Sheffield Hallam University

Anarchist research within and without the academy: everyday geographies and the methods of emancipation

WHITE, Richard and SPRINGER, Simon

Chapter 25

Anarchist Research Within and Without the Academy: Everyday Geographies and the Methods of Emancipation

Richard J. White and Simon Springer

Abstract

With the overall aim of trying to raise consciousness and awareness about anarchist geography in the context of research, this chapter is divided into two key sections. The first section focuses on 'anarchism, anarchist geographies and research'. The second section addresses the more comprehensive inter-locking question of, "What are anarchist methodologies in human geography, and how should anarchist research be disseminated?" Bringing these dilemmas under the focus of the chapter, we ask what is the point of anarchist research if it is exclusionary, only accessible to those who can converse in English, heard by those who are privileged enough to afford to pay (or have their institutions pay) exorbitant conference fees, and/or read by those able to spend £100+ on a Handbook produced by a private publishing company for profit? The chapter, however, concludes on an optimistic note. As anarchist geographies continue to gather momentum in our time of crisis and crises, they carry with them the hope of a better world. It is our hope that many readers will seriously reflect on how they may connect, or more fully align, their research with these anarchist lines of flight in mind.

INTRODUCTION

> "Anarchism has always been anti-ideological; anarchists have always insisted on the priority of life and action to theory and systems." (Wieck, 1972: 10)

> "If anarchism is a spirit, it is the spirit of revolt… The challenges of our time require us to rebel against the disabling faith in the idea that oppression, hierarchy and captivity are somehow the national consequences of human evolution. Our revolt is our emancipation." (White et al. 2016: 1)

In popular conversation, as sure as the sun rises in the east, any reference to anarchy, anarchism or anarchist will provoke invoke images of malevolent individuals consumed with misanthropic disgust and terroristic intent. Typically, these *anarchists* bring with them violent intentions, either concealed about their person (the bomb-sewn jacket of 'the Professor' in Conrad's Secret Agent perhaps), or act as its visible messenger: their nihilistic hands bearing Molotov cocktails, ready to set aflame the night sky. Propaganda by deed, perhaps (see Fleming, 2008). It is far less likely, that any mention of anarchy or anarchism immediately spark connections with (i) established body/ies of highly respected academic research, and (ii) *geographical* research. What image, we wonder, might be unleashed if a researcher walked down the high street, clipboard in hand, and invited passers-by to describe to them what an anarchist geographer *looks like?*

However, as we hope to demonstrate in this chapter, there are many rich and exciting intersections that exist between anarchism, geography and research, and have been so for many years. Indeed, these connections stretch at least as far back as the 19th century. As Springer (2013, 46) notes, geographers began engaging with anarchism right at the dawn of the philosophy of anarchism being first established, with key figures like Élisée Reclus and Peter Kropotkin rejecting the discipline's preoccupation with imperialism by developing an

emancipatory vision for geography. The research of Peter Kropotkin (1842-1921) and Élisée Reclus (1875–1894) still continue to exert a significant influence across many contemporary aspects of critical geographical knowledge and understanding, not least those which are concerned with addressing the current ecological, economic and political crises and challenges we face today (see Ferretti, 2019; Pelletier, 2009; MacLaughlan, 2016). That notwithstanding, it is also important when thinking about anarchist geographies that we extend our reading to embrace other key contributions that anarchist geographies have made, and continue to make. However foundational their work is within geography and anarchism, we are not proffering a *Kropotkinist* Geography or a *Reclusist* Geography, in the way that some other radical geographies might have emphasized a single individual! There is no time like the present, and the present moment represents an ideal opportunity to bring our research questions and ideas into a full and productive conversation with anarchism. Anarchist geographies are very much in the ascendency: the 21st century has certainly witnessed it a resurgence of anarchist thought and practice, seen within the discipline and critical social sciences, and through expressions of activists and activism across the world (see Springer et. al, 2016; Souza et al, 2016, White et al, 2016).

Of all the radical traditions, given its *a priori* refusal to privilege one form of domination (e.g., class, gender, race) over another, anarchists have sought to engage with *all* types of injustices, wherever and in whatever form they manifest themselves. As Wigger (2016, 133) notes:

> Anarchists seek social change beyond the point of capitalist production by extending social struggles to sexual, ecological, racial, patriarchal and gendered forms of inequality and oppression.

Unsurprisingly therefore, we can clearly see how these struggles have animated anarchist geographies, with this body of research consistently raising consciousness and awareness to

the reality that social injustice is always spatial (see White and Springer, 2018). To this end, research in anarchist geographies have made numerous critical interventions across geographical sub-disciplines, including political geographies (see A Collective of Anarchist Geographer, 2017; Ince and de la Torre, 2016); neoliberalism (Springer, 2016b); diverse economics (White and Williams, 2016); political ecology (e.g. Brock, 2020); queer space making (Rouhani, 2012); radical pedagogies (e.g. Ferretti, 2018; Stenglein and Mader, 2016); more than human communities, particularly critical animal geographies (Reclus, 1901; White and Springer); intersectional forms of activism and organisation (Springer, 2014; Ferretti, 2016; Veron, 2016); and researching activism (Ince and White, 2020). Certainly, as Sidaway et al (2017, 281) notes: "the dynamic currents that animate anarchist geographical praxis today, as geographers (re)map the possibilities of what anarchist perspectives might yet contribute to understandings of geography, and in turn, what geography might yet contribute to how we understand, appreciate, and practice anarchism, are flourishing."

These anarchist lines of flight will undoubtedly continue to push geography further in ever radical and critical directions. For example, given the ongoing and devastating global impacts of COVID-19, we certainly envisage some of the most urgent areas of attention for anarchist geographers will be those that coalesce around post-capitalist, post-statist and critical posthuman/vegan geographies.

