



OTHER SCENES

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Other Scenes

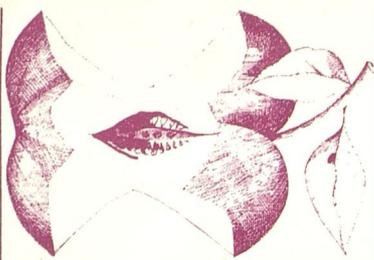
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Other Scenes & Oz

This is a special issue produced for John Wilcock of 'Other Scenes'; edited by John Wilcock and Richard Neville.



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CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your generous four-page spread on us in your last issue. The two articles were as clear, lucid, comprehensible, intelligent, devoid of contradiction and confusion, and as close to the truth as the bent minds of the two female weirdies you hired to write them.

Let's sum up our position for you.

The Process combines the worst aspects of both Nazi Germany and Communist China. Our methods bear a striking resemblance to the techniques of brainwashing and we incorporate all the components of an authoritarian, Nazi, Communist, brainwashing organisation in the business.

Members of The Process are both anarchist and fascist, dangerous megalomaniacs and brainwashed zombies (on alternate days?)

We are rabidly anti-intellectual and punish all deviators with ostracism, ridicule - particularly ridicule, nothing more ridiculous than someone deviating from The Process - and expulsion of course, what else would we do with such trash? We can never make up our minds whether we are desperately keen to lure everyone into The Process or primarily concerned with keeping everyone out.

The Process is wholeheartedly anti-Semitic, hence all the Swastikas (ignore the hammers and sickles), excluding, of course, all our Jewish members, of which our Fuehrer is one. Jehovah gets faintly bothered about this from time to time, but not to worry.

As a result of all this The Process makes countless enemies, draws persecution, condemnation and legal action against itself from every side, sustains frequent attacks by the press in many parts of the world, which of course makes it the safest, cushiest niche in town, just the thing for people too scared to be part of the establishment.

One thing surprises us. Your two sleazy would-be exposers managed to invent so much other rubbish about us, but no sex? no orgies? no perversions? not one sex maniac amongst the lot of us? Or would this make us too acceptable to your readers?

Yours sympathetically,

The Process
2 Balfour Place
London W1

Dear Sir,

I congratulate you on your Process' expose. I inadvertently went to 2 Balfour Place and experienced several bearded loons with large alsation dogs.

I was approached by one bearded fellow who tried to explain his reasons for living. I didn't realise he was a religious pervert, and said an individual could find meaning in worship of an abstract super-being, inferring God. I wondered why he left hastily until another bearded fellow announced they were a religious organisation. I then fell in, the other poor sod didn't want to get involved in an argument. They believed they were on the outside of a brainwashed society, but this fellow was the most brainwashed creep I had ever seen (apart from the pope).

This issue is sponsored jointly by John Wilcock's 'Other Scenes', a fortnightly news-letter published in New York City, and Oz magazine, published monthly in England and Australia. In the style of the fast-growing "underground press" in the United States, this will hopefully demonstrate the need (and the audience) for a truly international 'paper' devoted to the creative, avant garde community. Distribution of this issue is not only in England but throughout Europe and the United States. John Wilcock's 'Other Scenes' appears 20 times each year from wherever its publisher happens to be. Mailing address is P.O. Box 8, Village Station, New York 10014, U.S.A. Subscriptions from September 1967 through December 1968 cost three guineas or \$10, payable either to the New York address listed or via Oz magazine in London.

You can acquire 'The Process' from an easy start. Communication lessons (3 gns andhour) learning how to talk. This is a racket preying on the insecure with inferiority complexes. Most religions do (mystic). It's a good money earned. The Process believe in 'truth', why don't they speak it? They want money to live at Xtul, their chosen paradise. Process are the most hypocritical group on the 'god will come' scene. The bloke even called me 'blocked', adding 'sweetie' after, so as to communicate his feeling.

Yours faithfully,

J N Warne
60 Repton Road
Orpington, Kent.

Dear Sir,

Surely Auden is the first of the modern hippies - he said twenty five years ago that we "must" love one another or die" and, I believe, his house in Austria is surrounded in flowers. Also, doesn't Gandi come into it somewhere (plus, of course, all the religious figures who have preached love).

But, what really, is the flower-power craze all about, apart from being an excuse to act mad and have a good time (which you can do without

subscribing to any half-formulated philosophies from America); there are no manifestoes or even clear declarations and aims to argue about. Of course, it is the drug aspect of the "movement" that gets all the publicity in the daily papers, but again, we get no flowery spokesman to rattle his beads in reply. If people want to escape from an ugly world and attain a level of consciousness in which mundane conformity, policemen and politics do not exist, then good luck to them. However, you don't get change in the world if you attempt to escape from it all the time:

It's not wrong to live for the moment, but transitory experiences at Alexandra Palace or Hyde Park have no lasting significance. If the sincere among the flower people want to establish a loving, beautiful society, then light shows and wierd dancing will not help. Let's have a clear statement of aims and some constructive alternatives to the existing set-up, or else the hippies will die out; and they will leave nothing to mark their existence (the Beat Generation left some literature), except a few plastic flowers.

Yours faithfully,
John Whiteman

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OTHER scenes

The British distribution rights to Andy Warhol's twin-screen movie, "The Chelsea Girls", are held by Louis Scher who left his California home for a year and set up shop in London anticipating a long and profitable run for the four-hour film. A friendly lunch with British film censor Trevelyan however convinced him that in view of the current furor over drugs "Chelsea Girls" wouldn't even get an "X" certificate. So now the plan is, hopefully, to screen the film at the London film festival in October in an effort to make it "respectable" enough for a release afterwards.

In actual fact the film is more notable for its technical experimentation (two vignettes shown simultaneously, side by side; acid-trip sequences shot under rotating colour gels) than its theme. The more perceptive U.S. critics have spotted this; the others being still hung up on the kind of orthodox moviemaking that has had its day. All the indications are that we are heading into an era when total environments will be commonplace - film as moving tapestry on four walls and ceiling; strobe lights and coloured spots strategically placed; "instant newspapers" projected in homes; wall-sized television bringing live coverage at all times.

That some people deplore such a future is irrelevant because (a) it will never be obligatory to watch, and (b) there will always be more filmless oases than environments. But two things make this prediction a certainty: the technological possibility and the profit potential. One sure thing about this society is that if there is money to be made, somebody will do it.

One of the factors that most of the "underground" movie visionaries have in common is that the people who put them down invariably spend hours arguing about whether or not they really have anything to offer. It should be self-evident by now that an artist who can provoke lengthy discussions about his work has obviously proved his capacity to involve an audience which, by any standards, is a measure of art.

2

The British are so trusting. Where else in the world would the government ask people to voluntarily pay a license fee for having a radio or television set -- with virtually no way of enforcing the law against those who don't comply? Does the GPO have the right, for example, of coming to anybody's door and demanding to search the house for a TV set or radio? Surely not without a warrant. And can a warrant be issued to search anybody's home just on suspicion that there might be such an unlicensed set? So it boils down to citizens' honesty in reporting such sets themselves (i.e. by getting a license).

A similar situation is the naive law which prohibits a British subject from taking more than £50 abroad when going on vacation.

3 4

Apart from the sheer arrogance of a government that not only heavily taxes your income but then proceeds to tell you where and how you can spend it, there's the idiocy of a people who do what they're told on the grounds that "respect" for the law is more important than individual liberty.

To start with, the law is totally unfair penalising, as it does, the poor compared with the rich who can find a score of ways to legally evade it. Secondly, it's a stupid law that is totally unenforceable against anybody who makes the slightest attempt to avoid it. The post office can't check the contents of every letter that leaves the country any more than the customs officials can search everybody's pockets.

So once again what are we left with but a people who willingly subscribe to restrictions on their freedom voluntarily -- kept in check by a cynical government that knows honesty is the best police.

5

The majesty of the law, as a matter of fact, is little more than a joke to people who give any thought to these matters. Do you have respect for a law that allows fishermen to be arrested and jailed for fishing for their livelihood?

Well, you see these happened to be Polish fishermen and they were trawling off the waters of Northumberland within the so-called "12-mile limit". What kind of crazy humanity is it that states that a citizen of the world can't go into the world's seas and catch fish?

Of course we all know the dumb arguments about national rights and that every country behaves in the same way about its so-called territory. But it is exactly this type of greed and acquisitiveness - whether individual or national - that causes most of the violence in men and always has.

6

And then we come to the matter of the courts. Anybody who has ever spent any time in one knows what a colossal waste of time they are: the petty tyranny of court officials; the endless, pointless arguments of lawyers; the irrelevant pomposity of magistrates and judges giving lectures to unlucky victims of a system that, once again, is loaded against the poor.

7

London's transport system is one of the best in the world but is there no solution to the endless lines that must form every night outside the ticket booths of underground stations? As often as not the ticket dispensing machines either don't work or take only specific coinage and it's too much to expect that people always carry the exact change. There is a solution, as it happens, and it's an obvious one: make all public transport free with buses stopping ANYWHERE to pick up somebody who wants to get on and both buses and subway trains running all night.

Here we have three ideas that only sound radical but actually make a lot of sense. It is unlikely that the money saved by abolishing ticket collectors, guards, machines, checkers, printers etc. would compensate for the loss of passenger revenue but it would certainly make life a lot simpler and any deficit could be made up by a transport tax on the more affluent car owners and the stores that benefit so much from the mass of subway passengers.

There is also, at this stage of history, no reason at all why transport should cease at the ridiculous hour of 11:30 P.M. For the London Transport Authority to maintain that there is no need for buses and subways to run later because nothing is open later is begging the question: if transport started to run all night, things would stay open all night. In any case, the present system is discriminatory - if you have a car or can afford to travel by taxi, you can get home at late as you like.

8

Gerson Legman, in a still-to-be-published diatribe called *The Fake Revolt* ("the gangsters of the new freedom are already mopping up your kids with narcotic drugs and drivelling pretenses of fake revolt") says the atom bomb is "nothing but the Marquis de Sade on a government grant". From the safe distance of Valbonne, France, he writes: "The Fake Revolt movement is, very simply, a trick of the money and power organization and its dead-end culture whereby all real revolt, emotion and art are siphoned off into degenerate static and snowblitz which are no danger at all to the status quo."

9 12

Recent visitors to the badly organized Dialectics of Liberation Conference - Stokely Carmichael, Allen Ginsberg, Emmett Grogan - have demonstrated that American is exporting not only murder, napalm, death and colonialism, but a more constructive type of social revolution. But it seems significant that all the aforementioned find themselves increasingly caught in the trap of becoming more

and more famous while repeatedly avowing they merely represent popular viewpoints and seek no attention for themselves. The cult of personality is too deeply ingrained in the culture for people not to worship at its shrine but apparently one of the best ways to cultivate it is to turn one's back. . . . To be released soon: an LP record of the thoughts of Mao Tse Tung, recently recorded in London (seriously). . . . How do London shops get away with charging customers for an adequate paper bag to carry away their groceries? . . . Most overrated shrink in England: Ronald David Laing whose unintelligible, second-rate corruptions of the original Tim Leary message have created a cult of believers apparently unfamiliar with the original.

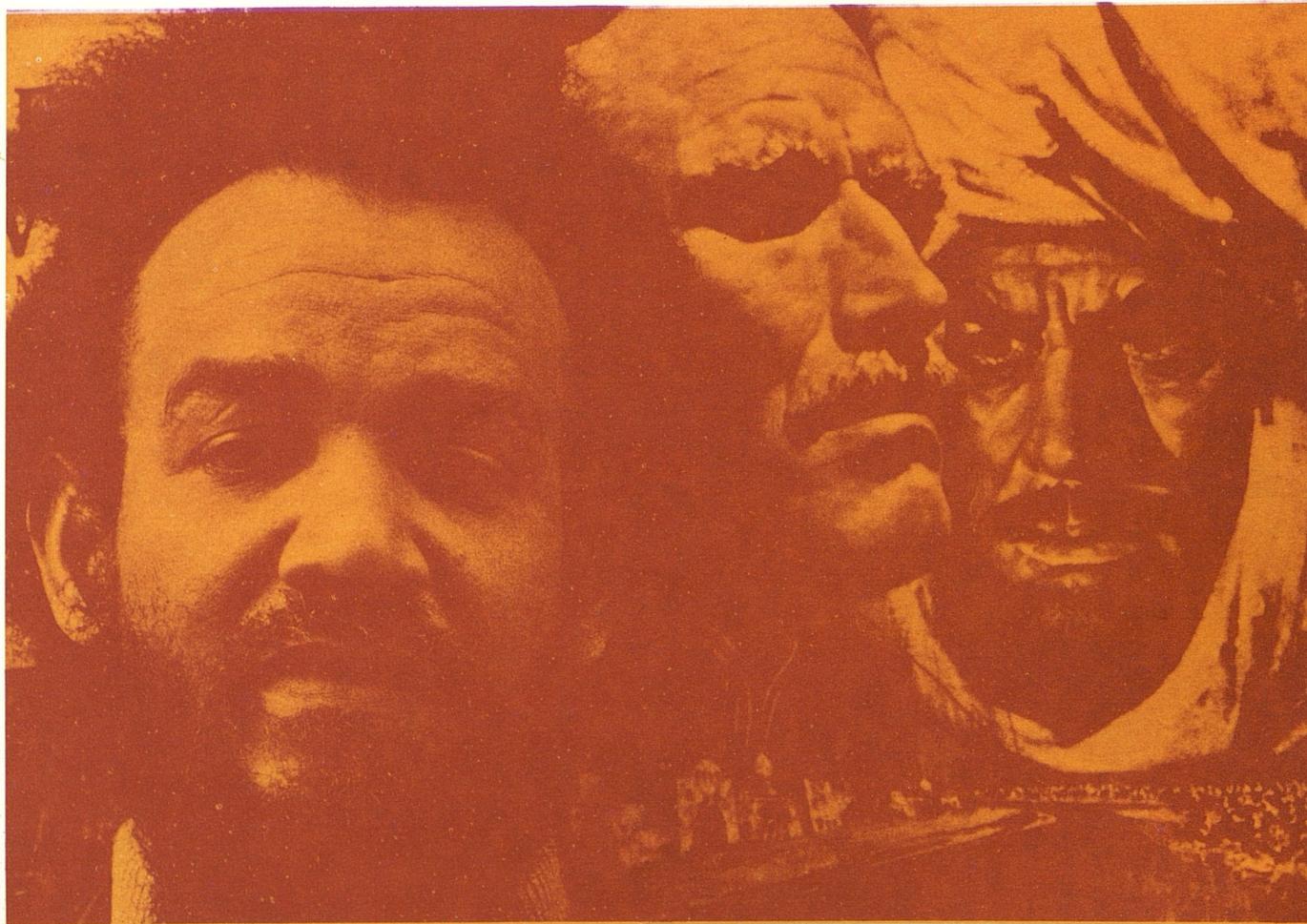
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Most of the production staff of the recent (mainly positive) ITV show about pot turned on in the course of the show's preparation. Even the young lady researcher who reported that it didn't do anything to her although she appeared to be ideologically converted. . . . The people who invented the hoola-hoop, WEI AM-O Corp. of San Gabriel, Calif., recently reintroduced the gimmick in "a few test areas" to see if they could chalk up some more sales. But, according to one of the partners, "the trouble is that today's teen-age dancing has far surpassed the body movement of the hoops". . . . Philip Morris and other major U.S. tobacco companies have been promoting a special deal so that Americans at home can send cigarettes to servicemen in Viet Nam tax free (\$10.61 for 100 packets). It has helped the Saigon black market no end. . . . Most British restaurants offer you a choice of coffee "black or white?" and seem quite unable to cope with any variations on this theme. . . . The N.Y. Times quoting a recent sociological study on hippies' homelife came to the conclusion that hippies' kids tend to ignore their parents rather than fight with them. "How can you rebel sexually against a mother who will be happy to fit you for a diaphragm at the age of fourteen?" one asked. . . . The Indian government has been reading the 1,100 year old Hindu love manual, the Kama Sutra, and thinks it has discovered a contraceptive drug therein named the Palash flower. Research continues. . . . "It was noted, with considerable irony, that on the anniversary of the assassination Bobby (Kennedy) visited his brother's grave and then returned for another visit because photographers had not been present the first time" (Ralph de Toledano in "RFK: The Man Who Would Be President" recently published in America by Putnam). . . . What could be stupider than the recent deportation from Britain of the two Australian members of the Bee Gees voucher to stay here permanently but there is already a two year waiting list. What is the advantage of a waiting list that prevents British subjects from working in any of the countries of the so called Commonwealth?

21-30

WHY doesn't Civil Defense tell you about germ warfare? This is one of the new type provo stickers to be seen in London Underground stations. Suggested new slogans for sticking anywhere: KEEP AWAY FROM THIS CORNER; WARNING - DANGEROUS FUMES IN THIS VICINITY and OUT OF ORDER (for parking meters, phones and subway ticket machines). . . . Should U.S. athletes be boycotted at next year's Mexico Olympics as has been suggested? Yes, all OFFICIAL representatives of the United States should be boycotted, spurned, humiliated, spat upon and rejected (according to taste) until Official America ends the murderous, inhumane war in Viet Nam. This includes athletes, diplomats, congressmen and all military types. . . . When it comes time to build some kind of new, loving society on the ruins of the present Establishment the names Kingsley Amis, John Braine, Simon Raven and Bernard Levin should all be remembered with disfavor. These self-righteous champions of human liberty (masquerading as literary lions) all signed the letter to the Times expressing "respect and good will" for LBJ and his G.I. murderers. . . . Amnesty International (Turnagain Lane, Farringdon St., E.C. 4) is one of the most humane things in the world you can join. Currently it is running a postcard campaign to get prisoners out of jails into which they were tossed for their political views. Kit with full info costs £2.10s. . . . New from the enterprising Panther Books: Rolling Stones File (5s.), a documented semi-transcript of the recent trial. . . . Sheffield University Union of Students have produced an imaginative magazine, Arrows with a dazzlingly psychedelic cover. . . . "Hippies may be on the way to solving a problem that is almost certainly going to hit straight society one of these days: how to live without working. The hippies are the first sizeable group in the US to work out in their sub-culture a way of coping with the cybernetic revolution. This is not a small thing to be doing. I think the effort, like the hippies themselves, should be viewed with sympathy", writes Charles McCabe in the SF Chronicle. . . . Living Screen, a process being used at Las Vegas' Tropicana Hotel is a three dimensional screen made of elastized strips closely fitting together so that when a man is shown full sized on film he can step through his image onto the stage. . . . Soccer is being introduced into American television in a special version that allows longer intermissions for fourteen minutes of commercials.

