

Philosophies and Bios

Rusty on your political theory? Chomsky who? Here are some people and philosophies you need to know.

Anarchism: “From each according to his ability, to each according to his need”. Lenin claimed that communists and anarchists agreed on everything except the timeline. Anarchists believed that people could live together without coercion, and that human beings are capable of giving mutual aid to each other to create a better society. Some anarchists believe that the existing state needs to be overthrown to clear the way for anarchism, others that the state will die on its own and anarchism take its place.

Prominent Figures: Emma Goldman, Rosa Luxembour, Mikhail Bakunin, Peter Kropotkin.



Fidel Castro/Che Guevara:

Fidel and Che fought alongside each other in the Cuban revolution. Fidel became president of Cuba while Che returned to aiding revolutionaries in other third world countries. Fidel is still president of communist Cuba, while Che was killed in 1967 in the Bolivian jungle. Did You Know: Left-wing governments in Bolivia, Colombia and Brazil all look to Fidel and Che as role models?

Aung San Suu Kyi: Leader of the National League for Democracy



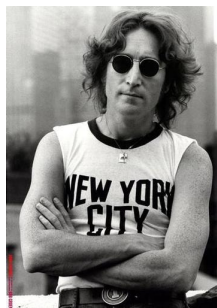
in Myanmar, and recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991. A non-violent pro-democracy activist in Myanmar (Burma), Aung San Suu Kyi is the daughter of Aung San, the man who negotiated Burma’s independence from Britain in 1947. In 1990, her party won the General Election, which would have made Aung San Suu Kyi Prime Minister if the ruling military junta had not nullified the elec-

tions. She has been harassed and placed under house arrest numerous times since 1990, and is prevented from leaving the country, despite vocal support from other countries worldwide.

Communism: “From each according to his ability, to each according to his need”. Communism is in general agreement with anarchists, except that most communists believe that the state will need to be overthrown, despite Friedrich Engel’s view that the state will “wither away” on its own. Soviet and Chinese communism are specific to those countries’ historical situation, and do not reflect communism as an ideology.

Prominent figures: Karl Marx, Vladimir Lenin, Leon Trotsky, Fidel Castro, Mao Tse-Tung.

John Lennon: ex-Beatle. Promoter of world peace and love. Assassinated in 1980.



Martin Luther King, Jr.:

Champion of racial equality and peace. Assassinated in 1968. Recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964.

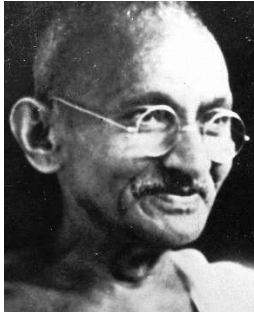


Subcomandante Marcos: Leader of the Zapatista rebels in the southern Mexican state of Chiapas. Promoters of indigenous rights and land reform, the Zapatistas have staged what has been called “the first postmodern revolution”, using all kinds of media, including the World Wide Web, to promote their cause.



Socialism: “From each according to his ability, to each according to his work”. Socialism posits the view that society should be organized equally, and with social protection given in exchange for work. Communism and Anarchism are specific forms of Socialism, but there are others.

Prominent figures: Robert Owen, Louis Blanc.



Mohandas K. Gandhi, known as “Mahatma” (Great Soul) (1869-1948): Promoted non-violent resistance and used it to end the British empire in India. Assassinated in 1948. Suggested work: *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*. Did you know: Gandhi walked 400 km to the Indian Coast

as a protest against the English salt tax?

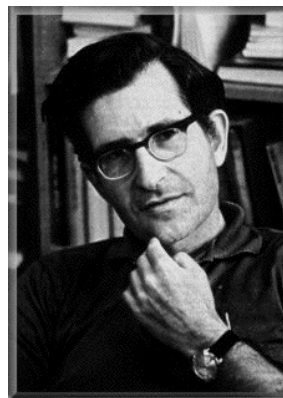
Nihilism: Not really a political ideology, but an influential concept for both Communism and Anarchism. The view that nothing is important, nothing has value or meaning (from the Latin *nihil* = nothing). Many radicals are drawn to Communism and Anarchism in the belief that the existing social structure is meaningless and cruel, and that a more meaningful, kinder society can be achieved.

Prominent figures: Nietzsche (sort of).

Steve Biko: Nonviolent antiapartheid activist in South Africa. Biko died in 1977, under arrest on anti-terrorism charges, probably as a result of being beaten by police.



Ken Saro Wiwa: Nonviolent activist in Nigeria, promoting human rights, the rights of ethnic minorities and environmental responsibility and denouncing the abuses of the multinational corporations. He was executed by the Nigerian military in 1995.



Noam Chomsky: Came to prominence with his outspoken criticism of the Vietnam war. Since then has been a severe critic of American domestic and foreign policy. One of the most recognizable and prominent political commentators of the last 25 years. Suggested work: *What Uncle Sam Really Wants*. Did you know:

Noam Chomsky is one of the most highly-regarded professors of linguistics in the world?