

# Anarchism



# Anarchy in the UK

Right ! NOW ! ha ha ha ha ha

I am the antichrist

I am an anarchist

Don't know what I want but

I know how to get it

I wanna destroy the passer by cos I

I wanna BE anarchy !

No dogs body

Anarchy for the U.K it's coming sometime and maybe

I give a wrong time stop a trafic line

your future dream is a shopping scheme cos I

I wanna BE anarchy !

In the city

How Many ways to get what you want

I use the best I use the rest

I use the enemy I use anarchy cos I

I wanna BE anarchy !

THE ONLY WAY TO BE !

Is this the M.P.L.A

Or is this the U.D.A

Or is this the I.R.A

I thought it was the U.K or just

another country

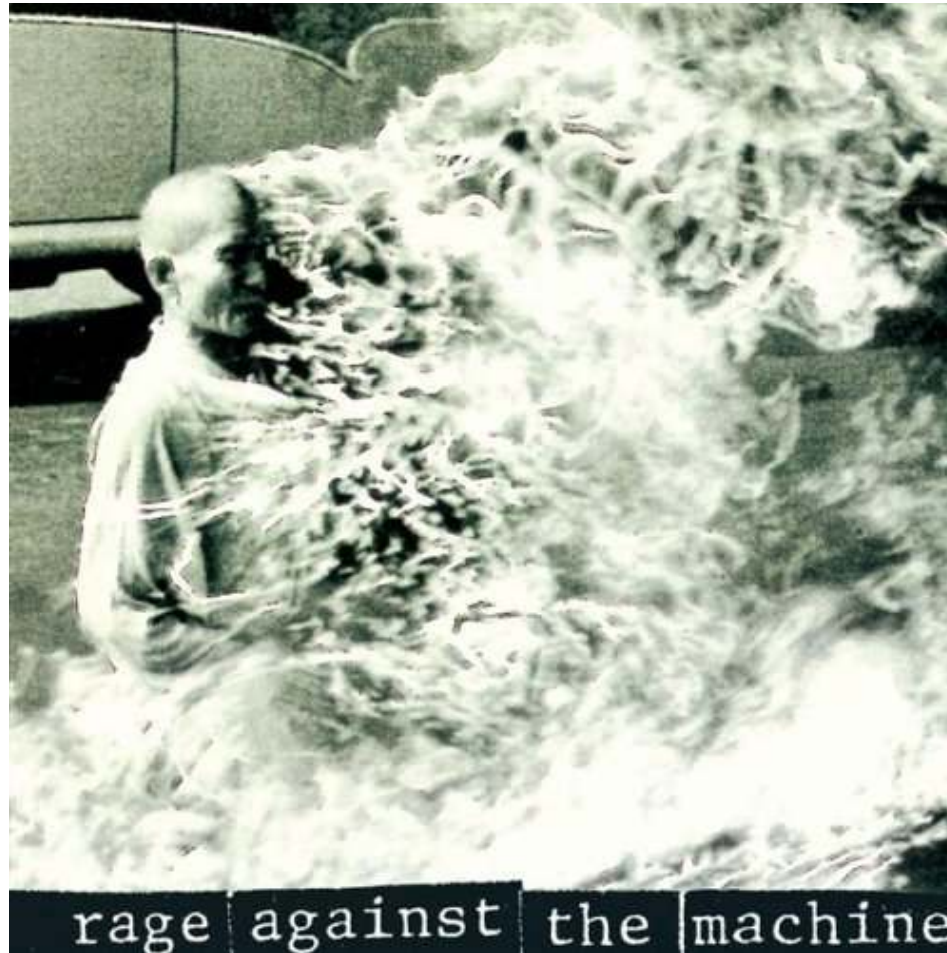
another council tenancy

I wanna be an anarchist

Oh what a name

DESTROY !

# Contemporary expressions



# Rage against the machine

Killing in the name of!

Some of those that work forces, are the same that burn crosses

Those who died are justified, for wearing the badge, they're the chosen whites

You justify those that died by wearing the badge, they're the chosen whites

And now you do what they told ya

And now you do what they told ya, now you're under control

I won't do what you tell me

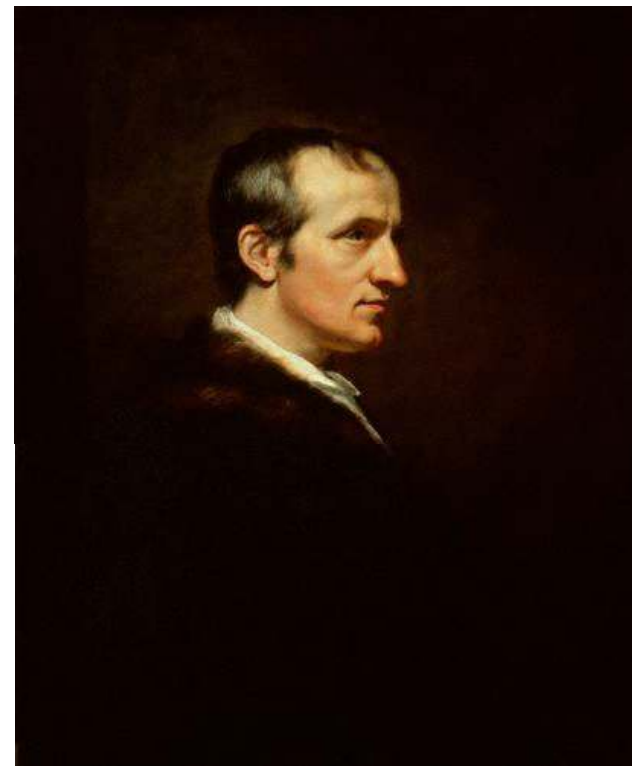
Uggh!

