

ALliance

"We have done this because we love liberty and hate authority." - Voltairine de Cleyre



Issue #4

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**Borders are gang-
turf boundaries**



**drawn by conquest
and upheld by
oppression**

<http://www.libertyactivism.info>

Table of Contents

A Note From Z's	1
In Defense of the Leech: A Rant	3
Russian Market Anarchism: An Overview	17
Conviviality and Empire	26
Active Listening as Conflict Resolution	32
Six Questions with Shawn Wilbur	38
To Vote or Not to Vote: A Symposium	40
Your Obligation to Not Vote	41
Election Strategy For Anarchists	43
Politics: A Survey of Anarchist Positions	47
The Past and Future of the Ladies' Liberal League	55
Some Recommended Reading from ALLiance	58

A Note From Z's

Thanks for checking out ALLiance #4. This experiment has been going on for a year and it feels great. I'm very excited to introduce a few new features in this issue. Six Questions is an interview series. This issue also features a symposium on voting. Finally we are introducing a classic reprint of Voltairine de Cleyre's piece *The Past and Future of the Ladies' Liberal League*. This piece will be serialized over the next three issues.

Speaking of future issues, the next issue will focus on the Industrial Workers of the World. Are you a member of the IWW? What role do you see unions playing in the future? We'd like to hear from you! Please contact us..

Last but not least is that ALLiance has a website. It should be up and running soon. Check out www.alliancejournal.net.

Thanks for your support.

Chris Lempa

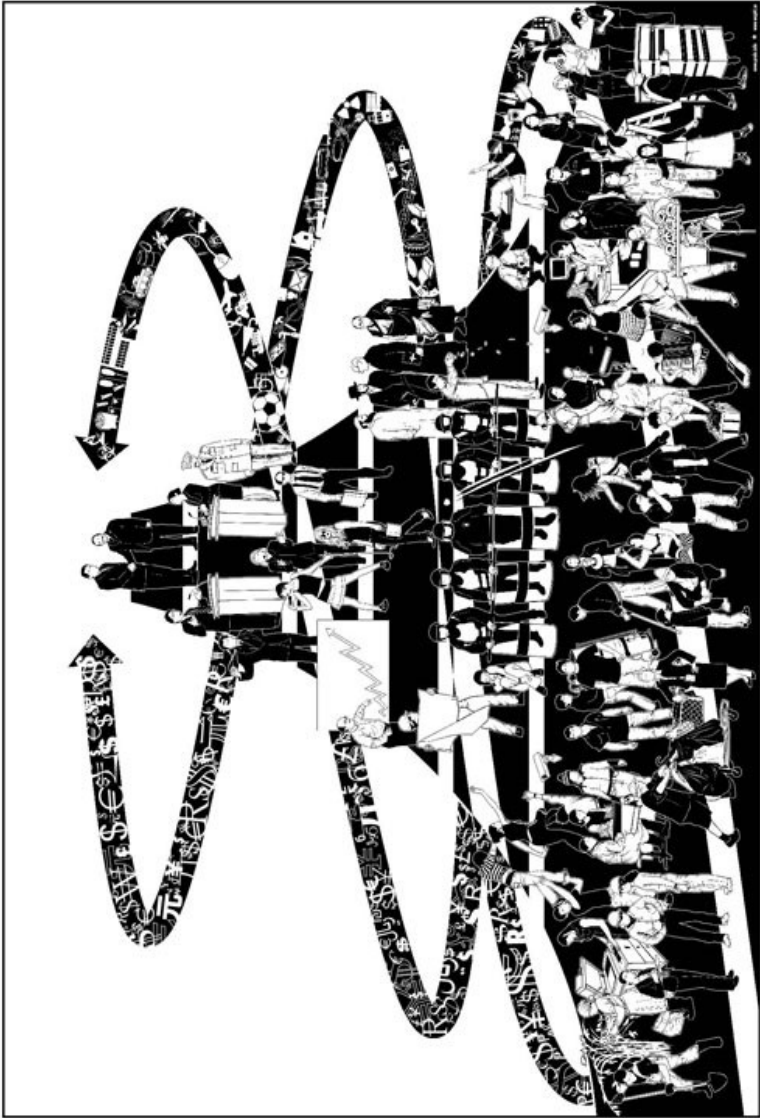
chris (at) chrislempa.info

www.chrislempa.wordpress.com

PO Box 442353

Lawrence, KS 66044

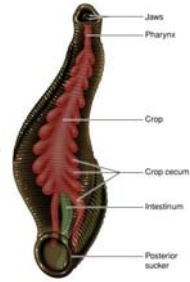




In Defense of the Leech: A Rant

By Ben Aubin

Every popular system of government throughout history has convinced you that working is an essential part of survival. Is it any wonder that so much cultural and social value is placed on a Work Ethic? Can a person have a strong Work Ethic, who isn't working at a traditional job? Some readers would answer that question, yes, then begin to reconsider. If a person needs a job, and has the opportunity to claim one, then turns it down, can this person still qualify for a good Work Ethic? Is this really so far out of our experience that we must immediately put negative framing on the situation, and lean toward believing this imaginary person is insane or degenerate?



The concept of a Work Ethic is a cultural construct. It glorifies the worker, polarizing them, and making them into something out of Greek Legend. It places any character trait which gets in the way of work as mental, social, cultural, or physical, weakness. If you are not a warrior, you are a subordinate; urged to pay homage to the warrior culture. To not work, is to be weak. To have a strong Work Ethic is to be collectively conscious, trustworthy, disciplined, industrious, proactive, patient, punctual, and committed to perseverance, self reliance, and personal growth. However, I believe one must explore the two motivators for sustaining a good Work Ethic, in order to answer the question above.

Let's imagine a world where no one works, because no one has to. The ads and billboards everywhere have been covered in local art; as you walk up the street, you notice the flag outside the post office is missing, and has been for months—

replaced with a pillowcase. Everything is provided for, and time barely exists. It's just one long day. People are still doing things. They are still going places. They are still solving problems. Work, in this context, is simply defined as, “accomplishing one or many connected tasks over an extended period of time.” Of course, in order to “Work,” we must have “something which takes time to accomplish.” So, what would Work look like if you lived in a world wherein the social pressure inviting you to believe that the Work you do decides whether or not your government and economy will survive?

Here, the split happens.

We can now clearly see Duty, as a motivator, would no longer exist. Seeking out and finding your life's embarrassing most secret Purpose would become all important, because it is the only motivation that we would have to wake up in the morning.

To eliminate Duty, only leaves the evil twin motivator, Joy—fluidly defined, and forever spontaneous. Joy crumbles societies. It is addictive, and tolerance is quickly built. One must constantly strengthen their dosage in order to benefit. One must be totally aware of themselves, rather than their culture. It poisons the mind, and creates outlaws, libertines, and hedonists. It moves like water, and will fill in every space it is allowed to flow, until it is obstructed, or allowed to dry up. It does not compromise. It is flakier than a hot hipster. Joy only destroys, because it is akin to True Love. Read that sentence again slowly in your mind. To be committed to Joy, is to be raw; to have a home out on the limb. Only the strong survive.

You—yes you, and not in a generalized sense—are tamed

with fear, and negative motivation. I call it coercion, but its True Name is Duty. We few, we happy few, invite you to give up, surrender, and relinquish control. Join us Anonymous homeless, jobless, fauxcialites, working hard at our own private purpose, not yours. With Joy, we do unto ourselves as we wish others will do unto us, because play is not passive.



The downside to Duty is boredom, but the downside to Joy is Ego, and it must be kept checked, lest the user become a philosophical vanguardist. The wise, motivated by Joy, understand that outreach cannot exist, because Joy is not objective. Our lives should only passively inspire others, and dare them to live up to their own curiosities, by witnessing us doing the same. After all, the unexperienced so often mistake Joy for the Sloth Time required after a day of Duty. Sloth Time is merely a 2:1 reaction to Working for someone else's Joy or Duty. Two hours of Sloth, for every one hour of Duty Work.

Duty is reactionary. Joy never reacts. It only destroys.

At times, it seeps through the cracks of the Duty Worker's day. Sloth Time activities such as movies, video games, habitually smoking marijuana cigarettes, drinking heavily, becoming a pickup artist, or becoming religiously spiritual, may inspire even the most destitute Duty Worker to imagine quick flits of a Joyful reality. These flits are the sealed invitations of Joy. They are the equivalent of sitting on a stationary roller coaster. Duty Workers coerce themselves into thinking they are content getting off before it gets started, because they don't have the time to enjoy the whole ride. They spend it all on Duty Work, and Sloth Time.

In life, we tend to produce the results of that which we focus on. Supplementing Joy, to avoid the pain of boredom and servitude, keeps focus on the pain, through Negative Motivation—the cohort of Duty, dedicated to Sloth Time. It tells you when you've had enough Joy, and cuts you off before you can begin questioning your Duty. Beneath cultural rationalizations—in the part of the mind the Duty Worker avoids—the secret place; the heart of hearts; it is impossible to perceive a negative. It is like a young child, and assumes Duty does not exist—only Joy.

When the Duty Worker tells themselves, “I'm going out to party, so I can forget work,” the child mind ignores any negative. It hears, “I'm going out to party, so I can work.”

The same can be said for the person who thinks, “I wish I made more money, so I could stop being poor.” It hears: “I wish I made more money, so I could being poor.”

When it corrects the grammar, so it can fully comprehend that, guess what it thinks?

Negative motivation, and the Duty Ethic, exist for short-term emergency situations. Sustained, they only fulfill their singular purpose, and if the perceived emergency is not thwarted, it starts all over again. Once you have enough money that you're not poor, you lack the motivation to make more than that, and so you begin to self-destruct, so you may continue motivating yourself to make the money you are motivating yourself to have. Money, as it turns out, can make Joy supplements rather convenient. This ties positive emotions to ones self-destruction, and devolves the user into a Masochist. They become addicted, and trade war stories with other Legendary Duty Work acquaintances, rationalizing and

fetishizing their cultural commitment.

Slowly, the purpose of the Duty Worker's life becomes self-destruction, instead of cultural-destruction, since their limitations are now of their own design. They're tailor fit. They'll say: at least we have a degree of control over our comfort, emotions, mind, and decisions now. Their culture will say: you're right, but just in case you have any doubt, here's a list of scapegoats: scary current events, financial instability, unsavory background traits, poor upbringing by your family, fascist significant other, unpopular skin color, lack of hanging genitals, over-emotionalism, aesthetic, having the wrong attitude—or the contemporary favorite—a potential list of psychosis.

