Without Borders or Limits

Without Borders or Limits: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Anarchist Studies

Edited by

Jorell A. Meléndez Badillo and Nathan J. Jun

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PREFACE

ANARCHIST STUDIES AFTER NAASN-III: WHERE ARE WE GOING?

JESSE COHN

Driving to the Canadian border in January 2011, headed for Toronto and NAASN-II with my friends Daniel and Susan, I was asked the purpose of our visit. "To attend an academic conference," I said, perhaps a little too briskly, because the guard in the booth pressed us: "On what subject?" "On anarchism," I said, affecting a casual tone. We were asked to pull over, and while the car was searched, a customs agent started grilling us: how did we know each other? Where were we staying? What were we going to be doing? Finally, I pulled out the conference program and showed him: "Look, I want to go to this guy's presentation—he's going to be talking about his *dissertation*..." It was like a magic spell, that word: *dissertation*. The agent relaxed visibly. "Oh, I see— you're just *studying* anarchism! You're not talking about *being* anarchists." "No," I lied, smiling, as if at a small, private joke. We were let through.

There are many, of course, for whom the very idea of an "anarchist conference" or "anarchist studies" *is* a joke (fig. 1), or an oxymoron at best. Probably most of these have never heard of the *Confederación Nacional del Trabajo* or Peoples' Global Action. Some who have never picked up a copy of David Graeber's *Debt* or Peter Kropotkin's *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution* may think of anarchism as anti-intellectual, as pure action (but not as cognitive or social activity). Some of us, for whom anarchism is, among other things, a way of *thinking otherwise*, are nonetheless skeptical about the notion of an "anarchist conference" or "anarchist studies" for quite other reasons. "Anarchist studies" can indeed sound like just another item in a long list of topics for dissertations—urban studies, women's studies, cultural studies, disability studies, science and technology studies, etc.—which begs the question: are we, in fact, *studying* it or *doing* it?

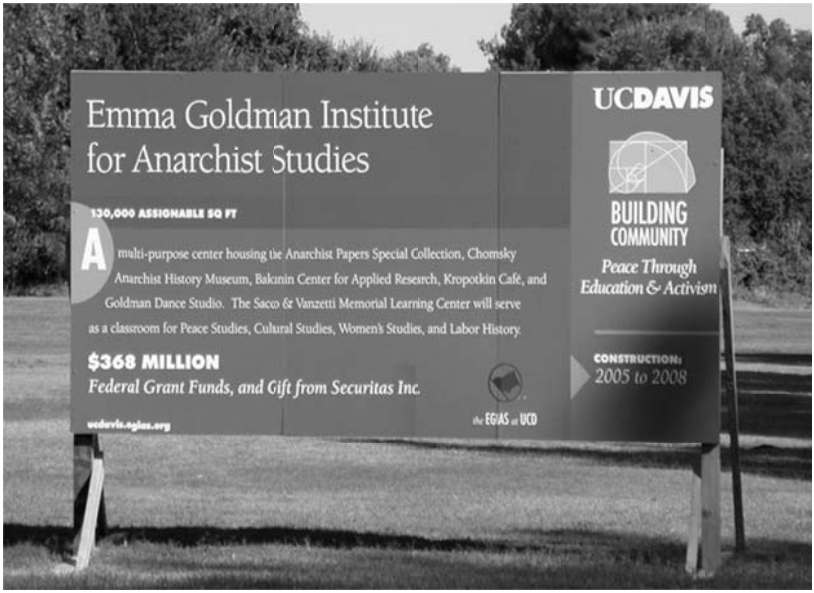

Fig. 1: Steve Lambert, *Emma Goldman Institute for Anarchist Studies*, 2005 (wood, inkjet print on adhesive vinyl; 7' x 10'). See http://visitsteve.com/made/emma/.

Of course, it is entirely possible to study and to do at the same time, to engage in a self-critical practice, but it is hard not to think with discomfort of the ways in which some radical movements have been academicized, textualized, neutralized, made safe. Sometimes that aura of safety has its tactical uses—like getting three people past a squad of paranoid border agents, say, or channeling institutional resources to popular and even subversive projects. The old asylum law in Greece, which used to make it illegal for police to come onto a university campus, might not have existed anywhere else, but in a manner of speaking, universities can and do act as a kind of refuge for radical projects that have been left few other social interstices to inhabit, a holdover from their historical roots as quasi-autonomous medieval guilds, resistant to the utilitarian logic of the marketplace.[1] Those of us with academic jobs might even think of "anarchist studies" as a kind of *perruque*, to borrow the French slang term: "the worker's own work disguised as work for his [or her] employer," as Michel de Certeau explains, like "a secretary's writing a love letter on 'company time.'"[2]

Sometimes, when I do research on anarchism on "company time" (and almost any block of my time can become, and often does become, "company time"), it does indeed feel like I am stealing that time to write love letters to Gustav Landauer, Voltairine de Cleyre, Ricardo Flores Magón, or Red Emma herself.

