

A Brief History of New York City Anarchism: 1901-2011

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PREFACE

WHAT IS ANARCHISM?

A Note To Whoever Reads This:

“It is the name of a movement which originated with Pierre Proudhon, about the middle of the last century [the 1850s]. Proudhon’s anarchism predicated social order upon the self-control of free individuals, without governmental force. He asserted the extreme of an old American doctrine which is not yet forgotten that ‘the best government is a government that governs least.’ Out of Proudhon’s anarchistic or nongovernment philosophy there sprang two principal schools of anarchism, the pacific and the militant, each with a variety of factions. The militant school is terroristic, its slogan ‘propaganda by deed.’ Its method and its activities in different parts of the world have doubtless given to the word “anarchism” that sinister significance which attaches to it in its uses as a vulgar epithet.

But in the interpretation of a legislative act, reasonable constructions must be given to this word as to all other words. Giving such a construction to the word ‘anarchist,’ as used in the [1918] immigration law, its broadest possible meaning would include on the one hand disciples of Leo Tolstoi, that famous and beloved advocate of the communistic simplicity of the early Christians, and on the other hand the advocates of ‘propaganda by deed,’ who with pistol, knife, or bomb would assault rulers and property owners.”

-United States Assistant Secretary of Labor Louis F. Post giving the definition of the word “Anarchist” during a Congressional Hearing before the Subcommittee of the Committee on

Immigration and Naturalization-Communist and Anarchist Deportation Cases, April 21-24, 1920.¹

There are other writers like Peter Kropotkin and Mikhail Bakunin and many other political philosophers from the 1800s to today who've expanded on, or given different definitions to the word "anarchist" or "anarchism". However, for the sake of this thesis, and the fact that there are hundreds of theory books that already dive into this school of thinking way better than I can or care to do, this is what I'm defining as who or what is an "anarchist", or "anarchism". In other words, whenever I throw around the terms, "anarchist", or "anarchism" in this thesis, refer back to the quote above.

INTRODUCTION

Once every month, a large group of self-proclaimed anarchists crowd around the office spaces at Verso Books in the Dumbo area of Brooklyn. They exchange news, information about current protests and direct action initiatives, network, and talk about their days. I had went to several of their meetings during the summer and fall of 2018 to prepare for this thesis and really wanted to see what it was all about. This group usually forbids people outside their membership to record meetings. But I very distinctly remember at the very end of one meeting in September 2018, a young man, a college student who goes by Henry, wanted to make an announcement.

It was the day after the 117th anniversary of the assassination of America's 25th President, William McKinley, and Henry wanted to celebrate this by quoting the assassin who'd

¹ U.S. Congress. House. Immigration and Naturalization. *Communist And Anarchist Deportation Cases: Hearings Before a Subcommittee of the Committee On Immigration and Naturalization*. By Albert Johnson and W. A. Blackwood. 66 Cong., 2d sess. H. Rept. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1920. 120-21. Accessed May 8, 2019. <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/100346963>. Original Print from Harvard University

done the deed. He proceeded to state the assassin's final words before he was sent to be executed. "I killed the president because he was an enemy of the good people—of the working people. I am not sorry for my crime. I'm awfully sorry I could not see my father." The group cheered and clapped. The group's name is the Metropolitan Anarchist Coordinating Council, and the words Henry uttered were by Leon Czolgoz, a self-proclaimed anarchist who had killed the 25th American President in Buffalo, New York.^{2 3}

Anarchism has had a profound, but hidden, influence in the history of New York City. From the assassination of McKinley in 1901 Buffalo up to the protests in Occupy in 2011, major American Anarchist activities happened in New York. New York City is known for a lot of things in pop culture, politics, and finance. But who knew that there were newspapers, immigrants, schools, and kids with funny Mohawk haircuts that preached a political philosophy? A philosophy that condemned the system and consequences of Capitalism, a big reason why New York City has been so successful and has long been a huge influence in American political history.

Anarchism made its mark in New York, and its impact here would live on in the city to this very day. Russian Jews, who learned to read and attempt to practice the ideas of Bakunin and Kropotkin, fled a Czar's ruthless pogroms to spread their far-left activism in the Lower East Side, where two of their own people, Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman, would make their mark. Thanks to the Progressive Era and World War 1, anarchists in New York City deepened their influence in the area, providing numerous journals to the public, setting up

² Dr. Carlos F. MacDonald and Dr. Edward Anthony Spitzka, "The Trial, Execution, Autopsy, and Mental Status of Leon F. Czolgosz, Alias Fred Nieman, the Assassin of President McKinley." *American Journal of Insanity* 589 (January 1902): 375. Accessed May 12, 2019.

<https://books.google.com/books?id=dVMXAQAAMAAJ&pg=PA375#v=onepage&q&f=false>.

³ "About Us." Metropolitan Anarchist Coordinating Council. Accessed May 11, 2019. <https://macc.nyc/>.

“Modern Schools” and advocating their “propaganda of the deed”, assassination attempts on wealthy bankers and oil tycoons, and bombing areas of New York they deemed to be serving the capitalist agenda the U.S government so favorably admired.

The Palmer raids post-WW1 would end this boom, and what would begin for Anarchism in the Big Apple would be vastly more underground. Book reading clubs were started by a young Sam Dolgoff, and a journalist named Dorothy Day, who converted to Catholicism, and advocated dismantling the hierarchy to promote the word of God.

Later, we had the age of the Beatniks and anti-war protesters, whose anarchism was realized and advocated when navigating civil rights issues and in the creation of anarchist affinity groups like Up Against The Wall Motherfucker, and direct action protests in New York’s Ivy League college, Columbia University. And when the Bronx was burning, hip hop was emerging, art was popping, and the whole city was bankrupt, anarchists thrived not in the protesting sphere, but in the underground punk scene and in abandoned buildings, with the squatters living there. And finally, 11 years after the dawn of the new millennium, a great recession struck the city; anarchists would be found facilitating one of the most popular protests in recent American history, the Occupy movement. This brief history, attempts to document some of the anarchist happenings in the city of New York, and how its citizens experienced, thought, and lived in it.

1901-1930 Chapter 1 Abstract-

Chapter 1 attempts to explain how the first big boom of anarchism was propelled by Industrialization and Immigration, specifically Russian Jews, and how the Palmer Raids and the Red Scare ended this heyday of Anarchism. In the early 20th Century, due to the huge migration of Russian Jews, and the massive societal changes industrialization had on the city, anarchism stirred and thrived. This chapter goes through the role of Russian Jews escaping from pogroms of the Russian Empire, the breadth of influence and activity that the Emma Goldmans and Alexander Berkmans of the world had, including mass protests in Union Square, terrorist bombings and learning institutions. After that, the Palmer raids would shut down this sole boom and Anarchism, barely active, would be transformed, and be discovered within the Catholic Worker and other small book and learning clubs during and after WW2.

1901 was going to be a good year for President McKinley. At the height of his political power, he easily won re-election the year before against his hotly popular rival, William Jennings Bryan, and was looking forward to four years of continued prosperity; the country was back on its feet after a huge economic depression in 1896, and a victory in the 1898 Spanish American war would add Puerto Rico and the Philippines to the growing list of territories America would acquire in the years to come.^{4 5} A trip to the Pan-American Exposition on the 6th of September, 1901 was designed to advocate his party's interests; McKinley's inauguration speech in March

⁴ David O Whitten. "The Depression of 1893." EHnet. Accessed May 11, 2019. <https://eh.net/encyclopedia/the-depression-of-1893/>.

⁵ "The Spanish American War, 1898." Office of the Historian: Milestones: 1866-1898. Accessed May 12, 2019. <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1866-1898/spanish-american-war>.

called for the support of the Dingley Tariff.⁶ He argued the tariff would open new opportunities for foreign markets to U.S manufacturers, and the Exposition in Buffalo would be the culmination of a speaking tour in support of this Tariff.⁷

But things would not turn out that way; Leon Czolgosz, a Polish American who had declared himself an anarchist only two months before, shot the President dead in the abdomen. He was greeting the public at the Exposition's Temple of Music for ten minutes before Czolgosz's .32 caliber revolver sealed his fate, and the country's.⁸ Czolgosz was a socially awkward man who was deemed by his own political group as a spy, according to a warning the anarchist newspaper, *Free Society*, wrote on September 1, 1901, five days before the assassination on September 2⁹:

“ATTENTION! The attention of the comrades is called to another spy. He is well dressed, of medium height, rather narrow shoulders, blond and about 25 years of age. Up to the present he has made his appearance in Chicago and Cleveland. In the former place, he remained but a short time, while in Cleveland he disappeared when the comrades had confirmed themselves of his identity and were on the point of exposing him. His demeanor is of the usual sort, pretending to be greatly interested in the cause, asking for names or soliciting aid for acts of

⁶ U.S. Congress. House. *The Dingley Tariff: An Act to Provide Revenue for the Government And to Encourage the Industries of the United States. Comparison of the Dingley Tariff (July 24, 1897) And Wilson Tariff (Aug. 28, 1894). Complete Index to the Dingley Tariff.* By Nelson M. Dingley and Nelson Dingley. 55 Cong., 1st sess. H. Res. 379. New York, N.Y., 1897. Accessed May 11, 2019. <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=hvd.hnnik6;view=1up;seq=11>.

⁷ "Second Inaugural Address of William McKinley." Avalon Project - Documents in Law, History and Diplomacy. 2008. Accessed May 12, 2019. http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/mckin2.asp.

⁸ "Topics in Chronicling America - The McKinley Assassination." The McKinley Assassination - Topics in Chronicling America (Newspaper and Current Periodical Reading Room, Library of Congress). May 2, 2013. Accessed May 09, 2019. <https://www.loc.gov/rr/news/topics/McKinleyAssassination.html>.

