

Exist!



a n a r c h i s m   i n  
a   n u t s h e l l



## "Anarchism."

The discourse and movement that desires and seeks the abolition of all power structures. ...The abolition of what can alternatively be grasped at with the terms "oppression" or "coercion" or "hierarchy" or "rule" or "ideology" or "greed" or "fear" or "hate" or any other manner of social psychosis that would accept or justify the destruction of freedom and common empathy.

The ethical assertion that no form of subservience or slavery is acceptable or necessary. That people are more than things.



Some things really are that simple.

Accepting no constraints from without, we countenanced none within ourselves, either, and found that the world opened before us like the petals of a rose.

We fell in love in the wreckage, shouted out songs in the uproar, danced joyfully in the heaviest shackles they could forge; we smuggled our stories through the gauntlets of silence, starvation, and subjugation, to bring them back to life again and again as bombs and beating hearts; we built castles in the sky from the ruins of hell on earth.





"If you have come to help me,  
you are wasting your time. But if  
you have come because your  
liberation is bound up with mine,  
then let us work together."

akpress.org

We killed Kings, Czars  
and Presidents. Threw  
bombs at Hitler and  
Stalin.

infoshop.org

indymedia.org

We helped create Linux,  
Firefox and wikis. Wrote  
open source and hacked  
past all restrictions.

crimethinc.com

foodnotbombs.net

We raised great armies in  
Spain, Korea and  
Ukraine. Fought in the  
trenches against all odds  
to protect and defend the  
world against Fascism,  
Imperialism and  
Communism.

anarchistblackcross.org

We rebuilt New Orleans.  
Snuck past the State's  
mercenaries to provide  
medical aid long before  
anyone else arrived.

We constructed libraries,  
schools and radio towers  
in the jungle with AKs  
strapped to our backs.

We read the constitution  
aloud in dusty western  
city squares and laughed  
knowingly when officers  
arrested us for treason.

We died bringing you the  
eight-hour work day.

We climbed redwoods  
and burnt logging trucks,  
saving great forests.

We stole back hundreds  
of factories from distant  
corporate bosses and are  
still running them more  
efficiently.

## No Masters

The cruel and absurd abuse. The self-satisfied authority. The intimidation and ridicule... We all know the nature of power.

It stems from a value system in which your worth is measured by the number of people and things you control, and how well you obey those above you. Weight is exerted downward through the power structure: everyone is forced to accept and conform to this system by everyone else. You're afraid to disobey those above you because they can bring to bear against you the power of everyone and everything under them. You're afraid to abdicate your power over those below you because they might end up above you.

In our hierarchical system, we're all so busy trying to protect ourselves from each other that we never have a chance to stop and think if this is really the best way our society could be organized. If we could think about it, we'd probably agree that it isn't; for we all know happiness comes from control over our own lives, not other people's lives. And as long as we're busy competing for control over others, we're bound to be the victims of control ourselves.

Even the ones at the very top of the ladder are controlled by their position: they have to work around the clock to maintain it. One false move, and they could end up at the bottom.

It is our hierarchical system that teaches us from childhood to accept the power of any authority figure, regardless of whether it is in our best interest or not. We learn to bow instinctively before anyone who claims to be more important than we are. It is hierarchy that makes homophobia common among poor people in the U.S.A.—they're desperate to feel more valuable, more significant than somebody. It is hierarchy at work when two hundred hardcore kids go to a rock club (already a mistake, but that's a subject for another article) to see a band, and for some stupid reason the clubowner won't let them perform: there are two hundred and six people at the club, two hundred and five of whom want the band to play, but they all accept the decision of the clubowner just because he is older and owns the place (i.e. has more financial clout, and thus more legal clout). It is hierarchical values that are responsible for racism ("white people are better than black people"), classism ("rich people are better than poor people"), sexism ("men are better than women"), and a thousand other prejudices that are deeply ingrained



*The knot in my stomach  
Tells me I'm not a victim anymore  
No past or future can bondage me  
The chains are paper links  
My heart is pumping to the beat of revolution  
You make me want to be so much more just a cog  
The clouds are our footing  
We're gonna jump for the stars*



in our society. It is hierarchy that makes rich people look at poor people as if they aren't even human, and vice versa. It pits employer against employee, manager against worker, teacher against student, making people struggle against each other rather than work together to help each other; separated this way, they can't benefit from each other's skills and ideas and abilities, but must live in jealousy and fear of them. It is hierarchy at work when your boss insults you or makes sexual advances at you and you can't do anything about it, just as it is when police flaunt their power over you.

