

News & Reviews

Fifth Estate Collective

1987

The Poet's Coven is a relatively new photocopied publication distributed free in the Vancouver, B.C. area. It consciously defies categorization and is open to a wide variety of expression—poetry, collage, fiction, articles. The Coven describes its vision as coming from an “eclectic assortment of inspirations,” and considers itself to be “a propaganda or counter-information project that would like to encourage creativity as well as debate and analysis within the anarchist/ social-ecologist/ ‘primitivist’ milieu.” The Coven seeks contributions from “anti-authoritarians, misfits, earth worshippers, optimistic and social nihilists, and underground rebels,” with a promise that all correspondence will be answered. Contributions in the form of money are also welcome.

Write: The Poet's Coven, c/o S.W., PO Box 15642, Vancouver, B. C., Canada.

The “Yankee Go Home” front page photograph we ran with our “Kids Say No to Government” in our Fall 1986 issue was not properly credited to Leeds postcards. It, and hundreds of other postcards, are available from their U.S. distributor, Vision Works, Box 331, Amherst MA 01004. A catalog is available.

Primal Scream is a new, high-spirited quarterly (a photo-copied and stapled publication) from Longmont, Colorado. Their summer '87 issue (No. 2) includes poetry, fiction, news on the Rocky Flats protest activities, the Nevada Test site actions, a query on world hunger and vegetarianism, record reviews and more. We met some of these folks in Minneapolis (at the anarchist conference) and were impressed with their energy and openness. They are interested in setting up “a non-profit anarchist/pacifist worker-owned and operated printshop in Colorado.” They're looking for ideas, equipment, and financial contributions for this project—as well as material for Primal Scream No. 3. Write: Primal Scream, 1125 Foxhill, Longmont, Colorado 80501.

Some interesting books that we have recently received but which we are not carrying in our bookstore:

From Hooligan Press, publishers of *The Free*, address: BM Hurricane, London WC1 England: *A Year of Our Lives: A Colliery Community in the Great Coal Strike of 1984–85*. Moving first person accounts of a labor struggle which went far beyond simple trade union demands. A portrait of a community united in struggle emerges where bonds of human solidarity are formed, sexual roles examined and the realization that the workaday world is an empty one. \$8.00

Also from Hooligan: *Ideal Home: Survival Edition* by “Suspect.” This volume suggests the extent of the widespread English squatters' movement as it gives advice on how to survive without paying rent. Essentially a “how to” book, it gives first-hand accounts on everything relating to squatting from how to break in to how to keep from getting pushed out. Also, legal tips, recipes, home improvements are included while maintaining a clear anti-private property and militant perspective. \$6.00

From Kerr Publishers, 1740 W. Greenleaf Ave., Chicago 1 L 60626, which celebrated its centenary last year: *The Rise & Fall of Radical Labor* by Daniel R. Fusfield, covers the period from the mass strikes of 1877 to the suppression of the IWW in 1918. Also, three classic reprints: *The Soul of Man Under Socialism* by Oscar Wilde, \$3.50; *Proudhon & His “Bank of the People”* by Charles A. Dana with an introduction by Paul Avrich, \$4.95; *The Flivver King: A Story of Ford-America*, Upton Sinclair's fictionalized account of Henry Ford's auto empire, \$7.95. A catalog of Kerr's extensive titles and postcards is available.

The *Pagans for Peace Newsletter* is back in circulation. It is open to submissions and seeks material on “spiritually-charged pagan political activism, or networking of different activist groups. Letters are a joy.” The xeroxed newsletter is published on the full moons, thirteen times a year and costs \$15. For more information, write: Pagans for Peace, P.O. Box 6531, Station A, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5W 1X4.

The first issue of *Feminax* was put together by women from South London who are, in their words, “involved in childcare, squatting, Anarchist groups, women’s groups, anti-militarism, boozing and having a good time. Articles are individual ravings...and don’t represent an editorial viewpoint.” They include a wide range of topics: a critique of the “male-dominated anarchist movement and a women’s movement...run by Labour Party social workers”; the feminist scene in the U.S. from the viewpoint of a poor woman crashing several expensive women’s music festivals; interviews with women shoplifters; the benefits of working in the sex industry; how to get an injunction against a battering partner; squatting; hitchhiking; foreign travel with children; and a night of verbal and physical violence against men in response to a rape. The energy of these women is refreshingly apparent in their use of language and their unconcern for the appearance of their publication. (Corrections and changes are often written in by hand.) For a copy contact Feminax Group, 121 Bookshop, 121 Railton Rd., Brixton, London SE 24.

