

Editor's Preface

Over the course of the past 150 years, “writers from all sides of the political spectrum” have consistently “ignored, maligned, ridiculed, abused, misunderstood, and misrepresented” anarchism,¹ characterizing it by turns as “destructive, violent, and nihilistic”;² “pathetic and ineffectual”;³ “puerile and absurd”;⁴ and “irresponsible, immature, and unrealistic.”⁵ Anarchists themselves, meanwhile, have been variously portrayed as “wild-eyed” fanatics and terrorists who “reject[t] everything but lac[k] any idea of how to replace it”;⁶ hopelessly romantic idealists who abjure the “present, evil world”⁷ and pine for a “mythical golden age”;⁸ proponents of “mindless action” who dismiss “all intellectual activity [as] distracting or even reactionary”;⁹ and harmless apolitical poseurs who “do nothing but contemplate their navels.”¹⁰ Under the best of circumstances they have been dismissed as hacks; under the worst they have been persecuted, beaten, jailed, and even murdered, their writings censored, their organizations violently repressed, their movements crushed.¹¹

Academics in particular have proven exceptionally antagonistic to anarchism, habitually treating it “with prejudicial incredulity, condescension, and even hostility ... beyond the normal ignorance of the over-specialized.”¹² Until recently, scholarly researchers have had precious little interest in, or regard

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- 1 B. Morris, *Anthropology, Ecology, and Anarchism: A Brian Morris Reader* (Oakland, Calif.: PM Press, 2014), 64; cf. P. McLaughlin, *Anarchism and Authority: A Philosophical Introduction to Classical Anarchism* (Aldershot, U.K.: Ashgate, 2007), 4–5.
 - 2 Morris, *Anthropology, Ecology, and Anarchism*, 64; S. Clark, *Living Without Domination: The Possibility of an Anarchist Utopia* (Aldershot, U.K.: Ashgate, 2012), 2.
 - 3 Clark, *Living Without Domination*, 2.
 - 4 P. Marshall, *Demanding the Impossible: A History of Anarchism* (Oakland, Calif.: PM Press 2010), xiv; cf. I. Horowitz, *The Anarchists* (New York: Dell, 1964), 603.
 - 5 Marshall, *Demanding the Impossible*, 14; cf. Clark, *Living Without Domination*, 4; J. Joll, *The Anarchists* (London: Routledge, 2013), 257.
 - 6 Clark, *Living Without Domination*, 2.
 - 7 E. Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1959), 57.
 - 8 Clark, *Living Without Domination*, 4; cf. Morris, *Anthropology, Ecology, and Anarchism*, 64–65; McLaughlin, *Anarchism and Authority*, 64.
 - 9 McLaughlin, *Anarchism and Authority*, 13.
 - 10 Morris, *Anthropology, Ecology, and Anarchism*, 65–66; cf. McLaughlin, 10–11; C. Honeywell, “Bridging the Gaps: Twentieth-Century Anglo-American Anarchist Thought,” in *The Bloomsbury Companion to Anarchism*, ed. R. Kinna (London: Bloomsbury, 2012), 112.
 - 11 N. Jun, *Anarchism and Political Modernity* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012), viii–ix.
 - 12 McLaughlin, *Anarchism and Authority*, 14.

for, anarchism under any description, while the few exceptions have almost invariably dismissed it as “irrational,”¹³ “ideologically incoherent,”¹⁴ and “theoretically nugatory”¹⁵—a “shallow creed”¹⁶ that lacks “philosophical rigour”¹⁷ or “anything like an adequate theoretical formulation.”¹⁸

All of this being said, there is widespread agreement at the time of this writing that anarchism's fortunes have improved dramatically—not just in intellectual circles, but also, and more importantly, in the wider context of global politics. This agreement is often articulated in terms of three general claims.

The first is that the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries witnessed a “remarkable resurgence” of anarchist or anarchist-inspired politics that began—or, at the very least, was first recognized—in the context of the anti-globalization movement of the late 1990s.¹⁹ Far from being an isolated and

13 Ibid., 170; cf. E. Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels*.

14 Honeywell, “Bridging the Gaps,” 112; cf. Joll, *The Anarchists*, 257; D. Miller, *Anarchism* (London: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1985), 3.