With the overall aim of trying to raise consciousness and awareness about anarchist geography in the context of research, the main body of this chapter is divided into two key sections. While always taking care not to obscure the highly inter-disciplinary, pluralistic and dynamic essence of both geography and anarchism, the first section focuses on 'anarchism, anarchist geographies and research'. The second section addresses the more comprehensive inter-locking question of, "What are anarchist methodologies in human geography, and how should anarchist research be disseminated?" The question of dissemination research often

weighs heavily on the shoulders of many radical and critical researchers, and invariably brings into play a myriad of dilemmas, some more easily negotiated than others. Greenaway (2011, xvii) captures the essence of this when observing that:

> Another problem for those who work as academics is how to do research and writing in a way that reaches out to a variety of audiences, and bridges the perceived gap between theory and activism. This is not just a question of the accessibility of ideas and language, but of where to publish or speak, when only certain publications and venues are academically acceptable.

Bringing these dilemmas under the focus of the chapter, we ask what is the point of anarchist research if it is exclusionary, only accessible to those who can converse in English, heard by those who are privileged enough to afford to pay (or have their institutions pay) exorbitant conference fees, and/or read by those able to spend £100+ on a Handbook produced by a private publishing company for profit? Tackling these issues also raises important questions of ownership and copyright. Here we also reflect on our own seeming hypocrisy and complicit nature in writing this piece for this volume. The chapter, however, concludes on an optimistic note. As anarchist geographies continue to gather momentum in our time of crisis and crises, they carry with them the hope of a better world. It is our hope that many readers will seriously reflect on how they may connect, or more fully align, their research with these anarchist lines of flight in mind.

1. ANARCHISM, ANARCHIST GEOGRAPHIES AND RESEARCH

"…an anarchist approach to geography embraces partial, fragmented, and overlapping worlds, wherein empowerment and emancipation become possible as shifting islands of reflexivity between theory and practice. (Springer, 2016: 1)

Given just how poorly understood anarchism is in popular circles, it is important to provide some sense of what anarchism means, and what is understood by anarchist geographies in the context of this chapter. In doing so this then creates a foundational space from which it is possible to critically question what anarchist geographies and anarchist methodologies are all about. We swim with caution in these definitional waters, mindful of the contesting currents of thought that swirl strongly beneath them! One of the salient qualities of anarchism has been its ability to resist being pinned down, labelled and neatly categorised. Indeed, it contains an essence which escapes – is truly beyond – language, though not understanding. Certainly, we have no desire to curtail this free spirit by imposing definitional boundaries - still less in policing (!) them.

One constructive way of approaching the question, 'what is anarchism?' would be to identify some of its core and adjacent concepts (see Franks et al, 2018). These would certainly include: an anti-hierarchical stance, and a commitment to prefigurative praxis, direct action, mutual aid, and horizontalism (see Text Box 1).

Text Box 1: Working Definitions of Several Core and Adjacent Anarchist Concepts

- *Antihierarchical stance.* For Amster (2018, 15) "an anti-hierarchical perspective is evident in anarchist theory and action alike. Indeed, it might be said that a robust

notion of anti-hierarchy is the sine qua non of anarchism, the core concept that differentiates it at root from other ideologies."

- *Prefigurative praxis.* "The praxis of prefiguration defines the appropriate sphere of action as here and not whilst looking to the future and directing our agency towards reassessing the contexts and structures that shape and constrain individual lives." (Honeywell, 2011, 67)

- *Mutual aid* has enjoyed a long association with anarchism, and anarchist geography in particular - not least through Kropotkin's (1902) classic work "Mutual Aid". For Kropotkin, mutual aid embodies the highest ethical principle. "In the practice of mutual aid, which we can retrace to the earliest beginnings of evolution, we thus find the positive and undoubted origin of our ethical conceptions; and we can affirm that in the ethical progress of [humankind], mutual support-not mutual struggles-has had the leading part" (1902/1915, 222-223).

- *Horizontalism.* "While this slippery term has meant slightly different things for different people, it generally connotes a form of "leaderless," autonomous, directly democratic movement building whose adherents consider it to be non-ideological." (Bray, 2018,101)

Reading anarchism in this way is also helpful in thinking about the areas of research and enquiry that anarchist research(ers) are likely to see as being particularly relevant and important. Certainly, the commitment to praxis rejects appeals to 'High Theory', and instead places emphasis on engaging with social relationships 'at the human scale'. It is no surprise then that significant branches of anarchist research have focused on everyday acts that "make the human community possible" (Ward, 1973, 8), such as informal coping strategies, altruism,

mutual aid and reciprocity in households and within local communities (e.g. White and Williams 2017, Springer 2020),

A commitment to some or all of these concepts, practices and principles can also be detected in other radical approaches and 'isms'. For example, anarcha-feminism, "emerged as a 'school of thought in the late nineteenth-century" (Kowal, 2018, 265) its roots the late 19th century and this conjunction of anarchism and feminism can be seen, and "understood in multiple ways: Anarchist feminism might be anarchists sympathetic to feminism or feminists for whom anarchism is a necessary corollary of their politics." (Kinna, 2017, 254). Thus, rather than calculating exactly how and where these overlaps may be, we'd encourage a more intuitive approach: as Uri Gordon (2008, 3) argued, "You know it when you see it". There is certainly great potential for further fertile intersections between anarchism and feminist research, non-representational research and participatory action research to emerge (see Chapters 31, 30, and 28, respectively, in this volume, respectively).

