

the Diggers and the San Francisco Mime Troupe. David Castillo's Catalan-language novel *El Cel de l'Infern* (trans: Heaven's Hell) examines personal and political struggles lived out in Barcelona's antiauthoritarian movements during the 1980's (Proa, 206 pages, 1999).

Two new bibliographies are available: *Anarchism: Contemporary Theories: A Bibliography*, edited by Joan Nordquist (Reference & Research Services, 72 pages, 1999) and, for Portuguese readers, *A Bibliografia Libertária - um Século de Anarquismo em Língua Portuguesa* by Adelaide Gonçalves, & Jorge E Silva (Editora Imaginário, São Paulo, 1999).

Residents of New York and enthusiasts of alternative culture would do well to read *Selling the Lower East Side: Culture, Real Estate, and Resistance in New York, 1880-2000* by Christopher Mele (University of Minnesota Press, 408 pp., February 2000). New York's Lower East Side has been a center for anarchist and other forms of revolutionary activism for more than a century, yet it has also been subject to sustained attack by real estate interests who use the area's marginality as a marketing device. *Selling the Lower East Side* examines the shifting views of the Lower East Side, from ghetto to 'desirable' urban niche. Another perspective on the history of anarchism in New York can be found in *Fighting Faiths: The Abrams Case, The Supreme Court, and Free Speech* by Richard Polenberg (Cornell University Press, 464 pages, 1999). This book tells the story of four Russian Jewish anarchists from New York who were prosecuted and deported to Russia for distributing leaflets protesting American intervention in the Russian Revolution. Polenberg traces the Jewish immigrant experience, the lives of the convicted anarchists before and after the trials, the careers of the major players in the court cases, and the effects of this case on present-day First Amendment rights.

**Perspectives**  
on anarchist theory

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The Biblioteca Social Reconstruir (BSR), an anarchist archive and educational center in Mexico City, has issued an urgent call for financial assistance. The BSR, now more than 22 years old, holds more than 3000 books and 4,700 magazines, including many that are extremely old and rare. It is a vital resource for researchers (both academics as well as activists) and a meeting center for radicals from Mexico and around the world. However, the BSR has been overwhelmed by the costs of rent, telephone and other necessities of their work, and needs the assistance of comrades to overcome their grave economic situation. Please send contributions to: Biblioteca Social Reconstruir, Morelos 45 Despacho 206 col. Centro, A.P. 9090 C.P. 06002 Mexico 1 D.F., tel-fax 55-12-08-86. You can also contact them at: [libertad@mail.internet.com.mx](mailto:libertad@mail.internet.com.mx) or visit their web site at [www.libertad.org.mx](http://www.libertad.org.mx).

There will be many good opportunities to discuss radical ideas and formulate strategies this year. The International Meeting on Anarchism and Judaism in Venice will be held from May 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup>. This conference, which is organized by the Centro Studi Libertari/Archivio 'Giuseppe Pinelli' of Milan and the Centre International de Recherches sur l'Anarchisme (CIRA) of Lausanne, will include a study conference, theatrical and musical performances, debates and original documentary films. The study conference will feature participants from Europe and beyond and simultaneous translation (Italian/English/French) will be available. For more information write: Centro Studi Libertari, via Rovetta 27, 20127 Milano, tel/fax 02 28 46 923, email: [eleuthera@tin.it](mailto:eleuthera@tin.it). Brazilian comrades are organizing an Encontro Internacional: Cultura Libertária e Mudança Social (trans: International Meeting: Libertarian Culture and Social Change) from September 4<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> of this year in Florianópolis/SC, Brazil. This conference will offer radicals an opportunity to exchange experiences and discuss the limits and possibilities of libertarian culture." For more information write: Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Centro de Educação - NAT (Núcleo de Alfabetização Técnica), Campus Universitário Trindade, Cep: 88010-970 Florianópolis/SC, Brasil. Send email: [molypey@brasilnet.net](mailto:molypey@brasilnet.net) or [anapreve@zaz.com.br](mailto:anapreve@zaz.com.br). Also of interest is Organize! An Activist-Academic Conference on Social movements and Organizing scheduled for April 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> at Columbia University. This conference will bring together academics and activists to discuss the many issues confronting those who organize for social change. For more information email: [organize\\_1999@yahoo.com](mailto:organize_1999@yahoo.com), Fax: (212) 854-2963, or write Organize! Conference, Dept. of Sociology, 413 Fayerweather Hall, Mail Code 2551, Columbia University, New York, NY 10027.

