versions of freedom

The papers contained in Versions of Freedom represent only part of the diverse and dynamic atmosphere of the 1995 Visions of Freedom Anarchist Conference, Sydney. Hopefully their publication will help keep important issues under debate in the anarchist community. With the aid of the companion volume, Visions of Freedom (1995), this book may also provide a (fragmentary) record of a significant anarchist event.

Includes Noam Chomsky's 1995 Sydney Town Hall talk, "Goals and Visions".

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versions of freedom

an anthology of anarchism

Visions of Freedom Collective, Sydney, 1996.

Versions of Freedom is the second publication to appear out of the 1995 Visions of Freedom Anarchist Conference.

Included here are many papers presented at the conference as well as papers offered in response to the conference and surrounding events. Two major themes that developed during Visions of Freedom discussions, were free speech and the relationship between feminism, and anarchism. Two papers on each area are included here in order to reflect the volume of debate on these questions. In addition, an important critique of the conference was launched during the plenary by queer participants, and a paper on this issue appears in the conference's other publication, ***Visions of Freedom*** (1996).

These papers represent only part of the diverse and dynamic atmosphere of the conference, but we hope their publication will help to keep important issues under debate in the anarchist community. With the aid of the companion volume, this book may also provide a (fragmentary) record of the occasion itself.

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If you would like copies of the volume, *Visions of Freedom*, the editorial collective may be contacted at:

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Goals and Visions

Noam Chomsky

In referring to goals and visions, I have in mind a practical rather than a very principled distinction. As is usual in human affairs, it is the practical perspective that matters most. Such theoretical understanding as we have is far too thin to carry much weight.

By visions, I mean the conception of a future society that animates what we actually do, a society in which a decent human being might want to live. By goals, I mean the choices and tasks that are within reach, that we will pursue one way or another guided by a vision that may be distant and hazy.

An animating vision must rest on some conception of human nature, of what's good for people, of their needs and rights, of the aspects of their nature that should be nurtured, encouraged and permitted to flourish for their benefit and that of others. The concept of human nature that underlies our visions is usually tacit and inchoate, but it is always there, perhaps implicitly, whether one chooses to leave things as they are and cultivate one's own garden, or to work for small changes, or for revolutionary ones.

This much, at least, is true of people who regard themselves as moral agents, not monsters—who care about the effects of what they do or fail to do.

On all such matters, our knowledge and understanding are shallow; as in virtually every area of human life, we proceed on the basis of intuition and experience, hopes and fears. Goals involve hard choices with very serious human consequences. We adopt them on the basis of imperfect evidence and limited understanding, and though our visions can and should be a guide, they are at best a very partial one. They are not clear, nor are they stable, at least for people who care about the consequences of their acts. Sensible people will look forward to a clearer articulation of their animating visions and to the critical evaluation of them in the light of reason and experience. So far, the substance is pretty meager, and there are no signs of any change in that state of affairs. Slogans are easy, but not very helpful when real choices have to be made.

Goals and visions can appear to be in conflict, and often are. There's no contradiction in that, as I think we all know from ordinary experience. Let me take my own case, to illustrate what I have in mind.

My personal visions are fairly traditional anarchist ones, with origins in the Enlightenment and classical liberalism. Before proceeding, I have to clarify what I mean by that. I do not mean the version of classical liberalism that has been reconstructed for ideological purposes, but the original,

before it was broken on the rocks of rising industrial capitalism, as Rudolf Rocker put it in his work on anarchosyndicalism 60 years ago—rather accurately, I think.{Rocker, *Anarchosyndicalism* (Secker & Warburg, 1938); "Anarchism and Anarchosyndicalism," appended essay in P. Eltzbacher (Freedom press, 1960).}

As state capitalism developed into the modern era, economic, political and ideological systems have increasingly been taken over by vast institutions of private tyranny that are about as close to the totalitarian ideal as any that humans have so far constructed. "Within the corporation," political economist Robert Brady wrote half a century ago, "all policies emanate from the control above. In the union of this power to determine policy with the execution thereof, all authority necessarily proceeds from the top to the bottom and all responsibility from the bottom to the top. This is, of course, the inverse of `democratic' control; it follows the structural conditions of dictatorial power." "What in political circles would be called legislative, executive, and judicial powers" is gathered in "controlling hands" which, "so far as policy formulation and execution are concerned, are found at the peak of the pyramid and are manipulated without significant check from its base." As private power "grows and expands," it is transformed "into a community force ever more politically potent and politically conscious," ever more dedicated to a "propaganda program" that "becomes a matter of converting the public...to the point of view of the control pyramid." That project, already substantial in the period Brady reviewed, reached an awesome scale a few years later as American business sought to beat back the social democratic currents of the postwar world, which reached the United States as well, and to win what its leaders called "the everlasting battle for the minds of men," using the huge resources of the Public Relations industry, the entertainment industry, the corporate media, and whatever else could be mobilized by the "control pyramids" of the social and economic order. These are crucially important features of the modern world, as is dramatically revealed by the few careful studies.{Brady, *Business as a System of Power* (Columbia, 1943). On corporate propaganda, see particularly the pioneering work of Alex Carey, some now collected in his *Taking the Risk out of Democracy* (UNSW, 1995); and on postwar America, Elizabeth Fones-Wolf, *Selling Free Enterprise: the Business Assault on Labor and Liberalism, 1945-1960* (U. of Illinois press, 1995), the first American academic study of the general topic. See also William Puette, *Through Jaundiced Eyes: How the Media View Organized Labor* (Cornell U. press, 1992); William Solomon and Robert McChesney, eds., *New Perspectives in U.S. Communication History* (Minnesota, 1993); McChesney, *Telecommunications, Mass Media & Democracy* (Oxford, 1993).}

The "banking institutions and moneyed incorporations" of which Thomas Jefferson warned in his later years—predicting that if not curbed, they would become a form of absolutism that would destroy the promise of the democratic revolution—have since more than fulfilled his most dire expectations. They have become largely unaccountable and increasingly immune from popular interference and public inspection while gaining great and expanding control over the global order. Those inside their hierarchical command structure take orders from above and send orders down below. Those outside may try to rent themselves to the system of power, but have little other relation to it (except by purchasing what it offers, if they can). The world is more complex than any

simple description, but Brady's is pretty close, even more so today than when he wrote.

It should be added that the extraordinary power that corporations and financial institutions enjoy was not the result of popular choices. It was crafted by courts and lawyers in the course of the construction of a developmental state that serves the interests of private power, and extended by playing one state against another to seek special privileges, not hard for large private institutions. That is the major reason why the current Congress, business-run to an unusual degree, seeks to devolve federal authority to the states, more easily threatened and manipulated. I'm speaking of the United States, where the process has been rather well studied in academic scholarship. I'll keep to that case; as far as I know, it is much the same elsewhere.

We tend to think of the resulting structures of power as immutable, virtually a part of nature. They are anything but that. These forms of private tyranny only reached something like their current form, with the rights of immortal persons, early in this century. The grants of rights and the legal theory that lay behind them are rooted in much the same intellectual soil as nourished the other two major forms of 20th century totalitarianism, fascism and Bolshevism. There is no reason to consider this tendency in human affairs to be more permanent than its ignoble brethren. {Particularly illuminating on these matters is the work of Harvard legal historian Morton Horwitz, including *The Transformation of American Law, 1870-1960*, vol. II (Oxford, 1992).}

Conventional practice is to restrict such terms as "totalitarian" and "dictatorship" to political power. Brady is unusual in not keeping to this convention, a natural one, which helps to remove centers of decision-making from the public eye. The effort to do so is expected in any society based on illegitimate authority— any actual society, that is. That is why, for example, accounts in terms of personal characteristics and failings, vague and unspecific cultural practices, and the like, are much preferred to the study of the structure and function of powerful institutions.

When I speak of classical liberalism, I mean the ideas that were swept away, in considerable measure, by the rising tides of state capitalist autocracy. These ideas survived (or were reinvented) in various forms in the culture of resistance to the new forms of oppression, serving as an animating vision for popular struggles that have considerably expanded the scope of freedom, justice, and rights. They were also taken up, adapted, and developed within libertarian left currents. According to this anarchist vision, any structure of hierarchy and authority carries a heavy burden of justification, whether it involves personal relations or a larger social order. If it cannot bear that burden— sometimes it can—then it is illegitimate and should be dismantled. When honestly posed and squarely faced, that challenge can rarely be sustained. Genuine libertarians have their work cut out for them.

State power and private tyranny are prime examples at the outer limits, but the issues arise pretty much across the board: in relations among parents and children, teachers and students, men and women, those now alive and the future generations that will be compelled to live with the results of what we do, indeed just about everywhere. In particular, the anarchist vision, in almost every variety, has looked forward to the dismantling of state power. Personally, I share that vision, though it runs directly counter to my goals. Hence the tension to which I referred.

My short-term goals are to defend and even strengthen elements of state authority which, though illegitimate in fundamental ways, are critically necessary right now to impede the dedicated efforts to "roll back" the progress that has been achieved in extending democracy and human rights. State authority is now under severe attack in the more democratic societies, but not because it conflicts with the libertarian vision. Rather the opposite: because it offers (weak) protection to some aspects of that vision. Governments have a fatal flaw: unlike the private tyrannies, the institutions of state power and authority offer to the despised public an opportunity to play some role, however limited, in managing their own affairs. That defect is intolerable to the masters, who now feel, with some justification, that changes in the international economic and political order offer the prospects of creating a kind of "utopia for the masters," with dismal prospects for most of the rest. It should be unnecessary to spell out here what I mean. The effects are all too obvious even in the rich societies, from the corridors of power to the streets, countryside, and prisons. For reasons that merit attention but that lie beyond the scope of these remarks, the rollback campaign is currently spearheaded by dominant sectors of societies in which the values under attack have been realized in some of their most advanced forms, the English-speaking world; no small irony, but no contradiction either.

It is worth bearing in mind that fulfilment of the utopian dream has been celebrated as an imminent prospect from early in the 19th century (I'll return briefly to that period). By the 1880s, the revolutionary socialist artist William Morris could write:

> I know it is at present the received opinion that the competitive or 'Devil take the hindmost' system is the last system of economy which the world will see; that it is perfection, and therefore finality has been reached in it; and it is doubtless a bold thing to fly in the face of this opinion, which I am told is held even by the most learned men.

If history is really at an end, as confidently proclaimed, then "civilization will die," but all of history says it is not so, he added. The hope that "perfection" was in sight flourished again in the 1920s. With the strong support of liberal opinion generally, and of course the business world, Woodrow Wilson's Red Scare had successfully undermined unions and independent thought, helping to establish an era of business dominance that was expected to be permanent. With the collapse of unions, working people had no power and little hope at the peak of the automobile boom. The crushing of unions and workers' rights, often by violence, shocked even the right-wing British press. An Australian visitor, astounded by the weakness of American unions, observed in 1928 that "Labour organization exists only by the tolerance of employers...It has no real part in determining industrial conditions." Again, the next few years showed that the hopes were premature. But these recurrent dreams provide a model that the "control pyramids" and their political agents seek to reconstitute today.{Gary Zabel, ed., *Art and Society: Lectures and Essays by William Morris* (George's Hill, Boston, 1993). Hugh Grant Adams, cited by Ronald Edsforth, *Class Conflict and Cultural Consensus* (Rutgers U. press, 1987, 29). See also Patricia Cayo Sexton, *The War on*

Labor and the Left (Westview, 1991).}

In today's world, I think, the goals of a committed anarchist should be to defend some state institutions from the attack against them, while trying at the same time to pry them open to more meaningful public participation—and ultimately, to dismantle them in a much more free society, if the appropriate circumstances can be achieved.

Right or wrong—and that's a matter of uncertain judgment— this stand is not undermined by the apparent conflict between goals and visions. Such conflict is a normal feature of everyday life, which we somehow try to live with but cannot escape.

With this in mind, I'd like to turn to the broader question of visions. It is particularly pertinent today against the background of the intensifying attempt to reverse, undermine, and dismantle the gains that have been won by long and often bitter popular struggle. The issues are of historic importance, and are often veiled in distortion and deceit in campaigns to "convert the public to the point of view of the control pyramid." There could hardly be a better moment to consider the ideals and visions that have been articulated, modified, reshaped, and often turned into their opposite as industrial society has developed to its current stage, with a massive assault against democracy, human rights, and even markets, while the triumph of these values is being hailed by those who are leading the attack against them — a process that will win nods of recognition from those familiar with what used to be called "propaganda" in more honest days. It is a moment in human affairs that is as interesting intellectually as it is ominous from a human point of view.

Let me begin by sketching a point of view that was articulated by two leading 20th century thinkers, Bertrand Russell and John Dewey, who disagreed on a great many things, but shared a vision that Russell called "the humanistic conception"—to quote Dewey, the belief that the "ultimate aim" of production is not production of goods, but "of free human beings associated with one another on terms of equality." The goal of education, as Russell put it, is "to give a sense of the value of things other than domination," to help create "wise citizens of a free community" in which both liberty and "individual creativeness" will flourish, and working people will be the masters of their fate, not tools of production. Illegitimate structures of coercion must be unravelled; crucially, domination by "business for private profit through private control of banking, land, industry, reinforced by command of the press, press agents and other means of publicity and propaganda" (Dewey). Unless that is done, Dewey continued, talk of democracy is largely beside the point. Politics will remain "the shadow cast on society by big business, [and] the attenuation of the shadow will not change the substance." Democratic forms will lack real content, and people will work "not freely and intelligently, but for the sake of the work earned," a condition that is "illiberal and immoral."

Accordingly, industry must be changed "from a feudalistic to a democratic social order" based on workers' control, free association, and federal organization, in the general style of a range of thought that includes, along with many anarchists, G.D.H. Cole's guild socialism and such left Marxists as Anton Pannekoek, Rosa Luxemburg, Paul Mattick, and others. Russell's views were rather similar, in this regard. {See my Russell memorial lectures, *Problems of Knowledge and Freedom*

(Harper & Row, 1971), for discussion. On Dewey, see particularly Robert Westbrook, *John Dewey and American Democracy* (Cornell U. press, 1991).}

Problems of democracy were the primary focus of Dewey's thought and direct engagement. He was straight out of mainstream America, "as American as apple pie," in the standard phrase. It is therefore of interest that the ideas he expressed not many years ago would be regarded today in much of the intellectual culture as outlandish or worse, if known, even denounced as "Anti-American" in influential sectors.

The latter phrase, incidentally, is interesting and revealing, as is its recent currency. We expect such notions in totalitarian societies. Thus in Stalinist days, dissidents and critics were condemned as "anti-Soviet," an intolerable crime; Brazilian neo-Nazi Generals and others like them had similar categories. But their appearance in much more free societies, in which subordination to power is voluntary, not coerced, is a far more significant phenomenon. In any milieu that retains even the memory of a democratic culture, such concepts would merely elicit ridicule. Imagine the reaction on the streets of Milan or Oslo to a book entitled *Anti-Italianism* or *The Anti-Norwegians*, denouncing the real or fabricated deeds of those who do not show proper respect for the doctrines of the secular faith. In the Anglo-American societies, however— including Australia, so I've noticed— such performances are treated with solemnity and respect in respectable circles, one of the signs of a serious deterioration of ordinary democratic values.

The ideas expressed in the not very distant past by such outstanding figures as Russell and Dewey are rooted in the Enlightenment and classical liberalism, and retain their revolutionary character: in education, the workplace, and every other sphere of life. If implemented, they would help clear the way to the free development of human beings whose values are not accumulation and domination, but independence of mind and action, free association on terms of equality, and cooperation to achieve common goals. Such people would share Adam Smith's contempt for the "mean" and "sordid pursuits" of "the masters of mankind" and their "vile maxim": "All for ourselves, and nothing for other people," the guiding principles we are taught to admire and revere, as traditional values are eroded under unremitting attack. They would readily understand what led a pre-capitalist figure like Smith to warn of the grim consequences of division of labor, and to base his rather nuanced advocacy of markets in part on the belief that under conditions of "perfect liberty" there would be a natural tendency towards equality, an obvious desideratum on elementary moral grounds.

The "humanistic conception" that was expressed by Russell and Dewey in a more civilized period, and that is familiar to the libertarian left, is radically at odds with the leading currents of contemporary thought: the guiding ideas of the totalitarian order crafted by Lenin and Trotsky, and of the state capitalist industrial societies of the West. One of these systems has fortunately collapsed, but the other is on a march backwards to what could be a very ugly future.

It is important to recognize how sharp and dramatic is the clash of values between this humanistic conception and what reigns today, the ideals denounced by the working class press of the mid-19th century as "the New Spirit of the Age: Gain Wealth, forgetting all but Self," Smith's "vile maxim,"

a demeaning and shameful doctrine that no decent person could tolerate. It is remarkable to trace the evolution of values from a pre-capitalist figure like Smith, with his stress on sympathy, the goal of liberty with equality, and the basic human right to creative and fulfilling work, to those who celebrate "the New Spirit of the Age," often shamelessly invoking Smith's name. Let's put aside the vulgar performances that regularly deface the ideological institutions. Consider instead someone who can at least be taken seriously, say, Nobel Prize-winning economist James Buchanan, who tells us that "the ideal society is anarchy, in which no one man or group of men coerces another." He then offers the following gloss, stated authoritatively as fact:

"any person's ideal situation is one that allows him full freedom of action and inhibits the behavior of others so as to force adherence to his own desires. That is to say, each person seeks mastery over a world of slaves,{Buchanan, *The Limits of Liberty: Between Anarchy and Leviathan* (Chicago, 1975), 92.}" a thought that Adam Smith would have considered pathological, as would Wilhelm von Humboldt, John Stuart Mill, or anyone even close to the classical liberal tradition—but that is your fondest dream, in case you hadn't noticed.

One intriguing illustration of the state of the intellectual culture and its prevailing values is the commentary on the difficult problems we face in uplifting the people of Eastern Europe, now at last liberated, so that we can extend to them the loving care we have lavished on our wards elsewhere for several hundred years. The consequences seem rather clear in an impressive array of horror chambers around the world, but miraculously—and most fortunately—they teach no lessons about the values of our civilization and the principles that guide its noble leaders; only "anti-Americans" and their ilk could be so demented as to suggest that the consistent record of history might merit a side glance, perhaps. Now there are new opportunities for our beneficence. We can help the people released from Communist tyranny to reach, or at least approach, the blessed state of Bengalis, Haitians, Brazilians, Guatemalans, Filipinos, indigenous peoples everywhere, African slaves, and on, and on.

In late 1994, the *New York Times* ran a series of articles on how our pupils are doing. The one on East Germany opens by quoting a priest who was a leader of the popular protests against the Communist regime. He describes his growing concerns about what is happening in his society: "brutal competition and the lust for money are destroying our sense of community. Almost everyone feels a level of fear or depression or insecurity," as they master the lessons we provide to the backward peoples of the world. But their reaction carries no lessons for us.{Stephen Kinzer, *NYT*, Oct. 14, 1994.} The showcase that everyone is proud of is Poland, where "capitalism has been kinder" than elsewhere, Jane Perlez reports under the headline "Fast and Slow Lanes on the Capitalist Road": some Poles are getting the point, but others are slow learners.{*NYT*, Oct. 7, 1994.}

Perlez gives examples of both types. The good student is the owner of a small factory that is a "thriving example" of the best in modern capitalist Poland. Thanks to interest-free government loans in this now-flourishing free market society, her factory produces "glamorous beaded dresses" and "intricately designed wedding gowns," sold mostly to rich Germans, but to wealthy Poles as well. Meanwhile, the World Bank reports, poverty has more than doubled since the reforms were

instituted while real wages dropped 30%, and by the end of 1994 the Polish economy was expected to recover to 90% of its pre-1989 gross domestic product. But "capitalism has been kinder": hungry people can appreciate the "signs of sudden consumption," admiring the wedding gowns in the windows of elegant shops, the "foreign cars with Polish license plates" roaring down the Warsaw-Berlin road, and the "nouveau riche women with $1300 cellular telephones tucked in their pocketbooks."

"People have to be taught to understand they must fight for themselves and can't rely on others," a job counsellor in the Czech Republic explains. Concerned about "the creation of an entrenched underclass," she is running a training class to teach proper atttidues to people who had "egalitarian values drilled into their minds" in the days when "the proud slogan used to be:

'I am a miner, who else is better'?" The fast learners now know the answer to that question: the ex-Nomenklatura, rich beyond their wildest dreams as they become the agents of foreign enterprises, which naturally favor them because of their skills and experience; the bankers set up in business through the "old boy network"; the Polish women enjoying consumer delights; the government-assisted manufacturers of elegant dresses for export to other rich women. In brief, the right kind of people.

Those are the successes of American values. Then there are the failures, still on the slow lane. Perlez selects as her example a 43-old coal miner, who "sits in his wood-paneled living room admiring the fruits of his labor under Communism—a television set, comfortable furniture, a shiny, modern kitchen," now unemployed after 27 years in the mines and thinking about the years before 1989. They "were great," he says, and "life was secure and comfortable." A slow learner, he finds the new values "unfathomable," and cannot understand "why he is at home, jobless and dependent on welfare payments," worrying about his 10 children, lacking the skill to "Gain Wealth, forgetting all but Self."

It is understandable, then, that Poland should find its place on the shelf alongside the other trophies, inspiring further pride and self-acclaim.

The region is plagued with other slow learners, a problem reviewed in a "global report" of *Christian Science Monitor* correspondents in the former Communist world. One entrepreneur complained that "he offered a fellow Ukrainian $100 a month to help him grow roses in a private plot" (in translation: to work for him). "Compared with the $4 that the man earned on a collective farm, it was a fortune. But the offer was rejected." The fast learner attributes the irrationality to "a certain mentality" that lingers on even after the victory of freedom:

"He thinks, `*Nyet*, I'm not going to leave the collective and be your slave'." American workers had long been infected with the same unwillingness to become someone's slave, until properly civilized; I'll return to that.

Tenants in an apartment building in Warsaw suffer from the same malady. They do not want to hand over their apartments to an industrialist who claims ownership of the building from before World War II, asking "Why should people profit from something they don't have a right to?" There has been "significant reform progress" in overcoming such retrogade attitudes, the report continues,

though "there is still great reluctance to let foreigners buy and sell land." The coordinator of US-sponsored agricultural initiatives in Ukraine explains that "You'll never have a situation where 100 percent of the land is in private hands. They've never had democracy." True, anti-democratic passions do not run as high as in Vietnam, where a February 1995 decree "set the clock back": "In a tribute to Marx, the decree aims to help Vietnamese by squeezing rent from the privileged few who have land certificates for businesses," granted in an effort to attract foreign investment. If only foreign investors and a tiny domestic elite were allowed to buy up the country, the natives could work for them (if they are lucky), and we'd have freedom and "democracy" at last, as in Central America, the Philippines, and other paradises liberated long ago. {Justin Burke, et al., *Christian Science Monitor*, July 26, 1995.}

Cubans have long been berated for the same kinds of backwardness. Outrage peaked during the Pan-American games held in the United States, when Cuban athletes failed to succumb to a huge propaganda campaign to induce them to defect, including lavish financial offers to become professionals; they felt a commitment to their country and its people, they told reporters. Fury knew few bounds over the devastating impact of Communist brainwashing and Marxist doctrine.

Fortunately, Americans are protected from the fact that even under the conditions of poverty imposed by US economic warfare, Cubans still refuse to accept dollars for domestic service, so visitors report, not wanting to be "your slave." Nor are they likely to be subjected to the results of a 1994 Gallup poll, considered to be the first independent and scientific survey, published in the Miami Spanish-language press but apparently not elsewhere: that 88% said they were "proud of being Cuban" and 58% that "the revolution's successes outstrip its failures," 69% identified themselves as "revolutionaries" (but only 21% as "Communist" or "socialist"), 76% said they were "satisifed with their personal life," and 3% said that "political problems" were the key problems facing the country.

If such Communist atrocities were to be known, it might be necessary to nuke Havana instead of simply trying to kill as many people as possible from starvation and disease to bring "democracy." That became the new pretext for strangling Cuba after the fall of the Berlin wall, the ideological institutions not missing a beat as they shifted gears. No longer was Cuba an agent of the Kremlin, bent on taking over Latin America and conquering the United States, trembling in terror. The lies of 30 years can be quietly shelved: terror and economic warfare have always been an attempt to bring democracy, in the revised standard version. Therefore we must tighten the embargo that "has contributed to an increase in hunger, illness, death and to one of the world's largest neurological epidemics in the past century," according to health experts writing in US medical journals in October 1994. The author of one says, "Well, the fact is that we are killing people," by denying them food and medicines, and equipment for manufacturing their own medical products.

Clinton's "Cuban Democracy Act"—which President Bush at first vetoed because it was so transparently in violation of international law, and then signed when he was outflanked from the right by Clinton during the election campaign—cut off trade by US subsidiaries abroad, 90% of it

food, medicine and medical equipment. That contribution to democracy helped to bring about a considerable decline in Cuban health standards, an increase in mortality rates, and "the most alarming public health crisis in Cuba in recent memory," a neurological disease that had last been observed in tropical prison camps in Southeast Asia in World War II, according to the former chief of neuro-epidemiology at the National Institute of Health, the author of one of the articles. To illustrate the effects, a Columbia University Professor of Medicine cites the case of a Swedish water filtration system that Cuba had purchased to produce vaccines, barred because some parts are produced by an American-owned company, so life-saving vaccines can be denied to bring "democracy" to the survivors. {Poll, Maria Lopez Vigil, *Envio* (Jesuit University of Central America, Managua), June 1995. Colum Lynch, *Boston Globe*, Sept. 15, 1994; apparently the only report in the mainstream press. See also Alexander Cockburn, *Nation*, Nov. 7, 1994.}

The successes in "killing people" and making them suffer are important. In the real world, Castro's Cuba was a concern not because of a military threat, human rights abuses, or dictatorship. Rather, for reasons deeply rooted in American history. In the 1820s, as the takeover the continent was proceeding apace, Cuba was regarded by the political and economic leadership as the next prize to be won. That is "an object of transcendent importance to the commercial and political interests of our Union," the author of the Monroe Doctrine, John Quincy Adams, advised, agreeing with Jefferson and others that Spain should keep sovereignty until the British deterrent faded, and Cuba would fall into US hands by "the laws of political...gravitation," a "ripe fruit" for harvest, as it did a century ago. By mid-twentieth century, the ripe fruit was highly valued by US agricultural and gambling interests, among others. Castro's robbery of this US possession was not taken likely. Worse still, there was a danger of a "domino effect" of development in terms that might be meaningful to suffering people elsewhere—the most successful health services in Latin America, for example. It was feared that Cuba might be one of those "rotten apples" that "spoil the barrel," a "virus" that might "infect" others, in the terminology favored by planners, who care nothing about crimes, but a lot about demonstration effects.