Back in the 1970s, Elaine Leeder, in her paper 'Feminism as an Anarchist Process' offered some important critical reflections in this context.

> "I have come to realize that the interaction in an all womens' groups [sic] has a unique flavor and style and that this is particularly true of feminist groups. … It could in fact be called Anarchist because the values of leaderlessness, lack of hierarchy, non-competition and spontaneity have historically been associated with the term Anarchism. They are also Feminist values. … It is clear to me from my experience with women in varying groups that the time has come for Feminists to make clear and articulate the Anarchism in our Feminism."(Leeder, n.d., 1, 3).

It is really encouraging to think that a more appropriately *contemporary* understanding and narration of anarchism might yet encourage more people – more researchers – to dare to speak its name, and explicitly recognise the influence that anarchist praxis has had/is having on their

own attitude, experiences, and research. Indeed, there are parallels here to be found with Smith's (2015: 1) exploration of the "productive links between the stance of anarchism and recent work in non-representational theorising in the social sciences." His paper argued for a "revalorization of anarchism in the social sciences" (ibid), stressing that "the time may be ripe for anarchism to be viewed with more relevance, particularly in a post-representational social scientific milieu." (Smith, 2015, 3)

A further important consideration comes in the form of the self-aggrandising scholar, that potentially finds refuge in the midst of card-carrying radical geographers (anarchist or otherwise). We can clearly identify researchers who consider themselves – and are viewed by others as – anarchist geographers. However, as anarchist geography continues to gather in momentum and visibility, as with all radical approaches there is the dilemma of how this radical intent can be maintained while being ushered ever more tightly into the web of mainstream academic circles. What are the perils of anarchist geographical research becoming 'edgy' or 'trendy', and thereby attracting a particular type of academic creature who seeks to gain from this (through publishing or research grants), but possessing no deep or real commitment to anarchism generally? On the flipside, we have been accused of turning "anarchist geography" into a brand simply by doing what all scholars do, namely publishing our work. Responding to these thoughts ushers in the question of "why" anarchist research is being undertaken: it is always worth critically evaluating the main motivations that underpin a particular research agenda, and the importance that of this for methodology and methods.

A commitment to anarchism and anarchist praxis is not an optional extra, something that just comes into play in an explicitly academic or research environment, perhaps because anarchism is seen to be 'trendy'. Rather, anarchism is something that should influence every fibre of our thoughts and being, and be present in all the spaces we encounter, whether the university, the home, the wider community, and so on. It should certainly inform our everyday

relations with others. An ethics of care is a key characteristic of anarchist approaches insofar as they aspire to seek authentic and genuine ways of empathising, sympathising, and demonstrating compassion for others.

This attitude and desire work to dissolve any formal relations that differentiate one (the researcher) from the other (the researched), and places both on a much more equal and 'human' footing. In contesting *authority*, we might also expose the hubris that comes with the notion of *authorship*, as though ideas are ever bolts from the blue as opposed relationally constructed fractals. Drawing on the figure of Élisée Reclus once again, these social qualities are beautifully captured by Woodcock (1988, 13):

> One of the reasons why Reclus flourished so happily in a movement that had become radically decentralised into small groups depending on personal affinities was the power he had of empathising with individuals. The gentleness of manner, the lack of pride or pretention, that he combined with an almost ferocious integrity… allowed him to mingle without affectation among workers whose manners and whose education were very different from his own."

Within the context of "academic" research (indeed life generally!) while it is particularly easy to *say* that we empathise, care etc. with those whom we interact with, there is certainly no shame in acknowledging how difficult it may be to put into practice. Context is obviously important here, as is our positionality and entangled experiences, for the latter particularly cognisant of the broader social relationships and communities we are embedded within. For example, even if we try and do 'the right' thing, a range of unintended consequences may present themselves. And that is okay insofar as it acknowledges that we are never 'perfect' in any situation. Perhaps the best we can hope for is captured in this insightful summary by the

Brazilian anarchist/left-libertarian geographer, Marcelo Lopez de Souza (2019, 21, emphasis added):

> At the end of the day, the 'moral of the story' could be summarised as follows: there are subtle and unconscious ways to patronise and subalternise those whom we want to understand and help but whose culture and history (and/or social class) are different from ours, and it is precisely these subtle and unconscious ways -very much related to the influence of problematic 'biographical atmospheres,' and sometimes also to the insufficient immunisation provided by some 'ideological soils' - that generate problems of coherence among radical scholars. *In order to avoid incoherence, we do not need to 'romanticise' those whom we show our solidarity and offer our support after all, they are all fallible human beings, too. Moreover, true dialogue presupposes horizontality, and true horizontality - something not easy to be achieved - presupposes the right to disagree but at the same time the obligation to do so without arrogance.*

In short, a healthy scepticism is important, and particularly justifiable when thinking about anarchism and research for the following reasons: "One simply cannot rely on self-identification. Just because someone claims to be an anarchist does not make it so. By the same token, just because someone never identified [themselves] an anarchist does not mean that [their] ideas cannot be qualified as anarchist" (Graham, 2015, 3). The same critique – as we have drawn attention to earlier – holds fast for the considerable research that takes place which can clearly be read as illustrative of 'anarchist geographical praxis' yet has not been defined or framed as either.

