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## Radical Cities and Social Revolution: An Interview with Janet Biehl

The abstractness and programmatic emptiness so characteristic of contemporary radical theory indicates a severe crisis in the left. It suggests a retreat from the belief that the ideal of a cooperative, egalitarian society can be made concrete and thus realized in actual social relationships. It is as though - in a period of change and demobilization - many radicals have ceded the right and the capacity to transform society to CEO's and heads of state.

Janet Biehl's new book, *The Politics of Social Ecology: Libertarian Municipalism*, is an affront to this. It challenges the politically resigned with a detailed, historically situated anti-statist and anti-capitalist politics for today.

I asked Biehl about her new work in the fall of 1997 by email. ~ Chuck Morse

*Your book is essentially programmatic: you set libertarian municipalism in a historical context and offer concrete suggestions for practice. What political circumstances made it seem especially important to produce this book now?*

As the political dimension of social ecology - the body of ideas developed by Murray Bookchin since the 1950s - libertarian municipalism is a libertarian politics of political and social revolution. It constitutes both a theory and a practice for building a revolutionary movement whose ultimate aim is to achieve an equal, just, and free society. My book is intended as a simple articulation of these ideas, which Bookchin himself has expounded elsewhere.

Briefly, for readers who do not know, libertar-

ian municipalism calls for the creation of self-managed community political life at the municipal level: the level of the village, town, neighborhood, or small city. This political life would be embodied in institutions of direct democracy: citizens' assemblies, popular assemblies, or town meetings. Where such institutions already exist, their democratic potential and structural power could be enlarged; where they formerly existed, they could be revived; and where they never existed, they could be created anew. But within these institutions people as citizens could manage the affairs of their own communities themselves - rather than relying on statist elites - arriving at policy decisions through the processes of direct democracy.

To address problems that transcend the boundaries of a single municipality, the democratized municipalities in a given region would form a confederation, sending delegates to a confederal council. This confederation would not be a state, since it would be controlled entirely by the citizens' assemblies. The delegates that the assemblies send would have the power only to advance decisions made by their assemblies; they would be mandated and easily recallable.

As the libertarian municipalist movement grew and as ever more municipalities became democratized and confederated in this way, the confederations would hopefully become powerful enough to constitute themselves into dual power, one that could finally be pitted in opposition to the nation-state. At that point either a confrontation would ensue, or the citizenry would defect to the new

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### IAS GRANT AWARDS

The IAS annually awards \$6000 in grants to writers whose work is important to the anarchist critique of domination, who exhibit a clear financial need, and whose piece is likely to be widely distributed. On January 17, 1998 the IAS Board of Directors was pleased to award grants to the following individuals:

\$2000 to Chris Day for *Anarchism and the Zapatista Revolution*. This book will develop a revolutionary, anti-authoritarian analysis of Zapatismo as expressed in the words and deeds of

the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) and Zapatista communities in Chiapas, Mexico. It will have three main components: an empirical investigation of Zapatista theory and practice, a consideration of the two main forms of libertarian thinking in Mexico - the traditions of indigenous autonomy and European anarchism; and finally an investigation of the more recent historical roots of the EZLN in the Mexican New Left and the indigenous struggles of Chiapas in the past few decades. It will draw out some of the

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**PERSPECTIVES - ON  
ANARCHIST THEORY**

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for Anarchist Studies

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Rebecca DeWitt, Chuck Morse

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## Institute for Anarchist Studies Update

This issue of *Perspectives* brings the IAS's first full calendar year of operation to a close and thus marks a milestone in our efforts to provide support to anti-authoritarian social criticism. I am pleased to say that these efforts continue as vigorously as ever.

The IAS board awarded the third set of IAS grants to another fine group of radical writers this January. The three projects we supported bring anarchism to bear on some of the most important issues facing radicals at the end of the millenium: the global capitalist attack on communities worldwide, the forms and implications of various responses to these assaults, and, finally, the relationship of new communication technologies (i.e., the Internet) to community and democracy. (See page 1 for a fuller account.)

It is also with satisfaction that we watch previous IAS grant recipients bring their works toward publication. There are many developments to report in this regard: Murray Bookchin has finished the first and major chapter of the second volume of his *Spanish Anarchists*; Allan Antliff has completed the first draft of his book, *The Culture of Revolt: Art and Anarchy in America*; Paul Fleckenstein has submitted his piece, "Civic Vitality or Civic Mortality? Progress and Growth in Burlington, VT" to publishers; Peter Lamborn Wilson has nearly finished his introduction to Enrico Arrigoni's autobiography; and, finally, Mark Bohnert and Richard Curtis have almost completed their *Post-Industrial Resources: Anarchist Reconstructive Efforts and Visions in the Upper Midwest*. (Note: there are more extensive accounts of previous IAS grant awards in earlier *Perspectives*.)

I am also happy to state that the IAS's 1997 fundraising campaign was a complete success and that we even exceeded our \$8500 fundraising goal. IAS donors were extremely generous and their support - a source of encouragement to all of us here - enabled the IAS to provide real assistance to radical writers, continue publishing *Perspectives*, and build the IAS endowment by 10 percent of every donation. In addition, we have used the excess from the fundraising campaign to purchase

some necessary equipment for the IAS office, an investment that will permit us to work more effectively on behalf of radical authors as well as the IAS's long-term development. (Please see page 11 for a list of those who made our 1997 campaign a success).

All of these developments heighten the enthusiasm with which we enter 1998, in anticipation of another year of sustained activity and growth. The IAS's 1998 fundraising campaign, inaugurated with this issue of *Perspectives*, will be a central focus of our efforts. Specifically, the IAS must raise \$9200 by January 1999 to award another \$6000 in grants, publish two issues of this newsletter, and build the IAS endowment. Our 1998 fundraising goal, as some readers may notice, is \$700 above our 1997 goal. This increase reflects a demand we have placed upon ourselves: to put 15 percent - not 10 percent - of every contribution into the IAS endowment. Indeed, one of our primary objectives is to make sure that support is available to future generations of radical writers and it is our endowment that will make this possible.

Please help us reach this goal by donating to the IAS if you are not among those who have already contributed or pledged a contribution to our 1998 fundraising campaign (see page 11). Please also note that Perennial Books has provided the IAS with books in support of our fundraising efforts once again. Those donating \$25 or more to the IAS are entitled to at least one of the great books they've generously made available to us. Perennial has also renewed its pledge to discount items in their extraordinary catalogue by 15% to all those who give \$25 or more. Please join us in our efforts to support radical writers now and in the future.

We are proud of what the IAS has accomplished over the last year and regard these accomplishments as a foundation upon which to build further contributions. It is immensely gratifying to work on behalf of radical social criticism, to participate in an emerging counter-institution, and, above all, to be active in a project that embodies the continued vitality of the ideal of a cooperative, egalitarian, and ecological society.

