followers. But deep in my bones I do feel the connection nevertheless. One woman, a survivor, spoke of Jones's combination of "idealism and repression." Jones's commune was apparently described as "socialist" in some respects, yet Jones's 19-year old son characterized his father as "authoritarian." Film clips of an interview with Jones in Redwood City, California several years ago show what seems to be a sensible and genuine man saying that in his colony, racism and sexism no longer existed, class divisions had been banished—as if such traits, socialized into us over years and indeed centuries, could be wiped out at the drop of a work-chart. Another survivor spoke of the suicide rehearsals as long as a year ago, and spoke also of how Jones had at first "ruled" with "love," then later "with fear."

The media so far have categorized The People's Temple as a "religious cult" rather than a utopian commune, a distinction which can best be appreciated in the light of Laurence Veysey's contrasts between two types of communal experiments, the "mystic" and the "anarchist." On the basis of historical research and his own experiences, Veysey says that the mystic commune tends to last a lot longer than the anarchist one but

only at the price of authoritarian, charismatic leadership—i.e., exactly that urge toward "domination" which is central to LeGuin's own political analysis:

> . . . one of the most omnipresent and disturbing ingredients in radical movements [is] personal magnetism. . . . Hero worship, not passion itself, or the impulse towards passionate fellow feeling, is the truly unfortunate element in the legacy of romanticism. Repeatedly in communal settings old and new, it rears its head. . . . The historical record shows that charisma is the persistent enemy of human freedom. The propensity among recent radicals to continue running after 'inspired' leaders in the time-honored way is profoundly discouraging. . . . The examples of an authoritarian tendency within the mystical tradition, both past and present. . . would seem to furnish compelling testimony of their own. One ends up being exceedingly grateful to the anarchistic tradition for having so long provided a partial corrective. [Laurence Veysey, *The Communal Experience* (NY, 1974), pp. 478-479]

Yet even the anarchist commune is not completely free of danger. As Veysey points out, even anarchists are reluctant to look closely at the nature of power and domination within their own groups and often deceive themselves as to the actual leadership going on in the midst of ostensibly leaderless groups. [Veysey, 460-461] For another thing, says Veysey, it is extremely difficult for human beings to maintain an attitude of skepticism toward both the mainstream *and* radical alternative:

> It is truly taxing to maintain an attitude of skepticism towards would-be prophets as well as toward the leadership of the mainstream. However, this skepticism must be combined with the idealistic faith which will permit dropping one's guard toward ordinary fellow men on occasions when the genuine promise of communitas is in the air. This situation, rather than the detached mechanis of alternative economic or political systems, is the most urgent problem which radicals should confront. [Veysey, 179]

For obvious reasons, I find Veysey's comments extremely suggestive in connection with LeGuin's novel. Her scientist hero Shevek in fact eventually does manage to exhibit both that skepticism toward the mainstream and toward the radical alternative, and the novel as a whole bears out Veysey's belief that while anarchism offers a superior political consciousness compared to other communal traditions, it too must deal with the way people seek to dominate others and be dominated by them. LeGuin makes this point herself when she insists that "the revolution" is in the "individual" and exists forward through the individual, not the

other way around. LeGuin has clearly chosen her side in the continual conflict between individualist and communitarian tendencies within anarchism, and for my part, I agree with her choice.

Let me address myself now to the novel itself. [All quotations are from *The Dispossessed* (NY, Avon Books, 1974)] *The Dispossessed* develops ingeniously by two parallel stories alternating with one another, one on the anarchist world of Anarres, the other on the capitalist world of Urras. (For good measure, LeGuin also depicts the Soviet authoritarianism of Thu and the burned-out world of Terra.) The Anarres story works by flashbacks in the life of the physicist Shevek. We discover that his manner of response to the present events of the story is a function of his past development. In particular, his past reveals him to be someone who asserted his own freedom against even the seemingly necessary coercions of an anarchist utopia: denied the publication of his time theories, Shevek finally decided to take direct action on his own by founding a publishing collective. We see also, in the earlier moments of his development, that the roots of domination are deep in human nature: Shevek got a kick out of putting a friend "in prison."

In the immediate present of the story, Shevek also resists anarchist coercion to carry out a visit to the planet Urras, from which Anarres rebelled some two centuries earlier in the "Odonian" revolution (a feminine charismatic and libertarian leader, Odo). This rebellion is the source of the novel's "dispossessed" title. Shevek insists on making this trip for two reason: he hopes to find a now intellectual atmosphere, perhaps freer and more congenial to his time-physics, and he hopes to lay the groundwork for reconciling the mother planet to its rebellious offspring. Both of these projects go against the general will of the Anarres population; LeGuin ingenious depicts an anarchist mob at the space port, protesting Shevek's departure. Though it is a mob, it is dis-organized one, with individuals milling about not quite sure how to fit themselves together in any mass protest!

