

ABC's

of Anarchy

by
Brian Heagney



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ABC's of Anarchy
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I want to tell you about anarchism.

I want to tell you about anarchism because I think that it is well that you should know all about it.

I want to tell you about anarchism because everything that you have heard about it is wrong.

I want to tell you about anarchism because I believe anarchism is the finest and neatest thing that has ever been invented.

I want to tell you about anarchism because anarchism is the only thing that can give you liberty and well-being and bring peace and joy to the world.

-The Weatherman

(paraphrasing Alexander Berkman)

From The ABC's of Anarchism

a collaborative work by Negativland and Chumbawamba

A note to the reader:

So, what the heck is **anarchy**, anyway?

The word **anarchy** comes from the Greek **an** (meaning **without**) and **arkhos** (meaning **leader** or **ruler**). And the Greek prefix **Archi-**, while not the documented root of the word **anarchy**, means **master** or **chief**. In any case, **anarchy** literally means **without leaders, or without rulers, or without masters**.

Applying the concept of **no masters** to your life can take shape in an infinite number of ways, and not everyone will agree on how to go about it. Can you be an anarchist and submit to the will of God? Can you be an anarchist and own property? Can you be an anarchist and pay taxes to a nation-state? Can you be an anarchist and be a proponent of civilization and technological advancements? Can you be an anarchist and raise well adjusted children?

I'm not going to answer those questions, both for the sake of brevity, and so I don't rile even more anarchists than I already have. But some anarchists have taken sides and formed various versions of anarchy based on answers to the questions above, thereby creating **anarch-ISMS**. These anarchisms have commonly held beliefs and doctrines, and it follows that some anarchisms may be the complete opposite of other anarchisms.

Luckily, this isn't a book about anarchism - I don't know or care enough about all the different branches of anarchism just yet. This is a book about anarchy, living a life without masters. So, the following pages are full of examples of applying anarchy to your life in various ways. Undoubtedly, not all anarchists will condone or even like this book. And not everyone will even like the way I've just defined **anarchy**. That's okay. Hopefully, there will soon be many **ABC's of Anarchy** books on the market, so we can once and for all rid the world of the negative connotations of that beautiful word, **Anarchy**.

Lastly, even though I sought out input from many people (anarchist and non-anarchist, experts and novices, friends and foes), and even though I've been working on this book for the past two years, I am still seeing things I want to change. I would love to turn **C** into "Class War", **G** into "Gentrification", and **U** into "Utopia", for example. I also want to change the **Y** page to a word that better exemplifies anarchy, and perhaps rewrite all of the text, or have a real writer take a stab at it. (I should also probably rewrite this little introduction too.) I hope you can forgive such glaring omissions, and please contact me with all of your questions, comments and concerns.