~ Chuck Morse

**CORRECTION:**

In the last issue of *Perspectives* the date of the *Third Annual Bay Area Anarchist Bookfair* was listed incorrectly. The correct date is March 14, 1998.





## On Choosing to Be a Radical Professor

by John Schumacher

*At a time when anti-authoritarian social critique must be reevaluated and developed, it is especially important to engage, challenge, and transform the institutional settings in which this work takes place. John Schumacher helps us understand some of the dilemmas faced by those in the university.*

How do you, as a radical, expect to influence people? Will people read what you have to write? Or hear what you have to say? Will they be *ready* to read or hear it? Or do their lives have to cease being smooth first, so that they ask questions where before there were only routine answers? A radical needs a nose for situations in which people are ready for a radical lesson, or alternatively, needs to be a facilitator of that readiness.

So, why not choose to be a radical professor? You will work with people at the most liberal time of their lives (though one wonders how long such a time will survive, as today only 27% of first-year college students - less than half of what it was 30 years ago - think that keeping up with politics is a worthy life goal), and the residue of academic freedom and tenure provides more opportunity for being radical than you will find in, for example, secondary education. Being a professor also

provides a living, not the "decent poverty" advocated by Paul Goodman, but typically not embarrassingly more either.

You can be a radical professor in various ways, but the primary divide, again, is between those who stress writing or speaking and those who stress helping people get ready to read or hear. Few do both well, but only the latter is necessary to being a successful radical professor. Headstrong, I started out by trying to change the minds of my students, rather than making it *possible* for them to change their own minds. I needed to learn how to be a facilitator.

Anarchism is just one subject among others at the level of writing or speaking, but has no peer when it comes to learning how to be a facilitator. I will try to explain this, but first I want to say a few words about the university context.

### The University Context

How can you influence young people if you can't sing? In 1971 I chose to teach college-age young people at a research university in the USA. I had more opportunity then to develop my radical agenda, both in and out of the university.

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## Recommended Reading



*We asked two authors to tell us about their favorite books on a vital topic: radical politics after the fall of the Soviet Union?*

Arif Dirlik, author of many works including *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution* (California, 1993) and *After the Revolution: Waking to Global Capitalism* (Wesleyan, 1994), writes: "In these days of globalization craze, it is difficult often to distinguish critiques from celebrations of globalization. While there are many books on globalization, I am particularly fond of William Greider's, *One World, Ready or Not: The Manic Logic of Global Capitalism* (Simon & Schuster, 1997) for its comprehensiveness, its revelations about globalization through the eyes of those who are creating it, and its keen critical edge. In the same vein, Manuel Castell's, *The Power of Identity; Vol.2 of The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture* (Blackwell, 1997), offers a most sensitive analysis of the various kinds of politics bred by globalization, and the levels at

which an appropriate resistance politics may be formulated. Finally, place-based resistance is the theme taken up by Jeremy Brecher and Tim Costello's *Global Village or Global Pillage: Economic Reconstruction From the Bottom Up* (South End, 1994).

Kathy Ferguson, author of *A Feminist Case Against Bureaucracy* (Temple, 1985), writes: "Two thoughtful recent books represent for me two contrasting dimensions of politics with which anarchism has historically engaged: broad philosophical efforts to conceptualize key concepts in politics; and specific, grounded inquiries into practices of political change. One is Wendy Brown's *States of Injury: Power and Freedom in Late Modernity* (Princeton University Press, 1995). Brown's book is highly theoretical, drawing intellectual tools from Nietzsche, Marx, Foucault, Weber, and contemporary feminist theory. Brown targets the liberal regulatory state

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## BIBLIOTECA POPULAR 'JOSE INGENIEROS'

The Biblioteca Popular 'Jose Ingenieros' in Buenos Aires is a remarkable counter-institution dedicated to popular education, the preservation of anarchist history, and radical opposition.

Founded in 1935, it has served as a consistent center for anarchist activity in Buenos Aires and Argentina as a whole. It provides meeting space for anarchist groups, a lending library for neighborhood children, and a film program now in its thirtieth year. It also holds what is probably the second largest archive of anarchist material in South America (surpassed only by the Edgard Leuenroth collection at Brazil's Universidade Estadual de Campinas).

The Archive has been open and functioning for five years. It holds material dating from 1895 to the present and in thirteen languages. They also have a particularly large collection of anarchist material in Yiddish.

You can help the library by sending anarchist publications of any sort, books for their lending library, as well as financial contributions. Contributions can be made in U.S. dollars and correspondence can be handled in most major languages. Please make sure to enclose a contribution if you are requesting information or photocopies.

Please contact the library at:  
Biblioteca Popular 'José Ingenieros'  
J. Ramirez de Velasco #958  
(1414) Buenos Aires  
Argentina

## CONTACTS & ADDRESSES

AK Press  
P.O. Box 40682  
San Francisco, CA 94140  
Web: <http://www.akpress.org>

Black Rose Books  
1-800-283-3572; Web: <http://www.web.net/blackrosebooks/ordering.htm>

The Kate Sharpley Library  
BM Hurricane  
London, WC1N 3XX, UK;  
Web: <http://members.aol.com/wellslake/Sharpley.htm>

The Meltzer Press  
PO Box 35, Hastings,  
East Sussex, TN34 2UX, UK.

Douglas & McIntyre  
1615 Venables Street  
Vancouver, BC  
V5L 2H1, Canada  
1-800-667-6902

### — Notice —

Seeking information on the whereabouts of the long lost, final bronze cast of the Sacco and Vanzetti bas-relief by Gutzman Borglum. The mayor of Boston recently accepted a copy of this sculpture (one of three copies made from the plaster cast of an earlier version of sculpture) after it had been repeatedly refused by both the city and the state since 1937. It had been found by a junkman in 1960 in an abandoned warehouse and now hangs in the Boston Public Library. However, only photos remain of the final bronze sculpture and the last known location of the sculpture was the Borglum estate in Stamford, CT, where it was shipped in 1940. If you have any leads please contact Jerry Kaplan at PO Box 381323, Cambridge, MA 02238 or [jerry\\_kaplan@harvard.edu](mailto:jerry_kaplan@harvard.edu).

## What's Happening: Books & Events

The domination and exploitation of women by the state is the subject of *Race, Class, Women and the State: The Case of Domestic Labour* by Tanya Schecter. Focusing on the Canadian state, Schecter argues that the state "consciously acted to take advantage of [Third World] women's desperation, of their poverty, in order to find a cheap supply of domestics for its own citizens while limiting its own social expenditures...The end result ... being a mistress-servant relationship." Due out in February 1998 from Black Rose Books.

