

The Anarchist Library
Anti-Copyright



An Open Letter Concerning a Witch-Hunt

Wolfi Landstreicher

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Yesterday morning (Sunday, July 16, 2017), I received two emails from two different sources with a link to a diatribe on a web site called The Conjure House denouncing me because of the publishing house that published my translation of Stirner's *The Unique*. Had I not received these emails, I would have known nothing of this, because I choose to have a minimal relationship with the internet. The internet originated in military research. Its functioning makes it an ideal tool for police work: gathering, extracting, combining, twisting and inventing "information" that may have some relations to actual existence or not, but that can cast the appearance of "guilt" on whatever target one chooses. I assume from the start that everything that goes on the internet gets into the hands of cops of one sort or another, so when I do use the internet, I do it with care. After all, I do not want to accidentally incriminate myself, nor to accidentally snitch on someone else, whether to state cops or to the wannabe cops of political correctitude in anarchist circles (both self-incrimination and accidental snitching seem to be frequent occurrences in internet

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interactions). That is why in this statement, which I am writing so that others who choose to can post or republish this, the only names you will see are Kevin Slaughter, Underworld Amusements, Loompanics (because they are no longer in business), Dr. Bones and my own (at the end of this statement). No other names are relevant to what I have to say and these have already been made public in this situation. I'll start by putting forth the facts from my perspective:

I began working on my translation of Stirner's *The Unique and Its Property* shortly after finishing my translations of Stirner's *Critics* and *The Philosophical Reactionaries*. After some positive responses to these translations, I felt confident in my ability to do it. I had ideas about who I would like to publish *The Unique*, but made no agreement until it was pretty much finished. The person through whom I would most have liked to publish it had been having trouble getting money together to do his own projects, and there didn't seem to be any sign of an end to this lack of funds in sight, so I assumed that was not a possibility. If I didn't say this directly to him, my apologies to him for my lack of communication. Another anarchist publisher offered, and I considered it seriously (despite whatever differences we may have on certain things, I consider these people friends, and anyone saying otherwise is wrong and doesn't understand how I relate to people – and besides, it's the sort of thing NOT to say in public forums – so tales of “bad blood” are tall tales). But I had seen some of their books come out with major problems in layout and the like, and I didn't want that for this book. Apparently they had planned to have someone else do the layout and printing for this, but I somehow missed that (or forgot it) and that is my fault, and to them I also offer apologies for my unawareness/forgetfulness. But the concern about quality was what made me look for another publisher, even if it was a mistaken concern. I wanted to find a small anarchist press (not either of the bigger anarchist publishers who, in any case, weren't likely to be willing to print anything I was involved with) with the means to

cept to the extent that they embrace a categorical identity, whether through proclamation or through their choice of identifying symbols), and I recognize that any freedom that is not a mere abstraction has to rest in individual autonomy. In this sense, I encounter my worlds individualistically. I refuse to be ruled to the extent that I have the strength (and so also to rule, since all rulers are ruled by the system of ruling). In this sense, I encounter my worlds anarchistically. And I have no need for a god in my worlds. So in this sense I encounter my worlds atheistically.

I don't have time to waste any more on someone who is either a complete nitwit, utterly unaware of the significance of the symbols he displays and the methods he uses, or, as I strongly suspect, a crypto-stalinist half-wit trying to appear as an anarcho-communist-egoist. Dr. Bones is not a worthy foe, so he gets no more of my time. If I get around to it, I may also write the “declaration of independence from politics” I promised, but I am done with dealing with an ideological idiot's shit-slinging.

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the perfect medium for this sort of witch-hunting campaign, a sort of campaign that also feeds very well into the interests of the authorities. Ultimately, I know this will be a tempest in a teapot. Dr. Bones may choose to call me enemy, I choose to call him nothing but a dim-witted, crypto-stalinist fool (if you want to pass yourself off as an anarchist don't wear the symbols of a totalitarian state on your face) and be done with him.

Yesterday, in an email not intended for public viewing (though it apparently got posted on one public site), I said that I was going to drop out of public anarchist projects. I have since decided that would be the wrong way to deal with this. Dr. Bones is a pathetic bully, and I won't back down before such crap. I have seen certain things happen at anarchist book fairs and similar gatherings that show that the upholders of politically correct moralizing can be violent toward those who don't conform to their party line. So if I go to such gatherings, it will be with care (and with good friends who'll have my back). I will continue my other projects, and those with whom I have done projects can decide for themselves whether they are willing to continue to have me be involved with their projects. I know they will let me know (and some already have).

To end this, a bit of a declaration:

I have nothing but contempt for all racism and all racists, no matter who they are... I have nothing but contempt for all nationalism and all nationalists (and these days, that isn't political correct). I have nothing but contempt for all fascism and all fascists (including the red fascists who hide behind their hammer and sickle)... and I also have nothing but contempt for ALL political systems and those who uphold them: democracy and democrats, republics and republicans, socialism and socialists, communism and communists. And I will add in here, though it is technically not a "political" system: capitalism and capitalists.