However, not all the people at Toronto or San Juan have that luxury (if that's what it is), and the sense of tension is not so easy to dispel. Unlike congresses (like the International Anarchist Congress of Amsterdam, 1907), gatherings (like the North American Anarchist Gathering in Lawrence, Kansas, 2002), or convergences (like last summer's Anarchist People of Color Convergence, or, more playfully, APOCalypse), *conferences* are pretty evidently a format that does not come from within the anarchist tradition. Panels of speakers sit behind a table, faced by ranks of politely seated spectators—isn't this set up pretty thoroughly imbricated with the kinds of hierarchy that make academia an extension of the State and capitalism?[3] Aren't we still part of a competition for academic capital, racking up lines on our CVs? What if a North American Anarchist Studies Network Conference *is* a terrible joke?

A good farce requires the actors to be unaware of their own actions. We are, at least, self-conscious—sometimes painfully so. From the very first meeting of the NAASN in Hartford, Connecticut in 2009, we have been questioning and debating the relationship between anarchist studies and academia. We have experimented with everything from the use of alternative spaces (a community center in Hartford, a union hall in Toronto, the beautiful *Ateneo Puertorriqueño* in San Juan) to alternative forms of seating (particularly the circle), confronting phenomena of oppression where they emerge (notably turning the closing session of NAASN-II into an intervention against sexism and rape). We have been trying to adopt some of the practices of facilitation commonly used in consensus-based organizing—e.g., "taking progressive stack" to disrupt the kinds of hierarchy and domination that routinely reproduce themselves in our spaces of discussion. We have hoped to encourage the participation of academics and non-academics alike, to break down the discipline imposed by scholarly "disciplines," and indeed, we have created spaces where, for a time, musicians and street medics, ethnographers and English professors, farmers and filmmakers, librarians and labor organizers can rub elbows. And in the process, we have built a sense of solidarity and conviviality unlike any I have found in the academy "proper."

This is not to say that we have miraculously resolved the contradictions of social life and cognition under capitalism, the State, sexism, or any of the other intersecting and overlapping systems of oppression that make it

so difficult for us to talk and listen and think together. For example: I decided that for my talk at NAASN-III, I would try to avoid reproducing the presentation format, and particularly the oral delivery of a paper that I find so awkward and alienating. My first wish was not to make a "presentation" at all, but to organize something like a skill-share (a common feature of anarchist convergences). There had been a well-attended and successful workshop on radical writing at NAASN-II, and much of my work as an anarchist scholar involves translating writings from French and Spanish into English—it's one of my favorite activities. Why not a workshop on translating texts?

Unfortunately, it was not to be—there wasn't enough interest, and perhaps it would have been difficult to slot into the space and time of the *Ateneo Puertorriqueño*, which seemed to favor a series of panels rather than concurrent sessions (eliminating the old problem of deciding which of two or twenty panels to attend). Instead, I opted to give an informal talk about the kinds of uses of academic high theory that I had been finding inspiring, rather than annoying, and helpful in illuminating the anarchist tradition ("Getting at Anarchist Theory via Anarchist Practices: Or, 'Political Thinking in the Streets'"). This worked fairly well, I thought; I was comfortable, the audience was responsive, and it felt more like an exchange than another academic performance. But this meant that when it came time to gather texts for this collection, I came up empty-handed. Fortunately for my CV, Jorell Meléndez was kind enough to ask me to write this preface, so in institutional terms, it will still "count." Otherwise, whatever I said, whatever we shared, would have failed to register in the University's great virtual ledger of merits and demerits.

The miraculous thing is that in spite of all of these difficulties and limitations, about once a year, the NAASN actually does manage to bring people of at least three language groups from all corners of this continent to do the things that the university is supposed to do—to have this open, exploratory, revivifying exchange of ideas—and to do it across all kinds of borders and boundaries, national, disciplinary, and otherwise.[4] We do this in a way that actually *is* self-critical and questioning and experimental, the things that scholarship is supposed to be. Apparently, we do it well enough to draw police attention on a regular basis, even if the academic aura has so far shielded us from too much hostility from that quarter. And as we repeat this performance, extending this little space of conversation across time—producing an "anarchist counterpublic," Kathy Ferguson would call it—we are slowly bringing into being something that we presupposed: something called "anarchist studies."[5]

In one sense, certainly, we're not inventing anything new. The Institute for Anarchist Studies has been working out of New York for nearly two decades now, and the UK-based journal *Anarchist Studies* has been around since 1993. More than half a century ago, you could find journals like *The University Libertarian* (Manchester, UK, 1955-1960) and *Etudes anarchistes: bulletin d'etudes et de critiques de la federation anarchiste* (Paris, 1948-1952). The origins of "anarchist studies" might be seen to melt back into the entire history of anarchist educational practice, with its *ateneos* and study circles, its Ferrer Schools and Hobo Colleges (Fig. 2).