Power does make people cruel and heartless, and submission does make people cowardly and stupid: and most people in a hierarchical system partake in both.

Hierarchical values are responsible for our destruction of the natural environment and the exploitation of animals: led by the capitalist West, our species seeks control over anything we can get our claws on, at any cost to ourselves or others. And it is hierarchical values that send us to war, fighting for power over each other, inventing more and more powerful weapons until finally the whole world teeters on the edge of nuclear annihilation. But what can we do about hierarchy? Isn't that just the way the world works? Or are there other ways that people could interact, other values we could live by?

### Anarchy

Stop thinking of anarchism as just another "world order," just another social system. From where we all stand, in this very dominated, very controlled world, it is impossible to imagine living without any authorities, without laws or governments.

Instead, think of anarchism as an individual orientation to yourself and others, as a personal approach to life. That isn't impossible to imagine. Conceived in these terms, what would anarchism be? It would be a decision to think for yourself rather than following blindly. It would be a rejection of hierarchy, a refusal to accept the "god given" authority of any nation, law, or other force as being more significant than your own authority over yourself. It would be an instinctive distrust of those who claim to have some sort of rank or status above the others around them, and an unwillingness to claim such status over others for yourself. Most of all, it would be a refusal to place responsibility for yourself in the hands of others: it would be the demand that each of us be able to



## It's Not Like The Obvious Hasn't Been Obvious Before



Emma Goldman



Peter Kropotkin



Voltairine de Cleyre



Noe Ito



Pierre-Joseph Proudhon



Mikhail Bakunin



Errico Malatesta



Lucy Parsons

Leo Tolstoy, Buenaventura Durruti,  
Dorothy Day, Sakae Osugi, Murray  
Bookchin, Joseph Déjacque,  
William Godwin, Mother Jones,  
Albert Parsons, Ezra Heywood, Li  
Shih-tseng, John Henry Mackay, Liu  
Shifu, Zhang Ji, Lysander Spooner,  
Benjamin Tucker, You, Henry David  
Thoreau, Ba Jin, Josiah Warren,  
Emiliano  
Zapata, Tai Xu,  
George Orwell  
...and on forever



## Adjectives To Taste

**Communal:** How can we build community and secure self-management? How do our systems of exploitation grow? How might we facilitate more direct democracy and begin meeting the needs of all?

**Market:** How do we place power in the illusions, ghosts and idols of collective identity? How can we re-root society in individual conscience? How might we reject paranoia and coercion in favor of mutually profitable competition? How does consensual free-association challenge and destroy monopolies?

**Primitive:** How has hierarchy, alienation and senseless work been built into the very premise of civilization? How should we achieve a more active or sensual integration with our environment? How might we rewild and reject our domestication?

**Extropian:** How is the basic nature of life to evolve beyond operating constraints already flourishing?

How might we apply our creative energy to craft an open society of free information, collaborative self-improvement and a more open source reality?

**Relational:** How do we internalize power structures and identities in our interpersonal relations? How does the domination, utilization and commodification of others first take root? How can we create more egalitarian relationships in our everyday lives? How do our conceptions or approaches to race, gender, age and the like facilitate oppressive power structures?

...As I came into contact with more and more anarchists, I found that most of us could agree to disagree on many issues but still find enough common ground to support one another's activities and actions, whether or not we chose to directly participate in them.

The important thing was to keep the pressure on - to **work, educate, agitate for a better life.**

...Rob los Ricos, 2005

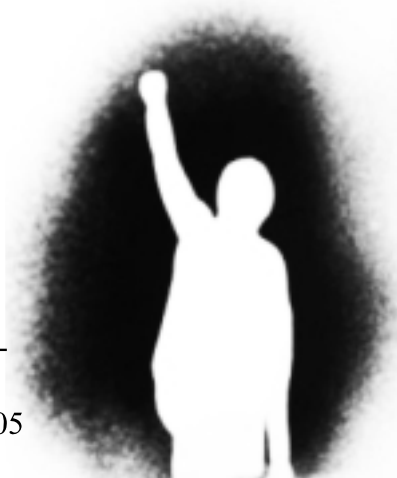
**OK, I'm interested**

**What do I do next?**

Not to be brusque, but haven't you been paying attention?

