

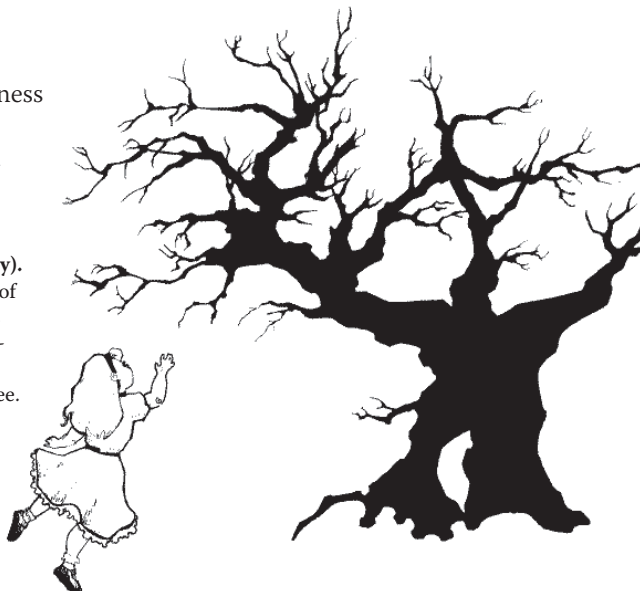


## BURNING THE ANARCHIST BIBLE

*cynical poetry for those fed up with dogma*

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### INTRODUCTION FROM THE PUBLISHER

MOST OF THE PEOPLE I KNOW, MYSELF INCLUDED, CRINGE AT THE WORD “poetry”. Most of the anarchists I know, myself included, cringe when someone says something like “I’m so fed up with this P.C. culture.” And yet, most of the anarchists I know *do* know that something is wrong with anarchist culture: we have allowed ourselves to be more concerned with the specifics of language than confronting individual acts of oppression. In a very real sense, we have often abandoned the anarchist practice of taking each instance as its own unique event to hide behind the safety of codified rules.

The poet we have published herein was frustrated to the point of burn-out by the instances he saw time and time again, and wrote in retaliation. A few years went by; eventually he calmed down and started talking to us anarcho types again. Our aim in publishing his work is not to lambast our fellow anarchists, but to provide precautionary warnings.

### THE ANARCHIST BIBLE (EXCERPT)

#### *the book of politics*

- 1— all social ills are, at their root, caused by hierarchy.
- 2— all hierarchy is unnatural to human nature.
- 3— hierarchy was created by greed, 10,000 years ago during the agricultural revolution.
- 4— before agriculture, all humans enjoyed an idyllic, anarchist, and egalitarian existence.
- 5— government is an inherently hierarchical institution.
- 6— capitalism is an inherently hierarchical institution.
- 7— the goal of anarchists is to achieve peace and equality.
- 8— it is only through the abolition of government and capitalism that peace and equality can be reached.
- 9— any political actions that do not actively further the abolition of the state reinforce the state.
- 10— as far as non-hierarchical, non-reformist actions that directly undermine or attack the state and capitalism while maintaining a respectful attitude to social concerns (such as racism, sexism, homophobia, ableism and other forms of oppression) are concerned, a diversity of tactics is respected and encouraged.
- 11— all wars conducted by nation-states are unjust.
- 12— those who do not believe in the values rendered within this book are not necessarily evil people; they are uninformed and reasonably innocent. exceptions to this are as such:
  - a) the yuppie is not innocent; s/he is so consumed with consumptive greed as to be considered evil.
  - b) the pig (police officer) is not innocent; s/he is so driven by the desire to repress through violence that s/he is actually inhuman.
  - c) the politician is not innocent; s/he is so consumed by greed for political power that s/he is to be considered evil.
  - d) the corporate media journalist is not innocent; s/he consciously seeks to misguide “sheep” towards evil ends.
- 13— all violence against the above-mentioned exceptional categories is justified.
- 14— attempting to propose what is best for any group of people outside of your own gender, sex, class (as defined by your conditions as a child rather than your current social class), sexual orientation, race, color or creed (in this case, your creed is anarchist) is vanguardist and inherently authoritarian.
- 15— all anarchists work on the group consensus model.
- 16— if an anarchist does not adhere to the decisions made by the anarchist group, they are to be, at the very least, shunned.