However, Joy does have a chance. By self-destructing, one invites critique. Worded another way, self-destruction is a call for help. Sadly, most close to a Duty Worker, are also Duty Workers, and so they will only insist on ways to return their friend to the fray. A Joyful wild card is the only chance that remains. Their Duty Worker friends will only validate the collective nature of Duty, inadvertently throwing more on top of the young child Joy.



Our life purpose must be tailor fit. It will likely not have mass appeal. The purpose must be singularly interesting and positively motivating to the person, refusing to compromise for any substitute. You can witness it shine through as they make fun of the qualities they associate with their secret purpose, or attack those same qualities in other people. Those Duty Workers whom are able to afford higher Joy supplementation, will press their own Purpose onto the concerned Duty Worker, persuading them to absorb their

life's purpose by highlighting their achievable means of accessing high supplementation. The only means to achieving these means then, is a sense of Duty.

Duty Motivation presents a conundrum for both Anarchism, and the Status Quo. Only Joy can create success. Only Joy can create millions—or remove the necessity for millions. However, the Status Quo is less concerned with this than Anarchists, because whether the worker is self-destructive, or not, they will still be forced to Work. By contrast, those living in an Anarchist society must all carry with them the characteristics of a successful entrepreneur—which may only occur once Joy has stepped in, and Sloth Time has ceased to be an internal calling. Thus, the problem is far more immediate for Anarchists, because we, like Joy, refuse to compromise. We, unlike Capitalism, will not create devices in society to keep the Duty Workers separate from the Joy Workers. We will not idolize the stoic worker of ages; those retaining high social value by coupling their demeanor with a sense of humility. We will not accept being Tired as a status symbol.

Anarchism is fueled by humility's opposite: humanity. As a tool and philosophy, it is potent, powerful, and full of life. For many gathered at its fringes, it is a beautiful framework for working on new and exciting theories and activities. When it's explored in absence of self-destruction, it begins to build a bridge between thought and action, which bestows its user with a lust for knowledge, and a constantly evolving paradigm. Joy then, is Anarchism's only renewable, socially valuable, resource. Without its continued existence, Anarchism cannot exist.

So, why are there so many Self Destructive Anarchists?

This crossover hybrid has only one equal: Christianity. The promise of a great world, later, after Death, or the Revolution, is nearly impossible to shake.

Newcomers to Anarchism skim over the movement when they're met with this majority truth—the world outside of elegant theory (written by a minority of Anarchist intellectuals), is heavily populated by practitioners guided by one purpose: justified Self Destruction. It's the flip side of the coin.



However, since many of these Anarchists live off the grid, have no set work schedule, and spend most of their time socializing, or in solitude, the paradigm—from the outside—can look very similar to the lifestyle of Joy, because the Joyful, and the Justified, both seem to care very little of the dangers of spontaneity, and exiting social norms. Additionally, many of the Justified (Christians and Anarchists alike) come from backgrounds of Abusee/Abuser relationships, and thus tend to play into the cycle of victim, martyr, persecutor. (This probably explains why women, and people of color, are minorities even within the anarchist movement: when you live through daily abuse, you tend to look for quantifiable ways out, not ways to justify staying in.)

The Justified may be quickly identified. They repeat more of what they learn through third parties, than what they learn first hand. They are elitist. They're more concerned with the long term than the short term. They're vanguardist. They hold what they have and consider to be culturally valuable over your head. They expect you to remember the things that

they think and say as well as they do, and scold you when you don't. Ask them to describe three similar objects, and they'll tell you the differences, instead of the similarities. They notice the negative aspects of things first. They share war stories as often as possible, to give themselves a sense of higher social value, rather than motivational stories. They live in a world ruled by scarcity, instead of abundance. They stick to patterns, and say No to invitations, more than Yes. They are typically co-dependent, don't know it, and espouse their disgust for co-dependency—and mistake inter-dependency for the same thing. They are aggressive collectivist nurses, pretending to help others with positive sounding words—masking negativity—likening themselves to Atlas, and remaining focused on saving everyone around them from future pain, and anxiety. They are attracted to other members of the Justified, because they attempt to save one another; the young child inside them secretly hoping to fix their own dissatisfaction by witnessing how to fix it first in someone else. The more socially active the Justified become, the more external validation will be required for them to feel Justified. So, they will often call their attacks on others, “assessments,” or “coaching,” and reason that they should be celebrated as a pivotal positive, or objective, influence in the lives of those around them. During times when celebration is scarce, they self destruct, and blame external elements, or superstitions. They do all of this of course, with a sense of Duty, negatively motivated by the secret mantra, “I must fix them, so I will not resemble them.”

In life, we tend to produce the results of that which we focus on.

The Justified also like to avoid “Drama,” and liken themselves to the shadowy Oz, working behind the curtain. When their cover is blown, and they believe their Justified peers can tell

they're “pulling strings,” they internalize and submit, even if that is the not their peer's desired outcome. They are tyrannical in their avoidance of “Drama.” Skin deep is as far as the Justified like to go, lest (they believe) they will blow their cover. They only discuss “Drama” topics in whispered voices, behind closed doors, and they pressure their peers to collectively worship these moments with them, like Pagan deities. Life, for the Justified, is all about secrets. “Drama” is the secret's nemesis.

Drama is difficult to define, because it has different parameters for every member of the Justified. It is typically the expression of something passionately or situationally important to a person—expressed in a direct or confrontational way. Abusers/Abusees abhor direct confrontation, and the Self Destructive character flaw refuses



to acknowledge critique, lest they begin thinking about Joy, which will destroy their safety blanket, control. Often, the Justified continue pointing the finger, until a finger points back, and they thus learn everything in a rather peculiar way: second person. They avoid the ever-dreadful “knock down,” by educating themselves through proxy. They spontaneously or purposefully stumble across others who, they believe, have an opinion, belief, or trait, that they wish they had the confidence to sustain in themselves. Then, they begin to attack it. They do so directly and indirectly, and in every way they can imagine, so they may witness how the person defends it. Usually, this just makes the kind of weak people the Justified are attracted to drop the trait all together, broken like a horse, and left to look the Justified for guidance—and destroying the original intention entirely. Soon, the broken horse will be taught to feel Justified as well.

When the approach does “work,” and the attacker feels they have discovered a way to “perfectly” defend it from any assailant, they step into paradigm, and bring their Self Destruction with them. As there is no “perfect” way of communicating concepts to everyone, ever, the first time they're confronted, or attacked, on their new perception, they drop back down to their Justified Rock Bottom, submit, and go on to become the Jack or Jill of shallow intellectual endeavors.



Since they believe an attack can come from anywhere, this creates a rather divine assailant, who knows everything, and forces them to avoid hanging onto any solid opinions for an extended period of time. They offer their repertoire of failed evolutions to their peers in the form of advice, and if their peers ever take them up on it, they begin their attack.

This is the approach that members of the Status Quo apply to their dissatisfaction with work, and it is why we Joy Workers must show them how it's done by positive example alone. We must not explain. We must only challenge them to discover their own true happiness.

This is the approach that Anarchists apply to their dissatisfaction with their monetary failure. I believe most Justified Anarchists don't really know how to comprehend successful Anarchism. They can only comprehend the Status Quo, and the fruits Capitalism bring. They want success, but don't know how to achieve it. They feel Justified in attacking it, because they can bring it all down to where every idiot can have it, rather than raise themselves and others up to a place

where they can all own it. When they are protest, break windows, start unsupported riots, and attack “the squares,” they are simply living the role of Devil's Advocate. Their secret desire is to attack the right person, who will defend their position so elegantly, the “Anarchist” knows they can step to the other side of the fence, be successful, and Justify themselves to their Justified peers by using the currency that Capitalist Culture tells them is an objective way of keeping score.

The Joy Worker does not need justification. It comes from within. Thus, the only ethically sound tool capable of positively influencing a person toward Joy, and away from Duty, is a tool called a Pattern Interrupt—the successful anarchist's most valued possession.

Recently, science has shed light on some significant parts of the mind's inner workings. The human brain simply cannot perceive all the information passing through it all at once, so it ignores bits of it by placing focus on others. This explains why you can't touch, smell, taste, and see everything in front of you, simultaneously. In addition to ignoring the items it perceives as unimportant, it has a system similar to computer “caching.” When the mind stores things, it banks the emotions present during the memory as well, presumably so you know to avoid the things you don't like, and recreate the things you do. It is also the technique that allows for you to run on auto-pilot: walking through your house thinking deeply about something, or talking on your phone while you do other stuff at the same time. We only devote all of our attention to something when it is new, not normal, or extremely important. This concept is called Associative Memory.

It's why you might avoid parking garages if you've ever been

mugged in one. Parking garages are inanimate objects, and yet we give them life through associative memory.

Additionally, If you ever reach for a doorknob without looking, your mind is probably filling in the image of the doorknob in your peripherals with its associative memory. The same happens for conversations. This is why we're thrown off the first time we ask a stranger how they're doing, and they respond with something clever, or rude. The mind stops working from its cache for a moment, and switches to recording, until it rests on what it believes would be a socially acceptable way of responding.

In my opinion, living within a successful Anarchist's paradigm, means that you must be committed to creating situations when your recorder (and other's), are on as much as possible. Many Anarchists don't consider that due to our living in such a media-drenched society, whoever introduces you to something new, will inadvertently anchor that new thing to the emotions present, forever—unless it's replaced by a stronger and more valuable memory later on.

Here—play a game with yourself. Say the word “Molotov” aloud. Do you associate positively or negatively to that word? Are there positive or negative images or sounds that are conjured up immediately afterward?

This is the battle of Hearts and Minds. This is advertising, branding, word of mouth, marketing, politics, authority, law, order, and confidence. It is where the phrase, “get them to laugh, and you'll rule their heart,” comes from. Why would a successful Capitalist want to research Anarchism, if their vision of Anarchism is weaker and brings less value to their lives, than their current way of living? Commerce works the exact same way. Let's say that you used cash for your last

purchase, and you had a positive experience. You will more than likely use cash for your next interaction. The same can be said for plastic. If you used barter, you will probably try to use that for your next purchase. However, if you have a negative interaction, you will probably return to whatever was more successful over a longer period of time. The only exception is an internally motivated commitment to change.