Fig. 2: A meeting of a Hobo College in Chicago, date unknown.

In another sense... well, it is still early to say what we are doing that is new, but I am encouraged by at least a few tendencies that were on display at NAASN-III:

- *Reflexive history*. There is a sense that part of the point of anarchist studies is not just to add a new flavor variety to what is already on offer within the academy (the better to compete for academic capital), but really to learn from anarchism's past (the better to think about what its future possibilities might be and draw them out). We might be acting as some of the movement's informal archivists and strategists, one of its think tanks.

- *Theoretical bricolage*. At the same time, there is an ongoing

attempt to think about how some tools developed within the academy—bits of poststructuralism or ethnography or academicized feminism, queer activism, critical race theory, and Marxism—might be useful for rethinking anarchism.

- *Reverse reading*. And we don't stop at being theoretical magpies, expropriating bits of academic discourse for our own purposes; we are also drawing theoretical tools from the anarchist tradition to do scholarly work on a full spectrum of subjects, from anthropology to art history, from intellectual property to international relations, from economics to ethnography, from philosophy to pedagogy.[6] We read these subjects with a difference—sometimes a quiet difference, sometimes louder.

My sense of things is that if we keep adventuring along this path, we will not be passively incorporated into the (ever crumbling) academic structures that serve some of us as temporary lodgings. We have other places to go.

Notes

1. For the most romantic version of this argument, see Paul Goodman, *The Community of Scholars* (New York: Random House, 1962). For a highly depressing antidote to romanticism, see Geoffry D. White and Flannery C. Hauck, eds., *Campus, Inc*: *Corporate Power in the Ivory Tower* (Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 2000).
2. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1984), p. 26.
3. Let's face it—the Middle Ages were a long time ago, and what's left of the tradition of faculty self-management is pretty ceremonial, with real power having long since been absorbed into Administration. (Even Goodman, writing in 1962, could see this process in action.)
4. We even seem to manage to avoid much (if not all) of the sectarian infighting that is pretty endemic to anarchism—insurrectionalism versus platformism versus primitivism versus pacifism, etc., etc. This ought to strike anyone who has ever read the comment threads on anarchistnews.org as pretty remarkable.
5. Kathy E. Ferguson, *Emma Goldman: Political Thinking in the Streets* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2011), pp. 71-75.
6. However, we have yet to see a lot of developments in the natural sciences and technological fields—a crucial gap. Where are the hacker geniuses, the visionary physicists, the permaculture mavens and eco-architects?

INTRODUCTION

NATHAN JUN AND JORELL MELÉNDEZ

As a philosophical and political movement, anarchism has been expanding for two centuries and continues to grow and develop in a genuinely cosmopolitan manner around the world. In fact, as the Argentinean sociologist Christian Ferrer argues, anarchism may be considered, "after Christian evangelization and capitalist expansion, the most successful migratory experience in the history of the world."[1] At the same time, academic research on anarchism has long been viewed as irrelevant and obscure; it is only in the context of recent political events—events in which the decentralized organizational strategies advocated by anarchists throughout history have played a prominent role—that academics have begun to take a second look at anarchist theory and practice. Not surprisingly many if not most academic studies of anarchism have been carried out within conventional disciplinary boundaries. However, if we recognize anarchism as "a locally contextualized [but also] historically specific manifestation of a larger antiauthoritarian tradition,"[2] we would do well to heed George Woodcock's suggestion that "simplicity is, precisely, the first thing we need to avoid"[3] in studying anarchism. To the extent that conventional disciplinary methods can be and often are too "simple" for something as complex as anarchism, this book advocates the use of pluralistic, interdisciplinary approaches to the emerging field of anarchist studies.