We're not trying to get you to convert to a religion or vote for a party here—on the contrary!

The best and the hardest part of this is that it's **entirely in your hands.**



choose our own destiny.

According to this definition, there are a great deal more anarchists than it seemed, though most wouldn't refer to themselves as such. For most people, when they think about it, want to have the right to live their own lives, to think and act as they see fit. Most people trust themselves to figure out what they should do more than they trust any authority to dictate it to them. Almost everyone is frustrated when they find themselves pushing against faceless, impersonal power.

You don't want to be at the mercy of governments, bureaucracies, police, or other outside forces, do you? Surely you don't let them dictate your entire life. Don't you do what you want to, what you believe in, at least whenever you can get away with it? In our everyday lives, we all are anarchists. Whenever we make decisions for ourselves, whenever we take responsibility for our own actions rather than deferring to some higher power, we are putting anarchism into practice. So if we are all anarchists by nature, why do we always end up accepting the domination of others, even creating forces to rule over us? Wouldn't you rather figure out how to coexist with your fellow human beings by working it out directly between yourselves, rather than depending on some external set of rules? Remember, the system they accept is the one you must live under: if you want your freedom, you can't afford to not be concerned about whether those around you demand control of their lives or not.

*Do we really need masters to command and control us?*

For thousands of years, we have been sold centralized power and hierarchy in general on the premise that we do. We've all been taught that without police, we would all kill each other; that without bosses, no work would ever get done; that without governments, civilization itself would fall to pieces. Is all this true? Certainly, it's true that today little work gets done when the boss isn't watching, chaos ensues when governments fall, and violence sometimes occurs when the police aren't around. But are these really indications that there is no other way we could organize society?

Isn't it possible that workers won't get anything done unless they are under observation because they are used to not doing anything without being prodded—more than that, because they resent being inspected, instructed, condescended to by their managers, and don't want to do anything for them that they don't have to? Perhaps if they



were working together for a common goal, rather than being paid to take orders, working towards objectives that they have no say in and that don't interest them much, they would be more proactive. Not to say that everyone is ready or able to do such a thing today; but our laziness is conditioned rather than natural, and in a different environment, we might find that people don't need bosses to get things done.

Violence isn't just limited to physical harm: any relationship that is established by force, such as the one between police and civilians, is a violent relationship. When you are acted upon violently, you learn to act violently back. Isn't it possible, then, that the implicit threat of police on every street corner—of the near omnipresence of uniformed, impersonal representatives of state power—contributes to tension and violence, rather than dispelling them? If that doesn't seem likely to you, and you are middle class and/or white, ask a poor black or Hispanic man how the presence of police makes him feel.

When the standard forms of human interaction all revolve around hierarchical power, when human intercourse so often comes down to giving and receiving orders (at work, at school, in the family, in legal courts), how can we expect to have no violence in our system? People are used to using force against each other in their daily lives, the force of authoritarian power; of course using physical force cannot be far behind in such a system. Perhaps if we were more used to treating each other as equals, to creating relationships based upon equal concern for each other's needs, we wouldn't see so many people resort to physical violence against each other.

And what about government control? Without it, would our society fall into pieces, and our lives with it?

Certainly things would be a great deal different without governments than they are now—but is that necessarily a bad thing? Is our modern society really the best of all possible worlds? Is it worth it to grant masters and rulers so much control over our lives, out of fear of trying anything different? Besides, we can't claim that we need government control to prevent mass bloodshed, because it is governments that have perpetrated the greatest slaughters of all: in wars, in holocausts, in the centrally organized enslaving and obliteration of entire peoples and cultures. And it may be that when governments have broken down, many people lost their lives in the resulting chaos and infighting. But this fighting is almost always between other power-hungry hierarchical groups, other would-be

So do what you want with your life, whatever it is! But to be sure you do get what you want, think carefully about what it really is, first, and how to go about getting it. Analyze the world around you, so you'll know which people and forces are working against your desires, and which ones are on your side... and how you can work together with us. We're out here, living life to the fullest, waiting for you-hopping trains across the United States, organizing political protests in French public schools, writing beautiful letters at sunrise in Bangkok. We just finished making love in the corporate washroom a minute before you walked in on your half hour lunchbreak. And Life is waiting for you with us, on the peaks of unclimbed mountains, in the smoke of campfires and burning buildings, in the arms of lovers who will turn your world upside down. Come join us!