In the future of the story, Shevek ultimately recognizes the futility of his attempt to reconcile Urras and Anarres. In fact, he again finds it necessary to act on his own and take direct action by joining the Urrastian underground, thus betraying his Urrastian hosts and their hospitality. Though he has found both physical opulence and intellectual freedom on Urras, he recognizes that his newly burgeoning ideas about time would become nothing more than a product in the economy of Urras—one more means to exploit people or dominate them. Significantly though, in the process of doing all this, Shevek does make the key discovery about his "time-telephone"—the intellectual atmosphere *is* freer on Urras; nevertheless, Shevek opts to return to Anarres (through the offices of earth's ambassador) and thence to bestow his idea on all mankind freely, through publication.

Though I've summarized this badly, I'd like to note that LeGuin does a fine job of exhibiting the qualities of life on the two dissimilar worlds, chiefly through Shevek's consciousness. The novel gives us a real sense of what it would be like to live in the world of Anarres, with its limited opportunities but genuine decency, and contrariwise the opulence but heartlessness of life on Urras.

I said I was interested in LeGuin's novel for two reasons. The first is simply that LeGuin suggests the superiority of anarchist theorizing as a guide to reorganizing society because it involves notions of reversing the direction of power in society: instead of organizing hierarchically and competetively, from the "top down," we could have a freer and more egalitarian life if we organized from the "bottom up."

Though LeGuin's hero says this kind of organization was ideally designed to fit in a society of high technological development and stability, thus allowing for easy decentralization, it hasn't actually worked out that way. (The ideal, I think, is Murray Bookchin's notion of Post-Scarcity Anarchism.) In fact, Anarres is a poor planet where goods and raw materials are in very short supply, where life has to be eked out almost desperately. So in a way we have to credit LeGuin for taking the hard road to anarchism: if everyone can have enough through the wonders of easy energy and technological miracles, there really isn't any problem in letting everyone go off on their own. But what LeGuin does take up is the efficacy of anarchism in a scarcity economy. Here she argues that anarchism is superior to any other organizing form because it provides a more decent way to share the limited goods available. The key issue she focuses on is the conflict between (capitalist) efficiency and (anarchist) freedom. As Shevek explains to his Urrastian host's servant, the necessary work on Anarres is shared equally by everyone, which is admittedly not very efficient: everyone has to be trained and then retrained in order to be able to share. But the key value question is this: "You can't tell a man to work on a job that will cripple him or kill him in a few years. Why should he do that?" [p. 120]

So in LeGuin's scheme everyone has opted for individual freedom above social efficiency, and is free to do what they want to do, free

(hopefully!) also to join with others in voluntary groups to get the work of society done. Here is where LeGuin splits from the mainline socialist tradition to follow the anarcho-communist theories of Kropotkin and Proudhon; i.e., in the world of Anarres, all the means of production and consumption are held in common, there is no property of any sort (hence "order" but not crime), but—unlike the socialist version of things—there is no state either, it too has been abolished. In its place is a syndicalist organization of the economy in which voluntary groups—collectives, labor unions, affinity groups, etc.—own the material wealth of society and administer it through a "Production and Distribution Committee" (the PDC). Here then is "worker control," though as I shall suggest, LeGuin's view of it isn't simple or naive. The PDC is designed only as an administering unit: it isn't supposed to "govern" or possess the authority to order people to do things. It serves as a monitoring and feedback mechanism, surveying "public opinion" and conveying the "social conscience" back to the populace. On the basis of its surveys, it "advises" people on what work needs to be done and how the work is to be shared equally.

Here LeGuin approaches another key problem of the anarchist and socialist traditions, namely how to harmonize individual and social imperatives. For although LeGuin emphasizes individual freedom a great deal, she also sees that humanity must survive as a "social species" (something the Earth Ambassadress tells us Earth failed to do!). Hence individuals will have to "sacrifice" some of their freedom in the name of social survival, though LeGuin also says "sacrifice is not compromise." This becomes the rationale by which the PDC assigns people to various hard tasks and equally the rationale by which almost everyone accepts those tasks.