31



Michael X. (photo by Horace Ove)



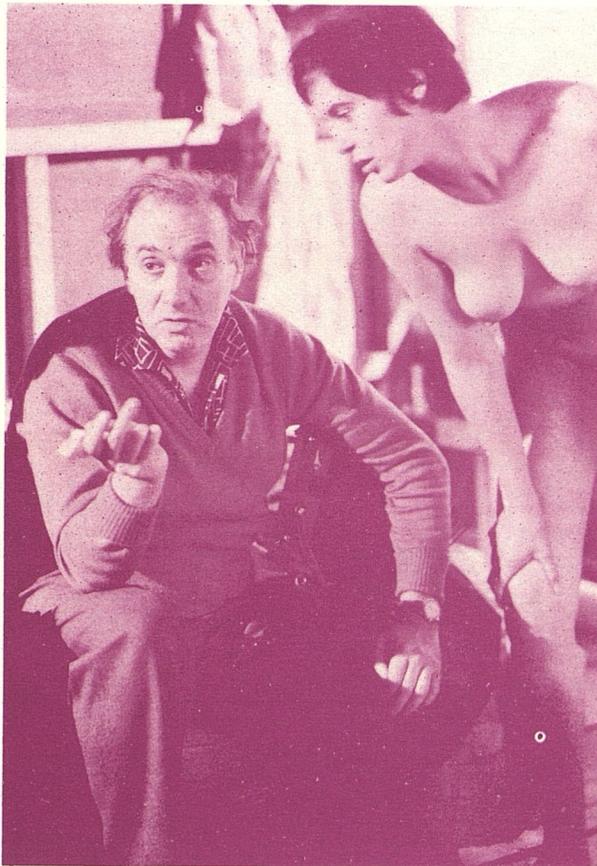
case 3003/66

Case no 3003/66 in the European Court of Human Rights is listed as STRAKER v. UNITED KINGDOM. It is an attempt to recover some 800 negatives of female nudes seized by the police from Jean Straker's Academy of Visual Arts in Soho-square which have been declared by the courts to be obscene. He's a pioneer photographer in the field of female nudity who's been challenging the whole moral attitude of authority for years, standing his ground and defending himself in the courts as a litigant in person. He tells his own story in this exclusive letter to Other Scenes & OZ.

You asked me to tell you something about my involvement. It's a long tale, but it goes something like this:- I make pictures of female nudes to help people find themselves: they're not the sort of chick snaps that you take in ten seconds with a polaroid; nor are they the bunny cheesecake that galls the girlie mags. They're a kind of mainstream flow from the psyche to the id - and they're an attempt to search for, discover and trigger whatever it is that makes sense in each one of us.

Unfortunately the scene here sends the police with warrants to grab my negs and prints and cart them off to prison; eight detectives the other day charged through my studios and workrooms creating the kind of chaos that would make to think they were the FBI looking for the CIA. One of them, a kind of sub-leader, was Detective Sgt. Terence Beale, a soft-eyed pious, innocent sweetie who gained for himself some notoriety last year when he prosecuted the Robert Fraser Gallery for hanging the Jim Dine Graffiti in sight of the passers-by in Duke Street. He told the magistrate that pictures of the male and female genital organs offended him - and that this was an offence under the Vagrancy Act of 1824.

A while later he showed me a reproduction of one of the offending pictures which Jim Dine labelled with the word 'cunt'. I said this was an accurate anatomical description of the particular organ drawn, with a respectable Latin etymological antecedent in 'cunnius', and Terence admitted he was learning. But a few weeks later he turned up again with seven chums and he said he thought my photographs were both indecent and obscene.



NON-CRIMINAL

Now, as most lawyers know, I been through all this jazz before; apart from a few thousand motorists, and a few hundred barrow boys, I must be the most prosecuted non-criminal in town.

The whole business is a bit negative, because the words they use have got perverted by a kind of case law process that collects up every bit of legal nonsense and makes it sacrosanct.

According to the Lord Chief Justice, my Danae study - the seduction of the virgin princess by Zeus, the king of the gods - is indecent. This is what he said in the Divisional Court:-

"In the present case there is no question in issue as to whether this photograph is obscene; the only question is whether it was indecent, and the Court, having seen the photograph and read the summing up is quite satisfied that looked at objectively it is indecent."

At the Freedom of Vision Teach-in on Censorship in the Arts, which we ran last year at Hampstead Old Town Hall, I displayed a large reproduction of this study. Charles Prebble made following point from the hall:

"I've racked my brains as to how on earth I could ever explain, for instance, this Danae picture - which I have in my collection - to a child."

And it was Ronald Clark who answered with these words:

"May I ask at the risk of offending some people's feelings a little, perhaps, how they would explain to their children the birth of Christ?"

ETERNAL THEME

So what did I say? I said that the theme was one which poets and writers had drooled over for two thousand years; that Rembrandt and Titian and Tintoretto had painted it, that Horace had used it as a basis for satire, that it was the same eternal theme that for ever fascinated man - the creation of new life. Then someone said:

"I think that children may have to ask questions?" And I answered:

"Well, this is education, isn't it? I use the theme to show graphically, literally, without evasion, how a woman's body looks when exposed to penetration. There's no teasing here, no titillation - it's a frank, artistic statement. I show two girls, one on guard, the other lying down, her pubic anatomy defined in detail; I show, imaginatively, in the background, a flash of light, a thunderbolt, a ray of sunshine - however you wish to interpret it. I should say you can use this picture to explain to any child not only the mechanics, but also the poetry of sexual congress."

The voice came again:

"Would you be prepared to give the explanation you've just given to a fourteen year old boy?"

And I answered:

"There's my fourteen year old son over there." So that's how I defended the picture, - but I can't give you a copy to print, because if you printed it in Other Scenes & OZ you couldn't send the paper through the post.

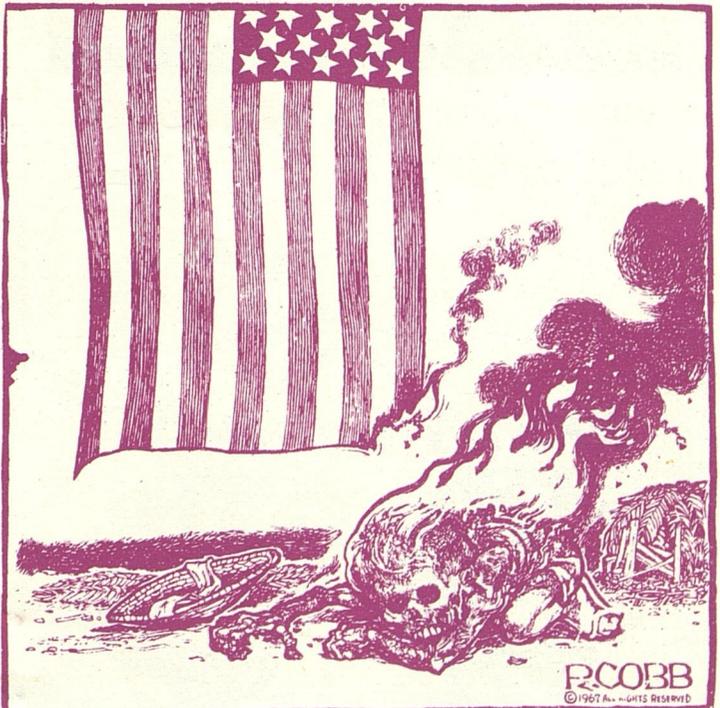
The Lord Chief Justice put it this way:

"It is an attractive point put forward by Mr. Straker that just as 'obscenity' must be tested by the effect on the people to whom it may be published, so must questions of indecency relate to the people to whom they are published. Mr. Straker prides himself on being very careful in his distribution, as he puts it, in only sending photographs to people who, he is quite satisfied, will not find them indecent. It is, as I said, an attractive way of saying it, but unfortunately the Post Office Act of 1953 does not so provide."

ABUSE BY JUDGES

Now I regard such attempts on the part of judges and justices to arrogate to themselves the right to say that a photographic study of a female pubis is indecent as an abuse of words and authority, and a denial of a fundamental human right - the right to look - and a dangerous denial too, for by making it impossible for people to educate themselves, men and women were growing up to be ignorant and stupid.

Peter Watkins made the point at the National Secular Society's forum on censorship at Caxton Hall the other day, when he said:



case 3003/66

"It was as though authority regarded the bulk of the public as porridge-minded, grey painted, woolly, fluffy nits, who have nothing up here."

The type of censorship that worried him was that subtle, eroding, pulling away of knowledge, pulling away of stimulation.

Ian Fraser came to see me a few weeks ago. He told me that often after he had married a couple they ask him for advice on sex. He was amazed how green some of them were. In his book, *Sex as Gift*, published for the Scottish Council of Churches, he says:

"Basic information about physical parts and functions should be given, as a right, to those whose lives it affects. In a survey of sexual attitudes and habits in certain colleges in the USA the source of knowledge which was said to give the most help was pornographic photographs. People wanted to know what happened, and how it happened. Knowledge of differences of male and female make-up must also be provided."

And just the other day, on another level, Dr. Dalzell-Ward, of the Central Council for Health Education told the 25th general assembly of the International Union against Venereal Diseases and Treponematoses in Munich:

"The aim of health education should be the promotion of psychological and sexual maturity rather than the avoidance of venereal disease and illegitimate pregnancy. One would lead to the other."

blue films by the yard

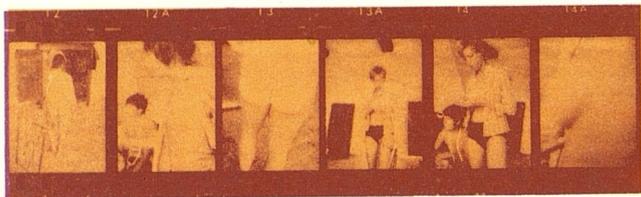
DIRTY MINDS

What Reginald Ethelbert Seaton, Chairman of Inner London Quarter Sessions Appeals Committee said was that some of my pictures were of women alone and some of women in association with other women, committing severe acts of a lesbian character. He thought that some undergraduate might possibly, as a medical student, choose some of my pictures and take them back to his university, where they might fall into the hands of persons who had no idea that such gymnastics were performed 'between the sexes' - and it 'might well be that people would become depraved and corrupted by the fact that they had seen these photographs - not because they were interested in the opposite sex but because they were dirty minded young persons."

And then came the judgment: He said to me:

"You are a pioneer, are you not?.... the painful pioneer.... if you are going to be a pioneer and if you think the law is wrong it has painful consequences."

The pain was a fine of £150 - just one month after the United Kingdom

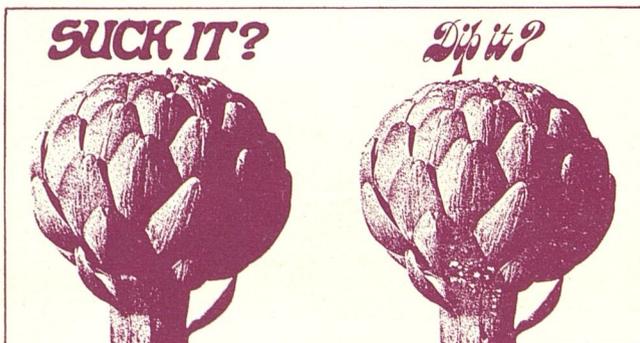


Government had accepted the compulsory jurisdiction of the European Court on Human Rights in regard to the provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights, of which Article 10 says:-

"Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers."

So you see, there's a kind of social malaise here causing psychologically immature people to fill beds in mental homes because the law takes upon itself the right to stop people getting educated. I know that young people - like the Oxford University students who got away with pubic hair in *Oxymoron* - are discovering their own psychological and sexual maturity; but it's the moronic adults who worry me. I am told that in Japan, sex is no problem. Why not print my Danae study in your Tokyo issue?

Good luck. Jean.



It was moving day at Scotland Yard and a heavily-guarded security truck stood by in the drab courtyard waiting to be loaded with the hottest cargo of all: the Yard's exclusive stock of confiscated 'pornographic' movies.

Flashback to several years ago, when a jovial middle-aged businessman friend of mine, whom I had originally met, bowler-hatted and umbrella stomping, at a lunchtime trad. jazz session in a City pub, asked me if I would care to make my flat available for a "film show". What kind of films? Nudge, nudge, whisper, whisper, ha ha ha. Of course, I'd be delighted. My friend would bring along a dozen or so well-heeled, dirty-minded business acquaintances who would contribute £5 each plus a share of the cost of a crate of whiskey and beer, for the pleasure of seeing a film show organized by - guess who? - Scotland Yard.

I was legitimately inquisitive and asked for details - it couldn't have been simpler. A detective inspector (friend of my chubby jazz-loving City acquaintance) together with a detective sergeant shared a duty roster supervising the "Black Library" at Scotland Yard, and paid a rake-off to their lieutenants which allowed them to take their pick of the best films in the library, remove them from the premises and return them to Scotland Yard before the next detail came on duty.

GUARDIANS OF MORALS

Whick is how I met Detective Inspector X and Detective Sergeant Y. My sitting room was full of tweedy, prosperous, shiny-faced, amiable, embarrassed businessmen drinking whiskey and beer and watching my friend and I pinning a bedsheet over the window curtains to act as a screen. In came the two guardians of our country's public morals, the inspector carrying a pile of film-reels, the sergeant carrying a movie projector. The sergeant set up the apparatus, while the inspector and my chubby chum discussed the menu (so to speak). At last the films rolled. While the sergeant attended the projector, the inspector delivered a running commentary on the extraordinary scenes of sexual athleticism being depicted on the improvised screen - not so much a commentary on the action as on the cast.

It went something like this: "That's Harry so-and-so" (describing a naked gentleman doing indescribable things to a double-jointed young woman decently clothed in suspender belt and stockings), "he's up for three at the Scrubs". Turning to the sergeant, "What was the name of the bird he's rogering, Bill? Oh yes, Norma, doing a stretch at Holloway Ladies' College right now. Mind you, they got hitched while the case was waiting to come to trial, thought being married might soften the Judge's stony heart. "Not at all, His Lordship was even more appalled by the idea that the sanctity of the marriage oath could be perverted by such vile and abominable conduct".

During this monologue the screen continues to show us its extraordinary panorama of fellatio, pedicatio, irrumatio, cunnilinctus and other forms of human contact which the Romans never imagined.

The main characters in these films had been given nicknames by the custodians of their art: one was known as The Walrus because of the luxuriance of the moustache which was his sole covering as he performed his weird rituals ('On the Moors, that one, five years'); another's sobriquet was Santa Claus because he serviced a succession of youthful angels while clad (basically) in that costume... These titles were written on the reels containing the films which were presumably stacked in alphabetical order on the shelves at Scotland Yard: Ape Man, Birching Betty, Chain Gang ... and so on down to the Ss (Santa Claus) and W (the Walrus).

VICARIOUS SEX

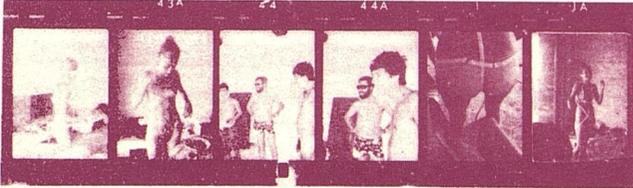
After the tired businessmen, surfeited with vicarious sex, had been seen off the premises and the loot counted out (a cut for my friend the entrepreneur, a large cut for the sergeant, the rest into the inspector's bulging trouser pocket) the Constabulary set out on the second part of the evening's entertainment, which consisted of touring the more "bohemian" Chelsea pubs, chatting up the birds, and inducing one or more of them to return for a private viewing of some of the more astonishing films - the principle being that the combined effect of large whiskies (courtesy of the tired businessmen) and the disorientation produced by the sight of such incredible goings-on on the screen would arouse



in the breasts of these busty blondes or tousled redheads some flicker of sexual interest in the charms of the burly sergeant and the saturnine inspector.

