

Anarchism and Freedom

Anarchism is the philosophy of freedom. We believe in a society where the freedom of each person is limited only by the freedom of everyone. We are born free yet everywhere we are enslaved. This is because the idea of "freedom" in a capitalist society is confused with "Social Darwinism"; the idea that a few people should be allowed to dominate, terrorise and exploit everyone else. While this may be the fantasy of the rich, it is not **true freedom**. Freedom cannot be achieved by taking over the government or becoming a new ruling elite because, so long as one group of people try to place themselves above everyone else, then everyone else will still not be free.

True freedom is also not defined by "Rights." "Rights" are a perversion of **true freedom** invented to trick us into believing that we owe our freedom to governments. In truth, we are born free and the purpose of governments is to take that freedom away in order to protect the money, property and privileges of the rich; the Ruling Class. All "Rights" are a system by which the government rations a portion of our freedom back to us (after they have Stolen it in the first place) in order to create the illusion of freedom or convince us that we are freer than others who are also enslaved by the coercion of legislatures, cops, armies, courts and prisons which await those who ask why some are more free than others. The truth is that if we allow ourselves to be dependent upon coercive institutions (like courts) created by the rich and coercive authorities appointed by the rich for a measure of freedom defined by THEIR interpretation of our "rights" then we are no more free than animals in a zoo whose zookeepers decide how large our cages are or how long our chains should be so that we can believe we are free, but still be under their control.

True freedom is not measured by the power or authority the rich allow us to have, but by the ability to govern ourselves. If we allow ourselves to believe that THEY give us freedom then we will give up our freedom any time they choose to take it away or anytime they threaten to take it if we don't do what they say.



True freedom is not measured by the money, property or consumer goods the rich allow us to have, but by controlling the wealth created by our own labour ourselves. The ability to have a credit card, a car or a big screen television is no more a measure of freedom than the ability to have a full stomach and a place to live. It does not change the fact that the rich steal the value of what we produce with our labour and only allow us a portion of it. It does not change the fact that if we work, we are in a coercive

relationship where our ability to eat and have a home is tied to our obedience to a boss.

True freedom begins when we take responsibility for our own actions. This means that we are not willing to let other people tell us what to think or how to live. We question what we have been taught by parents and social institutions. We question the motives and agenda of politicians, bosses and the capitalist news media. We question the injustice we see in the World around us and reject the excuses for it given by people with wealth and social privilege. **PERSONAL freedom** is a lifelong pursuit of understanding yourself and the World around you through self-education, personal experiences and introspection (thinking about what you have read and experienced, comparing it to things you learned before and trying to understand more).

Anarchists believe that to have **PERSONAL freedom** we must also have **SOCIAL freedom**. Most people do not live alone. We are one person in a community of people. We are one worker in a group of workers at a workplace. Our ability to have **PERSONAL freedom** is dependent upon our ability to co-operate with others in our community and our workplace in order to make collective decisions about things which affect everyone in the group so that we can live in ways where everyone benefits from their labour and has their interests taken into consideration and injustices are weeded out by the group. **SOCIAL freedom** begins when we recognise that no individual, clique or social class can have power over us or take advantage of us if everyone else refuses to obey them. We recognise that our refusal (our "Free Will") is more powerful than their coercion if we exercise it as a group. This means that instead of letting the rich trick us into competing against each other over a small portion of the freedom or wealth **they** steal from us, we get together and decide not to let **them** steal it in the first place and we all end up with more than any individual who plays **their** game.

SOCIAL freedom also means that we reject the ideas the rich invent to trick us into competing, so we don't work together. Anarchists believe that to be free we must replace the idea of "survival of the fittest" with the practice of **Mutual Aid**: "All for one and one for all" and "An injury to one is an injury to all." People have a natural feeling of compassion every time they see someone wronged because they know it could happen to them. We believe that this idea of "**Solidarity**" and the willingness of people to co-operate in groups for the benefit of everyone are the keys to enabling the greatest **PERSONAL freedom** for everyone.

Distributed by:

More copies can be downloaded from www.zabalaza.net/zababooks