But respectable people do not dwell on such matters or even the elementary facts about the campaign to restore the ripe fruit to its rightful owner since 1959, including its current phase. Few Americans were exposed to the subversive material in the October 1994 medical journals, or even the fact that in the same month, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution calling for an end to the illegal embargo by a vote of 101 to 2, the US able to rely only on Israel, now abandoned even by Albania, Romania, and Paraguay, which had briefly joined Washington in its crusade for democracy in earlier years.

The standard story is that Eastern Europe, liberated at last, can now join the wealthy societies of the West. Perhaps, but then one wonders why that hadn't happened during the preceding half millenium, as much of Eastern Europe steadily declined relative to the West, well into this century, becoming its original "Third World." A different prospect that might be imagined is that the status quo ante will be more or less restored: parts of the Communist empire that had belonged to the industrial West— western Poland, the Czech Republic, some others—will gradually rejoin it, while

others revert to something like their earlier status as service areas for the rich industrial world, which, of course, did not get that way merely because of its unique virtue. As Winston Churchill observed in a paper submitted to his Cabinet colleagues in January 1914,

"we are not a young people with *an innocent record and* a scanty inheritance. We have engrossed to ourselves...an *altogether disproportionate* share of the wealth and traffic of the world. We have got all we want in territory, and our claim to be left in the unmolested enjoyment of vast and splendid possessions, *mainly acquired by violence, largely maintained by force,* often seems less reasonable to others than to us."

To be sure, such honesty is rare in respectable society, though the passage would be acceptable without the italicized phrases, as Churchill understood. He did make the paper public in the 1920s, in *The World Crisis*, but with the offending phrases removed.{Clive Ponting, *Churchill* (Sinclair-Stevenson 1994), 132.}

It is also instructive to observe the framework in which the disaster of Communism is portrayed. That it was a monstrosity has never been in doubt, as was evident from the first moment to anarchists, people of independent mind like Russell and Dewey, and left Marxists—indeed predicted by many of them in advance. Nor could the collapse of the tyranny be anything but an occasion for rejoicing for anyone who values freedom and human dignity. But consider a narrower question: the standard proof that the command economy was a catastrophic failure, demonstrating the superior merits of capitalism: Simply compare West Germany, France, England, and the United States to the Soviet Union and its satellites. QED. The argument is scarcely more than an intellectual reflex, considered so obviously valid as to pass unnoticed, the presupposition of all further inquiry.

It is an interesting argument, with broad applicability. By the same logic, one can, for example, demonstrate the colossal failure of the kindergartens in Cambridge Massachusetts, and the grand success of MIT: Simply ask how well children entering first grade understand quantum physics as compared with MIT Phds. QED.

Someone who put forth that argument might be offered psychiatric treatment. The fallacy is trivially obvious. To conduct a sane evaluation, one would have to compare the graduates of the Cambridge kindergartens with children who entered the system at the same level. The same elementary rationality dictates that to evaluate the Soviet command economy as compared with the capitalist alternative, we must compare Eastern European countries to others that were like them when the "experiment" with the two development models began. Obviously not the West; one has to go back half a millenium to a find a time when it was similar to Eastern Europe. A proper comparison might be Russia and Brazil, or Bulgaria and Guatemala, though that would be unfair to the Communist model, which never had anything remotely like the advantages of the US satellites. If we undertake the rational comparison, we conclude, indeed, that the Communist economic model was a disaster; and the Western one an even more catastrophic failure. There are nuances and complexities, but the basic conclusions are rather solid.

It is intriguing to see how such elementary points cannot be understood, and to observe the reaction to attempts to explore the issue, which also cannot be understood. The exercise offers

some useful lessons about the ideological systems of the free societies.{For some efforts at comparison, and review of the meager literature on the topic, see my *Year 501* (South End, 1993); also *World Orders, Old and New* (Columbia, 1994). I'll skip the reaction, though it is of some interest.}

What is happening now in much of Eastern Europe in part recapitulates the general record of regions of the world that were driven to a service role, in which many remain, with exceptions that are instructive. It also falls into place alongside of a long, interesting, and important strand of the history of the industrial societies themselves. Modern America was "created over its workers' protests," Yale University labor historian David Montgomery points out, protests that were vigorous and outspoken, along with "fierce struggles." There were some hard-won victories, interspersed with forced accommodation to "a most undemocratic America," notably in the 1920s, he observes, when it seemed that "the house of labor" had "fallen."

The voice of working people was clearly and vividly articulated in the labor and community press that flourished from the mid-19th century until World War II, and even beyond, finally destroyed by state and private power. As recently as the 1950s, 800 labor newspapers were still reaching 20-30 million people, seeking—in their words—to combat the corporate offensive to "sell the American people on the virtues of big business"; to expose racial hatred and "all kinds of antidemocratic words and deeds"; and to provide "antidotes for the worst poisons of the kept press," the commercial media, which had the task of "damning labor at every opportunity while carefully glossing over the sins of the banking and industrial magnates who really control the nation."{Montgomery, *The Fall of the House of Labor* (Yale, 1987), 7; Jon Bekken, in Solomon and McChesney, *op. cit.*; Fones-Wolf, *op. cit.* On similar developments in England a few years later, see Edward Herman and N. Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent* (Pantheon, 1988), ch. 1.2}

The popular movements of resistance to state capitalist autocracy, and their eloquent voices, have a good deal to teach us about the goals and visions of ordinary people, their understanding and aspirations. The first major study of the mid-19th century labor press (and to my knowledge still the only one) was published 70 years ago by Norman Ware. It makes illuminating reading today, or would, if it were known. Ware focuses on the journals established and run by mechanics and "factory girls" in industrial towns near Boston, "the Athens of America" and home of its greatest universities. The towns are still there, largely demoralized and in decay, but no more so than the animating visions of the people who built them and laid the foundation for American wealth and power.

The journals reveal how alien and intolerable the value systems demanded by private power were to working people, who stubbornly refused to abandon normal human sentiments. The "The New Spirit of the Age" that they bitterly condemned "was repugnant to an astonishingly large section of the earlier American community," Ware writes. The primary reason was "the decline of the industrial worker as a person," the "psychological change," the "loss of dignity and independence" and of democratic rights and freedoms, as the values of industrial capitalism were imposed by state and private power, by violence when necessary.

Workers deplored the "degradation and the loss of that self-respect which had made the mechanics and laborers the pride of the world," the decline of culture, skill and attainment and even simple human dignity, as they were subjected to what they called "wage slavery," not very different from the chattel slavery of southern plantations, they felt, as they were forced to sell *themselves*, not what they produced, becoming "menials" and "humble subjects" of "despots." They described the destruction of "the spirit of free institutions," with working people reduced to a "state of servitude" in which they "see a moneyed aristocracy hanging over us like a mighty avalanche threatening annihilation to every man who dares to question their right to enslave and oppress the poor and unfortunate." And they could hardly be unaware of the material conditions at home or in nearby Boston, where life expectancy for Irish was estimated at 14 years in 1849.

Particularly dramatic, and again relevant to the current onslaught against democracy and human rights, was the sharp decline in high culture. The "factory girls" from the farms of Massachusetts had been accustomed to spend their time reading classics and contemporary literature, and the independent craftsmen, if they had a little money, would hire a boy to read to them while they were working. It has been no small task to drive such thoughts from people's minds, so that today, a respected commentator can dismiss with derision ideas about democratizing the internet to allow access by the less privileged:

"One would imagine that the poor get about all the information they want as things stand now and in many cases, even resist the efforts of schools, libraries and the information media to make them better informed. Indeed, that resistance often helps explain why they are poor "

along with their defective genes, no doubt. The insight was considered so profound that it was highlighted in a special box by the editors.{George Melloan, *Wall Street Journal*, May 16, 1994.}

The labor press also condemned what it called the "bought priesthood" of the media, the universities, and the intellectual class, apologists for power who sought to justify the despotism that was strengthening its grip and to instil its demeaning values. "They who work in the mills ought to own them," working people wrote without the benefit of radical intellectuals. In that way they would overcome the "monarchical principles" that were taking root "on democratic soil." Years later, that became a rallying cry for the organized labor movement, even its more conservative sectors. In a widely circulated address at a trade union picnic, Henry Demarest Lloyd declared that the "mission of the labour movement is to free mankind from the superstitions and sins of the market, and to abolish the poverty which is the fruit of those sins. That goal can be attained by extending to the direction of the economy the principles of democratic politics."

"It is by the people who do the work that the hours of labour, the conditions of employment, the division of the produce is to be determined," he urged in what David Montgomery calls "a clarion call to the 1893 AFL convention." It is by the workers themselves, Lloyd continued, that "the captains of industry are to be chosen, and chosen to be servants, not masters. It is for the welfare of all that the coordinated labour of all must be directed... This is democracy."{Ware, *The Industrial Worker 1840-1860*(Chicago: Ivan Dee, 1990, reprint of 1924 edition); Montgomery, *Citizen Worker*

(Cambridge 1993).}

These ideas are, of course, familiar to the libertarian left, though radically counter to the doctrines of the dominant systems of power, whether called "left," "right," or "center" in the largely meaningless terms of contemporary discourse. They have only recently been suppressed, not for the first time, and can be recovered, as often before.

Such values would also have been intelligible to the founders of classical liberalism. As in England earlier, reactions of workers in the industrial towns of New England illustrate the acuity of Adam Smith's critique of division of labor. Adopting standard Enlightenment ideas about freedom and creativity, Smith recognized that "The understandings of the greater part of men are necessarily formed by their ordinary employments." Hence:

"the man whose life is spent in performing a few simple operations, of which the effects too are, perhaps, always the same, or very nearly the same, has no occasion to exert his understanding...and generally becomes as stupid and ignorant as it is possible for a human creature to be... But in every improved and civilized society this is the state into which the labouring poor, that is, the great body of the people, must necessarily fall, unless government takes pains to prevent it," as must be done to bar the destructive impact of economic forces, he felt. If an artisan produces a beautiful object on command, Wilhelm von Humboldt wrote in classic work that inspired Mill, "we may admire what he does, but we despise what he is": not a free human being, but a mere device in the hands of others. For similar reasons, "the labourer who tends a garden is perhaps in a truer sense its owner than the listless voluptuary who enjoys its fruits." Genuine conservatives continued to recognize that market forces will destroy what is of value in human life, unless sharply constrained. Alexis de Tocqueville, echoing Smith and von Humboldt a half century earlier, asked rhetorically what "can be expected of a man who has spent twenty years of his life in making heads for pins?" "The art advances, the artisan recedes," he commented. Like Smith, he valued equality of condition, recognizing it to be the foundation of American democracy, and warning that if "permanent inequality of conditions" ever becomes established, "the manufacturing aristocracy which is growing up under our eyes," and which "is one of the harshest that has ever existed in the world," might escape its confines, spelling the end of democracy. Jefferson also took it as a fundamental proposition that "widespread poverty and concentrated wealth cannot exist side by side in a democracy."{Von Humboldt, see my *Cartesian Linguistics* (Harper & Row, 1966), "Language and Freedom," 1969, reprinted in *For Reasons of State* (Pantheon, 1973) and James Peck, ed., *The Chomsky Reader* (Pantheon, 1987). Also *Problems of Knowledge and Freedom.* Smith, see Patricia Werhane, *Adam Smith and His Legacy for Modern Capitalism* (Oxford, 1991), and *Year 501.* De Tocqueville, Jefferson, see John Manley, "American Liberalism and the Democratic Dream," *Policy Studies Review* 10.1, 1990; "The American Dream," *Nature, Society, and Thought* 1.4, 1988.}

It was only in the early 19th century that the destructive and inhuman market forces that the founders of classical liberalism condemned were elevated to objects of veneration, their sanctity established with the certainty of "the principles of gravitation" by Ricardo and other classical economists as their contribution to the class war that was being fought in industrializing England

— doctrines now being resurrected as "the everlasting battle for the minds of men" is waged with renewed intensity and cruelty.

It should be noted that in the real world, these economic counterparts to Newton's laws were heeded in practice much as they are today. The rare studies of the topic by economic historians estimate that about half the industrial sector of New England would have closed down had the economy been opened to the much cheaper products of British industry, itself established and sustained with ample resort to state power. Much the same is true today, as will quickly be discovered by anyone who sweeps aside the fog of rhetoric and looks at the reality of "economic liberalism" and the "entrepreneurial values" it fosters.

John Dewey and Bertrand Russell are two of the 20th century inheritors of this tradition, with its roots in the Enlightenment and classical liberalism, captured most vividly, I think, in the inspiring record of the struggle, organization and thinking of working men and women as they sought to maintain and expand the sphere of freedom and justice in the face of the new despotism of state-supported private power.

One basic issue was formulated by Thomas Jefferson in his later years, as he observed the growth of the new "manufacturing aristocracy" that alarmed de Tocqueville. Much concerned with the fate of the democratic experiment, he drew a distinction between "aristocrats" and "democrats." The "aristocrats" are "those who fear and distrust the people, and wish to draw all powers from them into the hands of the higher classes." The democrats, in contrast, "identify with the people, have confidence in them, cherish and consider them as the honest & safe...depository of the public interest," if not always "the most wise." The aristocrats of his day were the advocates of the rising capitalist state, which Jefferson regarded with dismay, recognizing the obvious contradiction between democracy and capitalism—or more accurately, "really existing capitalism," linked closely to state power.

Jefferson's description of the "aristocrats" was developed further by Bakunin, who predicted that the "new class" of intellectuals would follow one of two parallel paths. They might seek to exploit popular struggles to take state power into their own hands, becoming a "Red bureaucracy" that will impose the most cruel and vicious regime of history. Or they might perceive that power lies elsewhere and offer themselves as its "bought priesthood," serving the real masters either as managers or apologists, who "beat the people with the people's stick" in the state capitalist democracies.

That must be one of the few predictions of the social sciences to have come true so dramatically. It deserves a place of honor in the famous canon for that reason alone, though we will wait a long time for that.

There is, I think, an eerie similarity between the present period and the days when contemporary ideology—what is now called "neoliberalism" or "economic rationalism"—was being fashioned by Ricardo, Malthus, and others. Their task was to demonstrate to people that they have no rights, contrary to what they foolishly believe. Indeed, that is proven by "science." The grave intellectual error of pre-capitalist culture was the belief that people have a place in the society and a right to it,

perhaps a rotten place, but at least something. The new science demonstrated that the concept of a "right to live" was a simple fallacy. It had to be patiently explained to misguided people that they have no rights, other than the right to try their luck in the market. A person lacking independent wealth who cannot survive in the labor market "has no claim of right to the smallest portion of food, and, in fact, has no business to be where he is," Malthus proclaimed in influential work. It is a "great evil" and violation of "natural liberty" to mislead the poor into believing that they have further rights, Ricardo held, outraged at this assault against the principles of economic science and elementary rationality, and the moral principles that are no less exalted. The message is simple. You have a free choice: the labor market, the workhouse prison, death, or go somewhere else—as was possible when vast spaces were opening thanks to the extermination and expulsion of indigenous populations, not exactly by market principles.

The founders of the science were surpassed by none in their devotion to the "happiness of the people," and even advocated some extension of the franchise to this end: "not indeed, universally to all people, but to that part of them which cannot be supposed to have any interest in overturning the right of property," Ricardo explained, adding that still heavier restrictions would be appropriate if it were shown that "limiting the elective franchise to the very narrowest bounds" would guarantee more "security for a good choice of representatives."

There is an ample record of similar thoughts to the present day. {Rajani Kanth, *Political Economy and Laissez-Faire* (Rowman and Littlefield, 1986); see *World Orders*, for further discussion.}

It is useful to remember what happened when the laws of economic rationalism were formulated and imposed—in the familiar dual manner: market discipline for the weak, but the ministrations of the nanny state, when needed, to protect the wealthy and privileged. By the 1830s, the victory of the new ideology was substantial, and it was established more fully a few years later. There was a slight problem, however. People couldn't seem to get it into their heads that they had no intrinsic rights. Being foolish and ignorant, they found it hard to grasp the simple truth that they have no right to live, and they reacted in all sorts of irrational ways. For some time, the British army was spending a good part of its energies putting down riots. Later things took a more ominous turn. People began to organize. The Chartist movement and later the labor movement became significant forces. At that point, the masters began to be a bit frightened, recognizing that *we* can deny them the right to live, but *they* can deny us the right to rule. Something had to be done.

Fortunately, there was a solution. The "science," which is somewhat more flexible than Newton's, began to change. By mid-century, it had been substantially reshaped in the hands of John Stuart Mill and even such solid characters as Nassau Senior, formerly a pillar of orthodoxy. It turned out that the principles of gravitation now included the rudiments of what slowly became the capitalist welfare state, with some kind of social contract, established through long and hard struggle, with many reverses, but significant successes as well.

Now there is an attempt to reverse the history, to go back to the happy days when the principles of economic rationalism briefly reigned, gravely demonstrating that people have no rights beyond what they can gain in the labor market. And since now the injunction to "go somewhere else"

won't work, the choices are narrowed to the workhouse prison or starvation, as a matter of natural law, which reveals that any attempt to help the poor only harms them—the poor, that is; the rich are miraculously helped thereby, as when state power intervenes to bail out investors after the collapse of the highly-touted Mexican "economic miracle," or to save failing banks and industries, or to bar Japan from American markets to allow domestic corporations to reconstruct the steel, automotive, and electronics industry in the 1980s (amidst impressive rhetoric about free markets by the most protectionist administration in the postwar era and its acolytes). And far more; this is the merest icing on the cake. But the rest are subject to the iron principles of economic rationalism, now sometimes called "tough love" by those who allocate the benefits.

Unfortunately, this is no caricature. In fact, caricature is scarcely possible. One recalls Mark Twain's despairing comment, in his (long-ignored) anti-imperialist essays, on his inability to satirize one of the admired heroes of the slaughter of Filipinos: "No satire of Funston could reach perfection, because Funston occupies that summit himself...[he is] satire incarnated."

What is being reported blandly on the front pages would elicit ridicule and horror in a society with a genuinely free and democratic intellectual culture. Take just one example. Consider the economic capital of the richest country in the world: New York City. Its Mayor, Rudolph Giuliani, finally came clean about his fiscal policies, including the radically regressive shift in the tax burden: reduction in taxes on the rich ("all of the Mayor's tax cuts benefit business," the *New York Times* noted in the small print) and increase in taxes on the poor (concealed as rise in transit fares for school children and working people, higher tuition at city schools, etc.).

Coupled with severe cutbacks in public funds that serve public needs, these policies should help the poor go somewhere else, the Mayor explained. These measures would "enable them to move freely around the country," the report in the *Times* elaborated, under the headline: "Giuliani Sees Welfare Cuts Providing a Chance to Move."{David Firestone, *NYT*, April 29; tax cuts, Steven Lee Myers, *NYT*, April 28, 1995.}

In short, those who were bound by the welfare system and public services are at last liberated from their chains, much as the founders of the doctrines of classical liberalism advised in their rigorously demonstrated theorems. And it is all for their benefit, the newly-reconstituted science proves. As we admire the imposing edifice of rationality incarnated, the compassion for the poor brings tears to the eyes.

Where will the liberated masses go? Perhaps to *favelas* on the outskirts, so they can be "free" to find their way back somehow to do the dirty work for those who are entitled to enjoy the richest city in the world, with inequality greater than Guatemala and 40% of children already below the poverty line before these new measures of "tough love" are instituted.

Bleeding hearts who cannot comprehend the favors being lavished on the poor should at least be able to see that there is no alternative. "The lesson of the next few years may be that New York is simply not wealthy or economically vital enough to afford the extensive public sector that it has created over the post great Depression period," we learn from an expert opinion featured in another *Times* front-page story.

The loss of economic vitality is real enough, in part a result of "urban development" programs that eliminated a flourishing manufacturing base in favor of the expanding financial sector. The city's wealth is another matter. The expert opinion to which the *Times* turned is the report to investors of the J.P.
Morgan investment firm, fifth in the ranking of commercial banks in the 1995 *Fortune* 500 listing, suffering from a mere $1.2 billion in profits in 1994. To be sure, it was not a great year for J.P. Morgan as compared with the "stunning" profit increase of 54% for the 500 with a mere 2.6% increase of employment and 8.2% sales gain in "one of the most profitable years ever for American business," as *Fortune* eported exultantly. The business press hailed another "banner year for U.S. corporate profits," while "U.S. household wealth seems to have actually fallen" in this fourth straight year of double-digit profit growth and 14th straight year of decline in real wages. The *Fortune* 500 have attained new heights of "economic might," with revenues close to two-thirds of gross domestic product, a good bit more than Germany or Britain, not to speak of their power over the global economy—an impressive concentration of power in unaccountable private tyrannies. and another welcome blow against democracy and markets.{*Fortune*, May 15, May 1; *Business Week*, March 6, 1995.}
We live in "lean and mean times," and everyone has to tighten their belts; so the mantra goes. In reality, the country is awash in capital, with "surging profits" that are "overflowing the coffers of Corporate America," *Business Week* exulted even before the grand news came in about the record-breaking final quarter of 1994, with a "phenomenal 71% advance" for the 900 companies in *BW*'s "Corporate Scoreboard." And with times so tough all over, what choice is there but to "provide a chance to move" to the now-liberated masses?{*BW*, Jan. 30; May 15, 1995.}
"Tough love" is just the right phrase: love for the rich and privileged, tough for everyone else. The rollback campaign on the social, economic, political, and ideological fronts exploits opportunities afforded by significant shifts of power in the past 20 years, into the hands of the masters. The intellectual level of prevailing discourse is beneath contempt, and the moral level grotesque. But the assessment of prospects that lies behind them is not unrealistic. That is, I think, the situation in which we now find ourselves, as we consider goals and visions.
As always in the past, one can choose to be a democrat in Jefferson's sense, or an aristocrat. The latter path offers rich rewards, given the locus of wealth, privilege and power, and the ends it naturally seeks. The other path is one of struggle, often defeat, but also rewards that cannot be imagined by those who succumb to "the New Spirit of the Age: Gain Wealth, forgetting all but Self."
Today's world is far from that of Thomas Jefferson or mid-19th century workers. The choices it offers, however, have not changed in any fundamental way.

NOAM CHOMSKY AND LIBERATION POLITICS

VAL PLUMWOOD

1: Chomsky and Democracy

Noam Chomsky has been the most consistent and penetrating critic of American foreign policy this century. For over twenty years his biting and carefully-documented essays have exposed the moral outrage of American (and other western nations) active support for human-rights violating regimes of privilege, in Vietnam, the Middle East, Central and South America and the Caribbean, and, closer to home, in East Timor. Chomsky's work shows that the "free world" policies of support for these oppressive regimes have been extensive, systematic, and continuing, established outcomes of liberal institutions. They cannot be dismissed as mere exceptions, minor flaws in an otherwise largely satisfactory record, or leftovers from an unenlightened, Cold War past. The horror story Chomsky outlines of the frustration of movements for social change and popular control by means of overt and covert invasion, murder and atrocity, is made bearable for his readers by the controlled anger of his bitter irony.

What makes Chomsky such an important political activist and thinker for our time is the juxtaposition of his powerful, activist-flavoured exposure of the contradictions of the liberal effort to "promote democracy, human rights, and free markets world wide" with the strength of his own thought on liberal and radical democracy. Particularly useful has been his strategy for contesting the key idea of democracy, which never makes the mistake of conceding it to the opposition or of identifying democracy with its dominant capitalist form (which Chomsky terms "procedural democracy"). Chomsky's political work shows us the dirty underside of liberal

democracy in the area of foreign policy, and confronts us with the central fact of contemporary political life, that democracy under capitalism has failed the expectations and hopes for justice and equality held by its founders and by the radical movements of the past. But what makes the course Chomsky charts on democracy so important for the future is that he has been able to show us this failure without causing us to lose sight of the value of democracy itself.

Thus Chomsky neatly sidesteps the dilemma over democracy which has paralysed so much of the left for so long. For despite his revelations of the colossal contradictions of the liberal/capitalist version of democracy, Chomsky avoids the destructive cynicism about political democracy which has afflicted the Marxist left. This cynicism, which derides political democracy as hollow and valueless, an empty bourgeois show, has impeccable credentials from Marx himself, and has played a major role in the failure of Marxist societies to develop an alternative democratic theory and political practice. But at the same time, while insisting on the centrality of democracy, Chomsky avoids the other problematic left course of uncritically idealising the liberal public sphere and its impoverished and inconsistent concept of freedom, a course which has lead social democratic thinkers to overestimate the potential for achieving change in liberalism and ultimately toward acquiescing in the inequalities and silencing of oppressed groups instutionalised there. Chomsky's work points toward radical democracy as the solution to this dilemma : it helps suggest the direction such a reclaimed and redefined concept of democracy might take and some of the alternative strategies it must try to explain and avoid.

Although he has won academic respect as a leading theorist in the area of theoretical linguistics, in the area of his political work Chomsky's powerful combination of activist comment and democratic commitment has met with silence and dismissal . Chomsky's approach to political issues offends and disrupts the academic game in several ways. A striking feature of political philosophy as it is done in the contemporary liberal academy is its insulation from the rougher realities of contemporary liberal society. In this self-enclosed world, professional theorists mostly address one another, ignore the impact of their theories on the lives around them, and rarely interrogate the genial claims of theory to see how they might correspond to the experiences liberalism generates for less protected groups. If liberal-democratic theory proclaims justice and equality to be its core values, most theorists will be content to accept that they are indeed so, and to treat the debate as an abstract one about how these might be understood in theoretical terms, rather

than about how far they are applied in practice.

Reality testing is someone else's department : but that someone else is likely to be constrained, as an empirical researcher, in ways which are different but which similarly delegitimate or compromise political critique. As an "expert" subject to the iron rule "stick to your field", he or she will be legitimated to speak only about a minute piece of the puzzle, and the obligatory "value-free" stance will normally be taken to involve accepting the effects of power. In contrast, Chomsky's political writing "in dissent" engages the non-professional reader and forces a way through this neat academic system for defeating popular participation and protecting power via disciplinary division and academic conventions of disengagement. Although his eminence and daring have made it possible for him to bring this off and to win a wider audience, academic political philosophy has not forgiven this dangerous flouting of its conventions and has still to address Chomsky's political work and the embarassing phenomena it discloses. But, as I shall argue, the unwillingness to take Chomsky's political work seriously is also made easier by the limitations of its interrogation of power.