LeGuin of course touches on some basic questions of motivation here. How will you get people to actually work if no one compels them, and especially, how will you get them to do the shitwork? Here LeGuin's idea of human nature as a partially malleable concept, functioning always in relation to a particular society, comes into play; as Shevek says, when you remove the money-incentive, and when you recognize that paradoxically "coercion" is the least efficient means of obtaining order, you become aware of all sorts of other motivations in human beings:

> People like to do things. They like to do them well. People take the dangerous jobs because they can take pride in doing them, they can—egoize, we call it—show off?—to the weaker ones. . . . A person likes to do what he is good at doing. . . . But really, it is the question of means and ends. After all, work is done for the work's sake. It is the lasting pleasure of life. The private conscience knows this. And also the social conscience, the opinion of one's neighbors. One's own pleasure and the respect of one's fellows. That is all. When that is so, then you see the opinions of the neighbors become a very mighty force. [p. 121]

In terms of British traditions of moral thinking, LeGuin seems to speak for both the Hobbes-Mandeville line of thought (pride and shame as motivations) and Shaftsbury; and I would also see traces of Paul Goodman here —"People like to do things." In any case, this is considerably more complex than the George Woodcock quote I mentioned earlier, where the rational notion of the general good motivates people to give up private interests in the name of public.

But what if someone refuses to cooperate? That happens rarely, Shevek insists. And when it does—

> Well, he moves on. The others get tired of him, you know. They make fun of of him or they get rough with him, beat him up; in a small community they might agree to take his name off the meals listing, so he has to cook and eat all by himself; that is humiliating. So he moves on. . . . [p. 121]

Here is where LeGuin marks her own sense of anarchism and the nature of her own critique of it. What she's talking about here is power and coercion, and it seems that LeGuin would accept a certain amount of the latter as necessary even in a voluntaristic society. But it is also true that she wants to reduce such coerciveness to the absolute minimum, and to make everyone in such a society vigilant in detecting unnecessary coercion. And this is the second main point I'd like to make: I think one of the really distinctive things LeGuin does is to provide a critique of anarchism, both as to the power-domination urges in people (including "public opinion" and "social conscience") and the corollary, masochism-submission by which many people will accept other people's assertions of power.

The key to her analysis of human nature comes midway in the novel, where Shevek suggests that human beings are driven by the urge to dominate as well as to cooperate:

> People discriminated very carefully then between administering things and governing people. They did it so well that we forget that the will to dominance is as central in human beings as the impulse to mutual aid is, and has to be trained in each individual, in each new generation. Nobody's born an

Odonian any more than he's born civilized! But we've forgotten that. We don't educate for freedom. Education, the most important activity of social organism, has become rigid, moralistic, authoritarian. Kids learn to parrot Odo's words as if they were laws—the ultimate blasphemy! [p. 135]

In the public area, this urge to dominate translates into the ostensible "administering" committee which is in actuality has come to order people around—administering becomes governing, and the PDC becomes "authoritarian." In the private area, even intellectuals and scientists dominate, "egoize," "propertize," over others, through their use of ideas. This latter is the key, as Shevek eventually realizes when it comes to getting his ideas published through the "administering" of his fellow physicists Sabul: unless Shevek will put Sabul's name on the title page as co-author, Sabul won't allow the printing syndicate to publish Shevek's theories. But it's not even Sabul's external control that is crucial—quite the contrary, it is Shevek's own internalized acceptance of such control, i.e., that Sabul's very permission is neccessary:

The tact is [Shevek says to his wife finally], neither of us made up our mind. Neither of us chose. We let Sabul choose for us. Our own, internalized Sabul—convention, moralism, fear of social ostracism, fear of being different, fear of being free! [p. 266]

The upshot of this recognition is Shevek's decision to set up a printing syndicate of his own, to publish his and other dissident writings suppressed by the PDC.

Shevek's trip to Urras it a similar piece of individual action and rebellion. It also bears out another aspect of LeGuin's analysis, for Urras—even if hierarchical and property-minded—is a place where ideas are exchanged freely [p. 88], and Shevek needs that environment in which to bring his own ideas to fulfillment. Ideas, LeGuin implies, aren't as some Marxists would have it, totally connected to the economic structures of their surrounding society: Anarres has become hidebound in its revolutionary ideas, while Urras preserves at least one aspect of freedom.

Eventually Shevek enunciates a better vision of the individual-social conflict than the de facto situation on Anarres. Partly this involves a reaffirmation of the notion of harmonizing or balancing individual and social claims, instead of allowing the social to dominate completely:

We don't cooperate—we obey. We fear being outcast, being called lazy, dysfunctional, egoizing. We fear our neighbor's opinion more than we respect our own freedom of choice. You don't believe me, Tak, but try, just try stepping over the line, just in imagination, and see how you feel. . . . We force a man outside the sphere of our approval, and then condemns him it. [p. 265]

It is also, more explicitly, a matter of rejecting coercion itself:

