

ANTI-PORN

Greetings Sisters;

In here pornography is widely read by prisoners, in particular, *Playboy* and *Playmate* and as a result it shall mean a long hard struggle to alter the situation.

Pornography is used as an opiate so to speak, I mean in the sense that such sexist material tends to make most prisoners passive and apathetic in respect to problems which are inherent in the prison system.

When all prisoners can overcome such trivial distractions then we shall begin to solve the contradictions of the system and the racism among ourselves. By using the term "trivial distractions," I do not mean to imply that sexism is trivial, on the contrary it is a crucial problem in the existing State to be overcome and eradicated. What I in fact mean by trivial distractions applies to the reading of sexist material by prisoners. Nor does the stoppage of reading such material imply an end to sexist attitudes, but it means that prisoners can start examining their relationships to women in this society!

Smash sexist attitudes and female exploitation now!
In Solidarity & Anarchy,
Ken,
Matsqui Prison, B.C.

extra-ordinary/creative activities I think you fail to compete for the attention of people who still feel very powerless. I don't think it would have hurt the pace or interest-value of the issue to have added some "news stories" (i.e. case studies) of some less glorious collective activity by women fighting male and state oppression. For example:

- the struggle inside a particular bank for unionizing tellers
- the mechanics of how Lumpen Jane inspired friends or co-workers to create a women's health collective
- how Helen X began to participate in the active feminist struggles around her, without unnecessarily destroying relationships with the men in her life

and so on.
Please keep up the good work, in surrection,
D.S. Moffatt
Quebec

FEMINIST SPARK

Open Road,

Your issue arrived just as I was trying to formulate and describe the connection of sexism to language and the institutionalization of sexism—in our governments, churches, ideologies. You sparked

People don't seem to realize that until the anarchist society exists they are not practicing anarchism. How can one practice anarchism in an authoritarian society?
Best wishes,
Robyn Miles
London, England

PICNIC MONEY

Dear Open Road,

Enclosed please find a check for \$100 from money raised at the Italian Anarchist picnic September 16, 1979 at Santa Theresa Park in San Jose.
Bob Scofield
Valjo, California

STUFF IT

Dear Comrades,

Georgia Sanger's article on privacy in Issue 10 was the sort of crap I never expected to read in an anarchist paper. How can you talk about taking control of one's life and abolishing privacy in the same breath?

What, after all, is privacy other than control over one's personal space and control of information

IVORY TOWER

*Hello Sisters,
I am sending you \$0 and
I am waiting for the next
issue. I've just come out
from my ivory tower.
Giving you
Lona
Montreal, Quebec*

SPANISH CONTACT

Dear friends:

This is a call to you, from Spain, and in Spain from Zaragoza.

We want to get contact with you to get your *Open Road*. We have got some from a friend living in Stockholm.

We are of CNT, and work for anarchy.
Our fraternal regards
I Berdie
Zaragoza, Spain

SQUAT 'ING

Dear people,

We have just seen *Open Road* #10 and there is a piece on squatting which contains a number of errors we would like to correct.

First, and most important, **Squatting was not made illegal** by the Criminal Law Act (wrongly termed the Criminal Trespass Act) or by any other legislation. This is a widely held misconception which was the subject of a campaign we organised last year entitled 'Squatting is still legal'. Briefly, the Act made squatting more difficult by enabling owners to dispossess squatters when the squatters are all out and by creating a number of criminal offences which can be used against trespassers. However, few people have been arrested under these laws as they refer only to very specific instances and it is their deterrent effect, aided by inaccurate articles such as yours, which is of primary importance.

There are not as many as 40,000 squatters. A more accurate figure would probably be 15-20,000 although an accurate assessment is impossible. Squatting was not widespread in the sixties as the present movement really only got going in 1969.

You were correct in asserting that local authorities refer many people to our service whose name you got slightly wrong. However, we do not function as an alternative housing agency nor would we want to if we could. Squatting, if it is to be successful, demands individual initiative as well as thorough organisation, and it is not our role to house people. We need information, addresses of empty houses, and pass on our experience but it is up to the individual or the group to take over the empty houses—except where this is really not possible.

Good luck with your paper which is refreshingly internationalist. Yours in solidarity,
Christian Wolmar for
Advisory Service for Squatters,
London, England

Roadside Notes

PRO-PORN

Dear Friends,

A fucking prisoner hasn't got a chance! If it's not the guards it's some half-ass group or other who feel tough enough and safe enough to do some home-grown dictating of their own. So how many of these anti-pornities have spent 5½ years locked up and forced to visit over a phone and through glass? A blanket denunciation of porn is like a blanket denunciation of anything—it's ignorant.