~ Chuck Morse

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**The Institute for Anarchist Studies**

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**Perspectives**  
on Anarchist Theory

*From November 28th through December 4th, 1999, tens of thousands of protesters converged on Seattle and temporarily shut down the World Trade Organization (WTO). This article is a beginning look at the role of anarchism in Seattle and possible contributions to an emerging movement against globalization.*  
~ Rebecca DeWitt

I spent most of my week in Seattle in the street watching the events unfold. Occasionally I would take refuge from the terrible Seattle weather and sit inside a church or auditorium to hear distinguished experts speak on various aspects of the WTO. No matter what the topic, it was impossible to integrate what was going on in the streets with these carefully prepared lectures. One particular lecture promised a feminist critique of the WTO but the speakers never got beyond statistics and how the WTO can help increase the number of women involved global production. Earlier in the day, a women's march peacefully assembled at an intersection and, within five minutes, police began putting on their gas masks. So much for dialog.

At one of these lectures, I met a woman from Indonesia who, like me, was frustrated with the division. We left and walked through the rain to the center of town, ending up in the middle of yet another protest. In the distance, an environmental march could be seen running away from tear gas, while in front of us police with batons and rubber bullet guns chased state employee union members in their purple ponchos around the block. If you wanted to be chased by police all you had to do was walk to the other side of the street. Well coordinated with cell phones and walkie-talkies, the union members escaped by sneaking back around and standing behind a line of oblivious police. A Canadian union member standing next to me was shaking his head as he said he couldn't believe this was happening in the US. The Indonesian woman, a seasoned participant of many bloody protests in her own country, asked me if I knew where she could buy Levi jeans for friends back home. Meanwhile, I'm sure the lecturers were still calmly debating policy proposals to reform the WTO. It had become a tragic comedy of sorts.

The media said anarchy ruled the street in Seattle, although I'm not so sure. I had hoped to see more anarchist activity if only because the whole event was touted as a blow to global capitalism. There were many anarchists in Seattle, although only one group, from Oregon, was prominent in the media. Other groups reflected anarchist ideas such as the

**An Anarchist Response to Seattle: What Shall We do With Anarchism?**

Direct Action Network's call for an end to hierarchy and a new society free of oppression. Aside from these incidents, I didn't encounter any other specifically anarchist activities. Anarchists weren't on any panels, hadn't organized a forum to present an anarchist critique of the WTO and an anarchist critique was never presented that I knew of.

The WTO represents a structure of power to be fought against. People came to Seattle because they knew it was wrong to let a secret body of officials make policies unaccountable to anyone except themselves. A nonelected body, the WTO is attempting to become more powerful than any national government. In other words, the WTO is a political issue that has the exciting potential to galvanize a supposedly dormant public. For anarchism, the focus on global capitalism couldn't be more ideal. Yet, when the WTO mobilized tens of thousands of people, anarchism's visible high point was in the form of broken windows. My general excitement about Seattle hasn't dissipated but I am left with the impression of the anarchist activity as either an empty moralism, a practice devoid of theory, and as unwittingly giving energy to reformist politics. Anarchists need to move beyond these traps to formulate a theory of anarchism that will sustain a political movement.

**Anarchism as Empty Moralism**  
One of the biggest obstacles anarchists encounter is the prevailing notion that anarchism is a failure as a political movement and therefore an unattainable utopian idea. Ironically, anarchists often perpetuate this thinking by failing to project anarchism beyond an empty moralism. Anarchism manifested itself in Seattle as broken windows or a vague call for freedom instead of more serious discussions. These examples are indicative of anarchism as empty moralism as well as the only instances of anarchist activity in Seattle.

Anarchism is a sense of injustice in our world, faith in humanity's potential to transcend social structures that produce injustice, and the obligation to do something about it. In a sense, it is a by-product of our society: as long as there is injustice, there will be anarchism. Anarchism is also the rejection of all political, social, and economic hierarchy. It is anti-statist because the state represents a professional bureaucracy removed from the control of the people and anticapitalist because capitalism is an oppressive economic system. These ideas survive despite the lack of a political movement.

*continued on page 4*

**PERSPECTIVES  
ON ANARCHIST  
THEORY**

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Newsletter of the Institute  
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Rebecca DeWitt

**Grammatical Partisans:**

Chuck Morse, Andrew Bellware,  
Paul Glavin, Qayyum Johnson

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The IAS is a nonprofit,  
tax-exempt organization.

## IAS Update

Every new year we reflect on the accomplishments of the previous year and prepare for the challenges ahead. We are especially excited about the contributions the IAS will make in 2000 to the revitalization of radical social theory.

In January, the IAS decided upon two important changes. This year we are raising our grant awards from \$6000 to \$8000 and we will also begin to provide a monthly stipend for my position of general director.

