

September 1977

Vol. 1 no. 3

Anarcha Feminist



Notes

Hi! Some of you thought you were never going to get this newsletter, but here it is. Some of you have never seen Anarcha-Feminist Notes before, so you don't realize how long we've been promising to get it together.

But no use apologizing; if you're the type who works and has a personal life (a common type), you can probably figure out why us Ufems were such slowpokes. Just think of all that waiting as a learning experience. ("Learning what?" you may ask. Uh, well, how about perfect patience? No? How about about revolutionary fortitude? You already have that? Well, you can think of something.)

So here we are, forging ahead with gusto and giggles. Hope you enjoy it!

Utopian Feminists

Who are you?

We Utopian Feminists were really excited to hear about Tiamat and chose to talk about ourselves and would like to share through the Notes ideas and details about the different groups that we all are a part of.

We thought that a dialogue among us Notes readers about topics that we're interested in would be good for the Notes. One that we thought would be good is our small groups--how they are, how they began, how they're structured, what they've done, the agonies and victories--easy stuff like that.

So we think it would be neat for everyone else to send in articles about themselves for the next Notes, especially since the only articles that were sent in this time were reprints.



GNC/CPF

The Utopian Feminists

Our history

There are four of us now. There once were seven. Eight, actually--but one, an infant, was not among us through her own choice.

We all had been involved in women's groups for varying lengths of time. Two years ago, we all were currently in a women's group that was drifting/breaking apart. Some(one) of us had formally left the group.

One of us heard about a socialist feminist conference in Yellow Springs, Ohio, and organized a last minute two car caravan of seven women looking for... it varied. Several of us had grappled with Marxist/Leninist/socialist philosophies. Some(one) of us had to be dragged kicking and screaming to such a radical gathering.

All of us had a great interest in getting to know ourselves as women. That was the common bond.

Because of the last-minuteness of the excursion, one of us was turned away. No room at the inn. We struggled as a group for the first time--not very skillfully--with the question of one of us being separated from the group. But we were not yet a group defined as such.

Those of us who stayed felt a need to get together and share the experiences that we had each had individually or together throughout the conference. When we returned, the seven of us got together and by talking about the whole thing--experiences with other women, experiences in the workshops, an experience riding home alone on a bus, experiences in the large groups--realized that what all of us wanted might be able to come about in a small group of women who would make a commitment to each other that was binding.

And so, we tried.

Like many new relationships for which there are no role models, no patterns to fit into, this new relationship had many storms and struggles. We had made a commitment to each other to get to know each other intimately and to share everything that we could.

We found many things that we could share and the struggle was, by and large, a joyful one.

As time went on and each of us grew and changed as individuals will grow and change, we began to realize that there were some unproductive tensions within the group. We did not live together. Scheduling times when all of us could gather and have the energy to spend productive time with each other became difficult. The results of our interaction did not offer enough support in the daily lives of some of us to keep up such a heavy commitment.



One at a time, three women left the group. We struggled, not very skillfully, with these separations. Each one did not make the next easier to deal with for us individually or as a group.

We have learned much about ourselves from these struggles. As individuals, we have maintained, improved, or attempted to rebuild the relationships that we have with these women and the child that are no longer a part of us.

There are four of us now. We have begun to know each other well enough to make the commitment that we made to each other two years ago.

How we are

For two years the four of us Utopian Feminists have been together and before that we all participated in other women's groups. There is something special about women-only groups. They are exciting and productive. Trying to be leaderless and non-hierarchical (although difficult) has been easier in a women's group than in a mixed group because we have started out on a more equal basis. We have chosen to be in a small closed group so that we may each be more than one small voice in a crowd. Our group has been always changing and growing and we've been getting less and less oppressive to each other.

We believe that "movement" writing should be clear and easy to understand, and we try to put that into our practice.

We don't believe one form of oppression is more important than another. We all are oppressed and we all oppress. We feel that trying to change this condition is more important than worrying whether we are more oppressed than someone else.

We feel it's very important to have fun and keep our sense of humor in the course of changing our lives. The more we get to know each other and share with each other and hang out together, the more fun we have and the easier it is to change our lives and hope through that that other things will change too. The strategies we use and the projects we do seem to come easier with time. We've done so much work on our relationships already, built such a solid foundation, that we can get things done without a lot of brouhaha.

The Utopian Feminists are women-oriented. For us, this means that our commitment to change is based on more than hating men or the system or oppression. Anger is right on, but we also believe that much of the struggle should be joyful, and when we're with women we love, it is. (We almost named our group Joyful Struggle, but we didn't want to get called the Joystrugs.)