The dimensions of anarchist thought continue to grow with new contributions by and about two eminent anarchist thinkers. Continuing his historical analysis of revolutionary struggle, Murray Bookchin's second volume of *The Third Revolution: Popular Movements in the Revolutionary Era* is now available from Cassell Academic. In addition, Noam Chomsky's extensive work is examined in *Chomsky's Revolution: Cognitivism and Anarchism* by Carlos Otero. Due out in March 1998 from Blackwell Publishers.

The lives of anarchists and fellow radicals are the subject of several new books this year. Albert Meltzer is commemorated in *The Albert Memorial: The Anarchist Life and Times of Albert Meltzer* by Phil Ruff. A collaborative effort between the Meltzer Press and the Kate Sharpley Library (KSL), this remembrance of Meltzer's controversial and remarkable life includes photos, essays, and thoughts from close friends. Fifty percent of sales go toward the KSL's publishing projects (available from Meltzer Press or the KSL). Joseph Labadie, better known for the extensive archival collection established in his name (the Labadie Collection), will be the subject of a new biography, *All-American Anarchist: Joseph A. Labadie and the Labor Movement*, by his granddaughter, Carlotta Anderson (available in June 1998 from Wayne State University Press). George Woodcock, one of the definitive historians of anarchism, will be remembered in *The Gentle Anarchist: A Life of George Woodcock* by Doug Fetherling (available in February 1998 from Douglas & McIntyre Publications).

Another radical life is recounted in the first person by William Herrick in his autobiography *Jumping in Line: the Adventures and Misadventures of an American Radical*. He is the author of several novels, including the award winning *Hermanos!*, an anti-Stalinist book based on his experience in the Spanish Civil War.

The history of Spanish anarchism is explored and celebrated with two re-releases by AK Press. Murray Bookchin's *The Spanish Anarchists: The Heroic Years 1868-1936* is now available in a new edition with a new preface by Bookchin. Also, *1936: The Spanish Revolution* by The Ex, "anarchist-art-agitators", is available again with 144 pages of photos, essays, and two 3" cds with two Spanish anarchist songs and two original compositions performed by The Ex. Many other titles, new and old, are available from AK's extensive (and free) 1998 catalog.

The Labadie Collection, a large archive of anarchist materials and other social protest literature, has recently received several donations of manuscript materials which include: a collection of research and biographical materials on the anarchist writer/poet J. William Lloyd; original research notebooks and manuscripts of Francis Bartlett, the Marxist psychoanalyst; Abe Bluestein's papers; a small collection of materials which belonged to Emma Goldman (letters from Berkman and others, official documents, and identification cards); and a collection of material relating to E.F. Doree, Secretary-Treasurer of the Textile Workers Industrial Union of the IWW during WWI, who was imprisoned with ninety-nine others for violation of the Draft and Espionage Acts of 1917. For information, contact the Labadie Collection at: Special Collections Library, 711 Harlan Hatcher Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109; tel. (313) 764-9377; Web address: <http://www.lib.umich.edu/libhome/SpecColl.lib/labadie.html>.

Several conferences on radical social theory will be held this year. The 16th Annual Socialist Scholars Conference will be held March 20 to 22, 1998, at Borough of Manhattan Community College, 199 Chambers Street. The theme of the Conference is "A World to Win: From the Manifesto to New Organizing for Socialist Change." For more information, call (212) 642-2826 or check out their website at <http://www.soc.qc.edu/ssc/>. A conference on "Work, Difference, and Social Change" is being held at the State University of

### IAS on the Web

- IAS Publications
- Grant Applications
- Helpful Links

<http://members.aol.com/iastudy/Default.htm>

New York at Binghamton from May 8 to 10, 1998. It will explore the challenges and possibilities that confront labor as a social movement in a global economy. For more info: contact: Chuck Koeber at (607) 777-6844 or [work@binghamton.edu](mailto:work@binghamton.edu).

There's still a chance to find great anarchist books. The Third Annual Bay Area Anarchist Book Fair will take place on Saturday, March 14, 1998, 10am - 6pm, at the San Francisco County Fair Building in Golden Gate Park by Ninth Avenue and Lincoln Way. Admission is free. Artists and Speakers include Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Arther Evans, John Shirley, Pat Califia, and Will Rosco. More than fifty exhibitors from all over the US will sell radical and anti-authoritarian books, records, posters and t-shirts. For more information: contact Bound Together Books at 1369 Haight Street, San Francisco, California 94117, (415) 431-8355 or contact AK Press.

Spoken word recordings of Noam Chomsky and Howard Zinn are available from Radio Free Maine in both audio and video formats. They include: Chomsky's "Media Censorship and Our Right to Know," "The Role of the Media in Manufacturing Consent," and an interview with Chomsky by Exene Cervenkov (of the band "X"); and Zinn's "Failure to Quit: Reflections of an Optimistic Historian." For more information or a catalog, contact Roger Leisner, Radio Free Maine, PO Box 2705, Augusta, Maine 04338, (207) 622-6629 tel/fax.

Videos on Argentine anarchist history are available from the Fundación Almubrar. Works in progress include a piece on the shipbuilders' strike of the 1950's - the anarchist-inspired and longest running strike in Argentine history - and a piece on the anarchist Severino Di Giovanni and the Urriburu dictatorship. Videos are \$15 each. Write them at: Santiago Del Estero 2664 5° (1075) Buenos Aires, Argentina.

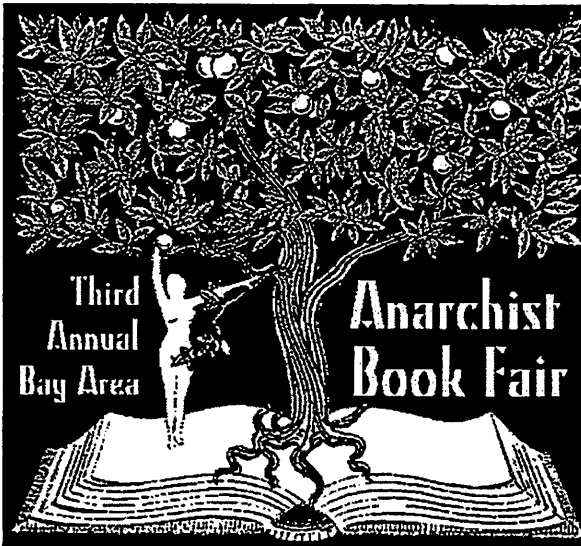
The entire collection of *La Voz de la Mujer*, a Spanish-language anarchy-feminist periodical published in Buenos Aires from 1896 to 1897, has been reprinted by Universidad Nacional de Quilmes. Write to: Universidad Nacional de

Quilmes, Roque Sáenz Peña 180, Bernal, 1876, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

For those interested in French-language, anarchist material, *Refractions* is a new journal on anarchist theory. It covers a variety of issues from an anarchist perspective, such as technology, democracy, gender, and ecology. Please contact them at: Les Amis de Refractions, BP 33, 69571 Dardilly cedex, France.