S.E.T. Free: the Newsletter Against T.V., is celebrating its fourth birthday. A paste-up of excerpts of articles from books, newspapers, magazines and professional journals, as well as a few short pieces written for the newsletter, it confirms the necessity for the elimination of TV. A sample of facts learned from this issue: ABC-TV is owned by Capital Cities which was founded by William Casey; our number 2 defense contractor, General Electric, owns NBC; according to a study from Rutgers University, the more people use TV as an escape from reality, the more uncomfortable they feel with unstructured time; during the 1973 Watergate hearings most of the retina of Senator Daniel Inouye’s left eye was burned out by the glaring television lights; a survey of 106 leading TV writers, producers and executives found that 99% are male; no scene in “Miami Vice” lasts longer than ten or fifteen seconds; and the New England Journal of Medicine claims, “TV is an environmental disease that is worse than pollution.” *S.E.T. Free* also includes information on where to get songs, bumper stickers and other materials that say “no” to television. For a copy of the newsletter (no set price, but donations are welcome), contact *S.E.T. Free*, Society for the Elimination of Television, Box 1124, Albuquerque NM 87103. Check out *S.E.T.’s* bumpersticker, “Just Say ‘No’ to Television,” available for \$1.50.

And Now This...“Kelly & Company,” a local, trendy TV talk show, contacted Mary Dixon of *S.E.T. Free* with the hope of interviewing her. Dixon declined, saying she never appears on TV but offered the FE as a local contact for anti-TV sentiment. The show’s producer seemed unable to grasp the idea that a critique of TV included our having no interest whatsoever in appearing on the show. Though he attempted several times to lure us before the lights, we just had to tell him we agreed on this one with the prez: Just Say No!

We misprinted Black & Red’s address in our last issue. It is B&R, P.O. Box 02374, Detroit MI 48202.

Ecodefense: A Field Guide to Monkey-wrenching, Second Edition, Edited by Dave Foreman and Bill Haywood, a Ned Ludd Book available from Earth First!, P.O. Box 5871, Tucson AZ 85703, for \$13.50 postpaid.

Ecodefense: A Field Guide to Monkey-wrenching is aimed at a defense of wilderness places and the animals that inhabit them. The “Forward!” by Edward Abbey, author of *The Monkeywrench Gang* (the popular novel which gave eco-sabotage its name), justifies monkey-wrenching, by any means necessary, as defense of our ancestral home from invasion, pillage, and destruction. He identifies the invaders as the corporate sector, the “three-piece-suited gangsters” with MBAs who control and manage it, the media, “jellyfish government agencies,” and “quisling politicians.” He states, “Representative government in the USA represents money not people,” but he presents this as a breakdown of the system instead of recognizing it as the function of government.

In fact, the book’s entire political analysis is disparaging of revolutionary thought and activity. Dave Foreman, one of the editors, lists 11 principles of monkeywrenching, most of which encourage thought and deliberate actions aimed at appropriate targets. However, ninth in the list of principles is “Monkeywrenching is Not Revolutionary.” He claims it is merely non-violent defense of the wild and states, “The Direct Action group in Canada (the Vancouver 5(4)1 is a good example of what monkeywrenching is not. Even Republicans monkeywrench.” In a chapter by T.O. Hellenbach, monkeywrenching is viewed as a means of enhancing the status and bargaining position of more “reasonable” opponents of wilderness destruction like the Sierra Club.

This is essentially a guide to the defense of the wilderness only. The majority of the book consists of entries that include pictures and diagrams as well as suppliers and brand names in detailing how to make rape of the wilderness and slaughter of wild animals a money-losing enterprise. Some entries, such as construction and use of smoke bombs, stink bombs and grenades; lock jamming; billboard revision; and perhaps the chapters on disabling vehicles, heavy equipment and power lines could be useful against urban polluters as well. There is also a good chapter on security in urban, suburban, and wilderness situations. There is some irony in the fact that much of the material that is used and discarded in monkeywrenching is the stuff we've been telling people is damaging to the ecosystem.

Though I have not yet engaged in these activities, the diagrams are easy to understand and the directions seem thorough and uncomplicated. The book is revised every 18 months and the editors request revisions and suggestions from all monkeywrenchers.

Hopefully monkeywrenching will spread to include a wider range of targets. —T.S.

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