⁹ Everett, Marshall. *Complete Life of William McKinley And Story of His Assassination: An Authentic And Official Memorial Edition, Containing Every Incident In the Career of the Immortal Statesman, Soldier, Orator And Patriot.* Memorial ed. The Author, 1901. 87. Accessed May 8, 2019. <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=msu.31293013910017;view=1up;seq=13>. Original Print from Michigan State University

contemplated violence. If this same individual makes his appearance elsewhere the comrades are warned in advance, and can act accordingly.”

Czolgosz may have had a right to be scared if he ever saw this notice, as the anarchists, the group he associated himself with, would become probably one of the most active political groups in early 20th century America. At the time of McKinley’s assassination, numerous anarchist publications like *Freiheit*, *Die Autonomie*, and *The Alarm*, were in circulation, and anarchists like Czolgosz were assassinating esteemed politicians and leaders throughout the country. These publications were all centered downstate.¹⁰

In New York City, 400 miles away from Buffalo, the anarchist movement was huge. The early 1900s up until the Palmer raids of 1919 and 1920 saw anarchists as a force to be reckoned with in the community. Thanks to a huge migration of Russian Jews, and the massive societal changes industrialization had on the city, anarchists stirred and thrived in this period. They formed “Modern Schools” and participated in "propagandas of the deed", bombing and protesting in areas like Wall Street and Union Square. To see this where it first started, one must look at Russia, near the turn of the century.

Russia was an empire in the 1880s, very much in control of their destiny to become an accepted world power like their British and German counterparts. They had just recently expanded into Serbia and occupied Turkestan in Central Asia.¹¹ Yet under the rule of Alexander II, serfdom was abolished in 1861 and his assassination in 1881 that resulted a massive pogrom

¹⁰ "Dynamite In Print." Bomb-Talking. 2000. Accessed May 09, 2019.
<http://www.chicagohistoryresources.org/dramas/act1/bombTalking/dynamiteInPrint.htm>.
Provided by the Chicago History Museum

¹¹ Look at Glenn E. Curtis *Russia: A Country Study*. Washington, D.C.: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1998, for more information.

against Russian Jews in the country.¹² Most Jews lived in poverty and were a persecuted working class who were susceptible to the ideas of Mikhail Bakunin as well as Peter Kropotkin, some of the founding fathers of Anarchism. They would most notably be found in the Chernoe-Znanmia, a group of anarchists in 1903, that attracted average Russian, mainly Jewish, workers.¹³

However, groups such as Chernoe-Znanmia could not survive the Russian Empire pogroms, and so many Jews would try to emigrate out of Russia, eventually finding their way into the United States in the early 1900s. Amongst a wave of new immigrants to come into the country in the late 19th/early 20th century, Russian working class Jews with Kropotkin and Bakunin in their minds entered the United States via Ellis Island, and found themselves working in small businesses like meat shops and sweatshops, along with new German, Italian, and Polish immigrants, within the rapidly growing economic powerhouse that was New York City.¹⁴ As Kenyon Zimmer writes in his book *Immigrants against the State: Yiddish and Italian Anarchism in America*, only 1 percent of married Jewish women held outside employment. Jews were working in industrial and trade factories in Manhattan and Brooklyn.¹⁵ The working conditions were poor and bosses cared about profits and not safety conditions.

¹² Look at Benjamin Blech. *Eyewitness to Jewish History*. Hoboken, N.J.: J. Wiley & Sons, 2004, for more information.

¹³ Geifman, Anna. *Thou Shalt Kill: Revolutionary Terrorism in Russia, 1894–1917*. Princeton, NJ: Univ. Press, 1995.

¹⁴ Marshall, Peter. *Demanding the Impossible: A History of Anarchism*. Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2010. 392.

¹⁵ Zimmer, Kenyon. *Immigrants against the State: Yiddish and Italian Anarchism in America*. Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 2015. 18.



Anarchist Alexander Berkman addressing a crowd in Union Square, July 7, 1914¹⁶

Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman would be two of these Russian Jews and would become possibly the most famous anarchists Americans would know. Both were born in the Russian Empire. Goldman moved from Russia to live with her sister Helena and her husband in Rochester, N.Y. in 1887. After a depressing marriage to a Russian immigrant, she moved down to New York City in 1889.¹⁷ It was there at a coffee shop called Sach's Cafe in the Lower East Side of Manhattan, she met Johann Most, "the fiery editor" of the German-language anarchist paper *Freiheit*, and Berkman, another ex-Russian who fled to New York from a family that

¹⁶ "Berkman Addressing Anarchists, Union Sq. 7/11/14." Anarchist Demonstration in Union Square, New York, 1914 Photo Gallery. May 7, 2011. Accessed May 10, 2019.

<https://libcom.org/gallery/anarchist-demonstration-union-square-new-york-1914-photo-gallery>.

¹⁷ She writes about this and meeting Berkman in her autobiography, Emma Goldman, *Living My Life*. New York: Penguin Books, 2006.

shamed him.¹⁸ It was Most's influence and writings that inspired Goldman to study and give lectures on anarchism all over New York City.

Berkman came from Russia with an already radical mindset; his uncle, Mark Natanson, had been put to death in Russia for revolutionary activities. Berkman was intrigued by the political discourse of the day in the immediate aftermath of Czar Alexander II's assassination.¹⁹ After moving to New York City and meeting Goldman, they became both one-time lovers, and participated in anarchist activities such as lecture touring, editing their own newspaper, *Mother Earth*, and conspiring, as part of "propaganda of the deed", to assassinate New York City businessman Henry Clay Frick in 1892.^{20 21} Their acts in the late 19th up to the end of World War 1 would inspire working-class New Yorkers to participate in the labor and social movements of the time. When Margaret Sanger was championing the right for women to choose, it was Goldman who produced and disseminated leaflets instructing how women can self-perform abortions, an act that would land her in prison.²²

The Popularity of Anarchism in NYC

When Anarchism hit the city, it became very popular among the immigrant working class. Schools were created, "propagandas of the deed" were initiated, and consequently legislation was enacted to exclude them. Aside from the two personalities of Goldman and Berkman, there were institutional means to educate children about anarchism. Goldman and

¹⁸ Zimmer, 19.

¹⁹ Avrigh, Paul, and Karen Avrigh. *Sasha and Emma: The Anarchist Odyssey of Alexander Berkman and Emma Goldman*. Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2014. 9-11.

²⁰ "Sample Short Biographies From: Emma Goldman: A Documentary History of the American Years, 1890-1901." Sample Short Biographies. April 2003. Accessed May 09, 2019. <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/goldman/PublicationsoftheEmmaGoldmanPapers/samplebiographiesfromthedirectoryofindividuals.html>.

²¹ Avrigh and Avrigh, 30-33.

²² "Birth Control Pioneer." The Emma Goldman Papers. Accessed May 09, 2019. <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/goldman/MeetEmmaGoldman/birthcontrolpioneer.html>.

Berkman (after Berkman had served fourteen years in prison for the attempted assassination of Frick) between 1910 and 1911, organized the Ferrer, or “Modern Schools”, in Manhattan.^{23 24}

Between 1910 and 1960, groups of radicals from New York to Los Angeles carried on a unique style of learning in American History---Using ideas from the anarchist educator Francisco Ferrer y Guardia. The Ferrer Schools “Differed from other educational experiments of the same period in being schools for children of workers and directed by the workers themselves.”²⁵

At the Ferrer Center in Union Square, people came to hear lectures by Clarence Darrow, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, and other public figures, to see plays, listen to concerts, and debate current events.²⁶ One of the supervisors was Will Durant, the noted philosopher who wrote an 11 volume story of civilization.²⁷ This Ferrer School and Center, as well as other anarchist communities in New York, provided sanctuary and acceptance for gay men and lesbians, “in a time of near hostility towards them.”²⁸ Anarchists were welcomed in downtown Manhattan. “Greenwich bohemians” returned the gifts that the Ferrer Center gave them by inviting anarchists to literary salons and by lending financial and moral support to workers fighting to unionize.²⁹ The Ferrer Center demonstrated that for even the farthest left of New Yorkers, there was an institution to call home.

When World War 1 broke out, however, the Ferrer Center was put on notice. On Independence Day 1914, three anarchists connected to the Ferrer Center, Arthur Caron, Carl

²³ Avrich and Avrich, 183-184.

²⁴ Marshall, 394.

²⁵ Avrich, Paul. *Anarchist Voices: An Oral History of Anarchism in America*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995. 191.

²⁶ Avrich, 193.

²⁷ Avrich, 193.

²⁸ Cornell, Andrew. *Unruly Equality: U.S. Anarchism in the Twentieth Century*. Oakland: University of California Press, 2016. 41.

²⁹ Cornell, 48.

Hanson, and Charles Berg, were killed in a tenement building manufacturing a bomb meant for Oil and Steel millionaire John D. Rockefeller (a revenge for the Ludlow Massacre which happened in Colorado that past April).³⁰ The Ferrer School shortly after gained a reputation as a bomb factory and had to move to Selton, New Jersey in May 1915, thriving for another 50 years.

³¹ Bottom line, anarchists in New York City were a major presence and help spur continued thought and action on the labor and progressive movements of the day.

The bomb builders and throwers of New York City, the ones who would target Union Square and Wall Street in those times, struck fear into many a politician.^{32 33} As such, the Federal government passed anarchist exclusion acts, like the 1903 Immigration Act, or Anarchist Exclusion Act and the 1918 Immigration Act.³⁴ It was this constant deportation and violent direct action that would spell doom for these anarchists.

The End of the Anarchist Boom

Anarchist influence would not last. The end of World War 1 brought new concerns to Americans, who had read about what had happened in Russia: A Czarist Empire falling to a Bolshevik government.³⁵ The very bombings that Berkman and Goldman supported and participated in started the first wave of the Red Scare. Labor unrest was a theme as well, as strikes were constant in places like Seattle and Boston.^{36 37} In Congress, the Overman Committee

³⁰ Avrich, 194.