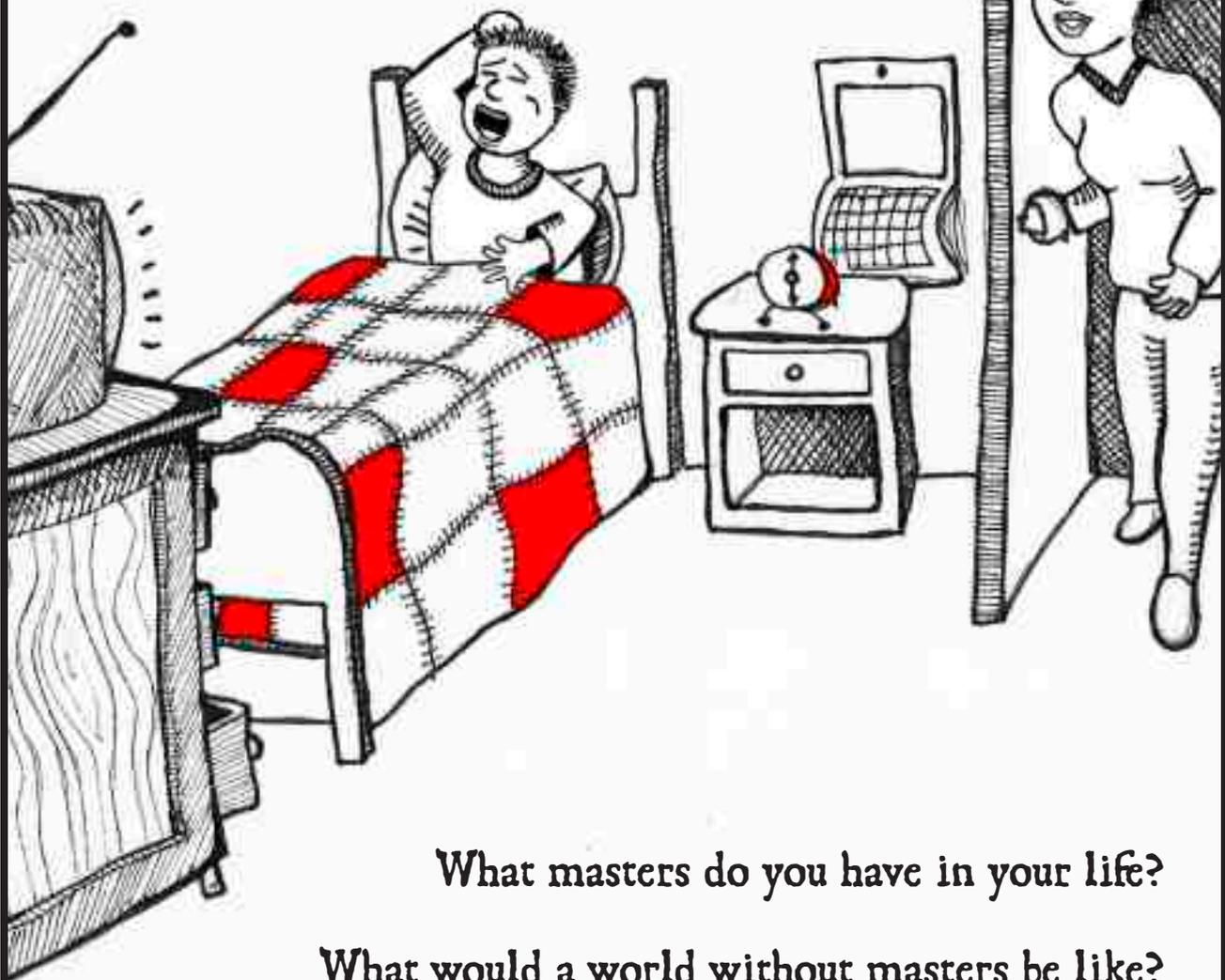
- Brian Heagney
www.brianheagney.com

for
Maeve Adele

A a

is for Anarchy

The word **Anarchy** literally means "without rulers", "without leaders", or "without masters". Any definition more or less than that is a matter of personal opinion. You might apply **anarchy** to your life in a way that is completely different from anyone else.



What masters do you have in your life?

What would a world without masters be like?

B is for Black Bloc

A **black bloc** is a group of people dressed in black to represent either mass solidarity for a cause, or mass resistance to oppression.

b



For what cause would you gather your friends together in a **black bloc**?

How can joining together in a **black bloc** help anything?

C

is for Critical Mass

Critical Mass is an informal direct action involving a leaderless group travelling through town on bicycles or other human powered vehicles. Some participants may want to show support for safe bicycle travel on the roads, others may just want to get together for a nice bike ride with friends.



What kinds of vehicles do you use regularly?

Where is the farthest place you have walked or cycled to?

E is for Egalitarian

In an **egalitarian** system, all people have equal access or opportunity to power and resources.



Whom do you feel more or less important than?

Why might someone want to have more power than someone else?

F is for Food Not Bombs

f

Food Not Bombs is a gathering of people who believe that no one should ever go hungry. Every week local Food Not Bombs chapters obtain free food to cook and share with anyone who wants it.



Would you ever consider eating food that has been thrown into the garbage?

What is the longest amount of time that you have gone hungry?

G is for Gender Role

The term **Gender Role** refers to how society expects you to behave based on your sex. In reality, however, few behaviors or preferences are determined by whether you are a boy or a girl.