2 : Limitations of Chomsky's Vision

Despite his exemplary activism and the strengths of his thought in the area of democratic politics, Chomsky's thought in a broader liberation context shows some serious limitations and incompletenesses, so that he is hardly the new Messiah that some on the left have proclaimed. Not only does he lack a broad theory of oppression which might be able to unite the concerns of oppressed groups, but also in some areas his thought contains elements of insensitivity to certain forms of oppression or is downright inconsistent with liberation perspectives. For example, in the main area in which he is lauded in academia, he has progressively (and needlessly) modified his account of syntax and criteria for language use so as to deny the key elements of linguistic capacity to non-human animals. Thus he has done much to reinforce a traditional mechanistic account of animals which denies them access to reason and presents humans as discontinuous from the "lower" animal world. Historically, this treatment of the animal (and of oppressed human groups identified with animality or nature) as radically other has been a key element in denying kinship, blocking identification and sympathy, and maintaining the structures of oppression for animals, for nature and for those human groups (such as women) assimilated to them.

Similarly, Chomsky has been unwilling to carry his critique of managerial and knowledge elites through in a thoroughgoing way to an interrogation of the modes of rationality associated with them, which lie behind the foreign policy decision-making he detests. He regularly castigates intellectuals for their lack of concern and responsibility, but he does not follow his critique of the knowledge elite through to a critique of their stock-in-trade of rational disengagement. He understands that his colleagues are blinkered, but aims to explain this, in simple economic reductionist terms, as a product of their capitulation to privelege. But it is too simple to depict the knowledge and opinion elites (including academics and journalists) as merely servants of power, each individually conforming to whatever is in their economic interests to believe, as he suggests. To explain the complicity of the knowledge elite and the academy in systems of oppression, we must look not only to their individual and collective economic interest but also to the systems of rationality into which they are inserted.

Dominant market, bureaucratic and scientific systems of rationality are each, in their own ways, instrumental to privelege, and each has developed ways to render marginal or obscure the experience and interests of oppressed groups, thus standing in the way of theoretical solidarity with them. The framework of disengagement and objectivism is itself problematic, as feminist and other critics have pointed out, cloaking priveleged perspectives as universal and impartial, and marking marginalised perspectives as "emotional", "biassed" and "political". But the powerful have the advantage of inertia, whereas the oppressed must act to disrupt the *status quo* from a passion for change. The demand for disengagement thus tends to favours the speech of the powerful, who have only to announce the realities created by power and to employ the well-practiced conceptual and emotional distancing mechanisms which legitimate the exploitation of the oppressed. These distancing mechanisms of instrumental reason include the construction of oppressed groups as radically other, and their treatment as available without constraint to serve the oppressor's interests, which are in turn conceived as radically separated from the well-being of others. It is precisely this instrumental type of reasoning that informs the morality of the foreign policy decisions Chomsky exposes, as illustrated in the famous Woolcott cable of August 17th 1975 advising the Australian government not to protest the Indonesian invasion of East Timor and suggesting a grab for the Timor Gap oil. Woolcott, architect of Australia's policies on East Timor, justified this calculating and ruthless instrumentalism and disregard for the rights of the Timorese with the supposedly "non-ideological" comment *"I know I am*

recommending a pragmatic rather than a principled stand, but that is what national interest and foreign policy is all about".

What we need to understand here is how reason has been constructed as one of the master's tools, and how an instrumental version of reason has evolved which supports a culture of rational meritocracy in which those considered "more rational" have the right to dominate those constructed as less rational. For twentyfive centuries or more the essence of humanity has been identified with reason, which has in turn been identified with elite groups, and the contrasting concepts of body, emotion and nature identified with those they dominate, with men over women, European over "barbarian", civilisation over primitivism, and human over animal. It is not just a mistaken belief system we have to deal with here, one that we can set straight by claiming women, for example, to be equally rational ; for, as feminist philosophers have argued, the resulting exclusions have deeply affected the dominant construction of reason in the west, and thus both who and what is seen as reasonable. Yet it is the framework of a singular, unquestionable model of disengaged reason which has somehow escaped political influence in its formation that Chomsky himself passionately defends in his castigation of those critical theories he terms "postmodernist". Chomsky and others associated with him seem to use this highly problematic term "postmodernism" as a punching bag which offers a diversion from and an excuse to avoid serious consideration of the important new critiques of modernity, reason and science which have emerged from feminist, critical and anticolonial sources.

My own view of postmodernism is that it is quite mixed in usefulness ; like any body of criticism, it includes good and bad, work that is elitist and obscure in its presentation and other work that is illuminating and useful for various activist issues. The postmodernism of the last two decades has been the riverbed along which the major currents in feminist and anti-racist thought have flowed together, and to dismiss this new confluence in its entirety is to write off some valuable work (along, perhaps, with more problematic material). The term "postmodernism" is a slippery one, which makes it easy to get away with using it to cover a general dismissal of recent feminist theory. This work is often described in hostile terms as postmodernist and rejected not so much because it fits the label as because offends variously by its critical stance towards radical feminism, Marxism, the conventional left, or fundamental assumptions of western thought. Some count the critique of rationality as the central feature of postmodernism, but this is problematic because important

sources of it temporally precede postmodernism and are not identified with its characteristic assumptions, vocabulary or style. Others focus on major figures such as Derrida or Foucault in place of a definition, which is even more problematic, since this makes an entire large body of criticism deriving from many sources and influences stand or fall with the work of a few major figures. What does appear to be most valid in postmodernism is something by no means confined to it — a critical stance towards the colonising record of western culture and its associated ideology in rationalist and Enlightenment thought.

But Chomsky is, as he says himself, a "child of the Enlightenment", and most of the limitations I have stressed result from the conservatism of his philosophical thought and his refusal to critique or look beyond enlightenment rationalism. Chomsky offers a reason-based explanatory framework to account for contemporary oppression which concentrates on the "manufacture of consent" and the control of information by market, bureaucratic and knowledge elites. He is right to stress the lack of democracy and accountability in economic institutions, and their instrumentalisation of media and political life. But confinement to this framework leads to economic reductionism and cannot account for or address the multiplicity or the specific content of the particular forms of contemporary oppression. The inadequacy of this framework emerges as soon as we begin to ask questions about other forms of power, for it tells us little about the specific content of liberal/capitalist exclusions, for example, why the corporations are not run by and for blacks or women. For a fuller account of why political citizenship has been rendered unavailable to or ineffective for the excluded groups who most need to exercise it, we will have to go beyond the simple and rather question-begging account in terms of economic elites and look at associated cultural systems of exclusion : for example the rationalist dualisms which naturalise and support rational meritocracy and the resulting hierarchies of race, class,. gender and nature, as well as the mind/body dualism which sustains the central liberal duality between political and economic citizenship. In short, to understand properly the failure of democracy Chomsky deplores, we need the critique of rationality Chomsky refuses.

Although Chomsky is a key political figure, he is not then, as some of his admirers have suggested, *the* key political figure, and to treat him in this way is to try to turn the clock back to an older and narrower conception of oppression, of politics and political leadership which has shown itself inadequate. That his perspective is both valuable and limited should not come as any surprise, and should put us in mind of

the pitfalls of guruism that helped destroy Marxism. For how could one person, and that person a highly priveleged member of the earth's most priveleged culture, possibly articulate the plurality of struggles and experiences of oppression we need to support ? Instead of expecting one brilliant white male expert to deliver the good word for us on everything from feminism and racism to science, we should approach Chomsky's valuable activist and strategic contributions as one part of a larger field of resources which could enable us rescue the concept of democracy from the clutches of liberalism and develop a new and more inclusive synthesis, a truly liberatory theory and practice of democracy .

3 Towards a New Synthesis : Chomsky and Radical Democracy

Such a synthesis must include both new and old elements, because although it must involve continuity with older radical traditions which have stressed democracy, such as anarchism, a radical account of democracy must immediately confront the inadequacy of the old political labels that preceded liberation politics, including the "anarchist" and "libertarian socialist" positions Chomsky invokes. For an account of democracy responsive to the concerns voiced by a range of excluded groups must involve more than extending democracy and equality to the community and to the economic and workplace decision-making male anarchist and anarcho-syndicalist thinkers have historically stressed. To take up feminist criticisms, it must aim to extend democracy and equality to the further domestic areas of life and relationship conceived as "private" and hence, like the "private" economy, as beyond the reach of democratic principle. To avoid the familiar traps of economic and political reductionism it must extend its scope to democratic culture as well as political and economic relations. Feminist critiques of liberal democratic methods also point to the need for major structural changes in the area of representation to deliver a politics of presence, a politics of difference, and a politics of liberation. And much, much more.

How far does Chomsky's work provide sustenance for such a new synthesis ? Chomsky's work suggests a basis for viewing actually existing liberal democracy as an incomplete and corrupted form which can never realise the radical potential of democracy for liberation. But his theoretical framework tends to appeal to a variety of older traditions rather than envisaging such a new synthesis. Thus he has variously pointed to anarchism, anarcho-syndicalism, libertarian socialism, liberal socialism, radical democracy, and recently classical liberalism, as sources of his ideas. The last suggestion may be truest to his rationalist commitments, but seeing

Chomsky as the defender of liberalism in its true and original form also seems the least satisfactory interpretation of his insights on equality and of the kind of radical participatory tradition he represents. I shall argue that what may account best for these insights is the emerging account of radical democracy.

Chomsky clearly appeals to a radical liberatory tradition of democracy, but it seems to me a mistake to identify this potentially liberatory form of democracy, as Chomsky now suggests, with the classical liberalism expressed by such figures as John Locke and Adam Smith. Feminists have argued that the worm was already at the heart of liberalism in its classical form, which from the beginning involved a conflict-ridden combination of inclusion and exclusion. The confinement of political citizenship and the franchise to men of property and the exclusion of women, the colonised and working people ("the rabble") was taken for granted in the work of classical liberals (with the arguable exception of J.S. Mill). Liberalism as a form of democracy which legitimates capitalism has historically striven to contain the subversive democratic imagination unleashed by the French Revolution, and to protect decision-making from any real popular control or participation. This containment has been achieved by a number of strategems, of which the control of information Chomsky stresses is one. Others include the distinction between political and economic equality and citizenship, which has been supported by the liberal conception of individual freedom as private self-containment. The private individual and his private freedom are realised in terms of legal rights against the public (variously identified as the state or civil society). The result is a conception of free social organisation as the outcome of an essentially private, formally "free" system of contract which excludes from its purview the social relations of inequality between the contracting parties, and hence permits the flourishing of capitalist, and patriarchal, contractual forms .

From a radical democratic perspective our present limited and conflicted form of democracy reflects the contradictions in the development of liberal democracy as the historical vehicle of a priveleged, property-owning "middle" class — simultaneously both an insurgent class needing to employ a universalist discourse of recognition and equality against monarchy and various kinds of despotism from above, and also a class of dominance aiming to maintain its own privelege against others such as women, "savages", and animals, and to resist the extension of this universalising democratic discourse to excluded groups below it . We can picture this most easily perhaps in terms of a tableau, in which the main actor is the master subject of liberalism, the man of property, in two personae, exhibiting both a fair

and a foul face. In the **first persona**, the fair-faced hero of reason confronts monarchy and hereditary privelege, rejecting their authority and invoking the concept of oppression. Having spoken thus fairly against the arbitrariness and absolutism of the despots, he faces his brothers-in-property and speaks fairly of equality, universality and freedom as the birthright of all beings possessed of reason. This part of his fiery speech has a familiar ring, and is elaborated in the modern rationale for liberal institutions and their accompanying traditions of rhetoric.

In the **second persona**, as the man of property and holder of economic and domestic power, he turns right around, and presents to an audience of women and other colonised and subordinated groups his foul face, excluding them from this discourse and refusing them recognition as fellow subjects and rational agents to be included in the reach of the freedom he has lauded . The foul face exhibited by the second of this Janus-faced pair expresses liberalism's liaison with and formation through economic and other forms of domination and commands a conceptual and a social structure which systematically silences and excludes the others this power has marginalised as outside reason. Chomsky's work draws sharply the contrast between the principles of the fair face and the practice of the foul face. But once we take into account the forms of oppression internal to liberal democracy, it is clear that we can't theorise this contradiction just in terms of hypocrisy and lies, any more than in Marxist terms, as a contrast between a "real" foul face and a "sham" fair face. In a way, both faces are equally real ; liberal democracy does provide some genuine benefits, but in a very selective way. The two faces reflect in part the experiences of different groups, and the gap between them is mediated by forms of silencing and denial in the formation of the liberal public sphere at least as much as by deliberate deception.

To make out the foul face more clearly, we would have to look harder at the increasingly important **internal** forms of oppression and silencing that Chomsky does not consider sufficiently. We can't hope to understand the mechanisms which enable the image of the liberal master subject to be superimposed on that of distant populations abroad unless we can understand the mechanisms which enable this image to be superimposed on the internal Others of liberalism. We need to understand the cultural mechanisms which hide oppressed experience of work, welfare, citizenship, of policing and repression in the liberal criminal justice system, and of the patriarchal family. What is pertinent here is cultural analysis which shows how the perceptual and conceptual politics of the liberal public sphere makes

priveleged experience appear to be universal experience and systematically silences, denies or misrepresents oppressed experience.

The contradiction between the claim to universality in the application of liberal democratic principles and the reality of their incomplete and exclusionary application in actually existing liberal democracy is also disguised by the exception clauses which create the Others of liberalism. There are four major areas where these exemptions from democratic and humanist principles of equality appear in liberal societies: the exemption of those held to be of lesser reason (which has been applied to exclude women and various colonised others) ; the exemption of areas designated as private (applied to the economy and to the family) ; the exemption of the area of "national interest" and foreign policy (applied to foreign populations) ; and the exemption in the area of criminality (applied especially to the liberal poor). Criminality is increasingly defined to include those "non-contributor" populations not useful to capitalism, and extended, along the lines of the "carceral continuum" described by Foucault, to provide a basis for ever closer regulation of the lives of the poor, especially through the welfare system .

Following out these insights suggests the need to distinguish between radical democracy and liberal socialism. The conception of our present form of democracy as **incomplete** is a widespread and appealing aspect of radical democratic worldviews, but there are two importantly different ways to develop this insight, which correspond I think to liberal socialism and radical democracy respectively. The liberal socialist sees liberal/capitalism as involving an incomplete form of democracy ; the liberal public sphere is basically OK but mechanisms to achieve forms of economic democracy and perhaps extra excluded group representation need to be added. Such additions, according to the kind of extended liberalism espoused by liberal socialists such as Chantal Mouffe and Paul Hirst, will create a more inclusive form of liberal democracy, which is otherwise benign and substantially in order. Radical democracy proper, in contrast, would see the liberal/capitalist form of democracy as involving both an incomplete inclusionary and an inconsistent exclusionary movement. Thus, the radical democratic project must involve more than completing the inclusionary movement begun by the first persona. It must also involve disentangling the identities of the fair and the foul personae, and making visible the forms of exclusion and silencing institutionalised as the foul face of liberal democracy.

This is one of the points where Chomsky's work is particularly useful in pointing the way forward. For Chomsky takes an unflinching look at the foul face of liberal democracy, as it turns its gaze outward to colonised populations external to the great power states, and his work reveals the exclusionary aspects which the school of thought which hopes to reformulate socialism as simply an extended form of existing democracy has overlooked. Even given the incompleteness of Chomsky's vision, it is not possible to come away from reading him with the liberal socialist belief intact that everything in the house of liberal democracy is fundamentally in order, except perhaps for some fancy new furniture we need to order, in the shape of a few extra elements of representation. Although a lot more remains to be done in establishing directions for a politics of radical democracy, Chomsky's work has much to contribute, and his voice remains one any attempt to think through a new liberatory alternative must attend to with care.

Note : This paper was written as a contribution to the Visions of Freedom Conference (Jan 17-20 1995 in Sydney, Australia) which featured Noam Chomsky as the major speaker, and was presented in absentia. Val Plumwood is currently Visiting Professor of Women's Studies at North Carolina State University, and is the author of several books including Feminism and the Mastery of Nature (Routledge 1993).

Social Ecology and "The Man Question"

Ariel Salleh[1]

ABSTRACT

The article argues that anarchist Murray Bookchin's social ecology converges with ecofeminist politics in several ways, even naming women's caring labours - 'libertarian reason par excellence'. However Bookchin's theory founders in practice through his rejection of what actual ecofeminist voices have to say. Ironically, when Bookchin's companion Janet Biehl takes up the case for social ecology against ecofeminists, a deep fracture between Biehl and Bookchin's assumptions about humanity and nature surfaces, revealing ecofeminism to be closer to Bookchin's social ecology than Biehl's liberal feminism is.

persistently exorcising her powers

After the Marxist doldrums of the 70s, anarchist Murray Bookchin's essays in Toward an Ecological Society offered an exhilarating release for some women activists stymied by unrelenting economism and male Left hierarchies.[2] For Bookchin, Marxism is

> an ideology of naked power, pragmatic efficiency and social centralisation almost indistinguishable from the ideologies of modern state capitalism. [3]

But more importantly, Bookchin's social ecology, born but yet unnamed as politics, focused on ecological crisis and its social origins just as ecofeminists were beginning to do. Among would-be 'fathers' of ecopolitical thought, Bookchin alone intuited the 'ecofeminist connection': an understanding that men's oppression of 'nature' and of 'woman' are fundamentally interlinked. As he wrote in The Ecology of Freedom:

> The subjugation of her nature and its absorption into the nexus of patriarchal morality forms the *archetypal* act of domination that ultimately gives rise to man's imagery of a subjugated nature.[4]

Bookchin's impressive history of hierarchy coincides with this key ecofeminist idea in a number of places, despite an assertion that gerontocracy was the earliest social stratification.

The following passage demonstrates the tension between gerontocracy and patriarchy as causal principles in his work, yet it ultimately favours patriarchal authority as prior. Why, after all, concern with the specific relation of father and son?

> Until well into the sixth century B.C., the son 'had duties but no rights; while his father lived, he was a perpetual minor.' In its classical form, patriarchy *implied* male gerontocracy, not only the rule of the males over females.[5]

Of course, the question which form of hierarchy came first historically - gerontocracy or patriarchy, is fairly scholastic and can never be determined with any methodological certainty. We could settle for recognising a 'relative autonomy' of the two faces of domination perhaps? On the other hand, it might be argued that the motive behind formation of a gerontocracy was itself a patriarchal need to secure resources for sexual gratification by less vibrant older males. Rule by ageing females is never the issue, for example. Besides, while older men may use cunning over males and females of all ages, younger men in most societies threaten physical violence over both men and women. Even without brute force, Bookchin notes, women are physically disadvantaged by their reproductive capacities.

If classical patriarchy was based on the subjection of sons, we scarcely seem to have moved beyond it. Older men sending younger men off to war has the double benefit of reducing sexual competition and protecting their accumulated property. The inequities of capitalism can be seen as a precise transmutation of a dynamic where young people, women, and outsiders, are kept impoverished and powerless by the corporate greed of a few 'big men', usually but not necessarily the over fifty age bracket. Looking at which model of power has a tighter hold on our lives today, it has to be said that patriarchal power, embodied in capitalist economics and state bureaucracies is certainly more glamorous and pervasive than gerontocracy. In addition, a handful of 'liberated' women reaching positions of authority in these institutions does nothing to change that structural domination.

If the Oedipal logic of totem and taboo still seems to apply, Bookchin's formulation unlike that of Freud or fellow anarchist Kropotkin, is far removed from any social instinct theory. Social ecologists like ecofeminists understand that power relations develop by historical convention. Bookchin sounds especially ecofeminist when he writes that woman was the first victim of

domination reinforced by appearance of the civil sphere:

> woman became the archetypal Other of morality, ultimately the human embodiment of its warped image of evil...the male still opposes his society to woman's nature, his capacity to produce commodities to her ability to reproduce life, his rationalism to her 'instinctual' drives...[6]

Again, he acknowledges that it is the material productivity of women everywhere which makes life possible. Here, he supports a model of gender exploitation that precedes both slavery and the class divided society of Marx. Bookchin suggests that denigration of women's 'nature' has been an all but universal phenomenon and notes how unremitting hatred of women's 'inquisitiveness' reaches from pygmy Africa to ancient Greece. Her posture must reflect renunciation and modesty.

Even so, the masculine will to power is not quenched.

> A gnawing sense of inferiority and incompleteness stamps every aspect of the newly emergent male morality... It is utterly impossible to understand why meaningless wars, male boastfulness, exaggerated political rituals, and a preposterous elaboration of civil institutions engulf so many different, even tribal, societies without recognising how...the male is over-active and 'over-burdened' by his responsibilities - often because there is so little for him to do in primordial communities and even in many historical societies. [7]

While in an 'enlightened world, Hobbes' social contract appears to abnegate the patriarchal self, in fact it simply sublimates the roles of fathers, priests, and warriors. The modern state comes to colonise and absorb every facet of daily life, replacing custom and loyalty by depersonalised law and bureaucratic supports. As Bookchin reminds us: 'the entire ensemble is managed like a business'. [8] Thanks to Locke and his brothers, the possibility of vigorous participatory democracy gives way under bourgeois capitalism to representative government by a mostly male propertied elite. Social production becomes mineralisation of the earth, and civil society a fragmented mass that now celebrates its identity in the electronic glitz of the shopping mall.

Against this postmodern condition, Bookchin pits a fundamentally ecofeminist vision by outlining what he sees as the feminine contribution to 'civilisation'. This contribution, created in the communication between mother and child, lays out the very foundations of consociation

and thought. While Bookchin's discussion tends to use unexamined, some would say 'essentialist' notions of gender, ecofeminists break with patriarchal dualisms by inviting men to join this radical nurturant activity. Social ecology points to such labour as a very specific form of 'reason' - one 'concealed by the maudlin term mother love'. It is a rationality of 'otherness', grounded in symbiosis. Consistent with his modernist framework, Bookchin calls this nurture an 'earlier' model of rationality, but clearly it is a skill current among women care workers across many cultures. Further, as I have argued in the ecofeminist critique of deep ecology, the apparent invisibility of techniques and values that make up this paradigm of sociability is holding back ecopolitical change:

... if women's lived experience were ... given legitimation in our culture, it could provide an immediate 'living' social basis for the alternative consciousness which [radical men are] trying to formulate as an abstract ethical construct.[9]

Such a move would also further the gender revolution by de-stabilizing fixed 'masculine' and 'feminine' work roles.

Compared with the bourgeois ethic of egoism, Bookchin contends that the sensibility women learn in caring labour expresses

a rationality of de-objectification that is almost universal in character, indeed, a resubjectivization of experience that sees the 'other' within a logical nexus of mutuality. The 'other' becomes the active component that it always has been in natural and social history, not simply the 'alien' and alienated that it is in Marxian theory and the 'dead matter' that it is in classical physics.

Without any sense of appropriation, Bookchin claims the mutualism of feminine labour and its techniques as the practice of 'libertarian reason' par excellence. In the light of this pervasive force, it is curious then, that he should wonder: How can we define the historical subject? Nevertheless, he goes on to reflect that what passes for civilsation now, is precisely the undoing of this empathic capacity in order for individual adults, that is men and a handful of so-called 'emancipated' women, to take part in patriarchal institutions:

growing up comes to mean growing away from a maternal, domestic world of mutual support, concern, and love, (a venerable and highly workable society in its own right) into one made shapeless, unfeeling and harsh. To accomodate humanity to war, exploitation, political obedience, and rule involves the undoing not only of human 'first nature' as an animal but also of human 'second nature'...

Based on such destructive de-socialisation, Western pretensions to personal autonomy become psychologically hollow and unsustainable, for their very substrate is vitiated. Women, meanwhile, are obliged to forge a 'cunning accomodation' with patriarchal requirements. Feminists must exercise a double duplicity. Bookchin contrasts Hopi Indian peoples, and we can recall the tale of Margaret Mead's Samoans, whose luck it was to carry their socialisation for reciprocity into adult life. According to social ecology, the organic evolution of humans - eurocentered ones he means, toward awareness of their 'free nature' demands recovery of this repressed sociability - a 'recollection' as Frankfurt Marxists say; for poststructuralist Julia Kristeva, a renewal of the semiotic. Social ecology, ecofeminism, critical Marxism and semanalysis converge at this turn, despite Bookchin's desire to differentiate his work from other radicalisms.

Nevertheless, both social ecology and critical theory posit men's control of 'woman' as pivotal to the establishment of hierarchy. The implication is that being less sullied by the commodity society, women are potential agents of liberation. But as noted, Bookchin does not explore this line further, preferring a pluralist analysis. Accordingly, The Ecology of Freedom reads

The dialectical unfolding of hierarchy has left in its wake an ages-long detritis of systems of domination involving ethnic, gendered, age vocational, urban-rural, and many other forms of dominating people, indeed, an elaborate system of rule that economistic 'class analyses' and strictly antistatist approaches do not clearly reveal.

Bookchin urges us to understand the complex interaction between these various stratifications, but in doing so, he does not seem to have assimilated the implications of his generous proto ecofeminist insight. For once the 'complementarity of otherness', so well understood by women care givers and reciprocity based indigenous communities is over taken by self interested calculation, the sexually fetishised dualisms of the eurocentric patriarchy become a 'complementarity of domination'.

Bookchin ultimately bypasses his proposition that men's historical power over women is archetype of this polarising style, and so loses the hidden political opportunity for actualising the 'free nature' expressed in women's labours. Instead, and in seeming self contradiction, his writing turns derisive of women's struggle:

It will do us little good to contend that all the evils in the world stem from a monolithic 'patriarchy', for example, or that hierarchy will wither away once women or putative female values replace 'male supremacy'...

After long passages spelling out the liberatory significance of women's nurturant activities in his philosophy of dialectical naturalism, Bookchin mocks 'putative feminine values'. Then, in the face of his own ambivalence, he projects ecofeminism as irrational.

What is going on here? It seems that 'woman' as glorified 'object' of man's contemplative gaze is one thing, but the feminine voice itself becomes a different matter. When can the subaltern speak? As we have seen, in dealing with women who dare to 'speak as women', a number of ecopolitical writers adopt defensively rejecting postures. So much so that discursive strategies like denial and omission, refusing to connect, projection and personalisation, caricature and trivialisation, discredit and invalidation, ambivalence and appropriation, are now familiar responses to women who presume to enter the masculine domain of theoria. Given Bookchin's path breaking recognition of man's domination of woman as archetypical, could the politics of social ecology itself be compromised by 'the man question'?

domestic agendas

In 1991, Janet Biehl, intimate companion of Murray Bookchin published a small book called Rethinking Ecofeminist Politics. This set out the terms of a long overdue political debate between social ecology and the spiritually oriented culturalist ecofeminism prevalent in the USA. The tension between these two ideological tendencies became clear at the first National Green Gathering in Amherst, Massachusetts, June 1987. Eco-anarchist Bookchin, was a key speaker at this event, and spiritual ecofeminist Charlene Spretnak, a mother of Green politics, was another. As the nascent US Green movement struggled for self definition, a sense of competing hegemonies hung over it like a cloud. Some described it as a collision between New England rationalists versus California mystics. Spretnak was also identified with deep ecology, another West Coast approach to Green thought and total anathema to Bookchinites.