"Anarchism," writes Peter Marshall, "is not only an inspiring idea but [also]… part of a broader historical movement"[4] which begins with the revolutions of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and continues through the French Commune in the 1870s, the Spanish Civil War in the 1930s, and the emergence of the New Left in the 1960s. More recently, one need look no further than the uprising of the *Ejercito Zapatista de Liberación Nacional*[5] in 1994, the Seattle anti-WTO protests in 1999, the Arab Spring in 2010, Occupy Wall Street and the Spanish *indignado* movement in 2011, and the Québec student protests in 2012 for confirmation of David Graeber's hypothesis that "anarchism is undergoing a veritable renaissance" and that "anarchist principles—autonomy, voluntary

association, self-organization, direct democracy, mutual aid—have become the basis for organizing new social movements from Karnataka to Buenos Aires."[6] For all this interest and enthusiasm, however, anarchist history has been largely overlooked and underappreciated, while anarchist theory and practice have been, and continue to be, widely misunderstood. The burgeoning field of anarchist studies has evolved in part to remedy this situation.

The vitality of contemporary anarchist studies is evidenced by the steady proliferation of organizations (e.g., the North American Anarchist Studies Network, the Anarchist Studies Network in the UK) and projects (e.g., the Anarchist Studies Initiative at the State University of New York at Cortland, Continuum Books' Contemporary Anarchist Studies series)—to say nothing of countless informal initiatives (e.g., Free Schools, Infoshops) around the world. This book seeks not only to provide a representative sample of the sort of work being done in contemporary anarchist studies, but also to contribute actively to the growth and development of the field. Although it is a product of conversations, debates, and presentations from the *3rd Annual North American Anarchist Studies Network Conference* (San Juan, Puerto Rico, 2012), it is not merely a record of proceedings. The chapters contained herein aim to demonstrate the dynamic, multifaceted, and interdisciplinary nature of contemporary anarchist studies and, in so doing, to promote and maintain dialogue between the different academic fields which comprise it.

With these ends in mind, we propose three concrete objectives for the present volume: first, to represent "anarchist studies" as a credible and independent field of intellectual inquiry; second, to situate anarchism within a broader transhistorical and transcultural antiauthoritarian tradition, as demonstrated by the wide range of topics discussed; and third, to formulate an approach to anarchist studies which, following Murray Bookchin's suggestion, can anchor "seemingly disparate social problems in an analysis of the underlying social relations: capitalism and hierarchical society"[7] and which, in the words of David Graeber, is not "based on the need to prove others' fundamental assumptions wrong…" but "to find particular projects which reinforce each other." The book is accordingly divided into five parts, each of which represents a dialogue between the chapters contained within them.

Part One, which is dedicated to philosophy and theory, attempts to place classical anarchism in conversation with contemporary anarchist theory. Dana Williams' contribution seeks to forge a link between the ideas of classical anarchist theorists (such as Proudhon and Kropotkin) and various pioneers in the field of sociology in order to develop a much-

needed anarchist approach to sociology. The section concludes with Jon Bekken's study of Kropotkin's ideas and their relevance to contemporary manifestations of anarchism.

Part Two is concerned with the historical analysis of anarchism *vis-à-vis* the formulation of new theoretical frameworks and methodologies. While focusing chiefly on the *fin-de-siècle*, the chapters in this section explore the diversity and cosmopolitanism of the classical anarchist movement as it existed in different geographical regions. The section begins with a study of identity construction within the Swiss anarchist movement with particular attention to print culture. In the next chapter, Puerto Rican anarchist discourse is analyzed through the lens of its literary production in order to demonstrate how anarchists created an unique radical narrative in the context of their immediate historical reality. Another chapter presents a novel methodology for outlining the networks created by the *Galleanisti* of New England. The final chapter of the section focuses on the anarchist aesthetic and its materialization through anarchist practices, including the creation of anarchist spaces.

Part Three highlights the enormous importance of anarchist aesthetics through analyses of its cultural and artistic production, as well as of the representation of anarchism in the media. The first chapter focuses on the representation of the body in propaganda posters during the Spanish Civil War. This is followed by a critique of Cornelius Cardew's book, *Stockhousen Serves Imperialism*, from the standpoint of anarchist epistemology. Another chapter discusses anarchist media in the United States and questions the effectiveness of the Internet as a way to spread ideas outside of the anarchist milieu. This is followed by a proposal to abolish copyrights along with suggested alternatives. The section concludes with an anthropological analysis of material culture inside contemporary anarchist circles and presents a theoretical model structured for this task.

Part Four focuses on the spiritual, religious, and the ethical. Two of the chapters will discuss spiritualism from the standpoint of the Puerto Rican anarchist and activist Luisa Capetillo. There is also a chapter on the relation between Christianity and anarchism. The section concludes with a chapter that develops an analysis of the capability of anarchism to create a coherent ethical and moral system based on complete individual freedom in a social context.

