

Friday 17th January 2025

Dear Rebecca

So in my last letter to you I spoke about my ideas around anarchy, and specifically contemporary anarchist subcultures and the fact that they are dominated by an in-group/out-group social structure that is policed by authoritarians, and that this has to date limited the diffusion of anarchist ideals to the wider population. I critiqued briefly the classical revolutionary approach of anarchy as being badly outdated, and proposed a different model, one based on how behaviour actually spreads through the social body, and explained that if we use this as a basis for how a real social revolution might be achieved (as opposed to overthrowing the state), then the first port of call would be in developing a culture which is much more geared towards dealing with social authoritarianism, talking about how it works and how to identify it, explaining how harmful and oppressive it is, giving examples and stories, and so on.

There are lots of really good innovative and engaging workshop ideas around that that can be developed, and I have my own ideas about how that can be done that I would like to share with you. They are really good workshop ideas that would fit the remit of a lot of funders, so I am pointing this out now so that you can think about it. You will be aware of funding deadlines and the yearly plan for Seeds work so by bringing this up I am hoping you will at least think about whether this could fit in and what a possible timescale would be. I also have ideas around the class issue, specifically workshops around raising class consciousness within social justice and environmental movements that I would also like to share with you, and that I think would also appeal to a lot of funders, way more than the usual Seeds work I think. I would like to suggest Seeds adopt or take an interest in this too, I would really like to work with you all on these, and so I am going to write a more formal proposal for you to consider. I don't know when, within a month I guess. If you don't want to take it forward that is fine, I've not put these ideas down on paper before so it will be useful for me to do so, and I can always approach some Bristol groups again with the proposal with a view to taking them forward if you decline (which is the likely outcome), though I think Seeds would be my first choice.

Anyhow I will carry on with this thread in future letters, but for now I wanted to talk a little bit about feminism, and specifically the anarcho-feminist subcultures that typify the UK anarchist scene, and of which you have been a part of. I have attached a poem I wrote some time ago and that summarises my own experience of radical feminist subcultures, and specifically the kind of subculture you have been part of.

I do critique feminism a lot in my writing, so I should first of all say that I love feminism, I mean, I love feminist writing and the diverse movement, and I agree overall with the broad critique of patriarchy. And I would agree that there is a war on women, I would say that that is obvious, but that it is a war waged by some men and some women on a certain kind of femininity (what you might call a liberated femininity), rather than a war by men on women. I would also add that, just as in the UK you have the indigenous red squirrel being squeezed out by a larger and more aggressive invasive grey squirrel, so too I feel that indigenous males are being similarly squeezed out by patriarchal culture, a culture which is not natural and which is invasive. I think this distinction is not at all made in feminism, where men are broadly branded as patriarchs.

These distinctions mean that feminism, and especially radical feminism, can be guilty of really quite heinous injustices, which it justifies by the narrative of 'war on women'. With a warlike mentality, 'collateral damage' is accepted and becomes normalised and tolerated. So the poem I have attached to the email along with this letter is really my critique and experience, in a nutshell, of this 'collateral damage'. It has had a devastating effect on my life, and caused a really severe

breakdown that I am still recovering from, so I find it particularly galling that these appalling attitudes continue to be tolerated.

You have been part of a classic anarcho-feminist subculture, one in which there is a really severe in-group/out-group structure policed passive-aggressively by authoritarians and man-haters such as Sarah or Rhiannon (who I don't think is a man-hater). This subculture legitimises the chronic abuse of men, such as myself, but others too, on the pretext of, I presume, *men are patriarchs - sexists and dominators - who abuse women and so they have no rights themselves to decent treatment, and if we are wrong in some cases then oh well there is a war on women and so collateral damage is to be expected and therefore doesn't matter*.

The abuse I received over the years caused so much misogyny in me that in the end I had to leave and go my own way, and even today I am still dealing with the emotional fallout and trauma of all this abuse, which as far as you and the other feminists in this subculture are concerned, never happened, and which you and they continue to take no responsibility for.

