

News & Reviews

Fifth Estate Collective
George Bradford (David Watson)

1985

Notes on errata and lacunae (G. Bradford)

An FE staff member currently traveling outside the U.S. wrote to us upon receiving his FE, that while the content and the layout were good, “there were a fair number of typos, which I’m sure you found as well.” We work hard on the paper, trying to catch every detail, to say things as best we can and to present it all in a dramatic, visually attractive format. Imagine our irritation, when we found, on the first page, that the typist had consistently put a typically gringo spelling Sandanista instead of Sandinista (staff members who speak Spanish had not gotten to proofread that page). That would make the Nicaraguan politicians disciples of Augusto Sandano rather than Sandino. Perhaps a niggling point, except that there are those of us who have always found something bothersome about foreign words and names being mangled in English language texts (though mangled English words in foreign language texts often strike us as amusing).

Then there was the concluding sentence of a reply to a letter in which P. Solis cusses the pornography question in terms appropriate to a post-situ who has suffered a great blow to the head: “Isn’t that ‘dark spot’ we see after masochistically contemplating the glistening vulva of the spectacle in the vulva of the sexual spectacle still another signal of demise...” wrote the venerable Sr. Solis (or so typed the venerable typesetter that day). He searched through the trash for his hand-scrawled original to no avail, and claims to have looked at the passage for days since without being able to remember what clever phrase he was trying to write that got so garbled. Maybe he was wearing the wrong spectacles. He’ll never make it as a porn novelist, either, we suspect.

Other less interesting typographical errors abound, such as the one numerical graph printed in the issue, in Tomas MacSheoin’s articles on biotechnology, which has fertilizer costs plummeting from \$600 million in 1970 to \$3.7 million (instead of billion) in 1975, which brought home poignantly M. Baudrillard’s comment that “statistics are casuistry.” Our traveling comrade cited above was right; it was probably one of the most typo-plagued issues in recent memory. Of course, this person was also one of our best proofreaders, too, and his loss was being felt. Recently, some friends have offered to help with proof-reading, and hopefully you are seeing the results of their help.

The typo problem is connected to that of lacunae, or all the glaring omissions from our pages. Because we are so short-staffed, we often neglect to publish material that we ourselves consider important—for example, the miners’ strike in England, and the events in South Africa, not to mention all of the bits of information, the publications that should be at least mentioned in this column, and the unedited news-clippings or roughly written manuscripts that come flowing into our postal box. Even articles that we plan to print often sit for a long time before seeing the light of day.

One possible solution is to publish much smaller but more frequent FEs, an attractive idea which we haven't been able to materialize yet. But whatever the outcome, we want more manuscripts and letters, and more people who are nearby and who feel an affinity for this project to get involved. As the recordings say, please bear with us.

FE in foreign languages: We were pleased to see FE articles on technology translated and reprinted in European languages during recent months. In France, *L'Insécurité Sociale* published our article "1984: Worse Than Expected?" (FE #316, Spring 1984 issue, available through the FE Bookservice for 50 cents) as a pamphlet entitled 1984: Pire que prévu, which included excerpts from Jerry Mander's book *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television*, and an excerpt from an earlier article, "Marxism, Anarchism, and the Roots of the New Totalitarianism," from FE #306, July 1981 (presently out of print). *L'Insécurité Sociale* has published many other texts of their own and from other sources; other pamphlets they sent were a French translation of Orwell's essay "Politics and the English Language," *Proletaires, si vous sachiez* (Proletarians, if you knew): Italie: 77-'80 (from Ombre Heretique, c/o L'Herbe Rouge, I bis, rue d'Alesia, 75014 France); and *Comunisme: Elements de Reflexion* (1). L'Insecti can be contacted at B.P. 243, 75564 Paris Cedex 12, France.

Two FE texts were reproduced in Spanish in a special issue of the review *Etcetera* from Barcelona—first, our diatribe against computers in "The Sledgehammer: Tool of the Year," from FE #312, Spring, 1983 (available through FE Books), and also "Against the Megamachine," from the out-of-print FE #306, July 1981. Their symposium on technology includes other material on the theme, such as a text on sabotage from *Processed World*, a translation of Paul Mattick's "The Economy of Cybernation," and some original contributions. *Etcetera* has also published a special issue on Mattick, and publishes interesting material on the present situation in Spain. They can be reached at: Editorial *Etcetera*, Apartado Correos 1363, Barcelona, Spain.