Part Five is dedicated to anarchist praxis in contemporary struggles. Three of the chapters in this section are concerned with animal liberation. Each articulates problems and critical appraisals of proposed solutions to these problems. Another chapter discusses pedagogical projects loosely

based on anarchist ideals. Another chapter looks at the influence of anarchist and libertarian ideas in the *Movimiento Socialista de Trabajadores*. The book concludes with a chapter examining the relation between anarchist theory and national liberation struggles.

Notes

1. Christian Ferrer, *Cabezas de tormenta* (Buenos Aires: Utopía Libertaria, 2004), p. 65. Our translation.
2. Maia Ramnath, *Decolonizing Anarchism* (Oakland, CA: AK Press, 2011), p. 258.
3. Quoted in Francisco José Cuevas Noa, *Anarquismo y educación: La propuesta sociopolítica de la pedagogía libertarian* (Madrid: Fundación de Estudios Libertarios Anselmo Lorenzo, 2003), p. 19. Our translation.
4. Peter Marshall, *Demanding the Impossible: A History of Anarchism* (Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2010), p. 671.
5. Colloquially known as the Zapatistas.
6. David Graeber, "Anarchism, Academia, and the Avant-Garde" in *Contemporary Anarchist Studies: An Introductory Anthology of Anarchy in the Academy*, ed. R. Amster, et al. (New York: Routledge, 2009), p. 105.
7. Murray Bookchin, *Anarchism, Marxism, and the Future of the Left: Interviews and Essays, 1993-1998* (Oakland, CA: AK Press, 1999) p. 161.

PART ONE:

THEORY AND PHILOSOPHY

Chapter One

A Society in Revolt or Under Analysis? Investigating the Dialogue between Nineteenth-Century Anarchists and Sociologists

Dana M. Williams

Unlike Marxism and feminism—originally, two non-sociological traditions that have now greatly influenced sociology—anarchism has yet to leave a comparable mark upon the field of sociology. Marxism and feminism have contributed to sociology's theoretical modeling power, topical focus, and even methodology. Indeed, it would be difficult to conceive of academic courses on contemporary sociological theory, social stratification, the family, or gender without explicit reference to these traditions. Anarchism's contributions to social theory have not—even abstractly—found their way into such courses, although it is not difficult to imagine how such a synthesis could begin. Why have Marxism and feminism been brought into the sociological canon (despite their generally un-scientific orientations), but not anarchism? The absence of anarchism within the discipline of sociology is an issue worthy of attention and deserving of an answer.

This chapter argues that anarchism and sociology have a more complicated history than most would initially assume and that, more specifically, anarchism has been excluded from academic sociology, to the detriment of the latter.

This thesis is explored by first considering the crisis and changes taking place within sociology, and the long-term context in which both anarchism and sociology have matured. To address this complicated history requires an in-depth exposition of how anarchists have viewed sociology and how sociologists have viewed anarchism. Despite the occasional compatibilities that emerge from this history, it is clear that professional sociology has held anarchism at "arm's length," excluding its influence from

the sociological canon. Much of this conflict seems to revolve around the nature and utility of the state: academic sociology and the state work to complement each other, while anarchism questions the very legitimacy of the state. This chapter concludes by re-writing the usual understanding of how anarchism and sociology relate to each other, suggesting a way forward for future theorizing and action.

I begin with the assumption that sociology can learn something important from anarchism. An anarchist-sociology theoretical synthesis could be as simple as incorporating anarchist thinkers into the sociological canon: for example, treating Mikhail Bakunin as a political sociologist, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon as an organizational sociologist, or Peter Kropotkin as a socio-biologist. Alternatively, anarchist concepts could be wedded to sociological notions; for example, "mutual aid" could be associated with Durkheim's understandings of solidarity or anarchist critiques of authority could appear alongside Weber's famous three-part typology. Anarchism and sociology could even be blended together into an anarchist-sociology that combines attributes from each tradition, creating something unique. As in the cases of Marxist or feminist sociology, an anarchist-sociology would not be strictly anarchist or strictly sociological, but instead greater than the sum of its parts.

As academic as all this sounds, the task of articulating an anarchist-sociology may have a rather pressing character, too. American sociology, in particular, has wracked itself with self-analysis and introspection over its professional mission (to serve "science," to serve "society," or to serve itself?). Much of this recent debate has fallen under the purview of "public sociology,"[1] but also under other guises, like "liberation sociology."[2] In all of these debates, many point out that not only should sociology aim to achieve a better, juster and egalitarian, and freer society, but that much of the discipline has *always* aimed to achieve this.[3] Consequently, the appeal of Marxism and feminism to sociologists is evident: both traditions are critical social philosophies that also share activist sensibilities. Here also lies the true relevance of anarchism to the discipline of sociology: anarchism is a radical praxis that was and still is an active force for social change. However, academia has resisted the incorporation of anarchism more strenuously than Marxism and feminism.[4] It is an appropriate moment in sociology's history to consider not only the substantial leaps in anarchist thinking in recent decades, but also the relevance of anarchism's activist-intellectual past (the focus of this chapter).