The Pattern Interrupt comes from a school of thought called Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP): the science of rewiring our associative memory. The Interrupt can be simple, or advanced. I encourage every Joy Worker to study NLP, because with this communication style you may interrupt the pattern of everyday life, or any one of the perceptions we take for granted, through many different methods. All it requires is for you to remain several moves ahead in your interactions, and a willingness to break some social norms. Your goal is to respond to their communication in ways that you believe are, for them, completely unique. Your interrupt doesn't need to make any sense at all, as long as you present a meaningful question that gets right to the heart of the matter immediately following the interrupt.



“I hate that I sit around in my house smoking pot all day, but it just makes everything so much more interesting,” they say.

“Let's go to Disney Land!” You respond, clapping your hands and jumping up from your seat in excitement.

“What?”

“I'm just kidding, but let's go and do something new that we've never done before! Let's start by going out for a walk, and see where it leads. Are you in?”

“Not really.”

“Why not? What would happen if you didn't?”

“I dunno. What's up with all the questions?”

“If you dunno, then why can't we go for a walk? It'll be great!

Now I'm pumped, so I'm going to go, even if you're not.”

The trick to a successful Pattern Interrupt is to understand that the mind will work slower than usual, because it will be pondering both the Interrupt (which confuses their Cultural identity), and what you said after it (which stimulates their Joy identity), so move along at a patient but assertive pace.

Once you begin using this technique on yourself, and you begin asking yourself why you believe you should do some things, and not others, you will begin exploring the validity of your Associative Memory. Thinking for yourself forevermore can be daunting, but try to think of it like exercise. It's always hard, but the longer you do it, the longer you can sustain it, and the easier it gets. Simply put, if you ever feel

yourself doing something—anything—on auto pilot, ask yourself, “what purpose does this serve?” Ask the people on auto-pilot around you this same question—just be prepared, because people react in different ways when they have someone asking them challenging questions (especially strangers). Typically, just asking is sufficient, and you don't even need to wait around for an answer. Try to smile as often as possible, and keep a positive outlook. Fake it until you make it.



Which Motivator controls your Work Ethic? What would happen if it didn't? What life purpose do you serve? What life purpose serves you? Is it yours or someone else's? If money and security was no longer an issue, what changes would you make for the better? How would you motivate yourself to sustain that evolution? What's stopping you from making that change?



Now.

Ben Aubin operates the [Portland Free Store](#). He was recently interview by the [Motorhome Diaries](#).

Russian Market Anarchism of the Late 20th - early 21st Centuries: An Overview

By anarchist Ivanov



First Congress of the Association of Anarchist Movements, 1990.

The crisis of the Leninist regime in the USSR in the mid-1980's undermined the ideological monopoly of the Communist Party. A variety of clubs and informal networks began to arise reconstructing various alternatives of communist ideology. During nearly 70 years, no opportunity to explore any alternative ideologies outside their official interpretation of the Soviet Union had ever existed. Thus, most existing clubs made their target to democratize existing Soviet socialist model and positioned itself as democratic, Marxist or social democratic. In this environment the groups that showed

interest in the Russian classics of anarchism, to the socialist tradition of Bakunin and Kropotkin also began to show up. By the end of 1980 they took shape in the Confederation of Anarcho-Syndicalists (KAS), the first organization of anarchists in the late Soviet Union¹.

In spite of the accepted name, not all members of the Confederation declared themselves syndicalists.

Confederation had about 2,000 people and included groups with very different views on anarchism. In 1989 in Leningrad (now St. Petersburg) Anarcho-Syndicalist Free Association (ASSA) appeared, which participants did not take Kropotkin's anarcho-communism and promoted free-market anarchism².

At the same time in Kazan, the Alliance of Anarchists (AKA) formed, which members for the most part adhered to the individualistic and market-oriented views³. In Moscow "Free World" ("Svobodny mir") group functioned, in Tula Union of Anarchists was founded. In 1990, Anarcho-Democratic Union (ADS) evolved from the Leningrad organization of the KAS, later joined by the anarchists from Arkhangelsk and Borisoglebsk. In fact, in the early 1990's market anarchism in Russia was represented by a large number of local groups.

There was a dissent at the 2nd Congress of the Confederation of Anarcho-Syndicalists in 1990, because it was decided by a majority of the Congress participants that the Confederacy from that moment could consist of anarcho-syndicalists only. All groups, who disagree with this decision, left the Confederation and formed the Association of Anarchist Movements (ADA). The Association had no fixed



May Day Demonstration in St. Petersburg, 1992

membership and its decisions accepted by consensus of participants. It could include any anarchist groups, both market anarchists and anarcho-communists. At the 1993 congress in Moscow separate groups of market anarchists from Kazan, Moscow, Tula and St. Petersburg established the Union of Free Laborers (SVT)⁴. Members of the Union announced that they follow the methods of evolutionary anarchism and intend to give their organization an official status. However, the organization was short-lived, because the main coordination was implemented through the more widespread Association of Anarchist Movement.



The Kazan Anarchist News Sheet, 1995.

Access to the classical anarchist literature for a wide range of readers continued to be limited. Classic anarchist extracts were published in the newspapers and magazines. In 1989-90 collections of works of Mikhail Bakunin and Peter Kropotkin were published, and only in 1994, in Ukraine

the work of Max Stirner "The Ego and its Own" was published. The work of Benjamin Tucker, "Instead of a Book", is still fully available in Russian only in the edition of 1907, with old grammar. A brochure with excerpts from this work was published in 1997 by the St Petersburg anarchists, with a title "Liberty, equal for all." In 1998 the works of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon were reissued. After a while independent publishers of economic literature released the works of "Austrian economists:" Hayek, Mises and Rothbard.

In the absence of works of modern Western authors mutualist tradition, russian tradition of free market anarchism



Logo of the Yaroslavl Anarchist Union

evolved independently. It was formed, including in discussions with the anarcho-communists, and based on its own experience of action and its analysis. In 1993, Kazan anarchists L. Chorny and N. Pavlov published a "Manifesto-93"⁵ consistent with the principles of evolutionary anarchism, and Petersburg anarchist Alexander Maishev published a "Declaration of principles of evolutionary anarchism." Further notes on the evolutionary market anarchism were published in the news-sheet "Kazan anarchist"⁶. Revolutionary market anarchism was presented by the Movement of Hard Anarchy (DZAN), publicism of Peter Rausch and the Petersburg anarchist newspaper "Novy Svet" ("The New World")⁷. Works, reflecting the views of Russian market anarchists were "Declaration of principles of evolutionary anarchism," "Manifesto-93," "Manifesto-98,"⁸ and the Declaration of the Movement of Hard Anarchy⁹. Later and best views of the St Petersburg anarchists were outlined in the program documents of the League of Anarchists (PLA)¹⁰, formed from several groups in 1994. With the advent in 1998 of the first anarchist sites in Russian, these materials are available on the Internet. With time it became possible to find on web-sites the works of Stirner, Proudhon, and Russian anarcho-individualists beginning of XX century – Lev Chorny (Turchaninov) and Alexey Borovoy¹¹.

In mid-1990's, in view of neo-liberal reforms implemented by the Russian new government, communist anarchism of Kropotkin became increasingly popular among the anarchists. In 1997, in Moscow the Confederation of



Yaroslavl protest against the wars in Iraq and Chechnya, 2005.

Revolutionary Anarcho-Syndicalists (KRAS) was founded, which has taken an aggressive stand towards the groups of market anarchists. At the same time, the Confederation and groups involved in the same position and a great deal of the works of European anarcho-communists and left-wing communists was translated into Russian. All this accounts the fact that anarcho-communism has become the dominant ideology among Russian anarchists. In 1998 part of the anarcho-communist and subcultural groups left the Association of Anarchist Movements and creates leftist movement 'Autonomous Action.' The anarcho-communists considered all other anarchist tendencies as "outside the libertarian movement." Only those groups of anarcho-communists, who include the Association of Anarchist Movement, do not agree with this position.

In view of the second war in Chechnya launched by Kremlin, a controversy concerning anti-imperialism exacerbated in the Russian anarchist movement¹². Groups of Moscow anarcho-communists suggested not making the difference between federal troops and insurrectionists. Groups of



Logo of the St. Petersburg League of Anarchists

market anarchists from St. Petersburg and Kazan, and the rest of the Association of Anarchist Movements have taken a consistent anti-imperialist stand and decided that the main enemy of the population of Russia and Caucasus the Kremlin regime organizing the war¹³. In this regard, anarcho-communists from Moscow accused members of the Association in "support of Islamic fundamentalism." At the same time, they began to actively use the name "anarcho-capitalists" in relation to groups of mutualists and individualists¹⁴.

In 2003, in Ukraine a political party "Anarchist Union of Ukraine" (SAU) was official registered, which declared itself as "anarcho-capitalist" and declared its intention to run for a parliamentary republic. On the elections this party enters into an alliance with the Ukrainian nationalist organization "Bratstvo" ("Brotherhood") and is gaining about 2% of the vote. In 2008, The party went back to the elections in 2008, together with the nationalists, this time with the Russians. The party lost the pure market ideology which enabled the Ukrainian platformists from the Revolutionary Confederation of Anarcho-Syndicalists (RKAS) to enter the party, calling her an "umbrella organization." Parliamentary politics and the rejection of direct action of the Ukrainian "anarcho-capitalists" had a negative impact on the dissemination of ideas of market anarchism in ex-USSR¹⁵.



In 2005 Yaroslavl Union of Anarchists (YarSA) was founded, which became a regional association of communist and market anarchists. In time all their participants were switched to free market ideology. Due to

Illegal rally against a curfew for teenagers. Yaroslavl, 2008.

the fact that in 2006 anarchists took part in organizing protests against the G-8 meeting in St. Petersburg, government security agencies were initiated repression against members of the League of Petersburg Anarchists, that continue through the next year. Two activists were extradited from Russia; some participants were forced to cease activity¹⁶. In 2007, the organization in St. Petersburg was dissolved by its participants and ceased publication the newspaper "Novy Svet" ("The New World").