It has always been our intention to raise grants award amounts and we are excited to be able to do this so soon. Raising our grant awards by \$2000 is a significant and satisfying development for the IAS. At times it has been frustrating to receive more high quality grant applications than we can support.

We have found it necessary to begin providing a small monthly stipend to my position of general director. For four years the IAS has been operating completely on a volunteer basis. However, even the most committed organizations are susceptible to traditional weaknesses of the left. These include burn out due to asking capable people to sacrifice too much, reliance on persons of privileged economic status to do most of the work and dependence of an organization on one person. This change will enable the IAS to grow in a stable manner.

January grant awards continued our mission to develop anarchist theory. Mike Staudenmaier was awarded \$1500 for his piece *Toward a New Anarchist Theory of Nationalism*. His ambitious project aims to address contemporary issues of nationalism and the anarchist response. In view of the increasingly international nature of radical politics, we were happy to award Alberto Villarreal \$2500 for his Spanish translation of *Remaking Society: Pathways to a Green Future* by Murray Bookchin. A Spanish translation will enable thousands of new readers to take advantage of *Remaking Society's* contribution to radical politics. A more detailed description of the grant awards is on page 3.

Seeing projects we have supported come to completion is always gratifying for us. So far, five projects have been completed and published and four are in the publication process. The grant update section on page 3 reports on the progress of projects still in the works.

IAS supported projects are not always easy to find once they are published. For example, some projects result in various parts being published in different

magazines. We will be putting information on our website about where to find published pieces we have supported.

Increasing our grant awards and providing a small monthly stipend are ambitious goals for this year. It also puts us in the position of having to raise more money than we normally do. However, we have found it necessary to spend a little more in order to give out a little more, with the end goal of larger grant awards.

This year's fundraising campaign will be our biggest undertaking yet. We have set a fundraising goal of \$20,000. This will not only help us increase our annual grant awards to \$8000 and begin to provide a small stipend for the position of general director, but will also ensure publication of *Perspectives* and maintaining regular operations. We have already raised \$10,000 thanks to generous donations by two longtime IAS supporters but we will need the sustained support of all IAS allies as well as new friends to reach our year 2000 fundraising goal. See page 7 for more details on our fundraising campaign and a list of our 1999 supporters.

We are yet again gratefully indebted to Raven Used Books for providing the IAS with fabulous books for all IAS donors. This year's books include forty new titles in addition to carrying over six titles from last year. Remember that IAS donors also receive a 20% discount on any purchases made at Raven Used Books. Please see the insert enclosed in this issue for a list of the exceptional books we are offering.

As the IAS enters its fifth year of existence, we continue to do our part for the revitalization of a radical movement. Due to the recent events in Seattle, I am personally inspired by the new possibilities for a radical movement. I hope the IAS' focus on radical theory will play a role in these exciting developments.

~ Rebecca DeWitt

### IAS Website

- grants awarded
- entire collection of newsletters
- application materials
- anarchism links

<http://home.newyorknet.net/ias/Default.htm>

## The IAS' 2000 Fundraising Campaign

The IAS needs your support: we must raise \$20,000 by January 2001 to continue awarding grants to radical writers and publishing *Perspectives*.

This year is special because we are giving out \$2000 more in grant awards and providing a monthly stipend for the general director. In order to do so, we are doubling our fundraising goal. We are not putting money into our endowment this year because we feel it is more important, at this time, to increase our grant awards instead.

Thanks to the generous support of two IAS donors, we have already raised \$10,000. Please help us raise an additional \$10,000 by sending a donation to the IAS today.

Your contribution will help the IAS meet its 2000 fundraising goal and thus make the following contributions to the development of anti-authoritarian social criticism:

- The IAS will award \$8000 in grants to writers struggling with some of the most pressing questions in radical social theory today. IAS grants help radical authors take time off work, hire childcare, purchase research materials, pay for travel expenses and other

things necessary to produce serious, thoughtful works of social criticism.

- The IAS will publish two issues of *Perspectives on Anarchist Theory*, our biannual newsletter. *Perspectives* is a unique source of interviews, publishing news, and commentary pertaining to anarchism. It helps keep people informed about anarchist scholarship and encourages dialogue among those interested in this work.

As an IAS donor you will receive each issue of *Perspectives on Anarchist Theory*. Also, all IAS supporters who donate \$25 or more will be able to choose from the great books listed on the insert accompanying this issue and will receive a 20% discount at Raven Used Books, an exceptional bookseller located in Amherst, Massachusetts. Donations are tax-deductible for US citizens.