According to Kivisto, the placement of certain theories or thinkers within the sociological canon over the span of the discipline's history is based on a variety of factors. The "canon" itself is a social construction

that changes over time and inclusion within it can occur in a haphazard fashion. Even so, "it is clear that influential and well-positioned sociological elites play a key role in making these determinations, acting as brokers."[5] For a long time in sociology's history, the role of "professional sociology" or "pure sociology" has reigned supreme. An almost studious avoidance of the political consequences of sociological knowledge dominates the agendas of social research and college teaching alike. Not all sociologists were apolitical, but most had a pro-system and pro-state orientation. A minority of prominent critical voices can be found in the early years of sociology, but their words and political conclusions are usually muffled or ignored.[6] It is crucial to confront contention and to give critics and gadflies their fair say. In this respect, one of sociology's most important, immediate, and intimate traditions is anarchism.

At earlier periods in their respective histories, the philosophy of anarchism and the discipline of sociology have had strong repulsion, cross-fertilization, respect and critique, and overlap. Anarchists and sociologists underwent an intense period of interaction and undoubtedly influenced each other. Although anarchism and sociology have not arisen from the same exact root origins, they have influenced each other sporadically and via a few central "blood ties"—individuals for whom the boundaries between anarchist and sociologist were not as rigid. The purpose of this paper is to explore these historical connections and to tease out the cause for their contemporary, mutual avoidance.

For well over a century, anarchists have been routinely portrayed by the mass media—this was a particularly potent frame in the US—as violent deviants that crave chaos.[7] Curiously, this portrayal does not match the view most anarchists have of themselves. Instead, anarchists have generally claimed to prioritize self-management, solidarity, decentralization, and anti-authoritarianism,[8] and have not been vocal advocates of chaos, terrorism, or violence any more than adherents of a wide-range of other philosophies (including republicanism, fascism, socialism, neo-liberalism, etcetera). At heart, anarchism is a radical social philosophy and a political movement against the state, capitalism, party-led socialism, patriarchy, white supremacy, and other hierarchical institutions. Anarchists' self-perception has only rarely penetrated into official narratives about anarchism, whether in the media, popular opinion, or academia. But what of sociologists, who share a common interest with anarchists in "society"? Do sociologists see anarchists more accurately, and if so, what is their history together?

A history of anarchism's interaction with sociology must be an incomplete one. Some anarchists and sociologists were undoubtedly good

friends, while others surely cursed each other under their breath, but never did so on paper or within anyone else's earshot. Even still, a distinct picture emerges from the written, historical record: anarchists and sociologists have had more serious things to say to and about each other than has been previously assumed by scholars of either tradition. This chapter makes the case for the need to direct more attention toward these two groups of social thinkers and their mutual evolution.

Before unearthing an "anarchist-sociology" history, it is crucial to place anarchism and sociology in their appropriate contexts. From the perspective of its adherents, anarchism is a radical philosophy with an orientation towards prefiguration and social transformation. To its practitioners, sociology is an expansive science, with a preference towards critical thinking about society. Sociology's focus on the amelioration of social problems was removed from the discipline (and transplanted to the newly-formed field of social work) by the early 1900s, at which point it became more conservative and reformist.[9] Needless to say, while both anarchism and sociology were and are concerned with "society," the former is a philosophy and social movement premised upon revolutionary praxis, while the latter is best characterized as an academic discipline that has a scientific and institutionalized epistemology and ontology. However, this "objective" summary of each tradition overlooks incredible amounts of subjectivity originating from one or the other. A given anarchist's (or sociologist's) perceptions of the other are just as likely to be inaccurate as accurate, uninformed as informed, conventional as unconventional, or even boring as opposed to interesting in respect to this chapter's central question.[10]

Even given their different social spaces (the frontiers of radical change versus the academy), both anarchism and sociology still emerged at roughly the same time period in Enlightenment-era Europe. All the accompanying phenomena and events of that time impacted anarchism and sociology (albeit differently), including classical liberalism, the democratic revolutions (especially the French Revolution), positivism, Darwinism, and the rise of industrialism out of feudalism.[11] Although separate from each other, anarchism and sociology developed during the same era of change. The most recent developments in sociology—the incorporation of Marxism and feminism—are constructive developments for a critical sociology, since they complement the desire of many sociologists for praxis and an activist-orientation. Crucially, the qualities that made Marx and feminist theory[12] attractive to Left-leaning sociologists is also present in anarchism.[13]

