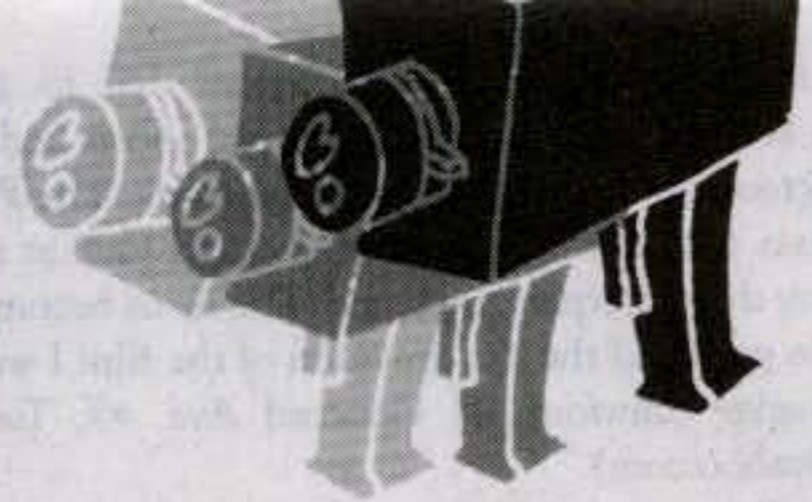


MOVIES



BRING ME
THE HEAD
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MAXIMUM BROCKBOLT

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The DVD *Anarchism In America* includes two '80s documentaries examining the presence of Anarchism in the United States. 1981's *Anarchism In America* has the filmmakers traveling across the country in a RV talking to different people in various communities about their political beliefs. The premise being that the widely held American belief in individual freedom is the essential ideal of anarchism. Most people have been misled about what anarchism is and the filmmakers are out to show the history of America life and the way Anarchism exists in it.

Anarchism In America has some great interviews and archival footage. Of course, there is footage of Emma Goldman. Goldman is asked if she will stop giving speeches since she is being threatened with deportation. She defiantly replies, "I'll stick to my guns." Also introduced are her lesser-known contemporaries such as Mildred Loomis. Then to show that not all Anarchists are on the left, there is an interview with former Republican speechwriter Karl Hess. Hess believes that Republicans and Anarchists really want the same things, less government interference in people's lives. Punk even gets introduced into the mix momentarily with the Dead Kennedys.

Anarchism In America is an interesting introduction to Anarchist principles. I could have done without the somewhat annoying soundtrack of music such as a live version of the Sex Pistol's "Anarchy In the UK" rewritten for the US and Steve Miller Band's "Living In the USA." Overall, though, the documentary is very enjoyable.

The other film is 1980's *The Free Voice Of Labor: The Jewish Anarchists*. This film looks at the history of the *Freie Arbeiter Stimme*, a Jewish Anarchist newspaper started in the late 1800s. The paper is shutting down because the publishers cannot afford to print it at the low subscription rate of \$7 per year. Yet, they don't want to raise the rates since they know the people who subscribe won't be able to afford it.

Freie Arbeiter Stimme started as a way for Jewish immigrants to communicate and organize when they first arrived in the United States. After being disillusioned when they came to this country and discovered working conditions were worse than what they experienced back home, the Jewish workers began to demand improvements, including a shorter workday. Being pacifists, the Anarchists were also against US involvement in World War I. Watching this you see some enlightening resemblance to the current war mania. During WWI, Americans were so anti-German that people weren't allowed to eat sauerkraut; it was renamed liberty cabbage. Red paint was also banned during the war. Things surprisingly haven't changed.

The Free Voice Of Labor: The Jewish Anarchists has some great footage of the early strikes as well as interviews with the publishers of the newspaper. When asked by the filmmaker if they were too idealistic, the secretary of the newspaper replied, "You have to be idealistic. Otherwise you might as well take a gun and blow your brains out."

The two documentaries make a great case for Anarchism in the present US. I see an opportunity for someone to get inspired and look at the way the political climate has changed for the American Anarchists since the early '80s. (www.akpress.org)

The Punks Are Alright starts with an intriguing premise. It begins with the Canadian punk band The Forgotten Rebels. Reformed and playing to enthusiastic audiences, the band sees a new generation of fans. Off in Brazil, The Forgotten Rebels have influenced the band Blind Pigs. Then the Blind Pigs receive an email from a kid in Indonesia who wants a CD, but has no money. The band sends him a CD and then he forms a band that is influenced by The Blind Pigs. I was hoping the documentary would continue that way with the Indonesian band influencing a band in the Czech Republic or Turkey and so on. It would be a great statement on the power of punk and how it spreads worldwide outside the usual commercial channels.

Unfortunately, the lineage stops with the Indonesian band. Dolly, the Blind Pigs fan, works in a factory where he earns a very small wage. His band can only