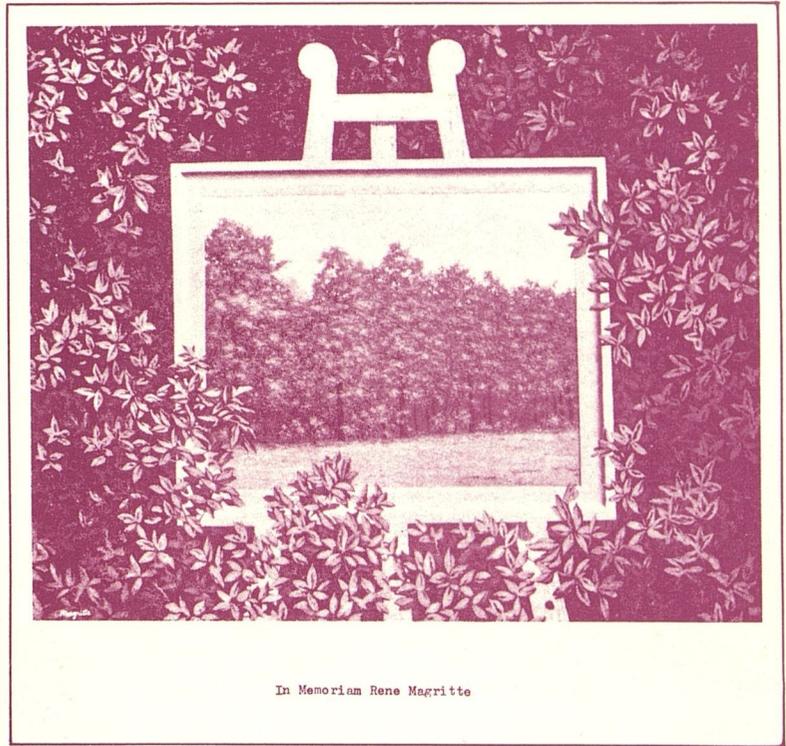
As far as I can remember, they were remarkably successful and sooner or later a mildly protesting female in a state of shock after being submitted to the film programme would be dragged towards the spare bedroom for a practical demonstration that the constabulary, contrary to slanderous allegations, are not entirely reliant on their truncheons when performing the act of love.

All this merrymaking had to come to a stop in time for Inspector X and Sergeant Y to stow away their gear in the Inspector's car and make it back to the Yard before their suborned colleagues were relieved by a less sophisticated team.



I often wonder what happened to those two enterprising policemen. I'm sure they went far.

Simon Watson-Taylor



In Memoriam Rene Magritte

What does LONDON need most?

A little anger. Everybody is so goddamned polite about everything all the time. They're told to line up and they line up. They're told to obey orders and they obey orders. It's so unnecessarily docile.

Why shouldn't they be?

Well they shouldn't be all the time. Don't accept rules just because they're there. Who made the rules and why? Do they make sense? Those are the questions that people should ask themselves before meekly obeying everything. Freedom comes by taking it -- always has -- not be patiently waiting until somebody offers it to you. American Negroes are the latest to find that out but it's an age-old lesson.

You're not suggesting that Londoners get out into the streets and start shooting policemen?

No, of course not, because Londoners aren't oppressed to the degree that American Negroes are. But they ought to get out into the streets and protest.

What specifically?

Well, they can protest Wilson's fawning acceptance of Johnson's murderous war in Viet Nam. They could protest some of the damned silly regulations that the British have to endure such as being told that they can't get a house or a telephone until the government sees fit to give them one; or being told how much money they can take out of the country. They could protest some of the social issues concerning discrimination, such as the restriction on coloured West Indians - who are Britons after all...

But there aren't enough jobs for the people here already.

That isn't the point - there aren't enough jobs for anybody anywhere looked at in that light. The restriction on West Indians is a discriminatory one - because they're coloured and most Britons are white supremacists.

How about some more personal issues that people could protest?

Well how about just the freedom to be. To stand on the sidewalk and look at something without being arrested for loitering. To play a guitar in the park without getting a music license, things like that.

If people were willing to fight for simple issues like this - in other words call the officials' bluff and go to court about it - they'd soon achieve a climate where it was easier to have this freedom without being harassed or arrested for

such simple, harmless things. The trouble with the English is that too many of them are busybodies and killjoys who immediately get officious if they see somebody doing something that they wouldn't or daren't do themselves.

Surely such protests would also result in more repressive measures from the authorities like in America?

Possibly, but I doubt it. I think protest and social action always gets results of some kind even if it's only to make more people aware of the possibilities. The vast majority of people in a society would like their lives to be better -- and even for other people's lives to be better -- but it's just never occurred to them they could do anything about changing them. Look how many people are affected by the wiping out of pirate radio, for example, but most people don't see it as a matter of principle at all -- just as the disappearance of a few pop stations.

Why is it a matter of principle?

Why? Because what right has a bunch of politicians to arrogantly say that you must ask their permission before you can communicate with people? What the pirate radio stations should do -- and what the government is afraid of -- is criticize the way the politicians are doing (or not doing) their jobs. If you have a communications system and you use it politically, to get social justice, you have a potent weapon that can never be silenced.

Aren't there more important issues?

All issues of freedom are important. In my view Vietnam is the main priority in the world today and if only Britain would raise its voice against America's murderous policy the war might come to an end a lot sooner. Too many Britons think Viet Nam is irrelevant. Of course, it's quite a cynical attitude that the British government has adopted -- help America and America will help you, the rights or wrongs of the case hardly enter into it. What Britain refuses to realise is that a so-called Socialist government should be on the side of the humane Americans who want to stop the war, not giving moral support to the military/business establishment in America that considers it more important to murder poor Asians 8,000 miles away than to cater to the needs of poor Americans in their own country. One gutsy statement by Wilson to the effect that Her Majesty's Government felt Vietnam to be an unjust war might change America's posture overnight. And, incidentally, restore Britain's prestige as a nation that believed in principles over profit.

The King & his Coca Cola Court

Richard Neville

Nepal is an exotic kingdom sandwiched impudently between India and China. Buddha was born there. You can get high there - on cannabis, opium and Everest. It is tiny, sedentary, backward - although, with the help of generous financial investment from Russia and America, Nepal is hurtling headlong into the 14th Century.

Hippies were dropping out in Kathmandu long before Haight-Ashbury exploded in 'Time'. See them strolling high through the cobbled labyrinthes, crashing mini cymbals at nightly rative concerts, spinning copper prayer wheels at the brooding monkey temple. Hippies happen in Kathmandu because it represents the opposite of L.B.J's Great Society. It's ancient, aesthetic, spiritual, tribal and, as the tourist brochure puts it, 'the most beautiful place on earth'.

And yet there is one striking parallel with U.S. policy which the hippies, being apolitical, have probably not noticed. The suppression of its peoples by a non-elected but officially blessed autocrat. Nepal is ruled by His Majesty King Mahendra Bir Bikram Shah Deva and is considered by himself - and some of his subjects - to be the reincarnation of a Hindu God. He governs his people with a blend of ruthlessness, ineptitude and insanity which is so often the trade-mark of mortal instruments of divine wisdom.

To make his autocracy more palatable to the purveyors of international Aid, he claims to have invented a brand new form of democracy called the panchayat system. The 'panchayat' (as opposed to 'parliament') is simply a state advisory body with most of its 89 members elected by the King - little more than institutionalised sycophancy.

Because King Mahendra is known to confer favours impulsively, members conspire to organize "accidental" confrontations with him. Indeed, accidental confrontations are the most his 'cabinet' can ever hope for. The King rarely grants audiences to anyone - except crazed Hindu Fakirs with recurring Majesterial visions.

Because it is a "partyless democracy", the function of the panchayat assembly is to presumably imitate only the theatre of parliament. Despite Mahendra's claims of originality, its administrative mechanism has been lifted directly from the Code Napoleon.

Some years ago in a stunt to provide his national daily, 'The Rising Nepal' with some pin-up photos, King Mahendra set out on a white horse to fraternise with some of his 9 1/4 million odd subjects. What was never mentioned in the glowing descriptions of Mahendra's grandiose goodwill gesture was the fact that he took the entire Nepalese domestic army with him. Some of the villages are still recovering from the economic catastrophe of this tour (e.g. villagers were made to sell rice to his troops at 1/4 the accepted price).

Last year some Nepalese teenagers paraded harmlessly outside the U.S. Embassy to protest Vietnam. Police swooped in and arrested all those involved. A resident British lawyer later revealed that the demonstrators were beaten by police so sadistically that "bones projected through flesh". They were then sentenced to twenty years in gaol. At the end of this time it will be King Mahendra's prerogative to decide whether or not the luckless demonstrators are to be executed.

The British Council once organised the staging of 'Macbeth' in a local hall. King Mahendra intervened personally to ban the production on the grounds that Shakespeare depicts the murder of a King - an insult to Mahendra's conception of omniscent monarchy.

These are just some of the facts of how monarchism operates in Nepal. Below is some of the fiction. These are extracts from a special issue of 'The Rising Nepal', the national daily, celebrating King Mahendra's birthday.

(A few weeks later the nation celebrated the Diamond Jubilee of King Mahendra's father. The fact that he has been dead for some years did not dampen official enthusiasm).

The editorial:

A RED-LETTER DAY

"Every country or nation has a number of red-letter days in a year and so Nepal or the Nepalese also have theirs. The most important and significant of them for the celebration of which, all the Nepalese in every nook and corner, whether in the hills and dales, high hills and the Terai, the midlands of the valleys and foothills within the country or anywhere in the world - join their hand amidst various functions in the massive demonstration of their love and loyalty - is June Eleven the auspicious day on which His Majesty the King was born. To-day June eleven which comes once every year is being celebrated with added rejoicing and jubilant enthusiasm by all the Nepalese wherever they may be or whatever they may be doing. For His Majesty is not only just a King to them but their saviour, deliverer, benefactor and above all leader. He has done so much to assure them a bright present and a brighter future that moved deeply by feelings of gratitude, they are offering prayers in temples in Vibars, and Gompas for the long and glorious life of His Majesty the King."

The newspaper also included a lengthy poem by King Mahendra plus a photograph, taken at night, of him actually composing the poem in the palace gardens, wearing spats. It is called "Rara, a Nymph of Paradise, Every Wave with a Precious Bead" which is about his wife. She, incidentally, is extraordinarily ugly, even for a Queen, and has never been known to smile in public.

An extract from the poem:

And hold in trance
And those who chance
To cast a glance
On your expanse
Fleetingly for only once ?

"Likely a lovely maiden
Of elegant proportion,
Where did you learn
To drop those long-lashed eyes
And tantalise

Here's a typical extract from one of many eulogies to Mahendra; this one titled 'King Mahendra: Politician, Poet and Philosopher'.

Speaking of His Majesty's idealism, one is inevitably reminded of his poetry. It is poetry drenched in the air, water, and soil of Nepal. Its cadence is the voice of the Nepalese; its lilt is the dance of the Nepalese.

We must never forget that King Mahendra's poetry is at its best only a reflection of the white-hot brilliance of his life. His whole life has been aglow with the fire and faith of the burning romantic - the romantic of not mere passion for womanly beauty, the beauty of the flower and the fields, of the streams

and the mountains, but the romantic ablaze with the fire of revolutionary fervour, the statesman who wants the world changed better to suit his heart's pattern - a world without feuds, a world without selfishness where poetic harmony rules over the jarring notes of mutual suspicion and apathy.

From a poem titled 'Forty Seven Lines - written in a mood of adoration.

That Man may celebrate with festivity and mirth
This blessed blessed day of King Mahendra's birth!

Blow, Zephyr! blow; blow, gently blow—
Not too fast nor too slow, blow or gently flow!

Blended with the fullsome fragrance, of flowers frail fragile
Flowers for the sense so essentially sensuous
There is another fragrance, of mind alert and agile
Such is the mind of Mahendra, so essentially righteous!
Ah! such is the fragrance of Mahendra, our poet-philosopher-king
The propounder of Panchayat, thus peace and plenty to bring!

Blow, Zephyr! blow, laden with Mahendra's high renown
Broadcast all around the majesty of the Nepalese Crown!

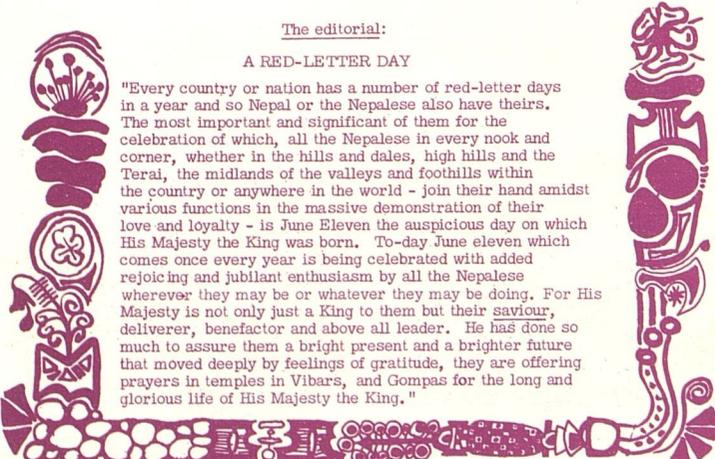
For all his white-hot brilliance and fullsome fragrance, King Mahendra Bir Bikram Shah Deva, has human appetites. His land is poor. Coca Cola is unavailable. However, the King is not deprived. Every month a crate of this precious liquid is flown in for the Palace. The empty bottles later reach the villagers who fill them with a vile, sugary, scarlet liquid and palm them off to tourists. No wonder the U.S. Government has classified Nepal, for the benefit of its Aid personal, as a 'hardship area'.

And it's not exactly a ball for Mahendra's subjects.



Nepal's King Mahendra Bir Bikram Shah Deva

The original of Peter Sellers' kingly caricature in 'The Mouse that Roared' - a film banned in Nepal





dope sheet

All drugs are dangerous, just like everything else, & just like everything else (almost), the danger lies not quite so much in the drugs as in how they are used. Even so, the drug scene — dealing, being flamboyant & furtive simultaneously, trying to be HiP, distrusting cops, &c — is far more dangerous than the drugs themselves. But since we will take drugs, it behoves us to minimize the risks. The traditional & best way to do this is through knowledge. If you know what you're doing & doing it right, it probably won't hurt you.

What acid does is restore the balance of your senses. This can be pretty confusing. Suddenly you can feel & hear & smell & taste as well as you've always been able to see, as well as evolution designed you to, as well as any natural animal. Your brain, used to handling mainly visual data, is suddenly flooded with information from senses it has always up to now pretty much ignored. You change in a flash from a set of eyes mounted in a flesh & blood transportation device to a Whole Man, which is pretty upsetting at first.

You should direct your trips, most especially your early trips, with this in mind. Although acid has no value in & of itself will not make you good or holy or wise or anything else except high it can be used (& to take it all is to use it) in a valuable way. It can be an educational tool. You can learn something from it.

Arrange to take your trip with someone else (also on acid) who is wiser &/or more experienced than you someone you trust, who should be able to answer whatever questions you may be able to ask, who knows what's happening & what to do about it if something has to be done — whom you like well enough to share the intimate experience of acid with. A guru.

Avoid crowds until you're used to acid. Crowds can overwhelm you & even set up paranoid reactions in you. Avoid most restaurants & coffeehouses. Avoid people who are not on the trip. All these things can wait until you're at home with acid & know how it works with you. In the yoga of acid you must eventually experience all of these things & more, but that's the third phase of your course, & comes a long time after your earliest trips.

Bathe beforehand, otherwise you're likely to be acutely aware that you haven't. Don't eat for at least four hours beforehand, otherwise you're likely to be acutely aware of the digestive process. Spend at least an hour beforehand relaxing your mind & body & spirit, becoming calm & peaceful, otherwise you're likely to have a troubled trip.

Provide your tripplace with things to touch, to feel, to smell, to taste, to hear, & eventually to do. Things for your expanded senses to experience.

Now comes the most important hour of the trip, the hour before you become high. This hour determines the shape & nature of the trip. I like to consult the I Ching at this time. Cast the oracle & spend that time reading & meditating on what it says. For me this determines the intellectual & spiritual content of the experience. You should certainly do something analogous to this. Determine the course of your trip while you can, because once you're high you'll be too busy.

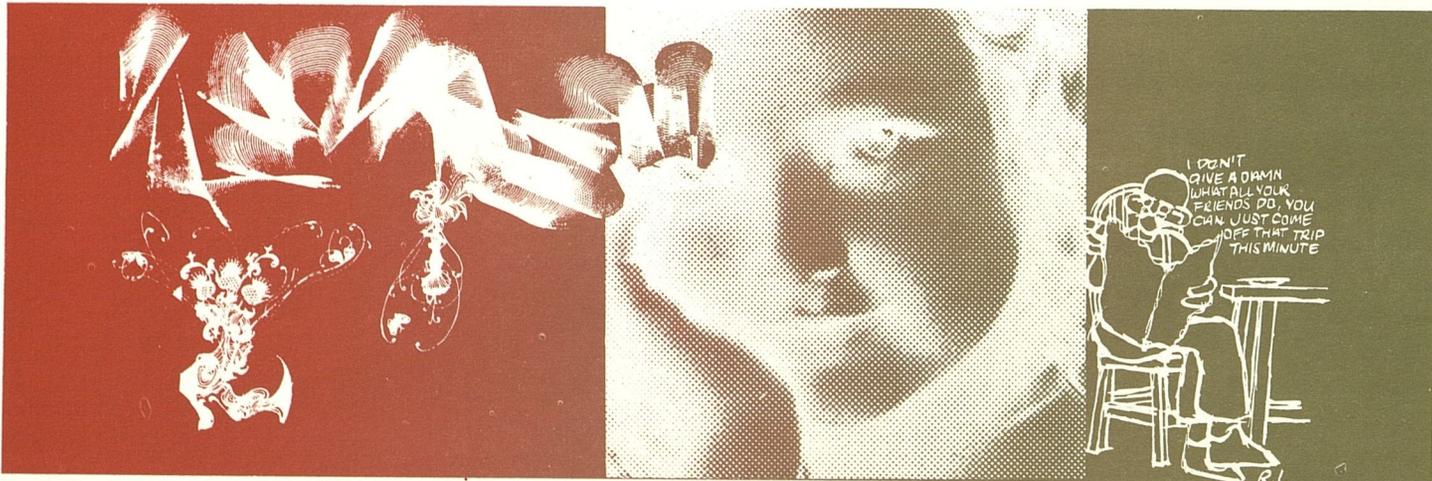
When the acid first takes effect, lean back, consciously relax, & let it happen. Do not be afraid.