**SEXIST**

in an old car on the way to the forest,  
the forest we all agreed ought not be cut,  
the discussion turned to poetry.

Bukowski was a sexist, I hear,  
and its true that he flung words like  
bitch  
around.

but his poetry has done a lot for me  
or at least driven me to drink,  
and I rose to his defense.  
he didn't hate women in particular,  
I claimed  
(perhaps mistakenly),  
he hated people.

but Bukowski was a sexist  
and I needed to stop reading him.

these people, their dogma  
I don't know where they came from,  
or how to define them.  
they don't even have a word for what they want,  
but I hope they find one soon  
and leave "anarchy" well enough  
alone.

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## DISCLAIMERS

I've heard it said before  
by people  
you know, "passionate" people  
that it is absolutely best  
to never disclaim your speech.

If I want to say  
"this poem is shit,"

then I had best not say  
"I understand why you wrote this poem  
and I think that it has redeeming  
qualities,"  
beforehand.

because I might undermine my "passion."

and certainly, it can be frustrating  
talking to some people  
who play politics with every  
word  
they use.

but sometimes you need to disclaim.  
take this zine:  
I love most anarchists  
I hate most poetry  
and yet herein I present you with poetry  
that disparages anarchists.

so to disclaim:  
I hate oppression as much as the next  
straight white 20-something male anarchist who was raised  
middle class in the USA  
and by that I mean, I hate it a lot.

## SPECIESIST

there was a campfire in the woods, of course  
and we soberly plotted authority's demise.

I don't know who it was who suggested that  
every fast food joint should burn.

the woodfire crackled with joy and  
wise young heads nodded.

I was old at 21 -  
I suggested that ideally one would be prepared  
to feed the family of the displaced cashiers  
and fry cooks  
until they found other jobs.

the woodfire sputtered its disdain and silence  
or disbelief gathered in the faces around me.

they taught me that concern for humanity  
is tantamount to treason  
and for voicing this opinion  
I was speciesist.

## SEXUAL ASSAULTER

he had an act, yes.  
he was good at it.  
a sob story is a great way  
to get into a yuppies wallet  
or a person's pants.

and it's really not okay.

there were a few score of us  
having all kinds of sex in that squat  
but he went about it wrong.  
there was consent, this isn't the question.

a week into this questionable fling  
she touched him as he said no  
in a clear, articulate and repeated way:  
no, he did not want to be touched there  
and she kept touching him.

the powers that ought-not-be came together  
and had him kicked out  
for his general sleaze and coercion.

the assault came to light.  
"although you may not want to hear this  
it is important to side completely  
with her.  
we are within a culture of patriarchy."

and so he left  
and she stayed  
and a powerful blow was struck that day  
against the patriarchy.

## RACIST

he was a big guy, chicano, bisexual  
nice as folks come  
didn't smoke but bummed for his friends,  
kill whitey patch on his knee.

he chuckled at a rape joke once  
and has been raped himself  
but people don't disclaim that  
when they painfully laugh.

so a white woman turns on him  
there is nothing funny about rape.

she calls him a straight white male  
who would therefore never have to deal with rape.  
the only word she got right was male.

he calls her sexist.  
she learns that he is chicano  
and her story changes.  
she explains that in the same way  
that he, chicano, couldn't be racist  
against her, white  
she, woman, couldn't be sexist against him,  
male.

"I was raised a racist," he replies,  
"by militant chicano seperatists."  
with her choice anti-racist views  
she had denied the struggles he had  
against his own internalized racial  
bigotry.

but that's okay, because later he became  
too racist against us good white folks  
or something  
and we had to kick him out.

## FEMINIST

she gave three men, crusty punks, a ride  
six hundred miles.  
of course, she bought all of the gas.  
of course, they didn't know how to drive.