³¹ Avrich, 194.

³² "A Bomb Goes off at a Union Square Rally in 1908." Ephemeral New York. August 17, 2015. Accessed May 12, 2019. <https://ephemeralnewyork.wordpress.com/2015/08/17/a-bomb-goes-off-at-a-union-square-rally-in-1908/>.

³³ "Wall Street Bombing 1920." Famous Cases & Criminals. May 18, 2016. Accessed May 12, 2019. <https://www.fbi.gov/history/famous-cases/wall-street-bombing-1920>.

³⁴ Hans P. Vought. Summary of Immigration Laws, 1875-1918. Accessed May 09, 2019. http://people.sunyulster.edu/voughth/immlaws1875_1918.htm.

³⁵ The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. "Russian Revolution." Encyclopædia Britannica. April 02, 2019. Accessed May 12, 2019. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Russian-Revolution-of-1917>.

³⁶ Omar Crowder. "Seattle General Strike." Seattle General Strike Project. Accessed May 12, 2019. <http://depts.washington.edu/labhist/strike/>.

that used to oversee supposed spy activities, lasted beyond the end of the war and went to work on examining labor unrest, not seeing it as “Anti-German” but instead as “Bolshevist” and “Red”.³⁸

Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer was determined to put an end to these people. Constant raids throughout 1919 and 1920 would spell an end for not only New York’s Anarchists, but the rest of the country.³⁹ After World War 1, anarchist journals like *Mother Earth* were shut down, the “Palmer raids” began. Prominent figures of the anarchist movement were hushed and imprisoned. Immigration was reduced to a trickle.⁴⁰ After the Palmer raids, anarchist influence began to greatly diminish as the Red Scare lumped anarchists, socialists, communists and all of leftist leaning groups into an “other”, a bogeyman that represented tyranny. To the U.S. government, they represented chaos, much like the falling Czar Empire and the rising U.S.S.R.

As the years went by, really nothing of importance came to the anarchists of New York, the lot of them having lost so much influence due to the raids and shutting down of journals. Though it didn’t permanently halt the Anarchist movement. Berkman published *What is Communism?* in 1929, an accessible entry to anarchist thought.⁴¹ The 30s had an Anarchist movement that was a mere shadow of its past a decade or two earlier, with many of the older generation grown, starting lives and families of their own, living the typical American life.⁴²

³⁷ "About the Strike." The 1919 Boston Police Strike Project. Accessed May 12, 2019. <http://blogs.umb.edu/bpstrike1919/aboutstrike/>.

³⁸ Look into Robert K. Murray’s *Red Scare: A Study in National Hysteria, 1919-1920*, for more information.

³⁹ "Palmer Raids." Famous Cases & Criminals. May 18, 2016. Accessed May 12, 2019. <https://www.fbi.gov/history/famous-cases/palmer-raids>.

⁴⁰ Peter Glassgold and Emma Goldman. *Anarchy!: An Anthology of Emma Goldman’s Mother Earth*. Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint, 2012. Xxxvi. Accessed May 11, 2019.

<https://libcom.org/files/Anarchy!%20An%20Anthology%20of%20Emma%20Goldman's%20Mother%20Earth.pdf>

⁴¹ Marshall, 395.

⁴² Avrich, 319.

However, as those 20s turned into the 30s, new radicals were going to try to keep anarchism alive in the backdrop of Depression and War, through the Catholic God, bohemian book clubs, and leaflets.

1930-1960-Chapter 2 Abstract-

Dorothy Day's and Sam Dolgoff's lives, activities in the Catholic Worker Movement and establishing book clubs were instrumental in keeping anarchism alive while the Great Depression, the Second World War, and the New Deal, ruled American society. In short, this chapter challenges the idea that New York's Anarchist movement didn't die (it nearly did), but evolved.

The Great Depression sparked economic, social, and political turmoil throughout the world. People in Europe and America were looking for strongmen to rescue them from unemployment and despair, and minorities were targeted and discriminated against, which people saw as the answer to the question, "Why aren't things getting any better?" President Roosevelt enacted the New Deal in large part because he was worried about influence from both left and right if he didn't do something to save the capitalist system which had benefited government so much.⁴³

New York's anarchist movement was hit with another punch; the social welfare programs that Roosevelt and Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia were creating, and public parks programs

⁴³ David Greenberg. "Presidential Firepower: How FDR Saved Capitalism in Eight Days." Slate Magazine. October 24, 2008. Accessed May 12, 2019. <https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2008/10/how-fdr-saved-capitalism-in-eight-days.html>.

commissioned under Robert Moses.⁴⁴ Roosevelt had enough confidence in LaGuardia's leadership to provide him millions of dollars in New Deal money, in a city that had 30 percent unemployed in 1932-33.^{45 46} Because of these social reforms, anarchists thought that their movement was dimmed down. Anarchists Anna Sosnovsky and Rose Pesotta saw that when they came back to New York, "By then there wasn't much of a movement left to be active in! Since the Roosevelt era began, much had changed in the American radical movement. He took the steam away from the social democrats. And anarchism, to me, was no longer an active movement but only a tradition."⁴⁷

Though anarchist and other radical spheres were much reduced, through people like Dorothy Day and Sam Dolgoff New Yorkers visited religious hospitality houses that combined Christian teachings with radicalism. They went to Libertarian Book Clubs, and read magazines like "*Vanguard*", "*Why?*" and other resistance literature. They took their activists out of the city and into the civil rights movement, and tried to provide a space for a much hidden Gay and Lesbian movement.

Dorothy Day's Life

Dorothy Day came from her Brooklyn Heights upbringing, a middle child of five, to write about working issues in socialist magazines in the 1910s, like *The Liberator*, *Masses*, or *The Call*.⁴⁸ During her teen years, she had flirted with anarchism as well.⁴⁹ On the Lower East

⁴⁴ Thomas Kessner. "Fiorello H. LaGuardia." *The History Teacher* 26, no. 2 (1993): 155. doi:10.2307/494812.

⁴⁵ Thomas Kessner. "Fiorello H. LaGuardia." *The History Teacher* 26, no. 2 (1993): 155. doi:10.2307/494812.

⁴⁶ Anne Klejment. "From Union Square to Heaven." In *Radical Gotham: Anarchism in New York City from Schwab's Saloon to Occupy Wall Street*. Chicago, Ill: Univ. of Illinois Press, 2017, 109.

Edited by Tom Goyens

⁴⁷ Avrich, 443.

⁴⁸ Tom Cornell. "A Brief Introduction to the Catholic Worker Movement." Catholic Worker Movement - Home. Accessed May 12, 2019.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20140314165158/http://www.catholicworker.org/historytext.cfm?Number=4>. Accessed via the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine.

Side, the Catholic Worker movement was born out of a desire to combine Catholic social teaching with Christian pacifist values. It was unabashedly anarchist as well, as radical Christian teachings were preached in the issues of the *Catholic Worker*, on sale for one penny each.⁵⁰

Day was self-educated in radical politics. She “absorbed” the Bible and Jesus’ core teachings for the love of God and thy neighbor. As Anne Klejment puts it, “To her, ‘love’ meant unconditional acts of generosity at personal sacrifice. ‘Neighbor’ meant all persons, a radical inclusivity.”⁵¹ Prior to the Great Depression, she set aside her Catholicism and was devoted to the radical journalism of the 20s. Writing positively about it, Day called Anarchism an, “emotional state of mind, denouncing injustice and extolling freedom, rather than a movement.”⁵² She “never had time for membership in any organization” and never went to “Socialist meetings” during her time writing for *The Call*.⁵³ Dorothy Day’s time within leftist journalism and activism clearly influenced her thinking. She wrote editorials opposing the Great War in the summer 1917 issue of *War?* and helped get fellow socialist journalists from *Masses*, a socialist magazine that she was an assistant of, to avoid prison via the Espionage Act by testifying and getting an acquittal.⁵⁴ Participating in the suffragists' movement with the National Women’s Party, she slowly but surely earned street cred among her contemporaries. Her Catholicism and fondness of Anarchism would merge in the Great Depression.

⁴⁹ Dorothy Day. "Chapter 6- New York." From *Union Square to Rome*. Accessed May 12, 2019. <https://www.catholicworker.org/dorothyday/articles/206.html>.
A digital excerpt from Day's 1936 autobiography, *From Union Square to Rome*.

⁵⁰ "Frequently Asked Questions." Accessed May 12, 2019. <https://www.catholicworker.org/faq.html#1>.

⁵¹ Klejment, 101.

⁵² Dorothy Day. *The Long Loneliness: The Autobiography of the Legendary Catholic Social Activist*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1981. 55.

⁵³ Day, 56.

⁵⁴ Klejment, 102.

In December of 1932, Day and labor Journalist Mary Heaton Vorse boarded a bus from New York City to Washington, D.C. to write about the hunger march organized by the “communist-influenced Unemployment Councils” for magazines “Commonweal” and “America”. It were these assignments that gave her nuanced perspectives on the Catholic Church, Catholicism, and communism.⁵⁵ It’s what helped start her movement, along with meeting a budding theologian, Peter Maurin.⁵⁶

This movement was strange. Up to this point, leftist philosophy and its followers didn’t think religion of any sort could be compatible, the teachings of Catholicism in particular, as anarchists rejected its grandiose hierarchy.⁵⁷ Anarchists of the Spanish Civil War five years later would burn churches and kill priests as allies of the state.⁵⁸ Klejment says, “Following the lead of Kropotkin and Tolstoy, Day and Maurin inspired a Christian anarchist spirit that empowered individuals to create small communities with minimal rules to advance nonviolent revolution through love of neighbor and direct action.”⁵⁹ It was this lead that received responses, of both favor and hate, from the organized Church and fellow radicals. “In stark contrast to the cardinal’s [Francis Spellman] ‘America right or wrong’ approach to Cold War Policies, Day advocated activist pacifism that refused to engage in war manufacturing, to take cover during a compulsory air raid drill, or to submit to military induction.” Spellman and his successors recognized Day’s motives and respected the movement.⁶⁰

⁵⁵ Klejment, 105.