I live my life for myself, creating it as I see fit to the extent of my capabilities. In this sense, I encounter my worlds egoistically. I relate to others as individuals, not in terms of categories (ex-

do a book of this size, but I wasn't aware of any others who had that capacity at that time (much later, I did learn of one other). And had I not missed the fact that the publishers mentioned above had planned to have it put together by an outside printer, I most likely would have gone with them. While pondering over where to publish, a friend of mine – whom I have known since the late 1980s, who had been active in the anarchist zine culture when I met him – gave me a suggestion. He had had a couple of egoist-related books published by Underworld Amusements (UA) and had made me gifts of those books. So I knew that they were well put-together, well-edited and well-printed. At that time, I went to the UA website. What I found that UA published itself were egoist, satanist, pessimist and vintage pornographic books. Their distribution also included anarchist books and some of what I can only call "in-your-face-outsider" books. I did not see a single book in the UA distro that was fascist, white supremacist or any such thing. In fact, their distro reminded me of the theoretical part of the Loompanics distro, a bit darker and more pessimistic, but parallel in many ways. For those unfamiliar with Loompanics, it was a publishing and distribution project started by a market anarchist in 1975 that continued until around 2006. During the 1980s and well into the 1990s, Loompanics helped facilitate a lot of the lively intense debates going on in the anarchist zine scene between different anarchist ideas. The similarity I saw between these projects and the number of anarchist titles UA carried led me to assume I was dealing with someone like the founder of Loompanics, and so I was willing to turn to UA, even though it wasn't my ideal. My friend connected me with Kevin Slaughter (hereafter, KS) through email. It is true that KS offered some monetary royalties (i.e., a percentage if books sold). Due to circumstances in my life (that are no one else's business) I cannot get paid in any official, trackable way for anything I do. I informed KS of this. I took KS's intention as to a desire to have the publishing relationship on a basis of mutuality, so I recommended that he give me books instead. He offered another alternative that would

include some money, but this should make it obvious that money was not my motivating factor. People who know me well already know this, because they know that I have been putting out publications for decades funded out of my very low income, and that I give most of them away, operating, to the extent that it actually works out, on mutuality (this is why I never ask my friends to pay for anything: their existence in my life is already a generous gift). UA's process of preparing the book was well on its way (layout, copy-editing, etc.) when I first heard from someone that KS might have connections with racist, right-wing, etc. movements. The way this message was worded, it seemed like a rumor. I know in the world of the internet and the tendency toward using police methods that the internet encourages, actually directly communicating with an individual about such rumors is considered old-fashioned. But that is what I did. I wrote KS a letter directly asking him about this and making it clear that I did not want to publish with a white supremacist, a white (or any other sort of) nationalist or any sort of bigot. His response was very clear and straightforward, and he said that he was not a white supremacist, a fascist or anything of that sort. Of course, I knew then and I know now that it was possible that he was lying. But someone I have known for nearly 30 years, and who has never been anything but contemptuous of bigots of all sorts, seemed to trust him. His distro, which, I would assume reflects the sorts of ideas he considers worth sharing with others, as I said, did not seem to include any fascist or racist material (I missed it due to relative ignorance, since, unlike antifa militants, I don't focus my life around fascism or racism or anything else that disgusts me). In fact, the only thing I had really expected to get much flack for was the vintage pornography on his site which was bound to offend some politically correct puritans. So that is my description of what went on with my decision about who to publish with. I offer my apologies to friends that I did not adequately communicate with about things relating to this, all of that is on me.

I still think that KS and UA are mainly Loompanics-like, but KS seems to have some friendliness toward certain right-wing and bigoted movements that I find contemptible, just as Dr. Bones seems to have some friendliness toward totalitarian left-wing movements (look at the scarf he wears in his website picture) that I find contemptible. So I am breaking off my long-distance interaction with KS. (I have never, to my knowledge had any contact with Dr. Bones). My anarchic and egoistic ways of encountering my worlds have always been anti-political, and I don't want to have anything to do with the shit-heap of politics of any sort or anyone who might pull me there, whether intentionally or not. I have told KS that I do not want him to do another edition of the Stirner translation nor to do another book that he offered to do of my material. I have told him not to send me anything more (books, etc.). I have also sent my files for the book to a several friends and publishers to spread as they see fit to encourage "pirate" editions. The break with KS will most likely also make me lose my friend of nearly 30 years, but that is that's how it goes sometimes.

However, Dr. Bones and his crypto-stalinist "communist-egoist" henchmen should not get it into their heads that they have won any victory. The Dr. has exposed himself for what he is. He clearly gets pleasure witch-hunting like the totalitarians whose symbols he proudly displays. He seems to know he doesn't have what it takes to take on the state, capitalism, cops, etc., so he decides instead to go for someone he knows makes very little use of the internet, and makes his attack through this medium. So I have to assume he's a coward as well as a bully. His use of innuendo, distortion, blatant lies (blended with bits of truth), cheap shots ("senility"? really? perhaps the good doctor should worry that some of his politically correct friends will call him out for his ageism... I just think it's absurdly funny coming from a halfwit) and barely-veiled death threats all fit in with his scarcely-hidden crypto-stalinism (wearing a bandana designed like the flag of the totalitarian marxist regime of the USSR is pretty telling). As I've said, the internet is