I'm no longer angry at you, as I feel you are engaging with me on this now, albeit silently. Nonetheless I feel you are listening and thinking on it all, and that you are integrating it. You may not be reading my letters but nonetheless when I write and send them there is some kind of mysterious process that takes place at the unconscious (for you) level. I know this because I can feel the difference, our relationship is changing as a result, and there is much more feeling to it now, and that is suggestive of healing and rapprochement, though for you this may all still be latent and not conscious. I also feel that you were in large part the victim of this social authoritarianism yourself, and that without the domination of the matriarchs within this feminist subculture you would not have acted the way you did towards me. I mean, we all know that oppressed people will often try and make the best of their situation, and that may often include a dose of collaboration with their oppressors in order to improve their lives. This is well described in feminism, often called 'bargaining with patriarchy', and the many situations where women collaborate in order to improve their life chances are well described. So I kind of think of you a bit like that, I don't really put the finger of responsibility on you. I know you are really quite stuck in a social matrix of relations from which certain things are expected of you, and if you do not conform there are penalties, which will probably include intense feelings of fear, anxiety, dread, panic. I think you are increasingly aware of the social prison you are in, and that as a result resistance is now starting to rise up within you. I can feel it. (feelings, by the way, are like entangled particles – the feelings between two people are not bound by time and space and can travel instantaneously from one person to the next. We are not taught that in western culture, but it is true, so by paying attention to your feelings for someone, even if they are hundreds of miles away and you don't speak to them, is nonetheless a sound and reliable way to understand their current state of mind. It is in this way that I know my letters are making a difference, regardless of whether you read them or not).

So the feminist subculture you have been a part of is a classic example of an in-group culture that I have been talking to you about, and has all the classic traits of inverting some of the values of the wider culture it critiques (the obvious one being devaluing men and empowering women), harbouring extreme hostility to the wider culture (war on women), and of being equally if not more oppressive than the wider culture it critiques.

Now you are I believe starting to address this, and I think you are even starting to stand up to Sarah, or at least to test the water, at the subjective emotional and mental level (you are not able to stand up to her socially), and I think you are also coming to terms with feelings for me, and especially repressed feelings. So you are going through a process of firstly becoming aware of social authoritarianism and how it impacts on you, to thinking about what you can do, and eventually to doing something about it. I don't know how conscious you are of this, but I think you should start

to pay more attention to it, because I think this can form the basis of future workshops in how to deal with social authoritarianism and passive-aggressive forms of domination. That is, the experience that you gain from this process will have value to others so it's important to be as conscious of it as you can so that you can then relate it to others at a later stage.

Something I really want to emphasise and that you do not take seriously is the fact that you have done me a lot of harm and there is a need to address it. At present you are continuing to ignore it, to block my emails, and to shut me out, which is the cause of additional harm.

I'm sure you're familiar with the framework below for conflict resolution within social movements. This conflict resolution framework is a natural process. That is, it doesn't require facilitation or intervention, it happens of its own accord. Though it is best navigated consciously, it doesn't need to be, as it takes place anyways regardless. It is what I refer to as an emotional pathway. Our emotions compel us along certain pathways, and this is one of them.

Framework	Frame	Strategy	Purpose
Transformative	Transform systems	Prevention Accountability	Undoing structural power
Restorative	Resolution	Prevention Reparation	Community cohesion
Punitive	Rule breaking	Retribution Incapacitation	Punishment

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Let me give an example: you harm someone. That will then set that person on an emotional pathway whereby their psyche seeks to heal and resolve the harm done. They will probably get angry initially, and they may seek to punish you by harming you back. That is one way to resolve it. If they don't choose that pathway, then they may seek to talk to you and come to a resolution. That is a second pathway. Finally, if they are unable to resolve the harm done then a transformative approach is undertaken. In this case the power that the person who did the harm has, and which they used to enact the harm, is undone, and they are then left in a place of powerlessness where they are then held accountable for what they have done.