⁵⁶ Tom Cornell.

⁵⁷ Shelia Webb. "Dorothy Day and the Early Years of the "Catholic Worker": Social Action through the Pages of the Press." *U.S. Catholic Historian* 21, no. 3 (2003): <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25154868>, 82.

⁵⁸ De La Cueva, Julio. "Religious Persecution, Anticlerical Tradition and Revolution: On Atrocities against the Clergy during the Spanish Civil War." *Journal of Contemporary History* 33, no. 3 (1998): 357-58. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/261121>. 357-358.

⁵⁹ Klejment, 108.

⁶⁰ Klejment, 109.

The *Catholic Worker* became popular. Dorothy Day reasoned that the growth could be because, "...that many young men were coming out of college to face the prospect of no job. If they had started to read *The Catholic Worker* in college, they were ready to spend time as volunteers when they came out." *Catholic Worker* papers and organizations would spread to Australia and England, with slightly different viewpoints than the original New York version.⁶¹ Some of its members would become active in radical politics and participate in the Plowshares movement, an anti-nuclear, Christian pacifist movement that became known for pouring blood over nuclear computing systems and documents in plants around the country.⁶² On April 5th, 2018, the daughter of Dorothy Day, Martha Hennessey, participated in one of these actions at a Georgia submarine base.⁶³

Sam Dogloff's Life

After the Second World War, New York anarchist activity would further descend into obscurity. McCarthyism and a second Red Scare provided an anti-socialist and anti-communist environment that would make even the most critical Americans reconsider their radicalism.⁶⁴ However, folks like Sam Dolgoff would be a thread that connected prewar immigrant anarchists with the artists, musicians, and intellectuals of the Beat generation that would in turn evolve into the hippie movement of the 1960s-1970s

⁶¹ Day, 186-187.

⁶² "The Plowshares Movement." *Defending Rights & Dissent*. March 08, 2018. Accessed May 09, 2019. <https://rightsanddissent.org/news/the-plowshares-movement/>.

⁶³ Campbell, Elizabeth. "7 Anti-war Activists Detained after Vandalism on Kings Bay Sub Base." *WJXT*. April 05, 2018. Accessed May 09, 2019. <https://www.news4jax.com/news/georgia/7-protesters-detained-after-vandalism-at-kings-bay-sub-base>.

⁶⁴ Look at Landon R. Y. Storrs. 2015 "McCarthyism and the Second Red Scare." *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of American History*, for more information.

Sam Dogloff was born in Russia in 1902 but raised in the Bronx. He first became interested in radical politics via the American Socialist Labor Party, which met in his neighborhood. “I became very enthusiastic;” Dolgoff would say in a 1972 oral history interview. “They appealed to me very strongly.” Dolgoff said, “They popularized everything. They explained all about Karl Marx and the economic question, surplus value. I think that was the time when Morris Hillquist was running for mayor or he was running for the assembly.” Dolgoff would quickly start diving into the discourse, soapboxing as a member of the Young People’s Socialist League, and supplementing his income as a house painter, like his father.⁶⁵ In the war years, Dolgoff and others like him were anarchists of a more pacifist sense, like Day’s Catholic Workers.

“Since the mid-1940s, the broader anarchist pacifist milieu had functioned as a relatively safe haven for gay and bisexual men such as Robert Duncan and Paul Goodman. The anarchist press advocated greater sexual freedom, as journals such as *Mother Earth* had done before the First World War.”⁶⁶ Book clubs started popping up in the city. In 1946, the Libertarian Book Club in the Lower East Side was born. It’s disputed as to who found it, ranging from William and Sarah Taback to Dolgoff himself.⁶⁷ Nonetheless, it provided education on anarchist ideas, history, and current struggles in and outside of the city. In 1955, Dolgoff founded, with Esther Miller, the Libertarian League, which lasted for ten years. Situated at 813 Broadway, it had a journal, *Views and Comments*, did several protests, held talks, and had close liaisons with

⁶⁵ Allen, Ann, “*Oral History Project*”, transcript of an oral history conducted 1972 by Ann Allen, Roosevelt University Oral History Project in Labor History, Roosevelt University 1972. Accessed May 09, 2019 <https://libcom.org/files/1972%20oral%20history%20with%20Sam%20Dolgoff.pdf>. 1-3.

⁶⁶ Cornell, 221.

⁶⁷ Cornell, 215.

anarchists groups in Europe.⁶⁸ Later residing at 12 St. Mark's Place, the Libertarian League proved to be an important vessel for anarchists to keep their tradition alive. The conversations and leaflets would attract Greenwich Village bohemians like Dave Van Ronk.⁶⁹ Dolgoff and people like him helped transform New York's anarchism from its immigrant beginnings to a more bohemian, early hippie atmosphere.

Why They Were Important

Dorothy Day and Sam Dolgoff were two figures within New York City who kept Anarchism alive as, at the very least, a lifestyle. The Catholic Worker Movement and Dolgoff's advocacy in promoting and forming book clubs during the burgeoning beat generation provided many new artists and poets coming to New York City, with an avenue to explore different ideas that McCarthyite mainstream culture deemed too weird or too dangerous.

The Catholic Worker's presence at the start of the Depression, and during the Second World War, was an awkward one, as it was probably one of the very, very few radical groups at the time that openly welcomed religion (the Catholic one of course) into informing their political stances. The Catholic Worker Movement provided a path for anarchists who had wanted to put religion in their lives and believed it could reside side by side with their non-hierarchical tendencies. The communist counterpart and rival paper during their heyday, the *Daily Worker*, would chastise the Catholic Worker for embracing religion and pacifist actions.⁷⁰ Day herself was a supporter of FDR's policies such as the Civilian Conservation Corps.⁷¹ And when the

⁶⁸ Avrich, 426.

⁶⁹ Cornell, 216-217. Note: The exact location of the Libertarian League at this time is disputed as I was researching. Cornell says it started in 1954 with Russell Blackwell.

⁷⁰ Webb, P.82.

⁷¹ Webb, P.85.

Second World War came, Day and the Catholic Worker's staunch pacifist take would be consequential to their readership, as it would decline drastically during the war.⁷²

Sam Dolgoff would be a middle aged by the end of the Second World War, and his activities as an anarchist in New York City represents the transition into the 60s. The Libertarian League got artists and poets in the Village interested in anarchist theory, thought, history, and action. It would be this, along with Dolgoff's own prolific writing and activism that would carry the radical politics into a new era of civil rights, war protests, and despair in the city.

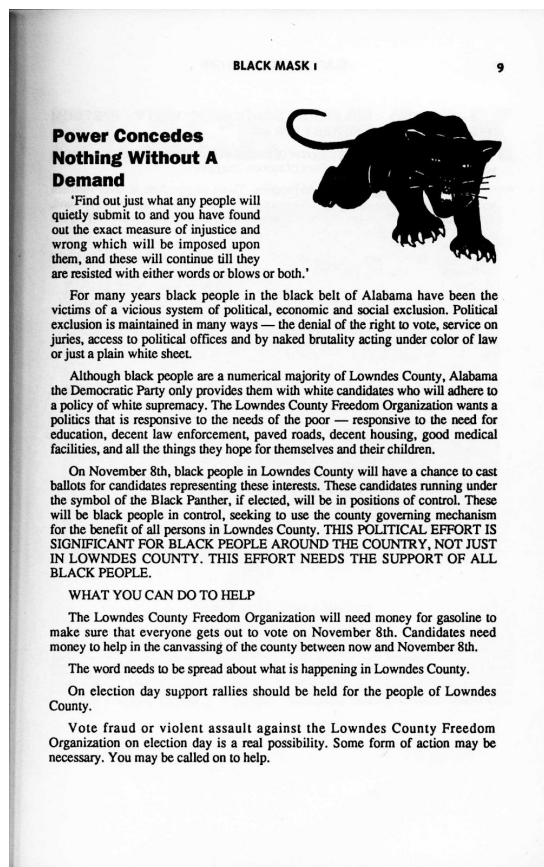
Anarchism had a very complex relationship with civil rights. Kropotkin's and Tolstoy's ideas went with Christian personalism and anarchist pacifist advisors and leadership groups of the early civil rights movement. As Andrew Cornell writes in *Unruly Equality*, "There, anarchist tenants such as the equal liberty of all people, the importance and validity of individual resistance to social evil, and direct action by the oppressed became mixed with the social justice traditions of liberalism, the African American church, black nationalism, and the below-the-radar contributions of communist activists."⁷³

⁷² Klejment, 114-115.

⁷³ Cornell, 222.

1960-1980 Chapter 3 Abstract-

This time represented an intersection of anarchism and civil rights. New York City anarchists confronted American foreign relations at this time as well. They saw and critiqued other groups as campus activism was taking off. New York's anarchism at this time was also really artsy and would be strongly defined by radical groups that would be closely associated with civil rights, young student protestors and a zine/leaflet culture that would help spur New York's punk movement.



The above is a piece of propaganda, a page from a radical magazine. One sees the Black Panther Logo prominently on the upper right-hand corner. The written type encourages the reader to send donations to the Lowndes County Freedom Organization to help black southerners register to vote on Election Day. “Although black people are a numerical majority of Lowndes County, Alabama the Democratic Party only provides them with white candidates who will adhere to a policy of white supremacy”. The text goes on to say:

“Vote fraud or violent assault against the Lowndes County Freedom Organization on election day is a real possibility. Some form of action may be necessary. You may be called on to help.”