15 McLaughlin, *Anarchism and Authority*, 13.

16 Marshall, *Demanding the Impossible*, 663.

17 Ibid., xiv.

18 McLaughlin; *Anarchism and Authority*, 13; cf. Morris, *Anthropology, Ecology, and Anarchism*, 65.

19 J. Shantz, *Living Anarchy: Theory and Practice in Anarchist Movements* (Palo Alto, Calif: Academica Press, 2009), 31; cf. B. Epstein, “Anarchism and the Anti-Globalization Movement,” *Monthly Review* 53, no. 4 (Sept. 2001), <https://monthlyreview.org/2001/09/01/anarchism-and-the-anti-globalization-movement/>; D. Graeber, “The New Anarchists,” *New Left Review* 13 (2002): 61–73; G. Chesters, “Shape Shifting,” *Anarchist Studies* 11, no. 1 (2003): 42–65; S. Sheehan, *Anarchism* (London: Reaktion, 2003), 7–24; J. Purkis and J. Bowen, “Introduction: Why Anarchism Still Matters,” in *Changing Anarchism: Anarchist Theory and Practice in a Global Age*, eds. J. Purkis and J. Bowen (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 1–20; M. Rupert, “Anticapitalist Convergence?: Anarchism, Socialism, and the Global Justice Movement,” in *Rethinking Globalism*, ed. M. Steger (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 2004), 121–136; L. Farrer, “A Revolt to Live,” *Anarchist Studies* 14, no. 2 (2006): 131–155; B. Epstein and C. Dixon, “A Politics and a Sensibility: The Anarchist Current on the U.S. Left,” in *Toward a New Socialism*, eds. A. Anton and R. Schmitt (Lanham, Md. Lexington Books, 2007), 445–462; T. May, “Anarchism,” in *The Encyclopedia of Activism and Social Justice*, vol. 1, eds. G. Anderson and K. Herr (London: SAGE, 2007), 102; J. Juris, *Networking Futures: The Movements Against Corporate Globalization* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2008), 15–16; T. May, Introduction to *New Perspectives on Anarchism*, eds. N. Jun and S. Wahl (Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2010), 1–4; C. Milstein, *Anarchy and Its Aspirations* (Oakland, Calif.: AK Press, 2010), 29–30; F. Dupuis-Déri, “Anarchism,” in *The International Encyclopedia of Political Science*, vol. 1, eds. B. Badie, D. Berh-Schlosser, and L. Morlino (London: SAGE, 2011), 74–75; S. Evren, “Introduction: How New Anarchism Changed the World (of Opposition) After Seattle and Gave Birth to Post-Anarchism,” in *Post-Anarchism: A Reader*, eds. D. Rousselle and S. Evren (London: Pluto Press, 2011);

anomalous by-product of this movement, moreover, the “full-blown anarchist revival [that] reached critical mass around the turn of the Millennium”²⁰ has been widely identified as a major factor of its emergence as a distinctive and powerful political force. Both at the time and subsequently, the basic political commitments of this “new anarchism” were widely characterized as the movement’s principal “basis for organizing”²¹ and the source of its “common philosophy.”²²

The second claim is that this resurgence, contrary to the expectations of many, has continued to grow in strength and influence over the past two decades and, in so doing, has had far-reaching and transformative effects on political movements throughout the world.²³ As early as 2001 Barbara Epstein proposed that the anarchist-inspired movements of the time were poised to deal a *coup de grace* to “the traditional socialist left.”²⁴ Three years later, David Graeber noted that anarchism was “veritably exploding,” that “anarchist or anarchist-inspired movements [were] growing everywhere,” and that the “traditional anarchist principles—autonomy, voluntary, association, self-organization, mutual aid, direct democracy” that motivated and inspired the anti-globalization movement were “playing the same role in radical movements of all kinds everywhere.”²⁵ Since then the same kind of analysis has been applied to a diverse array of global political phenomena including the Arab Spring (2010–2012),²⁶ the global Occupy movement (2011–2012),²⁷

R. Amster, *Anarchism Today* (Santa Barbara, Calif.: Praeger, 2012), xix–xxviii; R. Sparrow, “Anarchism Since 1992,” in *A Companion to Contemporary Political Philosophy*, vol. 2, eds. R. Goodin, P. Pettit, and T. Pogge (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 282–284; A. Cornell, *Unruly Equality: U.S. Anarchism in the Twentieth Century* (Oakland, Calif.: University of California Press, 2016), 291–300.