For two of us Ut-fems, being women-oriented includes having sexual relationships with women. We all believe in lesbianism as a political

choice and a way of expressing love for women, but we don't really believe in homosexuality and heterosexuality as two completely distinct, separable kinds of sexual realities. We think everybody's sexuality is more complicated than is probably comfortable to deal with, that we all have the potential to be just about any way we choose sexually, and that people's sexuality is ever-changing.

We don't believe in having a political "line". Although we have strong feelings and ideas about change, we see ourselves as always in process, analyzing things in new ways and growing. We believe in bread and roses; at the same time that we are opposed to the state and capitalism, we are also involved in personal change.



There's a certain political philosophy abroad in the land that says that change begins and ends at home, that all oppression exists in your head ("mind-forged manacles"). We call this outlook hippy-dippy. We do think it's true, though, that we've strongly internalized a lot of the bullshit we've been force-fed all these years. Some of our chains are products of our minds and when we identify them, we can try to overcome them.

What we do

Sometimes we actually get ourselves together and do stuff instead of sitting around jawing about it. Like this newsletter.

We all read *Begin at Start* by Su Negrin about a year and a half ago. We're still talking about it, since she writes about such relevant junk in it.

We collectively wrote a leaflet for and participated in a demonstration against the local six-county undercover narcotics agents (the Multi-County Enforcement Group). The leaflet is called "We Still Ain't Satisfied," and tells our position on recreational drugs, narcs, and doctors legally doping up women.



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We wrote outraged letters and articles in local papers and acted as a support group when open lesbians at Illinois State University were told that they wouldn't be allowed on the softball team because they were a "disruptive influence."

We picketed and leafletted a Farrah Fawcett Lookalike Contest at our local Ford car lot.

We went to Movement for a New Society women's conferences.

We drank beer and engaged in Revolutionary Analysis of Personal Relationships (it used to be called gossip).

We participated as a group in a larger group trying to plan a community women's center, but we dropped out due to many complicated reasons. Andrea says it was a learning experience because we "learned stuff about the conditions necessary to have a working group: like manageable size and clear goals."

We are currently working on (when we aren't biting our nails over this newsletter) a brilliant feminist travelling show, consisting of songs, skits, and poems written by ourselves and other women.

We agonized over a description of ourselves to appear in the local Women's Resource Directory, but it was too long and got cut down to one rather mindless sentence in the final product. Andrea says it was a learning experience, because we found out so much about ourselves as we wrote the original description.

We learned to run a platemaker and an offset press, the fruits of which you are now holding in your grubby hand.

This looks impressive the way I've got it written here, but remember it does cover two years and two months. But then, we were also struggling with shit jobs and unmet needs and broken hearts and all that junk during those years too, so maybe it's not so bad. Anyway, Andrea says it was a learning experience.

Who we are

SUE by susie

Sue is the kind of person that when you're in the audience and she's in the play, you have to keep practically stuffing both elbows in your mouth to keep from violently and repeatedly nudging the person sitting next to you and saying, "Isn't she wonderful? Isn't she beautiful? She's my girlfriend! Isn't she the best one? Doesn't she have a nice loud voice?" and really, this is pretty much how we feel about her when she's off stage too. She can also do things like supervise a seed company print shop and make the best snotty comments you ever heard, and what's even more endearing, she is prouder of the latter skill than the former. So consider yourself nudged.

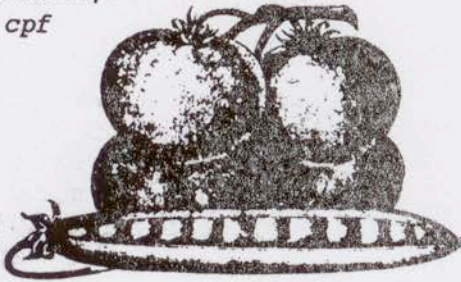
Who we are cont.

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ANN by andrea

Ann Lewis was the first one of our group to define herself as an anarchist. She is also the member of our group most involved with children and animals. Ann has been a vegetarian for six years. She has worked at an animal hospital as a vet's assistant and shit worker for over a year. She also has a dog and cat (Claudia and Smoky) and keeps bees (unnamed).

cpf



Ann is sensitive, militant, perceptive, and analytical. She can admit to being afraid to change and do it anyway. She is not afraid to go right to the basics of things. She is wonderful to talk to about anything and everything, and exceptionally caring and giving with her friends.