This is from the very first issue of the anarchist art magazine *Black Mask*, November 1966.⁷⁴ It, in a sense, can sum up what anarchism meant post-50s; it wasn't like it used to be. New York's anarchists were no longer German and Russian immigrants, but instead from the burgeoning hippie movement and its subjects that would put a nation to the test among Civil Rights and Vietnam War disruptions. The anarchists were more artsier, yet still in touch with their usual direct action motives. The people who created *Black Mask* would evolve to become the anarchist affinity group, Up Against The Wall Motherfucker and would start dumpster fires near Lincoln Center, or protest “War” Streets Financial center. The Yippie movement would do some similar things, from founder anarchist Abbie Hoffman. The protests of Columbia University in 1968 would signal to the anarchists within the Yippie movement that they had to join other sectors, like the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) to be more effective.

Even when the 60s decade was over, and American troops withdrew from Vietnam, these groups did not let up. The 70s saw the Libertarian Workers Group come into existence,

⁷⁴ Hahne, Ron, and Ben Morea. *Black Mask & Up Against the Wall Motherfucker: The Incomplete Works of Ron Hahne, Ben Morea, and the Black Mask Group*. Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2011. 9.

spreading leaflets, much like Up Against the Wall Motherfucker would do after their publication stopped, and these groups would carry on over to serve the genesis of “Zine” culture and the Punk movement that would arrive in New York. In short, New York’s anarchism at this time would be strongly defined by radical groups that would be closely associated with civil rights, young student protestors and a zine/leaflet culture that would help spur New York’s punk movement.

When the 60s came, anarchists and civil rights activists joined as one, demonstrating that the anarchists were not as big a political player as they once were. An example of this can be seen in *Black Mask/Up Against The Wall Motherfucker*, an anarchist affinity group residing in the Lower East Side. *Black Mask/Up Against The Wall Motherfucker* began in 1965 or 1966, with a group of non- “doctrinaire” anarchist Dadaist and surrealist artists headed by one Ben Morea. Ben and his associates wanted to, “find a place where art and politics could coexist in a radical way.”⁷⁵ The result was “*Black Mask*, featuring polemical writings from Morea and various calls to action, starting with the successful shutdown of the Museum of Modern Art on October 10, 1966. “The man-power it takes to overthrow a system won’t come from the small minority of us that are concerned with culture; it’ll come from the mass oppressed by power,” Morea wrote in this very first call to action, “And most of them don’t give a damn whether the Museum of Modern Art is open or closed, or whether it exists at all; their problems are much more vital, like whether they’re going to die in Vietnam or from a cop’s bullet in the back.”⁷⁶ *Black Mask* and the Motherfuckers would keep running until 1969. Morea was in constant

⁷⁵ Hahne, Morea, 153.

⁷⁶ Hahne, Morea, 5.

surveillance and found himself in legal trouble later avoiding the public eye for nearly 30 years.⁷⁷

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The Motherfuckers criticized practically everyone in the left: the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) for being too Maoist and petty, the hippie movement for not being militaristic enough, and Allen Ginsberg and Timothy Leary for being part of the “New Establishment”.⁷⁹ Yet in taking a look at some of the things they published, that these anarchists were interested in promoting the civil rights cause. After Newark, New Jersey went through a race riot in the summer of 1967, *Black Mask* #7 recognized, in a positive manner, that those riots were exactly what the New Jersey Governor Richard J. Hughes had said at the time, that they were acts of “insurrection”. As *Black Mask* puts it, “Until the blacks are joined by sections of the white working class they will have to rely on their own strength...Realize this is now a revolution and we need revolutionary solidarity. If they seek to crush our brothers they must crush us all--white and black.”⁸⁰ Morea’s cohort was on board with the black liberation struggle. They advocated for poor whites to join in on the black struggle, as seen in *Black Mask* #9. “Poor whites have also shown a real potential for radical activity. Nothing more clearly shows where their interests lie than their joining with blacks in the Detroit riots and the arrest of several white snipers.”⁸¹ The Motherfuckers, especially Morea after the 1967 Newark riots, wanted to be more active in radical protesting, so they continually searched for other allies like the Students for a

⁷⁷ "The Line Between: Ben Morea Paintings of the Early 90s." Boo-Hooray. 2015. Accessed May 09, 2019. <https://www.boo-hooray.com/pages/exhibits/19/the-line-between-ben-morea-paintings-of-the>.

⁷⁸ Hahne, Morea, 86.

⁷⁹ Hahne, Morea, 156,158.

⁸⁰ Hahne, Morea, 50-51.

⁸¹ Hahne, Morea, 62.

Democratic Society to help create bigger and better direct actions.⁸² The Motherfuckers were supportive of the Black Panther Movement, and the writings in their Black Mask movement show that. Anarchism, even opposed to the state, would still try and fight alongside the Panthers for Black Empowerment.

But what about the Youth International Movement, or “Yippies”? This was another radical group that popped up in New York’s late 60s, headed by activist and anarchist Abbie Hoffman. “The Yippies framed the creation of anti-capitalist counter-cultural institutions as direct action, meant as a critique and disruption of the mainstream economy.”⁸³ Throughout the country, they were known to be countercultural revolutionaries protesting the Vietnam War, political parties, and consumerism. The Yippies, in other words, saw that American politics and culture was absurd, and saw to fight against it was with absurdity itself.⁸⁴

Yet within the city, they helped start up a squatting movement that was influential up to the early 90s. Jerry the Peddler, a yippie who came to New York in the summer of 1971, met up with the Yippies at their headquarters on a 10 Bleecker Street. It was a squatter headquarters that started the “world’s only anti-disco disco”, “Where we only played rock and roll. No disco, no country and western, no nothing. Just rock and roll. And that happened every Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday night.”⁸⁵ Yippies, following the usual anarchist tendencies, rejected the

⁸² Casey, Caitlin. “Up against the Wall Motherfucker: Ideology and Action in a “Street Gang with an Analysis.” In *Radical Gotham: Anarchism in New York City from Schwab's Saloon to Occupy Wall Street*. Chicago, Ill: Univ. of Illinois Press, 2017. 166.

Edited by Tom Goyens.

⁸³ Starecheski, Amy. *Ours to Lose: When Squatters Became Homeowners in New York City*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016. 57.

⁸⁴ For more information, read Marty Jezer’s book, *Abbie Hoffman: American Rebel*

⁸⁵ Sorgen, Jeremy, “*Oral History Interview with Jerry the Peddler*”, transcript of an oral history conducted March 13, 2008 and April 26, 2012, *Squatters’ Collective Oral Histories Collection (OH.068)* at 70 Washington Square South and C-Squat, New York City. 19.

concept of private property and sought to use the growing amount of empty buildings in the city into the 70s.

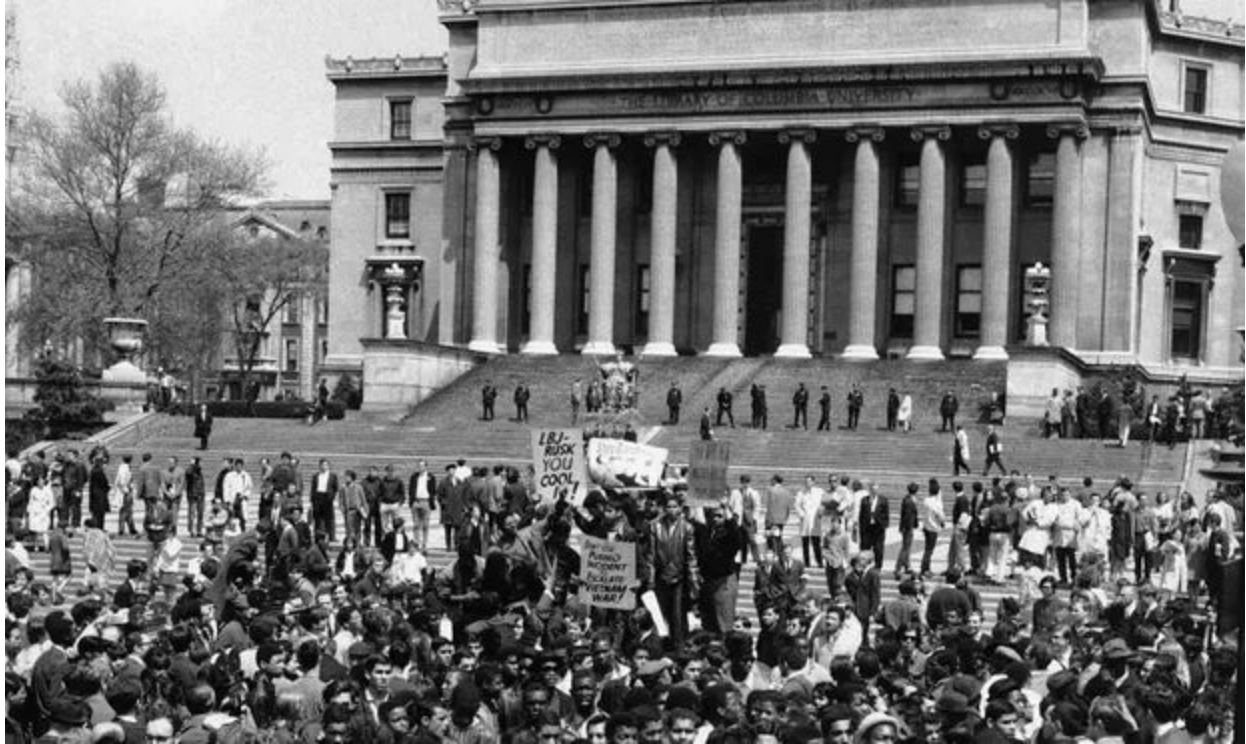
Probably one of the most famous instances of anarchists in this time gaining some kind of popular attention were the protests that occurred at Columbia University from April 23 to April 30th, 1968. It started when Students for a Democratic Society Columbia students Mark Rudd and Nicholas Freudenburg discovered documents from the International Law Library that linked the University's involvement with funding IDA, the Institute for Defense Analysis, a think tank that helped the U.S Department of Defense create military technology for use in Vietnam.⁸⁶

Columbia SDS members would use this as a point to protest on campus. Increasing the unrest were it the Students Afro-American Society (SAS) protesting Columbia's plan to build a gymnasium in Morningside Park, disrupting the Harlem and Morningside Heights communities.