In 2008, individual supporters 'Austrian school' of St. Petersburg and Moscow established the "Libertarian Party of Russia," which, like the Ukrainian "anarcho-capitalists," stated their intention to run in elections. Despite the idea of "minimized" state consistently described in the documents of the Party, part of its members call themselves "anarcho-capitalists." A negative image of the party has already been established with its open support for the odious plan of the St. Petersburg government to build a skyscraper for the state corporation Gazprom; against the wishes of the St. Petersburg population. In addition, the parliamentary orientation of the party also has a negative impact on the popularity of the ideas of market anarchism among the Russian anarchists.

In 2009, a group of market anarchists from the Association of Anarchist Movements was founded the League of Individualist Anarchism. League operates in accordance with the agreements of the Association of Anarchist Movement and in opposition to parliamentarism. Now the League is comprised of anarchists who share mutualist, agorist and individualist attitudes. Members of the League act in the cities of Yaroslavl and Omsk, on Sakhalin and in Moscow region. The main activities of the League are disseminating articles and brochures, posting flyers, and translation activities.



Currently, the Russian language for the first time translated texts of Lysander Spooner, Voltairine de Cleyre, Samuel Edward Konkin III, Wally Conger and Kevin Carson. The second edition of Benjamin Tucker's brochure "Liberty, equal for all" is coming soon. The League has a website¹⁷, its members are

active in social networks and the Russian-speaking segment of LiveJournal and the League of Individualist anarchism is set on joining the Alliance libertarian Left.

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1. Learn more about the Confederation of Anarcho-Syndicalists in the article of Peter Ryabov, see <http://www.angelfire.com/ia/IOKAS/>
 2. Learn more about creating Anarcho-syndicalist Free Association in the article of Aleksandr Shcherbakov, see <http://piter.anarhist.org/chz8-03.htm>
 3. Learn more about activities of Kazan anarchists in the article of German Alyotkin, see <http://akaada.narod.ru/ani.html>
 4. Learn more about the Union of Free Laborings in the bulletin "An-press" #43, 1993, see <http://piter.anarhist.org/anpr43.htm>
 5. "Manifesto-93" see <http://akaada.narod.ru/man93.html>
 6. Archive of "Kazan Anarchist" news-sheet see <http://akaada.narod.ru/kazagl.html>
 7. Archive of "Novy svet" ("New World") newspaper see <http://anarhist.org/piter/newworld.htm>
 8. "Manifesto-98" see <http://akaada.narod.ru/man98.html>

9. Declaration of DZAN see
<http://anarhist.org/piter/32dchan.htm>
10. Declaration of PLA see
<http://anarhist.org/piter/pla-declar.htm>, program of
action of PLA see [http://anarhist.org/piter/pla-
programma.htm](http://anarhist.org/piter/pla-programma.htm)
11. Libraries of anarchist sites of Kazan and St.
Petersburg, see <http://akaada.narod.ru/biblio.htm>
and <http://anarhist.org/piter/biblio.htm>
12. Learn more in the article of Peter Rausch "Anarchists
and the Chechen war", see
<http://www.goryachiy.narod.ru/2002/01/0901.htm>
13. See resolutions of the Association of Anarchist
Movements about the war in the Caucasus
<http://vintovka.front.ru/08ada1995-02.htm>, about
the anarchist antiwar movement
<http://vintovka.front.ru/13ada2000-01.htm> and
about problems of anarchist antiwar movement
<http://vintovka.front.ru/14ada2001-02.htm>
14. See statement by a group of anarchists "On the
anarchist solidarity and mutual respect"
<http://anarchofront.livejournal.com/2031.html>
15. Learn more in the article "Dissect SAU", see
http://reaction.zaraz.org/dialogi/p2_articleid/72
16. Learn more on 2006/07 repression in St. Petersburg
in article of Peter Rausch "Why anarchists?", see
<http://piter.indymedia.ru/ru/node/3257>
17. See <http://all.anarhist.org/>

Conviviality and Empire

solidad decosta

The philosopher and social theorist Ivan Illich¹ wrote several books on the means by which individuals may find themselves under the boot, as well as the counter-means to stomp said boot into the ground. In Illich's seminal work, Tools for Conviviality, he notes that western medicine in the 20th century is marked by two watersheds: first, the surpassing of even odds towards a given treatment's effectiveness, and secondly, the ability for medicine to create illnesses of its own². This observation reveals a fundamental truth about most contemporary societies: social systems that are allowed to prosper without effective counters to those systems to prevent domination, will eventually turn on the very people that fuel the systems to begin with. This dynamic is reflective of what [Michel] Foucault calls "biopower."³ As described by the social theorists [Michael] Hardt and [Antonio] Negri, biopower has its origins in the enlightenment, but came to fruition in the pervasive security state that emerged post-WWII.⁴ It is both a potential means for resisting Empire – which according to Hardt and Negri, establishes and maintains control via networks of interaction – and a deeply ingrained form of consciousness control, via systems of oppression as well as interpersonal relations. The rules of biopower facilitate both hegemony in the individual, as shaped by ubiquitous, compulsory institutions, such as schools, prisons, corporations, the media, the police, surveillance systems and so on⁵ – and a potential means of organizing against the forces that exploit that fracturing of self and culture, not by creating a separate set of rules a la guerrilla warfare, but by utilizing the systemic rules of Empire against itself.

In contrast, Illich's notion of *conviviality* provides a means for

individuals to foster a wide range of social relationships with one other on the basis of innate and spontaneous interests, abilities and desires. Such a framework of relationships, while revolutionary in scope, can also be fostered to a limited degree under the existing systems of control and domination, by repositioning biopower towards self-generating models that are individually and mutually beneficial to society. For example, with its rules, regimentations, systems of reward and punishment and proscribed methods of education, the school system is both a means of social control and a mechanism for harnessing biopower; but what if that system was dismantled, and people were allowed to learn, as opposed to merely being educated?⁶

Further, Hardt and Negri argue that humans can redirect their biopower towards means that are counter to their oppressive intent and/or design, due to biopower being woven into the fabric of people's daily lives; as such, it can be subverted by those whose lives it is a part of. In this way, brands can become culture jamming, corporate media can become mashups, and brand loyalty can become the means by which people learn once again to share, collaborate, and organize in their own enlightened (aka convivial) interests. This redirecting is key to Illich's theories as well, both in relation to conviviality as well as mechanisms utilized (by the state as well as individuals and groups) to ensure that oppressive systems are not allowed to re-establish systems of domination and control.⁷

It may seem at first glance that conviviality serves to benefit the more fortunate over the less. For example, allowing those with strongly held prejudices the means to act on said biases against others, all the while proclaiming self-interest, if not self-defense. In fact, restrictions against impinging on other people's convivial interests is one of the few areas where

Illich advocates for state intervention by law. This may be why Illich is considered a socialist as well as an anarchist, albeit one whose strong commitments to individual sovereignty places him squarely within a left libertarian rather than authoritarian socialist framework. In addition, Illich was a fervent advocate for the poor and disenfranchised, and if anything, actively condemned systems that manipulate others for self-gain.⁸

One question that is only partially addressed by Illich is how to reconcile conflicts between cultures, in particular conflicts rooted in identity. Bernice Johnson-Reagon's essay "Coalition Politics: Turning the Century"⁹ provides a framework for addressing such conflicts. Johnson-Reagon asserts that the strict policing of identity in safe spaces (which frequently revolve around building of trust and mutual respect on the basis of shared identity and experiences) inevitably leads to tensions over who exactly belongs within the grouping and who doesn't; attempts to create a uniform, uncontested social space will eventually be called into question by those who do not belong to the group, but want to. As such, Johnson-Reagon argues that a delineation between "home" (safe) and "coalition" (shared) is necessary, which in turn creates the possibility of the prospering of movement work.

While this is undoubtedly true, it is important to remember that within Illich's framework, conviviality is undermined when others are restricted in their ability to explore their own self-expression, creativity and healing. Where conviviality provides a parallel alternative to the conflicts that Johnson-Reagon accurately describes by allowing people to form their own groupings, with the goal being not just a handful of coalitional spaces based on large-scale social identities (gender, race, sexuality, religion), but hundreds of not thousands of such spaces, with the guiding rules essentially

being “live and let live”, as well as “harm none, unless ye be restricted in said harm.”¹⁰ Such convivial mechanisms have thankfully become commonplace on the Internet; what remains to be seen is what people will do with these experiences outside of social media, although there are promising signs of the active learning, sharing and commiserating that takes place on a daily basis online turning into forms of collective action throughout society as a whole – an embracing of transformation in everyday life that is long overdue and much needed.¹¹ In this way, a form of virtual convivial worldscape may actually become a literal one as well, on a global scale – a goal that Illich no doubt would think well of.

While the irony of the ultimate anti-convivial tool – one that was created by the U.S. Military, and fostered by U.S. Corporations, no less – becoming a means for global liberation is plainly evident, it is also true that the machinations of biopower can be turned on their ear even within such a deleterious framework. If we are all to become cyborgs, perhaps we will also remember what it means to be human as well, if for no other reason than to do otherwise would mean our self-destruction. While the stakes are high, the potential is as well – and hopefully, we will all share stories about the time that we finally ground to dust “the boot on our face,” and came to realize the emergence of a third watershed to counter the ill-effects of the second, while enhancing the benefits of the first – not just from building upon the early successes of institutionalized medicine, but from engaging in the active promotion and enabling of global well-being, social/emotional health and mutually beneficial learning for all.

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1. For those unfamiliar with Illich's life and work,

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ivan_Illich is a good starting point, as is <http://www.preservenet.com/theory/Illich.html>. An archive of Illich's written works, as well as a few audio recordings, can be found at <http://davidtinapple.com/illich/>.

2. “The sickening side effects of modern medicine became obvious after World War II, but doctors needed time to diagnose drug resistant microbes or genetic damage caused by prenatal X-rays as new epidemics. The claim made by George Bernard Shaw a generation earlier, that doctors had ceased to be healers and were assuming control over the patient’s entire life, could still be regarded as a caricature. Only in the mid-fifties did it become evident that medicine had passed a second watershed and had itself created new kinds of disease.” Ivan Illich, Tools for Conviviality, available online at http://clevercycles.com/tools_for_conviviality/. For a more through analysis of the medical system, as well as iatrogenic disease, see Illich's Medical Nemesis.
3. See pages 140-45 of Foucault's History of Sexuality v. 1: An Introduction for a summary of the impact of biopower in western societies from the 18th century onward.
4. Hardt and Negri, Empire, pages 22-27.
5. As Illich notes, “Medical treatment is mistaken for health care, social work for the improvement of community life, police protection for safety, military poise for national security, the rat race for productive work. Health, learning, dignity, independence, and creative endeavor are defined as little more than the performance of the institutions which claim to serve these ends, and their improvement is made to depend on allocating more resources to the management of

hospitals, schools, and other agencies in question.”
Illich, Deschooling Society. Available online at
<http://www.preservenet.com/theory/Illich/Deschooling/intro.html>.