. . . what we're after is to remind ourselves that we didn't come to Anarres for safety, but for freedom. If we must all agree, all work together, we're no better than a machine. If an individual can't work in solidarity with his fellows, it's his duty to work alone. His duty and his right. . . . We've been saying . . . you must work with the others, you must accept the rule of the majority. But any rule is tyranny. The duty of the individual is to accept no rule, to be the initiator of his own acts, to be responsible. Only if he does so will the society live, and change, and adapt, and survive. We are not subjects of a State founded upon law, but members of a society founded upon revolution. Revolution is our obligation: our hope of evolution. 'The Revolution is in the individual spirit, or it is nowhere. . . . If it is seen as having any end, it will never truly begin.' We can't stop here. We must go on. We must take risks. [p. 288-289]

Shevek's notion of the "responsible" individual actually introduces the other significant qualification of the anarchist idea, for ultimately LeGuin says, you are responsible only when you put your individual actions within the context of the past (psychological, social, historical) and the future, and only if, in so doing, you surrender notions of temporal stability or perfection. Explaining why the PDC has become authoritarian, Shevek says that it's not just that the PDC has become so but rather any institution where "expertise" and stability are desired: "stability in fact gives scope to the authoritarian impulse." [p. 136] Despite structures to prevent experts from hanging on and thus dominating other people, it is the case that experts do hang on, do dominate; the non-experts themnalize the notion that they aren't capable of running the show or running their own show and so submit to the experts' orders. The counterfoil to such institutional authoritarianism is to recognize how much our desire for stability and efficiency contributes to the spirit of domination. In particular, LeGuin argues for uncertainty as the operating assumption in life—at the least a counterfoil coming out of the legendary "Ainsetain" to Marxist notions that history is a closed book and that any means can be adopted to secure its known, millenial, ending. Ingeniously and appropriately, Shevek makes his own scientific discovery about instantaneous communication (a time telephone) while on the planet Urras and after he drops his own wish for theoretical certainty. [p. 225] The future is not

quite known, not quite unknown, though it may be in the way of a self-fulfilling prophecy, for as we wish and desire, so we will actually be.

So LeGuin pays a lot of attention to time, both as an "arrow" emphasizing succession and progress, and as a "circle" emphasizing unity. (Thus Shevek's own life and the novel's own structure, progressive in many dimensions yet also circular in its moral unity.)

> . . . neither pure sequency nor pure unity will explain it. We don't want purity, but complexity, the relationship of cause and effect, means and end . . . A complexity that includes not only duration but creation, not only being but becoming, not only geometry but ethics. [p. 182]

Toward the end of the novel, LeGuin summarizes Shevek's thoughts in this way:

> It is not until an act occurs within the landscape of the past and the future that it is a human act. Loyalty, which asserts the continuity of past and future, binding time into a whole, is the root of human strength; there is no good to be done without it. [p. 268]

In this respect, circular time means simply what Johnson meant by situating human acts midway between "memory" and "foresight"—between past actions joined to future hopes and future hopes conditioned by past awareness. In the novel's action, it is also mirrored by the personal story of Shevek and his wife's enduring commitment to each other.

There is a touch of determinism in all this, as Shevek admits, but by opting for "uncertainty" it is possible to see that you can never be deterministically sure about what is going to happen in the future or what happened in the past.

I find it very significant that LeGuin brings this body of ideas about relativity to bear on anarchist-socialist ideas because it makes much richer the anarchist notions of individualism (how can you be literally individual when you have been formed by your past, your family, your society) and of society (it is not just a given but has roots, is tied to hope, prophecies, and intents). In a crucial way too, the role of time has something circular and simultaneous (an "eternal present") may lead people away from egoizing and domination and towards cooperation: i.e., if what you do now is the way you want the future to be, then you have some opportunity to actually see just what sort of future is involved. LeGuin herself makes these connections by way of the concept of responsibility:

> . . . chronosophy does involve ethics. Because our sense of time involves our ability to separate cause and effect, means and end. The baby . . . the animal, they don't see the difference between what they do now and what will happen because of it. They can't make a pulley or a promise. We can. Seeing the difference between now and not now, we can make the connection. And there morality enters in. Responsibility . . . To break a promise is to deny the reality of the past; therefore it is to deny the hopes of a real future. [p. 181]

It is this sense of time in all its richness that accounts for LeGuin's use of science-fiction as a form: time in science fiction is an antidote to pessimism and cynicism: by its fictions, even catastrophic ones, it can suggest to us that the future is in our hands, that things are indeterminate, evolving, yet also graspable and wishable:

> You don't understand what time is, he said. You say the past is gone, the future is not real, there is no change, no hope. You think Anarres is a future that cannot be reached, as your past cannot be changed. So there is nothing but the present, this Urras, the rich, real, stable, present, the moment now. And you think that is something which can be possessed! You envy it a little. You think it's something you would like to have. But it is not real, you know. It is not stable, not solid—nothing is. Things change, change. You cannot have anything. And least of all can you have the present, unless you accept with it the past and the future. Not only the past but also the future, not only the future but also the past! [p. 280-281]

So there of course is another meaning to the title!