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⁸⁶ "1968: Columbia in Crisis." Columbia University Libraries Online Exhibitions | 1968: Columbia in Crisis: Causes- IDA. Accessed May 09, 2019. <https://exhibitions.library.columbia.edu/exhibits/show/1968/causes/ida>.

⁸⁷ "1968: Columbia in Crisis." Columbia University Libraries Online Exhibitions | 1968: Columbia in Crisis: Causes- SAS. Accessed May 09, 2019. <https://exhibitions.library.columbia.edu/exhibits/show/1968/causes/sas>.



Columbia University Students Protest near the Low Library.⁸⁸

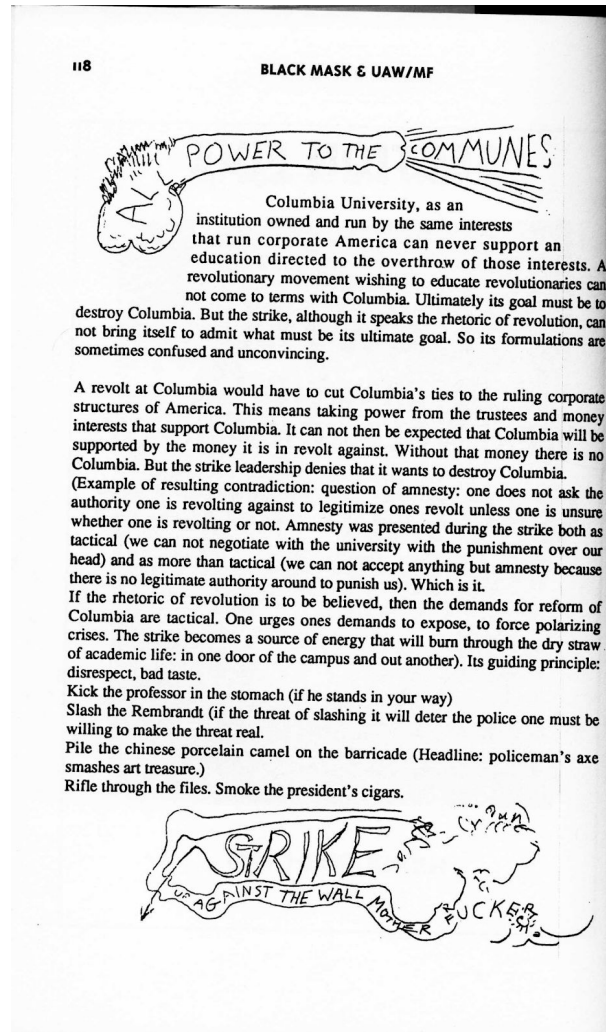
An anarchist tinge was there. Photos like the one above show hundreds of students crowded near the Low Library and invading the administration buildings. Yet, the presence of groups like SDS didn't impress some of the faculty. Jeffrey Kaplow, a student at the time of the protests, said "...I think it's clear that there's been a new consciousness amongst students, especially those who have moved in a leftward direction over the last five years or so, a dissatisfaction with the prevailing society, as SDS would have it, and I agree a great deal with their general theses, although I sometimes find them a bit vague and ideologically lacking."⁸⁹

⁸⁸ Avorn, Jerry. "In 68 We Occupied Columbia. Today's Students Can Again Spearhead Change | Jerry Avorn." *The Guardian*. April 30, 2018. Accessed May 09, 2019.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/apr/30/columbia-occupation-1968-students-neveragain>.

⁸⁹ Slovut, Gordon, "Reminiscences of Jeffrey Kaplow", transcript of an oral history conducted on May 13, 1968 by Gordon Slovut, "Columbia Crisis of 1968 project", Columbia University 1968.1.

Famed historian Richard Hofstadter said, however, that the students did reveal “very well the weakness of the academic liberal mentality, and that they had acted with corresponding ruthlessness.”⁹⁰



Up Against the Wall Motherfuckers supported the protests as seen in this leaflet, supposedly produced around that time of April 1968. They encouraged students to make a real scene at the university, to force administrators to think critically about their own actions. “If the

⁹⁰ Slofut, Gordon, “Reminiscences of Richard Hofstadter”, transcript of an oral history conducted on May 15, 1968 by Gordon Slofut, “Columbia Crisis of 1968 project”, Columbia University 1968. 8.

rhetoric revolution is to be believed,” it says, “then the demands for reform of Columbia are tactical. One urges one's demands to expose, to force polarizing crises....Its guiding principle: disrespect, bad taste.”⁹¹ Note at the end, the leaflet encourages to “Smoke the president’s cigars.”

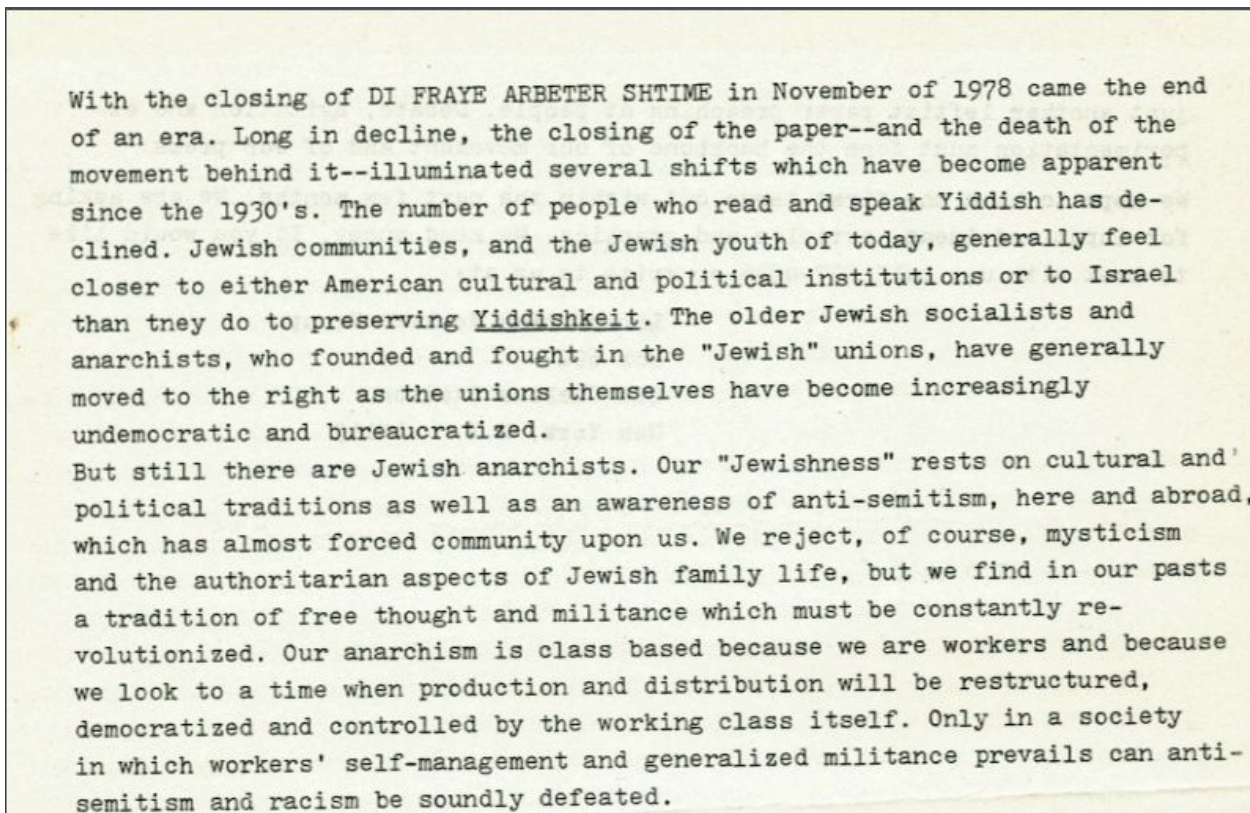
Out of pure coincidence, here is a photo of future poet David Shapiro smoking a cigar, sitting right in the President of Columbia’s seat during the protest:⁹²



⁹¹ Hahne, Morea, 118.

⁹² Upham, Gerald S. "[Student Activist David Shapiro Sitting behind University President Kirk's Desk Smoking an Appropriated Cigar during Six-day Campus Uprising and Protest at Columbia University, New York]." International Center of Photography. February 24, 2016. Accessed May 09, 2019. <https://www.icp.org/browse/archive/objects/student-activist-david-shapiro-sitting-behind-university-president-kirks-desk>.

After 1968 and during the 1970s, anarchism was then seemingly trying to get back to its more worker-oriented roots. The city, under the last mayoralty years of Lindsay and Beame, saw itself go bankrupt due to the middle class moving out to the suburbs, businesses finding cheaper and easier to operate areas, and an increase in crime.⁹³ Small groups would pop in and promote what would later become Punk's zine scene. The Libertarian Workers Group situated themselves in Chelsea, and produced large, news zines that commented on leftist anniversaries, and events happening in the world. They were "working people in the N.Y. area." Publishing the bulletin *ON THE LINE*, and worked in the anti-nuclear SHAD Alliance.⁹⁴



With the closing of DI FRAYE ARBETER SHTIME in November of 1978 came the end of an era. Long in decline, the closing of the paper--and the death of the movement behind it--illuminated several shifts which have become apparent since the 1930's. The number of people who read and speak Yiddish has declined. Jewish communities, and the Jewish youth of today, generally feel closer to either American cultural and political institutions or to Israel than they do to preserving Yiddishkeit. The older Jewish socialists and anarchists, who founded and fought in the "Jewish" unions, have generally moved to the right as the unions themselves have become increasingly undemocratic and bureaucratized.