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### The following groups and individuals generously donated to the IAS' 1999 fundraising campaign:

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Randall Amster	Peter Larsen	Peter Stone
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Phil Billingsley	Robin Lloyd	Dana Ward
Craig Bolton	Michelle Matisons & Gardner Fair	Diva Agostinelli Wieck
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Tony Epiceno	Matt Quest	indebted to:
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### BOOKS FOR IAS DONORS

This year Raven Used Books is offering forty new titles to IAS donors in addition to carrying over six titles from last year.

Raven Used Books (formerly Perennial Books) - one of the best booksellers around - offers a 20% discount on their remarkable stock to all IAS supporters donating \$25 or more to the IAS's 2000 fundraising campaign.

Raven Used Books specializes in used and discount books in philosophy, history, cultural studies, labor history, and women's studies.

They carry over 17,000 books, including more than 275 titles on anarchism (many of which are out of print and hard to find).

Raven Used Books is located at 71 North Pleasant Street, Amherst, Massachusetts 01002. They are open every day. If you are unable to stop by the store, please feel free to call Raven Used Books at (413) 253-9780 or write them at Raven Used Books, 71 North Pleasant Street, Amherst, Massachusetts 01002. Inquires are always welcome.

Please note that we cannot sell any of the books being offered by Raven Used Books. If you want to order a book, please contact Raven directly. Our books are available to IAS donors only.



**ANARCHIST  
CONFERENCE  
AUGUST 24-27, 2000**

**Critical Anarchism:  
Remaking the Tradition**

Nearly four summers ago, in Montague, Massachusetts, the Critical Issues in Contemporary Anarchism conference attempted to provide a scholarly space in which to both reexamine and reinvigorate the social and political tradition of anarchism. This small contribution to the difficult process of challenging anarchist history, thought, and practice continues August 24-27, 2000, in Plainfield, Vermont.

We again aim to create a participatory forum for open thinking that could ultimately push anarchism past its own limitations. Indeed, the so-called "New Anarchism" emerging from the Seattle WTO demonstrations, while extremely inspiring, cries out for a new generation of anarchist theorists to add rigor to a utopian tradition often only shaped by practice. This conference is a part of that project, as well as the larger struggle to build a free society.

The conference will feature 30 to 40 short presentations and discussions. Papers are also encouraged. We are looking for presentations covering a variety of perspectives and disciplines—from social and political theory, to history and anthropology, to philosophy and cultural studies, to economics and contemporary trends.

Space is limited, so please submit a presentation idea by May 1 to either of the co-organizers. Write for a brochure and registration form to: Cindy Milstein, 5641 S. Blackstone Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60637-1898, cbmilstein@aol.com; or John Petrovato, P.O. Box 715, Conway, Massachusetts 01341, ssimon@shaysnet.com.

## What's Happening: Books and Events

It is unusual for innovative thinkers to receive a balanced treatment during times of great social polarization such as our own. This is doubtlessly one of the reasons why Noam Chomsky's work has been divided into linguist and political categories but rarely treated as an integrated whole. This unfortunate fact, which deprives radicals of a full confrontation with his broad intellectual project, will receive a small corrective in two recent works.

*Chomsky* by James McGilvray (Blackwell Publishers, 268 pages, 1999) examines Chomsky's rationalist philosophical commitments and shows how they provide the basis for his political views as well as linguistic studies. It includes a chapter titled "Anarchosyndicalism and the Intellectual" among others.

*Chomsky: Ideas and Ideals* by Neil Smith (Cambridge University Press, 1999, 288 pages) pursues a similar trajectory. Smith analyzes Chomsky's studies of language and the mind and the relationship between these studies and his political ideas. Smith argues that several themes - rationality, creativity and modularity - unite the disparate strands of Chomsky's vast output.

While anarchism can be considered an influence upon Chomsky's work, it is the explicit concern of *L'imaginaire des libertaires aujourd'hui* (trans: *The Imaginary of Libertarians Today*) by Mimmo Pucciarelli. (Atelier de Création Libertaire, 365 pages, 1999). This book examines the history of anarchist ideas, contemporary variations and developments within the tradition, and speculates about the future of the anarchist vision.

Two new books will emphasize anarchism's influence upon important figures of early 20<sup>th</sup> century politics and culture. *Max Weber and The Culture Of Anarchy* edited by Sam Whimster (St. Martin's press, 248 pages, 1999) contains the first complete publication (in English or German) of letters written by Weber in 1913 and 1914 during his time spent at an anarchist settlement in Ascona, Switzerland. The letters show Weber debating free love, eroticism, patriarchy, anarchism, terrorism, pacifism, among other issues, and are complemented by a collection of essays relating Weber's writings to anarchist ideas and the anarchist movement. *Explosive Acts: Toulouse-Lautrec, Oscar Wilde,*

*Felix Fénéon, and the Art & Anarchy of the Fin de Siecle* by David Sweetman (Simon & Schuster, 512 pages, 1999) shows that Toulouse-Lautrec was not just a dangerously self-destructive bohemian artist (as he is typically regarded) but also participated in a community of anarchist revolutionaries and the cutting edge of radical art in fin de siècle France. Sweetman introduces a new way of looking at Toulouse-Lautrec who, with Oscar

Wilde, Félix Fénéon, and others, confronted many of the same social and political issues that we currently face.