In general, then, LeGuin has taken the basic doctrines of anarchism—individual freedom, voluntary cooperation, syndicalism—and joined them to an intelligent theory of human nature's urge to dominate as well as to cooperate; she has also coupled both the praise and critique of anarchism to a suggestive interpretation of time and relativity theory. What I think is especially important is the emphasis she places on the potential naivete of anarchist hopefulness: the urge to dominate is intrinsic and must be dealt with in each new generation; it comes in a variety of forms and will not pass merely with the passing of the State. It can be resisted only by becoming aware of how much we desire stability, how easily we internalize the domination of others, and how much we believe that we lack the power to act on our own.

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Reviews

The History of Sexuality Volume I: An Introduction

Michel Foucault (Pantheon, New York City, 1978), $8.95.

Foucault begins *The History of Sexuality* by poking fun at the contemporary Faustian pact which would "exchange life in its entirety for sex itself, for the truth and the sovereignty of sex." Yet he himself now devotes his life (or a considerable part of it) to this very project. And if the six projected volumes live up to the promise of the introduction, Foucault will have written something on the order of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind* addressed not to art, intellect, philosophy, history or politics but to sexuality.

Foucault dismisses the standard history of progress from medieval superstitution to twentieth century sexual enlightenment. Instead of experiencing an expanding freedom, people have been circumscribed in new ways which pass as liberation. Two great thrusts are identified: first, during the sixteenth century with "the development of procedures of direction and examination of conscience; and at the beginning of the nineteenth century, [with] the advent of medical technologies of sex."

The common end of society has heen control; the unspeakable or unnoticed has come more and more under supervision. Thus talk about sex has seldom made it more enjoyable or available; only more circumscribed. In this systematic development, four figures, divisions, amusements emerged: "the hysterical woman, the masturhating child, the Malthusian couple and the perverse adult." Before the sixteenth century, concern had centered only on the marriage contract and its fulfillment; everything else had been left more or less alone (according to Foucault); then suddenly each of these became a central focus of interest and control.

None of these four had even been recognized as topics earlier; their definition itself became a form of tyranny. "Hysteria" became a way to define and control women. Masturbation also enveloped the world of children whose sexuality suddenly came under massive scrutiny. And birth or population control, sensible as it might at first sound, allowed the government to develop policies for reproduction just as they have for the economy (mercantilism, imperialism, corporate capitalism, etc.). And the study of perversion has not been undertaken with any other aim than the control (if not extermination) of the perverse. In each of these, Foucault places great emphasis on the importance of definition as a way of imprisoning, institutionalizing activities which earlier went along quite generally and quite happily.

Foucault's work deserves careful study by anarchists or those concerned with power and dominance. His commitment to fighting systems of power is exemplary. Earlier writings—*Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* (1961) and *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1975)—attack two central institutions: "mental hospitals" and prisons. "Revolutionary action," Foucault says, "is defined as the simultaneous agitation of consciousness and institutions; this implies that we attack the relationships of power through the notions and institutions that function as instruments, armature, and armor. Do you think that the teaching of philosophy—and its moral code—would remain unchanged if the penal system collapsed?" (November, 1971 interview, *Actuel*)

Most English-speaking readers will have difficulty following Foucault's Hegelian analysis. Anarchists, in particular, have little respect for a philosopher who concluded with remarkable obscurity that the state and god are one. Karl Popper (*The Open Society and Its Enemies*) has argued that both Stalinism and Fascism originate in Hegel. The core of Hegel's argument is that freedom is the identity of the individual's personal goals with those of the general government. In this process, laws and regulations are supposedly created by each and all; these in turn are expressed and realized in the mind and action of the corporate society.

Foucault might be identified hastily as a Hegelian or a Structuralist (the two are related, if not the same). But he rejects such labels, I think, because he enters this realm of discourse only to demonstrate the dangers contained therein. Thus Hegel's description of how society and the individual merge describes precisely the program that has been implemented in regard to sexuality. What is so alarming is the way society has convinced everyone that they must monitor and control sexuality both in themselves and in others. Anita Bryant no less than Dr. Benjamin Spock conspires to keep everyone in line. The dangers in modern society thus come less from a few father figures or institutions than from this all-encompassing dialectic of a right line on sexuality.

Basically Foucault argues that most writing about power is pre-Hegelian. We still think in terms of a monarchical society, where the sovereign "exercised his right of life only by exercising his right to kill, or by refraining from killing." But today, Foucault argues that sovereignty is exercised in a much more diffuse and

effective way. Suicide is forbidden; even capital punishment uncommon; "it was the taking charge of life, more than the threat of death, that gave power its access even to the body." And in gaining this control over life and the body, the discourse on sexuality has been a major instrument.