The subsequent rise of a Left Green Network and Youth Greens organised by Howie Hawkins near Bookchin's home base in Vermont, was another practical outcome of the Amherst encounter - a concerted effort by social ecologists and others on the Left to ensure an adequate social analysis would inform the development of Green politics in the USA. A

further issue introduced by the East v. West Coast divide at the first US National Green Gathering, was a tacit struggle over the body of ecofeminism. Where should it belong? Was it to affirm the life giving potency of 'woman and nature' through ritual celebration of the earth Goddess? Or was ecofeminism to walk hand in hand with social ecology, helped along by Chiah Heller and Ynestra King, teachers at Bookchin's Institute for Social Ecology? An Ecofeminist Seminar hosted by the Institute of Social Ecology in July 1994 drawing together women from all regions of North America, played out the residue of that agenda.

From the perspective of women in an international ecofeminist community now over 15 years old, these ideological schisms are very much a product of social conditions domestic to the USA. Ecofeminists in Scandinavia or Australia, for example, enter a political scene where broadly socialist ideas have currency even in establishment circles; where the famous 'L' word so precious to American progressives, is even seen as conservative; and where politics itself is felt to be a spiritual commitment. The mainstream community temper in the wider Western world tends to be secular humanist too, rather than shaped by religiosity as it is in the USA. In India or Venezuela, ecofeminism encounters different conditions again. For the point is, that the problems facing Green activists around the world, including ecofeminist activists, vary with the unique historical trajectory of their region.

This fact indicates a serious limitation in Biehl's Rethinking Ecofeminist Politics, for that 're-think' depends on omission and a falsely universalised notion of what ecofeminism is. Her ecofeminist textual sources are - Susan Griffin's Woman and Nature (1978), Carolyn Merchant's The Death of Nature (1980), Charlene Spretnak's The Politics of Women's Spirituality (1982) and The Spiritual Dimension of Green Politics (1987), Riane Eisler's The Chalice and the Blade (1987), Starhawk's Truth or Dare (1988), Andree Collard's Rape of the Wild (1989), and essays from anthologies like Plant's Healing the Wounds (1989) and Diamond's and Orenstein's Reweaving the World (1990). While Biehl claims to engage with a movement, her bibliography deals only with North American material. The upshot of this inadequate research base, is that ecofeminists in the wider international community have their political contribution marginalised. Yet, equally unfair, they have to wear criticism that does not necessarily apply to their articulations of ecofeminism. Biehl comments somewhere in her book that the US education system is notably remiss in conveying a sense of history and geographic relativity to its people. Clearly, this serves the impoverished imperialist consciousness in many ways, but it is ironic to see this same limitation reflected in radical American writing as well.

Of course the mis-match between Biehl's rather home grown project and the global reach of its title, may have issued from publication editors with a keen eye for commodity export. The political impact of that decision will continue to ripple outward into the international scene, nevertheless. To take a case in point. On the Island Continent where Green first parties began, Rethinking Ecofeminist Politics has been embraced by Trotskyists who operate under a Green Alliance banner, and used as a means of invalidating the work of independent ecofeminist activists.[10] These Left cadres, never much troubled by ideological consistency when scoring a political point, are too unread to be inhibited by the message of Bookchin's 'Listen Marxist!'. - Perhaps the time is right for Murray to look at a revised, updated version of his earlier essay? A number of ecofeminist activists and scholars on our fatal shores would value his efforts. - But to return to Biehl. It is not her fault that others have used her writing in this way, although there is a salutory lesson in taking stock of the political landscape on all fronts, before setting out to attack potential allies. The other lesson in all this, is a reminder that history is made up of internal contradictions; ecofeminism having no prerogative on them.

Now, because ecofeminist politics grows out of a plurality of social contexts, it will have many complexions. Biehl asserts that it is marred by 'massive internal contradictions'. But one cannot expect the spontaneous organic voice of a worldwide democratic groundswell like ecofeminism, to show the same degree of philosophic grooming as a statement like social ecology, born of the pen of a singular charismatic figure. Despite differences among ecofeminists, there is always a common strand to women's experiences - things shared by dint of the patriarchal ascription of 'womanhood', and things beyond that. The knowledge of this unity is empowering to women and a delight. Women are discovering themselves as re/ sisters outside the divisive legacies of patriarchal capitalism, colonialism, even Marxism and some Green ideologies. In a global context, women, 53% of the world's population, are the largest 'minority group'. Never to forget that it is women who put in 65% of the world's work for 10% of the world's pay. This is what marks 'women' out as a significant political category - not an essentialist fabrication as antifeminists want to claim. But Rethinking Ecofeminist Politics forgets this material fact, preoccupied as it is with the status of political ideas. In this respect, New England rationalists display a bourgeois idealism equal to that of the West Coast spiritual feminists who bother it so.

Bearing in mind that US ecofeminism is Biehl's focus, she expresses disappointment in a literature that

[fails to] draw upon the best of social theory and meld it with radical concepts in ecology to

produce a genuine anti-hierarchical, enlightened, and broadly oppositional movement.[11]

She is disturbed by ecofeminists who seem to situate themselves 'outside' the emancipatory legacy of Western - read eurocentric - political culture. Not surprisingly, she offers Bookchin's social ecology as the most promising model in this legacy for ecofeminists and other Greens to espouse. Now Biehl is rightly concerned, in that there is no well developed Left ecofeminist account among the US texts she addresses. But she is wrong to go on to conclude that ecofeminism as such, lacks this analysis. Or more seriously, that it lacks the intellectual resources for arriving at same. German ecofeminist Maria Mies' study Patriarchy and Accumulation (1987) provides a coherent analysis of an internationally predatory capitalist system, and how it uses patriarchal violence on women and nature to secure economic ends. Mies steps outside the eurocentric legacy to look for an empirically grounded 'feminine voice', then brings this voice into dialogue with the basic presuppositions of Marxism itself. Vandana Shiva's postcolonial *expose* of 'development' in Staying Alive: Women Ecology and Development (1989) is a further example. Other ecofeminist positions again, have developed from the interplay of gendered living, environmental struggle, and intensive study of dialectical philosophies. This scarcely represents a turning away from social theory, as Biehl charges.[12]

More to the point, Biehl does not seem to recognise that it is patriarchal attitudes which put women's knowledges and feminine values 'outside' of Reason - a long established procedure and one that she herself now partakes of. But what is important for ecofeminists is that loss of women's wisdoms and skills through this marginalisation has devastating social and ecological impacts. Perhaps more than a double irony is involved when Bookchin reminds us that

> In a civilisation that devalues nature, she is the 'image of nature'...Yet woman haunts this male 'civilisation' with a power that is more than archaic or atavistic. Every male-oriented society must persistently exorcise her ancient powers...[13]

Thus, Merchant has demonstrated how the rise of the European scientific hegemony went hand in hand with a systematic elimination of knowledgeable women healers as witches. Mies documents how their property was appropriated by executioners finding its way into the bureaucratic coffers of what has grown in to the nation state. Considerable booty was to be had from an estimated 12 million women tortured to death. Before long, the trajectories of state and science became interwoven with capitalism. Today, we witness successful capture of the 'knowledge industry' by corporate interests - masculinist enterprise in yet another guise and Shiva points to how women's centuries old agricultural expertise is displaced in India by the import of so-called 'development': the advanced dust-bowl-technologies perfected by Western scientific men.

as nature to culture / body to mind / private to public

Biehl is not well read in feminist epistemology so misses the deeper implications of ecofeminist critiques of patriarchal politics and science. Women's approaches to making knowledge are not simply 'weak and irrational', but positively committed to principles of participation, embodiment, connectedness and wholism.[14] Conversely, the eurocentric patriarchal legacy from religion to science, exorcises 'nature, body and self' as contamination. The nature/culture split is replicated in the rationalist dichotomy between body and mind, and echoed in turn, by the political device of separating private from public sphere. For many ecofeminists, these binary representations are symptomatic of masculine struggles for independence - read transcendence from the originary body of the mother. The bodies of lovers and wives bring back the sense of need and dependency, the terror of reabsorption, dissolution. Enlightenment philosopher Rousseau is telling in this respect. If women were not kept restrained by modesty

> the result would soon be the ruin of both [sexes], and mankind would perish by the means established for preserving it...Men would finally be [women's] victims...All people perish from the disorder of women.[15]

Women's passion is 'nature' which must be controlled, and note, transcended, if social order is to be maintained.

In contrast to the simple pleasures of immanence contained in women's various labours, eurocentric history shows hegemonic masculinity as a defensive ego oriented system, engorged with transcendent projects such as monotheism, global empire, scientific mastery and the cult of Reason. Carol Pateman was early to conclude that such institutions originate in sublimation of men's fear of women's otherness.

> Men have denied significance to women's unique bodily capacity, have appropriated it, and transmuted it into masculine political genesis.[16]

> At any rate, it is no surprise to find masculinist thinkers railing against an immanence which tells our human embeddedness in nature. Or more recently, railing against ecofeminists who are said to 'collapse mind into body'. What ecofeminists are actually on about is restoring acceptance of the organic flow between body and mind - the link that eurocentric men compulsively check - as existential prerequisite to unmaking the destructive nature/culture split. Biehl, on the other hand, by reading ecofeminism literally back into the body, unwittingly sides with unreconstructed misogynist attitudes that since

Aristotle if not before, have tried to contain women by association with nature. But we are no longer living in such unreasoned times. Ecofeminist arguments address a postmodern conjuncture, where subaltern voices have new currency.

By looking at the relation of men and women to the natural body and its metaphors, ecofeminism is paving the way for an ecological ethic based on a profound re-thinking of 'the human condition'. Susan Griffin puts it aptly:

> We know ourselves to be made from this earth. We know this earth is made from our bodies...For we see ourselves and we are nature. We are nature seeing nature. We are nature with a concept of nature. Nature weeping. Nature speaking of nature to nature.[17]

There is little about this statement that Bookchin should have difficulty with. Unless, it is the speaker's gender...Compare The Ecology of Freedom where he describes nature as 'writing its own philosophy and ethics'. For,

> from the biochemical responses of a plant to its environment to the most willful actions of a scientist in the laboratory, a common bond of primal subjectivity inheres in the very organisation of matter itself. [18]

Speaking from a position of masculine privilege, Bookchin can afford to be less inhibited on the question of our human relation to 'nature' than Biehl. So, comfortably reviving Kropotkin in tandem with Bloch's neo-Marxist concept of 'co-productivity', he theorises that

> Labour's 'metabolism' with nature cuts both ways, so that nature interacts *with* humanity to yield the actualisation of their common potentialities in the natural and social worlds. [19]

In contrast, Biehl's old style patriarchally identified feminist contempt for 'the body' and 'nature' becomes confusion in discussion of the nature/culture nexus. She agrees with ecofeminism that men and women are not 'ontological opposites' but rather 'differentiations' in human potential. But her antagonism to social constructionists means that she cannot concede this potential as discursively mediated. In other words, lacking a dialectical understanding of links between nature and nurture, she is forced back into the very reductionism that she would like to fault ecofeminism with.

Losing sight of Bookchin's acknowledgement of women's mutualism as 'libertarian reason par excellence', Biehl asserts that if 'feminine' otherness is put forward as a political identity, then ecofeminists 'root themselves outside of Western culture altogether'.[20] Yet how else is the eurocentric patriarchal tendency to essentialise masculinity as 'humanity' to be negated without such antithesis? Leaving the dialectical naturalism of The Ecology of Freedom aside, Biehl shapes her argument with ecofeminism squarely within the classic binarisms of liberal politics. In consequence, she charactersises the ecofeminist argument that women and men are 'in and of' nature as anti-Enlightenment and regressive. In fact, ecofeminists are like deep ecologists in endorsing a continuum between human and natural spheres, but they are even more like those social ecologists who argue dialectically that human and non-human nature is simultaneously continuum and disjunction.

Biehl's support for Bookchin's rejection of autonomous ecofeminist voices also adopts the classical distinction between private and public as a political given. Hence, the text of Rethinking Ecofeminist Politics echoes Hegel's and Rousseau's terror of women's subversive potential: *viz* feminine piety versus public law represents 'the supreme opposition in ethics'. That opposition is played out today in debates over the adequacy of 'caring' as a feminist ethical principle. Again, forgetting Bookchin's writing on women's practice of 'libertarian reason', Biehl dismisses ecofeminists like Plant, Diamond and Orenstein, for seeking

> to extend the very concept of 'women's sphere' as home to embrace and *absorb* the community as a whole.[21]

While she agrees that ecofeminism coincides with the communitarian emphasis of social ecology, and with the ecological struggle of rural women in the Two Thirds World, Biehl is not happy to reinforce this convergence in Green thought. Rather, she remarks that

> decentralised community, seen abstractly without due regard to democracy and confederalism, has the potential to become regressive...Homophobia, anti-Semitism, and racism as well as sexism, may be part of a parochial 'communitarian ethos'.[22]

In light of recent feminist political theory, Rethinking Ecofeminist Politics comes down inappropriately on King's critique of a masculinist political legacy that is 'founded on repudiation of the organic, the female, the tribal, and particular ties between people'.[23] Biehl calls this

> convoluted thinking and atavism with a vengeance, especially if one considers that the

> Western democratic tradition produced a consciousness of *universal* freedom that ultimately opened the public sphere to women...[24]

Ecofeminists do not deny some ideological inspiration in the North's 'universalism' so-called, though Third World re/sisters may have another take on the origins of their emancipatory struggle. The real issue though is: - why has the eurocentric democratic tradition so consistently failed to deliver? Twenty years after Second Wave feminism began, the leading nation of the 'free world' still has not accorded women legal possession of their own bodies. Hence the work of Mary O'Brien, Hilkka Pietila, Shiva, and others to diagnose the source of this fraternal incapacity. To repeat: it is not ecofeminists, but the Western legacy itself, which puts women 'outside'. Biehl worries about possible loss of political 'objectivity' in ecofeminist communal dealings based on any feminine principle, but perhaps she should examine her own stance. For, as she herself notes,

> In any democratic polity worthy of the name, one is accountable to one's fellow citizens [including sisters], not only to one's friends and lovers.[25]

Eco-anarchist Bookchin rightly regrets the arrival of factory production that killed off the principle of usufruct and self reliance in community life. In related vein, he opposes the disempowering effect of representative government by an elected elite. Councils and political parties simply mirror the bureaucratic state in his view. As Biehl relates it:

> Social ecology distinguishes between statecraft, as a system of dealing with the public realm by means of professionalised administrators and their legal monopoly on violence, on the one hand, and politics, as the management of the community on a grass roots democratic and face-to-face level by citizen bodies...[26]

Bookchin recognises, but does not dwell on the role of a restless, transcendent masculinity in undermining its own political institutions. His lack of systematic gender analysis equally affects his treatment of 'usufruct' - a favourite economic theme, referring to communal availability of resources by those who need them, as opposed to ownership or exchange based on the monetary principle of 'equivalence'. Now usufruct is precisely what continues to mark the daily rounds of a global majority of women, excluded as they are from the commodity society. Pietila's account of the 'pink economy' among Finland's domestic workers or Shiva's North Indian forest dwellers are strong illustrations. Here is 'an immediate 'living' social basis for the alternative consciousness which [radical men are] trying to formulate as an abstract ethical construct'.[27] But social ecology remains too compromised by traditional binarisms to make connections of

this sort.

The same problem contaminates its political vision based on a rejuvenated Athenian model. *Polis* was and is, premised on a separation of culture from nature and as such, is ill equipped to steer an ecological future. The divide between *polis* and *oikos* was also a gendered and ethnic stratification, as women and slaves were excluded from citizenship. The gender stratification in turn, reinforced the separation of humanity and nature by compounding men with culture and women with nature. With the advent of the market, *polis* effectively split *oikos* apart into economy on the one hand, and ecology on the other. And so *oikos* as economics, was detached from its grounding in daily needs, breaking the rational tie between household and sustainability. Further, *polis* implies severance of its own ethical universalist orientation from *oikos*, supposedly limited to particularistic ends. However, feminism now teaches us that political and personal ends are intrinsically tied; while environmental crisis teaches that we split economy from ecology at our peril. Biehl's Rethinking Ecofeminist Politics states that:

> the essence of democracy is precisely its latent capacity to cut across particular, gender and other cultural lines.[28]

Not only is democracy even in the 20th Century still latent, but the 'cultural line' that Biehl does not mention here is that which cuts humanity off from the rest of nature. As we move towards a Green understanding, it is essential to address the full gamut of eurocentric domination.[29] Ecofeminism, like deep ecology, is concerned about the oppression of all life forms.

It goes without saying that against the dreary, alienating, exploitative society of transnational corporate capital, Bookchin's Rousseau style neighbourhood assemblies and confederation of city states offers an inspiring alternative. Emerging first as land trusts and shadow councils, they could mobilise communities around reforms, gradualllly gaining legitimation and at the same time, fostering autonomous co-ops, organic gardens and market places.[30] But as deep ecological Greens and most ecofeminists believe, a real political shift means letting go of the culture versus nature polarity. A regressive humanity/nature split is certainly a domain assumption of the eurocentric political legacy that Biehl's conventional liberal feminism wishes to preserve. And although Bookchin's neo-Hegelian image of nature contemplates a continuum of life potentials rather than dualism, he also speaks of consciousness as delineating a specifically human realm separate from the rest of nature. In this rationalist vein, Rethinking Ecofeminist Politics would have women place themselves with men 'over and above' nature. By contrast, ecofeminist politics enlists men to give up their originary fears of embeddedness; to join women in reaffirming their place as part of nature; and to formulate new social practices and institutions

in line with that perception.

conclusion

The gulf between Bookchin's radical, if occasional, celebration of women's mutualistic rationality and Biehl's liberal disdain of feminine values is a profound theoretic fracture within social ecology. It is plain from women's ecological actions across the globe - the three hundred year old tradition of Chipko tree huggers; the peasant mothers of Seveso; Australian Koori women anti-base activists; that it is empathic nurture rather than any sophisticated social theory which guides these sound and genuinely universalised political stands. Most women in general, and ecofeminists in particular, do not have great difficulty applying concern to strangers and others outside their immediate kin community. Mutuality as an ethical basis is no more fragile than the 'objective' basis of democratic 'rights' legitimated by the polity of men. As ecofeminist Marti Kheel has observed in an environmental ethics context: the emotional substrate of caring is prerequisite for a rights- based ethic to function at all - an invisible 'feminine' underbelly, whose social labour makes possible the public world of fraternal relations.[31]

Biehl's primary misgiving over ecofeminist 'immanence' is that its ontology is cyclic rather than progressive and she feels this goes against a transcendent liberatory politics. But the logic of ecology is also cyclic, which is why human intentionality cutting a linear path to its 'unreasoned' ends leaves so much destruction behind it. Moreover, looking at Green priorities, a trajectory of pure subjective choice is rationalist illusion: 'an embourgeoisement of freedom' to borrow Bookchin's insightful phrase. The freedom of some, is always enjoyed at the expense of others. Freedom was an important piece of ideology at a time when the classical liberal notion of human agency occurred to the North. But democratic citizenship, really fraternal emancipation, was only ever gained at the cost of women tacitly absorbed in social provisioning through the hidden sexual contract.[32]

On a global scale, the freedom that men and a few women in a postmodern commodity culture believe they enjoy, still rests on the labours of a mostly off-shore underclass, of women food growers and silicon slaves. As Commoner told it: there's no such thing as a free lunch. We live in a material world and freedom has material parameters. Beyond women's labours, stands the resource substrate of nature, next in the chain of appropriation. In order to arrive at a Green society, where gender equity is global and a sustainable reciprocity is established with nature, we may have to rethink the unbridled Western fetish for the transcendent. True freedom involves limits: an acceptance of our embodied condition. Without awareness of this, the most enlightened citizenry is as free as infant children are.

[1]Copyright:Ariel Salleh. Adapted from Ecofeminism as Politics: nature, Marx and the postmodern (London: Zed Press, forthcoming 1996).

[2]Murray Bookchin, Toward an Ecological Society (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1980). On p.15 of the 1979 Introduction, feminism is commended for recognising the originary domination, though no woman author is cited. See also p.40. On p.265, Bookchin acknowledges damage done to the women's liberation movement by the Left and specifically by Marxism as 'bourgeois sociology'.

[3]Murray Bookchin, Post Scarcity Anarchism (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1971), p.92.

[4]Murray Bookchin, The Ecology of Freedom (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1982) rev. 1991, p.121 italics added.

[5]Ibid., p.120 italics added.

[6]Ibid., p.120 italics added.

[7]Ibid., p.122.

[8]Remaking Society: Pathways to a Green Future (Boston: South End Press, 1990), p.182.

[9]Ariel Salleh, 'Deeper than Deep Ecology', Environmental Ethics, Vol.6 (1984) p.340.

[10]The world's first Green Party is now recognised as the United Tasmania Group formed in Australia, March 1972. The New Zealand Values Party appeared one month later.

[11]Biehl, p.1.

[12]Maria Mies, Patriarchy and Accumulation (London: Zed, 1987); Vandana Shiva, Staying Alive: Women, Ecology and Development (London: Zed, 1989); Ariel Salleh, 'Epistemology and the Metaphors of Production', Studies in the Humanities Vol. 15 (1988).

[13]The Ecology of Freedom, p.121.

[14]Evelyn Fox Keller, Reflections on Gender and Science, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985); Sandra Harding, The Science Question in Feminism (Ithica: Cornell University Press, 1986); Donna Haraway, Primate Visions (New York: Routledge, 1990). There is a useful summary in Benyamin Lichtenstein, 'Feminist Epistemology: a thematic review', Thesis Eleven, No. 21 (1987). See also the foundational critiques of rationalism by Carol Gilligan, In a Different Voice (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984); Genevieve Lloyd, The Man of Reason (London: Routledge, 1984); Luce Irigaray Speculum of the Other Woman (Ithica: Cornell University Press, 1985).

[15]Rousseau's Emile, as quoted in Carol Pateman, The Sexual Contract (Cambridge: Polity, 1988), pp.97-99.

[16]Ibid., p.216.

[17]Biehl, p.13. The reference is to Susan Griffin, op. cit., p.226.

[18]The Ecology of Freedom, p.276.

[19]Ibid., p.33. The reference is to Peter Kropotkin, Mutual Aid (Montreal: Black Rose

Books, 1914) and Ernst Bloch, Das Prinzip Hoffnung (Frankfurt: Suhrkampf, 1977).

[20]Biehl, op.cit., p.15.

[21]Ibid., p.132 italics added.

[22]Ibid., p.134.

[23]This literature includes - Susan Moller Okin, Women in Western Political Thought (Princeton University Press, 1979); Mary O'Brien, The Politics of Reproduction (London: Routledge, 1981); Nancy Hartsock, Money, Sex and Power (New York: Longman, 1983); Kathy Ferguson, The Feminist Case Against Bureaucracy (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984); Carole Pateman, The Sexual Contract (Cambridge: Polity, 1988); Ngaire Naffine, Law and the Sexes (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1990).

[24]Biehl, Ibid., p.136. The reference is to Ynestra King. 'Healing the Wounds', in Diamond and Orenstein, op. cit.

[25]Ibid., p.153.

[26]Biehl, p.150.

[27]Salleh (1984), op.cit., p.340.

[28]Biehl, p.149.

[29]See 'Class, Race, and Gender Discourse in the Eco-feminism/Deep Ecology Debate', op.cit.

[30]Steve Chase (ed), Defending the Earth (Boston: South End Press, 1991), pp.83-84.

[31]Marti Kheel, 'The Liberation of Nature: a circular affair?', Environmental Ethics, Vol. 7 (1985).

[32]For a detailed account of this claim: Ariel Salleh, 'Nature, Woman. Labour. Capital: Living the Deepest Contradiction' in M. O'Connor (ed), Is Capitalism Sustainable? (New York: Guilford, 1994).

MULTIPLE CONNECTIONS; ANARCHISMS AND FEMINISMS

Michelle Fraser

This paper is an attempt to bring together anarchist and feminist ideas in a way which reflects the potential that each set of political ideas/methods/values have to complement one another. This is no mean feat, as both feminism and anarchism are broad categories of political thought and action. A wide range of individuals who often differ in positions on many basic issues are attracted to these movements. Feminism since the 1970's has taken a number of different paths in its approach to social change, these approaches vary in terms of revolutionary potential. Although no-one would doubt that anarchism is revolutionary in nature, it is not necessarily a unified political theory. There are a variety of different types of anarchism such as anarcho-syndicalism anarchist-communism and eco-anarchism. These names usually reflect the differences in strategies and priorities that each style of anarchism takes in a similar way to the labels which feminism has developed. The major categories that have been used to define different forms of feminism to date are; radical, liberal (which I do not intend to discuss) and socialist feminism. More recently post structural feminism has emerged as an approach to feminism which has the potential to influence all of these categories. It is arguably a very useful form of feminism when aligned with an anarchist lifestyle. What I intend to do is highlight some of the ways in which self defined anarcha-feminists have so far approached the project of integrating their own forms of anarchism and feminism. I will also contribute some ideas about how current feminist theory and practice can contribute to the anarchist vision.

One point I would like to emphasise in discussing the above feminist categories is that they can be misleading. It is useful to know what each of these names generally represent and how they contribute to social change, but most feminists do not sit wholly in one category or another. Many feminists, particularly those influenced by anarchism are eclectic, taking some ideas from each of these feminisms. This is why you can get a group of women together who

all see themselves as both anarchists and feminists and yet they disagree significantly over many basic issues.

My first step in this task is to offer a brief overview of what anarchism is likely to represent to those attracted to its principles. One of the main contentions of anarchism is its objection to the power currently exercised through conventional politics. It rejects any higher form of rule, authority or government than that which proceeds directly from the governed themselves.

> anarchism is the doctrine which contends that the government is the source of most our social troubles and that there are viable alternative forms of social organisation. (Woodcock 1977, p.11)

In practice, anarchism places value upon creating social structures that reject hierarchies and foster both individuality and collectivity. It also favours a range of other social features, such as egalitarianism, voluntarism, decentralism and mutual aid. As I have already contended, there are differing forms of anarchism, which can reflect differences in modes of association , such as the difference between anarcho-syndicalism and its basis in urban settings and the trade-union movement and eco-anarchism, which advocates small-scale, decentralised communities and cooperation and harmony with nature. Anarchism as a political theory is unusual in its ability to encompass both 'post modernist' propensities and many values of liberal individualism (Pepper 1994, pp. 154-155). These features of anarchism reflect its diversity as a political movement and potential complexity. Anarchism's strength is particularly as a theory of organisation as well as a range of utopian visions and ideals about how society could be in the future. The attention that practicing anarchists pay to living their politics through lifestyles such as squatting , communal living, using alternative trading systems and activism is paralleled in some feminist circles, and is embodied in the phrase "The personal is political".

