

Lost Anarchism & Surrealism of the 1960s

Two Radical Threads Combine

Fifth Estate Collective

2022

The next project of Abigail Susik, author of *Surrealist Sabotage and the War on Work*, investigates the radical connections between anarchism and surrealism through the little-known figure of Jonathan Leake and his work in the 1960s with the magazine, *Resurgence*.

It is devoted to the extremely rare surrealist, anarchist, IWW, and anti-racist underground zine which had twelve mimeographed issues printed in New York, Chicago, San Francisco; between 1964 and 1967. It contains reprints of all twelve issue covers, as well as page selections from each issue, including the recently discovered, formerly lost issue #4.

The title of the book is *Resurgence! Jonathan Leake, Radical Surrealism, and the Resurgence Youth Movement, 1964-1967*, edited by Susik and published by Eberhardt Press in Portland, Ore.

It includes an introduction by Susik with contributions from Chicago surrealist Penelope Rosemont, Maggie Wrigley, co-owner and curator of New York City's Bullet Space, and Paul Leake, an original RYM member.

Jonathan Leake was way out, even for the farthest-out groups in that era, an extreme phenomenon of ultra-leftism who holds a legendary status in the memories of those who knew him. In the pages of Leake's fierce anti-racist magazine, *Resurgence*, radical surrealism operated in tandem with the group's advocacy of a youth-led rebellion. The first edition was published when Leake was 18.

Resurgence called for the protection of civil liberties for students and minors; the dismantling of the imperialist nation state; opposition to military conscription; support of African American youth defense councils; and coordination of the youth struggle with that of the working class.

Leake put his politics into action, co-founding the New York City-based Resurgence Youth Movement (RYM) in 1964, and organizing with the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). RYM was also in contact with the Chicago Surrealist Group,

Charles Radcliffe's Heatwave in London, the New York City-based Black Mask group, and international Provo groups, among other contacts.

Prior to his encounter with Chicago surrealist Franklin Rosemont during the summer of 1964, Leake first learned about the radical leftist political views held by surrealists and the movement's advocacy for total revolution as a result of his involvement in New York City's Libertarian League.

This anarchist-syndicalist organization, founded by Russell Blackwell, with Sam and Esther Dolgoff, exchanged its journal, *Views and Comments*, with fraternal groups around the world. Leake soon discovered Marxist-surrealist texts in the Parisian council communist journal *Front noir* that exerted a significant influence on *Resurgence*.

In August 1964, Leake was expelled from high school for attempting to burn down the campus chapel, and with a group of contributors calling themselves the spontaneous editorial board, began working on *Resurgence* 1.

Five hundred copies of the inaugural edition were produced on a donated old hand-cranked mimeograph machine at the Manhattan headquarters of the IWW during a party!

Unlike *The Rebel Worker*, published at the same time by Chicago's Solidarity Bookshop, *Resurgence* was not explicitly an IWW publication despite the fact that Leake and his co-editor Walter Caughey were both committed Wobblies, the popular nickname for IWW members.

Franklin Rosemont's cover drawing for *Resurgence* 1 featured a small IWW union bug symbol. Yet, the RYM that Leake, Caughey, and friends launched with their new journal remained independent of most Old Left factions, declaring on the masthead allegiance to:

"permanent insurrection:: anti-politics::cultural sabotage::towards the structive personality::invisible sociol-ogy::history as hallucination::subversive fantasy and science fiction::juvenile delinquency::cosmogony::prophecy::autonomy::surrealit

This subcultural-surrealist compendium of topics demonstrated that the envisioned RYM operated as least as much in pursuit of total cultural renovation as it did political revolution. The blistering insurgency of RYM was that of a general youth revolt against the capitalism and its stultifying culture rather than any specific party or ideology.

Funding for the original 500 copies is being raised by a Kickstarter campaign.

You can read more about the project, purchase an advance collector's copy, and donate to the independent publishing fundraiser at kickstarter.com/projects/tramps/resurgence-o.



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Fifth Estate #412, Fall, 2022

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