

Who we are: An Anarcho-Feminist Manifesto

Chicago Anarcho-Feminists

1971

We consider Anarcho-Feminism to be the ultimate and necessary radical stance at this time in world history, far more radical than any form of Marxism.

We believe that a Woman's Revolutionary Movement must not mimic, but destroy, all vestiges of the male-dominated power structure, the State itself – with its whole ancient and dismal apparatus of jails, armies, and armed robbery (taxation); with all its murder; with all of its grotesque and repressive legislation and military attempts, internal and external, to interfere with people's private lives and freely-chosen co-operative ventures.

The world obviously cannot survive many more decades of rule by gangs of armed males calling themselves governments. The situation is insane, ridiculous and even suicidal. Whatever its varying forms of justifications, the armed State is what is threatening all of our lives at present. The State, by its inherent nature, is really incapable of reform. True socialism, peace and plenty for all, can be achieved only by people themselves, not by representatives ready and able to turn guns on all who do not comply, with State directives. As to how we proceed against the pathological State structure, perhaps the best word is to outgrow rather than overthrow. This process entails, among other things, a tremendous thrust of education and communication among all peoples. The intelligence of womankind has at last been brought to bear on such oppressive male inventions as the church and the legal family; it must now be brought to re-evaluate the ultimate stronghold of male domination, the State.

While we recognise important differences in the rival systems, our analysis of the evils of the State must extend to both its communist and capitalist versions.

We intend to put to the test the concept of freedom of expression, which we trust will be incorporated in the ideology of the coming Socialist Sisterhood which is destined to play a determining role in the future of the race, if there really is to be a future.

We are all socialists. We refuse to give up this pre-Marxist term which has been used as a synonym by many anarchist thinkers. Another synonym for anarchism is libertarian socialism, as opposed to Statist and authoritarian varieties. Anarchism (from the Greek *anarchos* – without ruler) is the affirmation of human freedom and dignity expressed in a negative, cautionary term signifying that no person should rule or dominate another person by force or threat of force. Anarchism indicates what people should not do to one another. Socialism, on the other hand, means all the groovy things people can do and build together, once they are able to combine efforts and resources on the basis of common interest, rationality and creativity.

We love our Marxist sisters and all our sisters everywhere, and have no interest in disassociating ourselves from their constructive struggles. However, we reserve the right to criticise their politics when we feel that they are obsolete or irrelevant or inimical to the welfare of womankind.

As Anarcho-Feminists, we aspire to have the courage to question and challenge absolutely everything – including, when it proves necessary, our own assumptions.

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