

Information for Social Change Number 27 Summer 2008

Special Issue on Radical Bookshops

Editorial

Introduction to the Radical Bookshops issue of ISC and a selection of Radical Bookshops

There is an important distinction which must be drawn between Radical and Independent Bookshops.

Radical bookshops are in the business of stocking and selling books about radical history and radical ideas.

Radical bookshops are Important outlets for the many small radical publishers whose works would be very hard to find within almost any public libraries.

They are important outlets for all those small print run radical pamphlets and periodicals that would be 'uneconomic' to stock within mainstream bookshops, and which are rarely to be found upon most news stands.

Radical bookshops are places in which radical individuals get to meet each other.

They are places in which one finds information upon new campaigns and new ideas.

This issue of ISC started out with the announcement that it would focus upon the subject of radical bookshops.

What has changed with this issue is that it has become a reflection of the state of Radical bookshops over the last couple of decades.

My own political education was formed in part by reading such periodicals as Freedom, Anarchy (the 1st series), Peace News, and so forth.

It was also formed by being able to use such radical bookshops as Housmans, Freedom, and the long gone Collets Bookshop in the Charing Cross Road.

Many radical bookshops have disappeared within the last decade or so.

These include Compendium books at Camden town, Books for a change on the Charing Cross Road, 121 Books in Brixton, and Mushroom books in Nottingham.

During July Porcupine Bookcellar held its closing down sale.

With the threatened demise of the Radical bookshop there has also been a growth in the size and importance of such events as the Socialist and Anarchist book fairs.

Radical Librarians spend a lot of time in promoting alternative or radical publishers.

It is important for Radical librarians to use and promote these few radical bookshops which are left in existence.

Martyn Lowe

A note upon Contributors to this issue

Bookstore het Fort van Sjako

In this issue there is an article upon International Bookstore het Fort van Sjako, Amsterdam. This has been especially written for the issue by one of the bookshop collective.

Bill Hetherington is a Veteran Peace Activist and member of the Housmans board.

Lacey Prpic Hedtke is finishing her MLIS at the College of St. Catherine, St. Paul, Minnesota. She is passionate about art and zine libraries, making zines, collective action, and antiquated photo processes.

Donald Rooum is a cartoonist and author of the 'Wildcat' strip in Freedom since 1980.

John Pateman is a co-founder of ISC.

Radical Book shops

A brief Resource listing

Bookmarks

Marxist bookshop.

1 Bloomsbury Street, London WC1B 3QE

020-7637 1848.

<http://www.bookmarks.uk.com/cgi/store/bookmark.cgi>

Freedom

Anarchist Bookshop, and Publisher.

<http://www.freedompress.org.uk/>

Angel Alley, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX.

020 7247 9249.

News from Nowhere

Liverpool's Radical & Community Bookshop
not-for-profit · a worker's co-operative · committed to social change

96 Bold Street
Liverpool L1 4HY

<http://www.newsfromnowhere.org.uk/index.php>

France

Librairie Du Monde Libertaire.

French Anarchist bookshop, which is allied with
la Fédération Anarchiste.

45 rue Amelot,
Paris11,
France

<http://www.librairie-publico.com>

Schnews

The Schnews list of UK radical bookshops & Independent distributors of anarchist zines, pamphlets and other publications.

<http://www.schnews.org.uk/pap/bookshops.htm/>

Anarchist Bookfair

This annual event has been held over a quarter of a century.

The location of the Anarchist Bookfair changes from year to year.

<Http://www.anarchistbookfair.org/>

Further reading

O'Callaghan, Einde (compiler)

The Radical Bookseller Directory 1992.

Radical Bookseller Ltd – London - 1992.

Sendy, John.

Melbourne's Radical Bookshops.

International Bookshop Pty Ltd. - Australia – 1983.