(P. S. The only bad things about Ann are that she has hypoglycemia, which is making her meaner every day, and, like most women, she has absolutely no sense of humor whatsoever about anything.)

ANDREA by sue

Andrea, who identifies and routs out sloppy thinking and verbalizes the lessons we learn from our learning experiences, is the first of us to identify herself as a radical lesbian. She is also the first of us to verbalize the untruth of the separation of sexuality into neat little homo and hetero packages. She is a poet and a dreamer and a hard-core analyst. She brings to us the easiest outs through her sensitivity to emotional struggle and the hardest questions through her sensitivity to the conditions of our lives.

Her energy abounds. She is among the hard core of the community newspaper staff. She is one of the collective that operates the

local women's bookstore. She is a part of a living collective. She is involved in the life of the child that was part of the Ut-Fems. She is a tireless builder of and worker on relationships. She is...ah...a wonderful woman.

SUSIE by ann

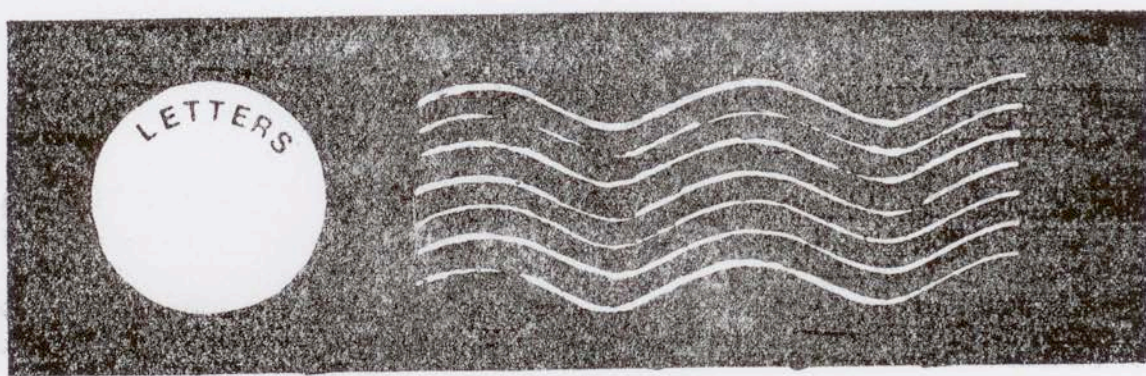
How can I write about Susie Day in 25 words or less? Her sense of humor is her most revolutionary feature. I am much more lighthearted since I've met her. She has been a strong force on the Post-American (our local alternative paper) for years and been active in all sorts of women's groups for a long time. This past year she quit her job as an English teacher at Illinois State University (one of her most revolutionary actions, next to quitting smoking). Now she's writing a book instead of lesson plans. Susie has so much to offer the Ut-Fems that it's hard to know what to say next. She writes beautiful poetry. I want to share a poem she wrote for Jennifer, who will be two years old this October and is a very special person.

for Jennifer

I wish I could promise you
That there will always be a place
Where you can see straight down
Through the water
and watch the pebbles
and the little fish and crabs
going about their cosmic business.

I wish I could tell you
That your sisters will never be hungry
That you will only see rifles in museums
That all your pain will be fruitful
That all words have meaning
That strangers will always take you in
and give you dinner

I wish that I could write a poem
Of all the things I want for you
And you could put it under your pillow,
And go to sleep,
And dream it true.



Dear Notes,

On the newsletter--I liked the job they (Tiamat) did--but I was displeased that they didn't stick to the deadline of May 30. I also wrote them several times asking how they were going to print so I could send my article accordingly. I never received an answer. (I also sent some money and never received a letter telling me they received the money.) Weren't the deadlines your group (the Des Moines group) suggested approved by everyone? I think if deadlines are set they should be kept. Sue Gilmore and I were working on articles but before we were finished the Notes came out.

If the group from Bloomington doesn't do the next issue I have no objections to letting your group (Des Moines) do it. There's no way I can take on the responsibility now.

In the next issue we should set new deadlines. Maybe the same as last year: Nov. 30, Feb. 28, May 30, and Aug. 30.

Sedition and Love,
MiMi
c/o Resurgence
P.O. Box 801
Evanston, IL 60204

Dear Sisters,

I have been able to get your address on the second issue of Open Road (a very good paper), and as I am an anarchist working in a Libertarian Feminist Collective, I'm very interested in receiving your publication and information about your activity.