"The personal is political" is the most well known slogan of the feminist movement, and is one of the founding assumptions of contemporary feminist theory and practice. The basis of this slogan is that much of what women experience as oppression is constituted in her personal experience of human relationships. It goes beyond the values of a liberal society, which assert that women may become "equal" to men through legislative change and equal participation in the public sphere (which is what liberal feminism aims to achieve). This slogan has also been taken up by other radical movements and bears much relevance to how anarchist people choose to live their lives. The well-known anarchist Emma Goldman was writing about women's emancipation from an anarchist perspective in the early twentieth century, long

before this slogan was taken up, yet much of what she was saying reflected this concern. She states in her article on Woman Suffrage that women are misled to demand equal rights in American society, as freedom and equality in a state system is an illusion (1969 version, p.p.196-198). Her argument is ultimately that women need to develop their freedom and independence themselves, rather than relying on the state system. As this was long before there was any notion of "consciousness raising" and women sharing their experiences to identify common oppression, she was unable to provide the "nitty-gritty" of how this was to be done. Her contribution lies in the recognition that women cannot gain true emancipation simply by joining an oppressive system. This viewpoint was taken up again in the 1970's by radical and socialist feminists.

Radical feminism has been identified as a feminist approach that critiques society in terms of anarchist ideals (Kornegger, 1975,p.32). It focuses on patriarchy as the most oppressive feature of society. All other inequalities can be seen in terms of men's desire to control women. The nature of patriarchy is to define women as the 'other' and all qualities categorised as feminine and the way in which women experience the world are denigrated as second-rate to men. Social institutions are regarded as having been created by men to foster their interests. Seen in these terms, all relationships in society and social institutions must be radically altered to realise the true liberation of women. Social hierarchy and authoritarianism are rejected as male forms of control and oppression. Radical feminists have consequently developed strategies to create alternatives. Women are urged to create new structures and forms of organisation which permit women to work together in non-exploitative ways.

This form of feminism has been strongly linked to anarchism as it critiques many of the same social structures and institutions and offers a similar approach to radical social change. Peggy Kornegger has made these links in her article "Anarchism: the feminist connection". She believes that women frequently speak and act as "intuitive" anarchists, women's impulses toward collective work and small, leaderless groups are anarchistic, but in most cases have not been called by that name (1971, p.33). From an explicitly anarchist position she suggests that women can lead the way to revolution

> It is women who now hold the key to new conceptions of revolution, women who realise that revolution can no longer mean the seizure of power or the domination of one group over another - under any circumstances, for any length of time. It is domination itself that must be abolished ...The presence of hierarchy and authoritarian mind-set threatens our human and planetary existence. Global liberation and libertarian

politics have become necessary, not just utopian pipe dreams. (1975 p.31).

Kornegger is particularly concerned with using anarchist tactics and methods in the ongoing struggle for revolution. She outlines three important areas/strategies for change;
1) educational (sharing of ideas and experiences),
2) economic/political, the realm of direct action and "purposeful illegality" and
3) personal/political, which is vitally connected to the previous two strategies and may take the organisational form of the anarchist affinity group.
This approach is very successful in bringing together feminism and anarchism to the enhancement of one other, approaching both the realms of visions and process.

Some aspects of radical feminist politics, which flourished in the 1970's , have become unfashionable due to newer feminist influences and theories. Despite this current re-assessment of radical feminism among women of all feminist colours (including many anarchist women) it has contributed much to radical social movements generally and anarchism in particular.

Current criticisms of radical feminism are mainly concerning two assumptions of this style of feminism. The first is that it assumes that there is an "essential" femininity that is repressed under patriarchy and can only be reclaimed through the empowerment of women involving complete separation from male culture. The second criticism is that this form of feminism prioritizes gender over other forms of social oppression such as race, class, sexual preference and assumes that all women are unified in their priorities and ultimately, visions. Many women have rejected this type of feminism because they have found it too proscriptive and simplistic. Anarchist women currently tend to be more diverse in their feminist politics. Most would still be committed to the forms of organisation and tactics that were put forward by women like Kornegger in the 1970's, but many are now influenced by ideas which have been called "socialist feminism" and "post structural feminism".

Anarchists are often suspicious of socialism. This is because socialists tend to believe that the state can be used as a tool to create an egalitarian, utopian society, which is of course, rejected by anarchists. On the other hand, socialism is a term which has been used in relation to anarchism, for example the term "libertarian socialist". Socialist feminism is useful to anarchists in that it provides a strong critique of gender relationships which has at its basis the assumption that gender is socially constructed. This theory focuses on radical social change as a solution to current gender inequalities. Anarchists would tend to agree with this proposition although they would not agree with the solutions that socialism proposes. The other important feature

of this type of feminism, is that it does not prioritise gender inequalities over race and class inequalities. It sees all of these forms of oppression as equally valid and moves away from the radical feminist belief that all oppression is created through patriarchy (although patriarchy is still considered a vital issue). Feminism has tended to move more in this direction as it has been criticised by women of colour for being racist and prioritising white women's issues over those of black women. Strong connections can be made between these understandings in feminism and anarchist thought. Recently there have been attempts by anarchists to develop theoretical models which pay attention to the complex dynamics of race, sex class and authority (and many other forms of oppression) , with the intention of creating strategies for social change. Liberating Theory (1986) is one attempt by female and male anarchists to do this. It makes a strong point very early on that "...activist theory must help its advocates overcome their own oppressive socialisation's." (p. 5 1986) It is this emphasis on socialisation and the individual's responsibility to look at themselves as well as society that is prominent in both of these approaches.

Anarchist individualism is often regarded (by anarchists) as differing from conventional 'liberal" individualism in that it recognises the importance of taking responsibility for one's actions. Anarchist women are demanding that the men within this movement examine their own behaviour and actions and how it contributes to male privilege in their own social situation. Feminism has provided a clearer understanding of the ways in which women are systematically oppressed by men. There are many examples of how anarchist men continue to disregard their own advantages and the ways in which they dominate events. At the recent conference in Sydney (1995) there was much dissatisfaction with the attitudes of men towards the concerns of women attending. Women often feel trivialised in these situations and men often choose not to take responsibility for the subtle ways in which women are silenced or ignored. Despite the popularity of the only workshop that dealt with feminism (60+ people attended), women left the conference angry and frustrated. This is not an isolated incident. In a recent report of an anarchist conference in London in Bad Attitude (Issue 7, 1995) "Manarchy in the UK" the writer says

> the overall experience I and many other women had was that much of the organisation and many of the male participants were gender blind. Dismantling patriarchy is one of the revolutionary issues, surely?

The problem continues to be that gender relations are such that women experience oppression within all social movements which include male participants.

Explanations as to why this continues to be the case have been offered to some extent by the previously mentioned feminist approaches. Currently there are important developments in feminism which are dealing more and more with the intricacies of gender relations, power and notions of "human nature" which anarchism can learn a great deal from. Post structural feminism is largely a consequence of the broader philosophical movement called post structuralism (also called post modernism) . This approach to feminism is the result of a combination of forces, the first being the "identity crisis" which feminism has suffered in recent years due to the growing awareness of the range of differing and often contradictory needs and identities which have been expressed by women. There is a strong history of feminists of very different political positions coming together on single issue campaigns which are seen as central to most women's experience. An example of this situation is in the area of reproductive rights where access to abortion has long been regarded as a key issue. This focus on abortion as the most important issue for all women has been criticised by black women and lesbians as both racist and hetero sexist. This is because it is regarded as privileging the concerns of some (white and heterosexual) women over others. Black women and lesbians may in fact be more concerned with changing social policies which discriminate against their choice to have children. Thus white women may want access to abortion , black women may want to end sterilisation programs imposed upon them (through racist social engineering) and lesbians may want access to sperm clinics (which are often only accessible to middle-class, "nuclear" families). The result of these conflicts is that feminists are now asking the question, what is a woman? It seems that fighting for anything under the banner " women" has become outmoded.

The second significant area of influence for post structural feminism is the area of French theory, which includes Foucault and his theories of power and subjectivity. His ideas have been influential to feminism as they are particularly useful in explaining power relations between men and women and other non-institutionalised (ie. non-state) power imbalances. Power is regarded as positive and negative in that it exists in all human exchanges and is not in itself a possession, it is also seen to be very hidden in these exchanges. His theory has also been used to examine how our subjectivities are constructed; it looks at how we rebel and how we comply to social forces and examines how change comes about.

Post structural feminism is also influenced by semiotics, particularly de Saussure's theory of the sign, which identifies two components of the sign : signifier (sound or written image) and signified (meaning). The two components are related to each other in an arbitrary way and the

meaning of the sign is not fixed but rather relational. Each sign derives its meaning from its difference from other signs in the language chain. The signifier 'whore' for example does not have an intrinsic meaning except through its difference to other signifiers of womanhood, such as 'virgin' and 'mother'. Language is also understood as being constituted through competing discourses (which are competing ways of giving meaning to the world) and of organising social institutions and processes. An example of this is the way in which the actions of a political activist can be labelled by the powerful legal discourse as 'criminal', with all the negative connotations attached while at the same time being regarded as committed, noble or just by the activist's peers. The terms 'terrorist' and 'freedom fighter' have very different connotations but may be used for the same person. These principles are important because they make language a social phenomenon and a site of political struggle (Weedon 1987, p. 23). Feminist post structuralism takes the further step in its use of post structural theories of language, subjectivity , social processes and institutions, in its commitment to understanding existing power relations and to identify areas and strategies for change.

This feminist approach (and in fact post structuralism generally) also challenges some deeply held anarchist beliefs about human nature. It is a move away from the liberal -humanist belief (which is the philosophy which has had the most influence over our current social and political institutions), that people are intrinsically rational and unified beings who are non-contradictory in nature and in control of the meaning of their lives. Anarchism is a philosophy which tends to regard people as having certain intrinsic qualities, such as cooperation, for example Alexander Berkman in *The ABC of Anarchy* (1929). It also sometimes makes the mistake of assuming that we have common understandings and shared values. Post structuralism rejects humanism, and any notion of 'human nature' because it sees subjectivity as constructed through language and discourse . Foucault has suggested that we are all a blank surface to be inscribed (1974). Very recently Grosz (1994) has theorised subjectivity as a mobius strip, where mind and body, nature and culture (and so on) all run into each other. Another objection to humanism is its tendency to homogenise human experience, goals and visions. One persons utopia may be very different from another's.

In other words, anarchists have also been influenced by a very dominant western discourse on what it means to be human, which may in actuality subvert our attempts to change (ourselves and society). Post structural feminism gives post structuralism the political edge to 'deconstruct' anarchism by making explicit some of the problematic assumptions of anarchist theory. It is also concerned with the centrality of individual experience and action in a way which can be very useful to anarchists because it does explore the intricacies of power

relationships and it does have the theoretical potential to challenge and subvert current power relationships in all forms. The two disadvantages of this form of feminism for feminists and anarchists alike is that it discards our precarious humanist beliefs and as it is very academic (and arguably elitist) in nature, it is often inaccessible to those who have not been educated in its language.

This review of feminist theory and anarchism has tried to offer an exploration of a critical area of philosophical theory for those who believe in radical social change. Anarchists can sometimes be hostile to certain forms of knowledge, on the grounds that they are 'elitist'. I believe that knowledge **is** power and the problem of elitism is more a mechanism which our hegemonic power structure uses very effectively to limit knowledge to a privileged few. This is why I have attempted to present these theories in a straightforward manner. Feminism has a lot to offer the anarchist lifestyle (and vice versa) and it is important to maintain an open mind to these ideas as they can enable all of us to broaden our perspective and offer us greater possibilities for activism and social change. It is also important to share this knowledge and to pass on information (a well recognised anarchist principle) as much as possible. This is one way of subverting or challenging the barriers (or power imbalances) implicit in current forms of language. Finally, I have wanted to show that an understanding of feminism (in all its variety) contributes an essential component to living an anarchist lifestyle, just as I believe that anarchism offers many feminists the radical edge they are looking for in their lifestyles and visions.

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Feminism and Anarchism: Towards a Politics of Engagement

Krysti Guest

Thinking through the possible relationships between feminisms and anarchisms involves a commitment to analysing the similarities and differences between these two emancipatory political frameworks and identifying what insights each movement could offer the other. That task is, of course, beyond the scope of any article or book. It involves a dynamic series of dialogues where issues are debated and reformed depending upon different contexts, a process which recognises that "theory" and "practice" are not separate activities but interdependent and evolving forms of knowledge.

This paper is a contribution to that process and is specifically my response to the anarchist "Visions of Freedom" conference in Sydney 1995. That conference left me extremely angry and frustrated at the exclusion and ignorance of feminist knowledges within the general conference proceedings. This was particularly bewildering given that there were clearly many people attending the conference committed to critical political theory and feminist views. What this disparity highlights is that there is very much a dominant brand of anarchism which is never clearly articulated and which is hostile to the insights and challenges of (at least) feminist theory. During the conference's plenary session, I delivered a condemnatory feminist critique of this dominant form of anarchism. This paper is an attempt to articulate more clearly that critique and will hopefully serve to pry open spaces for a range of political debates, which anarchism so clearly lacks and so desperately needs.

A Sketch of Feminist Political Theory

Revolutionary feminism is an analytical framework and movement committed to dismantling the institutions which politically, economically, sexually and psychically oppress all women. Revolutionary feminism recognises that women are not all the same and that a uniform experience of women's oppression is illusory. Rather, oppression on the grounds of sex operates differently according to a woman's race, class and sexuality, and if the oppression of <u>all</u> women is to cease, then the interconnected structures of patriarchy, transnational capitalism and Western imperialism must be fought against equally.

Feminism's most significant contribution to political theory is the recognition that political oppression does not only operate in the so-called "public sphere" of paid work and government, but thrives within the so-called "private" sphere of pleasure, personal life and family.

Politicising the "private" has had important implications for revolutionary political theory. Issues such as personal relations, sexual violence, housework, the preparation of food and childcare have become primary sites of political struggle rather than assumed supports for "real" political work. Consequentially, political theories which see the eradication of "real" social ills occurring primarily via the big-bang apocalypse of "the revolution" are revealed as anti-feminist. Although drastic social change through a a political and economic revolution is essential, it is only one moment in a continuum of political action aimed at changing the status quo. The need to ameliorate oppressive social structures now, by providing state funded women's refuges or community childcare for example, is not a poor relation to a revolutionary process but an essential part of that process. If microscopic and macroscopic social change do not develop equally, then most women will neither have the time, ability or even be alive to participate. Any subsequent revolutionary political structure will be steeped in sexism and the revolution against patriarchy will fail.

A Sketch of Anarchist Political Principles

Feminist interest in anarchism has been aroused by the traditional principles of anarchist political theory. Of most significance is that rather than focussing on one specific authoritarian structure (such as capitalism), anarchism identifies authoritarian structures in general as the key instrument of oppression. This allows the possibility that equal recognition can be granted to the different forms of oppression which specific authoritarian systems create. Equal recognition of different oppressions avoids socialism's premise that capitalist class relations are the ultimate form of oppression through which all other oppressive forces are filtered. It is impossible to understand, and therefore change, the complexities of women's oppression (or racial, homosexual oppression) if class and capitalism are ultimately seen as the origins of injustice. A feminist relationship to anarchism would mean exploring authoritarian structures as fundamental to women's oppression and an anarchist relationship to feminism would mean recognising that patriarchy is a paradigmatic example of authoritarian structures.

Anarchism's refusal to adopt authoritarian means to achieve non-authoritarian ends recognises that revolutionary change is a continuous process. Revolutionary society has to begin being forged today if it is to benefit the majority and not merely empower the minority in a vanguardist party. This parallels feminism's focus on politicising the "private" and "personal" spheres and opens up spaces for debate of the possibilities and limitations of both theories.

Finally, the principle of non-hierarchical organisation reflects the feminist insight that current social, political and economic hierarchies are gendered (as well as race and sexuality determined), in that they overtly

and subtly reproduce patterns of domination which oppress women. Non-hierarchical and decentralised organisation creates the possibility of allowing differently oppressed social groups to engage in a productive manner. The form that an effective non-hierarchical organisation would take is extremely complex to think through. I will not attempt to do this here (Rob Sparrow's paper in this collection provides a model with which to begin working) except insofar as to say that anarchist theory should not aim to assimilate feminist political theory. Assimilation policies only ever reduce the specificities of different oppressions to the specificities of the dominant group.

Some General Thoughts on Prevalent Forms of Anarchism

Although the above sketch of the similarities between anarchism and feminism presents a very promising picture, my experiences in the past eight years have overwhelmingly been of anarchism trailing the baggage of an extremely limiting split personality. There are political activists who claim anarchism and who are very committed to their politics, political theory and political action. On the other hand there are many people who claim anarchism, or more simply the anarchist symbol A, as a fashionable adjunct to their oh-so-alternative "counter-cultural" life. This brand of anarchism eschews collective organisation and rigorous political analysis for more freewheeling, zany and individualistic social actions or events.

Well excuse me, but I am a little weary of people presenting "anarchist" fashion statements or dope driven "anarchist" dinner parties as incisive forms of political action. Although cultural expression is clearly enmeshed within political and social change, what I have seen continually occur is that this brand of anarchist lifestyle politics does not form part of a movement but becomes the movement. Difficult political discussions and organised political activism are thereby insidiously framed as somehow "non-anarchist" or just not groovy enough. By constantly privileging cultural expression, the revolutionary possibilities of anarchism are inevitably emptied out leaving only an individualistic and ultimately conservative lifestyle choice.

The "Visions of Freedom" Conference

From a feminist perspective I believe it is of the utmost importance to work through why anarchism seems to attract or produce this tendency towards individualistic lifestyle politics, as this tendency makes anarchism irrelevant to other organised social movements. At the "Visions of Freedom" conference, this tendency towards conservative individualism arose in a number of guises.

My central criticism is that within the dominant views expressed at the conference, there was web of resistance to serious political debate and engagement. This was of course not always present, but there seemed to be a dominant assumption that what anarchism "is" is somehow self-evident and does not require a great deal of explanation. There was little desire to work through what the defining concepts of traditional anarchism are and how effectively these concepts work towards lasting change in society,

particularly when compared with other revolutionary theories. There was almost no discussion at all of how these concepts have been affected by the onslaught of diverse emancipatory movements such as feminism, anti-racism, environmentalism, and lesbian and gay movements.

My puzzlement over this lack of rigour was brought into sharp relief when at several points during the conference, some people seemed to be of the view that anarchism was not even a theory of larger structural change but merely a way of living one's individual life. During one paper, a group of people were staunchly opposed to the idea that an anarchist organisation would work towards changing people's views. The problem appeared to be that there was an inherent violence and curtailment of freedom of choice in trying to change opinions.

Teasing out this opposition is revealing. It is not a new argument that people's beliefs are socially or ideologically constructed. Therefore, if we disagree with current, dominant ideological systems (which as anarchists should be a given) then one should be working towards changing these structures and hence people's beliefs. What seems to have been the real difficulty is that many people believe that when one identifies as an anarchist, somehow all the shackles of ideological construction wither away and one becomes spontaneously free and equal. Hence any attempt to change this is to commit violence and to limit freedom.

It is extremely naive to view ideology as ever withering away. Values, belief systems and political theories are always determined by a particular ideological and material position and the ideology of anarchism is just as socially constructed as the ideology of capitalism. Otherwise we would see just as many anarchist men organising against violence against women ("girls stuff") as we do against police brutality ("real politics"). The ideology which drives the view that casting off the shackles of our dominant social beliefs somehow makes as "naturally free and equal" is the ideology of eighteenth century western liberal humanism, which tells the story that we are all born as equal individuals in control of our destiny. Wrong of course, and such anti-materialist, liberal individualism is supposed to be in opposition to traditional anarchist theory and action. Despite this, the fundamental tenets of this particular view of freedom, spontaneity and individualism continually frame much anarchist thought.

Excluding Visions of Freedom

The issue of "exclusion" provided a significant channel through which liberal ideology arose in conference discussions. During Rob Sparrow's paper on anarchist organisation, there was palpable horror from many people at the idea that part of defining what anarchism "is" is to define what values and principles are not anarchist and hence would be excluded from an anarchist organisation. Again, it is a banal and obvious point that if anarchism is opposed to authoritarian structures, it should not be many things: it should not be misogynist, fascist, homophobic etc. However, this point kept getting lost by many people beneath their fiery commitment to an abstract notion of "freedom". As I've said, ideology does not cease

to operate by invoking the magic word "freedom". The ideology of a freedom which claims to exclude no-one and tolerate a plurality of conflicting viewpoints is merely liberal pluralism, the status quo. Liberal pluralism ostensibly gives everyone equal rights and freedom of speech, but in fact excludes all but the dominant point of view by failing to take critical perspectives seriously, if not overtly vilifying them.

True to the repressive tolerance of liberal pluralism, particular groups were consistently excluded from the conference. There was almost no sustained discussion of race issues, particularly indigenous peoples' issues, during the plenary sessions and very little during the seminars. In a society underpinned by blatant racism, that is appalling. Racism is not an optional extra for political analysis but must be continually woven within every single political discussion. And white groups should never expect indigenous speakers to bother interacting with them unless a real commitment to engage with the oppression indigenous people face is displayed.

As was so powerfully described during the final plenary session, queer theory was also effectively excluded during the conference, not least by the display of homophobic imagery. To defend the existence of such imagery by the ritual incantation of freedom of speech, the most fundamental of all liberal premises, fails to understand that images and speech are fundamental tools of oppression and that it makes a difference if a negative image is against an oppressed group or against a dominant social group.

Very few women spoke during plenary debates or seminars (except at the seminar on feminism). Women's lack of confidence in public speaking is not because women are somehow naturally more passive or acquiescent, but because patriarchy teaches women to feel less confident in taking up public space and putting forward ideas. This is not an individual problem but an institutional problem which has to be dealt with though institutional means, such as affirmative action on the speaking list. On any conference panel, there should be at least one woman, if not an equal number or more women speaking. If few women are interested in presenting papers, than that simply raises the question again of why is anarchism failing to attract the feminist movement which is phenomenally more powerful, articulate and active in Australia than any anarchist movement has ever been.

Anarchism's Political Disengagement

But these overt forms of silencing aside, the most infuriating and extraordinary form of exclusion was the absolute refusal of the dominant voices at the conference to engage with critical perspectives. Failing to engage with critical ideas is a refusal by the person or group criticised to take responsibility for the implications of the critique on their position. It is the essence of repressive tolerance, in that a marginalised group may speak but will have no hope of changing the power structures of the dominant group for the dominant group are refusing to engage with their demands. To make it crystal clear to anyone who has missed the basic point, women, indigenous peoples, peoples from non-English speaking backgrounds, lesbian women and gay men are all oppressed social groups, whether it be in an anarchist organisation or

within a capitalist bureaucracy. The word "anarchism" is not a magic wand that suddenly makes all people equal. If anarchism wishes to become relevant to those groups and flourish as a political movement, rather than basically remaining the province of white, heterosexual men, then self scrutiny and critical engagement with analyses presented by those groups is essential.

The seminar on "Violence, Militarism and the State", a seminar ostensibly on institutionalised violence, makes these points obvious. I really would have thought that surely by now it was no longer contentious that women are by far the greatest targets for institutionalised physical violence, either in their daily lives or during military actions, with violence against indigenous women being by far the worst. Violence against women is condoned by the huge percentage of men who commit it, by the law, by the police, by the media and by social norms. A 1995 survey reveals that 30% of people in Australia still think women "cry rape". That's one third of the country. That's pretty institutionalised. The fact that violence against women, which includes terrorism, beatings, kidnapping, false imprisonment, rape and murder, is not understood as the most prevalent form of torture is merely one sign of its institutionalised acceptance.

Despite this, however, there was almost no gender specific discussion at all during the "Violence, Militarism and the State" seminar (I didn't hear any in fact, but apparently one of the speakers said something in the ten minutes I missed). This extraordinary exclusion of violence against women renders the analysis during that seminar complicit with the perpetuation of such violence. Failing to speak about the most prevalent form of institutionalised violence in this society undermines and makes invisible the centrality of violence against women and renders it merely an optional extra to discuss after "real" violence (presumably by the "State" or the "military") has been considered. As one of the seminar participants so aptly snapped at me: "[T]hat woman spoke about domestic violence yesterday. I came to hear about anarchism".

Although my comments on these issues were acknowledged by some of the seminar speakers as true, there was no attempt at all to engage their analysis with what I had said. It was simply yet another interesting point about violence. But placing violence against women in the equation of violence, militarism and the State fundamentally changes any political analysis of these issues. For a start, one can no longer name the enemy only as a nebulous concept of the State or military institutions - one has to start pointing the finger at men. And that does not mean that men are not socially constructed and that the military industrial complex or the multifaceted State do not perpetuate the norms which permit violence against women. But it does mean that men as a group have to start taking responsibility for men's violence (including talking about it in seminars) and devising ways to stop it. Traditional anarchism's analysis of State power and the police will also be forced to shift if violence against women is seriously considered. Do anarchists support women turning to the police or State funded refuges when they are escaping violence by men? Some anarchist traditions are also committed to the principle of non-violence, within the analysis that violent means produce violent ends. Does that mean that self-defence by a woman against a violent man is "unanarchist"? All these issues could have and should have been teased out and considered for they will fundamentally affect definitions of anarchist political theory. They are not merely

"interesting views" and if they continue to be seen as such, anarchism will remain basically irrelevant to half of society.

Anarchism without feminism is a partial, crippled and ultimately oppressive tradition. However, I still feel hopeful enough to say that there are many principles within both feminism and anarchism from which both theories could learn and develop. But any relationship between these two emancipatory frameworks cannot be assumed: it must be forged within concrete political struggle and rigorous political debate. Empty gestures towards nebulous concepts of individualistic freedom totally miss the point. I look forward, tentatively, to a politics of engagement.

'Free speech' : whose speech, whose freedom?

Suzanne Fraser & Jake Rance

'Free speech' has long been granted a privileged theoretical and practical position within anarchist circles; a talisman of individual and communal liberty against the perceived authoritarian and censorious instincts of a regulatory and repressive state. 'Free speech', along with 'equality', 'freedom' and 'self-determination', has come to symbolise a central tenet of anarchism; an iconic status beyond reproach and critical examination. Indeed, the position of an anarchist questioning the rhetoric of 'free speech' might seem at best confused and contradictory, and at worst, heretical and 'non-anarchist'. Anarchism's will to freedom, its seemingly unquestioning celebration of 'free expression', has ironically acted to censor, or at least circumscribe, debate which seeks to challenge and problematise received notions of 'free speech'. This paper hopes to somewhat redress this imbalance.