Foucault claims that sexuality is not a great reservoir of rebellion waiting to strike out against constituted authority; on the contrary, those who think they rebel in pushing for sexual liberation only reaffirm the system of power. "It is the agency of sex that we must break away from if we aim—through a tactical reversal of the various mechanisms of sexuality—to counter the grips of power with the claims of bodies, pleasures, and knowledges, in their multiplicity and their possibility of resistance."

Central to Foucault's discussion is his rejection of the "Repressive Hypothesis." He sidesteps any clear confrontation with Sigmund Freud's or Wilhelm Reich's analysis of the unconscious, repression and the return of the repressed material in uncontrollable ways such as neurosis or fascism. Foucault can dismiss the idea of "repression" in a limited way with examples of censorship and bowlderization. But the activities of the unconscious have been too often demonstrated—in dreams, slips of the tongue or other "irrational" behavior—to be dismissed without more discussion. Freud may be tainted with nineteenth century thermodynamics (although the reproductive glands, organs and tubes do utilize a hydraulic system); nonetheless, psychoanalysis has done more than any other body of writing to explain what sexuality is and how it functions. And by contrast Foucault's analysis of sex as a political issue seems lame: "It was at the pivot of two axes along which developed the entire political technology of life. On the one hand, it was tied to the disciplines of the body: the harnessing, intensification, and distribution of forces, the adjustment and economy of energies. On the other hand, it was applied to the regulation of populations, through all the far-reaching effects of its activity."

In two areas, Foucault shares major weaknesses in his analysis of sexuality with Sigmund Freud: women's sexuality and class. In any history of sexuality, the insights of feminists cannot be ignored. Foucault has had the text of Simone de Beauvoir available since publication of *The Second Sex* in 1949. How can he leave aside the power men have exercised over women and the forms of resistance women have forged through the centuries? His blindness appears in an earlier analysis (with his students) of *I Pierre Reviere, having slaughtered my mother, my sister, and my brother . . .* (1973). Their learned commentary like

that of the earlier doctors overlooked Pierre's quite explicit explanation of why he did it: "I would die for my father, that no matter how much they [the magistrates] were in favor of women they would not triumph . . . it is the women who are in command now in this fine age . . . ."

Foucault manifests similar difficulties with class as he does with feminism. Perhaps he shares the view that "anarchist analysis is concerned with domination as such, and not merely or primarily exploitation." But the exploitation of women no less than that of workers entails deeply rooted institutions within society that may be simply special examples of domination, but in fact appear in such a pervasive form that they require special analysis (and organization). Women or workers, dominated by their status (or caste), need to arm themselves with more than a little ideology. Foucault allows that there are class relationships (and his comments on them are quite extraordinary) but he first subordinates all relationships to ideology and intellect.

As a final point on this question of ideology, let me consider Foucault's analysis of perversion and homosexuality. Here I think such factors as social organization, oppression of women and sexual repression carry more weight than ideology. At any rate, Foucault's conclusion that homosexuals simply suffer from the invention of the idea of perversion is a perverse notion. To me, this seems only another argument for our nonexistence. We in fact are more than the misconception of some Victorian doctors. Whatever the argument might be which would say we don't exist, there are in its place myriads of us exploring and finding each other's bodies, searching for fun, pleasure and fulfillment in sexual and other acts. Among those acts are the organization of homosexuals into fighting groups. No theory will dissolve these groups: concentration camps, churches, "asylums," laws, persuasion, cold showers, metaphysics, hard work, electro-shock, behavior modification, police, teachers, beatings, primal therapy, prayer, proper diet, exercise. None of these have been able to destroy us.

Foucault leaves a lot to be desired in his removed attitude. No thinker or author stands outside the subject he/she analyzes; that is an illusion he of all people should recognize. Foucault himself is a homosexual and has contributed in practical ways to the gay movement in France; fighting for repeal of anti-gay legislation passed under Hitler and DeGaulle and supporting the independent gay French press. While he scorns confession and autobiography because they fit into the power system, he cannot escape so easily his own relation to the history of sexuality. Anarchists in partic-

ular admire the propaganda of the deed; thought emerges not from thinking but from living and struggling. In the area of sexuality for instance, why doesn't Foucault talk about how it feels to suck a cock, get fucked, fuck, or whatever he does? Why should he pretend his thought is separated from his sexuality? It isn't; the brain is a sexual organ.

—*Charley Shively*

Community Technology

Karl Hess (Harper and Row, New York City, 1979), $7.95.