English-language literature on antiauthoritarian resistance during the first half of the twentieth century will grow by two volumes this year, thanks to AK Press

and Paul Sharkey's indefatigable translation efforts. *Parti-sanas: Women & Armed Resistance to Fascism 1936-45* by Ingrid Strobl (AK press, 320 pages) will be released in July. Originally published in German in 1989 and written while the author was in prison on charges of membership in the alleged terrorist groups Revolutionäre Zellen and Rote Zora, this book contains material that should be integral to any history of anti-fascist resistance. Also forthcoming from AK Press is the first translation of volume one of Nestor Makhno's three-volume memoirs: *The Russian Revolution in the Ukraine: March 1917 - April 1918* (AK Press, 220 pages, forthcoming). This work, introduced by Alfredo M. Bonanno, contains firsthand accounts of the insurgent peasant movement led by Makhno.

Three new works should be of interest to students of more recent antiauthoritarian movements. Victoria Johnson and Jo Freeman (author of the famed "Tyranny of Structurelessness" essay) have produced a new anthology: *Waves of Protest: Social Movements Since the Sixties* (Rowman & Littlefield, 400 pages, 1999). This collection focuses on specific groups (from ACT-UP to the animal rights movement and many others) as well as the changing nature of social movement theory. Peter Coyote's memoir, *Sleeping Where I Fall: A Chronicle* (Counterpoint, 367 pages, 1999), details his experiences in West Coast counter-cultural groups during the 1960s and 1970s such as

*continued on page 8*



National Autonomous University of Mexico student strike  
photo by Jeremy Simmer

## Grant Awards

The Institute for Anarchist Studies (IAS) annually awards \$8000 in grants to writers whose work is important to the anarchist critique of domination, who have a clear financial need, and whose piece is likely to be widely distributed. The IAS Board of Directors was pleased to award grants to the following individuals in January 2000:

\$1500 to Mike Staudenmaier for his piece, *Towards a New Anarchist Theory of Nationalism*. This piece will develop an in-depth historical analysis on anarchist theories of nationalism and the diversity of opinions within anarchism. It will focus on a contradiction between theory rooted in class-based international criticism and a practice normally consisting of uncritical anti-imperialist and antiracist solidarity. He intends to show that this contradiction between theory and practice, along with very little written on contemporary nationalism from an anarchist perspective, only serves to polarize the issue of nationalism. Ethnic groups try to advance

## Grant Updates

Brian Tokar's anthology, *Engineering Life: A People's Guide to Biotechnology*, is finished and will be published by Zed Books in Fall 2000. Brian Tokar and Zoe Erwin were awarded \$1000 in June 1997.

Lucien Van der Walt's project, *Anarchism and Revolutionary Syndicalism in South Africa 1904-1921*, has essentially been completed. He will be expanding upon the original research and will focus on the impact of anarchism and revolutionary syndicalism on broader social movements, with particular reference to nationalist and labor movements. The material is to become part of his Ph.D. thesis, which he is pursuing at the University of the Witwatersrand, in South Africa. He was awarded \$500 in June 1998.

Fernando López's research into his project *The FACA and the Anarchist Movement in Argentina*, has produced interesting material on a congress held by anarchists at prison in

their freedom at all costs and anarchism often dismisses nationalistic struggles out-of-hand due to the historically simplistic anarchist belief that all people will triumph equally. This piece will include a case study of contemporary revolutionary nationalism; an intellectual history of anarchism and nationalism looking at writers such as Mikhail Bakunin, Gustav Landauer, Rudolph Rocker, and Freddy Perlman; and a section on contemporary issues that often intersect with nationalistic struggles, such as prison and anti-fascist activism. To be completed in March 2001, this piece will provide us with an innovative and sophisticated understanding of nationalism from an anarchist perspective. Mike Staudenmaier has been an active anarchist for ten years now, primarily in the Chicago area. He has also worked extensively with the Puerto Rican community in Chicago and has had opportunity to interact with members of the Puerto Rican nationalist movement on a daily basis for several years.