Our 1984 text on computerization also found its way into Italian under the title "La schiavitù a la libertà" (Slavery is Freedom), in the journal *Anarchismo*, a lavishly laid out oversized magazine from Catania. The same issue contains articles on the elections, a critique of an ecology party in Turin, crime, antimilitarism, and more. They can be reached c/o Alfredo Bonnanno, C.P. 61-95100, Catania, Italy.

Trench scholars: An interesting publication which has come our way is *Refuse* (pronounce it any way you like), produced by the Doctoral Students' Council Project, and aimed at (along with others) the "trench scholars"—part-time instructors, adjuncts and teaching assistants who man the universities for starvation wages. Will Petry writes, concerning their conditions, "I am sick of the phony credentials racket that exists solely to ensure exploitation, rather than to insure academic excellence...As long as the trenches exist there can be no community of scholars. The conditions that presently exist show an educational system that is increasingly becoming moribund. It is not only failing in its task to educate, but it is becoming irrelevant..." This poignant story (we've left out the gory details) confirms what one FE staff member (an early college dropout) said about our group, that those of us with the most degrees have the most grinding jobs...If this all sounds like you, write the Doctoral Students' Council, Room 201, CUNY Graduate Center, City University of New York, NY NY.

We continue to be pleased with *the gentle anarchist*, the anarchist zine with the most interesting banner quotes (our favorite: "anarchy comes naturally; everything else you have to be trained to do"). Shows what a small group of people with very limited resources can do. Write: some anarchists, P.O. Box 1313, Lawrence KS 66044-8313.

Circle A Books has just printed a new catalogue of publications available through the Bound Together Bookstore. It lists about 340 titles, including some Spanish language material. Send three 22 cent stamps for a free catalogue to Bound Together Books, 1369 Haight St., San Francisco CA 94117.

More uncategorizable publications: Postwar USA, number 3: "Is it safe to assume the dog will bury a bone? If so, where?" Write Postwar, pob 6613, Fullerton CA 92631.

The Thought, a "Philosophers' Guild" publication whose "national director" writes that he went "from arch-conservative Reaganite in 1980-81 to staunch anarchist in 1985," and who plans to publish an "Anarchy Essay Sub-series," inviting other "anarchists—capitalists, syndicalists, socialists, communists, whatever school of anarchy you may adhere to—to join me in this project write the Philosophers' Guild, P.O. Box 3092, Orange CA 92665.

Controlled Chaos—"We print the unprintable." From Bob M., 3034 High-ridge, La Crescenta CA 91214.

Remnants, from the high school class of '86 (why not to go to the prom), from pob 2211, Fullerton CA 92633.

Existential Rage: "Don't follow the Leader, swallow the Leader." E.R., P.O. Box 3092, Orange CA 92665. Do these people all know one another?

Moscow Graffiti Magazine, a single page “magazine” available from Box 16002, Arlington VA 22215. Discusses “the problem with Michael Jackson,” and animal liberation in an absurd manner oddly reminiscent of the Italian Futurist movement who were contemporaries of Dada: “Yes, it’s true that human selfishness causes a lot of unnecessary suffering for plants and animals, but so what? Because they lack self-esteem, plants and animals are nothing more than biological ‘machines’...We don’t pity a machine when an emergency indicator light comes on; why does it make sense to feel sorry for an animal when it cries out in pain?” This stuff is beyond parody. The fascist artists of the Italian Futurist movement took this attitude to its logical conclusions by discounting human beings as well, when they wrote in one of their manifestos (in 1910) that “The suffering of a man is of the same interest to us as the suffering of an electric lamp, which, with spasmodic starts, shrieks out the most heartrending expression of color.”