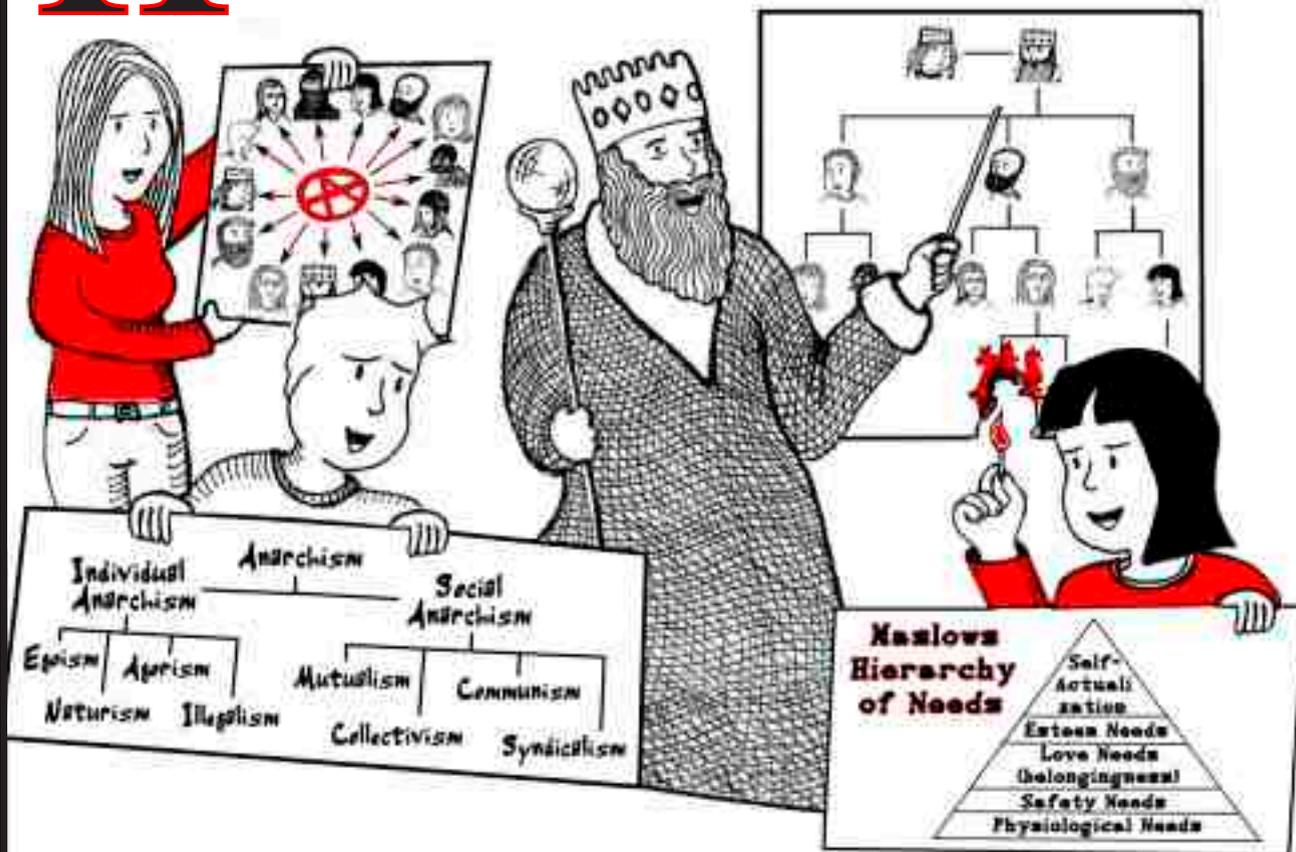


Why do you think some toys and activities are considered either masculine or feminine?

What are some toys or activities that you don't associate with any gender?

H is for Hierarchy

Hierarchy is a systematic tool for organizing people or things for the purposes of assigning order and importance, achieving a goal, or deconstructing and understanding a concept or issue.



How do you
organize your daily activities?

How do you and your family make decisions?

I is for Infoshop

An **infoshop** is a place where you can go to find radical books and zines, learn about local events, attend workshops and readings, and sometimes even catch punk-rock shows.



What was the last book you read? What was it about?

Where do you go to find out what is happening in your community?

J is for Job

A **job** is work one does in exchange for money. Many people work a **job** eight or more hours of the day, drastically reducing the number of hours they have to enjoy life with their family and friends.



What is the difference between work you do for fun, and work you do because someone tells you to?

What do you think would happen if everyone suddenly quit their jobs?

K is for Kabouter

k

Kabouter is the Dutch word for "gnome", and also the name taken by a group of Dutch anarchists who used pranks, civil disobedience, and sabotage to expose problems like police brutality, housing shortages, and the destruction of the environment. The **Kabouters** became so popular that people even voted them to serve in the local City Council.



If you thought something was wrong with your community, how could you tell people about it?

What is an example of a prank that could help inform, educate or amuse people?

L is for Liberation Front

Liberation is the state of complete freedom. A **Liberation Front** is a group of people determined to help others attain a life of freedom. **Liberation Fronts** have been formed to aid animals, oppressed people, the Earth, and even billboards.



Why might anything or anyone need help being liberated ?

How can you support others who are attempting to **liberate** themselves?

M

is for Mutual Aid

m

Mutual Aid is the voluntary sharing of resources and services.



Describe a time when you helped someone in need.

What are some resources or services you can offer other people?

N is for Nihilism

Nihilism is the rejection of traditional values. A **Nihilist** may choose to build his or her own cultural system of morals from scratch in order to reflect the needs and desires of current society.