2. FOREGROUNDING METHODOLOGY: METHODS, ETHICS AND DISSEMINATION STRATEGIES

We can secure a meaningful foothold in thinking through anarchist approaches toward methodology and methods by drawing on the provocative and captivating figure of Paul Feyerabend. Feyerabend is particularly well known through his foundational publication "Against Method" (1993), where he advances a conceptualising of anarchistic theory of knowledge (epistemology) as being 'against scientific method'. To understand this position, it is worth reflecting on this passage he wrote in his later work 'The Tyranny of Science' (2011). Feyerabend invites us to:

> … Imagine a wood, or a field, with its delicately balanced ecology including the humans who have to live off the products of both. Is there a way of understanding such a system? Of finding out about its robustness and its limits? Of discovering what will be tolerated and what leads to irreversible change? Yes, there is. Whoever has lived in the region for generations has learned its peculiarities and its life rhythms and has stored this knowledge in eyes, ears, in the sense of smell, in feelings, in the mind, in the stories that are old to the community. In short, whoever has stored the knowledge not just in her/his mind but in her/his whole being, possesses information that is not contained in the results of a scientific appraisal. Only a little of this information can be written down or otherwise articulated – it shows itself in how things look and how they feel and it cannot be transferred to a person lacking the appropriate experience. However the knowledge is there – and it should be used." (2011, 48)

Thus, an anarchist approach to what is 'the best' or most appropriate methodology and methods to harness, should at the very least begin with another question: In what ways can we hope to enable our research to connect with, recognise, value and celebrate the individual essence of things – and relationships - in ways that the positivist scientific gaze and 'objective' evaluation cannot? Here we must think creatively and be brave enough to cast off the shackles of past wisdom if the situation at hand calls for it. Ley (2019, 4) appeals to (our) use of 'the anarchist imagination', namely an imaginary which "allows the social scientist and historian to undergo...' 'moments of madness [sic]' in her research." Feyerabend (2011, 130) stressed the importance of the imaginary – and maintaining original thought when it serves to attract pessimism and derision from others: "Those who think that new things can be found only by wandering along a precisely defined path are wrong… 'anything goes' means only 'don't restrict your imagination' because a very silly idea can lead to a very solid result. Also, don't restrict your imagination by logic."

Given this reading of methodology and methods through an anarchist lens, it is unsurprising to find a keen depth of research focused on the 'human' scale, seeking to dive deeply into the richness and messiness of life in the here and now. Wigger (2016: 139) both roots and extends this focus, noting that:

> anarchism through its methods of transformative praxis, frequently gives ontological primacy to micro-level relations and everyday life. Decentralised, bottom-up grassroots struggles that aim at changing micro-relations in everyday life are considered the crux for changing macro-structures. The transformation of social structures hence evolves cumulatively through enlarging social spaces with alternative organisational forms, preferably decentralised organisational structures based on affinity groups that work together on an ad hoc basis, or more engrained and enduring voluntary associations.

Focusing on the question of how anarchists might look to develop their methods for their research, they would do so in a way that takes a critical look at any 'good practice' that emerges from the 'ready-made', pre-determined, 'this is how you must harness (a method)' literature. An inherent prescription for anything necessarily closes off a fuller realization of experimentation and innovation. When we are bound by systematic rules it becomes difficult to think and act outside the box. Against this, an anarchist approach would desire to harness methods in ways that are intrinsically exploratory, processual, always unfolding, and open to serendipity and experimentation. Read the research guidebooks by all means, but do so in a way that does not curtail you in unleashing your own methodological imaginary! (Orenstein and Luken 1978).

An anarchist researcher will do everything possible to avoid framing others as 'subjects' of their enquiry. For example - and aligned with methodological position long held within feminism (e.g. England, 2006) - whenever engaging other human participants, all hierarchical relationships (researcher/researched) must be resisted and headed off at every stage (DeLeon 2019; Munn-Giddings 2006). This desire, yet again, emphasises the need to be 'in the moment' when engaging with others. You will never be able to anticipate everything that you might experience – in terms of relationships to others – beforehand. It is vital that good practices of reflexivity are followed here (see Berger, 2015, Lumsden, 2015). For example, how do you act if the respondent assumes that they are supposed to behave passively, and reactively in your presence? It is quite plausible to assume this if they have designated you as 'the expert intellectual' in the relationship, based on their own (poor/limited) experiences of academics, rooted in unequal teacher-pupil relationships. The irony of course is that it is the researcher who is asking the researched to share their knowledge. The responsibility and challenge comes in the form of asking 'how can' this research encounter be used not just to

gain knowledge and insight about a particular issue, but also as a way of establishing trust and rapport. If successfully done so, then the potential to forge new and important solidarities in this way – in harnessing anarchism as research process – comes into play. If research is understood as a moment of reciprocal learning, community building, and an expression of shared respect - an idea shared by many critical scholars - it becomes decidedly anarchist inasmuch as such thinking moves us towards recognizing research as an actual practice of mutual aid.

Disseminating Anarchist Research Within and Beyond the Academy

> ... we need to sidestep the polarisation of 'activism' and 'academia', theory and practice. History, theory, reading and writing can all be forms of resistance and activism. A more constructive response is to find ways of bringing together different perspectives, analyses, ways of doing: not answers, but questions; not a single, smooth, impenetrable surface, but rough edges which can spark off one another, provide new points of access. Standard methods of propagating ideas – meetings, conference, books and articles – can be subverted in form and content to become spaces where past, present and future are reimagined and new ways of thinking become possible. (Greenaway, 2011, xvii)

An instinctive answer, when responding to the question of where anarchist research should take place, would be 'outside the academy'. Indeed, a great deal of what constitutes the diverse landscapes of anarchist research takes place in meaningful ways outside of the academy, and certainly by researchers and authors without academic appointments. This rootedness of knowledge and understanding outside of institutions is not at all surprising when one considers that "Anarchy sought to make manifest tribes without rules, architecture without architects,

and *education without schools:"* (Levy, 2019, 9). This response also applies when our conceptualisation of anarchist research is extended to embrace the everyday experimentation and agency of communities, and explore different ways of collectively being in the world. Reinforcing this point, Springer (2016, 64) argues that,

> Committing radical geography to an anarchist agenda would necessitate a negation
>
> of the false dichotomy the disciplines maintain between the academy as a space of
>
> knowledge production, on the one hand, and wider society as the domain of social
>
> struggle, on the other…

That notwithstanding, any response that uncritically asserts that anarchist research should – or does - take place 'beyond the academy', is problematic. Such a narrative, for example, risks fetishizing a particularly skewed reading of the academic and academia. In this reading, the university is typically envisaged as enjoying an ivory-tower like existence; a place where knowledge is pursued for the sake of itself, divorced and desensitised from the crises and struggles that are present in the world.