And did you ever wonder why prisons fought against letting prisoners receive porn for so many years? You can bet it wasn't because of deep feelings of solidarity with feminists. *I need porn* and if the only one who'll sell it to me is Larry Flint, then right fucking on to him. How many feminists would consider taking over his role and send prisoners some flicks to help fight the vicious sexual repression of prison?

Women who were serious would consider fighting both their exploitation and ours with real sexuality, but until then don't expect to guilt trip prisoners about being horny.
In the Pink
Joe Remiro
Represa, CA.

FEMINIST FOCUS

Dear Open Road,

Issue #10 was excellent.

Your women's issue came across very well—in fact the feminist focus seemed to provide cohesion, balance, and force without detracting from any other aspects of *OR*. Thank-you.

The balance of practice (news) and theory helps to make the mag a powerful political argument. However because so much of the news concentrates on spectacular/

many ideas. It is a wonderful contribution to Feminist scholarship. I especially enjoyed the "Coming Out" article. It captured for me many of the struggles I've seen and known.
Yours In the Bonds of Womanhood,
Christine Scholey
Lafayette, In.

ANARCHA-FEMINIST (SIC)

Dear Open Road Collective,

To read the article in *OR* #10 on anarchy-feminism makes me think that these women are living in some kind of horror-movie world where "isolation," "exploitation," and domination rule their lives!

It is a contradiction to call yourself an anarchy-feminist. Either you are an anarchist and believe in freedom for all or you are not. It is as simple as that.

The aware middle-class woman who allows herself to be put down by men should not call herself an anarchist. There is a considerable element of choice these days. The article itself points out the non-attendance at their groups of 'third world and working-class' women: 'This may be explained by the fact that these women were concerned with survival issues, since they were exploited as workers and as minorities!!'

The fact that women can spend time at these 'consciousness raising' groups isolated from men while there is work to be done brings seriously into question the anarchism in their feminism. Furthermore, the description of the activities of these anarchy-feminists in *Open Road* reeks more of the individualist, mystical type of anarchism advocated by some groups (could the Maharishi be a secret anarchist?) which is elitist and doesn't relate to the every-day world of the worker. To say that 'women often practice anarchism and don't know it' is the ultimate in confused thought.

about one's personal life? If one has no control over one's personal space, and can't decide who can or cannot enter it, and if one has no control over personal information, and can't decide who can or cannot know certain things about one, then one's life becomes subject to the grossest violations. Georgia talks about an anarchist community where members agreed to participate in each other's lives: "interfere" I would call it.

There are already too many people willing and eager to tell me how I should live my life. If anarchism means there are going to be more, I say "Stuff it!"
Yours sincerely,
Marshall Colman
London, England

SPIRITUALITY—YES

Hi,

Another issue of *Open Road* has come and generally I found it to be a tenth example of gung-ho journalism—Let's all pick up the banners and thump our chests again. It's like reading an anarchist version of the *People's Canada Daily News*. I suppose the style may be your version of agit-prop, i.e. of interest to people whom this type of material would not normally reach, but I wonder about the effectiveness of it.

I commend you for your bravery in printing the article on Spirituality, it's about time that someone in anarchist circles started talking about it. People have a lot of good reasons for being afraid of spirituality because of its connection with religion but a rational investigation will suggest quite strongly that there is more to this universe than can be accounted for by materialism. The linear, scientific modes of thinking are now being threatened from inside and outside their boundaries and will be completely overthrown when everything else is. Women's explorations into humanity's mythical prehistory are valuable in

spirituality so many modern radicals are preaching.

In the 19th century, anarchists and socialists rejected the legitimacy of the authorities of this earth and, therefore, rejected the concept of spirituality used to legitimate this authority.

Now in 1979 an anarchist paper is printing an article asking us to think that we need spiritual authorization for our revolutionary activity. I have to think that the writer of this article either has not had a hell of a lot of experience of material oppression (which itself is enough sanction for revolution) or does not have much faith in herself as an intelligent, material entity capable of organizing material data in a coherent way, thus making it necessary for her to turn to "spirit" to sanction her activity.

Come on! Let's wake up to the beauty of the human being as a material being in a material world who has evolved mental capacities capable of organizing a coherent picture of this material world, and, thus able to legitimize her/his activities in terms of material reality with no need to postulate the existence of an unprovable and unnecessary spiritual world. Our material selves and our material world as we experience it are all we need to legitimize anarchist revolution. Spirituality is only a degradation of the material universe.

In solidarity,
David DeVries
So. Holland, Ill.

Write to us at:

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Canada