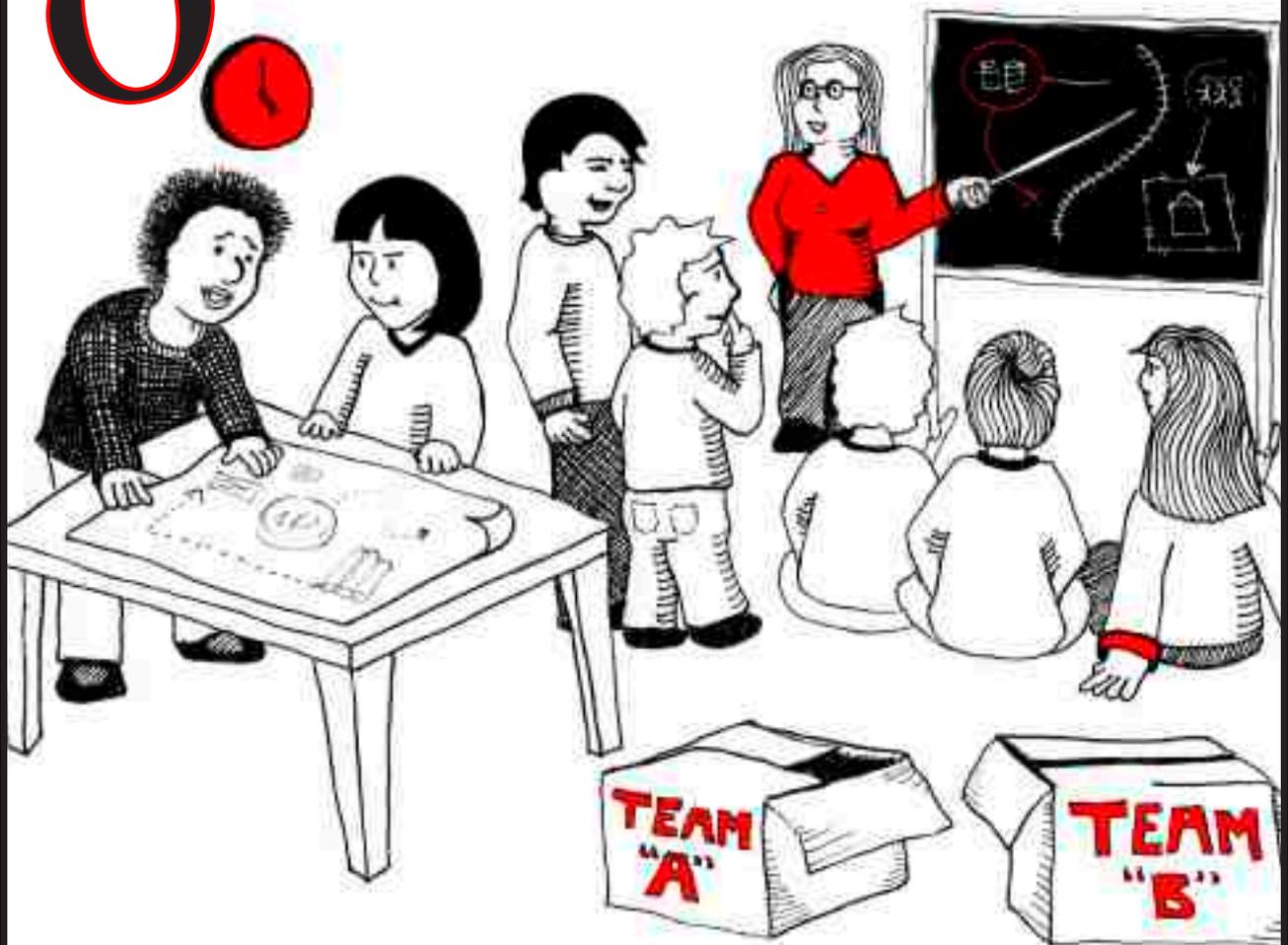


Describe some traditions or other aspects of your culture that may not make sense in your life.

What are some traditions or morals that you would choose to include in your cultural world?

O is for Organize

To **organize** means to create order or systematize things to accomplish goals and objectives. **Organizing** may involve assigning tasks, establishing directives, or creating charts, maps and documents.



What sorts of activities do you enjoy that are **organized**?

Describe a situation which would be better if things weren't **organized**.

P is for Propaganda

Propaganda is any type of media that is created specifically to further the doctrines or principles of an organization or movement. At best **propoganda** is informative and thought-provoking; at worst it is deceptive and damaging.



In what way is this book a piece of **propaganda**?