# What is Anarchism?

- *Anarchos* – Greek, meaning “without rulers”
- Anarchism is an umbrella term covering many ideological positions, though two distinct forms are commonly identified:
  - **collectivist anarchism**
  - **individualist anarchism** (often considered synonymous with Libertarianism)
- Origins may be found in Greek stoicism
- Referenced in the English Civil War – term of abuse used by Royalists
- Enlightenment thinkers saw it differently – viewed as a positive term by far-left extremists in the French revolution.
- Modern understanding formed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century

# Modern Anarchism – a few characters

- William Godwin (1756 – 1836) – response to the French Revolution & Edmund Burke’s Conservatism.
- NB Godwin was married to Mary Wollstonecraft and his daughter, also Mary, married Percy Shelley – becoming Mary Shelly!
- He agreed with Rousseau that man is corrupted by his social conditions. Removing the state would lead to self governance of pure reason and the eradication of vice.



Wot? No beard?!

# Michael Bakunin (1814-1876)

- **Bakunin** is widely regarded as the **founder** of anarchism as a distinct political body.
- He promoted a type of **collectivism** understood as “**self-governing communities of free individuals**”.
- This involved removal of the state and private ownership of the means of production, with salaries set democratically.
- Along with Karl Marx & Proudhon, he was a leading member of The International Workingmen’s Association (or The First International). Bakunin clashed with Marx & was expelled.
- His concerns over “The Vanguard of the Proletariat” proved well placed.



“...freedom can be created only by freedom, that is, by a universal rebellion on the part of the people and free organization of the toiling masses from the bottom up.”

# Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809-1865)

- **Proudhon** was the first to label himself an “anarchist”
- He attacked the right to property (“**property is theft**”), seeing it as the root of all conflict.
- He argued for “mutualism” – a cooperative system, based on a commitment to provide for needs rather than wants and leading to the means of production being controlled by the workers.
- He insisted that human beings must be allowed to creatively engage in their work, but must not materially benefit from the work of others.
- He admired small communities of craftsmen who managed their affairs through mutual cooperation. He was particularly impressed with Swiss villages.



“Whoever lays his hand on me to govern me is a usurper and tyrant, and I declare him my enemy.”

# Peter Kropotkin (1842-1921)

- **Kropotkin** reacted to Darwin, arguing that nature reveals that all animal species benefit from “**mutual aid**”. Those who readily cooperate are most likely to survive.
- He envisaged a type of **communitarianism** (anarcho-communism) where all members have shared ownership of material goods and meet to address issues of collective concern (using a type of direct democracy).
- He resisted the argument that laws promote positive behaviour, citing the ineffectiveness of the death penalty.
- He held a very positive diagnosis of human nature, believing our natural altruism would be our salvation:
- “No more laws! No more judges! Liberty, equality and practical human sympathy are the only effective barriers we can oppose to the anti-social instincts of certain among us.”



Winner of Gold Medal:  
Philosopher's beard category  
1890

# Human nature



- To develop a position on anarchism (or, indeed, any political ideology) you must first develop a position on human nature.
- Are we essentially selfish or naturally altruistic?
- Anarchism is, perhaps, the most optimistic political ideology. It often presents the idea that human beings are intrinsically moral creatures who define themselves in their liberty.

# Two perspectives

1. Anarchism attacks what the State does - the enslaving nature of the State



2. Anarchism asks on what basis the State may be justified. Is there any way that we can be held to have an obligation to the State?



# Problems with Anarchism

- The most damning indictment is that anarchist societies have always been very **short-lived**.
- Anarchism obviously places **excessive faith in human nature**. If communism has failed due to the failure of individuals to resist putting the common good before personal ambition, then how better placed is anarchism to allow the pursuit of self gratification?!
- The likes of Hobbes will claim that it only takes one corrupt soul to scupper the collectivist ideals of anarchism. Yet, the anarchist may respond by arguing that it is the state that corrupts individuals.
- Anarchist ideology **lacks clarity**. Often it appears to be little more than a hybrid formed out of socialist and liberal ideas.

# Don't we all need a little anarchy in our lives?!

- To imagine the abolishment of the state is perhaps a step too far, both in terms of possibility and desirability.
- Yet, some anarchistic sentiment is arguably necessary to combat 21<sup>st</sup> century neurosis:
- Obsessive about order and security
- Health and safety
- Unquestioning acceptance of the status quo
- Averse to risk taking - Stagnation?



# Beware the State!