Rejecting this framing of the university is important. Instead, a more nuanced reading is encouraged, one that recognises that many of the struggles that social justice activists rail against - brutal authoritarianism and managerial bureaucrats in the thralls of neoliberalism, to give two example – are struggles that are very much alive and relevant 'on the university campus'. The realities of being an academic researcher (at any level) in increasingly neoliberalised spaces of higher education (see Nocella and Juergensmeyer, 2017; Parker, 2014) come at an enormous cost for many. The constant struggle to secure tenure, help students/learners publish in 'the right' journals, continually chase funding to satisfy externally-driven targets – in a climate of ever diminishing resources and autonomy – is the brutal and unforgiving reality that increasingly casts a shadow across 'the 21st century university'. Such a dystopic scenario often leads to an ultimatum: either pursue the commodified aspirations of

neoliberal academia or get out. For some the decision is a stark one: to make a difference in the world means turning their back on the discipline they love. It is sobering to note that these dilemmas have a long history, and Kropotkin himself found himself at such a crossroads; being forced to choose between following academic geography or 'the people':

> Reared in Russia and steeped in the populist mystique of the "going to the people" movement, Kropotkin found himself morally bound to devote his time and energy to the cause of the masses, to the detriment of his scientific interests, which he felt it would be a selfish indulgence to pursue. So he set out on a course that was bound to destroy his geographical career, and though in later years he made use of his training to write important books, like Mutual Aid, which gave a scientific support to anarchist arguments, he never again returned professionally to geography, even though he was treated with great respect by English geographers for his brilliant work, many years ago, on the geography of East Asia." (Woodcock, 1988, 2)

Careful consideration of how anarchist research ought to be disseminated should come at the very beginning and certainly not bolted on as an afterthought. In a perfect world *everybody* would be able to – should they want to – access anarchist research: either through reading the author's work, or listening to them speak to it. In such a world, any financial contribution would be voluntary, and certainly not a prerequisite; non-English translations of the research would be in place; the text would be available to download from wherever the individual found themselves in the world. There would be no copyright, and open-access would be subject to fair use policy. It should be noted that many anarchist and radical publishers do actively try to operate in ways that aspire to meet these goals wherever possible.

However, for those who are in academia, seeking to publish their research along these 'open access' lines can be intensely problematic for them. For this open, inclusive, community-

orientated emphasis on disseminating knowledge flies in the face of the increasingly privatised and commodified worlds of academia and academic publishing houses. The dominance of these neoliberal metrics of assessment of both research and writing is so pervasive in contemporary academia there are precious few scholars, if any, who escape being put under considerable and continuous pressure to publish their research only in 'the highest ranking' journals for example. Failure to do so carriers with it enormous risks both for the academic's immediate future (particularly if they are in precarious employment, seeking tenure), and their longer-term prospective in terms of making a case for internal promotion, or being an attractive applicant for other research posts.

All is not lost however, and there are several tactics and strategies that the anarchist researcher potentially has open to them. These might include: buying (their) books and donating them to the groups/ communities directly; providing PDF versions of final versions of their work to those who might reach out to them; uploading files to a range of 'academic' websites where individuals, though they might have to formally register can access the documents without paying. This would include Academia.edu or ResearchGate. Other possible options include having their work published on The Anarchist Library https://theanarchistlibrary.org/special/index) or the Humanities Commons https://hcommons.org/

So why, you might justifiably ask, did we agree to author a chapter for a prohibitively expensive book (certainly in its Hardback form), one which is only likely to be purchased by university libraries? Are we guilty not only of being hypocritical – and complicit in writing this piece? We justify our contribution here in two ways. First, we see this chapter as embedded as part of a much wider richer and more complex tapestry of social geography, crucially a geography which is still to fully recognise the potential that anarchist praxis can offer. In that sense, it might serve as a small, but important intervention which can be taken forward by

others: particularly, we hope, student researchers. Secondly, it is important to note that the invitation to contribute came in the shape of a wonderfully crafted email from one of the editors. In this way – on a social level – the decision to say "yes" was markedly influenced by this initial invitation. Hopefully by engaging with the editors, and fellow authors of this book, there will be several meaningful and interesting collaborative experiences and opportunities that can now envisaged and looked forward to in future.