False Positive (a Summer ’84 technology issue—will there be more?). Very lively graphic work published by the Out-of-Kontrol-Data Korporation, last known address 55 Sutter St., Number 487, San Francisco CA 94104. “Dr. Carl Sagan had a vision one night last weekend as he lay recuperating in a hospital bed. ‘I saw two of America’s greatest national treasures, the Grand Canyon and Old Faithful, loaded into a space shuttle and shot into orbit,’ he said. ‘It’s clear that as in so many other areas that perplex us, our environmental problems may find their ultimate resolution in outer space.’ Sagan had to be hospitalized after stepping out of a meteor shower, falling, and hurting himself.” They promised a future issue on kooks, but we never saw it. Maybe it was because we took so long to mention it.

Vultur, “latin word for ‘vulture,’ is a paper put out by a bunch of unorthodox anarchists,” is free to prisoners, and is bilingual (French and English). Rather unorthodox language, too: “You will not find in these pages obsequial defenses of traditional anarchist ideals. There are suffice papers reeking into those matters.” (all sic). Or do they have our proofreading problem? C.P. 95 Stn. Place D’Armes, Montreal PQ H2Y 3E9 Canada.

More foreign publications: In French—Os Cangaceiros: taking its name from Portuguese, a Brazilian word for the nineteenth century bandits who became a national myth, this glossy publication contains articles on working class battles in France and Poland. Write M. Fourchainé, 16 rue de banquier, 75013 Paris France.

Informations et Reflexions Libertaires number 59, a special on the Kanak struggle in New Caledonia. Write IR L c/o ACLR 13 rue Pierre Blanc 69001 Lyon France.

La Sociale has published a special on the miners’ strike in England. Available from C.P. 209, Succ. N., Montreal H2X 3N2 Canada.

In Portuguese—anttese, a special on education. Write anttese, Apartado 40, 2801 Almada Codex Portugal.

In Spanish—Cultura Libertaria, the bulletin of the Fundacion Isaac Puente. Contains material on recent publications in Spanish and on libertarian milieus in Spain; mainly a bulletin for a documentation center. Send your publications and inquiries to them at Apdo 1697, Vitoria 01080 Spain. Another documentation bulletin, this one multilingual, comes from the Centre International de Recherches sur l’Anarchisme. Write CIRA, Case postale 51, 14 rue des Cedres, CH-1211, Geneve 13 Switzerland.

In English—Affinity (P.O. Box 109, North Fitzroy 3608 Australia). Contains articles such as “The Future of Feminism” (a critique of leftist-political feminists who want to legislate change within the existing institutions), “X-Posing the Censors” (on pornography): “...Pornography, like other mass media in our culture is contradictory. It can be sexist, misanthropic, misogynist, upsetting; it can also teittintirig:thritiih\$, life-affirming, fun. Its potential for any of these variations is nearly infinite, and its effect differs from person to person, as does sexuality itself...The solution must lie somewhere in transforming the very base of society, rather than suppress what may frighten us.” Also contains a review on China after Mao by FE contributor Pat Flanagan, and more.

Here & Now: A Magazine of Radical Ideas is the successor to the Clydeside Anarchist (previously mentioned in this column). They write: “We do not accept the false opposition of the ‘practical’ and the ‘theoretical.’ Those who talk most loudly of down-to-earth realism are precisely those most likely to be trapped in the ineffectual charade of marginalised political activity. We wish to re-examine the assumptions at the root of what is taken for ‘activity’ by revolutionary minorities. The only practical realism is that which faces up to the ineffectiveness of most of our activity and which makes a serious attempt to understand the social forces at work HERE AND NOW. We reject hand-me-down politics of any label and insist on the need to understand what is unique to our time.” Articles in this issue include “Which Class Are You In? Teachers, Class and Bureaucracy,” “Beyond the Workplace,” and “The

Communism of the Kampuchean Angkar." Write Here & Now, Box 2 c/o Changes, 340 West Princes St., Glasgow G4 9HF U.K. (A very limited number are available through the FE Bookservice

fifth Estate

Fifth Estate Collective
George Bradford (David Watson)
News & Reviews
1985

<https://www.fifthestate.org/archive/321-indian-summer-1985/news-reviews>
Fifth Estate #321, Indian Summer, 1985

fifthestate.anarchistlibraries.net