While you are high use your sense. Give them real workout. Learn yoga & their language, You & the guru you have chosen to travel with can teach you to be real again, undoing The System's years of teaching you to be unreal, unaware, unconscious, useful only to The System. In this way you can become free, & freedom is what all of this — acid, Haight/Ashbury, dropping out, the whole bit — is all about. Otherwise acid isn't worth breaking the law for.

That's where it's at. Be with a beautiful person in a beautiful place doing beautiful things & being beautiful, & you will have a beautiful trip. Instead of thinking about yourself, be. Be what you are, what the moment dictates, experiencing yourself & the world without your intellect

Rest a few days, at least, between trips. It takes an average of three days for your blood chemistry to recover from a trip, & until it does, acid won't have any effect. And you need the rest. Acid trips are more work than most jobs.

Finally, in as tranquil a mood as you can muster, drop the acid. It's good if you can do this with a certain amount of ritual, since the psychedelic experience really is a religious experience. (Any experience that restores you to wholeness is religious, no matter what metaphysic you espouse. Whatever makes you whole again is a true sacrament.)



As one of its side effects, acid stimulates the production of adrenaline, to which it is very similar. Fear is what usually stimulates adrenaline production, part of the mechanism by which the animal we are copes with & escapes danger. Now, what makes you human is your forebrain, those enormous frontal lobes, evolution's latest improvement on the original model-T brain that dogs & cats & monkeys have. Your hindbrain, however, is still that same old model-T animal thing, & what it does for you is keep your body running & your basic instincts/emotions going so as to leave your forebrain free for thinking. The hindbrain is an idiot. It equates increased adrenaline secretion with fear, but the equation is circular: fear = adrenaline, thus adrenaline = fear.

What acid does is stimulate adrenaline secretion & keep it stimulated for upwards of eight long hours (usually, in cases of fright, the secretion continues for only a few minutes). This can reduce you to gibbering terror unless you remember (it's easy to remember) that it isn't fear you feel but chemistry. Some people do get horribly frightened, despite the objective fact that there is neither anything to be afraid of nor any real fear. They suffer from an abstract, backwards fear. This is not necessary. Don't do it.

Your mind is yours, & you can do with it just about what you wish. You can remove the fear from the adrenaline simply by knowing that there is no fear & willing yourself to be calm. This leaves you with all that adrenaline floating about in your bloodstream, adding a prolonged adrenaline high to the effects of the acid. Adrenaline minus fear produces euphoria, which is a gas, baby.

Acid is a consciousness-expanding drug & should be used as such. A standard hip error is to devote trips to introspection, which is logically foolish & guaranteed to generate bad trips, at least in the early stages of the acid curriculum. Self-knowledge is even more important than you think it is, but introspection is the last step in the last step in the process of knowing yourself. (Here follows a digression from "A Handbook for Unicorns.")

"The way to know yourself is to know everybody else. You are different. A Martian couldn't tell you & anybody else apart.

"All men are more alike than different. They all have the same long evolution & genetic organization & physical structure, the same neural circuitry, the same kind of brain, the same chemistry, the same needs & desires, the same sensory equipment. We all have more experience in common than otherwise. The same language (way of thinking), the same general childhood history, the same kind of education. We've done the same things, read the same things, heard said eaten touched felt endured suffered craved enjoyed known all the same things, all of us. The differences are almost insignificant, no other race could easily detect them, & they startle us because similarities are invisible.

"Introspection — — delving into your own minute infinity — — is at best a vague adventure. How can you tell what all this subjective & symbolic data means? How can you tell what all this subjective & symbolic data means? How do you know what's real & what's just a subconscious smokescreen? How can you tell when you're fooling yourself?

"But if you first study everybody else & learn the elements of commonality, the billion things all men share alike, introspection becomes practical, because you have established standards for determining reality.

"Otherwise introspection is a solitary vice, a masturbation, a fearsome & unsatisfactory substitute for a real thing. Real people insist on real things."

Acid is only acid, but a full course of trips properly taken will make you a better & freer, more real & loving human being. This seems to take something like five years, but results are visible from the very beginning. (What causes the improvement is not the acid but the trips.)

The least beautiful aspect of acid is the business of acid: dealing. I don't know why, but the acid business is the dirtiest of all the drug industries. There are a spate of honourable dealers, but by & large there more burns short counts, adulterations & frauds in the acid trade than in any other (except, possibly, the methedrine trade, which is notoriously immoral & unethical).

Most acid hereabouts is cut with methedrine. Dealers lie outrageously about dosages, claiming 1000 micrograms for a tab that has less than 250. Other drugs, notably methedrine but sometimes worse are sold as acid. Thousand dollar deals in which somebody runs off with the money are commonplace. It's a dirty business.

The standard dose, worked out the hard way by Timothy Leary & friends, is about 250 micrograms & no matter what the dealer tells you (unless you know him well to be honest, ethical & generally right about such things), that's about how much there is in the usual tab or cap.

If you're having a bad trip, there are several things you can do about it. First of all, stop panicking, relax, breathe slowly & deeply. Will yourself to be calm. Find out what's wrong & correct it if you can, & take care to avoid that next time. Learn from your bad trips, or else stop taking acid.

If you feel you have to terminate the trip, vitamin B3 will bring you down safely. Take five tablets, & if that hasn't worked in 30 minutes, take five more.

Remember, you are under the influence of a drug that will wear off. No bad trips are permanent. (No good ones are, either.) You can get out of a bad trip simply by waiting until you come down, if there's no other way available.

Don't take a bad trip seriously (except to learn from it). It may be distressing, but it is not real. It will go away. You will not go mad or any other such newspaper-bullshit thing. Bad trips are produced by misunderstandings & misinterpretations, not by truths or by anything true. Do not take any serious action on the basis of a bad trip.

It's useless to take more acid after you've become high, because it won't work. You can get the same effect from a saccharine tablet. Don't exceed the standard dosage until you've learned to handle the standard dosage.

Speed kills. It really does. Methedrine, amphetamine &c can & will rot your teeth, freeze your mind & kill your body. The life expectancy of the average speed-freak, from first shot to the morgue, is less than five years. What a drag.

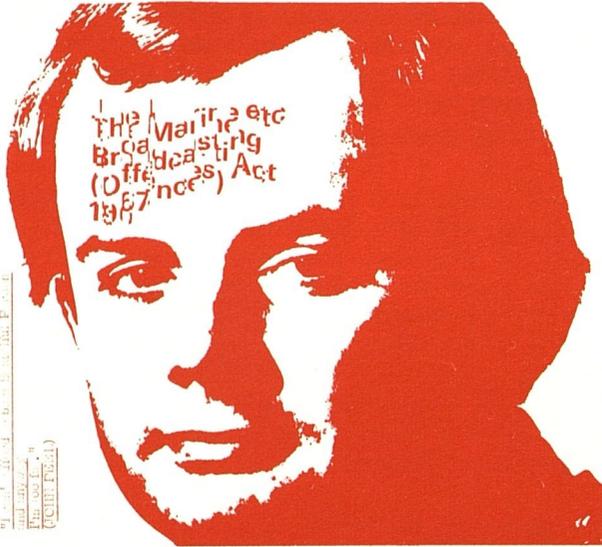
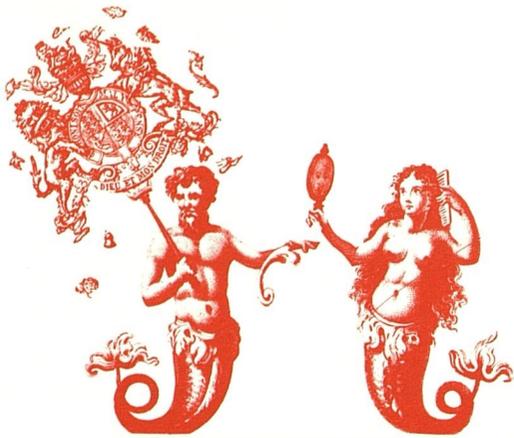
Don't become a dealer. It's habit-forming, messy, unpleasant, dangerous & a drag.

Don't do anything to your body that your body can't veto. No needles. Consider the psychological & symbolic implications of sticking a needle into yourself. Do you really want to do that?

Don't let dope be the only thing you do, or the most important thing in your life. That's the quick way to be bored with having fun, which is a drag.

Be cool.

Chester Anderson



DAVID PHILLIPS & MICHAEL GRAY TALK TO EX RADIO LONDON D.J. JOHN PEEL.

If you take a walk
I'll tax your feet.

The decibel level dropped suddenly in large blocks of flats; housewives stopped frying their Quicky-Snak Cod Pieces; afternoon teenyboppers roze in mid-Jerk, and supermarkets fell silent. Only Promethian chords of 'We Shall Overcome' lumbered across the aether from Radio Caroline - but growing fainter and sadder and further away.

The kind of experimental and avante-garde pop music that Peel had been free to play will be particularly hit. We await the over-whelming boredom of Radio 1, putting out an up-tempo "musical accompaniment" to damp and falling Autumn leaves.

Peel does see the Marine Offences Act as a restriction of a basic liberty. He believes that pirates allowed artist and listener an unprecedented release from the demands and limits which The Establishment placed on Pop.

The farmers and the businessmen,
they all did decide.

"I can see some of the arguments for the Bill - I don't know how justified they are - the electronic things, that it interferes with other people's signals and stuff like this. The logical thing for them to do, of course, would have been for them to license the pirate stations and bring them on shore. This is probably entirely naive but the way I look at it, one of the main reasons they closed down the pirates was sour grapes - the fact that they, the Lord Thompsons and such who already control the mass communications media, hadn't thought of it first and therefore it wasn't being run by the people who were safe and on their side. I don't think it matters which party is in office. I don't know whether the Conservative Party, if they get in, will introduce commercial radio as such, but if they do I'm sure it'll be controlled by the people who control everything anyway. I don't know who they are, but there's this great faceless mass of people who seem to watch over everything."

"This new Marine Offences Bill is one of the most terrifying things I've ever read in my entire life and the majority of people don't seem to realise exactly how far-reaching the thing is. I was down at Tiles the other day and the d-j on stage said something about Radio Caroline - and under the Bill he could go to gaol for that. And if you have a Radio Caroline sticker on your car you can go to gaol for that too."

And then the Kerosene
Is strapped across their shoulders.

"The majority of people who've been hired for this new thing, Radio 1 - I don't know who they all are, but of the pirate disc-jockeys - they seem to hire the safe and the pliable ones. You're going to get The Northern Dance Orchestra rendering "See Emily Play" and Harold Smart Swings and stuff like this. I think when it starts off people are going to say 'No'. We've been led to believe we're going to get some thing reasonably like the pirates - whether they were good or bad doesn't really matter here - but that's what's expected; and when it doesn't come along people are going to be very angry."

Please don't wake me
No don't shake me
Leave me where I am
I'm only sleeping.

"But of course British people only seem to be angry for a very short period of time and then they settle back and accept whatever it is that's being thrown at them with great vacant stares on their faces. This is the way that people have become conditioned to react. They get aroused about something and they never stay roused. England's so absurd you can't get angry with it yourself. People seem to be getting progressively more illogical. It's beyond apathy: it's reached some ecstatic new state where there aren't words to describe it.

"In America - which is far from being the ideal country - I worked just outside Los Angeles for a time, and you could pick up something like fifty radio stations; so that regardless of how bizarre your tastes were there'd be something somewhere to accommodate you. That is just not heard of here - and I think people should be angry.

"Mind you, I also worked for KLF, this Gordon McClendon station, and he runs this enormous anti-everything movement on the station. If a song mentions the word Mind that's a Drugs Song and if you mention Skirt well then that's a Sex Song, so the poor guy found himself with an almost entirely instrumental station. I think even 'Tequila' is banned out there (KLF is in Oklahoma) as 'conducive to a permissive attitude to alcoholism'."

The country music station plays soft
But there's nothing, really nothing to turn off.

"And this is more or less the situation here. The BBC is a great quivering mass creeping into the 1940s and out of the 1920s.

"You know I sent them a tape initially and word drifted back to me that they thought my programme was 'conducive to a permissive attitude to drug-taking.' Anyway, later on I went down there and talked with this person - who actually turned out to be quite aware of the things that were going on and it looks as though possibly I might be getting on there after all. The programme I'll be doing is supposed to be the anchor programme of the new service and this bloke wants me to get back to playing the sort of experimental records I was playing on Radio London. He can't start off right away by doing it because the BBC won't let him; so we'll have to build up to it gradually.

"But at the BBC it's so different. There are great crowds of people all around you - girls to put on the records, officials to watch them doing it, producers, programme controllers, shop stewards and all the rest. You need a studio the size of the Festival Hall. The nice thing about Radio London was that you could just sit there on your own out in this rusty boat and play the kind of music you wanted to (well I could anyhow) and people could just let their imaginations run riot. I have this great hang-up about being shy."

Hey, you've got to hide your love away.

"I learnt a lot from the letters I got on the Perfumed Garden. You know, they weren't the 'Dear John, I think you're fab, please send a pic' sort. Basically the music makes the programme and I was fortunate to have the freedom to choose what I wanted to play on London. It wasn't a question of converting people to one particular set of beliefs, either the listeners or other disc-jockeys, but of expanding them and increasing possibilities. This is why it was so valuable, despite the fact that there were some pretty distasteful people involved in Pirate Radio. And the insidious thing about the non-pirate 'professional' d-js is their incredible ignorance. They know very little about the music they're playing and so their picture of what their audience wants is no more than a myth."

Ezra Pound and T.S.Eliot fighting in the captain's tower
While calypso-singers laugh at them and fishermen hold flowers.

Maybe Big L meant lots of money for its American backers, but you could always find a record you actually liked. And when the pirates scratched their armpits, at least you know that it didn't come from the library of Special Effects.

The unofficial censorship that the BBC bureaucracy exerts as corporate scoutmaster will continue its sad-eyed vigilance against the Drug Peril-Sex Peril-Red Conspiracy. Victor Sylvester will creep up on us unawares and bring back Aspidistra Power. Down Your Way the Everready Batteries are going to last a whole lot longer.

"The more the bureaucracy is 'dehumanised', the more completely it succeeds in eliminating from official business love, hatred, and all purely personal, irrational, and emotional elements which escape calculation." (Max Weber).

NOTHING
is
happening
Mr
Jones...

No one went wild when H. Wilson became our leader. I assume, probably justifiably, that you didn't either. But I entertained hopes, small modest, self-effacing ones. Marginal changes here and there, things would not surely be worse than they had been in the previous wasted years; if no improvement was registered once again the government would be composed of rogues and villains with no attachment to principle. But our new leaders said they were Socialists, and Socialists are good men as we all know.

But nothing got better and everything worse, our new leaders were indeed rogues and villains and not socialists at all. All this was very disillusioning.

We observed from a distance that the nation, according to many reputable newspapers, was undergoing some form of crisis. Fat men with bald heads marched into important offices in Whitehall. Thin men made speeches deploring the deterioration in the quality of our national fibre. Better fibre means perhaps the ability to offer more relevant and purposive help to our allies in their efforts to eliminate unwashed peasants hiding in smelly swamps in various parts of the world. All we have been able to provide so far, however, have been encouraging noises which sounded like so much slobbering on a pair of fat Texan buttocks.

If these people who came to power under the banner of Socialism have in fact proved to be imposters who are they? Agents of the Comintern? the CIA? hirelings of a worldwide Jewish conspiracy? No, I fear, humble Englishmen just like me or even perhaps you. But with a difference - humble Englishmen whose principal aim is the preservation of a number of large smug corporations run by men with names like Chambers, Robens and Beeching. When the Corporation proves inadequate in size a larger one is produced and a new captain of industry is constructed: Lord Melchett and the National Steel Corporation go together like Love and Marriage.

Thus these humble men, with a little help from their friends, have constructed a large edifice known as the National Interest. Is it a small, domed building? A Hyde Park Bog, perhaps with a dash of Albert Memorial? British it may be but it is not the stuff of which Socialism is made.

For there is such a thing as Socialism and it does involve a rather different order of priorities to those of that humble man in number ten. It amounts to more than attacks on small drafty tramp steamers marooned around the British coast crammed with embittered colonials, North Americans and elderly Liverpool Teenagers. OH GOD! the irony of Caroline "exposing" the PRIVATE life of Wilson, as if sweaty fumbblings with an elderly secretary could be any more boring than the exposure of his public parts.

What's Socialism? It's NOT succumbing to a grubby Racialist, John Hanson in Rhodesia; and flogging vast quantities of consumer durables to the Union of South Africa; and wining and dining villainous old gangsters from obscure Kingdoms and Sheikdoms in Arabia; and slamming on a pay freeze that differs only from its Tory predecessor in the amount of wool that has been pushed over the eyes of the worker, the supposed Labour Party Folk Hero.

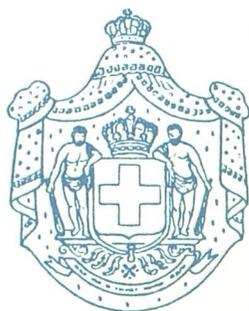
It is in fact the elimination of fat smug corporations. The effects of this kind of action would be considerable and might even enable us to live without the wads of dollars that MAKE life with LBJ the fun it is.

But under this So-called Socialist government it isn't happening.