*The State Adversary*, an impressive anarchist journal from New Zealand, is a great source not only on anarchist efforts in New Zealand but also for international coverage. It is published by the State Adversary Collective, an independent, autonomous collective based in Wellington, New Zealand, and subscriptions are \$10 for four issues. Send subscriptions or inquiries to: The State Adversary, PO Box 9263, Te Aro, Wellington, Aotearoa, New Zealand.

Jura Books and the Lucy Parsons Center, two anarchist bookstores and meeting places, are in need of help. Jura Books, one of the few remaining radical bookstores in Sydney, Australia, recently celebrated its 20th anniversary. They need financial contributions in order to continue paying for their building, increasing the Media Room Project collection of books and pamphlets, paying for daily expenses, and increasing book stocks. Send contributions to P.O. Box N32, 440 Parramatta Road, Petersham North, NSW 2049, Sydney, Australia. The Lucy Parsons Center of Cambridge, Massachusetts, is facing eviction in early 1998 due to their landlord's proposal to demolish 18 storefronts in order to construct a 16-story plaza of chain stores and high-rent apartments. In order to move to a new location without going under, the Lucy Parsons Center needs your help in the following ways: make a tax-deductible donation; offer professional skills (such as experience in grant writing, fundraising, and accounting); offer expertise in real estate; donate radical books; or have the Lucy Parsons Center table at your event. Contact the Lucy Parsons Center at 3 Central Square, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139, (617) 497-9934.



## INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL ECOLOGY

The Institute for Social Ecology (ISE) has been a center of ecological activism, radical community development, and eco-anarchist theory since it was founded in 1974.

The ISE's programs, which include summer sessions, workshops, conferences, and a BA and MA in social ecology (offered in affiliation with Goddard College), present students with a unique opportunity to learn about social and ecological reconstruction in a participatory setting, with an emphasis on classroom discussion as well as hands-on practical experience. It has now served more than 2,000 students from around the globe.

The ISE has also been active in the publication of newsletters, monographs, books, and journals, including *Democracy and Nature: the International Journal of Politics and Ecology*.

The ISE's 1998 summer program promises to be especially rewarding, as it will be the second summer session at the ISE's recently purchased, permanent home. The *Planning, Design and Construction for Sustainable Communities* program will run from May 30 to June 20 and the *Ecology and Community* program will run from June 25 to July 24.

For more information:

**Institute for Social Ecology**  
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05667 - USA  
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Web: <http://www.tao.ca/~ise/index.html>



JANET  
BIEHL

Janet Biehl has always gone against the prevailing fashions. Born in 1953 in Cincinnati, Ohio, she did not join the radical movements of the 1960's like many of her peers. On the contrary, she describes herself as 'rather straight' during this time.

However, in early 1970's, when many were abandoning cultural radicalism, Biehl was inspired by avant-garde performance groups such as the Living Theater and subsequently completed a degree in theater at Wesleyan University.

The desire to become an actress led her to New York City, where Biehl began to turn to radical theory and politics. Although the New Left was now a thing of the past, the election of Ronald Reagan and her growing disenchantment with the arts made this a natural choice.

While pursuing an MA in liberal arts at the CUNY graduate center, she became aware of Murray Bookchin's work and attended the Institute for Social Ecology in 1986.

Bookchin's work helped Biehl articulate her radical commitments with a new fullness. Shortly thereafter she moved to Burlington, Vermont, to work more closely with Bookchin and became his companion and closest collaborator. She lives and works with him to this day, making her living as a freelance copy editor. Unlike many of her generation - whose lives constitute a long retreat from youthful radicalism - Biehl has gone consistently in the opposite direction.

## Radical Cities and Social Revolution:

... Continued from page 1

system that gave them full control over their lives, "hollowing out" the power of the nation-state. At the same time the municipalities would take control of economic life from private corporations, expropriating the expropriators. A rational, libertarian, ecological society could then be formed, where structural power would reside in directly democratic assemblies inhabited by an active, vital citizenry.

My book lays out concrete steps by which a movement could be formed to create such a direct democracy. It emphasizes the crucial role of an educated group of committed individuals who, through study groups and local municipal electoral campaigns, build a movement by spreading these ideas in their communities.

The book has been needed for a long time, and I only regret that we didn't have it back when we were working in the Left Green Network.<sup>1</sup> Just how much it's been needed is indicated by the fact that within only a few weeks of its publication, comrades in other parts of the world made arrangements to translate it into five European languages, and discussions are under way for several others.

*You place libertarian municipalism in the anarchist tradition and embrace its anti-statist and anti-capitalist goals. However, your emphasis on the conflict between the municipality and the state (as opposed to the conflict between labor and capital) is a departure from several dominant tendencies in the anarchist tradition. Why is this departure important?*

First let me clarify that Bookchin does not oppose libertarian municipalism to the conflict between labor and capital. His intention is, rather, to broaden class struggle by connecting it to the municipality-state conflict; to introduce transclass issues - especially hierarchical domination and ecological dislocations - into formulations of class struggle; and to give class struggle a direct democratic base, grounded in a self-managed civic political culture. Libertarian municipalism is an effort to make class conflict a civic issue as well as an industrial one. It's actually not so unusual: after all, revolutionary class struggles have historically been based in municipalities. The uprisings in Paris in 1848 and in 1870-71 were fought around barricades that were located in neighborhoods. Both in Red Petrograd in 1917 and in Barcelona in 1936-37, strong neighborhood civic cultures were crucial arenas for their respective revolutions.

Within the anarchist tradition, the municipality-state conflict goes back at least to Proudhon's

1863 book on federalism, which called for a federation of autonomous communes. Bakunin absorbed this call and made it a central part of the programs he wrote in the late 1860s. In those same years, communalist ideas were becoming widespread among opponents of Napoleon III's centralized rule in France. So in 1871, when Prussia defeated France and the French government collapsed, communalist ideas were already in place to infuse the Paris Commune when it sprang up on the ruins of the Second Empire. After only a few weeks' existence, the Commune met with a disastrous end, yet many radicals - not only anti-statists but also Marx for a while - were inspired by the Commune's audacious example and regarded the federation of autonomous communes as the model political structure for a free, self-managed society. In the later 1870s the idea passed into the programs of the Jura Federation, which regarded the communal federation as integral to the post-revolutionary society.