- 20 U. Gordon: *Anarchy Alive! Anti-Authoritarian Politics from Practice to Theory* (London: Pluto Press, 2008), 5.
- 21 D. Graeber, *Fragments of an Anarchist Anthropology* (Chicago: Prickly Paradigm, 2004), 2.
- 22 L. Fernandez, *Policing Dissent: Social Control and the Anti-Globalization Movement* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2008), 51.
- 23 See C. Fominaya, *Social Movements and Globalization: How Protests, Occupations, and Uprisings Are Changing the World* (Basingstoke, U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), especially 71–78.
- 24 Epstein, “Anarchism and the Anti-Globalization Movement.”
- 25 Graeber, *Fragments of an Anarchist Anthropology*, 2.
- 26 See, for example, L. Galián, “New Modes of Collective Actions: The Reemergence of Anarchism in Egypt,” in *Contentious Politics in the Middle East: Popular Resistance and Marginalized Activism Beyond the Arab Uprisings*, ed. F. Gerges (Basingstoke, U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 351–372.
- 27 See, for example, M. Bray, *Translating Anarchy: The Anarchism of Occupy Wall Street* (Winchester, U.K.: Zero Books, 2013).

the *Indignados* movement in Spain (2011-present),²⁸ the Quebec student protests (2012),²⁹ and the *Nuit Debout* movement (2016).³⁰ It is in this context that anarchism has been described as “the most vibrant and exciting political movement of our time”³¹ and even as “the global revolutionary movement [of] the twenty-first century.”³²

The third claim is that anarchism has witnessed a corresponding “resurgence in the academy as a topic of cutting-edge scholarship and dynamic pedagogy.”³³ As Jeff Shantz notes by way of summary:

A glance across the academic landscape shows that in less than a decade ... there has been substantial growth in the number of people in academic positions who identify as anarchists. Indeed, it is probably safe to say that unlike any other time in history, the last ten years have seen anarchists carve out spaces in the halls of academia. This is especially true in terms of people pursuing graduate studies and those who have become members of faculty. Several anarchists have taken up positions in prominent, even so-called elite, universities.... The flourishing of anarchism in the academy is also reflected in other key markers of academic activity [including] academic articles focusing on various aspects of anarchist theory and practice; the publications of numerous books on anarchism by most of the major academic presses; and growing numbers of courses dealing in some way with anarchism or including anarchism within the course content. There have also emerged ... professionally recognized networks and associations of anarchist researchers, such as the Anarchist Studies Network of the Political Studies Association in Britain.³⁴

28 See, for example, D. Shannon, *The End of the World As We Know It?: Crisis, Resistance, and the Age of Austerity* (Oakland, Calif.: AK Press, 2014), 144–146.

29 See, for example, F. Dupuis-Déri, *Who's Afraid of the Black Blocs?: Anarchy in Action Around the World* (Oakland, Calif.: PM Press, 2014), vii, 4, 69–71, 76–78.

30 R. Georgy, “Des livres que amènent àNuit Debout,” *Libération* (11 Jul. 2016), http://www.liberation.fr/debats/2016/07/11/des-livres-qui-amenent-a-nuit-debout_1465558.

31 A. Prichard, *Justice, Order and Anarchy: The International Political Theory of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon* (London: Routledge, 2013), 1.