6. “The current search for new educational *funnels* must be reversed into the search for their institutional inverse: educational *webs* which heighten the opportunity for each one to transform each moment of his living into one of learning, sharing, and caring.” Ibid.
7. “Protection against laws that impose education, vaccination, or life prolongation is important, but it is not sufficient...Like intolerable pollution, intolerable monopoly cannot be defined in advance. The threat can be anticipated, but the definition of its precise nature can result only from people’s participation in deciding what may not be produced.” Illich, Tools for Conviviality. Available online at
http://clevercycles.com/tools_for_conviviality.
8. “The poor have always been socially powerless. The increasing reliance on institutional care adds a new dimension to their helplessness: psychological impotence, the inability to fend for themselves. Peasants on the high plateau of the Andes are exploited by the landlord and the merchant—once they settle in Lima they are, in addition, dependent on political bosses, and disabled by their lack of schooling. Modernized poverty combines the lack of power over circumstances with a loss of personal potency.” Illich, Deschooling Society.
9. Bernice Johnson Reagon, “Coalition Politics: Turning The Century,” Homegirls: A Black Feminist Anthology, pages 343-56. Citation source online at
http://www.amazon.com/Home-Girls-Black-Feminist-Anthology/dp/0813527538/ref=sr_1_2?

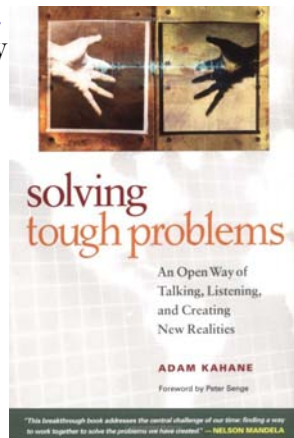
[ic=UTF8&s=books&qid=1256145675&sr=1-2#reader_0813527538.](#)

10. “Transition to a convivial society can be, and must be, the result of conscious use of disciplined procedure that recognizes the legitimacy of conflicting interests, the historical precedent out of which the conflict arose, and the necessity of abiding by the decision of peers. Convivially used procedure guarantees that an institutional revolution will remain a tool whose goals emerge as they are enacted; the conscious use of procedure in a continually anti-bureaucratic sense is the only possible protection against the revolution itself becoming an institution.” Illich, *Tools for Conviviality*.
11. For several examples of groupings of ordinary people utilizing the Internet towards collective action via “organizing without organizations” both online and off, see Shirky, *Here Comes Everybody*.

Active Listening as Conflict Resolution

Chris Lempa

In the book [Solving Tough Problems](#) [Adam Kahane](#) lays out a methodology for dealing with tough problems in the most difficult situations. Kahane played an integral role in the Mount Fleur Process which brought together representatives from Apartheid-era South Africa. Participants discussed what South Africa would look like after Apartheid. After the Mount Fleur Process, Kahane took part in similar gatherings throughout the world (Follow [this link](#) to learn more



about Kahane's work).

Many aspects of the book will be useful to people in their everyday lives, I would like to focus on listening. In his book [How to Win Friends and Influence People](#), Dale Carnegie tells us that by "becoming genuinely interested in people" and "be[ing] a good listener" are two important roles in building successful relationships. That's great, but what is listening and how do we do it?

Perhaps you are rolling your eyes at the thought of this silly question, but I have been involved in many frustrating conversations with non-listeners. These "conversations" generally become a waste of time and quickly deteriorate into mindless arguments, with people talking past each other.

Adam Kahane details Otto Scharmer's Four Ways of Listening:

1. **Downloading** - listening *from within our own story*, but without being conscious that what we are saying and hearing is no more than a story. When we download, we are deaf to other stories; we only hear that which confirms our own story. This is the kind of nonlistening exhibited by fundamentalists, dictators, experts, and people who are arrogant or angry.
2. **Debating** - listening to each other and to ideas (including our own ideas) *from the outside*, objectively, like a judge in a debate or courtroom.
3. **Reflective Dialogue** – listening to ourselves reflectively and listening to others empathetically-*listening from the inside*, subjectively.
4. **Generative Dialogue** – listening not only from within ourselves or from within others, *but from the whole system*.

According to Kahane and Scharmer, **downloading** and **debating** repeat already existing ideas. Nothing new is created. Reflective dialogue and especially generative dialogue can create new social realities. This is intimidating to think about, but can be done quite easily.

The website [PersonaDev](#) offers [10 Tips to Be a Better Listener](#). There are plenty of articles dedicated to active listening, but I think this one is short and to the point. I'm going to provide an excerpt, but I highly recommend the reading article and [website](#).

1. **Be Legitimately Interested:** Be interested. Drop whatever you were doing and focus. Stop focusing on the email you were writing or the article you were reading and really *listen*. Put yourself in the speaker's place and make his or her problems your own. The speaker will consciously or subconsciously pick up on this and you will *learn* more from the conversation. However, if you are in the middle of something just a little *too* important to drop...
2. **Be Honest About Your Time:** If you really are in the middle of something important, tell the speaker. Apologize and plan for another meeting where you can ensure your full attention and focus. This will let the speaker know that you appreciate their coming to you and you want to give them your full concentration. It's much better than lending half-an-ear and not listening well.
3. **Accept the Speaker's Point-Of-View:** At least until he or she is done speaking. Some of us have the desire to get our point across and a word in for every sentence spoken. Even if you disagree with the speaker's stance on a subject, allow him or her to finish their thought before voicing your disagreement and then *only* if necessary. Remember, you are trying

to be a *listener*, not partake in a discussion.

4. **Use Body Language, Eye Contact, and Repetition:** Using body language and eye contact the right way can really have an impact on the speaker. To show you are listening and interested, lean slightly forward in your chair. Not so much that your elbows are on your knees, but enough so you aren't reclined back on your chair. Make consistent eye contact, but do not stare. Make noises like "mm-hmm," or say "I see," and frequently repeat what was just said. These actions show that you are interested and actively listening.
5. **Go Beyond the Words:** Good listeners are actively thinking not just about what was said but also *why* and *how* it was said. Why did this person come to you to talk (or be heard). Is there excitement in their voice? Resentment? Jealousy? Once you determine the motive of the speaker, can you react more smoothly to their words.
6. **Get Rid of Distractions:** Just by slightly closing a door or turning off your monitor you can portray to the speaker that you are genuinely interested in what they have to say. Focus.
7. **Avoid Planning Counterarguments:** It is a natural response to automatically start planning a counterargument as soon as something is mentioned. As hard as it may seem, don't. Mentally record your disagreement and formulate a response later after the whole message has been received.
8. **Be Aware of Your History with the Speaker:** As a corollary to tip 5, think about how your history with the speaker may affect what is being said. Is there potential for flared feelings? Sympathy? Fear? Figuring this out will help you better understand the speaker's

motives and, thus, respond accordingly.

9. **Ask Questions:** If there is something said that is not clear to you, ask for clarification. Be careful not to use questions to rebut or represent your point-of-view. Only ask questions that'll help *your* understanding of what the speaker is saying.

10. **Watch and Learn from the “Good Listener”:** We all know one or two “Good Listeners”. Next time you are speaking to them, really pay attention to what they do. One can read a ton of articles and not learn as much as they would from actively watching a good listener in action.

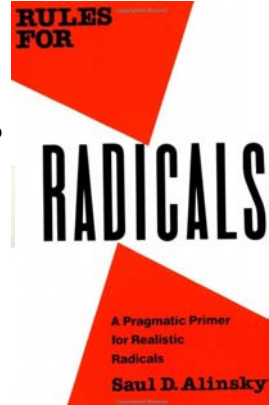
Being a good, active listener makes life a lot easier. Your conversations will be more enjoyable and less nuanced. More importantly, your active listening will encourage others to do the same. Whether you are trying to solve a tough problem, perform a group mediation, or plan your weekend, everything will go a lot smoother and more will be accomplished.

The large scale implications are what interest me the most. In our current society, people are quick to call the police if a problem or disagreement arises. A more ideal situation would involve people talking out their issues either by themselves or with a mediator. A lot of conflict can be resolved by listening and understanding the other person's motivations.

Peer mediation is a common model in elementary and high schools for a reason. . .it works. Children and youth are encouraged to work problems out amongst themselves. A group of youth mediators told me that mediation works and has led to a decrease in violent behavior amongst their peers. Active listening plays an important role in mediation and conflict resolution.

A lot of conflict stems from not listening to what the other person (group, etc) is saying. Further, we often do not even bother sharing our ideas because we don't feel as the other person actually cares what is being said. On a personal level this can destroy relationships. On a larger level it can destroy communities, organizations, and the entire world. If you doubt the validity of my claim, consider politics and war.

Altering our communication methods is an easy thing that we as individuals can do to create a better society. We don't have to wait for "The Rev". . .we can do it now. In *Rules for Radicals* Saul Alinsky explained that it is important to take advantage of easy victories much like a championship boxer chooses opponents carefully. He calls this the cinch fight.



Our cinch fight is listening. On one hand it involves deep personal reflection. After reflecting we must change our listening habits to incorporate various components of active listening. Some will be easy and some will not. The important thing is that we make the effort.

Shut up and listen.

Chris Lempa is a pickler, publisher, and post-civilization agorist. He can be reached at chris@chrislempa.info. His website is www.chrislempa.info.

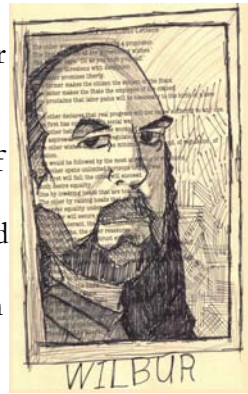
Six Questions

The first installment of six questions is an interview with Shawn Wilbur. Shawn is a micropublishing entrepreneur, bookseller, and historian. Wilbur is also a member of the Industrial Workers of the World and an advisor for the Center for a Stateless Society.