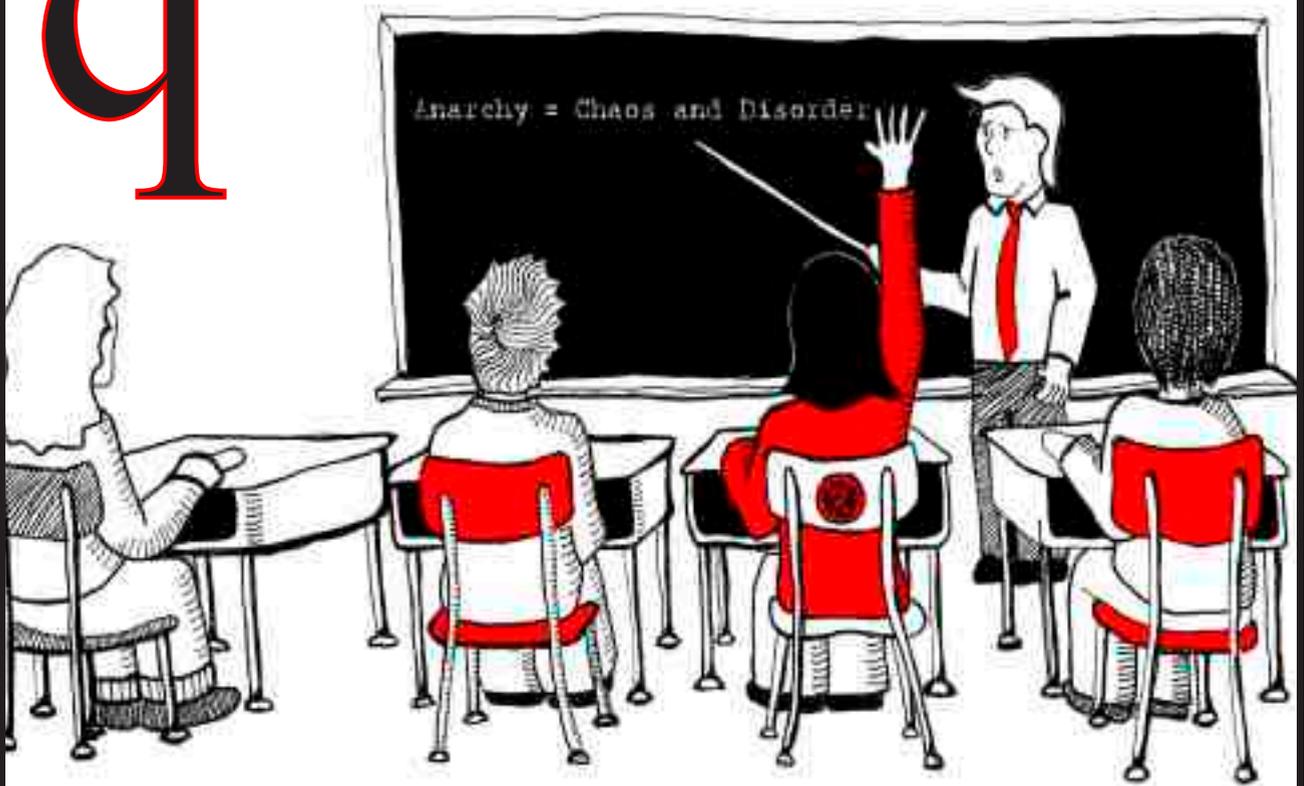
What sorts of **propaganda** do you encounter during an average day?

Q

is for Question Authority

Authority refers to anyone or thing in the position of imposing power over you. To **question authority** means to ask questions or express views or opinions that differ from those of an authority figure.

q



To whom have you decided to look for advice, leadership and guidance?

Describe a time you corrected or questioned someone who had more experience than you.

R is for Rewild

r

Rewilding means learning to live without any tools or artifacts of civilization. Some **rewilding** activities include foraging, hunting, fire-making, and building primitive structures.



Describe something you know how to make from scratch.

Why might someone believe that modern civilization has been harmful to ourselves and our world?

S

is for Squat

A **squat** is an empty, vacant, or neglected structure that someone has decided to turn into a living space.



What makes a house or apartment a home?

How do you think the very first people bought property, and from whom did they buy it?

T is for Train-Hopping

Train-Hopping is the art of sneaking onto trains and riding to your destination for free.

While **train-hopping**, you can see some amazing parts of the country that you might not normally experience.