But still there are Jewish anarchists. Our "Jewishness" rests on cultural and political traditions as well as an awareness of anti-semitism, here and abroad, which has almost forced community upon us. We reject, of course, mysticism and the authoritarian aspects of Jewish family life, but we find in our pasts a tradition of free thought and militance which must be constantly revolutionized. Our anarchism is class based because we are workers and because we look to a time when production and distribution will be restructured, democratized and controlled by the working class itself. Only in a society in which workers' self-management and generalized militance prevails can anti-semitism and racism be soundly defeated.

⁹³ Look at Kim Phillips-Fein. *Fear City: New York's Fiscal Crisis and the Rise of Austerity Politics*. New York: Metropolitan Books, 2017. For more information.

⁹⁴ "Libertarian Workers Group Leaflets." Libcom.org. April 11, 2018. Accessed May 09, 2019. <https://libcom.org/library/libertarian-workers-group-leaflets>.

Libertarian Workers Group Article on the end of one of the newspapers that first popularized Anarchism in the city, *Di Fraye Arbeter Shtime*. (Date Unknown-Presumably Nov 1978)

Another small group, which was actually part of a larger group, was Wages for Housework, an autonomous Marxist feminist movement with a home base in Brooklyn.⁹⁵ They called out the U.S forced sterilization of women, and advocated freedom from underpayment, paid vacations, medical care and abortion rights.⁹⁶ In the propaganda they published, they repeated:

A REAL CHOICE MEANS:

IT IS POSSIBLE TO HAVE OR NOT TO HAVE CHILDREN

AND ONLY WE WOMEN ---NOT THE GOVERNMENT---CAN MAKE

THIS DECISION.

OUR WOMBS ARE NOT GOVERNMENT PROPERTY!

From the New York Wages for Housework Committee pamphlet, circa 1970s.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Look at Silvia Federici and Arlen Austin, *The New York Wages for Housework Committee 1972-1977: History, Theory and Documents*. Brooklyn, NY: Autonomedia, 2018, for more information.

⁹⁶ "WagesforHousework.pdf." Index of /archive/sexualhealth. 2006. Accessed May 09, 2019. <http://bcrw.barnard.edu/archive/sexualhealth/>. Wages for Housework Pamphlet, circa 1970s.

⁹⁷ "WagesforHousework.pdf." Index of /archive/sexualhealth. 2006. Accessed May 09, 2019. <http://bcrw.barnard.edu/archive/sexualhealth/>. Wages for Housework Pamphlet, circa 1970s.

Alongside publishing houses like 1974's Autonomedia/Semiotext(e) that put out French post structuralist theory books in the anarchist tradition, 1970s anarchism was looking to get back to the minds of New Yorkers not with a focus on Yippie or artsy ambition, but back into a worker's point of view once more.⁹⁸ These small groups that "...attempted to revive a labor-oriented libertarian socialism or council communism" would pump out these leaflets and pamphlets.⁹⁹ These would serve as the genesis for Punk's zine movement, and how anarchists of the late 20th and early 21st centuries would exchange views.

The hard work that people like Dolgoff and Day put in during the inter and post-war years paid off somewhat. By starting book clubs, and encouraging nonviolent direct action elsewhere, anarchists new and old can still observe and participate in the spread and education of their ideology around the city. However, times were changing once again, the Civil Rights movement was gaining full steam around the country, and New York's provincial radical movement had to concede the of Civil Rights movement was bigger than their own. Anarchists joined civil rights folks down south to promote voting rights for African Americans. Anarchist affinity groups like Up Against The Wall Motherfucker (and its magazine counterpart *Black Mask*) would resurrect the direct action spirit by protesting the Lincoln Center. Student protesters shaking up an institution with anarchist values and ally-ships, and the birthing of small groups that would create a zine culture. New York's anarchism, once carried by Bohemians and Catholics, was, at the end of this era, about to be taken by squatters and Punks.

⁹⁸ Cornell, 295.

⁹⁹ Cornell, 291.

1980-2011- Chapter 4 Abstract-

This last chapter demonstrates New York's anarchism in the late 20th century, into the early 21st century, as one of lifestyle, and as facilitation of other issues. Mainly, through New York's burgeoning Punk Movement, and how anarchists were involved in Occupy Wall Street, it shows that their ideals still survive, and carry through to today.

Reagan, Bush Sr., Clinton, Bush Jr., Obama. Four presidents that have surely changed the course of American history significantly from 1981 to 2011. All four worked in a time when the nation was undergoing political party realignment, redefinitions of what government can and can't do, and considerations of what it meant to be a superpower at the end of the 20th century.

Through them we have seen military budgets increasing, social welfare budgets decreasing, social norms being ditched and being savored, and economies surging and crashing.

In New York, it was also a strange time. Thanks to organized labor, the city from the Second World War to the 1970s had strong tenant and rent control laws. Over half of co-op apartments were built with government assistance or were rent controlled.¹⁰⁰ However, the 1980s and 1990s presented the city with fiscal, racial, and filth crises under Koch, and a series of strict window breaking laws and a growing movement of gentrification in the five boroughs under Giuliani and Bloomberg.¹⁰¹ During this crazy time of hyper-privatization under the political umbrellas of neo-conservatism and neo-liberalism, what did the anarchists do?

The punks and squatters kept the ideals of anarchism alive in the music shows they played, and the places they, well, squatted. That punk movement would book shows in the run-down buildings and basements of New York's crumbling infrastructure, and enable squatting on the Lower East Side. Surely, the anarchists of this age don't resemble their immigrant ancestors from the century before. Anarchists of this time were trying to break through politics via cultural and lifestyle means. Anarchism was now a culture with a political movement, and not the other way around. A lifestyle, a tradition, not a stance.

But that is not to say these 30 years showed they had no teeth. Occupy Wall Street in the fall of 2011 would repopularize the ideals New York's anarchists had written and lectured about 100 years prior. A deep recession in the late 2000s gave leeway for people not just in the city,

¹⁰⁰ Starecheski, 66.

¹⁰¹ Look into Soffer, Jonathan M. Soffer's *Ed Koch and the Rebuilding of New York City (Columbia History of Urban Life)*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2010. And Wilbur R. Miller's *The Social History of Crime and Punishment in America: An Encyclopedia (5 Volume Set)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2012, for more information.

but all over the country, and arguably, the world, to reconsider the world they were living in. For the first time in possibly a hundred years, the eyes of the mainstream saw anarchism.

Punk music was the successor of the garage rock of the 1960s and early 1970s in the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia.¹⁰² With lyrics that railed on anti-establishment themes, drugs, sex and the constant critique of societal norms, subcultures from this music were born in the '80s. “The punk rock culture of the 1980s was not monolithic and in fact consisted of an array of different factions and subcultures, from the Mohawked apolitical chaos punks caricatured in the media to racist and anti-racist skinheads and, most influential in the squats, anarchist and DIY punk.”¹⁰³

¹⁰² Look into Legs McNeil and Gillian McCain’s *Please Kill Me: The Uncensored Oral History of Punk*. New York: Grove Press, 2016, for more information.

¹⁰³ Starecheski, P.61



Punk zines like this *Signs of Life* one were published and printed all throughout the city, succeeding the leaflets and pamphlets anarchists used before.¹⁰⁴

Vast and varied, in New York City the music was found in bands like Choking Victim, Bad Brains, and Meruder. They ran on “Do-It-Yourself” ethics.¹⁰⁵ In other words, you don’t need

¹⁰⁴ Sabater, Dan. "NYC Political Punk Zines 1985-1991." NYC Political Punk Zines 1985-1991. February 13, 2013. Accessed May 09, 2019. <http://signs-of-life-nyc.blogspot.com/2013/02/nyc-political-punk-zines-1985-1991-by.html>

¹⁰⁵ Moran, Ian P. "Punk: The Do-It-Yourself Subculture." *Social Sciences Journal* 10, no. 1 (2010). Accessed May 12, 2019. https://repository.wcsu.edu/ssj/vol10/iss1/13/?utm_source=repository.wcsu.edu/ssj/vol10/iss1/13&utm_medium=PDF&utm_campaign=PDFCoverPages.

Provided by Western Connecticut State University.

a venture capitalist to fund your next record or project, you don't need a middleman to promote shows, or a guitar teacher to teach you advanced modal inversions or voicings. You can do it yourself. "...DIY punks brought elaborate tools for creating noncommodified culture, from pirate radio to self-published zines and independently distributed music, to the squats. They also brought skills in self-organization, crucial in the relatively lawless world of the squats in which residents had to work together effectively to control and renovate their spaces or else lose them to junkies or fire."¹⁰⁶

The squatters, in turn, took those punk values and put them into housing needs. When New York was crumbling, and middle and upper-class citizens were moving to the suburbs, punks and others like them simply started living in the abandoned, empty buildings the city couldn't afford to maintain. Simply find an abandoned building, and live in it like it was your own home. Repair and take care of it on your own dime and with your fellow squatters, as happened to a building named Casa del Sol on Columbus Avenue between 108th and 109th streets.¹⁰⁷ This punk and squatting culture, based on anti-establishment and anti-state themes in a time of major crime-busting, racial tensions, and poverty, would keep anarchism alive in a more lifestyle-means way, not so much as a hardcore, party-platforming-esque, ideology from decades before. It still continues to this day in basements and buildings all over the city.¹⁰⁸

But arguably, the most important thing that would happen in New York City anarchism would come 11 years after the new millennium, after the world-changing events of 9/11. A great financial recession happened in 2008, due to an economic bubble bursting in the housing market

¹⁰⁶ Starecheski, P.61

¹⁰⁷ Starecheski, P.17

¹⁰⁸ My own experience. As a musician, I have been performing and visiting various punk show spaces since 2014. To reveal any specific locations, or dates, to the public or academic sphere is not be accepted by this community.

that was caused by huge investment in subprime mortgages. People lost their jobs, their livelihoods, and saw that the banks that caused so much their grief, were bailed out the end of the tenure of George W. Bush on October 3, 2008.¹⁰⁹

The bailout gave people all over the country the sense that things in America really only worked for the white-collared man on Wall Street, and not the working single mother in Iowa, or the middle-class African-American family in Baltimore. Anarchists in New York knew about this and decided to help facilitate the Occupy Wall Street movement in the fall of 2011. Created by a Canadian activist group called Adbusters, Occupy Wall Street not only brought attention to the larger question of American wealth inequality, but also repopularized anarchists and their tactics via mainstream media coverage, even though for the anarchists that were interviewed, the question of whether Occupy was effective for them, is still up for debate.