Libertarian municipalism draws on historical communalism, both in its anarchist and Marxist theoretical forms, as well as its concrete tradition in revolutionary history, going back to the French Revolution of 1789. At the same time it takes historical communalism further. Where early communalism saw the communes as mainly administrative in function, merely providing "public services," and gave actual decision-making power over to workers' associations (whose federation would parallel that of the federated communes), libertarian municipalism envisions the commune as a direct democracy that controls the economy. And where anarchist communalists thought people would form communes spontaneously after the state collapsed by other means, libertarian municipalism provides for a revolutionary transition, in which the federation of communes would become a dual power against the nation-state.

My point is that the communalist tradition, of which libertarian municipalism is a development, isn't by any means alien to the anarchist tradition - in fact, it was present at the creation.

*One way anarchists have distinguished themselves from others in the socialist tradition is by emphasizing the importance of counter-cultures as well as counter-institutions for a general revolutionary strategy. What is the relationship, in your view, between these efforts and the struggle for the radical, directly democratic political institutions described in your book?*

It's been much to the detriment of anarchism and the left generally that so much attention has

## An Interview with Janet Biehl

recently been given to cultural change at the expense of institutional change, to the point that today it overshadows politics altogether. I don't mean to suggest that cultural work is bereft of political meaning, but it can't stand on its own - it must be part of a larger political movement. Art and culture and self-expression by themselves pose no threat to the existing social order, because by themselves they can very easily be coopted and marketed. In fact, the alienation and dissent that a radical work of art expresses can sometimes make it all the more marketable, as something with a "dangerously" hip frisson.

Without a political movement that opposes commodification as such - and hence capitalism - as well as hierarchical domination, art too easily becomes just another commodity. The 1960s counter-culture has famously deteriorated into nostalgia merchandising and New Age spirituality, with all their many marketing possibilities, and hip advertising has coopted much of its sensibility (see the recent anthology *Commodify Your Dissent*). For example, the Beatles' 'Revolution' is now used to sell sneakers and my local bike shop sells Anarchy brand sunglasses. Within anarchism the emphasis on culture and self-expression and lifestyle - at the expense of a revolutionary politics (in the sense of community self-management) - has become so acute that social ecologists have had to distinguish themselves from it, to try to retain for anarchism a core socialist imperative to transform society at the level of social and political institutions as well as sensibility.

*You argue that to create a free society we must democratize and expand the political realm. What role does the struggle against hierarchies often relegated to the private sphere - such as patriarchy and white supremacy - play in this effort?*

During the course of a political and social revolution, people's personalities will doubtless be changed, especially as they experience the solidarity of common struggle, fight on behalf of a common ideal rather than their own particular interests, and socially empower themselves. During such experiences we could expect that racism and sexism would be reduced. But insofar as they persist, either in mindsets or in social arrangements, the community members - in the political realm, in the democratic citizens' assemblies - would make decisions about how to address them in whatever ways they deem appropriate.

The danger exists that a community could set policies that are racist and sexist, but it would be

irrational for a society predicated on the fulfillment of the potentialities of all its members to suppress the potentialities of some. One of the fundamentals of social ecology, of which libertarian municipalism is the political dimension, is a condemnation of all kinds of social hierarchy and class rule and a call for their dissolution.

*The idea of potentiality appears throughout your book. You refer to the "political potential of the municipality," our "uniquely human potentiality" for a rational society, etc. Please tell me more about this concept of potentiality?*

This question touches on the philosophical dimension of social ecology, dialectical naturalism, a topic too complex to explore thoroughly here; I'd refer interested readers to Bookchin's *Philosophy of Social Ecology* (2nd ed. revised). I'll merely say, in brief, that as a developmental philosophy (as opposed to an analytical philosophy), dialectical naturalism focuses on processes unfolding in both natural evolution and social history, especially those that tend, however obliquely and tortuously and even abortively at times, toward greater freedom, self-consciousness, and reflexivity.

As a developmental philosophy, dialectical naturalism uses a vocabulary that reflects developmental processes: potentiality, emergence, unfolding, growth, actualization, fulfillment. Where analytical philosophy presupposes fixity, dialectical philosophy presupposes movement, and not merely kinesis but directional movement.

By focusing on the potentialities of a situation, dialectical rationality encourages us to examine what kind of future could logically emerge from that situation. Thus, the municipality as it exists today contains the potentiality to become democratized and part of a rational society; the achievement of a libertarian municipalist society would mark the fulfillment or actualization of that potentiality.

*You call upon people to overthrow capitalism and the state, and to create a free society informed by reason, solidarity, and an ethos of citizenship. However, your discussion of the colonization of social life by capitalism, the assault on communities, and the dissolution of the political realm seems to describe the destruction of the sources from which we could derive the capacity to build a social alternative. From where, under these conditions, can we find the strength and insight needed to create a free society?*

Today's society of instant gratification

*Continued on Next Page*

### JANET BIEHL: SELECTED WORKS

*The Politics of Social Ecology: Libertarian Municipalism.* Montreal: Black Rose, 1997.

*The Murray Bookchin Reader* (editor). London: Cassell Academic, 1997.

*Ecofascism: Lessons from the German Experience* (with Peter Staudenmaier). San Francisco: AK Press, 1996.

*Rethinking Ecofeminist Politics.* Boston: South End Press, 1991.



"Militia Fever: The Fallacy of 'Neither Left nor Right'" *Green Perspectives*, No. 37, 1996.

"European Greens: From Movement to Party," *Society and Nature*, No. 3, 1993

"Women and the Democratic Tradition," *Green Perspectives*, No. 16 & 17, 1989.

"Goddess Mythology and Ecological Politics" *New Politics*, Vol. 2, No. 2, 1989.

"Critique of the Draft Program of the Left Green Network" (with Murray Bookchin), *Green Perspectives*, No. 23, 1991.

... Biehl Continued

perpetually gives us the message that our aim in life is to maximize our personal happiness, within the framework of capitalism. It gives little or no cultural support to subordinating immediate personal needs to the pursuit of a larger goal. It shrivels our imagination from expansively envisioning a better world to submersing itself in matters of practical survival and the consumption of goods and services. It systematically strips us of what earlier centuries would have called our better nature.

Not only does this social order commodify and exploit us, it obscures our historical memory and thereby stupefies us. It would like us to forget that for centuries people participated in efforts for social transformation that did not bear fruit in their lifetimes. Not only did they not need immediate gratification, they did not expect it and were willing to risk exile and punishment, knowing it served the creation of a better society.

We therefore have to recognize that the immediate gratification of desire is part of the system we are fighting. We have to hold on to our historical memory and resist social amnesia. We must be willing, on some level, to put the cause of creating a better society before the cause of putting an espresso machine on the kitchen countertop.