This chapter considers individuals who lived—but did not necessarily work exclusively—during the nineteenth century. This time period includes the early decades of each tradition (before anarchism was suppressed by the First Red Scare of 1919 and sociology became institutionalized). Many of the thinkers included herein wrote mainly in the twentieth century, even up to and beyond World War I, although they were all born during the nineteenth century. Having lived during the nineteenth century not only sets conditions for a bounded time-period, but also helps to encapsulate a particular era.[14] (See the Appendix for greater description of this chapter's methodology.)

The central analysis of the chapter is focused upon a direct comparison between both traditions: first, the anarchists' perceptions and interpretations of sociology, then the sociologists' view of anarchism. Based on these historical relationships, the reasons for the absence of anarchist theory and anarchists themselves from the sociological canon become readily apparent. Consequently, this paper demonstrates the potential for linking anarchism with sociology in diverse and fruitful ways; for example, the reinvigoration of radical practice, in which sociologically-minded anarchists and anarchist-inclined social scientists can pursue their shared goals of interpreting and transforming societies.

The Many Interactions of Anarchists and Sociologists

The mutual appraisals of anarchists and sociologists reflect a variety of opinions, ranging from hostility and critique to favorability. In some instances, anarchists and sociologists viewed the other with open hostility, considering the others and their ideas to be either incompatible with their own or reprehensible. Many more, however, sought to engage in a serious (and likely fair) critique of the other, seeing many things worthy of discussion. Some ideas of the other were agreeable, but others were not. In a few instances, there was warm appreciation for and favorable conclusions drawn about the other. In these cases, common ground or agreement was reached, and personal relationships even developed. The wide spectrum of opinion and interaction is readily apparent from the following examples. A noticeable ambiguity or sloppiness is sometimes on display from both anarchists and sociologists, who occasionally—in the case of the anarchists—conflate "sociology" with socialism or mere social analysis or—in the case of the sociologists—use "anarchism" to refer variously to a movement, an attitude, or disorder. These patterns of subjectivity are themselves revealing and will be discussed later.

The Anarchists Talk About Sociology

The main characteristics of sociology that repelled anarchists were related to what anarchists perceived as sociology's core assumptions. For example, Peter Kropotkin argued that sociology treats the state as a given, assuming that there is no world outside it (or at least no world worth knowing about).[15] As such, something that is in fact socially-constructed—like the all-pervasive and seemingly irreplaceable state—do not deserve such an easy critique from sociologists, but instead warrant a strenuous challenge. Thus Bakunin,[16] a collectivist and "father of anarchism," associated sociology with Marx and Engels (as did later sociologists, too), who Bakunin concluded did not see any inherent problems with the state.[17] Such criticisms underline an essential critique of state power, and the anarchists saw academia in general and sociology in particular as helping the state to exercise that power.[18]

Likewise, Alexander Berkman felt that sociologists tended to disregard the opinions and ideas of non-intellectuals. "Learned men have written big books, many of them on sociology, psychology, and many other 'ologies,' to tell you what you want, but no two of those books ever agree. And yet I think that you know very well without them what you want."[19] Of particular concern for Berkman was the tendency for individuals to get lost in sociology's analysis and for this to result in the normalization of the suffering of some individuals in society:

> And they have at last come to the conclusion that you, my friend, don't count at all. What's important, they say, is not you, but "the whole," all the people together. This "whole" they call "society," "the commonwealth," or "the State," and the wiseacres have actually decided that it makes no difference if you, the individual, are miserable so long as "society" is all right. Somehow they forget to explain how "society" or "the whole" can be all right if the single members of it are wretched.[20]

Berkman's critique is certainly directed at what today is called "structural functionalism," but his words can still find resonance in the social distance often desired by sociologists from individual people. These anarchist conclusions regarding sociology's desire to remain holistic and objective are best summed-up by the Italian electrician and revolutionary anarchist Errico Malatesta, who concluded that sociologists have no practical program for society and "are concerned only with establishing the truth. They seek knowledge, they are not seeking to do something," whereas anarchism, a non-science, was completely interested in programs and projects *for* society.[21] However, despite sociology's pretensions, the mystic anar-

chist Landauer stressed that it is not an "exact science" (a fact he was content with) and that something like "revolution" could not, thankfully, be studied via science.[22]