Indeed, nothing is happening. We are all asleep. Public consciousness was asphyxiated with the second endorsement of Wilson just fifteen months ago and now we dream.... in our dream comes nothing but wraiths in the night, the return of the vanquished and almost vanished Tories. No one really wants them, but no one really minds them. They are after all there. Stupid yes, but certainly no more so than their opponents; hypocritical yes, and almost as efficiently, immoral but in the correctly uninteresting way. Turn over in your sleep and there they are.....

Nigel Rourtain

Letter from a



Greek Prison

As you know, this sad land is censored by the hot-eyed colonels who recently captured it, but I smuggle this random comment from the inside of the slam because they shouldn't escape without having this view of their black deeds exposed. The operating methods of Greek fuzz have always been vile – violent nerve-shattering two-month "interrogations" in the station, mysterious disappearances in the night, sick old junkies hanged

by the thumbs, smashed balls – all the insane trappings of the police state.

Once I lived half a year in a pretrial prison and saw maybe 200 accused go to court without a single not-guilty decision. They have it as they want it, apparently even the judges and juries are terrified. Foreigners inhale it too, the favourite tactic being to take a "confession" written in Greek, which said tourist

can't read, then fill it up with fuzzy fantasies and trick or beat a signature out of the man who then gets convicted of half the unsolved crimes in the country and doesn't even know what they are.

Especially dangerous for heads here, as Athens is full of multilingual stooges, often bearded and hip-sounding, who seduce tourists to push or score or turn on, then bring a fuzz-trap to the rendezvous. Courts not

particular here, any old piece of evidence will do the job. Greek prisons must have the highest percentage of foreigners of any country in the world. I suppose these dirty fuzz aren't any sicker than anybody else's cops but here they're given more freedom to act out their psychosis by the military-monarchy-church-busin-

essman syndrome which rules the place and protects its interests by holding the numbed masses in tightest fear and ignorance.

Same old story but worse here, as this has always been one of the world's most selfish oligarchies, although in places like Dubuque, El Paso and the Pentagon it's known as one of the lucky democracies American military aid has saved from the dirty Reds. Fuck

the ghost of John Foster Dulles. The rifles marching around these prison walls are American and if the CIA didn't trigger this coup then at least it's grateful, for the election it prevented would have been won by the Papandreou family which threatened to do such dirty commie tricks as build some schools, make the obscene-rich pay taxes, castrate the massive police force throw the king out of politics and build a couple of fac-

tories. Sad, sad affair, the demise of the people's choice, the death of the Left and the Center, too.

NAILED TO THE CROSS

An old lifer cornered me in the toilet the other day and whispered, "Papandreou went forward carrying the cross and the fascists nailed him too it. Tell that to the good people in your country if you can find any." So I found you and I tell you.

So now we have the military apparatus on top of the police apparatus, operating their own courts and prosecuting for thought-crimes, a true 20th century witch-hunt. This enormous medieval slam is loaded with the results of this new menace. A student bows before a public picture of the king and says. "We're lucky to

have such a fine king," but the court reads his mind, says he was being sarcastic and pays five years upon his young soul. Another spends the night at his brother's house without the permission of the government gets three years, his brother disappears into exile. Those stories are endless, each sicker than the last, the latest chapter of Kafka.

Behind much of this is a system of false witnesses for this is a land where families quarrel and don't speak for generations, a bitter hung-up mentality full of mystical fuck-hatreds, the home of revenge and duplicity and this new dictatorship brings out the rat in everybody. The military, like the fuzz, don't care; they need victims and when they don't exist they'll create them. So it becomes a completely schizophrenic nation where

almost nobody is speaking or behaving as he wishes, a country of madmen whose appearance is the only real and constant concern, words mean absolutely nothing, truth is death and therefore it is dead. Martial music and strident speeches rip out of the loudspeakers, military genius everywhere, including such gems as "We're saving you from Communism, Fascism and Nazism", whatever that means, and "Karl Marx was a

stupid pig". Wow.

And these prisons are a long stepdown from Sing Sing. They're rat-infested and dark, totally without heat in the bitter winters, twenty-five crowded into stone rooms, hardly any food or medical care, no schools sports workshops or libraries. Nothing. The all-consuming question is the simple one of survival and by no means all can answer it.

PRISONS ARE SEXY

As to what happens here, have explained that aspect elsewhere but I tell you that prisons are among the sexiest places on earth, beginning with the 'goonie-con relationship. Often ask the uniformed performers why they want to spend their lives pushing helpless men around and locking them in cells and if I get an intelligent reply they sort of say, "Because it takes a MAN

to do it", so I say, "If this makes you a MAN, then we must be less than men so what are we, WOMEN or some thing?", and they can't follow it, but what it really makes us is eunuchs, less than men because we are castrated, and the power they hold over us, the contempt they have for us, the self-esteem they derive from our plight is essentially due to the fact that they have heterosexual pricks and we do not. This differ-

ence manifests itself in all phases of the dance and dialogue. It can be resisted, but at great cost.

What is actually demanded is that you repent your big crime, and that you quite literally fall into some sort of love with your keepers. This is why narcotics violations have so much friction in all prisons and why they're so despised. They can never repent their deeds because they know very well they've done nothing

wrong (except some junkies who feel they've sinned against themselves) and thus they can only feel contempt or pity for their keepers which drives said keepers straight up the wall.

And the whole concept of "rehabilitation" is just as phony here as it is everywhere, for the qualities everybody's schoolteacher said we were supposed to have — courage, conviction, creativity etc. — are the same

qualities which will get you completely burned in here. What they want to turn out of here are a bunch of walking zombies, too down and terrified to do anything but obey even the dumbest orders for the rest of their pasty lives, a servile army of the spiritually lobotomised. Anyway I've been denied parole three times and

it's clear I'm never going to get it, which is encouraging. Let's fill all the dungeons in the world up with dirt and grow sacred mushrooms in them.

ARROGANT COLONELS

So these arrogant colonels are shamelessly determined to convert all the people into miniature reflections of

their one-minded selves, to "purify" Greece as they say. This means to eliminate whatever they cannot understand, which is everything that doesn't think their simple thoughts and fall in love with their brass and bearing, and it's clear that nothing here can stop them. They can only be toppled from outside, by a big drop in tourist support (already happening) and the frequent smashing of their embassy windows, which wounds

them deeply.

People can play the tourist here if they wish, but they play it at their deadly peril and every coin dropped here helps to perpetuate this black jazz. I've seen the blood they spill, plenty of it, it's red and it runs.

Which brings up to the talking butterfly which once made it into this cave and told me it is aerodynamically capable of flying as straight and efficiently as an

arrow, but it makes it around zit-flut-flit because it feels like it, which seems to be one of the more important things learned in this long walk into strange.

Time here in its mysterious vortex stretches folds and snaps like the turned-on mind that it is, but the final realization is that eternity plus or minus a few years still equals eternity, so nothing is finally altered. It is truly possible to dance everywhere, even in the far

reaches of Lost. Your news from the outer world, your talk of the vast turn-on and the worldwide defiance of of the forces of destruction gives proof that the countless casualties paying the price in faceless prisons are being revenged in the only way we care about: we continue to exist, and we multiply.

With love, peace and music.

(Name Withheld)



Much has been written on the oligarchic aspects of organisations but next to nothing on the same features of "non-organisations". What follows is a comment on the non-organisation centering around R.D. Laing and on what happens in the social transformation of his ideas. Laing's work which is a moving protest on the alienating characteristics of institutionalised socialisation seems to have provided little resistance to the emergence of those very same tendencies in the resocialisation of his cult of followers.

Laing probably realises this only too well. "We are born into a world where alienation awaits us. We are potentially men, but in an alienated state, and this state is not simply a natural system. Alienation as our present destiny is achieved only by outrageous violence perpetrated by human beings on human beings". And then, "Sometimes it seems that it is not possible to do more than reflect the decay around and within us, than sing sad and bitter songs of disillusion and defeat".

The disillusion and defeat that I feel about the Laing movement (but not with him or his words) stems from a dilemma facing any liberating movement; The dilemma as Gene Debs the American socialist put it, "If you are looking for a Moses to lead you out of the capitalist wilderness, you will stay right where you are. I would not lead you into the promised land ... because if I can lead you in, others can lead you out."

The point is that when men are dependent on leadership for their liberation they're caught before they even start. The paradox is that in order to become independent through the action of a movement you have to be independent to begin with.

This is highly relevant to-day when for argument's sake we can say there are two opposed models of revolutionary or underground movement. We can characterise this duality as it exists in the present world in several ways; Marxists versus anarchists, activists versus dropouts, Leninists versus acid heads, guerrillas versus diggers, material versus spiritual, external versus internal, etc., This dichotomy also parallels that between the affluent societies and the "Third World".

What Laing is trying to do is have afoot in both camps. And this is the importance of his message. Whether he will end up with the best or the worst of two worlds is another question. One side is for freedom and the other side is for movement. Do you have to choose one or the other or can you have both?

The concern for individual freedom which was once the monopoly of anarchist theory has now become subject to the efforts of an existentialist anti-psychiatry (R.D. Laing, David Cooper and Frank Atkin in this country) and in a different sort of way, the acid head. Liberation - in the individual-psychological sense which was Laing's first concern - involved the study of the obstacles in interpersonal relationships which resulted in the diffusion and disintegration of one's wholeness resulting in the label "schizophrenia". Like the acid merchants this was a concern with "freeing the mind", but unlike them it was also a critique of alienated society - not so much a sick or hung up society but one of which you, whether you like it or not, are a part. And if you don't get it before it gets you, brother, then you're cooked. But how can you get it before it gets you when you are born into it? In many ways Laing has moved on from a study of the individual in small groups and is now dealing with the question of society itself, with emphasis on what is to be done right now rather than a passive study of what has been going on. This transformation from the analytic critique to the prescriptive formula and the outwinding from the individual to the social system cannot be said to be a success so far. The reasons for this lie in the metaphysical nature of his concepts and their metamorphosis into a group culture.

The concepts of alienation, identity and self, for example, are not only inherently ambiguous but find their concrete application in a bewildering multitude of different states. If we try to pin

down exactly what someone means when they use a concept like alienation we find it almost impossible because the term has a sneaky way of eluding any fixed categories. For instance, it is common practice to describe alienation in terms of powerlessness, isolation, meaninglessness and self-estrangement. But when we try to think of some concrete particular situation in which any or all of these things are NOT present we find we can't. This is because alienation is as multidimensional as the whole spectrum of any possible human experience.

Another, puzzling thing has been the literal acceptance of Laing's descriptions as though they were theories. Theories, I would submit, are propositions which have a general reference, are empirically grounded and contain implicit or explicit causal connections which can be tested. In contrast to this Laing's network of statements are, at their precise best, mapping strategies which only occasionally embody a suggestion of where to look for connections.

The real bite comes when we examine what happens to these ideas when they become part of a group ethos. I think it fair to suggest that Laing's work has become alienated over and against him. While he is an advocate of internal and external prescriptions for revolution (let us say an "acid-marxist") he has become a leader, if only passively. Now while leaders by definition only exist in conjunction with followers the tragedy of this particular dialectic is that followers seem to need and generate leaders. Charisma for example, would seem to be as much a property of prophets as a property of those who project it onto the prophet and the phenomenon of power is also the phenomenon of compliance.

What we should try to understand are the conditions which have led to and perpetrate this state of affairs. Why is it that a brilliant set of speculations on "schizophrenia" has achieved the social configuration of a messianic movement? And what is more a movement that is retreating hot foot into irrationality and a mystification almost as great as that it condemns.

Part of the answer, in psychological terms at least, can be found in Laing's work itself. It starts off from the notion of the social origin of the self (you are what certain significant other people think you are) and the postulated effect of one sort of limitation on personal development. Somewhere there is a "real you", a non-alienated you, awaiting its existential birth, but the others in your life are frantically determining what you shall be become instead. The emergence of this true self only occurs in a situation we shall call freedom. But the catch is not only that you are fighting a losing battle in a war with others who have completely lost themselves in the same process, but that in a very meaningful way you need them and are dependent on them.

To understand the implications of all this for the particular context in which the Laingians exist one can start first of all by taking its issue with the way a group, their group, mangles ideas. One example is their theme of "phenomenology" - a general obscurantism which serves to control the group in the same way as Marx discussed ideology. In this case, however, the control is initiated by the controlled. For our purposes, phenomenology is the direct and spontaneous subjective experience of "a totality" in an anti-analytical way.

To begin with a totality is defined and selected by one's prior experience which determines the parts and their patterning from an infinitude of possible totalities.

Secondly this process of selection and definition is dependent on an intervening grid of concepts which the Laingians like anybody else (must) allow to stand between them and their field.

Now the important point is that the Laingians delude themselves into thinking that they take this intervention into account by their talk of meta-levels of perception of on-going processes since each meta-level involves its own intervening concepts. They allow for this intervention only in the formal sense of not denying its general existence.

UNDERGROUND TELEVISION

The next art form scheduled for liberation is television. Long a slave of film, this workhorse medium is beginning to find its wings.

"As collage replaced oil paint, the cathode tube will replace the canvas." These are the words of Nam June Paik, a Korean artist living in New York who has become the prophet of The New Television.

Paik uses direct electronic manipulation to produce distorted television images, some surrealistic and some abstract. He may adjust the interior mechanism of the set so that it shows a garbled but pleasing picture. Or he may use a powerful electro-magnet to interfere with the cathode ray beam of the television tube, making "crazed" electrons line up in op-art-like force-field patterns across the picture tube.

Potentially, the main instrument of The New Television is the videotape recorder. This is an instrument with which the artist can work and rework his material, instantly replaying what he has done, collecting images from various visual sources (commercial television, film, magazines) or producing his own live. Unlike film it allows him to be free from censorship. He can put anything he wants on tape. There's no Kodak Labs to return blank film if they disapprove. Making a videotape can be as private as writing a poem or painting a picture.

Television is like film, but it is not film. Film is

light moderated by shadow, and the texture is of thousands of tiny grains. Television is florescent light, and the texture is of hundreds of horizontal lines. The quality of the image is different. The quality of the television image is of immediacy, and never of immediacy, and never of spectacle (film); of flow, and never of stability (film). With its electric presence, it is the medium of our time.

Few artists are using television at present. It is more expensive to work with than film right now. Presumably it can be dangerous without some electronic knowledge. But many artists are making plans for using television, and the cost of videotape recorders is coming down in a hurry. An equipment salesman here on the West Coast told me there may be a \$100 recorder by 1975.

Meanwhile a sort of highclub in New York has already started using videotape for "underground television." People pay \$1.75 to see a private hour videotape. Some of this is described as looking like a "psychedelic 'Today Show'".

Sheldon Renan

author of the forthcoming
"An Introduction to the American Underground Film"
(Dutton Paperback, \$1.95)

Hmm four in the morning and it's my birthday, thirty-one or fifteenth same thing. Number one squaw has folded her tent and silently stolen away leaving the aura of a vanishing Hitchcock flavoring under my thumb. We had some fresh orange juice at the air terminal, and costume changes, and Dinner under the clock at The Big A (Alvaro's) with a Medicine bag with a comb in it and my oldest friend who filmed it all. I powdered her nose. and then the Hilton to bring the new day in. She's a crazy tearaway heiress on her way to being a boss woman. It's down to me.

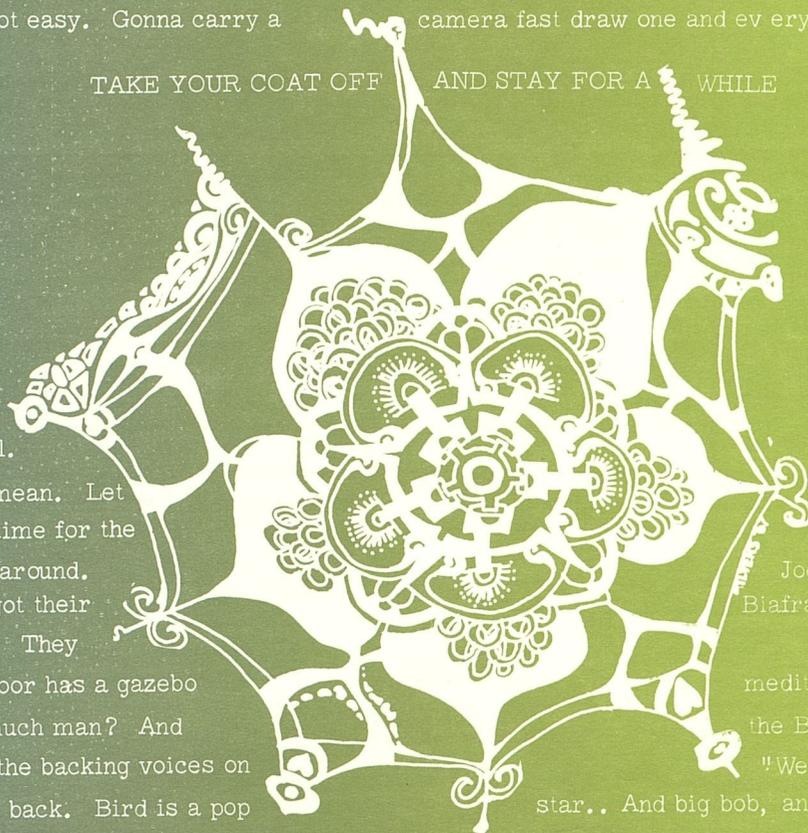
Surrealist pillow 1500 words and PAUL BUTTERFIELD BLUES BAND cooking taking me back to Chicago and Muddy Waters sipping an Old Fitz and coke. "Those kids over there sing from the heart" he says about this scene here. Small world. I'm going home I was born there. Lenny lives. All the spirits are out. THINK.