32 D. Graeber and A. Grubacic, “Anarchism, or the Revolutionary Movement of the Twenty-First Century,” *Dissident Voice* (6 Jan. 2004), <http://www.dissidentvoice.org/Jano4/Graeber-Grubacic106.htm>; cf. C. Sartwell, *Against the State: An Introduction to Anarchist Political Theory* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 2008), 14.

33 Amster, *Anarchism Today*, xiii.

34 J. Shantz, “Anarchists in the Academy,” in *The Best of Social Anarchism*, eds. H. Ehrlich and A.H.S. Boy (Tucson, Ariz.: See Sharp Press, 2013), 109–110; cf. R. Amster, L. Fernandez,

In view of the foregoing, some have concluded that anarchism “has become a respected field of study within academia”³⁵ or, in Shantz’s somewhat cheekier formulation, that it is “suddenly ... almost hip to be an anarchist academic.”³⁶

Whether these claims provide an accurate reflection of the present and the recent past is a complicated question that far exceeds the remit of this preface. It is not my intention here to subject them to detailed critique, nor even to challenge the broad consensus they express, as others have already done so at considerable length.³⁷ That said, the third claim does raise

A. DeLeon, A. Nocella, and D. Shannon, eds., *Contemporary Anarchist Studies: An Introductory Anthology of Anarchy in the Academy* (London: Routledge, 2009), 1–8; B. Franks, “Introduction: Anarchism and Moral Philosophy,” in *Anarchism and Moral Philosophy*, eds. B. Franks and M. Wilson (Basingstoke, U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 1; C. Honeywell, *A British Anarchist Tradition: Herbert Read, Alex Comfort, and Colin Ward* (London: Bloomsbury, 2010), 2; Amster, *Anarchism Today*, 151; C. Kaltefleiter and A. Nocella, “Anarchy in the Academy: Staying True to Anarchism as an Academic-Activist,” in *Anarchist Pedagogies: Collective Actions, Theories, and Critical Reflections on Education*, ed. R. Haworth (Oakland, Calif.: PM Press, 2012), 200–217; R. Kinna, Introduction to *The Bloomsbury Companion to Anarchism*, ed. R. Kinna (London: Bloomsbury, 2012), 3–4.

35 Amster, et al., *Contemporary Anarchist Studies*, 5.

36 Shantz, “Anarchists in the Academy,” 110.

37 Critiques of the first and second claims have often centered on the ambiguous relationship between the ostensibly “anarchist-inspired” politics of the anti-globalization movement and the broader anarchist tradition. See, for example, G. Curran, *Twenty-First Century Dissent: Anarchism, Anti-Globalization, and Environment* (Basingstoke, U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); Gordon, *Anarchy Alive!*, 5; S. Hirsch and L. van der Walt, “Final Reflections: The Vicissitudes of Anarchist and Syndicalist Trajectories, 1940 to the Present,” in *Anarchism and Syndicalism in the Colonial World, 1870–1940*, eds. S. Hirsch and L. van der Walt (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 397–400; A. Heywood, *Political Ideologies: An Introduction* (Basingstoke, U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 165–166; B. Morris, “Reflections on the ‘New Anarchism,’” in Morris, *Anthropology, Ecology, and Anarchism*, 133–148; G. Smulewicz-Zucker, “Illusory Alternatives: Neo-Anarchism’s Disengaged and Reactionary Leftism,” in *Radical Intellectuals and the Subversion of Progressive Politics*, eds. G. Smulewicz-Zucker and M. Thompson (Basingstoke, U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 121–147. For somewhat more nuanced (if occasionally pessimistic) discussions of the place of anarchism in contemporary academia, see Graeber, *Fragments of an Anarchist Anthropology*, 2–7; J. Purkis, “Towards an Anarchist Sociology,” in Purkis and Bowen, *Changing Anarchism*, 40–41; P. Gelderloos, “The Difference Between Anarchy and the Academy” (2009), *The Anarchist Library*, <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/peter-gelderloos-the-difference-between-anarchy-and-the-academy>; McLaughlin, *Anarchism and Authority*, 13–15; J. Suissa, *Anarchism and Education* (Oakland, Calif.: PM Press, 2010), 1, 143; Shantz, “Anarchists in the Academy”; L. Davis, “Anarchism,” in *Political Ideologies: An Introduction*, eds. V. Geoghegan and R. Wilford (London: Routledge, 2014), 213–214, 143.