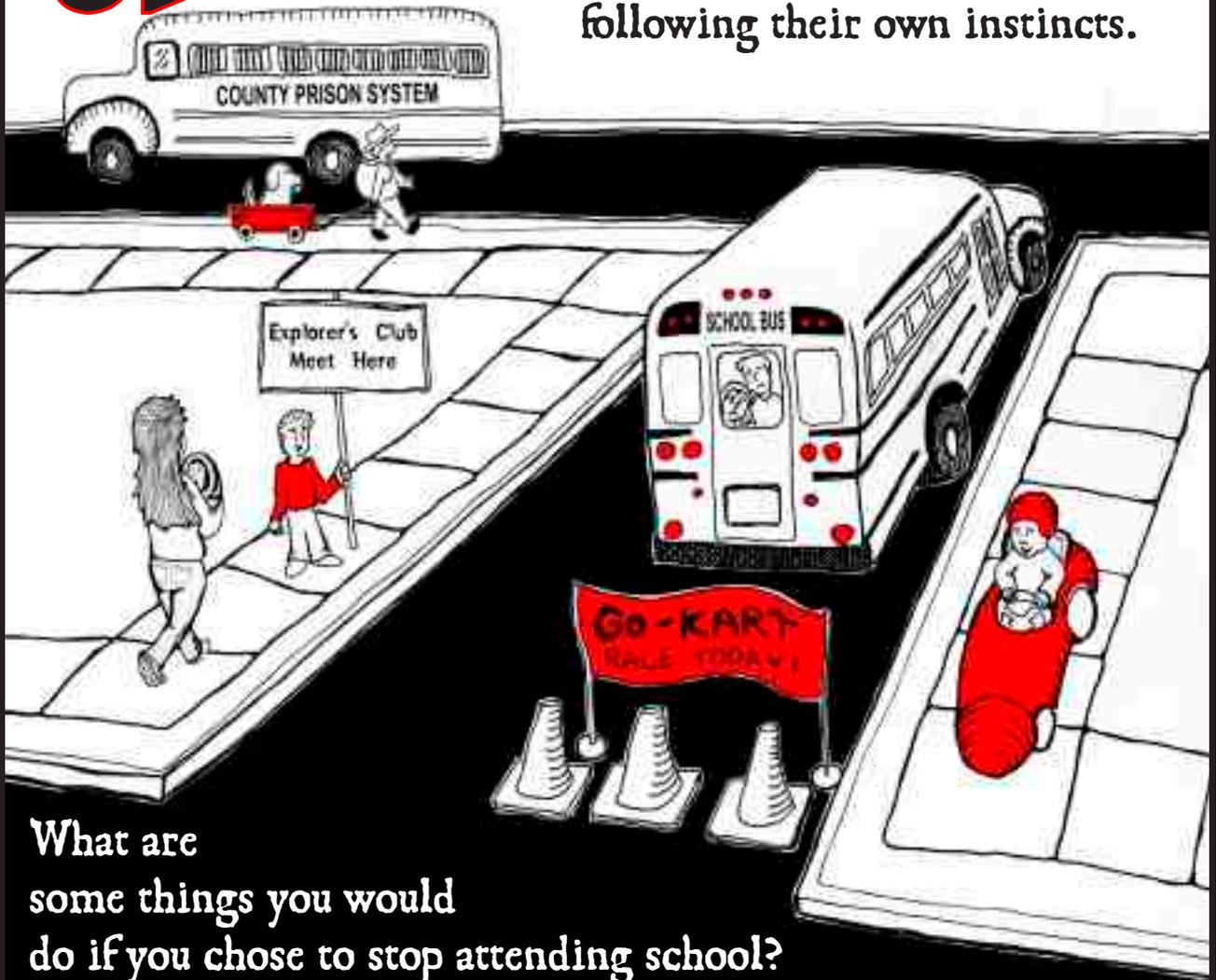


To where might you like to hop a train?

What sorts of difficulties do you think you would encounter while **train-hopping** across the country?

U is for Un-School

Un-schooling is the process of children learning from real-world, hands-on, self-guided experiences, rather than from a classroom setting. Parents involved in **un-schooling** recognize that all children love to learn, and do so best when following their own instincts.