Those American cats that blew in last month weren't kidding about there being about twenty people in this town and papa's got a brand new bag. To bridge the gap between acting and expression. Whatever happened to strolling players actors are getting so hung up with the career thing they've forgotten what it's all about. They're playing parts or something dumb. Even the best ones are off playing that stale eight-note staccato bebop for a price. Pawns in other peoples' fantasies. Godard has some very hip things to say about that scene. "And when I'm really cookin' out there in life almost in anguish and tongue firmly in cheek I scream "where are the cameras NOW?"

Movies are like five years behind fashion and pop and here I am a cinema child trying to freak out. And these young musician image beautiful people are going to replace actors, because they're the true expressionists. Coltrane lives. It's not easy. Gonna carry a camera fast draw one and ev everybody works.

TAKE YOUR COAT OFF AND STAY FOR A WHILE

Freakout



Look at that stupid girl.
being a good Christian mean. Let
first stone. It is now time for the
the third eyes floating around.
news on the box They got their
revolutionized mayhem. They
but my neighbor next door has a gazebo
Isn't Brian Jones too much man? And
and Keith Richard and the backing voices on
playing light years and back. Bird is a pop
in the subway and Huntington losing three tanners in the phone box.

FLIGHT 505. What does
he that is without sin jail the
moment of truth. and all of
Joe and Mike. It's all bad
Biafran race riot stateside cultural
won't give Mick any privacy,
meditation room in his back yard.
the Baghdad. And Michael Cooper
"We Love You". Jimi Hendricks
star.. And big bob, and the flower children singing
What's happening in China today

Paisley Doctor robert. JobtimeHigh and Dry. Carruthers M15, must get that together, Scots Dunfries fan-
tasy of disguises. Africa Brass. Nelson Algren in the neon wilderness. "the punks just squawkin' cause his knees are
shaking" applies to this scene. Lucy in the skies with Diamonds and the burning of the midnight lamp, the moving
finger writes the singer not the song, the songer not the sing. Breakfast at the Maze. Oxygen at Harrods Senior Service

saw a film today in one of those moseleums called the a.b.c. and even the kids were bored. and the scene
changes. simone and marike and apple juice capes. brian and suki back from marbella, olympic recording, and hen-
rietta may be pregnant walkin' blues. daddy walsh with two godparents for his new ariel ring a ding ding purple tanger-
ine snowflake eleven and the jolly giant. if i only had one hour for every second boy, would i cook. who wants yester-
day's papers? just take it or leave it, it's just my liliife

and christine had the word, looking as beautiful talking about the new toppling. groucho marz. caramel the
moment you start playing the game that's the moment you have to be one step ahead of the game and it's called being
even. who's been sleeping here. are you experienced? claire de loon.

And isn't Richard Harris too much. Ian keeps burning just keeping up the beat. ABRACADABRA, and the
sweet sensation of getting it together with the help of my friend stargazers. Implosion

Ben Carruthers

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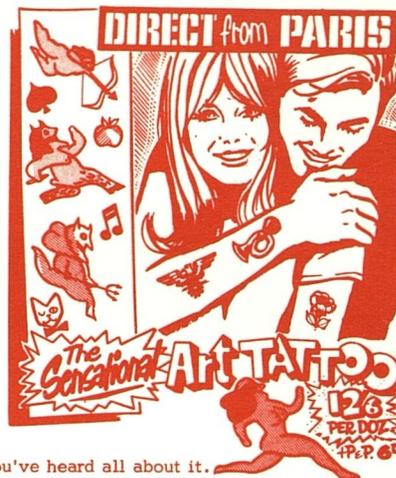
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FILMS AND FEELINGS by Raymond Durngat

Not the least difficulty faced by a writer on the cinema is that the medium he confronts is a hybrid of theatrical, visual and literary forms. All too often those who understand aesthetic theory dismiss the different tastes of most cinemagoers, and those who understand their tastes have themselves little taste for aesthetic theory. Through close attention to details of style and content alike in films which range from Cocteau's 'Orphée' to Westerns like 'Ride Lonesome', Mr Durngat attempts to establish a common 'sphere of experience' from which to approach some of the aesthetic problems posed by cinema as an art-form. With 30 photographs. 45s

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"So I'm back in business" says Maurice Girodias "Getting my Dirty Books out again at last -".

He raises the spectre of a smile. Girodias has the wan, suffering look of a baroque saint, and seems elegantly weary as a diplomat who has spent a lifetime arguing at the Geneva Disarmament Conference. He is the greatest pornographer in the world, the single most dedicated provider of sexual delicatessen for the Anglo-Saxon mental meat-market. He is now to be canonised in the first big-budget Dirty Movie.

"Girodias" says Mel Fishman "was the First Man on the Underground". Fishman is a Californian with a satyr beard, and is planning to make the first mass-audience blue film. The script is by Stephen Schneck, a not-so-underground novelist, and is being based - loosely - on Girodias' life. It is being called The Olympia Reader, and it was Girodias' Olympia Press in Paris - when Paris was still The City of Light. Remember? - which brought the waiting world Jean Genet, Henry Miller, Burroughs' Naked Lunch, Nabokov's Lolita, Donleavy's The Ginger Man, Candy, a homosexual number by Jean Cocteau, and a great quantity of delicious, untalented, hard-core porn.

"And now we are republishing. In New York" says Girodias, who is holed up at the Chelsea Hotel (favourite holing-up place for the more Established Avant-Garde, ever since Thomas Wolfe raved there, Brendan Behan had DT's there, and Dylan Thomas went into a coma there. Now Arthur Miller lives there. Which isn't the same thing, really). "First I bring out The Travellers Companion" - and these were the green covers, as internationally recognisable an image as a Coke top - "No, I never liked that green colour myself ... Perhaps they should shoot this film in green? Then in October I bring out the Ophelia Series. This will be cheaper, in every sense of the word. In Paris we had many series that started with the letter 'O'. It is the most significant letter in pornography.

"The first book will be Stradella" - and this, I recall from pubertal reading, is a good meaty stretch of thrashing thighs - "I own the rights on all my books, but always there is trouble with writers. The moment their book does well, they see that they can make more money on the straight market. All except Bill Burroughs. Having been through that junkie thing, he doesn't seem to mind ...

"But Nabokov! He pretends that when he sent me Lolita, he did not know that I was a publisher of what he calls 'obscene novellettes'. I had already brought out Sam Beckett's Watt. And, anyway, people attack me for publishing obscenity for obscenity's sake. So what. I admit it? What's wrong with that? What

are these analytical standards? Isn't this the worst form of hypocrisy?" Certainly Girodias is an ambiguous figure. Half hustler, and half freedom-fighter, impelled by a drive to make money - "Why is publishing pornography different from other publishing? They think they can treat me like a convicted criminal. It's a business" - but impelled by an equally urgent drive to extend the frontiers of taste, and, in fact, time and time again losing all his loot through acts of wilful defiance - ("Maurice Girodias" an unusually tedious Parisian poet intoned at me once "Will Always Go Too Far").

Girodias is now forty-eight. While he was operating in Paris, it seemed as if the heady mood of the thirties still hung over that moribund capital. The French Law disapproves of headiness, in any form. They busted him. Girodias started a club, a multi-layer cake of a place, including bars, sitaround places, an avant-garde theatre - it was, in fact, a fun palace, such as Joan Littlewood and John Calder never seem to get around to starting - but the theatre put on a production of De Sade. So that was busted too.

So he moves to Denmark. And the Danish Police, who have never taken it into their Viking minds to bother about the printed word before, bust his printing-press. So he hires a barge and send it across to England, loaded to the gunwales with sex books. Unprecedentedly, the barge sinks. Finally, he comes over to set up in London ("The Permissive Society", if you have been following the press), and he meets some beautiful people, publishers with thick, soft suits, and great affluent smiles, like the cat that got the cream ... They set up to acquire his rights - "And now" says the most fatly affluent, amiably ... "Now we want to drop the Dirty Books Image!".

So now New York, and hoping for the best. Girodias sits in Fishman's suite in the London Hilton, and sips a Pouilly Puisse moodily - "A recent vintage. But good" - while Mike Wilson, who has been working on Science Fiction with Stanley Kubrick, plays some sitar, Fishman sends down for some hamburgers, and explains about the movie ... which is to be, well, partly biographical, but, interleaved. With fantasies. And frank, all so frank, no nonsense - The public is ready for Real Blue Movies, of a studio excellence, isn't it? Girodias looks a bit puzzled, and makes a telephone call to a lady in Paris. "The film" explains Fishman "Will be screened at selected cinemas, like the Plaza in New York, or even better, the Rivoli ... "And there will be special times, like in the theatre, except there will be effects impossible to duplicate in the theatre. Will it be illegal? "No, of course not ... and kids? Kids shouldn't be up that late anyway". Girodias is still puzzled, but quiescent. Blue Movies aren't really his scene. His scene is Dirty Books. He telephones New York ...

THE PORNBOOKER

Rosetalk

arc, to
 boncum
 brell
 chrom
 death, the
 droll
 dustbowl
 dwellsell
 epileap
 for cough
 fistular
 greenland
 hotpot
 itching
 jug
 knowledge, have
 lippy
 long trail
 long lie
 lubber
 mist
 notch
 notchy
 ochre
 presentation
 roseboys, rosegirls
 tramlined
 U-tube
 way-yay-hay

Hippie language is, in terms of the English-speaking community and even beyond, pretty well universal. There are, however and inevitably, local variants. The following are some of the latest in-terms or endoglosses used in London, S.W.1.

To ascend the psychedelic curve (NB: psychedelic is a false spelling) that culminates in the definitive vision.

Originally bum-come but, by assimilation, transformed into a form that comes off the tongue more easily. To attain an orgasm (both sexes) that does not involve the grosser forms of coition. As noun: such an orgasm.

The quiet note of jublation sounded in gentle orgasm.

Colour content of a psychedelic vision.

Police or other repressive forces of the community.

Not funny but frightening - like the utterances of the enemy.

A pipe used for smoking marijuana.

A cell where several hippies live but where also supplies may be obtained.

To achieve the destination of a trip.

Clearly enunciated, with the accompanying indication of something harmless - like a beer or cigarette, this can be used as a gentle rebuke to the enquiring fuzz.

Used with some such term as group or force, is signifies the police. Evidently a compound of fist and the ular of constabulary, ular also being the Malay word for snake. And the whole word connotes a disease.

The psychedelic visionary world. Also just THE LAND.

A Liverpool importation. Marijuana that is in danger of confiscation.

In need of marijuana.

The head (presumably as a receptable for the wine of visions).

A Biblical revival, and none the worse for that. To indulge in pre-coital sex. Best used in the expression of a gentle wish: "I'd like to have knowledge of you".

A reefer.

A trip embarked on in solitude.

The sexual act when deliberate techniques of prolongation are used.

The female breast.

Pot when alight.

For beginners, a unit of psychedelic experience.

The night (from the Russian?)

Marijuana

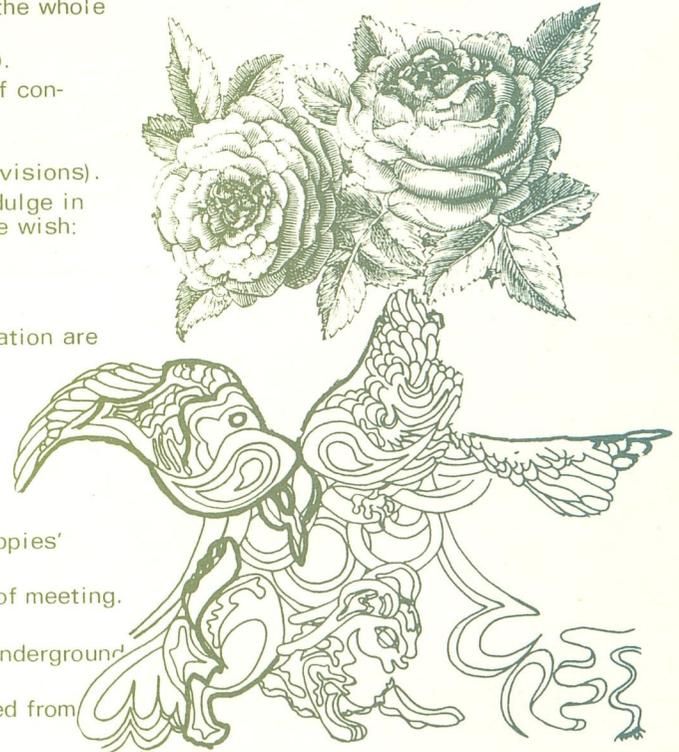
A trip (perhaps an attempt to translate the German hippies' Vorstellung).

British flower-children. Thus, ROSEGARDEN: a place of meeting.

Hooked on hard drugs.

The brain as a thoroughfare for trips. (Perhaps from Underground and its popular synonym tube).

A rosegirl's cry of jubilation (this seems to be derived from Pitman's Shorthand Manual).



BEAUTIFUL PERSON



"We're citizens of a new enlightened age
We're all revolutionaries nowadays" (Coulmier Marat/Sade)

We believe a lot of lies. We like to put myths between ourselves and what could be. So we convince ourselves that David Frost has no talent and that Katherine Whitehorn is a raving nymph and that the queen loves her Corgis more than Prince Phillip. The myths exist as obituaries of our achievement. Thus a lot of people, who for a long time thought that a revolution would be a good idea are announcing that the Hippies have the modern state on its knees. The world's turned on; the lockstepped chessgames of the USA's iron and steel insanity is defeated by our heads; its the psychedelic storming of the Winter Palace; Dictatorship of the Chemical Provotariate. The grownup revolutionaries have seized on Flower Power like they used to get worked up about CND in the days that the better educated debs patronised the Aldermaston Marches. Now it's UPO between Finishing School and Merchant Banker.

Which is a pity. Because at the moment the hippies in England represent about as powerful challenge to the power of the state as the people who put foreign coins in their gas meters. Alice Bacon's hairdresser is nearer to the counsels of state. For without a fundamental change in the economic system which at present controls our societies every dimension, the hippies will be forced to live like jackals; first to bowdlerise their own experience to make it intelligible, then, very soon, to make it commercial. Hippies without radical social forms like the Diggers and the Communes are unable to float off the surface of the society from which it derives its meaning.

What happens instead is that hippies confuse alienation from society with influence over it, ending in formal demonstrations of their own impotence. Thus the first Love In in the Golden Gate Park was in 10 months debased to the Ally Pally "Love In" (£1 a Head) making two crooks, £5,000, and a lot of people very unlovely. Leary begins as the Johnny Appleseed of the Mind and, like Davy Crockett, ends up in Disneyland with blue rinse coach tours block booking for the Reincarnation of the Buddha at \$4.50. The Dialectics of Liberation end as a cultural bay of pigs; a high cultural massage leaving the demystifiers clambering about in a complicated scaffold of language and assumptions which had become a new orthodoxy. Its recommendations as soggy as cornflakes in hot milk; as respectable as G Plan. So even the things we control, a fairly pathetic list to begin with, the boutiques, head shops, clubs and light shops are forced to become pushy and ugly. Punchups at UFO, turnstiles at the Love In's, the mini cooper people now in transfers and beads but still the frantic pleasures of a ruling minority, the who's-for-tennis crowd in drag.

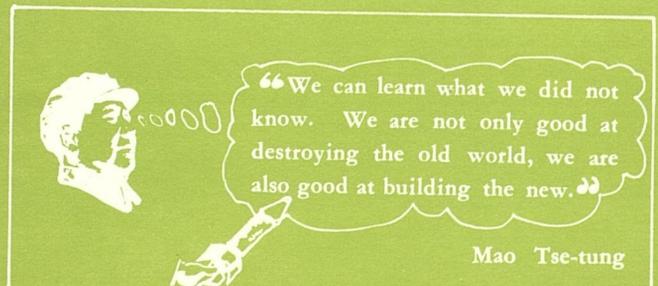
For that majority of the population - those on the receiving end of the News of the World and the Palladium - even the chance to drop out isn't there. Pleasure is not just free time which may be spent either with Billy Cotton or William Blake, Reveille or International Times. For two centuries the working people of this country have been systematically deprived of the self consciousness and awareness for the Flower Peoples sort of power. Far from wanting to change this, heads celebrate it, "LSD users are not theghetto people but the middle class who want to immerse themselves in their own abundance, see more of it, not escape it

in the manner of the black junky". At best the head gives a maddening lucidity from the richness of the drug experience, at worst an emotional client state ruled by whatever banana boss holds its keys. Pot could certainly be legalised tomorrow and apart from a few narcotic squad men getting transferred to traffic duty, we would proceed untouched into the Stagnant Seventies and the Awful Eighties. For that great rump of the British people who remain turned on to mild and bitter, life would be still submerged in Pink Stamps, HP on the tele and the Greyhound Standard ... The men John Gerassi talked to in NW Brazil die of old age at 28 and chew cocoa leaves not for visions but to block out the agony of their bellies.

We choose between life as style, style as value, value as fact; the ethic of the strutting Beautiful Person attacking the modern state where it likes, not where it hurts. The alarm bells ring for nobody but ourselves; if you eat health foods, you must expect to look like a banana.

There's more ways to blow H. Wilson's mind than STP in the Santiogen. The tactics of the urban guerilla in an over ripe welfare capitalism cannot be the same as a Fidelista in the Sierra Meistra ... But the point of doing the thing is to transform the values and aims of a society. The old folk's homes in the college aren't going to do this any more; the radical intelligensia are too absorbed in the perfect simulation of Youth, trying to swallow time like Capt. Hook's crocodile; Progress Westminster style has all the pace of a tractor going uphill with the handbrake on. At least the Young see that what we are offered as social change from above is just a little more rouge on a very old whore's face. The Old Left is, in David Mercer's words, like a kipper, two faced and gutless, if the hippies don't want to go that way, the this-sidedness of psychedelics must flower a thousand Communications Companies and Underground Press and Hippy Teleprinters, more Diggers (who are English anyhow) and King Street Communes, Free Schools, and youthplay in Happenings and Gatherings, take flowers to strikers and throw them at fuzz. As the corporate land of Wilson nudges itself into a liberal fascism with Labour Capital and Gnome joined in a National Interest; so the need to eradicate dissent will grow and the Underground; strikers and psychedelics; dropouts and demonstrators will bear the weight of the dissent. As the New Britain subsides into its white-between-the-mind, wet-between-the-legs crematorium, Albion Arise.