**I am an Anarchist! Wherefore I will**

**Not rule, and also ruled I will not be!**



## There is a difference between Life and Survival

Whatever medical science may profess, there is a difference between Life and survival. There is more to being alive than just having a heartbeat and brain activity. Being alive, really alive, is something much subtler and more magnificent. Their instruments measure blood pressure and temperature, but overlook joy, passion, love, all the things that make life really matter. To make our lives matter again, to really get the most out of them, we will have to redefine life itself. We have to dispense with their merely clinical definitions, in favor of ones which have more to do with what we actually feel.

As it stands, how much living do we have in our lives? How many mornings do you wake up feeling truly free, thrilled to be alive, breathlessly anticipating the experiences of a new day? How many nights do you fall asleep feeling fulfilled, going over the events of the past day with satisfaction? Most of us feel as though everything has already been decided without us, as if living is not a creative activity but rather something that happens to us. That's not being alive, that's just surviving: being undead. We have undertakers, but their services are not usually required; we have morgues, but we spend most of our time in office cubicles and video arcades, in shopping malls, in front of televisions. Of course suburban housewives and petty executives are terrified of risk and change; they can't imagine that there is anything more valuable than physical safety. Their hearts may be beating, but they no longer believe in their dreams, let alone chase after them.

But this is how the revolution begins: a few of us start chasing our dreams, breaking our old patterns, embracing what we love (and in the process discovering what we hate), daydreaming, questioning, acting outside the boundaries of routine and regularity. Others see us doing this, see people daring to be more creative and more adventurous, more generous and more ambitious than they had imagined possible, and join us one by one. Once enough people embrace this new way of living, a point of critical mass is finally reached, and society itself begins to change. From that moment, the world will start to undergo a transformation: from the frightening, alien place that it is, into a place ripe with possibility, where our lives are in our own hands and any dream can come true.

governors and rulers. If we were to reject hierarchy absolutely, and refuse to serve any force above ourselves, there would no longer be any large scale wars or holocausts.

That would be a responsibility each of us would have to take on equally, to collectively refuse to recognize any power as worth serving, to swear allegiance to nothing but ourselves and our fellow human beings. But if we all were to do it, we would never see another world war again.

**Write Nothing  
On Your Flag**



**Only People  
Matter**

Of course, even if a world entirely without hierarchy is possible, we should not have any illusions that any of us will likely live to see it realized.

We should, rather, recognize the patterns of submission and domination in our own lives, and, to the best of our ability, break free of them. We should put the anarchist ideal (no masters, no slaves) into effect in our daily lives however we can. Every time one of us remembers not to accept the authority of the powers that be at face value, each time one of us is able to escape the system of domination for a moment (whether it is by getting away with something forbidden by a teacher or boss, relating to a member of a different social stratum as an equal, etc.), that is a victory for the individual and a blow against hierarchy.

Do you still believe that a hierarchy-free society is impossible? There are plenty of examples throughout human history: the bushmen of the Kalahari desert still live together without authorities, never trying to force or command each other to do things, but working together and granting each other freedom and autonomy.

If you need an example closer to your daily life, remember the last time you gathered with your friends to relax on a Friday night.





Some of you brought food, some of you brought entertainment, some provided other things, but nobody kept track of who owed what to whom. You did things as a group and enjoyed yourselves; things actually got done, but nobody was forced to do anything, and nobody assumed the position of chief.

We have these moments of non-exploitative, non-coercive, non-hierarchical interaction in our lives constantly, and these are the times when we most enjoy the company of others, when we get the most out of other people; but somehow it doesn't occur to us to demand that our society work this way, as well as our friendships and love affairs. Sure, it's a lofty goal to ask that it does—but let's dare to reach for high goals, let's not fucking settle for anything less than the best in our lives! Each of us only gets a few years on this planet to enjoy life; let's try to work together to do it, rather than fighting amongst each other for miserable prizes like status and power.