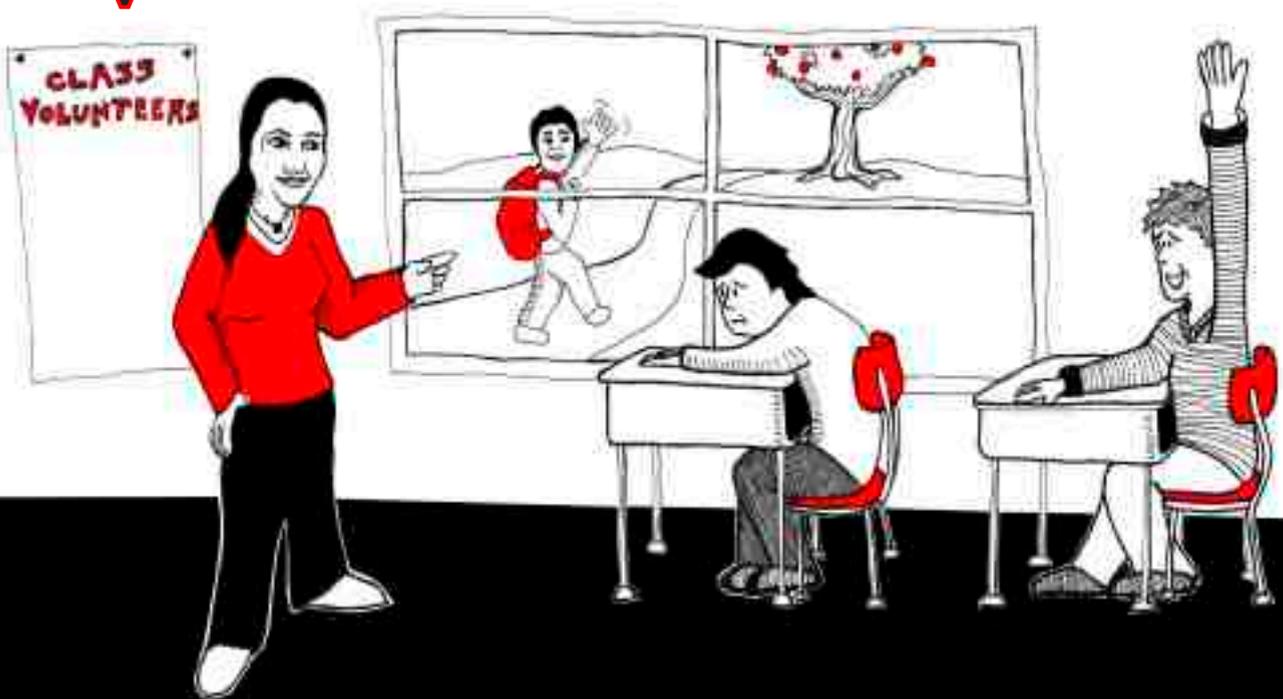


What are some things you would do if you chose to stop attending school?

What is one activity you have planned for yourself to do this week?

V is for Voluntary Participation

Voluntary Participation is actively choosing to be a part of something. As a liberated being, you have the right and obligation to act of your own free will, to participate in activities on a consensual basis.



Describe a situation where someone might try to force you to do something you don't want to do.

What are some consequences of asserting your right to voluntarily participate?

W is for Without Borders

W

A border is something that divides one area from another. Dictators and Nation-States divide the world into political zones as they see fit. However, viewing the Earth from space, we see a world **without** political borders, a world where the only boundaries are the great mountains and the vast seas.



What are some naturally occurring borders you encounter on a daily basis?

What are some human-made borders you encounter on a daily basis?

X X

is for Xylography

Xylography is the art of printmaking by woodcutting. Lots of propaganda (especially anarchist propaganda) has been produced using Xylography.