David Widgery



"We can learn what we did not know. We are not only good at destroying the old world, we are also good at building the new."

Mao Tse-tung

SNAREART



Snare-picture: objects found in chance positions, in order or disorder (on tables, in boxes, in drawers, etc.) are fixed ("snared") as they are. Only the plane is changed: since the result is called a picture, what was horizontal becomes vertical. Example: remains of a meal are fixed to the table at which the meal was consumed, and the table hung on the wall.

Snare-picture squared (snare-picture of a snare-picture): the tools used to fix the objects in a snare-picture are themselves snared along with the objects at a certain "snared" moment.

In the "Grocery Store" at the Galerie Koepcke in Copenhagen in October 1961, groceries were recognized as individual works of art without being incorporated into an assemblage. They were stamped "Caution, Work of Art" and bore my certifying signature. Nothing else about them was changed, and the price was the current market price of each article.

Once the creation of objects through the imagination is accepted (at first the imagination was totally rejected), the false snare-picture enters. It consists of imagining and composing a situation in which the details appear to be a chance situation, so that the result cannot be distinguished optically from a real snare-picture. Example: a baby-pen with scattered objects and toys that a baby might have left in disorder, except that the pen was never used by a baby.

Working with chance situations implies the acceptance of chance as a collaborator after the initial result has been achieved, of transformations due to time, weather, corrosion, dirt, etc. Example: the rats who devoured the organic matter on two of my snare-pictures at Galleria Schwarz in Milan have been accepted as collaborators. Taboos have as their objective the preservation of traditions and forms,

an objective that I reject: at the Galerie Koepcke "Grocery Store", sandwich rolls, in which garbage and junk were mixed during the kneading, were baked and sold as «taboo catalogues.»

When the supporting element of a snare-picture represents something (if it is a realist painting, for instance) a relationship is automatically established between the snared objects and the supporting element. This relationship destroys the false perspective of the representation: a deliberate choice of added objects interprets, profanes and changes the meaning of the supporting element. Example of a *dérompe-l'oeil*: a romantic view of the Alps—a valley with a stream flowing toward the spectator—is augmented by bathtub faucets and a shower.

Chance and creation merge, the difference between the snare-picture and the false snare-picture gradually disappear, when the real snare-picture is multiplied by false ones. In the «art multiplier,» a chance situation is fixed to a mirror, and the same situation is reflected onto another mirror joined to the first by hinges. In addition, the objects are reflected and multiplied in proportion to the angle at which the mirrors are set.

Everything is a snare-picture, anybody can choose a chance situation and make a picture out of it. To demonstrate this, I accepted an invitation to exhibit at the Danish «Salon de Mai» in 1962 on the condition that Addi Koepcke be allowed to choose

and fix situations in my name. The copied certificate of guarantee was printed for the occasion.

The foregoing principles can be applied to the other arts. A conversation, snared on tape, between four persons, reproduced as was, became the play «Yes, Mamma, We'll Do It,» first performed at the Municipal Theater in Ulm, Germany, in 1962. This true snare-play became a false snare-play when it was acted out on the stage; but it became a true snare-play in the second part of the play when the actors listened to themselves speaking their roles in the first part and commented spontaneously.

During the group manifestation Dylaby (dynamic labyrinth) at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam in September 1962, I transformed two rooms of the museum. In one, converted into a dark labyrinth, the spectators were exposed to sensory experiences (warm and humid surfaces, varied textures, sounds and odors) as they had to develop their senses to appreciate the environment. In the other room, a principle of the snare-picture (changing of plane) was applied to a whole room containing an exhibition of fin de siècle painting and sculpture. The real floor was «hung» with paintings, so that it was transformed into a wall; sculpture «stood» on one of the real walls, transforming a real wall into the floor; and the other walls shifted their position in relation to the new «floor.»

In March 1963, a composite photograph of my room, composed of 55 individual shots, was exhibited as a snare-picture at the Comparaisons exhibition in Paris.

In the Dorotheanum (Non-Profit Suicide Institute), at Dorothea Loehr's gallery in Frankfurt-am-Main in October 1963, different facilities for suicide were offered in eleven rooms. (No one profited by the opportunities offered.)

In March 1964 at the Allen Stone Gallery in New York, I exhibited 31 «Variations on a Meal,» extending the variations-on-a-theme principle of hard-edge art to include the collaboration of chance. Thirty-one identically set tables were transformed through the agency of the invited guests. The results were exhibited.

The «word traps» made together with Robert Filliou were an attempt to visualize proverbs and sayings. Example: «Raining cats and dogs,» in which toy cats and dogs were fixed to the top of an open umbrella.

The exhibition of my hotel room. These principles developed in an unmethodical fashion, and are much less precise categories than they might seem as outlined above.

Daniel Spörri

PICASSO'S PLAY AT ST. TROPEZ

The man described by Life magazine as "Europe's most admired young artist", Jean-Jacques Lebel has a remarkable capacity for upsetting the squares. A few years ago he was run out of Italy after a painting of his on show at the Milan Gallery was found to contain the words "Fuck the Pope"; last year his Happening near Marseilles caused consternation as an immense rubber penis arose out of the harbor accompanied by almost-nude swimmers.

This summer J-J turned his attention to St. Tropez, a once swinging Riviera resort now noted for gorgeous chicks sporting bare midriffs, exorbitant prices and a strangely bourgeois set of local morals.

Lebel had thoughtfully obtained the consent of Pablo Picasso to interpret the latter's only play, "Desire Caught by the Tail" and ambitiously planned to present this in a tent behind the Papagayo on the least visited side of St. Tropez's lovely harbor. The Papagayo's owner, a thoughtful looking man who wandered around dressed in kimono and smoking a foot long pipe, was only too anxious to host the performance, but the mayor had other ideas.

Irked by a story in Paris' conservative Le Figaro to the effect that the play would include nudes, anarchistic viewpoints and a stripper actually pissing on stage, the mayor refused permission to the company who then proceeded to erect the tent at a crossroads about three miles from town in the neighboring village of Gassin.

"We thought it would be nice to bring all the tourists a piece of genuine art to liven their vacation and we get sent away" complained J-J in aggrieved tones.

His disappointment was somewhat alleviated a few days later by the appearance at a Papagayo press conference of Le Figaro's female correspondent, author of the original story which had provoked all the trouble. Quite genially Lebel called her "a whore" and suggested that she might be happier if she returned to her supposed trade in the streets. The correspondent, not surprisingly, left in a huff and wrote another angry story about the production.

Two weeks before the show opened the cast and miscellaneous staff were frantically dividing their time between the Papagayo, the tent, an old villa in which some of the cast were billeted and the elegant, barely finished \$50,000 mansion of J-J's mother about 15 miles out of town. Here total nudity swiftly became routine and the succession of guests (including a novice correspondent from Time and staid reviewers from Le Monde) were stunned to be greeted by assorted nudists covered with art tattoos.

Living in the spacious, unfurnished house was al fresco style with foam rubber mattresses on the floor, canvas beach chairs and continual indoor picnics of yoghurt, red wine, bread and cheese.

By the time the show opened the chaos, far from resolving itself had become institutionalized. The play itself - a surrealist fantasy featuring such characters as The Thin Anguish, Big Foot, the Onion and Taylor Mead portraying a vulgar dog - was a prescient allegory of the artist's dilemma, but this was almost dwarfed by the subsequent happening.

In this, bare-breasted waitresses served wine to the audience, a car was driven into the tent and spray painted, girls changed clothes on stage in front of psychedelic films, two actors pulled down their pants and displayed their asses, a violin was dramatically smashed and a seemingly endless plastic tube slowly inflated and snaked back and forth between the seats.

At last report the event was fulfilling what seems to be the inevitable Lebel predestination: mysterious assailants had put two rifle bullets through the portable generator and the mayor of Gassin had forthwith prohibited future happenings.

Said J-J: "We are planning to move events to the beach".



Michael Broome



YOU HAVEN'T MUCH TIME,
TRY TO REACH THE SHORE!

NO

YOU MUST NOT
GO BACK!

CORONARY....

YOU'RE TRYING TO
TRAP ME!
STAY AWAY!!!

NO! DON'T SWIM AWAY!
YOU DON'T REALIZE.....

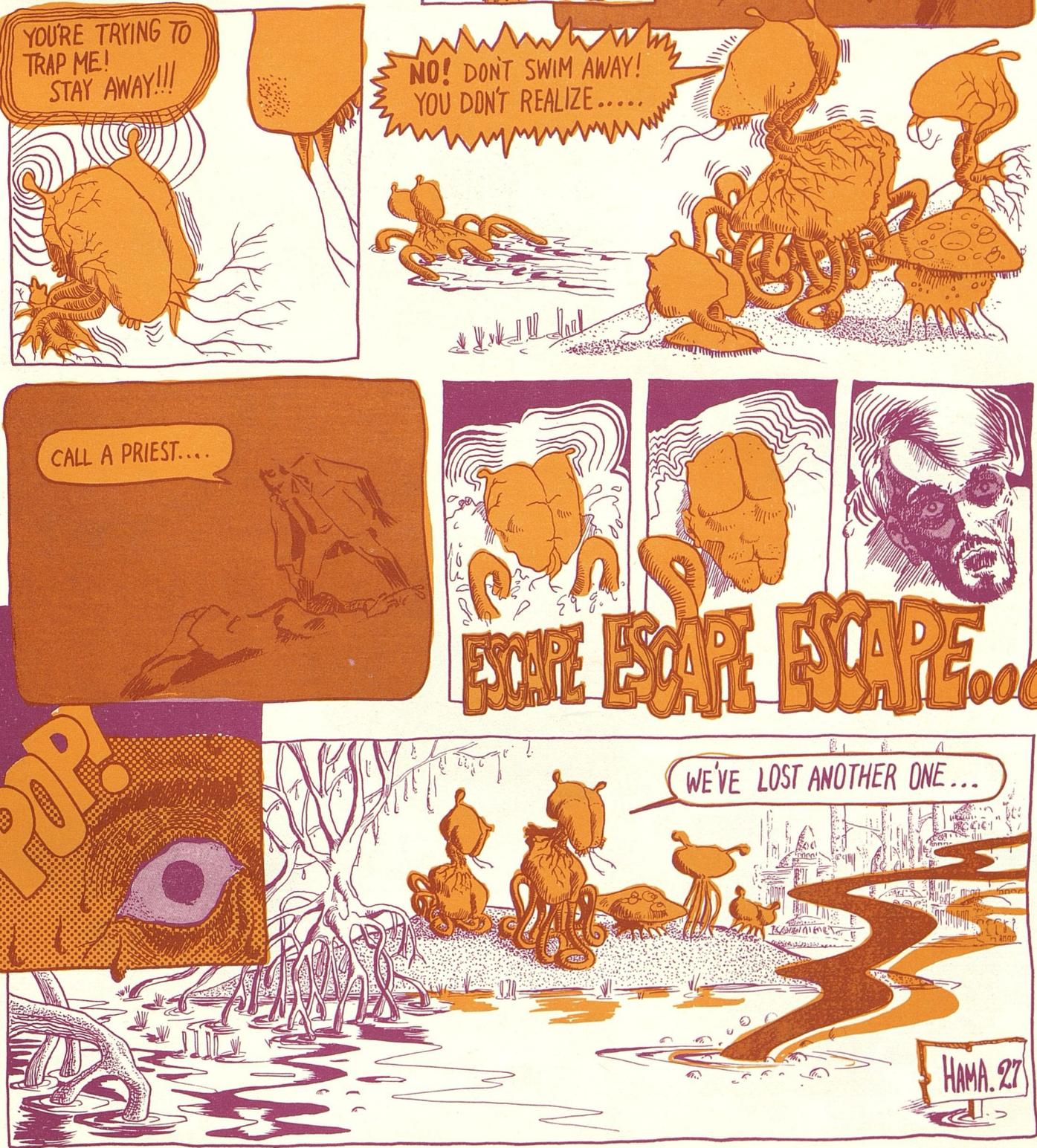
CALL A PRIEST....

ESCAPE ESCAPE ESCAPE...

WE'VE LOST ANOTHER ONE...

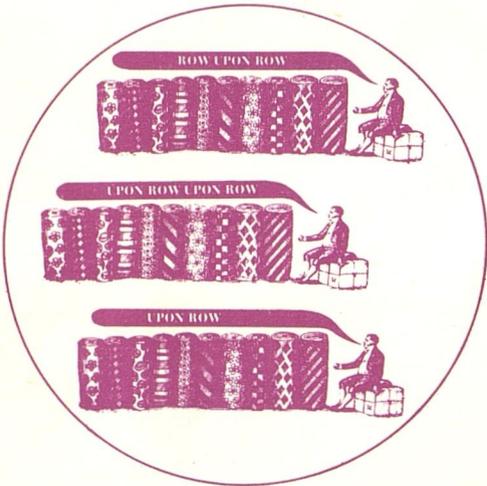
POP!

HAMA. 27



marshall
mcLwan's

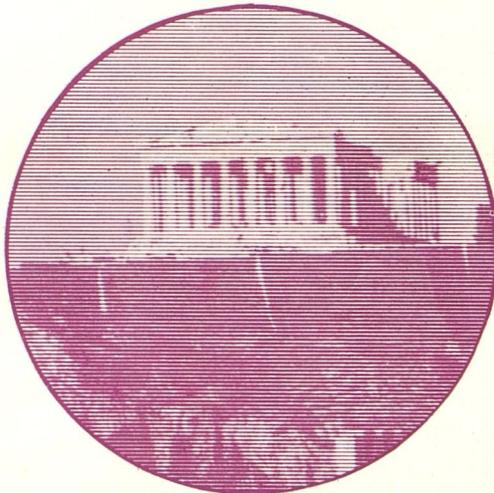
wun ied
kingdom



Printing is a ditto device.



All media are extensions of some human faculty-
psychic or physical.



Art is anything you can get away with.



We now live in a global village - a simultaneous happening.



There is absolutely no inevitability as long as there is a
willingness to contemplate what is happening.

McLuhan has complained, fairly, about the literati's hostile or ostrich attitudes to the new "electric" media (aural and audio-visual). The following criticisms of his *Understanding Media* are meant as contributions to a sort-out, not a put-down.

But a sort-out is needed. In Madison Avenue and Greenwich Village, and, increasingly, Bloomsbury, McLuhan is semi-canonised, and oracle. His current charisma recalls that accorded such fallen idols as Arnold Toynbee and Colin Wilson. This sort-out is a pre-emptive move against the coming backlash.

It's already ominous that it's this, McLuhan's third, and worst, book which has found such favour. Read McLuhan, but read his first, *The Gutenberg Galaxy*, first. Immeasurable sentences in the recent book are only explained adequately in the first, and the study of the impact of printing on thinking is better researched than his trigger happy (shoot-first-and-ask-questions-afterwards) notions on the electric media.

These, necessarily brief, samples, indicate some major reservations.

1. "The medium is the message" isn't a new message. Henry James asked what would become of the ghost story with the invention of electric light (Answer: it became the horror film. But more people still believe in ghosts than understand relativity). Some of us know we're media fans (film lovers, pop fans, bibliophiles, etc). Of course we're also content lovers (no film lover finds all films equally interesting). Content is still half the story.

2. Alas, that's what McLuhan tries to deny. In trying to stress that the medium's form is a message, proceeding, constantly, whatever its content, he throws the baby out with the bathwater, repetitively dismissing and deriding content-analysis. This leaves him totally helpless to explain why you prefer one movie to another, or a good film to a banal TV show, or the rise of pirate radio, or why the masses shy off everything the schoolroom teaches. He says "radio has this effect!" when what he means is "radio could have had this effect if used at maximum pitch and if no other variables were involved" which is like saying "radio didn't have this effect!", and the "because" involves principles which McLuhan's hop, skip and jump style might have been designed to distract your own thinking from.

His remarks on the movie *Marty* (p. 293) afford a useful touchstone. He attributes its success to the fact that the public was conditioned by TV, and that *Marty* was like TV, because (a) its photography was "low definition" and (b) it sacrificed "hot" stars for "cool" realism, TV-style. (a) is wrong; *Marty* is as well-photographed as any other movie. And films that fit (b) regularly flop (e.g. such follow-ups to *Marty* as *The Bachelor Party* and *Take A Giant Step*). Indeed, *Marty* itself flopped, until it got its Oscars, when the producers re-released it with a publicity campaign costing as much as the movie, whereupon it succeeded, because its Oscars gave it glamour as "the film that dignifies 'ordinary people'".

McLuhan's terms are bankrupt before this next problem. Here are six post-*Marty*, *Marty*-style, movies. Why, of two "Osborne" movies, was *Look Back In Anger* a hit (in G.B.) and *The Entertainer* a flop? Why, of two "Sillitoe's" was *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* a hit and *The Loneliness of The Long-Distance Runner* a flop? (Incidentally, all four movies are directed by the same man; the first two both have stars, the last two didn't). Why, of two "abortion" stories, was *The L-Shaped Room* a hit and *The Pumpkin Eater* a flop? Why was *A Taste of Honey* a hit and *This Sporting Life* a flop? All these problems can be explained, in detail, satisfactorily, in, and only in, terms of the content analysis which McLuhan so brusquely assigns to the scrapheap (note too, how he edits his evidence; not cynically, he just doesn't know enough. But who does!?).