Like I said, that all takes place naturally. Interpersonal power is a fluid thing, and it shifts and changes according to these principles. I have not sought retribution on you, instead I have been trying to come to a resolution, but you are ignoring me, really quite rudely so, and deeply hypocritically and offensive, so now what is going to happen is that the structural power that you have over me, and that allows you to turn your nose up in the air and ignore me, is going to be undone.

How so?

I'm not going to say. In yoga these things are known as assembled causes. They are studied because they are important in understanding how the social world works, and the forces that propel people from A to B, and the very structure of social spaces themselves. By continuing to ignore me despite my best intentions and despite the horrific abuse you have levelled my way over the last 16 years without cause, by doing this you have now massively tipped the balance of power, and the assembled causes are such that nothing is going to stop the structural power you have from being dismantled, and from you being held accountable for what you have done to me.

It isn't anything scary. It is just what is going to happen. I think in all likelihood you are totally ignorant of what is going on within you, the latent forces building up, the repressed desires and feelings, the repressed disgust at how you have behaved... I think you are totally ignorant of all these things, you never did really have your eye on the ball, so these inner forces will simply overwhelm you at some point, and a sudden shift will take place.

We have a relationship Becky, and it is one that you are going to have to spend a lot of time and effort repairing, and I think the way to doing that begins with me working with you, Sharon and Anna at Seeds to guide Seeds in a new and more productive direction, one that confronts real power, teaches others to overcome it, and that brings real healing and rapprochement.

The last thing I want to say about undoing structural power is that one of the things that will happen is that you are going to have to face up to Sarah, and the chronic forms of passive-aggressive control that she exerts on you (fright, panic, terror, acute anxiety etc). To aid that process I am just going to share with you a few things that I think will really help you to understand where you are at.

The first is the UK Government's definition of domestic abuse, which is: *'any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse by intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to psychological, physical, sexual, economic, emotional'*.

The next list is a list of common feelings that those in abusive relationships feel:

- *She may be overwhelmed by fear*
- *She may believe she is to blame and that if she somehow changes then the abuse will stop*
- *She may experience many conflicting emotions. She may love her partner, but hate the abuse. She may live in the hope that her good side will reappear*
- *She may be dependent on her partner emotionally*
- *She may feel shame, guilt and embarrassment*
- *She may feel resigned and hopeless and find it hard to make decisions about her future*
- *She may worry about leaving or trying to break away*

And lastly, some info on why people in abusive relationships find it hard to leave:

It takes a great deal of courage to leave someone who controls and intimidates you. Try not to put pressure on your loved one to leave right away. Leaving is not a single act – it is a process that takes time. Let her know that you are there for her, no matter what she decides to do.

There are many practical and psychological barriers to ending a relationship with an abusive partner, including:

- **Safety:** *She may be fearful of what the abuser will do to her if she leaves or attempts to leave*

- **Lack of self-confidence:** She may believe that it is her fault and that she deserves the abuse, and may fear she would never find anyone else if she left
- **Denial:** She convinces herself that “it’s not that bad”
- **Shame:** She is embarrassed about people finding out
- **Guilt:** The abuser makes her believe that she is to blame for her actions
- **Loyalty:** She may be loyal to the abuser regardless of her actions
- **Hope:** She believes that things will improve with time, or that she can make her change
- **Lack of support:** She doesn’t know where to turn for help
- **Pressure:** Family and friends pressure her to stay and ‘make it work’
- **Religious/community beliefs:** She is under pressure not to break up the ‘sisterhood’
- **Love:** Despite the abuse, she still loves her
- **Jekyll and Hyde:** The abuser switches between charm and rage; the woman thinks ‘She’s not always like this’
- **Intimidation:** The abuser uses chronic states of passive-aggression such as anxiety, guilt, panic, threat, menace to control and keep her compliant.
- **Gender roles:** She might normalise her behaviour – ‘that’s how lesbians are’. She may believe it’s her role to put the needs of others first

Love and Solidarity

Sonny x