If you're interested in our activity, we'll send you the material you need; at the present, Italian feminist movements are mostly concerned with the political trials for the several cases of physical violence against women; during these trials, the police often cudgel the women who protest against the judges and the male ideology of the state's institutions that, instead of judging the rapist, accuse the woman of being a whore who has excited a poor man with her inviting behavior.

We're also involved in the propaganda of free abortion and other kinds of rights for women's liberation.

I'd like to know if you've any experience about theatrical activities, used to emphasize the woman's condition in the present authoritative society.

I've read something by Emma Goldman and I think she's a wonderful woman that understood many things, and her position about women is very good.

Well, I hope to hear from you soon, and excuse me for my bad English.

Love and Anarcha-feminism
Ester Tognon
Viale Fulcieri, 6
47100 F O R L I'
Italia

WOMEN'S LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS

Dear Notes,

I am one of the women in a new anarchist/anarchist-feminist paper group that should be out soon. We are positively interested in communicating with you because anarcha-feminist groups are not really going here like they are in the states. Although after the National Women's Liberation Conference this April, a network has been set up, and we hope to have an anarchist women's conference soon.

We would really like to hear what is going on in relation to this as we've only been able to piece together bits (from Siren, Second Wave).

You'll see from the open letter that we hope the paper will be widely contributed to with news from abroad. And would be really glad to hear of any news/ideas that you have--or have written. We have not been able to obtain Emma, and would gladly pay for any postage/xeroxing.

We hope to write an outline of the development of anarcha-feminism. Has anything been written in the states?

In the meantime, we'll send you our paper and a copy of anarcha-feminist newsletter, as it would be really good to establish contact.

In sisterhood,
Sharon,
for Zero
BM Box 746
London WC1V 6XX
England

Please send me information about Emma and Anarcha-Feminist Notes.

Clare Raulerson
218 S. Gadsden, Apt. 4
Tallahassee, Fla. 32301



Workbook/cpf

Saw your name and address in the Open Road, and am interested in reading A/F Notes.

Would you let me know if I can subscribe (!) or if I could send you some money for costs and postage (I haven't included any in this letter, as money orders are a bit pricey here, so I'll wait till I hear from you.)

You might also be interested in hearing of the AS IF collective in Melbourne (Aust.)--anarcha surrealist insurrectionary feminists--address PO Box 294, Rollingwood, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia. I don't think they're still together, but they had some good outputs which I think are still available.

Hope to hear from you soon,
Carolyn Page
32 Westbury St.
Hockney,
South Australia 5069

Dear Notes,

I saw the note about the A/F Notes in Open Road #2. I would like to see a copy for review. If it's possible to do, please send a copy to:

Black Market Books
P.O. Box 306
Cambridge, Mass. 02139

ERS LETTERS LETTERS

Dear Sisters!

We've received a lot of enthusiastic support for the A/F Notes. Since the announcement appeared in Open Road saying that copies are available from me, requests to be added to the mailing list and other new inquiries have been coming to me. I've been responding to those that necessitate a letter and forwarding the letters to the producing group. I've also been keeping the mailing list updated. I also sent the Utopian Feminists a couple of the letters that I sent that I thought might interest people.

I encourage folks to write to each other particularly if common interests emerge in the Notes. If anyone is traveling, direct contact could also be supportive.

Communication with the producing group has been a problem for several of us. I kept receiving material and writing to ask what to do with it. Also the Des Moines group was prepared to do this issue if necessary. Again I received no response from Tiamat as to whether another group had volunteered. It's also helpful to check to make sure the updated mailing lists are being received. I understand that we are all busy and that sometimes it takes a while to work things out. It would be helpful to me if the producing group could keep in touch with me, let me know how things are proceeding. This seems particularly necessary since I will be mailing back issues and will probably continue to receive new inquiries. It really takes a lot of effort to coordinate an effort such as this across a long distance. I feel praise for us for the energy we've put into it and encourage us to continue to improve our process.

Here is the latest financial update from this end:

Contributions: \$18.64

Expenses: \$14.15.

Expenses that haven't been covered yet include xeroxing and mailing back issues to three groups and forwarding material to the Utopian Feminists. At any time that funds build up beyond the expenses for mailing back issues and responding to inquiries, I will forward the money to the producing group.

In addition, we all need to help the producing group by sending contributions direct to them. This is becoming even more necessary because our distribution and the amount of material to be included is growing. It's really exciting to see so many women interested in the network! Let's keep it working!