This morning I opened the garage door to start up our new used motorcycle. It wasn't there. During the night someone had forced the side window, opened the side door, which had been locked from the inside, and rolled the bike right out the door. We had just bought the bike, it wasn't registered yet, and we thought it would be safe in a locked garage. After all our neighborhood is one of the better ones in Boston. It's almost all white and not poor. Almost no one knew we had the bike because it hadn't been on the road yet. So the thief had to be someone from right around, maybe someone we see every day, or who sees us.

The week was topped off when I was assaulted by five black teenagers on the subway platform after I had tried to dissuade them by my presence from harassing two young white girls who were also waiting for the train. Though there were other people on the platform, nobody helped out, nobody went for the police.

Another wonderful week in the Athens of North America. But not an extraordinary one. What is extraordinary is that no one was shocked or surprised by what happened because this sort of thing happens all the time, though not to everybody or even to a majority of people. But often enough that such things have become an accepted, if still regretted, part of everyday life. In fact I am counted lucky because I wasn't stabbed, just a few bruises and a black eye.

But I have been stabbed many times, deeply hurt by the callous and unthinking way in which I am approached and treated every day, on the way to work, on the job, even in the neighborhood. A brutal cruelty of a different but no less painful sort characterizes daily interactions, a brutality which I share and take part in as well. Why not? You have to protect yourself and cultivate a hardened indifference to get by. After all, there isn't much you can do about it, is there, especially since what passes for mass movements for political change are usually just as callous and indifferent to individuals as what they want to replace, and often just as violent. Besides, after what has happened to these movements in our century, a little suspicion seems, to me at any rate, in order when people start to extoll the virtues of big parties and big organizations.

Karl Hess has for some time been a critic of contemporary America and an enthusiast for decentralization as the basis of social change. In *Dear America*, his best book, he laid out his critical view of contemporary affairs, breaking with both commissar and capitalist, and arguing the virtue of a decentralized society. In *Neighborhood Government* he drew on his own experience and that of others to sketch a general idea of how neighborhoods could be run in an open, democratic, and decentralized fashion. In *Community Technology* he continues this development, seeking to provide the "material base," the community technology, without which no decentralized social order could survive.

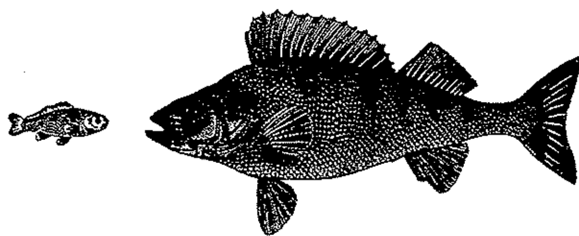
The theme of the book is very simple and common-sense (in the best meaning of the word, akin to "down-to-earth"), though unfortunately not yet common-place. "There is not a single large institution or organization in the world today that is satisfactorily performing all of the functions people have assigned it. . . Yet people themselves persist, continue to survive, even make things better; and more and more they do all of those things with less and less direct reference to the major institutions." But large institutions persist, people function within them, and are in the main still habitually thinking big. The result has been the sort of mess I tried to convey above. The obvious alternative to big, alienating (how I hate to use that word) institutions is decentralized or small communities. In making these decentralized communities a reality, there are two crucial elements: community and technology. "A *place* in which and a *way* in which people can live peacefully, socially, cooperatively; and *tools* and *techniques* to provide the necessary material base for that way of living." Utopian thinking? Not at all. "Possible. Practical. Not pie in the sky, but something for here and now."

The various sections of the book are attempts to flesh out this general theme, though not all of them are convincing or hang together. Nonetheless, this is an extremely interesting book which more conventional reviewers might (mis)label as "important." One of the most interesting sections for me concerned Karl Hess's description of the attempt he and others made over several years at a community technology project in the Adams-Morgan section of Washington, D.C. The group launched a number of projects including fish farming,

rooftop gardening, solar energy collectors, neighborhood assemblies. There was much success, but in the end the group failed, falling before apathy, social climbing, neighborhood violence, and the welfare-reparations mentality. But not before having demonstrated that a community technology is certainly realizable, even if initial attempts fail.

This sort of "politics," decentralist and anarchist, is always roundly criticized as being out of tune and not cognizant of the brutal realities any movement for social change has to face, or is it "interface" these days. But is it really so lame an approach? Or does it in fact demand that we begin to do what is perhaps the hardest thing of all, to think differently, and to see and understand the world from a different perspective? Politics these days is based on expertise, just as business, technology, and learning are. This is true as well of radical politics, the politics of mass movements. But knowledge is not the same as expertise, just as being thrown together in the subway or at work or in an apartment complex is not the same as community, and it is entirely possible that any proposed solution to contemporary social ills that does not answer the need for community, participation, and a sense of mattering will be no solution at all. "If that is the case . . . then the criticism of these speculations as unrealistic should be changed to saying that they are merely unpopular. And that in turn might be modified by saying, Unpopular right now but maybe not tomorrow."