Conclusion: Futures

> It would appear that we are entering not only the Anthropocene, a geological period during which human activity is the dominant influence on climate and environment, but the Necrocene, the Age of Death, in which Empire works inevitably against the Earth. (Marshall, 2019, x)

We finish this chapter by calling for more *anarchist* geographies to be brought into being: geographies that will be folded into an energised emancipatory praxis that can actively work to address the crises that threaten to end the world as we know it. The success of this vision will certainly be dependent on ongoing support and contributing to the intersectional anarchist struggles including "anti-capitalism, radical environmentalism, queer liberation, anti-militarism, prison abolition, information freedom and free speech, freedom of movement, anti-racist, anti-fascist and labour struggles" (Wigger, 2016, 133). In this context, and linked to an ongoing desire to further decolonise the geography curriculum (see Lopes de Souza, 2019; Ferretti, 2020), and the Eurocentric canon of classical anarchism, we hope to see productive engagements with Black anarchism – and contributions from - Black anarchists in these critical dialogues and debates come to the fore (see Black Rose Anarchist Federation (2016). Here it is important not overlook the several important interventions that have been intent on

decolonizing anarchism: each of which deserve greater recognition, and further attention from critical geographers (see Galian, 2020). This certainly includes Ramnaths' alternative perspectives on anticolonial movements in India (2011); Galvan-Alvarez et al. focus on decolonising the state (2020); and broader attempts "…to develop an anarchism that can both fight white supremacy and articulate a positive vision of cultural diversity and cultural exchange" (Black Ink, 2018 n.p).

In this context, we also see the task of decolonising euro-centric anarchist though and practice, and foregrounding Indigenous movements in defence of the commons (Clark, 2019) as being central to developing a wider inter-species justice agenda. We would certainly welcome anarchist geographies embracing more fully the struggles for inter-species justice; struggles that fold in the more than-human worlds that we are dependent upon. Indeed, research that contributes to anarchism's posthuman futures (Cudworth and Hobden, 2018; White, 2015a) might prove to be some of the most vital and urgent contributions of them all. Some examples to think about here include zoonotic diseases (Cudworth, 2021), capitalism and farmed animals (White, 2017), insect population collapse (Gunderman and White, 2021), appeals for total liberation (Anonymous; Springer, 2021). Such ambition will also present a new cluster of challenging theoretical, methodological and ethical research dilemmas that are only just beginning to be through in the critical social sciences. How can we gain consent of other-than-human beings? How can we create meaningful spaces to represent their voices and experiences, desires and fears? As importantly – and indeed a question that accompanies all research focused on social and spatial justice – it is never just enough to disseminate knowledge, but to do so in a way that gets people to really *care,* and then act.

Perhaps the COVID-19 crisis will prove a catalyst to new and powerful expressions of inter-species care and relationality? Certainly, it provides with absolute clarity that we must not return to the old norms that have wrought misery, havoc, and destruction on the world and

all life within it. Research in this context must be potentially everywhere, seeking to transform and overturn all sources of oppression, domination, and exploitation where they emerge. What is certain is that we need new imaginaries, new questions, new methods, new ways of seeing and being in the world. And if we are not prepared to embrace this radical direction now, then when? As the editorial collective for the journal ephemera (2020), writing in response to the current corona crisis, argued:

> Crisis is not only something new and transitory, it also crystallizes and reinforces existing inequalities. But crises may also hold a potential to create other political imaginaries and new organizational realities. We hope that the decision to slow down the journal enables the ephemera community to make time and space to collect itself, to listen, to read, to reflect in a way that makes us part of a transformation rather than being simply controlled by it. Crises raise important questions: what have we been doing and what are we doing now as academics, as citizens, as friends, as parents, and as members of different communities? This crisis may be a moment to pause, to (re)think what kind of life we want, what kind of work we want, and what kind of care we can give and receive.

Let us be emboldened by this invitation to begin anew, and do so by taking strength and inspiration from others where it is found. If we can consciously, and creatively orientate ourselves and our research and our methodologies in ways that demand the impossible, we can act as a catalyst through which new forms of emancipatory praxis can to be brought forward into the world. That would have something to do with anarchist geography, wouldn't it?

~~REFERENCES~~References

A Collective of Anarchist Geographers (2017) Beyond electoralism: reflections on anarchy, populism, and the crisis of electoral politics. *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies,* 16(4), 607-642. Retrieved from https://acme-journal.org/index.php/acme/article/view/1571

Anonymous (2019) *Total Liberation*. Active Distribution.

Amster, R. (2018) Anti-Hierarchy. In Franks, B., Jun, N., and Williams, L. (2018). *Anarchism: A Conceptual Approach*. Routledge: London. Pp. 15-28.

Berger, R. (2015). Now I see it, now I don't: researcher's position and reflexivity in qualitative research. Qualitative Research, 15(2), 219–234. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794112468475

Black Ink, (2018) *Ashanti Alston's Black Anarchism.* Available at https://blackink.info/2018/03/08/ashanti-alstons-black-anarchism/ [last accessed 01.07.2021]).

Rose, B. Anarchist Federation (2016) Black Anarchism.. A Reader by Black Rose Anarchism Federation.

Bray, M. (2018) Horizontalism. In B. Franks, N. Jun and L. Williams (Eds). *Anarchism: A Conceptual Approach.* Routledge: London. pp 101-114.

Brock, A., (2020) 'Frack off': Towards an anarchist political ecology critique of corporate and state responses to anti-fracking resistance in the UK. *Political Geography*, 82, p.1-15.

Clark, J. (2019*) Between Earth and the Empire: From the necrocence to the beloved community.* PM Press: Edinburgh.

Clare, N. White, G. and White, RJ (2017) "Striking Out! Challenging academic repression in

the neoliberal university through alternative forms of resistance: some lessons from

the United Kingdom. In A.J. Nocella and E. Juergensmeyer (ed) (2017) *Fighting*

academic repression and neoliberal education: resistance, reclaiming, organizing,

and Black Lives Matter in education Peter Lang Publishing: New York. Pp 15-32

Cudworth, E. and Hobden, S. (2018) Anarchism's Posthuman Future. *Anarchist Studies 26.1.*

pp 79 -104.