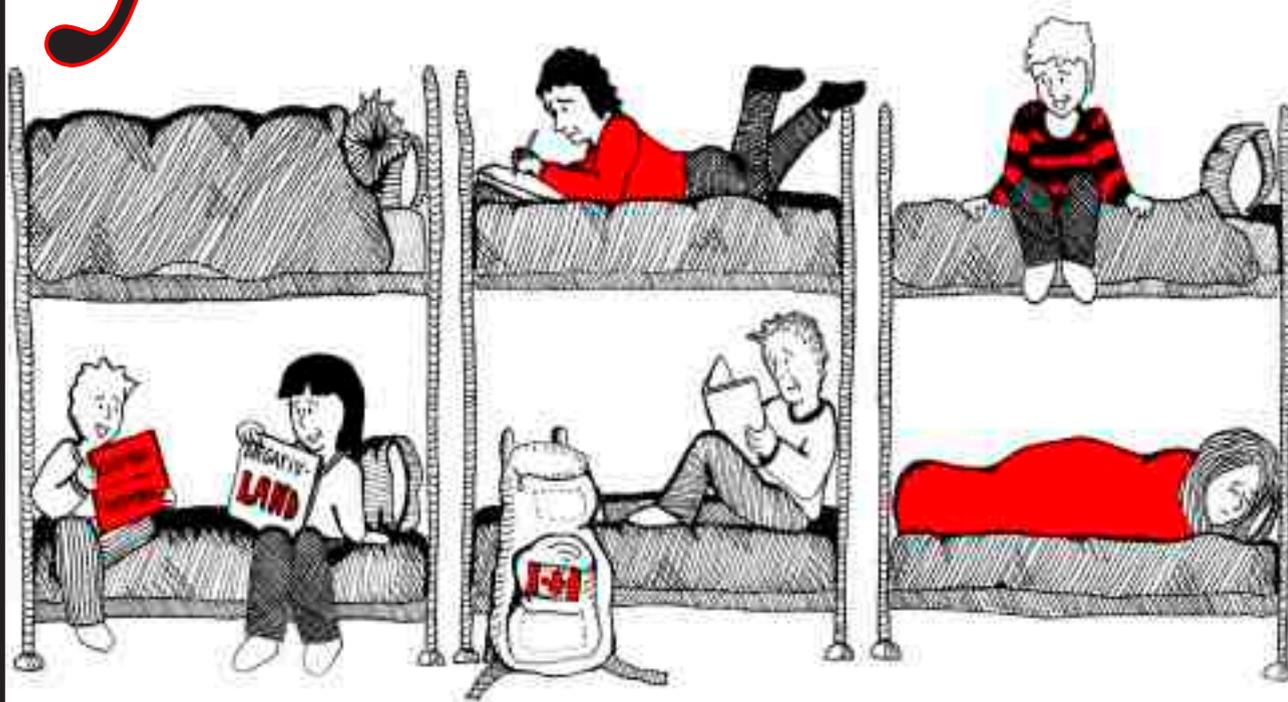


What was the last picture you drew?

What are all of the different ways you have made pieces of art?

Y is for Youth Hostel

A **Youth Hostel** is an inexpensive alternative to a hotel. When spending the night at a **Youth Hostel**, you might stay in a large room with many people. Fortunately, this enables you to meet new friends and share interesting stories.



What might be some differences between spending the night on your own versus sharing a room with many other people?

When are some times you would rather sleep alone, and when might you prefer to sleep in a room with others?

Z

is for Zine

A **zine** is a kind of mini-magazine. **Zines** can be completely hand-made, or they can be photocopied.

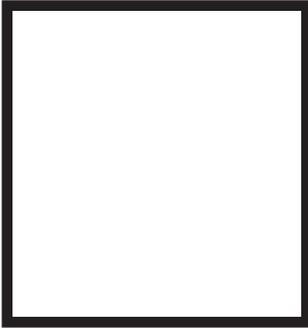
Z

A **zine** might be: a DIY manual; a collection of poetry or short stories; a personalized historical account; a collection of recipes; a boring political tract; or anything else you can think of!



Which of the **zines** above would you like to read today?

If you were going to make a **zine**, what would it be about?



is for _____

Do you think there could be a new letter for our alphabet? Now is your opportunity to make one up. And if you want to, draw a picture for it!

Can you come up with a sound that doesn't have a letter in our alphabet?

How do you think the alphabet was invented?

Other books and publications by Brian Heagney

all available at <http://stores.lulu.com/brianheagney>
or through Brian Heagney's website: www.brianheagney.com

Genesis: Just About the Whole Story Told in Cartoon Pictures

The book of Genesis, illustrated and paraphrased by Brian Heagney. Filled with adult situations, this tome includes all of the stuff your pastor intentionally left out.

(Adults Only)

Thumbs: Stories, Sketches & Stupid Little Comic Strips

The complete collection of Thumbs comic strips, by Brian Heagney.

(Young Adults and Older)

Anarchitecture: Writings on Architecture From an Anarchist Perspective

Essays ranging from gentrification to the spatial structure of the !Kung.

(All Ages)

The Silly Boy

A collection of "silly boy" puns, poems and sentence gags. This book will leave you crying for more and more, then less, then more again.

(Young Adults and Older)

The Silly Girl

Basically, the same thing as The Silly Boy, but obviously a tiny bit different.

(Young Adults and Older)

If I was a breeder, I would want this book for the reproductions. As it is, I would want this book for all children to read, just before they become adulterated.
- Sue Coe

Yes. Interesting. I love what you're doing.
- Boff Whalley (Vocalist and Guitarist of Chumbawamba)

Very good!
- Mark Hosler (Co-Founder of Negativland)

Definitely not to be missed!
Graphic Witness: Visual Arts & Social Commentary

Finally an abecedarius to smash alphabetical order.
- Agent Markatos from Crimethinc. (co-author of "Days of War, Nights of Love")

This book is fun to read and certain to get tongues a-waggin'! Dig in!
- Rob Los Ricos

An all-time favorite for people to pass down within their families and given as gifts to friends and colleagues, comrades and coconspirators throughout time and crimes.
- Nikki Craft (Always Causing Legal Unrest)

The ABC's of Anarchy will be among the first volumes on the pyre when the elites of the civilized world start to feel threatened by the agitating minority. How dare someone tell children about Anarchy! They will cry. They should be reading their bibles and shopping in the mall; not giving them ideas about freedom, rebellion and equality. What a wonderful idea for a book. Oh, how I would love to see copies of this little gem appearing on the shelves of school libraries across the world.
- Keith Farnish (author of "Time's Up!" and founder of The Earth Blog)

Brian Heagney is an Architect, a Planner, a writer, a comic strip artist, a forager, an inventor, a soap-maker, a religious philosopher, a library advocate, a lover of anarchy, and only very recently a father.

He lives in North Carolina with his wife, two cats, and a very new baby.

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