In asking critical questions of 'free speech', in problematising its consistent invocation amongst both anarchists and the wider community, we are not erring on the side of censorship. We are not raising our anarchist hands in a gesture of despair and defeat, only to declare that we were wrong all along, that indeed censorship is the answer. Rather we want to question what 'free speech' means in a society such as ours where inequality is manifest not merely in economic, political and social terms, but is also interwoven within the realm of speech. We want to question what 'free speech' means in the political and economic context of Australian capitalism where speech takes on the role of a commodity that people buy and sell, where some are paid to speak and write, while others pay to listen and read. We want to ask what 'free speech' means in a society where 'free speech' primarily means the free expression of ideas and opinions in support of the prevailing system of power and privilege; where, as Chomsky suggests, public consent is *manufactured* not volunteered. In uncritically calling for 'free speech' in our current climate just whose speech are we protecting, and just how 'free' is it? Or are we merely playing an

Orwellian game of *Animal Farm* where we are all free to speak, only some of us have loudspeakers and others have gags?

Our questions with regard to 'free speech' necessarily lead us to consider the nature of human subjectivity. How do each of us acquire subjectivity (consciousness, sense of self, perspective)? Some people believe that our subjectivity is largely innate. These people believe, for instance, that sexual preference is inborn, that some of us are born feminine and some masculine, that some of us are just natural born leaders. Most anarchists tend to shy away from this view as it offers a theory of humanity that provides little hope of change. After all, how can we aim for the absence of institutionalised hierarchy if some of us are innately and irredeemably leaders and others followers? But, if we aren't born with our subjectivity, from where does it arise? Where does our sense of ourselves, our desires and needs spring from? In the main, anarchists tend to operate on the assumption that subjectivity is learnt. Hence, boys like trucks because they are taught to, and girls play with dolls for the same reason. In this sense we are all products of our particular social and cultural environment and we all inevitably internalise some of the values that perpetuate inequality and oppression in our society. Once we acknowledge the proposition that our sense of ourselves, our sense of perspective, even our experience of sexual desire, is primarily the result of our interaction with the social world, then it raises important concerns regarding the notion of 'free speech'. For what is evident is that one of the primary means we have of being social(ised), of establishing a sense of identity, of endeavouring to understand the world, is through speech. Speech, as language or *discourse*, must thus be understood as one of the primary structures through which our subjectivity is constructed, and by which we all necessarily participate in social life and its associated inequalities. But what do we mean by discourse and how does it function to construct subjectivity?

Words and language hold power; they not only reflect the world but actively create, shape and control it. Language is more than a means of communicating an idea, or reflecting upon reality, it also makes possible ideas and realities. Concepts of 'madness', 'perversion', and 'the criminal', for example, are labels, *words*, which hold extraordinary power in our society and have fostered an historical tradition of institutionalisation and incarceration. In this sense language, as representation and knowledge, as 'discourse', *is* power. Language must be understood as not merely the reflection or translation of systems of power but as necessarily constitutive of, and enmeshed within, their operation. There can be no power relation without there being a corresponding field of knowledge and mode of representation, nor any knowledge and act of representation which does not presuppose and enable at the same time power relations. French philosopher and critic, Michel Foucault, demonstrates that within the context of the mental institution, for example, the power relation between doctor and 'patient', the power of a

doctor to represent someone as 'mad' (and institutionalise them) is only possible given a socially and historically prescribed field of knowledge about 'madness': *psychiatry*. In return the knowledge of psychiatry has historically borne with it a set of power relations between psychiatrists and 'the mad', and more generally, 'the sane' (*us*) and 'the mad' (*them*). Similarly so, the power relation between the penal system and 'the criminal', or more generally, between 'the innocent' (*us*) and 'the criminal' (*them*), can only function because of both a set of knowledges about criminality: *the law*.[1]

Once the power of language as representation and knowledge is recognised as such, then notions of 'free speech' become increasingly problematic. In our society certain discourses, certain forms of knowledge, are clearly privileged over others: the 'medico-scientific' discourse of psychiatry over the 'unreasoned' discourse of the mad, the 'objective' discourse of law over the 'self-interested' discourse of criminals, the 'rational' discourse of patriarchy over the 'irrational' discourse of femininity, the 'realism' of economic rationalism over the 'idealism' of environmentalism, the 'respectable' discourse of home owners over the 'dubious' discourse of squatters, and so forth. Increasingly it becomes apparent that a system of power operates within our society to block, prohibit and invalidate particular discourses whilst privileging, promoting and valorising others. So while anarchists may advocate the free presentation of ideas around, say, racism, they rarely acknowledge the existence of a hierarchy of discourse that will *already* favour a pro-racist stance over an anti-racist one in the public mind. That this system of power operates not only at the crude level of explicit censorship (the banning of particular publications, films, productions and so forth) but profoundly penetrates the entire societal network must necessitate new and expanded ways of thinking about, and acting upon, what we have traditionally defined as censorship, and indeed, 'free speech'.

What can we thus make of 'free speech' when historically our society has been founded upon a political economy of truth, a "regime of truth";[2] which has consistently excluded, silenced, and marginalised certain groups and their speech whilst concurrently privileging others with the status of saying what counts as true? How can we understand 'free speech' when, on a daily basis, certain institutionalised and socially sanctioned relationships at best hierarchise, and at worst, preclude, the right to speech: in mental institutions, prisons, courts of law, classrooms, lecture halls, state bureaucracies, private corporations, the media, and so forth. Under industrial capitalism the right to 'free speech' for employees is effectively silenced every time they enter the workplace, along with the right to free assembly and equal access to decision-making.

What we are arguing is that power and knowledge are inseparable and that through this inseparability, orders of discourse are created. These orders of discourse, this 'regime of truth', creates a system of power which

cannot be reduced to economics but which necessarily supports, facilitates and makes possible, capitalism. A specific example of this can be found in the medicalisation of childbirth in Australia around the turn of the century. Due to the existing power/knowledge formations, the knowledge and expertise of midwives was vulnerable to attack by doctors wishing to monopolise this lucrative area. The existence of scientific forms of investigation and validation and the respect they enjoyed in culture meant that midwives' traditional knowledge could be criticised as 'superstitious' and irrational. Ironically, and tragically, doctors had so little real knowledge of childbirth that for a long time their intervention meant increased risk of sepsis and death in childbirth.[3]

But what does this have to do with our questions around 'free speech'? The point is that when we advocate 'free speech' we pay scant attention to the reception different views may have. Medical discourse found fertile ground in turn of the century Australia due to types of knowledge that had come to dominate throughout western society. How useful, then, is the advocation of 'free speech', when that which can be understood and accepted has already to some extent been dictated by existing regimes of power? Certainly, where vilifying messages act to circumscribe our thought, our sense of freedom, our quality of life, they can be argued to be *limiting* our freedom of speech. How can a young gay man speak out in favour of his sexuality when homophobic messages produce a hostile environment that makes such speech dangerous, and perhaps difficult or impossible for that person even to imagine? The 'free speech' of one can preclude the 'free speech' of another.

A contemporary example is the Miami Herald vs Tornillo case in the United States where a Florida statutory right of reply was overturned on the grounds that it limited the freedom of speech of the newspaper. In this case the right of the newspaper to speak freely was protected over the right of the individual to speak freely in response. It is clear here that the content of 'free speech' is not inherently liberating or equalising. In fact, we would argue that it most efficiently serves the interests of entrenched power.[4] An Australian example further illustrates our point. In 1991 the *Political Broadcasts and Political Disclosures Act* was introduced as an amendment to the *Broadcasting Act* of 1942. The object of the amendment was to prohibit the broadcasting of political advertisements, on television or radio, during an election period. The rationale behind the amendment was the attempt to reduce domination by economically and politically powerful groups. It was an acknowledgment that effective dissent was in no way facilitated by advertising, and that indeed the economic constraints of *buying* publicity actively restricted the flow of information and ideas. However, in 1992 the Federal legislation banning political advertising during election periods was challenged in the High Court and struck down. In handing down its decision the High Court made an historic decision, finding an implied right to freedom of political speech in the Australian Constitution. Once again, the principled commitment to 'free speech' as a symbol of freedom and

democracy actually worked against the marginalised and in favour of the privileged?

We must begin to ask: whose interests does the notion of 'free speech' serve? Perhaps we should begin to understand 'free speech' as an ideological construct, which now serves, along with those other high myths of classical liberalism, 'liberty', 'justice' and 'equality', to mask genuine inequality beneath the ever-illusory 'level playing field'. For in its very theoretical conception, and its practical inception, classical liberalism was founded upon rights of inclusion and exclusion, speech and silence, what Val Plumwood rightly calls 'the worm ... at the heart of liberalism'; granting 'universal' franchise and political citizenship only to men, and only to those of property.[6] Perhaps we should also be rightly suspicious of 'free speech' rhetoric when we consider that not only its historical legacy, but its current popularity and perceived practice, owes much to its most vociferous champion: the United States, a country which enshrined 'free speech' within the First Amendment of its Constitution at a time when women, blacks and Native Americans were still denied the vote. Thus, if one takes voting as a symbol of 'free speech', the degree of hypocrisy contained in its history is clear. It suggests that from its inception 'free speech' has had a distinctly white, male, and well-educated voice.

Above we have discussed some of the elements of what may be called *constituent* censorship. This is the type of censorship that the 'free speech' debate tends to ignore. It is censorship that occurs *prior* to intervention by the state over specific material, prior to the more familiar form of *regulatory* censorship. It functions on a profound and pervasive level. In fact, various qualities of constituent censorship may be said to be inseparable from, or endemic in, knowledge itself. These qualities relate to issues about the presence and absence of knowledge in culture, the fact that knowledge must be transmitted, that all forms of transmission (for example, print media, radio, television, lectures) construct as well as convey knowledge. Moreover, knowledge is dependent upon language which is *always* a system of meaning that regulates and constitutes knowledge, its impact and implications. We believe that this distinction between constituent and regulatory censorship is crucial in questioning the aforementioned 'level playing field' assumption that underpins much 'free speech' debate.

So why, then, is the issue of the 'level playing field' important here? As we have argued, the notion of 'free speech' tends to reinforce entrenched power through the dual functions of economic determinism (money buys the loudest voice) and orders of discourse which predispose us toward or against certain messages. Those who argue, for example, that sexism should not be censored, rather it should be countered with anti-sexist debate, naively ignore the fact that sexism already exists in all of us, through existing discourse and its role in the construction of subjectivities. They also ignore the sheer volume of sexist material in society, the money behind sexist messages, and the relatively small impact anti-sexist material can have. Compare the circulation of the anti-sexist men's

magazine *XY* with the combined readership of *Penthouse*, *Playboy*, and the *Australasian Post* among many. Thus, for example, to defend the right of an individual to have sexist material (letters*etc*) published in *XY* would be to ignore the saturating presence it has everywhere else, and to waste precious resources.

The important point is that 'free speech' as a principle to be applied unquestioningly to any situation in society needs to be examined. How 'free speech' may work in some utopian context differs enormously from, even contradicts, how it functions in real terms in this society. Here, anarchists need to look to the status they accord principles. Ironically, principles often function in the same way as laws and rules: ignoring context, ignoring individual differences, taking the form of an imperative. Thus voluntarism tends to disappear under codes of behaviour and norms.

Related to this is another question about censorship that 'free speech' advocates often ignore. Should direct censorship (the removal of material by an individual to whom the material is offensive) be regarded in the same light as state censorship; as just another form of regulatory censorship? For despite the problems we have raised regarding the uncritical promotion of 'free speech', it seems dubious to advocate state censorship. None of us believe an elite few can judge what the rest of us are fit to view. And of course, censorship legislation can also work against progressive messages. However, it is also important to note that the state has no real need for specific censorship laws in order to control radical material. A recent case in Croatia, where an anarchist publication was reclassified as 'pornographic' in order that prohibitive tax levels were applicable to it, worked equally well as a form of indirect censorship: the publication went bankrupt. In fact, the Minister for Culture in Croatia has threatened to reclassify in the same way any other publication that is persistently critical of the government.[7]

Our purpose here has been to problematise the notion of 'free speech', to unmask its hidden contradictions and difficulties. What we would like to avoid is the construction of a dualism where only two options exist: the uncritical advocation of 'free speech', or the support for state censorship. This would be misleading. In discussing the various forms of censorship in our society we hope to have revealed some of the workings of power that are otherwise disguised by the simplistic definition of censorship currently utilised by 'free speech' advocates. If we do not recognise how profound censorship is in our society, we cannot hope to confront it. Perhaps, then, a provisional approach to 'free speech' that we may offer here is one that encourages the consideration of context in evaluating the use or rejection of censorship. At a moment in Australian society when vilification legislation is being energetically and publicly debated it is important that anarchists too critically reconsider what has grown to resemble a position of dogmatic certitude. For certainly, as the issue now stands, the status of 'free speech' as a litmus test of radicality and libertarian intent makes the unquestioning adoption of a conventional 'free speech' position almost mandatory.

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Footnotes

[1]Foucault's work is particularly useful in understanding how networks of power/knowledge operate in Western societies to perpetuate systems of surveillance, discipline, and 'normalisation'. See for example, Madness and Civilisation: a history of insanity in the age of reason and Discipline and Punish: the birth of the prison. For a general introduction to Foucault's work try *The Foucault Reader*, edited by Paul Rabinow.

[2]The idea of a'regime of truth' comes from the work of Michel Foucault. See, for example. the chapter entitled 'Truth and Power' in *The Foucault Reader*.

[3]N, Williamson, "'She walked ... with great purpose': Mary Kirkpatrick and the history of midwifery in New South Wales", in M. Bevege et.al. (eds) *Worth Her Salt*, Hale and Iremonger, Sydney, 1982.

[4]E. Barendt, "Free Speech in Australia: A Comparative Perspective", *Sydney Law Review*, vol. 16, no. 149, 1994.

[5]D. Cass, 'Through the Looking Glass: The High Court and the Right to 'free speech'', *Public Law Review*,

vol. 4, no. 229, 1993.

[6]V. Plumwood, "Noam Chomsky and Liberation Politics", (this publication) 1995.

[7]*Bad Attitude* no.7, February-April, 1995.

(Historically, the communist witch-hunts of the McCarthy era are an exemplary illustration of the state's ability to prohibit and punish speech without recourse to specific laws of censorship. McCarthyism also further highlights the degree of hypocrisy associated with the history of free speech in a nation purportedly committed to upholding its protection.)

From free speech to freedom - exploring anarchistic visions of freedom

Peter McGregor

In memory of Ken Hauptmann

From:
"most people think that nothing but this wearying reality of ours is possible" (Nietzsche)
To:
"I live on the edge of the universe & I don't need to feel secure" (Vaneigem)

PREFACE

If you can keep your head while all around you are losing theirs, it may show you just don't know what's going on ...'do you, Mr. Jones?' (Thanks Bob)

For Lautreamont plagiarism is both necessary & desirable. In fact it is inevitable: society, history & progress require it.
Yes it's true, the best things in life are free...or stolen. But when we steal we shouldn't do it half-heartedly, like a thief in the night, like a mere graffitier of toilet walls.

I want to write 'stop police violence' on the walls of police stations, or 'join the boycott' on Nestle' & Nescafe' billboards, in broad daylight - not unlike the way Gary Hayes used an armoured personnel carrier in Perth a couple of years ago. Verily the strength of his critique of power, of the weapon of police brutality, directly emanated from the arming, the em-powering of his critique - the propaganda of his deed lay in his resort to weaponry as a means of... speech: & remember Gary only spoke violence to property, not to people. On the other hand, the ultimate censorship of ideas lies in the killing of advocates of those ideas, the Fatwah on Salman Rushdie being perhaps the most infamous contemporary example.

"If you really mean it, say it with a ... gun."
(This essay will consciously borrow or steal from wherever, let alone any unconscious influences...)

About the author:
(Perhaps some of my readers are also bent out of shape by society's pliers?)

Who am I ? I'm a somewhat broken & gutless - but still mischievous has-been, mostly a dilletante & fellow-traveller :
'they've sentenced me to 20 years of boredom, for trying to change the system from within' (Thanks Leonard)
I find it increasingly hard to match my practice, my actions to the diversity & intensity of my desires & imagination: a pessimism of the will, despite an optimism of the intellect. (Thanks Antonio, or was it Bertolt ?) We all know that what is now real was once only imagined ... This author isn't dead, just lacking an autonomous - free? - self.

(A) So, what do anarchists believe in or want ?

"We must have appetite, taste is the approach of death, the evasive value of those who are losing their appetite..." (Harry Hooton)

1. Developing ourselves by expressing ourselves.
Including (a) the freedom to be different: as Kamala said "anarchists do love to argue";
(b) the pleasure of jointly making up common games:
as Noam said "an anarchist talk would be fun";
& as Emma said " if I can't dance I don't want to be part of your revolution";
& (c) the love which is inherent in our interactions: Vaneigem depicts communication as potentially ... love:
"a transparency in relationships which promotes the participation of all in the self realisation of each other".

2. Questioning things - especially authority.
As Karl said
"since it is not for us to create a plan for the future that will hold for all time, all the more surely what we contemporaries have to do is the uncompromising critical analysis of all that exists; uncompromising in the sense that it fears not its own results, nor conflict with the powers that be"...
& as Darcy notes, the former fear constitutes the greater threat to freedom...

3. The importance of social theory.
For example, a fundamental thesis is the interaction - interdependence - of means & ends:

that the ways in which you struggle for freedom, will condition the kinds of freedom that you will develop & establish.

4. The merits of egalitarian, libertarian & mutualist relationships.
The most illuminating account of human passions & needs that I've come across remains Vaneigem's "Revolution of Everyday Life".
Bakunin had argued that "liberty without socialism(equality) brings privilege, & socialism (equality) without liberty brings tyranny".
He was acknowledging the complementarity of the passions: how separation falsifies them, & how integration fulfills them.
Vaneigem took it further.
Namely, a mode of self-realisation based upon freedom, & resulting via subjectivity & individuality in creativity, rather than the will to power, to domination over others, the veritable denial of THEIR freedom !
And a mode of participation based upon equality, resulting via the direct democracy of spontaneous games in joyful playing-with-each-other, rather than the painful marginalisation of the constraints of hierarchical social stratification.
And a mode of communication based upon sympathy & solidarity, resulting via a collective poetry - 'the organisation of creative spontaneity' - in existence as love, rather than the opaque deceits of existence as accumulation, mediated by authority & chauvinism. Having little, but being much (thanks Lorraine); rather than 'you are what you have (own)'...
Happiness, 'the erotic(,) is the development of the(se) passions as they become unitary'.

Free speech plays a pivotal role in our journeyings ("if you dream alone, it's just a dream; if you dream together it's reality": Brasilian folksong) - in formulating our common desires- & then, the construction of situations (thanks Guy, Raoul et al at the SI) - in trying to make those desires real, is where freedom comes in...

(B) Free Speech & the Incoherence of the Intellectual (Thanks Fredy)

"To do is to be" - Socrates
"To be is to do" - Sartre
"Do be do be do be do" - Sinatra

If you don't stand for something, you'll fall for anything"

Do we have ideas, or do ideas have us ? Consider: what is freedom? just another word for...nothing left to lose, or for...furniture, or for...a bank - whoops! I mean building society - account !

(*"Everybody loves their Freedom" & "What a great idea, St. George !"* Similarly...*"Brescia, as individual as you are".)*
The freedom to starve, or the freedom to own a gun, or freedom as obedience to the law, or ...

I do believe ideas matter, & that dia-logue, rather poly-logue (thanks Jan) the expression of differences, is fundamental for life & growth.
As the Angry Penguins put it in their 1940 Manifesto:-
"THERE CAN BE NO ART WITHOUT LIFE
THERE CAN BE NO LIFE WITHOUT GROWTH
THERE CAN BE NO GROWTH WITHOUT CHANGE
THERE CAN BE NO CHANGE WITHOUT CONTROVERSY
VITAL ARTWORK IS CONTROVERSIAL & DISPLEASING TO THE MAJORITY"

If one gets the chance to speak, & says nothing, why bother ? And if we can't express our differences as ideas, we may be destined to express them as actions, in social & physical conflict: give me verbal attack over physical attack any day. Though, as Oliver Stone said in "TALK RADIO":
'Sticks & stones can break your bones,
but words can cause... permanent damage.'
Phung Thi Le Ly Hayslip (the writer behind Stone's "HEAVEN & EARTH") puts it with more gentility ('tu te'), as Viet Namese often do: *'Stone(sic - Ha!) wears out in a hundred years, but words can last a thousand!' (Tram nam bia da thi mon, ngan nam bia mieng hay con tro tro!)*

(C) "The most important thing is to pull yourself up by your own hair, to turn yourself inside out, & see the world with fresh eyes"
(from 'The Persecution & Assassination of Jean-Paul Marat, as Performed by the Inmates of the Asylum at Charenton, under the Direction of the Marquis de Sade', by Peter Weiss)

My position is one of posture-ing for alternatives, but without 'going all the way'; whether at work (as a lecturer), or in my other political activities. Yet, as St Juste said (in reference to the French Revolution of 1789):
"Those who make only half a revolution dig their own graves."

A key problem is how can all of us equally be enabled to both express ourselves, & to act.
The apparent precondition to the freedom to construct a social system based on our shared passions & interests, is the freedom to think, & to express those conceptions. Empowerment involves the shift from representative democracy to direct democracy, the sharing of access, &

the notion of belonging to a community of diverse points-of-view, all participating & being heard. By representing ourselves, telling our own stories, we are intervening in the construction of alternative social strategies.

The mere expression of ideas (free speech as the acknowledgement, the awareness of differences, & hence of the potential for conflict), can flow on to their practice (their full expression in action, directly fostering alternatives & resistance to existing social dominations, & perhaps culminating in social change.)

So, how can we come 'to see the world with fresh eyes' ?
Why, when communication becomes love - 'a transparency in relationships which promotes the participation of all in the self realisation of each other' - identity embraces 'radical subjectivity ... the common front of identity rediscovered ... the pressure of an indivisible will to build a passion-filled life. Those who cannot see themselves in other people are condemned for ever to be strangers to themselves' - & eroticism is 'the spontaneous coherence which gives practical unity to attempts to enrich lived experience'.(Thanks Raoul)

(Students, beware the prime of Miss Jean Brodie & of other professional teachers! The shepherds can become the wolves - aca-dema-gogy is parasitically alive & based upon hypo-crit-eria: one of the core paradoxes of education is the way institutions & educators can fail to practice what they preach...)

Probably the best measure of one's politics is the willingness to repudiate domination in those spheres of coercive social life where one has individual &/or group privilege. So, just what do academics/intellectuals DO with, or about, their ideas?

"The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways, the point is to change it." Marx's 11th Thesis on Feuerbach

'Dear Peter,
Unfortunately we cannot proceed any further with your request concerning the request for an inquiry into the Hilton bombing as we have no record of your membership with The Australian Sociological Association (TASA). If you can provide proof of current membership we can discuss the matter further. As it stands our constitution allows only members to submit motions for such action at the AGM. We are now faced with your motion at the AGM being void."
(extract from letter from TASA Executive(sic) 21/12/1992)

At TASA's Conference a couple of weeks before, I had put a motion whereby the AGM of TASA had unanimously endorsed lobbying for an inquiry. Even though I promptly produced evidence

of my current membership of TASA, I could not get this national organisation of intellectuals to do anything at all with the motion:
"I don't think any of us are very thrilled at the idea of TASA being involved in media campaigning (about the Hilton).."
(from letter from TASA Executive, 14/1/1993)
(On the 13th Feb. 1993 the 15th anniversary of the bombing was commemorated with a memorial service, march, public meeting & considerable media.)

So, for the next TASA Conference (Dec. '93 at Macquarie University), I submitted a paper on 'The incoherence of the intellectual', subtitled:
'Sociologists, one more effort if you don't want to suffer the same fate as "THESIS 11" (the journal).' Some of the TASA Executive, & even some editors of THESIS 11 attended, & an animated discussion ensued.
(As far as I know neither TASA nor THESIS 11 have yet to take any action on the Hilton issue...)

(D) Against Hypocrisy, but for Plagiarism

Some of us are interested in an uncompromising criticism, the practising of free speech in the spirit of thesis 11- not knowing where it may lead - as a means by which freedom may develop.

Consider these examples:

1. During the 'Bicentenary' (Excuse me ! Not all 'four-letter' words have 4 letters), the national conference of Communication scholars (Armidale, July 1988) heard a paper by sociolinguist Diana Eades (UNE) about the conviction of an Aborigine, Kelvin Condren for murder. Her evidence showed that the Queen's english Kelvin spoke when he confessed to the police was a very different language from the Aboriginal english he spoke in court & when interviewed by anybody else. This conference passed a motion calling for such academic sociolinguistic evidence to be acceptable in court (it had been refused), & for a re-investigation of Condren's conviction. The conference organisers issued a media release & undertook lobbying of all Attorneys-General throughout OZ. The Australian Linguistics Society did likewise. Condren's case was subsequently re-considered & in July 1990 he was pardoned, as not guilty - yet another wrongful conviction based upon ...un-free speech ... police verbals.

2. Another activist social theorist, Val Plumwood, presented a paper concerning Paul Keating, ethics & East Timor at the Australasian Association of Philosophy ,onference(AAPC) in 1992. The following motion was subsequently passed at the Association's AGM:

"We, the philosophers gathered at the 1992 AAPC express our distress concerning events in East Timor since 1975, including the continuing occupation of East Timor by the armed forces of Indonesia against the will of the East Timorese people, the violent suppression of civil liberties in East Timor, the massive death toll by slaughter & ill-treatment of the people of East Timor, & most recently the Dili massacre.
We deplore the actions of the Australian government & previous Australian governments in recognising & lending support to the Indonesian invasion & occupation of East Timor & call on the present government to implement ALP policy 'to continue by all means to seek alleviation of these concerns' &, in particular to:
1. Withdraw recognition of Indonesian sovereignty in East Timor;
2. Initiate a process of mediation between the governmnt of Indonesia & the people of East Timor to enable the Timorese & the Indonesians to arrive at an optimal solution to the problems which are giving rise to the present conflict between them;
& 3. Stop military training & aid to Indonesia until such a process of mediation has reached a successful conclusion."

Yes, the next move IS up to each of us - to attempt to practice our daydreams together, to create our own situations - unless we want to merely reproduce either the hypocrisy of leftist spectacles of opposition, or the half-hearted post-modernist parodies of consumerealism. (Thanks Craig!)

In learning as in the spectacle, danger lies in the separation between the directly lived & its representations. Knowledge is a way of relating to the world, or it is sterile.