ALLiance's questions are italicized.

What personal experiences have been the most influential on your thinking?

That's a hard question. In retrospect, it was probably my semi-disastrous first year of college. I was at an institution that was probably over-rated at the time: heavy on demands, but not necessarily on quality of instruction or intellectual rigor. I dropped out after a year, thinking I had just washed out as a student. I went and got most of an associate's degree in business, and then left that to go into retail bookselling, working for a national chain. After a few years, I went back and got an English degree, and eventually went off to grad school in American Culture Studies. But the years I spent thinking that all of that was behind me, and focusing on bookselling, really transformed my thinking about literature and culture. It was coming back to college with a pretty good understanding of how books circulate in the world outside the classroom that gave my undergrad work a bit of cutting edge, and eventually led me to focus on intellectual history and cultural studies. Circumstances have kept me off any particularly stable career track for all my adult life, but the combination of perspectives I learned early on has, I think, served my unconventional scholarly career pretty well.



What essay, article or book has been the most influential on your thinking?

I tend to draw from a lot of sources and traditions. Pierre-Joseph Proudhon's mature work is very important to me, but so is the work of Jacques Derrida. I could list a lot of works that provided some absolutely necessary insight, but maybe the single most important one has been Walt Whitman's "Leaves of Grass." Whitman was ultimately wrestling with a lot of the same questions as the more explicitly political and philosophical writers of his day - and his era was one which I think still has a lot to say to us today. The play of individual and collective identity in poems like "Song of Myself" treats a lot of the thorniest aspects of "property" with a subtlety lacking in a lot of more explicitly economic analyses.

What projects or events do you feel have the most potential to bring a social change, for the better, in the world today?

The current "jobless recovery" makes the development of cooperative projects for self-employment a pretty high priority, whether the results are traditional cooperatives of associated, individual micro-enterprises. Obviously, I also believe that we need to work on self-education and on reclaiming our radical histories, so we're not always reinventing the wheel.

What would you like to see happen in the left-libertarian movement?

I have less and less attachment to the notion of a "left-libertarian movement," honestly. But those of us who came together to try to push past some of the traditional conversation-stoppers in anarchist and libertarian circles obviously need to continue that work. But we also really need to have the conversation that have traditionally been stopped - really have things out - and we need to find the occasions to put our theories into practice. At the C4SS, we have Kevin

Carson engaging in a very specific critique of contemporary capitalism, and making some specific suggestions about counter-economic strategies. That work seems to be well-received, but its implications don't seem to have penetrated all that far. It would be good to see more practical interest in micro-enterprise, for example.

What area of left-libertarian theory do you think still needs work?

It all needs work. Anarchist theory in general needs work. But it seems to me that the work it needs is positive elaboration. We're pretty good at critique. We need to work on our strategies for advancing liberty. That's admittedly a very difficult task, but the stakes have become very high for a lot of us.

Other than anarchism, what else occupies your time?

I work as a bookseller for a big-box chain, so too much of my time is occupied with concerns about job uncertainty and the stresses associated with business as usual in this economy. Beyond that, and some hiking, my time is largely consumed by my various anarchist projects: micro-publishing with Corvus editions, translating and archiving historical material, etc. I'm hoping to do more work with the IWW in the future, having recently rejoined the union. I read less than I probably should, but still quite a bit. I have a pair of cats, Nestor and Voltairine, who keep me company while I work at home. I'm fond of good beer and dark chocolate.

To Vote or Not to Vote: A Symposium

The following articles discuss a controversial topic amongst anarchists – voting. Passionate arguments have been made on both the pros and cons of participating in electoral politics. This mini-symposium was inspired by Alex R. Knight III's September 9, 2009 article *Your Obligation to Not Vote* which

was originally published by the Center for a Stateless Society (C4SS). Knight's piece inspired a series of comments both in support of and against voting. What was most interesting is that both sides were convincing. Roderick Long of C4SS replied, "I'm in the odd position that while I'm not convinced by the antivoting arguments. . . I *like* them — partly as an antidote to the absurdity of 'it's your duty to vote!' and 'if you don't vote you can't complain!' and partly because I do think that electoral politics should be *much* less central to our strategy."



What are your thoughts on voting?

Your Obligation to Not Vote **Alex R. Knight III**

The recent death of Ted Kennedy and assorted other reasons have resulted in an upcoming crop of U.S. Senate "special elections" and related blather. It's amazing to me, even after all this time as an anarchist, how people speak of the "right" to vote — said "right" being nothing more or less than a legal claim on something. Of course, government laws are nothing more than the opinions of bureaucrats backed up by the lethal violence of guns in the first place, but in the case of voting it gets even worse.



No one has any "right," under ordinary everyday

circumstances, to use violence or the threat thereof to control another's life or property. In fact, each of us has a very serious moral obligation to not engage our fellow human beings in such a manner. Yet, cloak a cop or a tax collector or a politician in the magical, quantum-physics defying aura of government, and suddenly this becomes not only acceptable, but even commendable and necessary. Such is the intrinsic nature of the State.

Thus, by voting in political elections, a voter implicitly endorses this kind of immoral and intellectually indefensible behavior by proxy. No, Mr. or Ms. Voter, it's not you specifically who holds the gun to the taxpayer's head, throws the marijuana smoker into the jail cell, imprisons the peaceful owner of a certain type of weapon for life – and it may not even be the series of politicians you voted for – but in essence, by voting, by casting that ballot for the continuation of government, you are hiring hit men (and women) to do those things for you. You are endorsing the inherent violence and thievery of government.

The good news is that the majority of people don't vote – either because they don't want to, or because they don't satisfy governmental criteria for being able to do so. As a result, there are a minority of individuals to whom this message must be carried. It would also not do any harm to bring these points to the attention of non-voters, who although they are already doing good by politically abstaining, consistently show in survey after survey that they fundamentally share the same political views as those of voters. One does well by working to change that. Yet, even then, think of the typical reasons most non-voters give for not showing up at the polls: “There's no one running who I like.” “I don't watch the news or pay attention to politics.” “The system is rigged.” “I'm too busy, I have bills to pay.” In

each and every instance, what is implied is a.) a mistrust of and disdain for government, and; b.) that the life, career, family, and recreational time of the non-voter is more important than what bureaucrats and politicians are doing and are all about. That alone is still healthy.

Saying you have a “right” to vote only empowers government, not you or anyone else. Again, it’s like saying you have a right to hire assassins and thieves to give you what you want at someone else’s expense. This is never justifiable. Each of us has an obligation to not kill, to not steal, to deal with each other as co-equals in a open, honest, and peaceful manner. Even getting your name put on a voter registration list contravenes these essential principles of a free and prosperous society. If that’s you, consider not only ceasing and desisting from voting, but getting your name removed from the registration rolls. It’s not difficult; I know people who’ve done it with very little effort. Even that’s not the point, though.

You have an obligation to not vote. Own up to it.

Alex R. Knight III is an author of horror, science fiction, and fantasy tales, living and writing in rural southern Vermont. He is the author of Victoria's Place and Other Tales of Terror (BareBones Publishing, 2008), and numerous other works, including non-fiction and poetry. He is also a regular contributor to the libertarian journal Strike The Root, and his archive may be accessed here: <http://strike-the-root.com/archive/knight.html>.

Election Strategy For Anarchists

By Darian Worden

Elections are a pillar of modern governance, and anarchists should put thought into how to approach them.

The influence of one vote is too minimal for voting to be a moral question. What each person decides to do about the election does however have strategic value.

The best use of a vote's miniscule influence is to register discontent. In politics, perception matters. A functional democratic system is often seen as the basis of legitimate governance. People whose votes are counted are said to have a voice in the government. In major elections the total number of voters is often reported in mass media, and a large turnout is presented as a triumph for political democracy. We're talking about perceptions here, not the reality of election fraud, manipulation, and disenfranchisement. So each ballot cast increases the perceived legitimacy of a state - even if you write in "nobody".

VOTE FOR



NOBODY
Because Nobody Cares

It should go without saying that on the national level a consistently libertarian political candidate cannot win. Political candidates can only discredit libertarian ideas by asserting the ridiculous position of being in charge of instituting liberty. If the political climate changes to allow a consistent libertarian the possibility of winning, then it would not be necessary to run the candidate because the goal is dismantling authority, not commanding authority.

On the local level there may be times when it is worth voting: when votes can make oppression more difficult to implement. But most often there is merely a trade-off between oppressions. For example: if a school budget is not

passed, those administering the confinement of students will likely cut programs that can make school less oppressive. This might mean that students will spend more time being trained to repeat what authority tells them instead of comparatively enjoying the modicum of self-expression still permitted in art or athletics. Thus the logic of the system means that in trying to free the taxpayer of a burden, one might contribute to placing a greater burden on students. So why not instead register some degree of dissatisfaction?

Just because voting is generally useless at best doesn't mean that anarchists can't participate in elections on our own terms. The political media spectacle surrounding an election can be seized to direct attention toward libertarian ideas.

Disrupting a political convention as a bloc of self-proclaimed anarchists is one way to give anarchism a voice in political discourse. A prankster could put out signs that look like those of a major candidate but say "ANOTHER MILLIONAIRE to tell you what to do". Election literature could be spoofed or graffitied with messages like "authority wins every election - try anarchy for a change". The Vote For Nobody campaign (anti-politics.ws) could imitate electoral campaigns in an effort to promote anarchism in the context of the 2010 congressional elections. One could highlight the fraud, manipulation, and disenfranchisement noted above and point out that they are necessary parts of a system that is based on forcibly taking decisions away from individuals and delegating them to professionals answerable to political clout. Perhaps the Alliance of the Libertarian Left flyer "Don't Fall For the Political Game" will provide inspiration (<http://nj.libertarianleft.org/downloads/politicalgame.pdf>).

Political opponents and media members interested in protecting their monopoly on acceptable political discussion

will put negative spin on any radical action. In order to best keep our message from being mislabeled, it is important to consider ways anti-electoral action will be attacked.

The disruption of major political conventions in 2008 was absurdly condemned as an attack on the delegates' freedom of speech. Similarly, the crowd that holds that freedom is based on the ability to vote over who will oppress us will probably describe anti-electoral action as an assault on the



foundation of freedom, and probably label it an attack on the ruling class's alleged freedom to speak about how they will oppress us.