If we don't find the strength to persist and maintain our ideals, then our lives will be meaningless too, and we will become trivialized. We will, as William James once put it, "relapse into the slumber of nonentity from which [we] had been momentarily aroused."

So we have to look for other people who, like us, want to uphold human dignity, and who understand that the worst problem our society faces is not El Nino or incompetent nannies but the social order itself. We fight that social order because a diminution of our humanity and our best aspirations would be insufferable.

*Marx essentially argued that communism would emerge from the maturation of capitalism's internal contradictions. Do you regard the creation of a libertarian municipalist society as an act of will or a culmination of a larger historical process?*

It's both. I have no doubt that our society is heading toward a crisis - the only question is whether its immediate cause will be social or ecological. As Marx pointed out in *Capital*, capitalist enterprises must either maximize their profits and therefore expand, or else succumb to their rivals and perish - grow

or die. Bookchin has added that this imperative puts capitalism on a collision course with the natural world. Even as global warming is poised to wreak enormous havoc in the next century, the discrepancy between rich and poor is widening. To maximize its profits on a global basis, capitalism is rendering whole categories of people useless - by some estimates, about three-fifths of the world's population.

I also think we might take another look at Marx's "immiseration" thesis. He argued that the logic of capitalism was to reduce wages to the lowest possible level; when people were pauperized, he thought, they would be impelled to revolt against the bourgeoisie exploiting them. This prediction was not fulfilled, in part because welfare states were created that softened the impact of capitalism somewhat. Now that many of the social welfare benefits upon which the social peace has come to depend are being whittled away, the prediction that immiseration will lead to social revolution may yet turn out to be correct.

Whatever the cause of the crisis, when it does develop, its social outcome will by no means necessarily be a rational, ecological, and libertarian society. Its outcome could be a dictatorship, or chaos. If the crisis is to result in emancipation, at least some degree of consciousness of the liberatory alternative will have to be in place beforehand.

This is where voluntarism comes in. Pre-revolutionary periods are usually quite short. We are unlikely to have a lot of time to do the painstaking, molecular work of education that a liberatory movement will require. That's the kind of work we should be doing now: especially building a libertarian municipalist movement, showing people how they can take their political and economic lives into their own hands, showing them how they can build a society that will allow them to reclaim their humanity. It requires endless patience, but it must be done. If it is not, then the crisis that comes will result in tyranny.

*It's hard to find a radical theorist these days not ensconced in the university. You are an exception and have deliberately remained outside of academia. Why is this?*

The other night I came across a passage in Bakunin, where he talks about "the history of all academes." "From the moment he becomes an academician," Bakunin wrote, "... the greatest scientific genius inevitably lapses into sluggishness. He loses spontan-

city, his revolutionary hardihood, and that troublesome and savage energy characteristic of the genius, ever called to destroy tottering old words and lay the foundations of the new. He undoubtedly gains in politeness, in utilitarian and practical wisdom, what he lacks in power of originality. In a word, he becomes corrupted."<sup>2</sup> I think this passage is too harsh; many academics from all parts of the political spectrum do try to participate in public political culture, writing books and op-ed pieces and articles for a popular readership. And the research that radical historians in the academy do on revolutionary movements and socialist-anarchist ideas is certainly invaluable to those who are trying to build on those traditions.

But it's hard for professors to write works that directly advance revolutionary movements, works that will educate and inspire revolutionary activists and intellectuals. In a university, most of the writing one does must help consolidate one's career, especially by demonstrating scholarship. Writing a movement-building work could jeopardize that career. So academics tend to address each other, more than the general public, and certainly much more than the revolutionary public. In this country, the mass exodus of leftists from public life into the academy has undoubtedly vitiated radical political culture.

*Tell me about the future of your work. Do you have new projects planned or new issues you intend to explore?*

I'm happy to say that *The Murray Bookchin Reader*, which I edited, is now available in the U.S. Currently I'm helping Bookchin put together a collection of recent interviews and essays, to be called *Anarchism, Marxism, and the Future of the Left* (published by A.K. Press next year).

Some of your readers may be interested to know that an international conference on libertarian municipalism will be held in Portugal in August 1998. Its purpose will be to discuss and advance the ideas of libertarian municipalism, as defined by this book and by Bookchin's own writing. Those interested in advancing libertarian municipalism may contact the conference organizers at P.O. Box 111, Burlington, VT 05401 USA or [blakrose@web.net](mailto:blakrose@web.net) or [bookchin@igc.apc.org](mailto:bookchin@igc.apc.org).

#### Footnotes:

1. Biehl and Chuck Morse were co-coordinators of the Left Green Network Clearinghouse from 1990 to 1991.
2. Sam Dolgoff, ed., *Bakunin on Anarchy* (New York, Alfred Knopf, 1972), p. 228.



## Abe Bluestein: An Anarchist Life

Abe Bluestein, a lifelong anarchist, passed away on December 3, 1997, at the age of 88. We should remember him as someone who fought to embody anarchist principles all his life, and celebrate the inspired example he offers to the present generation.

Like many anarchists born in the early 20th century, Abe came from a radical, immigrant family. His Russian parents, Mendel and Esther Bluestein, were active in the anarchist group in the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union and also became part of the Modern School of Stelton, NJ, which Abe attended until junior high. Abe was strongly influenced by his family life: "I was brought up in an anarchist milieu, and was an anarchist already as a child. I had many lengthy discussions with my father - even before I was in my teens - over whether society could exist without government or laws...Our house was filled with anarchist literature, and Kropotkin's works - especially the *Conquest of Bread*, *Mutual Aid*, and *Appeal to the Young* - made the strongest impressions on me...my father, the Modern School, and Kropotkin's writings - combined to shape my anarchist upbringing."

When Abe left Stelton for public school he became valedictorian of his junior high class like so many Stelton students before him. His family then left for New York City, eventually moving into the Amalgamated co-ops (a housing development) in the Bronx. After graduating from City College, Abe encountered the Libertarian Center and participated in the Vanguard Group, a prominent anarchist group during the thirties. Within this forum Abe began to grow into his own as an anarchist and test the political currents.

As a young, questioning anarchist, he confronted the established beliefs of the older generation. He described himself as having "the arrogance of youth and ...criticized the more utopian aspects of anarchism and of libertarian education." Yet, Abe was responding to the need for anarchism to be critical of the present and not just rely on the past. However, Abe did not give up anarchism, but immersed himself in the movement and its controversies.

Abe was an editor of the anarchist magazines *Vanguard* and *Challenger*, and recalled how the anarchists "conducted forums, lectures and made soapbox speeches on street corners, getting into fights with the Communists all the time, protected

by the Wobblies with iron pipes wrapped with handkerchiefs." However, the highlight of Abe's anarchist activities was the Spanish Civil War, as it was for many anarchists who yearned to practice anarchist principles.