"Anarchism" is the revolutionary idea that no one is more qualified than you are to decide what your life will be.

—It means trying to figure out how to work together to meet our individual needs, how to work with each other rather than "for" or against each other. And when this is impossible, it means preferring strife to submission and domination.

—It means not valuing any THING, any system or ideology, above the people it purports to serve.

—It means not trying to force the self to abide by any external laws, not trying to restrict your emotions to the predictable or the practical, not pushing your instincts and desires into boxes: For there is no cage large enough to accommodate the human soul in all its flights, all its heights and depths.

—It means refusing to put the responsibility for your happiness in anyone else's hands, whether that be parents, lovers, employers, or society itself. It means taking the pursuit of meaning and joy in your life upon your own shoulders.



It is difficult to convince a man who has a lot to live for in his personal relationships to be willing to fight and die for an abstraction such as the state; for that matter, it may be difficult to convince him to even pay taxes. It poses a threat to cultures of all kinds, for when human beings are given wisdom and valor by true love they will not be held back by traditions or customs which are irrelevant to the feelings that guide them.

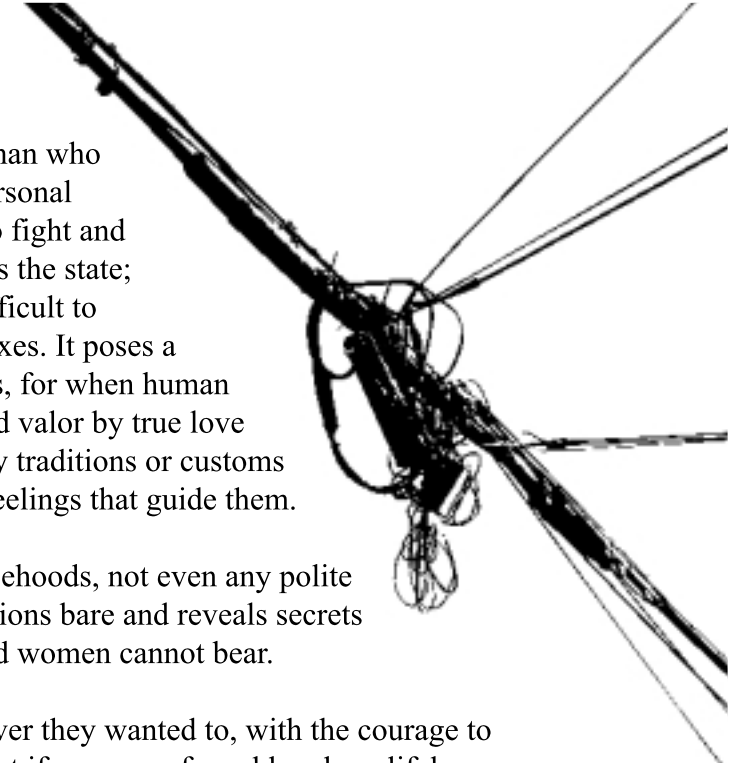
Love permits no lies, no falsehoods, not even any polite half-truths, but lays all emotions bare and reveals secrets which domesticated men and women cannot bear.

What if everyone did whatever they wanted to, with the courage to face any consequences? What if everyone feared loveless, lifeless monotony more than they fear taking risks, more than they fear being hungry or cold or in danger? What if everyone set down their "responsibilities" and "common sense," and dared to pursue their wildest dreams, to set the stakes high and live each day as if it were the last? Think what a place the world would be!

We must fight against these cultural restraints that would cripple and smother our desires. For it is love that gives meaning to life, desire that makes it possible for us to make sense of our existence and find purpose in our lives. Without these, there is no way for us to determine how to live our lives, except to submit to some authority, to some god, master or doctrine that will tell us what to do and how to do it without ever giving us the satisfaction that self-determination does. So fall in love today, with men, with women, with music, with ambition, with yourself... with life!

**Activism without love is hardly Activism**

**Love without action is hardly Love**





## Join the Resistance: Fall in Love

Falling in love is the ultimate act of revolution, of resistance to today's tedious, socially restrictive, culturally constrictive, humanly meaningless world.