certain issues that must be briefly addressed in order to establish the context of this book. Although there is no question that “the volume of [scholarly] work in anarchist studies has grown substantially” over the last twenty years and “interest in anarchist research has grown in parallel,”³⁸ the notion that anarchist studies has altogether transcended its marginal status—let alone that it has ignited an “anarchist turn” in one or several disciplines or come to be recognized as a “respected field” in its own right—is patently absurd. It would be far more accurate to say that anarchism is *tolerated* to a greater degree than in the past—a not insignificant development in its own right, but scarcely an indication that anarchism has supplanted deeply entrenched liberal and Marxist orthodoxies in the academy. (Even if it were, this would not necessarily be a positive development, as has been made clear by Shantz, Gelderloos, and others who have reflected on anarchism’s problematic relationship with formal academia.)

More germane to our purposes is the fact that this toleration has not been practiced equally across the disciplines. Of particular note in this regard is philosophy, which, by all reasonable appearances, is no more receptive to anarchism now than it was twenty years ago.³⁹ While it is true that “the range of disciplinary territories over which anarchists now roam has expanded,” only a smattering of recent scholarship on anarchism deals explicitly with philosophy, and the number of academic philosophers who claim anarchism as a principal research focus is negligible. As a result, philosophy has played a comparatively minor role in contemporary anarchist studies and has been underrepresented in general overviews of the discipline. This state of affairs is problematic not only because it involves the omission of a canonical intellectual practice from a discipline that prides itself on multidisciplinaryity, but also, and more importantly, because anarchism itself is frequently described as a “philosophy” and, to this extent at least, warrants far more explicitly philosophical investigation than it has received to date.

The resurgent interest in a form of politics that has been described as “new anarchism”—or, at the very least, as “anarchist-inspired”—has quite understandably provoked a desire to more fully understand the broader anarchist tradition that serves as its inspiration. In the absence of rigorous philosophical analysis, however, the basic theoretical and political commitments of this tradition have tended to be misunderstood. This, in turn, has generated a great deal of confusion regarding the nature of contemporary anarchism as well as its relationship

38 Kinna, Introduction to *The Bloomsbury Companion to Anarchism*, 3.

39 For a more detailed discussion of this phenomenon see Paul McLaughlin’s contribution to this volume as well as the editor’s critical introduction.

to other forms of political thought, including earlier iterations of anarchism itself. While the present volume is in some respects intended to remedy this situation, the paucity of scholarly literature explicitly focusing on the relationship between anarchism and philosophy necessitates a somewhat different strategy.

Unlike other companion-style texts, which more often than not provide general outlines of established discussions within single disciplines (or across multiple disciplines), the present volume is seeking to fill a void; for this reason, it adopts a self-consciously inventive approach to its subject matter. Many of the chapters included herein consider anarchism's pertinence to other philosophical theories and systems within the Western intellectual tradition (e.g., Marxism, libertarianism, liberalism, existentialism, phenomenology, nationalism, post-structuralism, psychoanalysis, pacifism). Others examine it in relation to specific philosophical subdisciplines (e.g., ethics, environmental philosophy, feminist philosophy), topics (e.g., sexuality, aesthetics), methodological or stylistic tendencies (e.g., Continental philosophy, analytic philosophy), or eras in the history of philosophy (e.g., nineteenth-century American and European philosophy).

Some explore their subject matter through highly specified lenses; others employ more conventionally synoptic approaches. Whatever their particular angle, all of them seek to shed light on the various ways that anarchism has been influenced and, in some cases, transformed by its engagement with non-anarchist philosophical discourses, as well as the distinctive contributions that anarchism itself has made, and continues to make, to the discipline of philosophy. It is the collective hope of editor and contributors alike that doing so will prompt further exploration of anarchism and philosophy and that this will lead to a fuller integration of the subject into the diverse fold of anarchist studies

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