3. McLuhan oversimplifies the media. He's right about print splitting word-sound from word-sight, brilliantly so. But most of the poetry in our anthologies was written to be read aloud (not just listened to) and poetry is still a vocal medium (even more than an aural one!). So is much prose (e.g. Dickens' novels were often read aloud in the Victorian family circle). Even eye-prose retains strong vocal associations (and not simply in dialogue). The "typewriter" poems of which McLuhan makes so much are a very minor genre; Mallarme and Lewis Carroll wrote them before typewriters, and most poets still work by mouth, ear and pen.

McLuhan really ought to stop talking about "magazines" as a medium and distinguish between (say) a poem in *Encounter*, a *Reader's Digest* inspirational feature, and, discussions of abstruse philosophical or knotty legal points, all of which are matters of content, and affect the thinking-styles of those who read them. Apply such principles to all media and McLuhan's generalisations read like a Martian's eye-view of earth.

4. McLuhan's style is dazzling because it's confusing and puzzling because it's vague. He calls Western literacy visual in that (a) you read it with your eyes and (b) you may accompany it with images in your mind's eye. This is also to say that it's non-visual, in that what you see (print) becomes transparent to what you only think you see, i.e. print is what we always thought it was, avizual and conceptual. Instead of suggesting, as he does, that reading makes us visual, he should have said that it makes us "visual", i.e. starers, but-visually unobservant. More important, though: the content of printing (concepts) makes us abstract-minded and therefore unobservant.

The content of movies is never, as McLuhan says, novels; it's usually theatre, and the content of theatre is spoken word, mime (gesture, physiognomy). McLuhan oddly omits the theatre from his media, which is extraordinary, and significant, since it's the medium which most clearly displays what the content of media really is. He slides round it with a weird formulation (p. 8), that the content of a medium is another medium; but this, if true, would be a vicious circle, and leave all media with no content. The content of all media (including the content of all their forms) is whatever associations are triggered off in the spectator by the form-content alloy. All media work by association (as McLuhan notes), e.g. music can be tactile, muscular, intellectual, emotional, in different proportions, depending on both the content, and the spectator's responsiveness.

5. McLuhan's tunnel-vision blinkers him in other contexts, as when he tries to trace big spiritual shifts to, and only to, changes in media forms. He writes as if the only difference between movie and TV were that the former's visual image is sharp and clear (high definition), and therefore makes you a passive spectator, while the latter is poor and grey (low definition) and therefore involves you as a participant.

But let's start from the beginning. The major distinction between movies and TV is that you watch movies on a big screen which dominates you, in a dark hall which conceals you, among a big crowd which includes mostly strangers. But you watch TV on a tiny screen which you dominate, by full or tv-light which doesn't conceal you, in your old familiar sitting-room, with a small group of friends. The moviegoer is cut off from the real world, he's dominated by the image, he's all but unobserved, but the sounds of crowd-excitement can

reach and infect him. So he can get carried away, lose self-consciousness, identify with the hero, etc. (However if the film's boring he's furious, he has no alternative distractions, he's come all this way, and paid so much, specifically for this).

The TV-watcher isn't dominated, isn't unobserved, hasn't got away from it all, so completely, has alternative distractions, and doesn't much mind half-boredom. Hence movies tend to exaggeration, excitement and climax. TV tends to a quieter, more even style, keyed down to the composure of your sitting-room and friends. Also, it's always there, to be looked at or not or half-looked at. That's why the content of TV is nearer newspaper-content than movies, which correspond to a "night out".

Placing the media in their contexts takes care of all McLuhan's points, except for the absurdities, as when he says (p. 312) that you can't use TV as background, as you do radio. Most British working-class families do, getting on with the ironing and the chat, glancing at the box if a remark or image interests them, looking away again, or half-attending; just as I'm writing this to the accompaniment of *The Avengers*.

This account also shows that McLuhan has got things the wrong way round. Movies in moviehouses involve you, TV leaves you more detached and contemplative, sympathetic. Movie is swimming, TV is sitting by a porthole. Definition is nothing to do with it, as McLuhan could have seen if he'd thought about home movies or TV screenings in cinemas, when the movies become less participational (though still hot!) and TV shows more (e.g. Cassius Clay fights), though still cool. Nor does this contrast prove anything about the relative power of the media. Maybe TV lingers in your mind more insidiously because (a) it lacks, the discontinuity between the movie's fantasy darkness and the real world, or because (b) it has more newspaper-fact content or (c) because you see more of it. On the other hand, you remember movies longer and clearer, the moments stand out and don't merge in a general, even-tempered grey.

Maybe, after all, modern coolth comes not from the TV image, but from (a) the audience's increasing exposure to all the audiovisual media, i.e. their gradual loss of impact, i.e. their approaching the "contemplative" distance, the non-actuality, of prose; (b) affluence ousting economic anxieties and replacing them by a habit of boredom; and (c) a greater sophistication about life anyway, so that we're all in the habit of withholding judgement until we've processed a great deal more information than the old "who's the baddie?" or "who started it?".

6. On the media's side-effects McLuhan is as unreliable as he's stimulating. He implies (p.178) that print taught people to visualise distant goals. But all (illiterate) primitives believe in an after-life and Christ taught, orally, 14 centuries before the Gutenberg Galaxy. Maybe printing encouraged introversion, which is another matter entirely. I suspect that many of the effects McLuhan attributes to print can be attributed to mercantilism and the trading mentality. Among them: distant goals ("If I take this cargo from here where it's cheap to there where it's dear..."), abstractions (laws of supply and demand, ideas of profit and utility as divorced from the physical commodity), calculation (profit-margins), rationality, ("it's not the magic it's the value"), etc.

Beware of McLuhan's wild-swipe analogies. "By electricity" (i.e. TV, radio) "we everywhere resume person-to-person relationships as if on the smallest village scale." (cf. Chaps 80, 31). Thus McLuhan, when it suits his need for startling statements, forgets that for him the medium is the message.

For a TV presence is very different from "flesh impact" (as in theatre) and even more different from the long, committed, mutual relationships of the village scale. TV speed produces quick, shallow, relationships, informal perhaps but restless, all the symptoms of alienation, the lonely crowd. The village scale produces good neighbourliness in some socio-economic contexts (e.g. the growing, thriving American West), hereditary feuds and suspicion in others (e.g. French or Sicilian peasants). Indeed the comparison isn't so much between TV and village, as between village and city. The lonely crowd antedates TV. It comes with the city, it takes different forms with different cities. Electric speed is nothing compared with seeing 500 faces a minute as you walk down Oxford St.

Two more examples out of three hundred. McLuhan attributes to TV everything from (p. 321) the disappearance of assembly lines (have they!?) to (p. 325) the egghead paperback explosion. Peering at TV images, he says, gave people the idea of reading slowly, and therefore understanding more difficult texts. Not a word about the possibility that more people now have better education and more leisure, and so read more, and therefore more easily, and need, and tackle maturer stuff. The idea that until TV no-one thought of reading slowly is crazy; the trouble with semi-literates is either they can't read quickly, they're so busy making out the words they can't follow the thought, or that they try and understand each word before they've got to the end of the sentence, or both, which your super-literate rarely does; he usually carries on until he's got a drift, and then works back. (Reading is far more "mosaic" than McLuhan realises).

Again, McLuhan suggests (p. 327) that TV (being fuzzy) has promoted a love of fuzzy textures in real life, and tactile-sensuous pleasures. Alternatively: Maybe people always relished them, but can indulge them now because (a) tactile things tend to be expensive and need affluence, and (b) sensuous pleasures need a decline in puritanism (which favours abstraction against the senses). In the '50s Americans still relished steak, ice-cream and chromium-plate - simple-mindedly brash flavours, which went with a liking for smooth, plasticized surfaces. Now everything is smooth and plastic and the rough is a blessed relief. It's perhaps puritanical afterglow that leads the Americans back to brick-and-homespun rather than on to, say, the Jewish key of spices and furs. But TV's nothing to do with it. The masses have always been sensuous, one way or another, and middle-class changes can be plotted against the puritan-trading syndrome.

7. By omitting both content and context, and thinking only of one medium "versus" another, McLuhan closes more avenues than he opens. He closes, for example, the avenue of function. The (sociology based) Himmelweit Report on TV spoke of "functional equivalence": if TV hit the comicbook hard it would be because it performs a similar function better. Not for McLuhan, who because he derides content can't understand function (since a main function of a medium is to put you in touch with the mental experiences triggered off by the content). So why does McLuhan think TV hit the comic? Out comes the same old line: both have low-definition images.

McLuhan, like the hi-fi maniacs who listen to sound, but never music, scarcely focuses on anything except the media's quality of definition!

8. McLuhan is concerned with how the media-forms influence our thinking, whether un-, pre-, or just plain conscious. But his account of thinking has some bad gaps. He attributes modern forgetfulness about names to our "visual" culture - not to the speed and informality with which the electric age showers us with information which we get into the habit of forgetting. Nor does the fact that the TV image is produced by a scanner-dot mean we perceive it differently from a photographic print. The fact that we see print with our eyes means we don't think about what we're seeing. McLuhan rushes up (a) how an image is produced (b) our perceptual



processes (c) our interpretation of our perceptions and (d) what we think about. Certainly these processes influence each other. But since McLuhan never clearly separates them, he comes up with simple one-for-one correspondences between the physical form the media and their effects on our souls.

He assumes that audience involvement depends on information-density. But the satisfactions of empathy and identification, of the mind's own selectivity, aren't reducible to information-density. While taking the odd titbit from gestalt (or Freudian) psychology, McLuhan clings, basically, to the, exploded, Lockean, assumption whereby the mind takes the form of the outer stimulus. The mind is a strip of blank film recording whatever form impinges on it. The mind is the slave of form because it can't refer back to any content (experience). No modern psychologist of any school goes as far as McLuhan in making the mind a passive "camera" of sense-pictures.

The wayward butterfly of McLuhan's thought alights briefly on points that, excavated (by corny old logic) could have been goldmines. He remarks that the ear is more emotional than the eye, and loses himself in a tangle of generalisations about radio being "trite". What's interesting is that in the animal the ear is an alarm-signal for the eye. What's behind you may be nearer than what's in your field of vision, so the ear is more "jumpy". And that's why musical rhythms make you jump (tap your feet). Visual rhythms don't, and the eye is more closely linked to precise information (look before you jump). Hence music has always been more abstract than the visual arts. It can be more abstract because it's more urgent. Abstract painting is a late, sophisticated development (schizophrenic in requiring both formal sensitivity and a cut-off of extroversion?). Abstract painting is best when you've just taken mescaline. Decorative patterns (as one finds in primitives) are best when one lets one's eyes mover over them slowly (children look at things this way; decoration fascinates them). This also happens to be movement of reading, but it precedes reading. What makes the Western adult so "illiterate" about pattern is nothing to do with reading. It's his habit of merely noting what a thing is, which he does because he lives in a world of utility and cause. He can't stroke things for pattern (pactility) with his eye: he has a slightly better grasp of form; but all he really looks at is identity. The trouble with literate people is that they don't bring the eye-movements of literacy into the world around!

9. McLuhan (shrewdly) distinguishes American or Anglo-Saxon from "European" types of sensibility, and keeps implying the Anglo-Saxons are more literate than the Europeans. But the English and the Americans are less literate than the Scandinavians, Germans, French and Dutch, though more so than the Italians and Spanish, so what happens to the "Europeans"?

If he didn't skim around so fast, McLuhan would have had to call to his aid more conventional social factors: e.g. puritanism, mercantilism, the shifting of commodities other than information, even that dreaded Marxist notion, social class.

Marx saw how technology (the means of producing wealth) interacted with the social process, and with human relationships, and with human consciousness. After all, consciousness is an artefact, determined like other artefacts by all these factors working together.

In other words: technology, as a part of the whole social process, produces the industrial revolution which produces modern capitalism; and improved methods of producing and transmitting everything include improved methods of producing and transmitting information. The cowboys beat the Red Indians not because the cowboys had the telegraph and the Indians only had smoke signals; but because the cowboys had the telegraph + maps + the Winchester 73 + wagontrains + more men + more money, etc.

But McLuhan won't have this. He reduces the history of society to the history of communications and the history of communications to the history of communicating information. What led to the downfall of the Roman Empire? Shortage of papyrus (p. 101). What causes today's civil wars? The press (p. 21). And so on and so forth (Of course at other times he allows non-informational processes a certain autonomy; and such contradictions would be more obvious if his style were less wayward).

No wonder McLuhan dazzles his readers with a sense of being in the presence of a mind which is subtle, agile and amazing. He's straining to make information format, responsible, all by itself, for everything he can think of; foresight (print), Hitler (radio), psychoanalysis (photography), the switch from jobs to roles (TV).

Why has his last, scrappiest, book, been uncritically accepted, where his first was, and it's a pity, ignored here, bar a tiny circle of aficionados? First, Understanding Media is impressively full of nuggets of interesting information; it's a great, incoherent, machine of miscellaneous stimuli (and worth reading for that alone). Second, the sense of strain exuded by his prose strikes the impressionable as the surprises of brilliance (and the Gutenberg Galaxy often is brilliant. Third, the electric media now fascinate us all, so wild guesses about them are welcome, and McLuhan reads more flip than square, which balm is in Gilead. Fourth, what men of letters want to do is bask in the hammock of endless speculation, without commitment, without conviction. And you can endlessly weave strands of McLuhanesque speculation because it's an unverifiable metaphysics.

It can blend perceptual subtelety ("How sensitive we are!") with intellectual complexity ("how clever we are!") with, as epochs rise and fall, apocalyptic overtones ("how profound we are!"). You don't have to bother to define your terms or organise your thoughts for your thinking isn't old-hat linear, it's electric-age "mosaic" or "iconic". (Actually only the lines are spokes: McLuhan's "pepperpot" style conceals a relentless, obsessive "linearity"; every point leads directly to his central concern, media-formats).

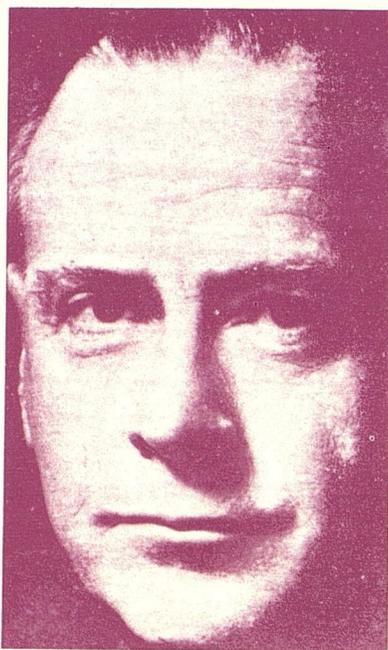
These marginal muddles are a pity, because his main point is true as it's neglected. The forms of messages do influence our mind's workings, on all levels. The medium is much of the message, it is a major link in the chain of civilisation.

Maybe McLuhan's Messianic style was the best way of attracting due attention to his hypotheses. But now it's time for testing them, and I'm not at all sure that McLuhan, then, will have transformed our thinking about the media at all. A man can fly a 1,000 kites and never get anything else off the ground.

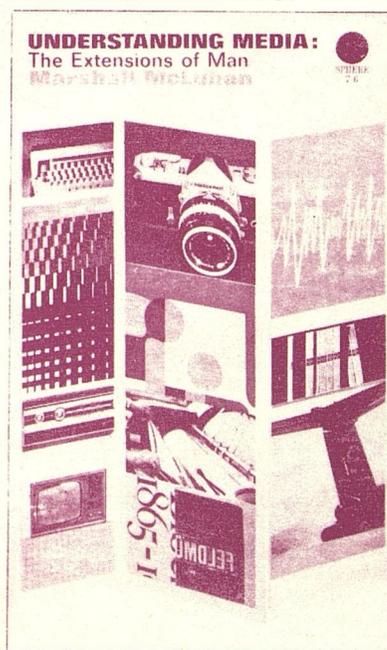
WHO IS MARSHALL McLUHAN



He looks like this.



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3. You should not be harassed by the police to make a statement. (e)
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dear Sir,

A few weeks ago i visited london. i found your magazin at betterbooks. i bought it, not knowing, that over here i would be offered a half an hour broadcast about the hippie-movement. since the offer i am trying very hard to get information, in london and in san francisco, as there is none in germany. i liked your magazin; if i could get more information about the question how much politics, social structure etc. mean to the hippies, i could put down all the scepticism from the left, which regards the hippies as a reactionary group, a group which never brings to fall the political systems of the western world, but which never them even stronger, by being a undangerous and accepted outcast. more then once it was mentioned in your magazin, that this would not be so, that the hippies would know perfectly well, that without a radical political philosophy, there would only be a chance for a few thousand, for a few years to live quite freely - and not even that.

The feature will be broadcasted in october. i have to get informations very fast - i hope, that you will help me.

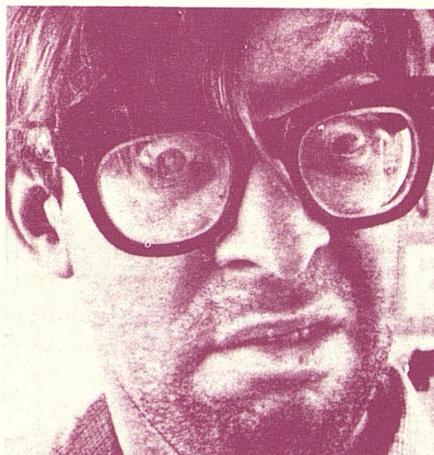
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