—*Huckleberry Hess*



Last Writes

- On April 9, Royal Canadian Mounted Police (R.C.M.P.) agents raided the Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario home of a young nonviolent anarchist who is actively involved in Amnesty International and the Ontario Federation of Students. During the raid they seized a quantity of literature which included information about an Anarchist/Communist Federation conference to be held in Ysiplanti, Michigan the following weekend.

  Four days later, 12 Canadians from the Niagara Peninsula and Toronto en route to the conference were seized by U.S. Customs officials in Detroit. They were held for over six hours during which time they were body-searched against a wall, interrogated and fingerprinted. The threat of indefinite detention for not submitting to fingerprinting accompanied this sequence of events.

  When they were about to be expelled they were handed notices to appear before hearings of the U.S. Department of Justice. Immigration and Naturalization to determine whether they will be allowed to enter the U.S. again and, if so, on what terms. Meantime, they are banned from entry into the U.S. and will face detention in a penitentiary if they try to cross the border.

  The group expects to be represented at the hearings by the American Civil Liberties Union of Detroit. They will argue that the incident is a clear violation of the 1975 Helsinki Agreement which provides for the unhindered passage of individuals and ideas between signatory nations. They need help—financial and otherwise. Please direct any correspondence and contributions to: Regina ACF, Box 3658, Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada S4P3N8.

- Cienfuegos Press (Box A, Over the Water, Sanday, Orkney KW17 2BZ, Scotland) is an anarchist publisher of books and a journal, the Cienfuegos Press Anarchist Review. Their latest books are: G.P. Maximoff, *The Guillotine at Work; Volume 1: The Leninist Counter-Revolution* and Albert Meltzer, ed., *A New World in Our Hearts: The Faces of Spanish Anarchism.* Four issues of the Review have appeared to date. Issue 4, 185 pages long, contains all sorts of articles, book reviews, and features, including writings of Camillo Berneri, an interview with Pa Chin, an article on Flavio Costantini artist of anarchy, anarchism in Chinese political thought, and a gay manifesto.

  In terms of future books, the Press has ambitious plans. Some of the upcoming titles are: The Friends of Durruti, *Towards a Fresh Revolution;*

Joseph Lane, *An Anti-Statist, Communist Manifesto;* Peter Newell, *Zapata of Mexico;* Emma Goldman, *A Woman Without a Country;* Antonio Tellez, *Facerias, Anarchist Extraordinary.*

The Press recently suffered a huge loss when a fire destroyed most of Issue 4 of the Review and their typesetting machine was ruined in an accident. Cienfugos Press needs help if it is to continue its fine work. 1979 Review subscriptions are $25. Donations and interest free loans are always welcome.

- The Boston Public Library will sponsor a two-day conference, "The Sacco-Vanzetti Case: Developments and Reconsiderations—1979," to be held at the Library on Friday and Saturday, October 26-27, 1979.

  For further information, write: Sacco-Vanzetti Conference, Boston Public Library, Boston, MA 02117.
- The Boston Alliance Against Registration and the Draft (BAARD) is a coalition of many individuals and groups. BAARD meets every Wednesday evening at 7:30 p.m. at the American Friends Service Committee, 2161 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, and welcomes new members. For further information write or call BAARD, c/o Resist, 38 Union Square, Somerville, MA 02143; telephone 617-623-5110.
- The Iberian Solidarity Committee is organizing a North American delegation of interested persons to attend as observers the forthcoming national congress of the *Confederacion Nacional de Trabajo* (CNT) of Spain. The national congress will begin on October 10, 1979 and will probably last a week.

  The congress will consist of delegates directly chosen by the workers in their local unions. The Congress will define the position of the CNT on: problems of orientation; attitudes toward reformist labor unions, contracts and movements like the "counter-culture"; problems of agricultural workers; women, ecology, neighborhood centers, schools, etc.

  The Committee hopes to charter a plane between Montreal and Spain. The present estimate of the cost of an airline ticket is $375.00 for two weeks' stay. Persons interested in being part of the delegation should write *immediately* to Iberian Solidarity Committee, 3981 boulevard St. Laurent, 4th floor, Room 444, Montreal H2W, 1Y5, Quebec, Canada.
- We regret we neglected to mention the names of the typesetters for *Black Rose* #1 in that issue. They were Page McLane and Susan Siens.
- On page 5 of *Black Rose* #1, the last sentence of the quote by Shelley should read: "Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world."

—*Ann Kotell*