



Published by the Anarchist Association Of The Americas

Volume 6, Issues 5 & 6,
Numbers 47 & 48, May-June 1983



WHY CAN'T WE BE FRIENDS?

Personal Notes of an Anarcha-Feminist

Anarcha-feminism seems a joyous union of two oft-mis-taken-as-negative movements--anarchism, whose general aim is one towards the outgrowing of oppressive authority, and feminism, whose general aim is one towards the outgrowing of patriarchy. They may use different words to describe ideas, but the objectives of each have many similarities. Anarcha-feminism provides a thoughtful basis on which women and men together can develop positive personal and political alternatives to both passive subjugation and self-centered escapism.

I agree with the idea that the feminist perspective in practice is almost purely anarchist. In "Anarchism: the feminist connection", Peggy Kornegger speaks of the necessity for women to develop their own "consciousness": a personal autonomy. She continues, "It (true revolution) takes years of preparation: sharing ideas and information, changes in consciousness and behavior, and the creation of political and economic alternatives to capitalist, hierarchical structures. It takes spontaneous direct action on the part of autonomous individuals through collective political confrontation. It is important to 'free your mind' and your personal life, but it is not sufficient. Liberation is not an insular experience; it occurs in conjunction with other human beings. There are no individual 'liberated women'." The last section is very important: liberation is not an isolated event to be experienced by some while viewed by others; both women and men must participate for it to succeed.

One anarchist principle says that the people involved in an activity should make decisions together: consensus. It does not presuppose any group form or method, with the exception of oppressive hierarchies and related coercive manipulations. Beyond this, I think the collaborative efforts of anarcha-feminists are most effective within a societal entity (a town or city). That is where we can share the practice of

continued on page 2