\$2500 to Alberto Villarreal for his Spanish translation of Murray Bookchin's *Remaking Society: Pathways to a Green Future (Rehaciendo la Sociedad)*. Originally published in 1990, this book is meant to be a

Villa Devoto, Argentina, in 1931, and about the level of violence and sectarianism between the militants of the Argentinian anarchism movement from 1925 to 1930. Incidents include violent encounters between groups such as the anarchist "foristas" and a rival anarchosyndicalism organization, the Unión Sindical Argentina. The violence and sectarianism caused individual members of groups to be attacked. Incidents include the murder of López Arango, editor of the magazine *La Protesta* and Jacobo Prince, a writer whose article appeared in the publication *Pampa Libre* and angered someone enough to shoot him in the back. López continues his research at various Latin American archives. He was awarded \$2200 in June 1999.

Patricia Green's piece, *Federica Montseny: The Woman and the Ideal/La Mujer y El Ideal*, continues to take shape. Parts of the material appeared in an article on "Turn of the Century Spanish Utopian Short Fiction", published in *Revista de Estudios Hispánicos*, 133, 1999. She will also be submitting a study on Federica Montseny's novel *HEROINAS* to the Brazilian journal *Cadernos do Arquivo Edgard Leuenroth*. Greene expects to com-

summarization of social ecology, a political philosophy that bases the ecological crisis in the emergence of social hierarchy and domination and advocates for a radical transformation of society. A wide variety of Spanish speaking movements, particularly in Latin America, are struggling with social and ecological issues, which can be radicalized by ideas presented in *Remaking Society*. To be completed by September 2001, this translation project will greatly add to Latin American radical intellectualism. Alberto Villarreal has translated several of Bookchin's essays for *Comunidad*, newsletter for the Comunidad project of Sweden and Uruguay, and *Tierra Amiga*, magazine of REDES - Friends of the Earth Uruguay. He was a founding member of REDES and has been actively involved with social ecology for the last fifteen years.

If you are interested in applying for a grant, please send a SASE to the IAS at P.O. Box 1664, Peter Stuyvesant Station, New York, NY 10009 - USA. You can also print out a copy of our application from our website, <http://home.newyorknet.net/ias/Default.htm>. On our website, you will also find a complete listing of IAS supported projects. ~

plete most of her project sometime this spring. She was awarded \$900 in June 1998.

C.W. Brown has completed a draft of his piece, *Vanguards of the Crusaders; The American Radical Right, Liberal Ideology, and the New World Order*. Brown shows how an American moralism is the basis for both liberalism and right wing conservatism and subsequently leads to disturbingly similar conclusions. He also shows how American policy reflects and encourages a New World Order grounded in an antidemocratic Christian ethos by using the example of the Persian Gulf War. At the same time he looks at how anarchism may or may not escape from this American moralism. Finally, Brown intends to explore the anarchist approach to democracy and how this can offer a substantive alternative. He was awarded \$800 in June 1997.

Joe Lowndes is still working on his piece "Anarchism and the Rise of Rightwing Anti-Statism." In particular, he is focusing on the potential of left-democratic localism as a response to right wing devolution in the US. He was awarded \$1000 in June 1998. ~

## An Anarchist Response to Seattle:

Most histories of anarchism end abruptly in the late 1930s after the Spanish Civil War. George Woodcock ends his history of anarchism in 1939 because he believes that anarchism never constituted a credible movement afterwards. He either could not have foreseen or didn't take notice of continued low-level anarchist activities in antifascist, feminist, antiwar, antinuclear, and ecology movements, but he still would have viewed these activities as nothing more than scattered and isolated incidents. If anarchists scored political victories, their successes only reflect passing historical conditions, not an overriding political relevance. Woodcock also distinguishes anarchism as a *political movement* from the *idea of anarchism*. He finds that the idea, in various forms, has been with us long before any anarchist movement and continues to emerge every so often. Therefore the strength of anarchism lies in its ideas, not its political relevance since history gives us far more failures than successes. The idea of anarchism, according to Woodcock, is an eternal resistance to any given society's tendency towards ever-greater centralization and uniformity. This resistance becomes a moral imperative, which we act upon against prevailing structures of power.

If anarchism can perpetually survive as an idea then we can legitimately be anarchists without taking into account our successes and failures. However, when left as an idea the moral imperative has a tendency to take over anarchism. If anarchism is to be thought of as an idea and not a viable political movement, then we can only act upon the strength of anarchist ideas as a sort of moral compass. We can project anarchism as an ideal but we need to remember that an ideal always runs the risk of becoming so elevated that it loses any relationship to real problems and social struggles. All too often, "one does not come down from the cross alive."<sup>1</sup>

Overtly anarchist activity in Seattle constituted acts of property destruction. Breaking windows of department stores can be momentarily exciting but also represents how an anarchist politics becomes empty moralism. Family owned businesses were intentionally not targeted but this only resulted in a vague distinction between good and bad business. These categories don't offer much

in the way of educating the public about capitalism in general. Furthermore, we can't build a movement based on simple ideas of good or bad. Targeting Nike as a major contributor to the evils of capitalism is necessary, but how and why it is true cannot be explained by broken windows. It is not about damaging anarchism's reputation: it is about whether or not we want anarchism to be more than an idea and become a political movement.