Cudworth, E., Boisseau, W. and White, R.J. (2021) "Guest editorial", International Journal of

Sociology and Social Policy, Vol. 41 No. 3/4, pp. 265-281.

https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSSP-04-2021-514.

de Souza, M. L (2019) Decolonising postcolonial thinking. *ACME: An International Journal*

for Critical Geographies, 18(1), 1-24. Retrieved from https://www.acme-

journal.org/index.php/acme/article/view/1647

DeLeon, A. P. (2019) Anarchy and Qualitative Methods. In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of*

Education. https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190264093.013.345

ephemera collective (2020) ephemera's response to the coronavirus crisis. *ephemera.*

Retrieved from

http://www.ephemerajournal.org/contribution/ephemera%E2%80%99s-response-

coronavirus-crisis

England, K. (2006) Producing feminist geographies: theory, methodologies and research

strategies. In S. Aitken, & G. Valentine (Eds.), Approaches to human geography.

SAGE: London. https://www.doi.org/10.4135/9781446215432.n27 (pp. 286-297)

Ferretti, F., (2016) Organisation and formal activism: insights from the anarchist tradition.

International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy. Vol. 36 No. 11/12, 2016

pp. 726-740

Ferretti, F (2018) Teaching Anarchist Geographies: Elisée Reclus in Brussels and "The Art of Not Being Governed", *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*, 108:1, 162-178, DOI: 10.1080/24694452.2017.1339587

Ferretti F. (2020) History and philosophy of geography I: Decolonising the discipline, diversifying archives and historicising radicalism. Progress in Human Geography. 2020;44(6):1161-1171. doi:10.1177/0309132519893442

Ferrell, J. (1998) Against the Law: Anarchist Criminology. *Social Anarchism* Issue 25.

Ferretti, F. (2019) *Anarchy and Geography: Reclus and Kropotkin in the UK*. Routledge: London.

Feyerabend, P. (1993) *Against method*. Verso.

Feyerabend, P. (2011) *The Tyranny of Science*. Polity Press.

Fleming, M (1980) "Propaganda by the deed: Terrorism and anarchist theory in late nineteenth-century Europe." Studies in Conflict & Terrorism 4, no. 1-4. Pp.1-23.

Franks, B., Jun, N., and Williams, L. (2018) *Anarchism: A Conceptual Approach*. Routledge: London.

Galián L. (2020) Decolonizing Anarchism. In: Colonialism, Transnationalism, and Anarchism in the South of the Mediterranean. Middle East Today. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-45449-4_2

Galvan-Alvarez, E. Birk Laursen, O. and Ridda, M. (2020) Decolonising the state: subversion, mimicry and criminality, *Postcolonial Studies*, 23:2, 161-169, DOI:10.1080/13688790.2020.1752356

Graham, R. (2015) *We do not fear anarchy, we invoke it: The First International and the origins of the anarchist movement*. AK Press: Oakland and Edinburgh.

Greenaway, J. (2011) 'Preface: sexual anarchy, anarchophobia and dangerous desires.' in J. Heckert and R. Cleminson (ed*). Ethics, Relationships and Power*. Routledge: New York.

Gordon, U. (2008) *Anarchy Alive! Anti-Authoritarian Politics from Practice to Theory*. Pluto :London.

Gunderman, H. and White, R. (2021) "Critical posthumanism for all: a call to reject insect speciesism", International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy, Vol. 41 No. 3/4, pp. 489-505. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSSP-09-2019-0196

Honeywell, C. (2011) *Anarchism*. Polity Press: Cambridge.

Ince, A. and de la Torre, G.B., (2016) For post-statist geographies. *Political Geography*, 55, pp.10-19.

Ince, A. and White R.J. (2020) Activist Geographies, in H. Wilson and J. Darling (ed) *Research Ethics for Human Geography*, SAGE: London.

Kinna, R., (2017) Anarchism and feminism. In N. Jun.(Ed.) *Brill's Companion to Anarchism and Philosophy*. Brill: Leiden. pp.253-284

Kowal D.M. (2019) Anarcha-Feminism. In: Levy C., Adams M. (eds) The Palgrave Handbook of Anarchism. Palgrave Macmillan. pp. 265-279

Kropotkin, P. (1902/1915) *Mutual Aid: A factor of evolution*. William Heinemann: London.

Leeder, E. (n.d./ 1977) Feminism as an anarchist process: The practice of anarcha-feminism. The anarchist library: Anti-copyright. Retrieved from https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/elaine-leeder-feminism-as-an-anarchistprocess

Levy, C (2019) Introduction. In C. Levy and S. Newman (Ed) *The Anarchist Imagination: Anarchism Encounters in the Humanities an d the Social Sciences*. Routledge: London.

Lopes de Souza, M. (2019) Decolonising postcolonial thinking. ACME: An International

    Journal for Critical Geographies, 18(1), 1-24. Retrieved from https://acme-

    journal.org/index.php/acme/article/view/1647

Lumsden, K. (2019) Reflexivity: theory, method, and practice. Routledge: London.

MacLaughlin, J. (2016) *Kropotkin and the Anarchist Intellectual Tradition*. Pluto Press:

    London.

Marshall, P. (2019) 'Foreword'. In J.P. Clark *'Between Earth and Empire: From the*

    Necrocene to the beloved Community'. PM Press: Edinburgh.

Munn-Giddings, C. (2001). Links between kropotkin'theory of 'mutual aid'and the values

    and practices of action research. *Educational Action Research*, *9*(1), 149-158.

Nocella, A.J. and Juergensmeyer, E. (ed) (2017) *Fighting academic repression and*

    neoliberal education: resistance, reclaiming, organizing, and Black Lives Matter in

    education Peter Lang Publishing: New York.