Auguste Comte, the coiner of the term "sociology," was considered an important figure by anarchists. The anarchist who most interacted with Comte was Proudhon, who attended an 1848 lecture by Comte on the "history of humanity." Although Proudhon praised parts of the lecture, he thought it was filled with "idle chatter and contradictions," called Comte a "crazy" "old driveller," and considered Comte's justifications of inequality to be "stupid."[23] A few years later, however, Comte approached Proudhon (and other leftists, including Auguste Blanqui) to join him in his positivist mission. The two thinkers had copies of their books sent to each other; they read each other's writings (although Proudhon doubted Comte would read his work), and carried on a long-distance correspondence. In order to attract Proudhon, Comte used flattery, praising Proudhon's spontaneity, verve, and originality. Proudhon both accepted the label "positivist" and rejected it at different times, but he remained consistently cynical about Comte's objectives. Comte's ideas about "cerebral hygiene" were ridiculous to Proudhon, and Proudhon criticized Comte's inaccessibility and writing style. More viciously, Proudhon referred to Comte as "the most pedantic of scholars, the poorest of philosophers, the dullest of socialists, the most intolerable of writers."[24] Both thought the other lacked a sufficiently scientific background, and it was clear that their relationship was a collision of substantial egos—although Comte, with his "cerebral hygiene" philosophy, was more adverse to fair dialogue than Proudhon. Still, there was a lot of overlap between the two thinkers: rejection of traditional religion, support of republicanism, sympathy for the working classes, interest in a more cooperative and decentralized society, and their general anti-feminism. When Comte died in 1857, Proudhon was the only contemporary thinker to attend the funeral.[25]

Bakunin was also a thorough reader of Comte; in fact, a biographer of Bakunin once claimed that Comte "was the chief intellectual influence on Bakunin's last decade."[26] Comte was considered by Bakunin to be "the true father of modern scientific anarchism."[27] McLaughlin points to a number of goals shared by both Bakunin and Comte, including the unification of scientific knowledge, the "recasting" of the European education system for the modern era, and their desire for successful social reorganization (i.e., Comte wanted a closure to revolution, while Bakunin—at least once becoming an anarchist—sought the non-closure of revolutionary action).

While anarchists tended to like Comte's scientific approach—for example, the Russian anarchist-count Leo Tolstoy thought sociology could be based upon biology as a "positive science" and thereby reveal the "laws of humanity"—many thought Comte took his positivism too far. Bakunin felt positivism was ultimately too deterministic and that it ruled out choice.[28] Even though the anarchist geographer Élisée Reclus taught at a positivist-influenced university and admired Comte's appreciation for history, he still did not like Comtean positivism.[29] What bothered anarchists most about positivism was Comte's elevation of sociology to a "religion of humanity."[30] Kropotkin considered Comte's "moral principle" to be too religious and concluded that Comte was requesting nothing short of "worship."[31] Kropotkin[32] also thought that sociology overlooked the regular and common mutual aid in people's private lives, since most mutual aid took place in friendships and families, and not in "public."[33] Consequently, the sociological conclusions of the time that considered inequality and competition to be "natural" phenomena or "laws" of humanity were wholly untested claims in Kropotkin's estimation. Such propositions were merely the "guesswork" of "middle-class sociology."[34]

An early sociologist commonly read by anarchists was Herbert Spencer. In fact, Spencer may have been one of the most widely read by nineteenth-century anarchists, including many famous figures like Emma Goldman,[35] Bartolomeo Vanzetti (and many other Italian anarchists),[36] Peter Kropotkin, and Benjamin Tucker. The work that put Spencer on the anarchists' radar was his essay "The Right to Ignore the State" (published in *Social Statistics*, 1851). In his appraisal of Spencer's early work, Kropotkin felt Spencer's writing contained many anarchist ideas.[37] This interpretation inspired Kropotkin (along with his brother) to translate Spencer's *Principles of Biology*, which is perhaps why Spencer later signed a petition that demanded Kropotkin's early release from prison after his conviction at Lyons in 1883.[38] Still, Kropotkin often disagreed personally with Spencer; he claimed that Spencer misunderstood both Darwin and mutual aid, and he argued that Spencer's social Darwinism (i.e., "survival of the fittest") was premised upon faulty method and reasoning.[39] For example, Kropotkin felt that Spencer misused the strategy of applying analogies to social life based on physical phenomenon, that he was Western-centric and unable to appreciate cultural diversity in other societies, and that he misinterpreted "the struggle for existence" to refer to competition *within* species as opposed to simply between species.[40]

Tucker, who was also influenced by Spencer and was one of the main distributors of Spencer's writings to American anarchists through his newspaper *Liberty*, still found Spencer's sociological implications to be