Another consideration is the racial and economic makeup of neighborhoods that anti-election activism takes place in. Many establishment personalities would be eager to spread news of "groups of militant anarchists telling African-Americans not to vote". The best countermeasure to this is to agitate across racial and economic divisions and keep things as participatory as possible.

It is usually in the interests of anarchists to avoid voting in government elections. However, it can be useful to exploit the electoral spectacle to raise libertarian consciousness.

Darian Worden is a writer and activist from New Jersey. See his commentary, fiction, humor, and other work at darianworden.com.

Politics: A Survey of Anarchist Positions

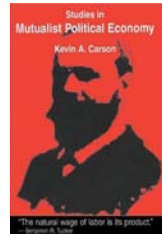
James Tuttle

One of the perennial questions of anarchist theory and strategy is the proper role that politics should play in our liberation program. Politics, in this context, refers to any attempt to influence the institutions that constitute the State in order to undermine, subvert or destroy the State itself.

If the existing positions were represented on a continuum, showing the degree politics plays, then, to be sure, the advocate of %100 politics should be held in extreme suspicion. But if we move down this scale past 60% and 50% percent we find the population of libertarians and anarchists begin to grow and our suspicions, though always present, subsiding.

I would like to offer a brief survey of these positions through the testimony of the proponents who held them. I am not a scholar or researcher; indexing and cross-referencing are not my profession. This is not intended to be comprehensive; only sketch or outline, to be filled in, sooner or later, by other enthusiasts, like myself, hopefully within the pages of this journal.

My sources can be found in the articles and pamphlets found in Shawn Wilbur's Corvus Editions, Wendy McElroy's indispensable volume [The Debates of Liberty, I Must Speak Out](#) lovingly edited by Carl Watner, and Kevin Carson's, must read, [Studies in Mutualist Political Economy](#).



That landscape found below the 50% mark is populated by many different people from many different points of view; all

wanting a liberated land where they can work, grow and love. It is because of this historical fact that questions of anarchist sincerity will not be speculated upon here; even though this has been a favored past time of other anarchists past and present.

Starting with some of the restored history found at Corvus Editions. I will assign “pro-politics” and “anti-politics” labels to the determined positions, but we should not conclude that a “pro” position that politics is regarded as the only or even as a constitutive means to our shared anarchist end. Eliphalet Kimball holds an anti-politics position and a pro-violence position as you can see here.

“It is only by anarchy and violence that a great accumulation of social wrongs can be removed. Anarchy is a good word. It means ‘without a head.’ Violence is the healing power of Nature applied to society. The violence which would follow from the abolishment of law, would be proportion to the number and magnitudes of the wrongs that needed removal.” -- Eliphalet Kimball, *Law, Commerce, and Religion, Anarchy is a Good Word*

The wonderfully clear Henry Addis makes his anti-politics understood.

“To support government is to aid tyranny. To become a part of it is to join hands with organized murder. Political action is for the ignorant, the deluded and the knave.” --Henry Addis, *Political Action, Essays on the Problem*

“The more the powers of the State are curtailed the more nearly we approach a condition of Anarchy: the more powers of the State are increased the further we drift from it. How then can State Socialism, the governmentalization of everything, lead to Anarchy?”

It cannot. If you really want Anarchy, refuse to uphold the State. Decline to run for or hold office. Refuse to do jury duty, and in every way practicable weaken the powers of the State.” --Henry Addis, *Through State Socialism into Anarchism.*, Essays on the Social Problem

The director of a clinic for the poor in the Chelsea district of New York City, Dr. Gertrude B. Kelly supports a pro-politics plan for state dissolution.

“Necessarily, therefore, the community, to protect itself in securing intelligent citizens, must enforce a compulsory education law. Though, as an Anarchist, I desire a radical change in present social conditions, I do not believe the public-school system is the place to begin. Manual and industrial training, though obtained at the expense of the taxpayers, are useful under present system, but only because that phase of education helps mitigate, somewhat, the evils under which we suffer. Such compulsory training the Anarchist believes would not be necessary if every man got what he really earned.” --Dr. Gertrude B. Kelly, *IV*, Some Socialist and Anarchist Views of Education

The anarcho-syndicalist Jay Fox has cast his lot in with the anti-politics and instead recommends General Strike for social and economic change.

“But you will ask, ‘What’s to be done?’ I trust we have at least learned something that should not be done, that is: We should not waste any more time striving to better our conditions through legislation. The attempts in Colorado has been a miserably failure, and all such attempts elsewhere must inevitably fail for the reasons aforementioned.” --Jay Fox, *What’s To Be Done?*, Economic Thought

In The Debates of Liberty Wendy McElroy gives an account of three positions and three men; all representing different philosophies regarding political participation.

“Possibly Brother [Benjamin R.] Tucker has yet to learn that compromise is a true scientific principle under Anarchism, and that in its proper sense it is logically enjoined upon the faithful. I have never found a final settlement of any problem yet, save that of my own ignorance: therefore do I rise for prayers, and ask Sister [Dr. Gertrude B.] Kelly and Brother [Benjamin R.] Tucker to keep me from going astray.”
--Henry Appleton, “Anarchism and Expediency,”
Liberty (April 17, 1886). Quoted from *On the State and Politics*, The Debates of Liberty page 22.

Interestingly Henry Appleton, as Wendy McElroy points out, is not referring to compromising Anarchism with regards to voting, but with regards to supporting popular labor organizations that used political activity; like the Knights of Labor, an organization that Appleton had infiltrated. Needless to say this puts Henry Appleton in the pro-politics camp.

“If my use of the ballot has been aggressive, some person must exist whose rights, whose legitimate freedom, have been invaded by the adoption of free trade, by my vote for free trade. But, since free trade is a corollary from equal freedom, no one’s rights are violated by the establishment of free trade. If no one’s rights are violated, those who vote for free trade are not guilty of any offence. When there are no aggressed upon, there are no aggressors.” --Victor Yarros, “Principle and Method,” *Liberty* 12 (November 1896). Partially quoted in *On the State and Politics*, The Debates of Liberty page 24.

Victor Yarros held many positions, maybe all positions at one time or another within the anarchist and other radical social movements of his time, but I feel that it is safe to conclude that at this time young Victor Yarros presented a case for the pro-politics.

Our final sample from The Debates of Liberty will be from the “consummate” representative of plumb-line anarchism, Benjamin R. Tucker. Tucker smashes all doubts to his commitment to anti-politics with the following:

“If liberty has a weak-kneed friend who is contemplating a violation of his anarchist principles by voting just for once, may these golden words from John Morley’s “Compromise” recall him to his better self: “A principle, if it be sound, represents one of the larger expediencies. To abandon that for the sake of some seeming expediency of the hour is to sacrifice the greater good for the less on no more creditable ground than that the less is nearer.” –Benjamin R. Tucker, “Labor’s New Fetich,” *Liberty* 2 (August 23, 1884). Quoted in in *On the State and Politics*, The Debates of Liberty page 21.

I Must Speak Out is a treasure trove of anarchism. It is a labor of love from the heart of Carl Watner, Wendy McElroy and George H. Smith. Every collected article is exciting and challenging. It is a must read for anyone who claims the mantle *Voluntaryist* or anyone of the minarchist persuasion who feel up to the challenge of dueling with some of the best. The *Voluntaryist* has not only staked a claim dead center in the anti-politics territory, they have built a barn and tilled the land.

From the Statement of Purpose, page 1, of I Must Speak Out:

“The Voluntaryists are advocates of non-political strategies to achieve a free society. We reject electoral politics, in theory and in practice, as incompatible with libertarian principles. Governments must cloak their actions in an aura of moral legitimacy in order to sustain their power, and political methods invariably strengthen that legitimacy. Voluntaryists seek instead to delegitimize the State through education, and we advocate withdrawal of the cooperation and tacit consent on which State power ultimately depends.”

Before I conclude with Kevin Carson’s Studies in Mutualists Political Economy I would like to offer the position defended by the anarchist philosopher Roderick T. Long, who offers a position similar to Carson’s and for similar reasons. Roderick T. Long is a supporter of the pro-politics position, but I must emphasize, as he has always emphasized, it is the smallest “pro-politics” position one could have while still remaining pro-politics.

“Now I certainly agree that as libertarian strategies go, education and building alternative institutions are *much more important* than electoral politics. And I also agree that the danger of reinforcing people’s attachment to the State is *a count* against urging people to vote libertarian. ... But I also think *voting can be useful as a means of self-defense in the short run*; and while the ultimate revolution will be primarily from the bottom up, *it will certainly go more smoothly, and with less danger of a violent crackdown* from a government desperate to maintain power, if we’ve got some support on the inside too.” --Roderick T. Long, <http://aeblog.net/2006/11/06/in-defense-of-voting-sort-of/> (italics added)

In the final chapters of the impressive and important Studies in Mutualists Political Economy, Kevin Carson gives his readers an introduction to the Mutualist program of Gradualism. It is important to understand that the concerns of the gradualist program is to dissolve the State while doing as little harm to the subject population as possible and, hopefully, protecting them from the violent death throes predicted to accompany the end of the ruling elites privileged position. This places Kevin Carson, by my lights, in the politics edge of our scale.

“The problem with this line of argument is that the State is an instrument of exploitation by a ruling class. And exploiters cannot, as a group, be ethically "educated" into abandoning exploitation, because they have a very rational self-interest in continuing it. Coleman McCarthy can conduct "peace studies" classes, and quote Tolstoy and "the Rabbi Christ" till he's blue in the face, but it isn't likely to persuade a majority of the ruling class that they'd be better off working for a living.

If most ordinary people simply withdraw consent and abandon the political process altogether, the ruling class will just drop the pretense of popular control and resort to open repression. So long as they control the State apparatus, a small minority of dupes from the producing classes, along with well-paid police and military jackboots, will enable them to control the populace through terror. A majority of Italian workers may have supported the factory occupations of 1920, but that didn't stop the blackshirts, paid with capitalist money, from restoring the bosses' control.

In *For Community*, a pamphlet on Gustav Landauer, Larry Gambone argued that it was no longer possible merely to act outside the State framework while

treating it as irrelevant. To do so entailed the risk that "you might end up like the folks at Waco." An "anti-political movement to dismantle the State" was necessary.²²

At some point, before the final dissolution of the State, its mechanism must be seized and it must be formally liquidated.” –Kevin Carson, Studies in Mutualists Political Economy page 319.