### Anarchism in Action

At the core of anarchism, decentralization is the most popular way anarchism is put into practice yet also causes it to lose political momentum. Anarchism is more often than not put into action simply by groups with a decentralized leadership structure. Decentralized leadership is part of the idea of anarchism but is often confused with directly constituting a political movement simply because decentralized activity is present.

The Direct Action Network (DAN), largely responsible for the most aggressive protests that shut down the November 30<sup>th</sup> WTO session for the majority of the day, included many anarchists. Their website states: "Imagine replacing the current social order with a just, free and ecological society based on mutual aid and voluntary cooperation. A NEW WORLD IS POSSIBLE and we are part of a global movement that is rising up to make it happen."<sup>2</sup> The majority of DAN's activities are credited as anarchist because of the decentralized nature of their actions. This follows the logic that in order to create a non-hierarchical society, anarchists must use non-hierarchical tactics in order to reach that goal. Traditional leadership was not present and instead people formed affinity groups and operated with a model of consensus decision making.

DAN's activities were successful far beyond what anybody had imagined. On November 30<sup>th</sup>, before the police knew what was happening, four intersections surrounding the hotel where WTO delegates were staying were occupied by DAN members and protesters had locked themselves down in front of the hotel itself. By the time the twenty or thirty thousand strong union march arrived downtown, police had already started firing tear gas and general chaos ensued but DAN members were able to hold the intersections

for quite some time. The initial presence of DAN shut down the center of Seattle for the day and police essentially lost control of the city. Protestors continued to regroup and by the end of the week protests were still going strong. The WTO had to cancel the meeting altogether because they were unable to plan for a new round of talks. This was the major victory for everyone involved.

In contrast to DAN, the explicitly anarchist group that broke windows marched in military formation and orders were given accompanied by a whistle to direct their movement. Ironically, DAN did not label itself anarchist despite its approach while the so-called anarchists did not practice decentralization in their actions. The real point is the belief that anarchist ideas, when put into practice, are supposed to advance anarchism simply by their presence. If the means are the same as the desired end, then we will reach that end. My intention is not to denigrate the purity of heart of protestors who practiced anarchist ideas in their actions. However, it is crucial to point out simplistic interpretations of anarchist ideas because of what is missing: what occurs between the means and the end.

Aside from moral outrage, all anarchists have are demonstrations. We protest injustice and move from issue to issue. It is not enough that we do it in a decentralized fashion. We will go from protest to protest until we are tired or other obligations draw us away. We can also fall prey to disappointment over the commonly non-revolutionary outcome of protests. As a result of Seattle, Ralph Nader is running for president, unions are looking to Al Gore to meet their demands, and the hot topic is whether or not China should be a member of the WTO. Furthermore, non-anarchist groups have shaped the anarchist debate. Due to some broken windows, anarchists are forced to debate the role of violence because non-anarchist groups dubbed anarchists as vandals and looters. This is not what we want to put our energy towards. Can we avoid being foot soldiers for more powerful mainstream organizations and shape the anarchist debate ourselves? Anarchists must develop a theory of a free society with the intention of guiding ourselves from the means to the end, otherwise we will not be able to make the necessary step from idea to political movement and will end up fighting for things we do not believe in.

## What Shall We do With Anarchism?

### Reform vs. Revolution in Seattle

It is necessary to point out the overwhelmingly reformist nature of the protests in order to establish a standard by which anarchists can act upon and think about what kind of political movement we want to work for. Because an anarchist analysis was never presented, reformist tactics in Seattle were accepted as part of the success of the week.

At one of many protest marches, I overheard a woman yelling at the protestors to either pay for what they were doing or go home. This woman was voicing the reality that we have to pay for free speech. Groups like Global Exchange want the Starbucks coffee chain to give Central American coffee growers more money for their crops. If they don't then consumers will boycott. This type of activism accepts the category of consumerism, suggests that we control capitalism with capitalism, and puts the burden of change on the individual no matter what their circumstances are.