Yes, a littel edjukayshun (whoops! sorry, spelling...) can be a dangerous thing. And rather than steadying a leaking & rotten boat, we can use our intellects to help rock it.
Hey ! We could even help sink it...

Anarchist Politics & Direct Action

Rob Sparrow

This talk discusses **Direct Action** - the proper method of anarchist activist action. In it I try to consider some theoretical issues that we don't usually get a chance to discuss in the midst of political campaigns. Some of the issues raised will be, the role of anarchists in other political movements, the difference between direct action and symbolic action, the various traditional types of direct action and the proper attitude of activists towards the police and the media.

* * * * * * * *

Direct Action is the distinctive contribution of anarchists in the realm of political method. While reformists advocate the ballot box, liberals have their lobbying and their letter writing, bureaucrats have their work through 'the proper channels' and socialists have their vanguard parties, we anarchists have direct action. Political tendencies other than anarchism may adopt direct action as a method but its historical origins and its most vigorous proponents are anarchist. Because direct action is a political method, before we can properly understand it and its place in anarchist practice we must first examine the nature of anarchist political activity.

Ideally, anarchist political activity promotes anarchism and attempts to create anarchy. It seeks to establish a society without capitalism, patriarchy or State, where people govern themselves democratically without domination or hierarchy. As I have argued elsewhere, this is an activity which is inescapably revolutionary in nature and which is best carried out collectively in an organisation dedicated to that purpose. While anarchists remain without a political organisation of their own, the main avenue for promoting anarchism is to participate in, contribute to and provide leadership in other political movements. Our objective in participating in other political movements and campaigns should be to show that anarchist methods and ways of organising work. The best advertisement for anarchism is the intelligence of the contributions of our activists and the success of our methods. Anarchists should strive to provide living examples of anarchy in action. As we will see, direct action is one of the best possible ways of doing this.

Two dangers in Anarchist Political Practice

Before I go on, I want to highlight here two problems which may occur with anarchist political activity which both stem from a tendency to be utopian in our political demands. Anarchists are often utopian in their rejection of any political activity oriented towards the state and in their failure to establish a realistic connection between their ends and their means. This sort of utopianism is not a virtue but instead contributes to anarchism's continuing political irrelevance to the majority of Australians.

Anarchism and the State

In a capitalist economy the activities of "private enterprise" are rigorously excluded from public scrutiny and control. We have no input into the decisions about production and investment which determine the basic conditions of our existence and which are made in corporate board rooms. In many cases, if we don't like what we see happening around us, the only option open to us is to try to change government policy. Thus most forms of politics today are oriented towards the state. Most obviously, electoral politics seeks to determine the identity of those few individuals who supposedly control the state. Most forms of political protest also hope to induce, or to force, the state to take some action to address the protesters' concerns. Yet anarchism is largely defined by its rejection of the state as a mode of organising to meet social needs and anarchists have traditionally - and rightly - been extremely suspicious of any suggestion that we can succeed in using the state to serve our ends. It may therefore be tempting for anarchists to proffer 'social revolution' as the solution to all problems. Anarchists may argue that the problems that people face are the results of an insane social and economic order and that only a revolution and consequent creation of anarchy will solve them. But people have problems and face difficulties here and now which need to be addressed and they cannot wait for the revolution to solve them. Thus in rejecting attempts to force the state to address our needs or serve our political ends we must offer realistic alternative methods of achieving our goals, if we are to be relevant to the struggles of people today. Sometimes this may be possible. Sometimes we can organise together, without relying on the state, to address and solve our problems here and now. As we shall see below, this is the essence of direct action.

Often, however, it won't be possible to provide genuine solutions to people's problems, within the existing order, without recourse to the state. Whether we like it or not certain social needs are, in current circumstances, only going to be addressed by the state. Access to medical resources, secure housing, educational qualifications or income support are for most people only going to be available as the result of state action. Relations between the sexes are also another area where the state seems to be the only plausible existing instrument of social policy. Domestic violence protection orders and state funded refuges may not be much of a solution to the problems created by violent or abusive partners but for some women they are all there is. For many women they are a necessary step on the road to escaping a cycle of abuse. The

society wide education campaigns which are necessary to challenge sexist attitudes likewise can only be carried out with state support. Until anarchists constitute a sizeable portion of the community and are capable of providing these services - or alternatives - themselves, activists concerned about these issues will be justified in turning to the state for help in addressing them.

Furthermore, legislation by the state can represent a real political victory. This may be because the passing of legislation acknowledges and gives weight to changes which have already occurred in the political consciousness of society at large or it may be because the legislation actually makes a real difference to the living conditions of ordinary people. Legislation guaranteeing a minimum wage, public health-care, health and safety standards at work or a decent standard of living for those excluded from work represents a genuine political victory for the majority over the ruling class. Not only do such state provided services make a vast difference in the quality of life of those who otherwise would have no or little access to them but they also dramatically increase the possibility of political action. The less time people have to spend struggling to meet their basic needs, the more time they have to criticise and challenge the existing order.

The traditional anarchist hostility towards the state then should be tempered by the recognition that, while it continues to exist, it is an important site of class struggle. If we reject attempts to exert pressure on the state we may render ourselves irrelevant to the real needs of large elements in society. Calling only for revolution is not going to interest anyone who needs real change now. Anarchists must provide workable solutions for people here and now. Sometimes this will involve recourse to the state.

Anarchism and Ends and Means

One of anarchism's historical strengths has been its insistence on the connection between ends and means. Anarchists have insisted that libertarian outcomes will not result from authoritarian means and, more generally, have been sensitive towards the ways in which compromises made in the realm of political methods may corrupt us or infect our goals. Sometimes, however, this has lead to an over simplistic equation betweens our means and our ends. Anarchists often fail to address properly the political question of how our methods relate to our goals. An example of this is the pacifist claim, 'if everyone refused to fight there would be no wars'. Now this is clearly true, in fact tautologically so. But pacifism does not follow from this truism. It does not follow that the best way to prevent wars is to make an individual commitment to refuse to fight in them. The connection between our actions and the goal of peaceful world is a political one. It is political because it involves the workings of the whole set of power and economic relations which structure our social and personal decision making. For our activities to have their intended effect they must be taken up by others and whether or not this will take place will depend on a whole set of political and economic factors. It is not at all clear that our refusing to fight will cause sufficient numbers of others to do so and thus make war impossible

(in fact, this just seems wildly implausible). The best way to prevent wars may be to address the social systems and the injustices which cause them. It may even involve fighting.

More generally then, for our means to be suitable to the ends we seek we must be able to tell a realistic story about exactly how our activities will bring our ends about. This story will have to take account of the economic and political realities which affect our lives. It is often not realistic to believe that everyone else around us will immediately follow our example.

The best forms of anarchist politics avoid these two forms of dangerous utopianism and offer people genuine hope and occasional success in their struggle for a better world. Direct action is a crucial component of such a politics.

Direct Action

The distinguishing feature of direct action is that it aims to achieve our goals through our own activity rather than through the actions of others. Direct action seeks to exert power directly over affairs and situations which concern us. Thus it is about people taking power for themselves. In this it is distinguished from most other forms of political action such as voting, lobbying, attempting to exert political pressure though industrial action or through the media. All of these activities aim to get others to achieve our goals for us. Such forms of actions operate on a tacit acceptance of our own powerlessness. They concede that we ourselves have neither the right nor the power to affect change. Such forms of action are therefore implicitly conservative. They concede the authority of existing institutions and work to prevent us from acting ourselves to change the status quo.

Direct action repudiates such acceptance of the existing order and suggests that we have both the right and the power to change the world. It demonstrates this by doing it. Examples of direct action include blockades, pickets, sabotage, squatting, tree spiking, lockouts, occupations, rolling strikes, slow downs, the revolutionary general strike. In the community it involves, amongst other things, establishing our own organisations such as food co-ops and community access radio and tv to provide for our social needs, blocking the freeway developments which divide and poison our communities and taking and squatting the houses that we need to live in. In the forests, direct action interposes our bodies, our will and our ingenuity between wilderness and those who would destroy it and acts against the profits of the organisations which direct the exploitation of nature and against those organisations themselves. In industry and in the workplace direct action aims either to extend workers control or to directly attack the profits of the employers. Sabotage and go slows are time-honoured and popular techniques to deny employers the profits from their exploitation of their wage-slaves. Rolling and wildcat strikes are forms of open industrial struggle which strike directly at the profits of the employers. However, industrial action which is undertaken merely as a tactic as part of negotiations to win wage or

other concessions from an employer is not an example of direct action.

As the examples of direct action in the community above suggest, there is more to direct action than responding to injustices or threats by the state. Direct action is not only a method of protest but also a way of building the future now. Any situation where people organise to extend control over their own circumstances without recourse to capital or state constitutes direct action. 'Doing it ourselves' is the essence of direct action and it does not matter whether what we are doing is resisting injustice or attempting to create a better world now by organising to meet our own social needs. Direct action of this sort, because it is self-directed rather than a response to the activities of capital or state, offers far more opportunities for continuing action and also for success. We can define our own goals and achieve them through our own efforts.

One of the most important aspects of direct action is the organisation involved in order for it to be successful. By organising to achieve our goals ourselves we learn valuable skills and discover that organisation without hierarchy is possible. Where it succeeds, direct action shows that people can control their own lives - in effect, that anarchy is possible. We can see here that direct action and anarchist organisation are in fact two sides of the same coin. When we demonstrate the success of one we demonstrate the reality of the other.

Two Important Distinctions

Direct action must be distinguished from symbolic actions. Direct action is bolting a gate rather than tying a yellow ribbon around it. Its purpose is to exercise power and control over our own lives rather than merely portray the semblance of it. This distinguishes it from many forms of action, for example banner drops such as those often engaged in by Greenpeace, that look militant but, in my opinion, aren't. These actions do not directly attack the injustices they highlight, but instead seek to influence the public and politicians through the media. Any action directed primarily towards the media concedes that others, rather than ourselves, have the power to change things.

Direct action must also be distinguished from moral action. It is not 'moral' protest. By moral protest I mean protest which is justified by reference to the moral relation to some institution or injustice that it demonstrates. Moral protest usually takes the form of a boycott of a product or refusal to participate in some institution. Such actions seek to avoid our complicity in the evils for which existing institutions are responsible. No doubt this is morally admirable. But unless these actions themselves have some perceivable effect on the institutions which they target, they do not constitute direct action. Direct action must have some immediate affect to demonstrate that we can exert power. It should not rely entirely on others taking up our example. Our own action should have such an affect that we can point it out to others as an example of how they can change - and not just protest - those things which concern them. Boycotts, for

instance, therefore are not examples of direct action. If only those who organise a boycott participate in it, it will almost invariably be ineffective.

Of course, these distinctions are overdrawn. Any action at all involves some exercise of power. By acting at all, in any way, we overcome our passivity and deny that we are helpless to affect change. Any action short of revolution is to some extent both moral and symbolic. Capital, patriarchy and state have the power to undo all our efforts short of revolution. Any form of protest can be effectively prevented if the state is willing to employ the full range of its resources for authoritarian repression and control. The only form of direct action which cannot be contained by the state is popular revolution. This is the ultimate direct action that anarchists should aim for, when all people organise to destroy the existing order and cooperate to run society without capitalism, patriarchy or authority.

Implications

So given that any action will be less than ideal, how should we assess potential direct actions? I would suggest that possible direct actions should be assessed both as examples of direct action as described here and against the broader criteria for anarchist actions set out above. That is, of any action we should ask:

1) to what extent does our action affirm our own power and right to use it?
2) does it advance the theory and practice of anarchy and, in particular, will it build the anarchist movement?

Some further questions we can ask ourselves to help determine the answers to these are as follows. Firstly, will it draw others in? Is it the sort of activity which encourages other people to become interested and involved? Actions which necessitate a high degree of detailed organisation or secrecy are unlikely to score highly against this criterion. Will it succeed in achieving its defined objectives? For instance, will a blockade actually stop work on a site for some period? Successful actions are the best advertisement for anarchist methods. Are the politics of the action obvious or at least clearly conveyed to those who witness it? If the targets of our actions relate only obliquely to the issue which they are intended to address, or the goals of our activities are unclear to those not 'in the know', then we are unlikely to convince others of the relevance of anarchism. For this reason we must always be conscious of the messages which our activities convey to other people and try to ensure that this is the most appropriate possible. What consequences will result from the action for those involved in it? Actions which involve a high risk of police beating or of arrest with consequent heavy fines or imprisonment may reduce the willingness or capacity of those affected to engage in further political activities, if any of these things occur. Very few people are radicalised by being hurt by the police, most are just scared. Often the hours spent dealing with legal hassles for months after an arrest could have been more productively spent in other political activity, if the arrest was not necessary. Finally, how will the action transform the consciousness of those involved in it? We should aim

to engage in activities which establish within us an increased awareness of radical social and political possibilities, broaden our base of skills and leave us confident and empowered. Sometimes actions may have other, less welcome, effects on the psychology of those involved. Unsuccessful actions may leave us feeling disempowered and embittered. Actions which involve a high degree of aggression, confrontation or potential violence may breed hostility and aggression within us which might hamper our ability to work productively in other political circumstances.

By assessing our political activities against these criteria and asking these questions and others like them, I believe that we can ensure that our actions have the greatest chance of achieving our goals and thus demonstrate the superiority of anarchist methods of political action.

Some consequences

Anarchists and the police

The relation of activists and demonstrators to the police is a contentious issue in activist politics in Australia. This is not the place to give a detailed treatment of the politics of various ways of relating to the police. But a brief consideration of some of the matters discussed in this paper can, I believe, aid discussion of the issue by ruling out a number of possible (bad) answers to the question of how we should treat the police.

The first implication of the politics of direct action with regards to our relations with the police is that, wherever possible, we should disregard the authority of the police. Direct action is action which acknowledges our own power and right to exercise it. To the same extent that we recognise the authority of the police and obey their instructions we are relinquishing our own right and power to act as we would wish to. So it is actually essential to direct action that we do not concede the right of the representatives of the state to restrict our activities. Of course, for tactical reasons, we may have to acknowledge the consequences that may occur when we ignore the law and may even have to negotiate with police in the attempt to minimise these. But it is important that, in doing so, we remember at all times that although they have the means to do so, they have no right to restrict us in our liberty.

The discussion of the necessity of a political analysis of the relation between our ends and our means is also crucial here. Any strategy of dealing with the police must take account of their role as a political - and ultimately a class - force. The police force exists to defend the status quo and the interests of the ruling class. Individual police officers may occasionally have reservations about doing so but, when push comes to shove, that is their job. A police officer who doesn't follow the orders of the state is no longer a police officer. As anarchists therefore, the police, not as individuals but as an institution, are our enemies. They exist to defend all that we wish to destroy. In their defence of private property and the state, the police are backed up by the armed force of the state. Behind the police lies the military who, as numerous historical examples illustrate, are ready to step in and restore 'order' if the civilian population becomes

too unruly.
Once we recognise the police force as a political institution and that its members therefore necessarily stand in a certain political relation to us then a number of things become clear.
Firstly, any attempt to win over the police, one by one, is doomed. We can win the cooperation of the police for precisely as long as we fail to genuinely threaten the existing social order. As soon as our activities begin to threaten the interests of the state or the profits of the ruling class the police will move to disperse/arrest/beat us, as sure as night follows day. Of course, individual police may be moved by personal convictions. But as I suggested above, this does not change their political relation to us and the necessity of them acting against us. It's their job and if they refuse to do it they will (ultimately) lose it. A gentle cop does not remain a cop for long. Attempts to win over the police may succeed in winning over individuals then, but at the cost of them ceasing to be members of the police force. We will never to able to win the cooperation of the police as a political force when it counts.
Secondly, the fact that the police are ultimately backed by the armed force of the state determines that any attempt to resist or overcome the police through violence will ultimately fail. While the state and ruling class are secure politically and can succeed in maintaining the passivity of the majority of the population, they can defeat any attempt to threaten them through violent means. The state has more repressive force at its command than we can ever hope to muster. This is not a pacifist position. We have every right to employ force in the attempt to resist the violence of the state. Where a specific act of violence against the state will achieve a particular tactical objective, without provoking crippling repression or a disastrous political backlash, then we would be justified in committing it. But as a political strategy, in a non-revolutionary period, attempting to overcome the state through force is doomed.
The beginnings of an anarchist politics with regards to the police force, then, are to be found in a conscious hostility towards them as an institution, tempered by an awareness of the tactical realities of dealing with them. Recognising that the police are our class enemy is itself an important gain in political consciousness. This is not to deny, however, that there may be tactical advantages to not antagonising the police. Indeed, antagonising the police is a sure way to guarantee extra hassles for protesters. So it should never be done unnecessarily. But in our care to avoid creating unnecessary trouble for ourselves we must remember that the source of the confrontation and violence which sometimes occurs around the police is the police themselves in their attempts to protect an unjust - and ultimately itself violent - social order.

Anarchists and the Media

The other important area of politics where my discussion of direct action has significant practical consequences is in protesters' relation to the media. This is an issue which often generates heated discussion within activist groups and which can have a significant effect on their politics. Again consideration of the politics of direct action allows us to go some way towards settling

this question.
As I suggested earlier any protest where protesters are acting entirely for the sake of media attention or - as actually often occurs - are even being directed in their activities by the media is not a case of direct action. Such media stunts do not themselves seek to address the problems which they highlight and are instead directed to getting other people (usually the government) to solve them. Thus in as far as we are concerned to be practicing direct action we should shun this sort of involvement with the media. We should not 'perform' for the cameras or reporters. Yet, because an important criteria for a successful anarchist action is its success in reaching other people and convincing them of the efficacy of anarchist techniques, we can't really ignore the media. Sadly, the only contact many people have with political events around them is through television or the papers.
From these two facts, I believe, the rudiments of an anarchist stance towards the media emerge. Anarchists should neither ignore the media or perform for it. Instead we should remain true to our own politics and seek to achieve our ends through our own efforts. While we do so we should welcome media attention which might spread news of our activities and so help build an anarchist movement. When we cooperate with the media we should do so without compromising the integrity of our own politics and without distorting either ourselves or our message. Once we compromise our politics for the sake of media attention then we are no longer conveying the success of anarchist methods.
Finally the advantages of direct action should encourage us to make maximum use of our own and community media in attempting to reach out to others. Rather than relying on the capitalist press to communicate our message to the people we should do it ourselves. Community papers, radio and television are themselves examples of direct action in the media.

A final note

This paper has discussed and advocated the politics of direct action within the broader context of the purpose of an anarchist politics. Direct action has many virtues, not least that it is, in essence, itself anarchy in action. But direct action is not the only form of worthwhile political action. Anarchists should remain open to the possibilities of an entire spectrum of political methods. Any form of politics that involves people and transforms their consciousness in a progressive way may be useful in the struggle to build an anarchist movement and ultimately a revolution to create anarchy. Which particular political movements and methods deserve our support can only been decided within the framework of a well theorised, consciously anarchist, politics. This paper is intended as one small contribution to the project of developing such a framework.

Beyond Military Control

by Schweik Action Wollongong

Nonviolence news report, Germany, 1920;

Troops under the command of the right wing Dr. Wolfgang Kapp attempted to stage a coup d'etat-style overthrow of the new Weimar Republic government in Berlin.

From its hiding place in Stuttgart the ousted Ebert government issued instructions for citizen non-cooperation with the Kappists. Thousands of workers went on strike, newsletters were distributed, shops were shut and the public service shut down.

Under these conditions of general strike the military regime became increasingly weak until, only a short time after the beginning of the coup, its leader fled. The potential effectiveness of nonviolent resistance against military coups was thus shown.

Nonviolence news report, Fiji, 1987;

On 14 May, six weeks after its election to government, the ruling Labor/National Federation coalition of Fiji was toppled by a military coup led by Colonel Rabuka. Since that time nonviolent means of opposition to the regime have been widely used.

Strikes, shop closures, protests, petitions and a mass emigration of learned, skilled workers have proven very effective against the regime. The nonviolent character of such resistance has hurt the violent Rabuka's reputation in the media of Fiji.

The success of such ad hoc measures has led some to conclude that nonviolent action may well have been successful in overturning the regime had it been organised in advance and unified.

Nonviolence news report, Palestine, June 1988;

The deportation of Palestinian nonviolent activist Mubarak Awad this month indicates the importance of nonviolent methods used against Israeli soldiers since the beginning of the intifada in December last year.

After studying the writings of such figures as Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Johan Galtung and Gene Sharp whilst in the USA, Awad returned to Jerusalem in 1985 and founded the Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence.

When asked about the centre and its role in the organisation of nonviolent action, Awad says that action is organised as the need arises. "People will come and ask for help and we'll go and show them how to organise committees. At first, the Centre was very small with only a dozen or so people attending but this slowly increased. We traveled to many other places and handed out

material on how nonviolence could be used and what forms it could take."

The initiatives of the Centre have proven successful. Since the uprising in 1987 acts of disobedience have been widely used by people on the West Bank. Many Palestinians now boycott Israeli products, resist tax, refuse to fill out official documents in Hebrew, dismantle fences set up by Israelis and lay in front of Israeli bulldozers. Organised commercial strikes are also a regular occurrence. In 1987 the Centre began planting olive trees on Palestinian land; the olive tree has now become a symbol for the Palestinians.

Awad states that the idea of nonviolence has resulted in a profound change in the thinking of many Palestinians. "For the first time a Palestinian woman will tell her son to go to the streets rather than trying to protect him. This is courage. Then she will go to the streets after him. The man who owns the shop, he cannot do nothing, so he has to close the shop. ...It is an experience of empowerment that is growing and growing. I am seeing that there is much hope."

The problem of the military

Military forces are a key means of social control in today's world. Military force is the ultimate method any government has for controlling opponents of the state. Troops are used in civil emergencies, such as terrorist attacks, major strikes and insurrection. The military generally acts in a conservative fashion: it does not oppose activities supporting state or corporate power, but it does get involved against mass opposition.

The military coup is a special use of military power, usually to oppose radical change. Military coups are common in Third World countries, but also have occurred in industrialised countries such as Greece and Poland. The possibility of a coup often looms in the background, and provides an unstated inhibition against social movements taking direct action.

The standard response to these problems is to advocate better control *of* the military. The usual formulas stress control by civilian authorities and taking action against individual members of the military who abuse their position. The most common areas of peace movement activity, such as negotiations, disarmament and transferring spending, do not challenge the power of the military in any fundamental way, nor offer any way to overcome the use of military force against reforming goverments.

Instead of controlling the military, another way to get beyond military control is to *replace* the military. There are basically two possible replacements which involve popular participation: guerrilla warfare and social defence. Of these two, the possibility of a resurgence of the military is larger with guerrilla warfare. In many anti-colonial struggles, guerrilla warfare has been superseded by regular military forces, as in Vietnam. We believe the best prospects for truly getting beyond military control lie with social defence.

Social defence is a nonviolent alternative to military defence. It is based on widespread political, economic and social non-cooperation in order to oppose military aggression or political repression. It uses methods such as boycotts, refusals to obey, strikes, demonstrations and setting up alternative government.

Social defence is based on the principle that no regime — whether a democracy or military dictatorship — can survive without the passive support or nonresistance of a large fraction of the population. Since social defence relies on resistance by large sections of the population, it is the nonviolent equivalent of guerrilla warfare.

However, the similarities between social defence and guerrilla warfare are limited since the basic thrust of social defence is the replacement of the centralised military system that we know today. Guerrilla warfare must also ultimately rely on the use or threat of violence to achieve its aims.

Social defence has even greater potential than guerrilla warfare to mobilise the population for political struggle. Anyone can participate in social defence, including young, old, women and people with disabilities. Guerrilla struggles, like conventional military forces, rely mainly on young fit men. In addition, use of only nonviolent methods is more effective in undermining the will of the aggressors.

Social defence and other campaigns

Preparation for social defence provides valuable preparation for other campaigns too. Imagine a local community that has developed skills and plans to resist an invasion or coup. This would involve workers being prepared to take over workplaces and produce goods that the community needs. It would involve people joining in workshops and roleplays in how to maintain nonviolent solidarity in the face of attacks on protesters. It would involve developing communications networks outside the standard channels of radio, television and the press. It would involve increasing local self-reliance in energy production, transport and food, for example through greater use of solar heating and wind power, bicycles, and local vegetable gardens.

In each case, preparation for social defence can support other campaigns. If governments or employers take repressive stands against workers, the workers are better prepared to resist by direct action at work. For example, in the case of anti-union legislation, methods of nonviolent sabotage could serve as an alternative form of resistance which would be hard to counter using the legislation.

If a government passed legislation limiting civil liberties or if police abused their powers, resisters would be better prepared. A community ready to use a range of nonviolent methods would be better able to resist repressive government actions or the introduction of computer identification systems. Personal and group practice in nonviolent methods would also help women resist, individually and collectively, violent men.

Alternative communication channels are important whenever the mainstream channels refuse to touch an issue. This includes short-wave radio, CB radio, small-scale printing and photocopying operations, and telephone and newsletter networks. For example, full information about the Indonesian military invasion of East Timor and the Fiji military coup was denied to the Australian population due to censorship and communication bans in East Timor and Fiji, as well as by cautious stands taken by the Australian government and media. Alternative channels, prepared in advance,

would allow Australians to help resist repression in other countries.

Preparation for local self-reliance in energy, transport and food is vital for environmental campaigns. Nonviolent intervention has been widely used against nuclear power plants, forestry operations and industrial polluters.

These examples show that a full-scale conversion to social defence is far more than a change in technique for resistance to invasion. Society would not look the same under social defence. Hence it is only to be expected that social defence can only be brought about as part of a wider struggle for people's control and resistance to control by governments and other powerful groups. Promotion of social defence goes hand in hand with many grassroots struggles by workers, women, environmentalists and others.

The strong links between social defence and other social movements are especially important since the decline of the 1980s peace movement. Two inherent weaknesses of the mainstream peace movement have been its heavy focus on nuclear weapons and its orientation to governments as the road to disarmament. The result has been that campaigns have not changed the power of people in their everyday lives in relation to war. Governments still make the decisions about military matters, and militaries themselves still hold the monopoly over the use of force. The peace movement has certainly had an impact and has helped to shift policies. But it has done little to alter the structures of power which ultimately lay the basis for war.

Social defence overcomes these two weaknesses of the mainstream peace movement. It focusses not on weapons systems but on developing a complete alternative to weapons of violence in the hands of professional soldiers. Furthermore, it does not have to rely on governments for implementation. In fact, governments are likely to be hostile to social defence precisely because it provides power to people which can be used to resist government itself. The onus is on activists to promote social defence in the face of indifference or hostility from governments.

The transition

A future vision for the development of a social defence policy requires a discussion on the transition from reliance on military defence to social defence. This might include

* supplementing military defence with social defence;
* utilising social defence in place of military defence in special circumstances, for example when military defence has failed;
* converting military defence "permanently and completely" to social defence.