In May, 1937, Abe and his life-long partner Selma Cohen, a fine-artist and radical herself, traveled to Spain and took part in the revolution. He conducted radio broadcasts and sent out weekly bulletins to U.S. and British publications and, informally, worked as an information officer for the CNT. A year later they returned to America and Abe translated Augustin Souchy's *With the Peasants of Aragon* (a book on the peasant collectives in Aragon, Spain), among many other works.

Abe found himself caught in the dilemma that tore apart the anarchist movement: WWII. He was a pacifist and could not bring himself to support the war. The standoff between the pacifists and those who supported WWII in order to fight fascism caused many groups, including Abe's, to fall apart. The controversy led to massive inactivity among the anarchists, and Abe became less and less involved.

During the post-WWII political era, Abe worked as a reporter for the *Jewish Daily Forward* and the *American Labor Union*. In the 70's, Abe helped edit *News from Libertarian Spain* and worked with the Libertarian Book Club. At this time, Abe mostly made his living in the social services and, for a while, managed the United Housing Foundation, an organization that included the Amalgamated co-ops where he had lived as a teenager.

Though he became less active as he grew older, his constant passion for the spirit and ideals of anarchism stayed with him throughout his life, and he sought to instill them wherever he could. Abe, when interviewed in 1972, said: "the answer lies primarily in education - 'freedom through education', as Elizabeth Ferm (one of the founders of the Stelton School) put it. All my life I have put my faith in trade unions, cooperatives, and education as constructive channels. Is this inconsistent with anarchism?"

~ Rebecca DeWitt

Note: Abe Bluestein's comments are taken from Paul Avrich's *Anarchist Voices: An Oral History of Anarchism in America* (Princeton, 1995)

### WORKS BY ABE BLUESTEIN

Although Abe Bluestein was primarily an activist, he made valuable literary as well as practical contributions to the anarchist movement.

He translated Augustin Souchy's important *With the Peasants of Aragon: Libertarian Communism in the Liberated Areas* (Soil of Liberty and Cienfuegos Press, 1982). He also assembled and edited *Fighters for Anarchism: Mollie Steimer and Senya Fleshin* (Libertarian Publications Group, 1983) and wrote *Forgotten Men, What Now?: New Deal "Security"* (Libertarian Publishers, 19--).



April 1, 1937 (aboard the *Atonia*): Abe Bluestein & Selma Cohen on their way to Spain.\*

\* Photo courtesy of the Labadie Collection, Special Collections Library, University of Michigan. Special thanks to Julie Herrada, who also provided the bibliographic information.

## RECOMMENDED READING

... continued from page 1

(e.g., the contemporary U.S.) for collapsing our ideas of citizenship and identity into narrow bureaucratic channels. Looking at some contemporary identity politics, Brown finds what Nietzsche called 'ressentiment' a debilitating politics in which 'paralyzing recriminations and toxic resentments [parade] as radical critique' (p. xi). She challenges feminism to be radical; to contest the dominant terms of debate rather than just demand a share of the existing pie."

"The second book enacts this process of contesting the dominant terms of political debate. In *Streets of Hope: The Fall and Rise of an Urban Neighborhood* (South End, 1994), Peter Medoff and Holly Sklar give a hands-on account of the rebuilding of a blighted urban area in Boston by its determined residents. The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative brought together a racially and ethnically diverse group of residents to fight not only City Hall but capitalism and racism as well. They confront the specific obstacles and dilemmas familiar to most people who have attempted radical political change on a local scale: there are endless negotiations with funding organizations, city agencies, state and federal authorities, local landowners, banks, and courts. While Brown's book is helpful for pushing us to think radically (that is, to go to the root of our ideas) about power and freedom, *Street's of Hope* sketches concrete examples of such radical pushing against our society's dominant institutions."

### ... Radical Professor Continued

Everywhere you turn today the capitalist bottom line is taking over. Let me give an analogy.

Recently two university professors from Uruguay spoke to my department about the problems of developing a successful research university in their country. They were concerned with the quality of the science faculty, but the same can be said of any faculty: (1) to achieve prestige, one must meet international standards, and (2) to do research, one must have funding. The dilemma is that, for (1), international standards pull scientists way from addressing specifically Uruguayan problems, and, for (2), given the financial status of Latin American countries (old hands at dealing with the IMF restructuring that now focuses on Southeast Asian countries), funding for science is increasingly international - read, "foreign capital" - pulling scientists away from Uruguay as well. The old one-two punch, as we say.

I am sure I do not need to spell out this analogy, though certainly one thing to note is that (2) is increasingly a factor in (1), no matter where you are. I was joking the other day, as a take-off on the renaming of Albany's sports and entertainment arena as the Pepsi Arena, that soon a university will become the Pepsi University. But the sponsor does not need to be up front, after all, to exert control. (See, for example, Peter Montague, *Rachel's Environment and Health Weekly* #581, January 15, 1998.)

Academic standards that you must meet for tenure, and continue to meet every year for raises, promotions, and so on, are inevitably going to pull you in the wrong direction. Blind peer review, for example, is a conservative process, working along the established hierarchical lines of a profession. But longer odds do not mean no odds at all. And here people who stress writing or speaking will have better chances than those who do not. Teaching, let alone helping young people to be ready for a radical lesson, is not high on university agendas these days.

Gaining support for your research is part of meeting standards for tenure and so on, even in the humanities. And again the funding process is problematic in the same way that the scholarship process is. The IAS itself is an excellent example of the right idea: provide some funding, no matter how little, that will also count for professional review.

So, it is not so much that a university will try to

shut down a radical directly, but rather indirectly, through what look like the routine application of academic standards and the routine competition for scarce funds. Oh sure, you are *always* subject to the established hierarchies of other professors and administrators who will decide your case, and they may well be more in need of a radical lesson than your students are. But today it is easier not to hire someone in the first place, or not to support someone in the competition for scarce prestige and support, than it is to say someone is too radical and risk one's own reputation, no matter how small the risk. Only 1/4 of college instructors have tenure, and 1/2 of the positions at four-year universities are filled by adjuncts!

But the deepest irony is that the necessary condition for being a successful radical professor tends to drop out of the picture along with the minimization of teaching. Let me now explain.

### A Facilitator in a University Context

I understand being radical, first, as getting at the root questions underneath the answers we live out in the routine of our society and, second, once successful in the first phase, as living these questions. In the course of my career I began to present this understanding as having a radical conscience. I did not want my students to think that to be radical they needed to change their routine answers. No, they needed only to have radical consciences: little birdies in their heads, so to speak, chirping the root questions, reminding them that it is *always possible* to change their answers.