When I looked for alternatives, I found little other than proposals dependent upon the state or that assumed the continued existence of the WTO. Consider this statement from Public Citizen: "Our task now is to fight for a global trading system that is democratically accountable and aimed at meeting the needs of people, not simply the world's largest corporations."<sup>3</sup> It is uncritically given that a global trading system will meet the needs of the people if only it is democratic. This statement presupposes the acceptance of democracy as it is today: a centralized bureaucratic structure removed from people's control. What most people think of as democracy is a professional body such as the state that, in fact, acts as an intermediary to freedom. When we demand democracy, but not in a way that is explicitly anti-statist, we are calling on the very same body that needs the WTO to carry out trade policies because political control is never given to the people in the first place. The ability to affect change in the system is greatly diminished and makes revolutionary change impossible.

In contrast to the superficial reformist methods mentioned above, anarchists draw upon a refusal to reform with the idea that our society must be torn up by the roots and replanted with an ideal society in mind. Because the WTO represents the push for glo-

balized capitalism, any resistance must be approached at the level of systemic change that will have widespread international affect. For anarchists, substantive political change is impossible without a utopian vision. A political movement that produces temporary successes by reforming isolated parts of the system is not revolutionary. These successes may last for half a century or more but they often give way to oppression worse than the original. Anarchism's refusal to reform offers a chance to transcend a perpetual cycle of reform without revolution.

### A Political Theory for Revolution

Anarchists are great at pointing out what is wrong with our society and various political approaches but we are going to have to offer more than critiques of other people's activism. We are going to have to enter the debate, be on the panels next time, and provide a forum for an anarchist critique. Most importantly, unless anarchism strikes out in a new direction, anarchism's limitations will make it very difficult to sustain an anarchist politics in a new movement. Anarchists frequently limit themselves by resorting to symbolic acts such as breaking windows that result in an empty moralism or limit the potential of anarchism to certain practices such as decentralization. When looked at more closely, much of the activism in Seattle revolved around consumer-based activism and acceptance of the status quo, to which anarchists gave lots of energy. Escaping these traps means we must begin to undertake the enormous task of understanding our world as well as projecting a vision for the future.

This also means we must have a political theory that draws on anarchist ideals yet is grounded in the experience of our world. If an anticapitalist political movement is really emerging then anarchists are presented with the unique opportunity to legitimately explain what is meant by a "just, free and ecological society based on mutual aid and voluntary cooperation." What our world is like, what our principles are, and how we go about developing this theory will determine a political theory. Activism offers us the opportunity to temporarily see our thoughts result in action but can also narrow the vision to pragmatic concerns. Political theory enables us to act upon the best of anarchist ideals and the strength of a popular movement. However, this is dependent upon making sense of an-

archist ideas as well as the world.

George Orwell stated that "Political language –and with variations this is true of all political parties, from Conservative to Anarchists – is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable and to give the appearance of solidity to pure wind."<sup>4</sup> Even when lying or murdering is not on the agenda, sometimes there is no way around having to give "the appearance of solidity to pure wind" in anarchism. I often find this to be true when it comes to an anarchist political theory. Slogans such as "down with capitalism" and "smash the state" can feel empty when we don't know what type of capitalism we want to tear down or how exactly the state functions as a source of power. Anarchists also talk about social freedom and cooperation but we must give these terms a real political and theoretical context in order for them to be meaningful. These are just a few examples of what we must tackle in order to make sense of our beliefs and how they relate to society.

The amazing international coalition of unions, environmentalists, farmers, students, and intellectuals represented in Seattle is an inspiring beginning for a new movement. We must involve ourselves as anarchists in this emerging movement with a real sense of what we offer and what roles we chose to play. Woodcock contradicts himself when he states: "To acknowledge the existence and the overbearing force of the movement toward universal centralization that still grips the world is not to accept it. If human values are to survive, a counterideal must be posed to the totalitarian goal of a uniform world..."<sup>5</sup> Turning the anarchist ideal into a counterideal is very different from letting anarchism languish as an admirable yet prohibitive moral imperative or simplistic practice: it is an idea *and* a political movement. To pose this counterideal is to escape the clutches of anarchism's limitations and project a vision for a free society that we can believe in as well as act upon.

~Rebecca DeWitt

<sup>1</sup> Julio Cortazar "We Love Glenda So Much" in *We Love Glenda So Much and A Change of Light*. New York: Aventura, 1984.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.agitprop.org/artandrevolution/wto/dan.html>

<sup>3</sup> Statement by Lori Wallach of Public Citizen.

<sup>4</sup> "Politics and the English Language" by George Orwell. <http://www.bnl.com/shorts/stories/patel.html>

<sup>5</sup> George Woodcock, *Anarchism: A History of Libertarian Ideas and Movements*. New York: Meridian Books, 1962.