Gene Sharp states that social defence is far more achievable than might be thought. Although social defence will require major changes in our societal structures, it will not require deep changes in individuals themselves. Many people are already questioning current military policy. Many more people recognise the desirability of nonviolent defence methods, if not the possibility of their implementation as a complete defence policy.

For many years there has been much debate in the western world on the issue of defence, particularly in relation to the peace movement and in terms of the prevailing economic

circumstances. There is much questioning of the efficiency of military defence in the face of possible methods of current warfare including chemical, biological and nuclear war. Along with concern regarding the monetary cost of weapons production, there is much disquiet about the ever-present potential for offensive use of supposedly defensive weapons. Also in Australia, there is doubt about the possibility of a military invasion from an external source. There seems to be far more likelihood of internal strife than external invasion in the foreseeable future.

Social defence can be a solution to the many questions that have been raised in these debates. The nonviolent methods utilised in a social defence strategy provide no pretext for an arms buildup by opponents. They can also be used against internal as well as external threats. As a comprehensive strategy, social defence abolishes the need for military systems. Gene Sharp argues that social defence "possesses a power potential even greater than military means."

Social defence is theoretically achievable through the normal democratic processes of our society. If enough individuals adopt social defence as a worthwhile goal (individually, nationally and globally), then community pressure can be applied to bring about the necessary policy changes. Once adopted as policy by an organisation such as a trade union or political party, the implementation of social defence could include the organisation of a sponsored and funded social defence network. This network could include small groups on a locality basis to develop and distribute a range of educational material. These groups could also run practical training exercises in the community. These small groups could link into a national or international body, representative of the locality groups. This body could deal with the administration of the social defence policy including the initial transition from military to social defence.

Australia is in a particularly favourable position to experiment with a social defence strategy. Australia enjoys a reasonable level of social cohesiveness and a geographical situation that greatly reduces the likelihood of invasion. If Australia adopted a social defence strategy it could be an important example for other countries to follow. An international linking of social defence strategies is vital for the goal of worldwide security through worldwide social defence. Such links would allow countries to assist each other in the implementation of social defence policies and would facilitate effective pressure being applied on governments and regimes hostile to social defence.

It is when people understand the power that they and their institutions can wield that social defence becomes possible. Self-determination requires the full participation of people in the governing of their communities. Social defence takes place through people's ability to take direct control of the agencies in society.

Social defence contributes to the empowerment of people to be their own experts and the decision makers in their own government. Such self defence exercised by all individuals in society can work toward improved conditions of social justice. It can help create full equality of opportunity and conditions for all people. It can prevent the reliance on violence to gain improved living conditions or to protect one's own living conditions.

A number of social movements are seeking to empower people to take control of their own lives. To the extent that they are successful, society will become and seem more worth defending.

The potential effectiveness of social defence can only increase as this occurs.

What you can do

There are many practical things which people can do to build social defence networks in their communities and workplaces. The essence of social defence is planning and strong grassroots action. So the best way of preparing for social defence is to form links within your community to first build an awareness of social defence through discussions, workshops and speakers.

There are many practical actions that you and your friends can take.

¥ Organise a project on social defence in your workplace which might show ways in which your daily work routines could aid social defence at the appropriate time. This involves looking at the extent to which you as a worker can take control of your workplace.

¥ Approach your local school and see if you can make presentations on the issue to classes.

¥ Learn to use equipment for producing leaflets, such as word processors and printing presses.

¥ Learn to use short-wave radio.

¥ Make an inventory of neighbourhood resources, including food, shelter, communications, transport and people's skills.

¥ Try to go without centralised transport and entertainment for a week. Instead of catching the bus or driving to work, ride a bike or walk. Instead of watching TV, read or make your own entertainment. Write about your experience and send it to friends.

¥ Undertake nonviolent action training.

¥ Participate in campaigns which build skills and experiences in community resistance such as against rape, military installations or government surveillance.

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Schweik Action Wollongong takes its name from the clever anti-hero of Hasek's classic novel *The Good Soldier Schweik*, who caused havoc in the Austrian army during World War One by pretending to be extremely stupid. The group promotes social defence and other uses of nonviolent action for a more just society. This paper is by Alison Rawling, Lisa Schofield, Terry Darling and Brian Martin. We can be contacted at 40 Euroka Street, West Wollongong NSW 2500, phone (042) 287860, email b.martin@uow.edu.au.

Anarchism and National Liberation

David Fisher

The right of a political unit is a recent idea. It developed when the nation-state became representative of a people rather than a property of a dynast or an empire. Self-determination confuses the right of a political unit with the rights of the people within that unit. They are not the same. Attitudes toward the Civil war in the United States point out these differences. In general northerners see slavery as the major cause of the war, and southerners see states rights as the cause. The major states right at issue was the right to keep some human beings in bondage within the political boundaries of the state. Thus, southerners transformed slavery into a right of a political unit. The Civil War in the United States was a war of self-determination although the word was not in common usage at the time. As in many other cases of self-determination the wishes of all people concerned were not regarded.

The United States Civil War is important in a discussion of self-determination. Firstly, the unsuccessful attempt of the south to be independent was similar to the nineteenth century nationalistic movements in Europe. Secondly, Woodrow Wilson who put "self-determination" into international practice grew up in the southern United States and had the southern racial attitudes which were contrary to the eighteenth century revolutionary ideas of liberty and justice for all.

The founders of the United States considered ethnicity unimportant.

They even debated the official language of the new nation. Some voted for German as a symbol of independence from England, but English prevailed. Unfortunately, reaction to universal freedom for men (meaning at that time not mankind but male human beings) set in after both the American and French Revolutions. In the United States, the Declaration of Independence of July 4, 1776 states:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by

their Creator with certain inalienable Rights'

However, the Constitution was later adopted and recognized slavery.

In France the reversal was even more dramatic. The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen in 1789 in France maintains 'Men are born and remain free and equal in rights.' France had slaves, most noticeably in their West Indian possessions. Revolutionary France set all slaves free. After Napoleon used the rhetoric of revolution to install himself as emperor, he reintroduced slavery.

The idea that people sharing the same ethnicity should unite dominated nineteenth century nation building. Mazzini, the Italian nationalist and democrat, thought that states based on national divisions and free institutions would not go to war with each other but would grow into a higher unity. The free institutions proved fragile and his optimism unjustified. Some of the states founded on this basis had the concept that the citizens of the ethnic nation should be so united that democracy would be unnecessary and even divisive. Extreme examples of this attitude are expressed by the slogans "Ein Volk, Ein Reich, Ein Fuhrer" and "Credere, Obbedire, Combattere." Germany and Italy went into World War II with "One People, One Realm, One Leader" and "Believe, Obey, Fight", respectively. Self-determination is in the tradition of nineteenth century nation building. Political groupings in the United States during the nationalistic revolutions of 1848 in Europe recognised the connection between self-determination and violence. Pacifist Elihu Burritt "did not hesitate to condemn outright the resort to violence during "the mournful spectacle of the June days."" Those who supported the violence also recognised the connection. "...in America the idea of self-determination was just then being championed by a particularly chauvinistic and materialistic group, the "Young Americans," a minor political coterie in the Democratic Party." Twentieth century Europe has not eliminated tribalism, and self-determination extends nineteenth century European tribalism to the developing nations.

As the various central and eastern European ethnic groups developed senses of national identity based on shared culture, language, religion, race and attachment to the land their suspicion of those in their midst with another identity grew. One prominent minority group was the Jews. With the extension of civil rights to the Jews after the French Revolution they became competitors in areas they could not previously enter. Both the new nationalists and the old regimes promoted antisemitism. The Socialist Mayor of Vienna, Karl Lueger, influenced Adolph Hitler who admired Lueger's political skills and followed his antisemitism. Reactionary governments such as that of imperial Russia used antisemitism to divert protest against themselves. Centuries of antisemitism fostered by the Catholic, Orthodox and Lutheran churches made the Jews an easy target.

Reacting to this the Jews developed a nationalist movement called Zionism. Zionism is the last of the nineteenth century European nationalisms. Since there was no piece of

territory where Jews could establish a homeland in Europe they were forced to look outside, mainly to Palestine because of the historical and religious connections. Early Zionists were largely secular and were opposed by the religious leaders since the latter believed the return to Zion should be only through divine intervention. Political action would usurp the divine prerogative. Since the establishment of the state of Israel most religious Jews have become Zionists though many religious Jews still oppose the state of Israel. Zionism has the failing of other ethnic nationalisms. Those in the homeland who do not share the ethnic paradigm become second class citizens. However, support for national liberation movements and self-determination and opposition to Zionism means national liberation and self-determination are only for gentiles.

Some socialists denied the concept of ethnicity entirely. Instead of the vertical stratification of ethnicity, they proposed a horizontal stratification of class. "Workers have no country". The working class probably supported World War I to the same degree as other sections of the population. Few representatives of socialist parties opposed the move to war in 1914. With the establishment of the first "worker's state" in 1917, class supposedly triumphed over ethnicity. However, the persecution of the class enemy followed the same dynamic as the persecution of the race or national enemy. Many died through famine as the Soviet collectivised by force and confiscated seed grain. Many peasants were defined as kulaks and died as a result of their hardships. After the Marxist takeover in China officials had to fill quotas of landlords who were "class enemies". Anyone an official didn't like or who criticised the new government could be declared a class enemy. To divide humans by tribe or class is to ignore most of what makes us human. Nevertheless, dividing humans by tribe is the basis of Woodrow Wilson's self-determination.

Wilson was born in Staunton, Virginia in 1956, and, except for study at Princeton University, did not leave the South until 1883. Thus he lived in the South through the Civil War and the Reconstruction Period. After the Civil War black people were freed from slavery and given full rights as citizens. Land was distributed to some former slaves from the holdings of their former masters. Black Senators and Representatives took seats in Congress and state legislatures for the first time in the nation's history. In 1875 Congress passed a Civil Rights Act which gave equal rights to blacks in public accommodations and jury duty.

Reconstruction lasted approximately from the end of the Civil War until April 1877 when the last of the federal troops were withdrawn from the South. Land holders got their land back from the few slaves who were given land. Various means from legislation to terrorist groups such as the Ku Klux Klan kept blacks from voting. The Supreme Court in 1883 invalidated the Civil Rights Act. In the 1890s segregated facilities for whites and blacks were mandated in the South by state laws. Since most blacks were landless they had little economic base compared to the white population. It was not until the protests of the 1960s that blacks made up a part of their losses. Although Wilson is known as a champion of democracy, he was also an imperialist and a racist and stifled dissent to a greater degree

than McCarthyism did in the United States after World War II.

Eugene Debs was a Democratic Socialist. His vision of democracy differed from Wilson's. He was the leader of the American Railway Union and became a socialist in reaction to the government's use of troops together with thugs hired by the rail owners to crush the Pullman strike of 1894. Debs was sent to prison for ten years in 1918 for opposing the United States participation in the Great War. As an ordinary inmate Debs sought prison reform, "Any honest warden would admit that 75 percent of the prison population consists of decent dependable men, and with this for a foundation I would proceed to build up the superstructure of the prison's self-determination."

Debs viewed self-determination as democratic, and that is possibly the vision most people have of it. Debs' democracy called for the inclusion of women and blacks and specifically excluded the rule of an elite. Wilson's definitions of self-determination and democracy are not the same as those of Debs, but it is Wilson's definition that has determined the actual application of self-determination. Wilson's pattern of democracy was rule by an elite doing what they thought best for the people. Debs criticised the imperialism and racism implicit in Wilson's democracy.

Not all white Southerners were racists. Before the Civil War there were more white Abolitionists (those who wanted slavery outlawed) in the South than the North although circumstances forced them to be less open about their feelings than the Northern Abolitionists. However, Woodrow Wilson was a racist. The previous Republican administrations had maintained equal opportunities for blacks in the United States Civil Service. Those black people who managed to get an educations had no restrictions to their advancement in the Civil Service. As President, Wilson did not allow the advancement of blacks to a level higher than clerk, he repeated on a federal level the actions that the state governments in the South had taken to keep the blacks down. With the election of Wilson, Reconstruction was over on even the federal level.

At that time in the United States as in other English speaking countries and in Germany and France educated opinion ranked nationalities in a hierarchy with the northwestern European peoples on top. Stephen Jay Gould's Mismeasure of Man is an account of the racist science of the period. George Mosse's Crisis of Ideology in Germany tells of the racist attitudes of German academics. Mosse makes the point that the Nazis simply took ideas that pervaded German academic thought and made them available to the German masses. In 1921 the United States Congress tightened immigration by limiting immigration from any European country in any year to three percent of the number of people of that nationality in the population of the United States in 1910. This had the effect of cutting down immigration from southern and eastern Europe. In 1924 Congress further limited immigration by lowering the cap to two percent of the number of people of that nationality in the population of the United States in 1890. An act of 1882 excluded Chinese from naturalisation, and that act had been extended to include all Asians.

When Wilson asked for a Declaration of War against Germany on April 2, 1917, he said, "The world must be made safe for democracy." Wilson spoke of "peace without victory" and victory without revenge. On February 11, 1918 Wilson said in his 'self-determination' speech, "National aspirations must be respected; people may now be dominated and governed only by their own consent. 'Self-determination' is not a mere phrase; it is an imperative principle of action..."

The view of Woodrow Wilson taught in the US secondary schools is that he was an idealistic democrat outmanoeuvered by the wily European power politicians when he went to Europe for the peace treaty negotiations. Compton's Encyclopedia expresses this view, "The peace treaty dragged on week after weary week. David Lloyd George of England, Vittorio Orlando of Italy, Georges Clemenceau of France, all were experienced and shrewd diplomats and each was determined to have his own way. The endless arguing and the official banquets and receptions frayed Wilson's nerves."

However, the results of the peace treaties could have been exactly what Wilson wanted. The three main defeated powers were treated differently. Their different treatment reflected the hierarchy of nationalities held by educated opinion at that time in the English speaking countries, Germany and France. Germany lost little territory compared to the Austro-Hungarian Empire. There was no thought of self-determination of any kind for colonial possessions outside of Europe. They were transferred from the losing colonial powers to the winning colonial powers under League of Nations mandates. The only application of self-determination was to the Austro-Hungarian Empire which was broken up into a number of ethnically determined states.

The Balfour Declaration which designated Palestine as a Jewish Homeland and the breaking up of the Austro-Hungarian Empire possibly had similar motivation. The prospect of persecuted Jews seeking refuge in England probably horrified some English people. Better Palestine, not in my back yard. Maybe Wilson had much the same motivation. He was probably not anxious to see many more Slavs, Hungarians or Jews in the United States. Possibly Wilson reasoned, "Didn't we export all those radicals? Don't they criticise American power used in legitimate pursuit of American interests? Don't they question the economic system? Don't they threaten our way of life and destroy our solidarity? For the mongrels of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, self-determination would mean they would be more likely to stay there. We can handle an occasional Debs." Maybe he equated the nationalisms in the Austro-Hungarian Empire with the Lost Cause of the Confederacy. Maybe he saw it as a useful separation of inferior from superior people. His idealism probably coincided with his prejudices.

Democracy was not served. Except for Czechoslovakia all of the nations from the territories of the Austro-Hungarian Empire plus the Balkan states were Fascist to a degree in the period between the two World Wars.

After World War II the United Nations put self-determination on the agenda again. The

first sentence of Part I Article 1 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights proclaimed by the United Nations states "All peoples have the right of self-determination." Since self-determination does not seem to be defined explicitly in any United Nations document one must define self-determination by the way it has been applied. It was probably not defined explicitly to avoid conflict among member states. One can maintain that self-determination increases the potential for violence, is possibly the worst basis on which to create a nation-state and conflicts with other rights specified by the United Nations.

Self-determination guarantees that the rulers must come from the people ruled. It does not guarantee human freedom, it does not guarantee individual rights and it does not guarantee human dignity. It does guarantee that, in case the new political formulation becomes a tyranny, the tyrant will not be an outsider. Uganda had full self-determination under Idi Amin.

Human beings generally are conditioned by society not to hurt other human beings. The barriers set up by the conditioning are lowered when other people can be thought as an inferior kind of human being, an untermensch. Pan-Slavism set Slavs above other people, Treitschke wrote of the German morality and the volk, and black intellectuals from the former French West Africa write of negritude. In general, proposed self-determinations are on the basis of ethnic unity which separates a people from other groups not sharing their ethnicity. Nationalism which sets the nation above other nations combines with ethnicity to promote notions of ethnic superiority and encourages violence.

The results of this "solution" to ethnic conflict are problematical. Another way self-determination increases the potential for violence is to postpone the resolution of a conflict without doing anything about the causes. Unless there is a conflict there will be no push for self-determination. Divorce is generally considered a last resort in the case of marital difficulties, but divorced individuals can physically separate themselves from their former spouses. Separation of large states into smaller states by self-determination can set off war by leaving opposing peoples separate politically but physically contiguous. Yugoslavia is one example. Another is the separation of India into India and Pakistan. Pakistan is an Islamic state. Therefore, Pakistan should absorb Kashmir which has a Moslem majority. India is a multicultural state. Therefore, India should retain Kashmir since its Moslem majority has full rights of citizenship, and the Kashmiri Hindus would have to live under Islamic law or migrate if Kashmir became part of Pakistan. Kashmiri self-determination has exacerbated this conflict. India and Pakistan have warred about Kashmir.

The Yugoslav conflict could be seen coming in reports coming out of Yugoslavia in 1991. The difficulty of drawing borders is illustrated by the following example of a Croatian village in a Serbian region in Croatia in Yugoslavia. A news story told of Elizabeta Erzegovac, a Croatian woman, living in Kijevo, a Croatian village, of 1,500 in Krajina, a Serbian district within Croatia. She wanted to take her child to a clinic to have an earache and fever treated.

She was turned back by Serbians at a roadblock. Serbs were voting in a referendum where they were expected to secede from Croatia. Kijevo was blockaded for weeks and had no electricity or water for a fortnight. They want to live apart, but they are condemned to live together.

During the past one hundred and fifty years among the few European countries that have been democratic most of the time are Great Britain, Switzerland and the Netherlands. Great Britain's outlines have been determined by the surrounding ocean, and disparate ethnic elements have formed a nation within those outlines. Switzerland since the war of the Sonderbond in 1847 has been a peaceful democratic state. The Swiss are mostly of two religions, three ethnic groups and four languages. The Netherlands are mainly Protestant in the north and Catholic in the south and a minority speak Frisian. The effort to create nation-states from a diversity of backgrounds could have encouraged respect for difference of opinion and promoted democracy. Geography, shared economic interest or sheer accident seem more likely to produce fairer systems than a unity due to ethnic or linguistic identity which is the basis for self-determination.

Another problem with self-determination is that people do not usually have a single ethnic unity. Arabs are not only Arabs, they may be Christians or Muslims. If Christians they may be Maronite or Orthodox. If Muslims they may be Sunnis or Shiites. If Shiites they may be Iraqis or Iranis. If one considers ethnic unity in the context of Arab society, one has to ask which ethnic unity of which groups. Jews are not only Jews, they may be religious or secular. If religious they may Orthodox, Conservative or Reformed. If Orthodox they may be Sephardim or Ashkenazim. If Ashkenazim they may be Chasidim or Mitnagim and so it goes. Which ethnic classification does one consider?

People sometimes love people of a different ethnicity and produce what the Nazis called mischlings. Of course, they can be exterminated to preserve ethnic purity. One cannot draw political boundaries within humans, but one can create tragedies by separating humans who don't want to be separated. The South African Parliament on 17 June 1991 repealed the Population Registration Act which divided South Africans on the basis of race. South African taxi drivers in 1959 were instructed to carry only members of their own race. One Coloured taxi driver pointed out that he would be prevented from carrying his wife or mother in his cab since both of them were classified as white. The Race Classification Board was set up in South Africa. Cuticles were examined as to the pink of the quick. One person relied on the eyelid test. If a lowered eye-lid was continuous and uniform the person was White. Mandela in cooperation with his old opponents is creating one country and ending the above nonsense.

The State of Israel means self-determination for the Jewish people and the culmination of two thousand years of heartfelt longing for a return to Zion. Ask the Palestinians how they feel about it. The ancient homeland was to be the setting for a free people and a refuge for persecuted Jews. The Ethiopian Falashas are the most recent refugees.

Palestinians want the same. There is a shaky peace process which may succeed. What is needed if both people want to live in the same area is some means by which they can live together with neither oppressing the other or confronting the other within the bounds of two hostile nation-states. The present oppression should be ended, but the creation of another nation-state does not seem a reasonable solution. Sari Nussibeh, a Palestinian lecturer in philosophy at Bir Zeit University, has pointed out one tremendous obstacle to the two state solution. The Jews and the Palestinians both find a state unacceptable without Jerusalem as its capital. Nussibeh suggested getting around this difficulty by having a joint administration of the city. If we admit this possibility, why not have the whole country under joint administration? Could Israel be the Switzerland of the Middle East? In that case it would no longer be a Jewish State, but Jews and Arabs could possibly live in peace in the new state. It could include Jordan and have the Law of Return apply to both peoples. Jordan was created by a stroke of Churchill's pen.

Self-determination does not seem a reasonable basis for a nation-state if the results are examined. It is easier for human beings to repeat an unworkable process with a hope that 'We'll do it right this time' than to admit that it doesn't work. The call for self-determination is a conditioned response at present to oppression because other possibilities are not considered, but is self-determination really a determination of self?

The word, self-determination, is a misnomer. The self is our total identification as a person. Self-determination only considers the ethnic part of our identity and ignores everything else about us. It is a very truncated self that is defined in self-determination. Self-determination is a denial of the self. The idea of justifying self-determination by an appeal to group rights is a racist one. A group would then be defined by some ethnic identity. No other criterion is ever suggested. Many don't regard their ethnic identity as the main item in their self-definition although it is a determinant. Making it the most important thing would mean that the individual's associates would be determined in a manner contrary to his wishes if he did not regard his ethnic identity as most important. This is a direct contradiction of Article 20 item 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 10 December 1948. Article 20 item 2 states "No one may be compelled to belong to an Association." The smallest autonomous unit of human society is the individual. In a free society larger groups should be defined only by the consent of the individuals making up the group. It is reasonable to want to see a world where Kurds and Iraqis can live together and a world where each person decides what is most important about themselves and who they want to associate with. There has been too much assigning of yellow stars and official labels. Any group right based upon birth is logically no different than the group right assumed by the hereditary nobility in the premodern era. Whether self-determination can be justified by an abstract concept such as group rights seems irrelevant. What is relevant is whether it actually relieves overall oppression. Any political concept can be justified by some rationale. Self-determination

has the implicit concept, "They would be happier with their own kind." The basis for self-determination, regarding a human's ethnicity or race as their most important characteristic, has caused great suffering. Ethnicity is one expression of the wonderful diversity of the human race, but is it the most important one?

Where a people vary greatly in culture from their neighbors, they may need a measure of isolation to preserve their culture. Tribal people such as the Aborigines in Australia, the Xikrin in Brazil and the Penan in Malaysia cannot be merged into a modern nation state and preserve their tribal culture. To survive as a separate cultural entity they need undeveloped land and isolation. If they were required to set up political units necessary to administer autonomous regions they would have to develop an administrative structure parallel to that of the nation state they are in. It is just as unreasonable to ask them to develop parallel structures to that of the nation-state as it would be for them to request the nation-state to develop parallel structures to that of tribal peoples. Both requests would distort the cultures of the people concerned. If tribal people need isolation to preserve their society give it to them, allow them to determine who enters their area and leave them alone except for allowing individuals who want to leave the tribal culture to do so.

Self-determination limits accountability for war crimes. Nations avoid accountability when charged with human rights abuses by claiming it is an internal affair. Establishing a new nation is like establishing a new corporation. The word limited is used in the names of corporations like Bougainville Copper Limited. BCL could destroy the land in Bougainville and its directors were insulated from responsibility. Likewise Australia can commit war crimes in Bougainville and Robert Ray who as Minister for Defence has arranged for the crimes to be committed cannot be brought to account. According to the Amnesty report of 1991 of actions of the Papua New Guinea army in Bougainville PNG forces with Australian advisers have committed war crimes. Nuremberg Principle II states that the fact that internal law does not impose a penalty for an act which constitutes a crime under international law does not relieve the person who committed the act from responsibility under international law. However, who has jurisdiction, can file charges and bring the accused to the dock? The trials resulting from the Bosnian atrocities may set a precedent.

In Yugoslavia before its breakup, if a lawless gang had gone on a rampage of murder and rape the national government could have brought them to account. When murderous gangs called nations were created out of the ruins of Yugoslavia it doesn't seem possible to bring them to account. They got national sovereignty as a result of their self-determination.

Such units of power as the nation and the corporation oppress individuals. The law limits corporate responsibility. This was purposefully set up to encourage investment. The liability of an individual for the act of a corporation he or she owns shares in is limited by the value of those shares. This is unlike direct company ownership where liability is unlimited. When corporations become multinationals, they can evade the limited responsibility that the nation can force on them.

This is what happened in Papua New Guinea. If Bougainville had been an Australian colony, world attention would probably have been focussed on the present conflict. However, once Papua New Guinea got self-determination it also had national sovereignty. Gareth Evans could now say the allegations of human rights violations on Bougainville were an "internal problem" for Papua New Guinea. The self-determination of Papua New Guinea makes it possible for Australia to evade the consequences of its war crimes. To provide for the protection of citizens from the arbitrary use of power we need mechanisms to bring corporations and nations to account. Self-determination is analogous to corporation law which limits liability. More self-determination is not a solution. Do we keep dividing up into smaller units until the globe is covered by wall to wall ethnic ghettoes? Like a multinational setting up a corporation on the Cook Island to avoid the taxes that citizens of Australia and Australian corporations pay, nations such as Australia and France can now avoid accountability through self-determination of their former colonies.

French troops dressed in Belgian uniforms have been accused of shooting down the airplanes carrying the presidents of Rwanda and Burundi. The French supported and advised the Rwandan Government in the ensuing slaughter of perhaps a half million people. If there is an official international war crimes tribunal for the atrocities committed in Rwanda and Bougainville it is unlikely that either the French or Australian officials responsible for the crimes will be sitting in the dock. Although they may be guilty under the Nuremberg Principles self-determination has created the national entities Rwanda and Papua New Guinea which absolve France and Australia from responsibility for their actions. Gareth Evans can be as free of guilt as Pontius Pilate since the actions on Bougainville are an "internal affair" for Papua New Guinea.

In Australia there is a policy directly opposed to self-determination. It is multiculturism which supports ethnic groups preserving their culture and identity by encouraging different ethnic groups to keep their differences, interact with each other and not isolate themselves by drawing political boundaries around themselves. Self-determination ghettoizes our planet.