When the initial call to action by a general assembly organized by Adbusters in the midsummer and the initial sit-in and takeover of Zuccotti Park happened on September 17, 2011, no one really knew how it was going to function.¹¹⁰ Did this huge group of people, that the growing number of television cameras were showing, know what they were doing? How to organize?

Zuccotti Park was selected as one of the few privately held public spaces in the city and was available 24 hours a day.¹¹¹ Anarchists set the format of the general assembly, with direct

¹⁰⁹ Look at Gretchen Morgenson, and Joshua Rosner. *Reckless Endangerment: How Outsized Ambition, Greed, and Corruption Led to Economic Armageddon*. New York: Times Books, Henry Holt and Company, 2011, for more information.

¹¹⁰ Nathan Schneider. *Thank You, Anarchy: Notes from the Occupy Apocalypse*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013. 16.

¹¹¹ Heather Gautney. "Anarchism in Occupy Wall Street." In *Radical Gotham: Anarchism in New York City from Schwab's Saloon to Occupy Wall Street*. Chicago, Ill: Univ. of Illinois Press, 2017. Edited by Tom Goyens. 225.

voting and initiatives put in place. However, they didn't control everything. David Graeber, anthropologist and the anarchist facilitator said, "The anarchist scene in New York had been very fragmented. The insurrectionists versus the SDS people--there'd been all these splits. It had become a little dysfunctional. The New York scene was fucked up, to be perfectly honest...." Real hardcore, insurrectionist anarchists were at the scene, he said, but there were more "small-a" anarchists, who just wanted to see the assemblies work. "I don't feel any need to work in groups that are made up exclusively or mainly of anarchists," Graeber said, "as long as they operate on anarchist principles."¹¹²

The assemblies were long and tiring, going as long as 4 hours. They decided anything and everything the occupiers wanted to do, and what not to do.¹¹³ A People's Library was established to give, donate, and share free books in the park, and a community kitchen to feed the hundreds of protesters was placed on the grounds as well.¹¹⁴ News media was all over it. *CNN*, *CBS*, the *New York Times* documented, and sometimes poked fun at the spectacle of a huge groups of people from undoubtedly different backgrounds and political leanings to say one thing: Enough was enough.^{115 116 117} They thought that 99% of the American population gets none of the Federal support that the top 1% does: tax breaks and cuts to billionaires and big businesses, gave underpaid, long work-hour jobs to both young and old, to make even more profit.

¹¹² Schneider, 13-14.

¹¹³ Schneider, 13.

¹¹⁴ Gautney, 228.

¹¹⁵ Jason Kessler and Michael Martinez. "Wall Street Protests Grow after Unions' Endorsement - CNNPolitics." *CNN*. October 05, 2011. Accessed May 09, 2019. <https://www.cnn.com/2011/10/05/politics/occupy-wall-street/index.html>.

¹¹⁶ Brian Montopoli. "Occupy Wall Street: More Popular than You Think." *CBS News*. October 13, 2011. Accessed May 09, 2019. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/occupy-wall-street-more-popular-than-you-think/>.

¹¹⁷ Brian Stelter. "A News Story Is Growing With 'Occupy' Protests." *The New York Times*. October 13, 2011. Accessed May 09, 2019. <https://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/13/us/occupy-wall-street-protests-a-growing-news-story.html>.

The occupation at Zuccotti Park would end in November of 2011 by the NYPD citing sanitation concerns.¹¹⁸ It had inspired numerous other occupations throughout the country, in places like Seattle and Oakland.¹¹⁹ ¹²⁰ The anarchists had facilitate a change in discourse throughout the country. Thanks to them, the average Joe now considered critiquing the economic system their government lived and prospered on: Capitalism.

Looking back at it, some of the former anarchists feel like what happened at Zuccotti Park failed to go far enough. However, Occupy Wall Street created an “Occupy” culture in the mainstream, “...spurring hundreds if not thousands of self-organized groups, Internet memes, websites, and actions.” Like “Occupy Harlem”, which occupied a boiler room of a rundown building, or “Occupy Colleges”, in which public university students protest budget cuts and austerity measurements to starve off education privatization.¹²¹

Christopher Key, an anarchist journalist, and facilitator, was there and said that for people who it was their first time organizing and radicalizing it was a success, but it failed for his fellow anarchists who went off to splinter groups, doing their own organizing. “I stopped being able to understand my own god damn movement,” Key said. He also felt that there was an “overall lack of racial self-analysis.” He doesn’t think it likely that the Black Lives Matter movement was an offshoot. “Maybe it was a reaction to saying, ‘This is what we would do instead’, but yeah,” Key said, “Occupy Wall Street was super white. It was super fucking white.”¹²²

¹¹⁸ Dashiell Bennett. "The NYPD Emptied Zuccotti Park in the Middle of the Night." *The Atlantic*. October 30, 2013. Accessed May 12, 2019. <https://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2011/11/nypd-empties-zuccotti-park-middle-night/335487/>.

¹¹⁹ T.J Winick. "Occupy Wall Street Protesters: We Are Americans." *ABC News*. October 02, 2011. Accessed May 09, 2019. <https://abcnews.go.com/US/occupy-wall-street-protesters-americans/story?id=14652698>.

¹²⁰ Schneider, 124.

¹²¹ Gautney, 228.

¹²² Christopher Key(Journalist), interviewed by Zack Daniel Schiavetta at Zucotti Park, New York City, October 10, 2018.

Anna Cole, a costume designer who attended the protest, still very much thinks positively about the event. It connected her to a network of activists she is still in touch with, and still conducts protests with to this day. “[Occupy] changed how things are talked about,” Cole said. “Now we can say that Capitalism isn’t a problem without sounding like a conspiracy nut. Like it made some of these things a lot more mainstream.”¹²³

Yet Marisa Holmes, an anarchist filmmaker and another facilitator who documented her experiences at Occupy in a film titled *All Day All Week: An Occupy Wall Street Story*, was disappointed in Occupy’s outcome. Because there were more than just anarchists at the protest, she thought the true motives of Occupy were ignored or erased. “I think a lot of people assume that Bernie Sanders is somehow like the legacy of Occupy Wall Street,” Holmes said, “because there’s a concerted effort by social media strategists from the Sanders campaign to make that conclusion, and a lot of battles are waged on that.” All of that anarchist hard work, preaching about wealth inequality, and hoping, at least what Holmes wanted, a genuine horizontal, participatory democracy movement, didn’t happen. “You don’t always get what you want,” she said.¹²⁴

From those Libertarians in the 1970s, Punks carried along the philosophy via their rough, pointed lyricism and the squatting, zine culture that continues today. They had mixed feelings about Occupy, but it was a widely popular movement, whose discourse on wealth and political inequality has influenced many into reading and practicing more radical forms of political activism today.

¹²³ Anna Cole (Costume Designer), interviewed by Zack Daniel Schiavetta at Burp Castle, New York City, October 17, 2018.

¹²⁴ Marisa Holmes (Filmmaker), interviewed by Zack Daniel Schiavetta at The Outpost, Brooklyn, New York City, December 19, 2018.

CONCLUSION

For 100 years New York City has a community of people who wanted to see an entire system, a government, be completely removed in order to create what they think is a happier, safer and more successful future; one that prided community over authoritative power; one that prided protest and speaking out rather than sitting down and shutting up. But these people, these anarchists, what did they do to survive in one of the most powerful cities in the world?

As we saw, they began as immigrants, in the aftermath of the death of a President, escaping from the Russian czar, working in harsh factories in the city. Some of their most famous proponents, like Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman, would do speaking tours and go further to bomb and attempt to assassinate the bankers that they thought profited off of the system that so damaged them. The schools they built, the voice they had, all disappeared with the Red Scare. Their school of thought, anarchism, survived through the Great Depression, the Second World War, and the 1950s through the efforts of people like Sam Dolgoff who wrote and started book clubs, and Dorothy Day who promoted the word of God. Their movement would then slowly evolved into an artsy, culturally edgy phase with Up Against the Wall Motherfucker, the Yippie movement, and huge protests at an Ivy League school. Afterward, a new genre of music would promote anarchism via the songs, the squatting in abandoned buildings, and the “Do-It-Yourself” ethic that continues to this day. Finally, up to the most recent 2011 event, Occupy Wall Street, a movement that was facilitated by anarchists, probably the most well-publicized thing they have been connected with in decades.

In a sense, if there's anything to take away from these 100 years, it should be to say that Anarchists, especially in the city of New York, should be studied and looked at closely. This thesis began with a meeting at an Anarchist space, the Metropolitan Anarchist Coordinating Council, in September 2018. In other words, these people are still around, we must learn from their history. In one of the most powerful cities in the world, they were a group of people that resisted, and have tried to destroy that sense of power.

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