Love transforms the world. Where the lover formerly felt boredom, he now feels passion. Where she once was complacent, she now is excited and compelled to self-asserting action. The world which once seemed empty and tiresome becomes filled with meaning, filled with risks and rewards, with majesty and danger. Life for the lover is a gift, an adventure with the highest possible stakes; every moment is memorable, heartbreaking in its fleeting beauty. When he falls in love, a man who once felt disoriented, alienated, and confused will know exactly what he wants. Suddenly his existence will make sense to him; suddenly it becomes valuable, even glorious and noble, to him. Burning passion is an antidote that will cure the worst cases of despair and resigned obedience.

Love makes it possible for individuals to connect to others in a meaningful way—it impels them to leave their shells and risk being honest and spontaneous together, to come to know each other in profound ways. Thus love

makes it possible for them to care about each other genuinely, rather than at the end of the gun of Christian doctrine. But at the same time, it plucks the lover out of the routines of everyday life and separates her from other human beings. She will feel a million miles away from the herd of humanity, living as she is in a world entirely different from theirs.

There is no place for the passionate, romantic lover in today's world, business or private. For he can see that it might be more worthwhile to hitchhike to Alaska (or to sit in the park and watch the clouds sail by) with his sweetheart than to study for his calculus exam or sell real estate, and if he decides that it is, he will have the courage to do it rather than be tormented by unsatisfied longing.



**WANTED:** Creative, independent men and women, tired of being exhausted by the trivial details of modern survival, fed up with being bored by modern entertainment, no longer confused by the distractions of the mass media... not content with limiting their freedom, their lives, to their "free time." People who prefer **idealism to realism**, and **reality to ideology**.

Look at the world around us; it is a world that we have created. We transformed the old world into this one—but why this one? Is this the world we would have chosen, if we had considered in advance the question of what the best of all possible worlds might be? But before you despair, think—we created this world, it is we who make it up. Could we not make another world out of it, then, if we chose?



## Solidarity In Liberty

The inherent principles of human existence are summed up in the single law of solidarity. This is the golden rule of humanity, and may be formulated thus: no person can recognise or realise his or her own humanity except by recognising it in others and so cooperating for its realisation by each and all. No man can emancipate himself save by emancipating with him all the men about him.

My liberty is the liberty of everybody. I cannot be free in idea until I am free in fact. To be free in idea and not free in fact is to be revolt. To be free in fact is to have my liberty and my right, find their confirmation, and sanction in the liberty and right of all mankind. I am free only when all men are my equals. (first and foremost economically.)

What all other men are is of the greatest importance to me. However independent I may imagine myself to be, however far removed I may appear from mundane consideration by my social status, I am enslaved to the misery of the meanest member of society. The outcast is my daily menace. Whether I am Pope, Czar, Emperor, or even prime Minister, I am always the creature of their circumstance, the conscious product of their ignorance, want and clamouring. They are in slavery, and I, the superior one, am enslaved in consequence.



Individuality is a thing that cannot be killed. Quiet it may be, but just as certainly, silent as the growth of a blade of grass, it offers its perpetual and unconquerable protest against the dictates of Authority.

And this silent, unconquerable, menacing thing, that balked God, provoked him to the use of rack, thumb-screw, stock, hanging, drowning, burning, and other instruments of "infinite mercy," in the 17th century fought a



successful battle against that authority which sought to control this fortress of freedom. It established its right to be. It overthrew that portion of government which attempted to guide the brains of men. It "broke the corner." It declared and maintained the anarchy, or non-rulership, of thought.

Now you who so fear the word "an-arch," remember! the whole combat of the 17th century, of which you are justly proud, and to which you never tire of referring, was waged for the sole purpose of realizing anarchism in the realm of thought.

...Voltairine de Cleyre, 1890

One thing ideologues of all stripes share is a negative view of human nature -- they see us all as basically bad, and in need of improvement (achieved by a period of indoctrination, naturally, which they offer). Further, ideologues hold themselves exempt from this principal of negative human nature -- that is, they are okay, but the rest of the world is screwed.

The anarchist, conversely, holds that human beings are basically good and not in need of guidance, coercion, and control -- indeed, we hold steadfastly to the idea that the only evils in society come about when some seek to control and coerce others, and that the mechanisms of power, privilege, and control turn even the saintliest stalwart into a conniving manipulator.