I hope that you have enjoyed this tour of obscure and contemporary anarchists and their varied relationships with the institutions of political power. I would like to stress, if I may, that between the two, often feuding, camps of pro-politics and anti-politics, that we remember their expressed reasons for their positions. All anarchist hope and work for an end to State violence directed towards spontaneous and free humanity. All are sensitive to every freedom lost and every freedom unexercised.

I find both positions compelling and inspiring. I look to the anti-politicians like Henry Addis, Benjamin R. Tucker and Carl Watner for strength; their commitment to living their values *now* and accepting the hardships that accompany a systematic withdrawal from State infected life and culture.

And I look to the pro-politicians like Dr. Gertrude B. Kelly, Victor Yarros and Kevin Carson for compassion; their sensitivity to the perils and hardships that will inevitably be faced by humanity during the State’s disintegration.

It is my belief that a robust anarchist movement needs both positions equally (dialectically equal); that both represent the core values of what anarchism is and desperate to achieve. We need to continue pushing forward, breaking new ground on new counter-institutions, reducing the crippling hierarchies of the State and ending the violence that maintains it, but we must not forget that that aggression,

those hierarchies bows backs and breaks legs. We need to remember to show people that they can live free, help them to let go of their bonds and protect them from those final moments when the State, realizing its end, tries to take away our future.

The following article is the first of a three part series. Readers are encouraged to read more by Voltairine deCleyre. Low cost editions of her writing are available from [Corvus Distribution](#). The full run of [The Rebel](#), her newspaper, can be found here. - ed.

The Past and Future of the Ladies' Liberal League Voltairine de Cleyre

I have assumed a serious and severe office that of historian and prophet. But, pardon me, I intend to be neither serious nor severe; for this is an occasion rather for exchanging greetings and putting ourselves in good humor than being serious, and my talk will be somewhat governed thereby.

Our history is short, but, to borrow a ponderous phrase of Renan's "of interest to the philosophic mind." At last it ought to be; if it is not so much the worse for the philosophic mind.

We were born in February 1892, and like the celebrated author of *Innocents Abroad*, we ran alone ten minutes after we were born, --only he had the misfortune to get tangled up in his long clothes, while we, being the child of the New Women and the New Man, (comparatively new I mean, not of the "bloomer" yet, but considerably outside orthodox traditions) we were never swaddled in long clothes, but kicked freely and healthily from the beginning. I spoke with levity, but if we had dubbed ourselves the Kicking Society, in all

seriousness it would not have been amiss. The first act of our life was to kick against an unjust decree of our parents, and we have unflinchingly stood for the kicking principle ever since. Now, if the word kicking is in bad repute with you, substitute non-submission, insubordination, rebellion, revolt, revolution, whatever name you please which expresses non-acquiescence to injustice. We Have done this because we love liberty and hate authority, and the sentiment is bound to find vent somehow, "as the sap climbs upward to the flower," to make use of an illustration from Kropotkin.

How then, some stranger will inquire, does it happen that you, standing for so bold a principle, have such an *innocuous* name, --*Ladies' Liberal League*? Sirs, though our parents were reformers, men and women grown gray in a good cause, we beg you to remember that they are gray, and to look leniently on their foibles. We are the child of the Friendship Liberal League, and that worthy society, grand and courageous as it has been and still is, and no one enjoys paying so deserved a tribute better than I, has yet approached that mellowness of age when it has a tendency to smoothness and respectability. Respectability is a sort of secular saint to be considered in the matter of baptisms, and "Ladies" is a very respectable word. Besides our dear parents, as is often the case with parents, conceived us quite otherwise, than as we turned out to be. They had an idea of forming a sort of machine wherethrough the working force of the woman of the Friendship League could be brought to bear upon the Liberal Hall Association plan; in other words we were to be a Ladies Aid, after the model of the church, and make money after the manner of women, by fairs, sociables, picnics, excursions, et cetera. We were to smile men into ticket-buying, and shame them into candy purchase, and wheedle them into ice-cream. I presume that bedquilts done up gorgeously with silks and raffled at ten cents a ticket may have been distantly in view. I

could not say authoritatively; I did not join the society until after the girls had decided they were born for other purposes. How came it about? Well, the trouble lay right here: our parents assumed that the child was wise enough to earn the money, the best way it could, but not wise enough to control it after it was earned; the child thought otherwise. In that difference of opinion rebellion began, and continued till a complete separation took place, and the L.L.L. set up in business for itself.

It's a long way off now, but some of us still remember with pleasure the quiet Monday evening gatherings at the home of our secretary, where we used to meet and pass a cosy, nestled up time, getting to understand ourselves. Time has weeded us out a little: three of us, one young, one old, one middle-aged, have gone to shadow. Two of them had secular funerals, a matter which might not have been easy to manage but for the friendships formed and prolonged through and by the L.L.L. (So we hold it out to you as an inducement, if any of you are thinking of dying. Come into the fold in order that you may go out of it as a true rebel.) You may take that as a joke, but it is really a very serious matter. And no one knows till he gets to be a freethinker and starts to die, or some of his free thought friends do, what a difficult thing it is for a piece of cold human clay to escape the clutch of the church. "Are you there, my friend," says she adjusting her spectacles to take a good survey of you: "Aha! Now I have you at last! Your obstreperous mouth is closed, and I shall damn you at ease—with the fairest set of lies my agent can set forth. Oh, you all come to me in the end." And don't we though! Are we not made mock of in the very clods? Our whole lives belied? Our works gainsaid?

Well, as I said, some have gone to the shadow; some concluding that the trend of the more active spirits was too

radical, have withdrawn. Blessings go with them! We were sorry to part with them, we wish they could have gone with us; but we couldn't halt. We remember them as comrades; and when the evening firelight throws its gleams on the wall, and the pictures of the old quiet days before we dabbled in public-mixing matters flash in the illuminated rosy shadow, their faces are still there. Some are dead, some left behind, and some gone, not of their will but of the bitter Will of God or the Devil or whatever other cursed tyrant it is who separates people who do not want to be separated, that says to a man "Go thou,' and he goeth." This is the worst of partings.

To be continued. . .

Some Recommended Reading from ALLiance James Tuttle

I hope to provide *food for thought* and of vindication of left-libertarian theory and strategy.

ALL the best and enjoy:

1. For Socialism by Gustav Landauer (ISBN: 0-914386-11-5)

The great spiritual anarchist and libertarian socialist Gustav Landauer did not hide his feeling about Marx's system, "Marxism...is the plague of our age and the curse of the socialist movement." For Socialism contains two sections: the first is a meditation concerning, "what socialism is" and the second, larger section, concerning, "what socialism is *not*." If the tone wasn't enough, then the tattered remains of *scientific* Marxism should give you a clue: *socialism is not Marxism!* "So, what is Landauer's socialism," asks the interested left-libertarian? Well to give you an idea, "(Gustav) Landauer defines *socialism*

... as *faith*, as moral regeneration, and as creative individual activity within an intimate spiritual ‘community of communities.’”

2. Force and Freedom by Jacob Burckhardt (ASIN: B0007F1A98)

Jacob Burckhardt was one of those great 19th century historians, like Alexis de Tocqueville, who was considered a prophet of the 20th. In Force and Freedom he gives us a glimpse at his methodology; fans Chris Sciabarra and Shawn Wilbur will notice a similar dialectical (or trialectical) sensibility. From the introduction: “After a general introduction defining what we shall take as falling within the scope of enquiry, we shall speak of the three great powers, State, Religion and Culture, dealing first with the influence of the on variable, Culture, on the two constants.” Later on we get this amazing definition of culture, “Culture may be defined as the sum total of those mental developments which take place spontaneously and lay no claim to universal or compulsive authority. Its action on the two constants is one of perpetual modification and disintegration, and is limited only by the extent to which they have pressed it into their service and included it within their aims. Otherwise it is the critic of both, the clock which tells the hour at which their form and substance no longer coincide.”

3. Modern European Thought by Franklin L. Baumer (ISBN: 0-02-306500-1)

This was a book recommended by the great voluntarist and philosopher George H. Smith for the very reason stated in its opening line, “This book is

for anyone interested in ideas and their history.” Franklin L. Baumer structures his history, again dialectically, around the “perpetual modification and disintegration” of the *perennial questions*. “The history of ideas boils down essentially to answers to perennial questions. . . . The perennial questions, then, are the deepest questions man can ask about himself and his universe. They are perennial because man cannot help asking them; they are fundamental to his whole cosmic orientation. How could man not inquire continuously about God, nature, man, society, and history?” And to emphasize the dialectical nature of the endeavor Mr. Baumer continues, “These five areas of man’s intellectual concern are all closely interrelated and interlocked, and are, in a sense, the same, so that it is difficult to speak of one without begging all the others.”

4. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* by Thomas S. Kuhn (ISBN-10: 0-226-45808-3)
What more can I say about this book that hasn’t already been said before? (See: L.P. Liggio’s *Kuhn’s Paradigm’s*, Libertarian Forum Vol. 8. 11, Nov. 1976 or, more recently, Roderick T. Long’s *Wild Cards* aeblog.com, 10 Sep. 2009) The *structure* that Thomas Kuhn describes in *scientific revolutions* is just as applicable in other revolutions and strategically important for determining areas of ideological opportunity.

5. Spec Ops by William H. McRaven (ISBN: 0-89141-600-5)_
Spec Ops: Case Studies in Special Operations Warfare Theory and Practice is the recommendation that will probably secure my position on a government watch list. From chapter one: “Why is a theory of special operations important? A successful special operation defies conventional wisdom by using a small force to defeat a much larger or well-entrenched opponent. This book develops a theory of special operations that explains why this phenomenon occurs. I will show that through the use of certain principles of warfare a special operations force can reduce what Carl von Clausewitz calls the frictions of war to a manageable level. By minimizing these frictions the special operations force can achieve relative superiority over the enemy. Once relative superiority is achieved, the attacking force is no longer at a disadvantage and has the initiative to exploit the enemy’s weaknesses and secure victory.” Did that get your attention? Did it peak your interest? Did it raise an eyebrow? It should! This is what the State is writing; I think we should be reading.



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