Sisterhood for the Revolution!
Karen Johnson
1821- 8th St.
Des Moines, Iowa 50314



cpf

Greetings! Please send us a free sample copy of your publication which is the result of a merger of Anarcha-feminist Notes and Emma, neither of which we have seen. We publish the Alternative Press Index, and we are always looking for good anarchist publications to index. I read about you in Open Road, which we will be indexing. Thank you very much.

Chris Tsai-Stadler
Alternative Press Centre
PO Box 7229
Baltimore, Maryland 21218

LETTERS LETTERS

Herewith we have the pleasure to subscribe to your periodical A/F Notes, for the year 1977.

The Institute for social history collects material in the field of social history, in particular the labour movement, underground, action groups, anarchism etc., and puts it at the disposal of people who want to use it for research.

Would you be so kind to send the issues and an invoice up to December 1977 inclusive to the periodicals department of our institute?

Thanking you in anticipation,
International Institute of Social History
Herengracht 262-266
Amsterdam-C., Netherlands



cps Andrea's favorite graphic

Please send us a copy of the new anarcha-feminist paper--the collective would like to consider it to carry for the store.

Thanks,
Pancho White Villa
c/o the Madein Times Bookstore
617 Salem Ave.
Dayton, Ohio 45406

Dear Sisters--

I would appreciate being put on your mailing list to receive your publication--Anarcha-Feminist Notes. I am in the penitentiary in California and hope you can send it to me free of charge. Me and the other women would appreciate it.

Warm sisterly regards,
Emily Harris
#11842
PTU 95B
E.I.W.
Frontera, CA 91720

We are a small group of women active in the feminist and anarchist movements. We are trying to publish a paper/magazine along anarcha-feminist lines, and we would love to see your magazines, A/F Notes and Emma. Also could you tell us a bit about your group, how it evolved, what you do, etc. The anarchist movement in New Zealand is very small; however, a lot of feminist women are actively interested in anarchist ideas, and at grassroots level anyway, feminist activism here is fairly anarchist. So many women seem to be reading Emma Goldman these days!

I am enclosing \$2 which I hope will cover mailing, etc. Please let us know about subs, etc. Looking forward to hearing from you.

In sisterhood and solidarity,
Margaret Flans
71 Mansfield Ave.
Christchurch 1
New Zealand

As an anarchist-feminist-astrologer, would love to see what you people are putting out. Is it possible to send me a free intro copy? Would be much appreciated.

Yours for the Symbiotic Liberation Front,
Caroline W. Casey
150 W. Irving Ave.
Providence, R.I. 02906

TERS LETTERS LETTERS

Sisters--

A little bit, to help. Please keep me on the mailing list. Presently I am getting all the A/F literature addressed to the Feminist History Research Project. It doesn't matter.

We have no anarchy-feminist group, as such, here any more, so we couldn't possibly offer any help. The Sisterhood Revival Collective, of which I am a member, has been studying anarchy-feminism and in a yet inarticulate manner, I think the whole group is moving in that direction.

In the fall our collective is probably going to offer some discussion groups/courses on radical political theory and the connections to feminism. So many new women coming into the movement with no awareness of theory, coming in through concerts and the social events.

Keep up the good work. Hope you've found another group to pick up the next issue or will undertake another.

In unity,
Sherma Gluck

P.S. Have you seen Carol Ehrlich's "Anarchism, Feminism, and Socialism," put out by Research 1 in Md?

Dear Sisters,

Hi. I'm writing for the CETA workers and applicants branch of the Santa Cruz IWW to let you know that we are here and to let you know that we know you are there. That makes an us. Would you be interested in exchanging publications? We publish Class War Prisoner sporadically. Our copies of A/F Notes would be displayed at the Socialist School (where we hold our meetings) for all in Santa Cruz to read. Our address is CETA Workers

and Applicants IWW Union, c/o The Socialist School, 314 A Laurel St., Santa Cruz, Cal. 95060.

Hurrah for Us
Katie
for CETA Workers and Applicants etc.

P.S. Speaking for myself, I am very excited to discover a whole newsletter full of kindred souls. Reading SRAF news makes you feel like the only woman in the world. Once again I yell Hurrah.

Dear Sisters--

Just wanted to send along my new address and tell you how glad I am the Anarchy-Feminist Notes is happening--hope you have workers for the next issue by this time.

Have you seen the new English newspaper Zero, an anarchist/anarchy-feminist monthly? It's really well-done, and the energy of the women involved, to get the ideas of anarchy-feminism out to people, is inspiring. It seems that anarchy-feminism is popping up all over the world! Zero's address: Zero Collective, c/o Rising Free, 182 Upper St. Islington, London N. 1., England.