"why do you own a car?" it was their refrain.

she played the radio and drove them  
most of the way up the west coast  
to their green anarchist gathering.

on the stereo, political rap.  
"if a woman ain't down, she can never  
really be your wife."

"turn that sexist shit off." it was their chorus.

"look, I am a woman, and it doesn't offend me."

sitting shotgun, one took the opportunity of  
turning that sexist shit off for her.  
"just because I am a man, doesn't mean  
I can't be a feminist."

## AUDIST

she was on the seat of the bike  
while I worked the pedals  
and this is probably as close as  
I will ever come to telling her how  
amazing she was and is.

playing the spoons three-four to  
my concertina on the street  
or reading Sherman Alexie aloud  
before we fell asleep.

but there she was on the seat of the bike,  
not 100lbs but with more anti-fascist brawls  
in her than me, she was brass knuckles and  
brown fists.

"I saw this sign," I began, and asked her  
what audism was.  
she didn't know, but conjectured it meant  
discrimination against the hearing impaired.  
surely, I argued, that was covered under ableism.

"ah!" she laughed, "are you claiming that  
those who can't hear are differently abled?  
let me off this bike, you audist!"

and so we collapsed into the grass and laughed  
and laughed.

## SAFER SPACE

no punk can turn down a dance party  
for some godforsaken reason  
so we pile six or seven plus a dog into the sedan  
and arrive prepared to talk our way out of donation.

the door makes something clear:

this house is a safer space -  
actions or language that  
perpetuate sexist, racist  
homophobic, transphobic,  
ableist, sizist, ageist or  
audist behavior will  
NOT be tolerated.

we enter to a Michael Jackson song  
"billy jean"  
Michael Jackson, the child molester.

we stand in line for the keg and  
Gravy Train comes on.  
"I go to the high school and find me a bitch  
a young virgin switch."

we take our beer back to the door  
and, marker in hand, add what the sign left off:

the music and its lyrics  
of course, are exempt.

let's just be honest with ourselves.

## HOMOPHOBE

years ago in high school  
I was no anarchist.  
I thought laws could solve the problems of oppression  
and I thought rules should curtail improper behavior.

we formed the gay-straight alliance  
to let everyone know that homophobia was going to stop.

one day a teacher taught us that fanny packs were for fags  
and I used to respect that teacher  
but I told him I didn't appreciate gay jokes.  
three other members of the gay-straight alliance  
who were in the class with me  
tried to turn invisible.

he told me that it wasn't serious.

I told him the law against queer discrimination  
in the public schools of our county.

his eyebrows dropped in anger  
his old broken hands wrung themselves  
"if you want someone to understand you  
or comply, the worst possible way is  
to quote law at them, to tell them  
what they can and cannot do."

I was silent and self-righteous at the time  
but he was right about law.

I still don't appreciate gay jokes.

## ABLEIST

six of us in a three bedroom glorified shack  
there wasn't much we didn't share  
food, germs or money.

we drove to the edge of town  
to pick him up.  
he was cute, and tough.  
tough like only a tranny boi  
hitchhiking alone with federal warrants can be.  
he came highly recommended as a  
house guest so we took him home.

seven of us in a three bedroom glorified shack.  
I drank orange juice straight from the bottle.  
our house guest was appalled  
he looked like maybe we just shot his dog.  
quickly, angrily he informed us  
that those with weakened immune systems  
(like those with AIDS, we presume)  
would be put in serious danger.

we are horrified  
we looked like maybe we just shot his dog  
I quickly ask "do you have a weakened  
immune system?"

"no, but your actions are ableist."

six of us in a three bedroom glorified shack,  
there wasn't much we didn't share.

## DATE-RAPIST

he raped my friend and he got away with it  
glib-motherfucker and quite the slam poet  
he knew exactly what to say  
the bastion of a community  
that won't miss these two travelers.

"if we call him out he won't be able to heal"  
but if you asked him to his face  
he would summon anguish and tell you  
exactly what you want to hear.  
his language is flawless  
his remorse a perfect wax statue.

the best rapists are lawyers, are politicians  
are glib-motherfucker slam poets.

oh god, please stop quoting at me.