Orenstein, D. and Luken, P. (1978) Anarchistic Methodology: Methodological Anti-

    Authoritarianism as a Resolution to Paradigmatic Disputes in the Social

    Sciences. *Sociological Focus, 11*(1), 53-68.

Parker, M., (2014) University, Ltd: Changing a business school. *Organization,* 21(2), pp.281-

    292.

Parker, M., Cheney, G., Fournier, V., & Land, C. (2014) Advanced capitalism: Its promise

    and failings. In The Routledge companion to alternative organization (pp. 27-41).

    Routledge. London.

Pelletier, P. (2009) Élisée Reclus, géographie et anarchie. Paris: Les Editions du Monde

    Libertaire.

Ramnath, M. (2011) Decolonizing Anarchism: An Antiauthoritarian history of India's liberation struggle. AK Press: Edinburgh.

Reclus, E. (1901 [1996]) On Vegetarianism. Available at https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/elisee-reclus-on-vegetarianism

Rouhani, F. (2012). Anarchism, Geography, and Queer Space-making: Building Bridges Over Chasms We Create. ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies, 11(3), 373-392. Retrieved from https://acme-journal.org/index.php/acme/article/view/938

Sidaway, J.D., White, R.J., Barrera de la Torre, G., Ferretti, F., Crane, N.J., Loong, S., Knopp, L., Mott, C., Rouhani, F., Smith, J.M. and Springer, S., (2017) *The Anarchist Roots of Geography: Toward Spatial Emancipation.* The AAG (American Association of Geographers) Review of Books, 5(4), pp.281-296.

Smith, T. S. J. (2015) Anarchism and non-representational theory in the social sciences. *E-International Relations* .http://www.e-ir.info/2015/08/07/anarchism-and-non-representational-theory-in-the-social-sciences/ pp.1-6.

Springer, S., (2012) Anarchism! What geography still ought to be. *Antipode, 44(5)*, pp.1605-1624.

Springer, S., (2013) Anarchism and geography: a brief genealogy of anarchist geographies. *Geography Compass,* 7(1), pp.46-60.

Springer, S., (2014) Human geography without hierarchy. *Progress in Human Geography*, 38(3), pp.402-419.

Springer, S. (2016a) *The Anarchist Roots of Geography*. Minnesota Press.

Springer, S. (2016b) Fuck Neoliberalism. *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies*, *15*(2), 285-292. Retrieved from https://acme-journal.org/index.php/acme/article/view/1342

Springer, S. (2020) Caring geographies: The COVID-19 interregnum and a return to mutual aid. *Dialogues in Human Geography*, *10*(2), 112-115.

Springer, S. (2021) 'Total Liberation Ecology: Integral Anarchism, Anthroparchy, and the Violence of Indifference' in S. Springer, J. Mateer, and M. Locret-Collet (eds). Undoing Human Supremacy Anarchist Political Ecology in the Face of Anthroparchy. Oakland: PM Press.

Stenglein and Madar (2016) Cycling Diaries: Moving Towards an Anarchist Field Trip Pedagogy' in S. Springer, R.J. White and M.L. De Souza (ed) Anarchism, Geography, and the Spirit of Revolt. The Radicalization of Pedagogy (Vol.1) Lanham. Rowman & Littlefield. pp. 223-246.

Veron, O (2016) (Extra) ordinary activism: veganism and the shaping of hemeratopias. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*. Vol.36(11/12), p.756-773

Ward, C. (1996) *Anarchy in Action*. Freedom Press: London.

Weick, D.T. (1972) 'Preface'. In G. Baldelli, *Social Anarchism*. Penguin: London.

Wigger, A. (2016) Anarchism as emancipatory theory and praxis: Implications for critical Marxist research. *Capital & Class*, *40*(1), 129–145. https://doi.org/10.1177/0309816816628247

White, R.J. (2015) Following in the footsteps of Élisée Reclus: disturbing places of inter-species violence that are hidden in plain sight, in A. Nocella, R.J. White, and E. Cudworth (ed) *Anarchism and Animal Liberation: Critical Animal Studies, intersectionality and total liberation,* McFarland Press: Jefferson.

White, R.J. (2017) Rising to the challenge of capitalism and the commodification of animals: post-capitalism, anarchist economies and vegan praxis, in D. Nibert (eds) *Animal Oppression and Capitalism*. Praeger, Conneticut.

White, R.J., and Cudworth, E. (2014) 'Taking it to the Streets: Challenging Systems of

Domination From Below ', in A. Nocella, J. Sorenson, K. Socha. A. Matsuika (ed)

Critical Animal Studies Reader: An Introduction to an Intersectional Social Justice

Approach to Animal Liberation, Peter Lang Publishing Group: New York.

White, R.J. and Springer, S. (2018) "Making Space for Anarchist Geographies in Critical

Animal Studies", in J. Sorenson and A. Matuoka (Eds*). Critical Animal Studies:*

Towards Trans-species Social Justice. Rowman and Littlefield International: London.

White, R.J., Springer, S., and de Souza, M.L (2016) Introduction. Performing Anarchism,

Practicing Freedom, Pursuing Revolt. In R.J. White, S. Springer and M.L. de Souza

(ed) The Practice of Freedom: Anarchism, Geography, and the Spirit of Revolt.

Roman & Littlefield: New York. Pp 1-22

White, R.J. and Williams C.C. (2017) Crisis, Capitalism and the anarcho-geographies of

community self-help. In A. Ince and S.M. Hall (ed) *Sharing Economies in Times of*

Crisis: Practices, Politics and Possibilities, Routledge, London.

Woodcock, G. (1988) '*Élisée Reclus: an introduction'*. In M. Fleming. The Geography of

Freedom. Black Rose Books: Quebec. Pp. 11-18.