It is no easy task to keep this possibility alive. For example, one day - yikes, now over 20 years ago! - my first child came home from elementary school, and asked me why the boys were told to get off the bus first and help the girls off. She had noticed that she was bigger than a lot of the boys, and that she could have helped them off. What a root question at 6! But what happens if no one in her life helps her to keep it alive? What will she be like by the time she is a first-year college student?

To be a facilitator of such young people, however, you cannot *teach* root questions, no matter how well you have developed them - and your alternative answers - in writing or speaking. If anything could be said to be the motto of George Dennison's First Street School - an anarchist experiment (*The Lives of Children*, Random House, 1970) - it was that "learning is not the result of teaching." (See John Schumacher and David Wieck, "Childhood and Authority: An

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## The IAS's 1997 Fundraising Campaign

The following groups and individuals made the IAS's 1997 fundraising campaign a complete success. Their generosity enabled the IAS to meet its \$8500 fundraising goal and thus award \$6000 in grants, publish two issues of *Perspectives*, and build the IAS endowment by 10 percent of every donation.

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\* This donation is in honor of David Wieck.

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Please Note: The IAS is particularly indebted to Phil Billingsley, John Buell, Dan Chodorkoff, Miranda Edison, Micheal Glavin, Robin Lloyd, Michelle Matisons, Caroline Morse, Jon Scott, and John Petrovato.

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Barbara Epstein, *Political Protest & Cultural Revolution: Nonviolent Direct Action in the 1970's & 1980's* (CA Univ., hardcover, pp. 327). List: \$30.

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Martin Green, *The Origins of Nonviolence: Tolstoy & Gandhi in their Historical Settings* (Penn State, hardcover, pp. 256). List: \$27.95.

Frank Harrison, *The Modern State: An Anarchist Analysis* (Black Rose Books, paper, pp. 225). List: \$13.99.

Jerome Mintz, *The Anarchists of Casas Viejas* (Indiana University, paper, pp. 336). List: \$13.95

Graham Purchase, *Anarchism & Environmental Survival* (See Sharp, paper, pp. 156). List: \$10.

Osugi Sakae, *The Autobiography of Ōsugi Sakae* (California University, paper, pp. 167). List: \$14.

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Please make checks payable to the Institute for Anarchist Studies and mail them to:

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## ... Radical Professor Continued

Anarchist Theory," *Human Affairs*, 1983.) The irony of the radical classroom is that students must be free from the necessity of believing what the professor says, or of doing what the professor asks them to do, just because the professor says or asks it. Yet because of the authority of power routinely invested in our school teachers, *all of us* tend to resist this radical ideal.

Students have to ask root questions, again, in a way that sticks with them, in their consciences! Because you cannot require someone to do this, that is, you cannot require someone to be free from your authority — and here is the heart of anarchism — the authority of power is necessarily counter-productive. You must learn how to exercise merely the authority of competence, though not even this authority is required: my favorite technique is to turn a class around a root question I myself am still working on so that I am not tempted simply to "tell the truth"! As Caroline Estes (*Social Anarchism*, 1985) put the principle of consensus so well: everyone has a piece of the truth, and no one has all of it. (See my "Questions for Students of Justice," forthcoming in *Contemporary Justice Review*, 1998.)

Though I cannot go into detail here, the very physical arrangement of class activities must work independently of what I say or ask: *by itself* the arrangement must indicate that what happens between the students, face to face, is crucial — what I call "the osmosis method" (*Human Posture: The Nature of Inquiry*, SUNY, 1989; and "Our Responsibility for the Future in Higher Education," *The Raven Quarterly*, 1991). My favorite technique here — the perfect complement to asking an unanswered root question — is to break the students into small groups, preferably of 4 or 5 like-minded students, to work out their take on the root issue in question. If I facilitate this process

well, the culmination is a circle of reporting in which all sides of a root question become evident to the participants.

It is precisely in the context of this kind of conversation that I am freed to give a radical lesson. Instead of being just another requirement — or *teaching* — what I say is simply my contribution to the conversation. Everyone will *hear* it! And, ideally, the conversation will never stop, if only as little birdies in peoples' heads. Occasionally people who are not my students come into my office just because a class conversation carried over to the dorms. Or a former student writes years later to make my day: the chirping birdies got another person to join the radical conversation — a domino effect. Indeed, I am a domino effect of one of the best radical professors ever: David Thoreau Wieck (see the obituary I wrote in the last IAS Newsletter).

Oh sure, it is important to have something radical to say or write, and to say or write it well. If you are choosing to be a professor to develop a radical critique of our society, that is fine, especially if you can get it published in a way that passes academic muster — hard enough, without the double whammy: it will be useless in the classroom unless it can be worked into your facilitation of root questions, and even then a simple joke with a radical heart is often *heard* more easily. Whatever you say or write, you will need to bring it alive in the conversation of your students.

To be defensive against root questions or radical lessons is to fail to be inspired by Paul Goodman's concept of drawing the line (*Drawing the Line*, New Life Editions, 1977). Students and professors alike must draw the line beyond which they will simply not give routine answers, but realize how the authority of power is implicated in these answers. Lots of people, in lots of places, need to draw the line. For the most part, this has to happen on its own. Oh yes, you and I can help, again through the domino effect, and perhaps through our writing and speaking, but, again, there are lots of people and lots of places that are not likely to hear of us. We must have faith that, facilitated or not, *enough* people will develop a radical conscience.

John A. Schumacher is a Professor of Philosophy in the Department of Science and Technology Studies at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. He is the author of *Human Posture: The Nature of Inquiry* (SUNY Press, 1989).

## IAS GRANT AWARDS

... continued from page 1

important lessons that the Zapatista struggle has to offer contemporary anarchism. Chris is currently in Chiapas, Mexico.

\$1200 to Matt Hern and Stu Chaulk for *The Myth of the Internet: Private Isolation and Local Community*. This book will use a radically democratic, anarchist perspective to investigate and critique the social and cultural repercussions of the Internet. It will argue that, while the Internet appears to be a medium for genuine communication and democracy, it is actually undermining the very arenas in which actual freedom and democracy can flourish. Matt and Stu live in Vancouver, British Columbia.

\$800 to Melissa Burch for *Autonomy, Culture, and Natural Resources in the Neoliberal Age*. This piece will present a comparative critique of the domination of global capitalism and its devastating effects on the local culture in three regions: the Mexican State of Chiapas, the North Atlantic Autonomous Region of Nicaragua, and the state of Vermont. It will bring to light the fundamental incompatibility of the neoliberal model with an authentic, local, and ecological culture. Melissa lives in Plainfield, Vermont.

If you are interested in applying for a grant, please send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the IAS. You may also download a grant application from the IAS's web site at: <http://members.aol.com/iastudy/Default.htm>. Grant deadlines are May 15 and December 15 of each year.

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