Also--a note to anyone who's traveling in New England this summer: if you're in Boston, go see Howard Zinn's play Emma (directed by Maxine Klein) at the Next Move Theater. It's really well done, and the actors are excellent. Emma Goldman's spirit and her vision of revolution really come to life in that theater. I was very deeply moved by it.

That's all for now. Lots of energy and support to you, in anarchist sisterhood,

Peggy Kornegger
163 Willow Ave. #2
W. Somerville, MA 02144

LETTERS LETTERS LE

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Organizing/epf

Dear Sisters:

I am very glad to have found you and hope to come see you (Tiamat) in Ithaca this summer. I'd like people to know through your newsletter that our former women's history library is published in part on microfilm; Herstory (newsletters like yours, Journals, and newspapers), Women and Health/Mental Health, and Women and Law. We're distributing ourselves now. People can write us with a stamped self-addressed envelope for a list where our microfilm is available to them in part or completely.

I'd also very much like to see your review or letters in your newsletter about a book we provided the comparative U.S. data for--namely Soviet Women by William Mandel. My point of view is closer to yours and therefore I'd like to see you all discuss the very rich data in the book. (You can get a free press copy from Reid Boates, Doubleday Anchor, 245 Park Avenue, New York City).

Laura X
Founder

Women's History Research Center, Inc.
2325 Oak Street
Berkeley, Cal. 94708

P.S. Cornell doesn't have anything. The librarian to work on there is Hendrich Edelman.

Dear Sisters,

I have very little money at the present moment, but I can help by passing out literature and rapping to people.

Could you send me copies of your mag and other literature?

Thanks,
R.H. Green
4483 Matilija Ave.
Sherman Oaks, Cal. 91423

P.S. When things get better I can send you some money.

POEM

How Nice

How nice
It really
is
Your house
With its
Shiney floor
& fine
Curtains
How nice.

Marjorie Marshall
Ellsworth, Iowa
50075

THEIR LETTERS LET

Dear Sisters,

Could you please tell me how much it is to subscribe to your publication and maybe send me a sample copy? I read about it in Open Road and am really interested in reading anything connecting anarchism and feminism. A network has been started here after the National Women's Liberation Conference where there was a workshop on the subject and there is a conference this weekend. I would send you a copy of the newsletter which has just come out, but I only have one copy! I'll send you some money as soon as I hear from you. Thanks a lot.

Love in sisterhood,
Mandy Vere
News from Nowhere
100 Whitechapel
Liverpool L1 6EN
England

P.S. Do you know the addresses of any other feminist-anarchist magazines or publishers in America (particularly Feminist Communication and The Other Woman, both mentioned in Open Road, but no addresses given)? Thanks.

Dear Tiamat

I read your ad in Fifth Estate--and I'd very much like to receive "Anarchist Feminist Notes"--the issue you are publishing as well as anything published in the past by you or other groups on the same topic.

I've been a feminist for a long time, but an anarchist only recently. I'm presently in an anarchist study group (studying Spain at the present time), and a feminist support group which is fairly apolitical. The groups are physically distinct but obviously in my own head, I'm working on a merger of ideas. Any help you can offer in the way of literature would be greatly welcomed.

Yours--in sisterhood for a free world--

Annie Newstrom
3694 Ste. Famille
Montreal, P.Q.
Canada H2X2L4

Dear A/F Notes,

At our last National Women's Conference here in London, a great number of individual women gathered expressing their interest in anarcha-feminism. Consequently, we agreed to revive a communication network between anarchist/libertarian women and women's groups by means of a rotating newsletter to begin with.

A conference on anarcha-feminism to discuss some theoretical basis and practical work is going to be called in the near future.

Since most of us feel determined to make a serious effort to maintain some coherence among us and to create some link-ups internationally with other such women and groups, I would like to ask you for some information about your ideas and activities. I want to get hold of the Anarcha-Feminist Notes and Emma; how do I go about getting a subscription?

Hope to hear from you,
Ulrike Grund
2, Alton House
Bowbridge Estate
London E. 3.
Great Britain

Dear A/F Notes,

I read about your new publication in Open Road and I was very excited. Please send me a sample of the new publication, as well as any back issues of Emma and Anarcha-Feminist Notes. Thanks.

Sisterhood,
Diane Spaugh
108 Purefoy Rd.
Chapel Hill, N.C. 27514