...Dave Neal, 1997



## A Timeless Resurgence of Free Thought

Someone has said that it requires less mental effort to condemn than to think. The widespread mental indolence, so prevalent in society, proves this to be only too true. Rather than to go to the bottom of any given idea, to examine into its origin and meaning, most people will either condemn it altogether, or rely on some superficial or prejudicial definition of non-essentials.

Anarchism urges man to think, to investigate, to analyze every proposition.

...Referring to the American government, the greatest American Anarchist, David Thoreau, said: "*Government is but a tradition, though a recent one, endeavoring to transmit itself unimpaired to posterity, but each instance losing its integrity; it has not the vitality and force of a single living man. Law never made man a whit more just; and by means of their respect for it, even the well disposed are daily made agents of injustice.*"

Indeed, the keynote of government is injustice. With the arrogance and self-sufficiency of the King who could do no wrong, governments ordain, judge, condemn, and punish the most insignificant offenses, while maintaining themselves by the greatest of all offenses, the annihilation of individual liberty.

Its highest attainment is the reduction of mankind to clockwork.

...Emma Goldman, 1917



If such is the case I can be called an intelligent man. But I am foolish with the folly of the people, my wisdom stunned by their needs, my mind palsied. I am a brave man, but I am the coward of the peoples' fear. Their misery appals me, and every day I shrink from the struggle of life. My career becomes an evasion of living. A rich man, I tremble before their poverty, because it threatens to engulf me. I discover I have no riches in myself, no wealth but that stolen from the common life of the common people. As privileged man, I turn pale before the people's demand for justice. I feel a menace in that demand. The cry is ominous and I am threatened. It is the feeling of the malefactor dreading, yet waiting for inevitable arrest. My life is privileged and furtive. But it is not mine. I lack freedom and contentment. In short, wishing to be free, though I am wise, brave, rich, and privileged, I cannot be free because my immediate associates do not wish men to be free; and the Mass, from whom all wisdom, bravery, riches, and Privileges ascend, do not know how to secure their freedom. The slavery of the common people make them the instruments of my oppression. For we to be free, they must be free. We must conquer bread and freedom in common.

The true, human liberty of a single individual implies the emancipation of all: because, thanks to the law of solidarity, which is the natural basis of all human society, I cannot be, feel, and know myself really, completely free, if I am not surrounded by men as free as myself. The slavery of each is my slavery.

...Mikhail Bakunin, 1867





## Towards Anarchism

It is a general opinion that we, because we call ourselves revolutionists, expect Anarchism to come with one stroke - as the immediate result of an insurrection which violently attacks all that which exists and which replaces all with institutions that are really new. And to tell the truth this idea is not lacking among some comrades who also conceive the revolution in such a manner.

This prejudice explains why so many honest opponents believe Anarchism a thing impossible; and it also explains why some comrades, disgusted with the present moral condition of the people and seeing that Anarchism cannot come about soon, waver between an extreme dogmatism which blinds them to the realities of life and an opportunism which practically makes them forget that they are Anarchists and that for Anarchism they should struggle.

Of course the triumph of Anarchism cannot be the consequence of a miracle; it cannot come about in contradiction to the laws of development (an axiom of evolution that nothing occurs without sufficient cause), and nothing can be accomplished without adequate means.

If we should want to substitute one government for another, that is, impose our desires upon others, it would only be necessary to combine the material forces needed to resist the actual oppressors and put ourselves in their place.

But we do not want this; we want Anarchism which is a society based on free and voluntary accord - a society in which no one can force his wishes on another and in which everyone can do as he pleases and together all will voluntarily contribute to the well-being of the community. But because of this Anarchism will not have definitively and universally triumphed until all men



will not only not want to be commanded but will not want to command; nor will Anarchism have succeeded unless they will have understood the advantage of solidarity and know how to organise a plan of social life wherein there will no longer be traces of violence and imposition. And as the conscience, determination, and capacity of men continuously develop and find means of expression in the gradual modification of the new environment and in the realisation of the desires in proportion to their being formed and becoming imperious, so it is with Anarchism; Anarchism cannot come but little by little slowly, but surely, growing in intensity and extension.

Therefore, the subject is not whether we accomplish Anarchism today, tomorrow, or within ten centuries, but that we walk towards Anarchism today, tomorrow, and always.

...Errico Malatesta, 1931

