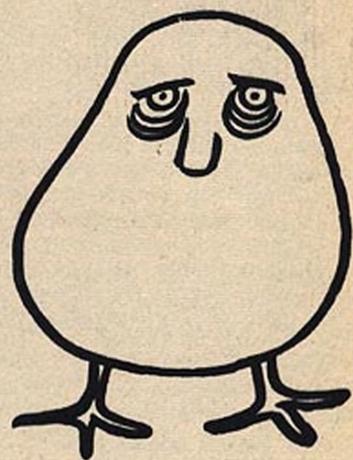


April, 1968 — No. 78

The Realist



Final Solutions to the Assassination Question

by Craig Karpel

These people seem to have been vaporized.—Jim Garrison, District Attorney, Orleans Parish, Louisiana.

On Thursday, March 9, 1967 I opened the *New York Post* to James Wechsler's column. Under the headline "JFK & Castro: Lost History?", it read:

In his final days on earth John F. Kennedy was actively and inquisitively responding to overtures from Fidel Castro for a detente with the United States.

That is the dramatic story unfolded by William Attwood, a key intermediary in the negotiations, in a new book called "Reds and Blacks" (Harper and Row) describing his experiences as journalist-turned diplomat in the Kennedy era.

Sen. Robert Kennedy, reached in Washington yesterday, confirmed the essence of Attwood's report.

The saga of the secret Castro initiative and the Kennedy Administration's cautious but affirmative, persistent probing belongs in any compilation of the inscrutable "ifs" of history. It has special relevance at this moment in the light of lurid rumors being leaked in Washington of a CIA plot, reportedly known to then Attorney General Kennedy, to assassinate Castro—and the simultaneous tale that Oswald was Castro's agent in a counterplot that led to John Kennedy's death.

The story recorded by Attwood blasts this fantasy and offers a wholly reverse version of the Washington-Havana relationship that seemed to be taking shape when John F. Kennedy was slain.

The unfinished episode began in September, 1963, when Attwood, now editor of the Cowles publications, was serving as special adviser for African affairs at the U. S. mis-

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by Reginald Dunsany

New Orleans D.A. Jim Garrison's courageous probe of the Kennedy assassination has confirmed the existence of a secret international terrorist ring more deadly than the Ochrana, GPU and Gestapo combined—the Homintern.

Intelligence agencies of the East and West have referred in hushed whispers to this sinister camarilla of homosexual militants ever since its founding in Lausanne, Switzerland in 1931, but until Garrison began his investigation, few hard facts confirmed the lethal scope of its activities.

Insiders in New Orleans now claim that all the major figures in the Kennedy murder were covert operatives of the Homintern's Western Hemisphere "Echelon B" network, serving under the direct control of David Ferrie, a former Eastern Airlines pilot cashiered after his arrest on sodomy charges in 1959.

Garrison characterizes Ferrie, who died under suspicious circumstances on February 22, as "the most important person of all time" and the key not only to events in Dallas but also to the systematic liquidation of eyewitnesses following in its wake (at the latest count by Penn Jones, Jr. and other assassination buffs, 23 dead, including Dorothy Kilgallen).

"You can understand Ferrie's motivation," Garrison said recently. "Kennedy was a virile, handsome successful man—everything Ferrie was not. In addition, there was the thrill of staging the perfect crime. Remember the Loeb and Leopold case in Chicago? It was the same thing with Kennedy."

Writing in the *Saturday Evening Post* (May 6, 1967) reporter James Phelan summarized Garrison's thesis as revealed in a series of exclusive interviews: "He claimed that Oswald and Ruby were both homosexuals and were both involved in the plot. He implied that Ruby—his homo-

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by Steve Klinger

"Mesa, Arizona—A laughing 18-year-old boy who 'wanted to get known' turned a beauty parlor into a slaughterhouse today when he shot four women and a 3-year-old girl . . . (He said) that he had got the idea from recent mass killings in Chicago and Austin..."

—News item

In recent times, there has flowered in the United States a happy marriage of two great American traditions, individual initiative and violence. Not since the gangland massacres of the 1920s and '30s has the nation been swept by such a bloody wave of multiple killings, and the spontaneous and quasi-public response of American citizens has been truly unprecedented.

Dutiful coverage by the communications media evoked reactions ranging from sympathy for the victims to a half-expressed admiration for the killers, although amongst the citizenry the latter was only obliquely expressed by such expressions as "Wow, what a nut!" and "That guy had some eye, didn't he!"

Still, one could sense the competitive spirit festering about the land as upstarts on every street corner began contemplating shooting their way into fame. Indeed,

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STEVE KLINGER

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as a prominent New York psychiatrist warned, a new national pastime was subtly evolving.

Of course the would-be headline-makers have had a difficult time eclipsing the best work of the past. The giants of yesterday were not so easily surpassed. There was, to begin with, the Babe Ruth of mass murder, Camden, New Jersey's own Howard Unruh, who, on Sept. 6, 1949, killed 13 persons and wounded three in the space of ten incredible minutes. Calculating the percentage of fatalities out of total hits, this gave our marksman a record .813 average and a ratio of 1.3 murders per minute.

Melvin Collins made headlines even earlier when he shot eight persons to death and wounded six others in Chester, Pa. in November of 1948. Collins may have been a bit sloppy but he proved his Hall of Fame mettle by having the resourcefulness to increase his total by killing himself.

Another case several years old which only recently received acclaim is that of Perry Smith and Richard Hickock, who killed all four members of a Kansas family in November, 1959. The two were later executed. The success of Truman Capote's account of the case, *In Cold Blood*, attested to America's esteem for public-pluggers. The book may even have precipitated the recent revival of such slaugthers.

In any event a new wave of mass killings began, and soon the old records were being shattered.

On July 14, 1966, Richard Speck allegedly resorted to a variety of techniques in the murder of eight student nurses in Chicago. Living up to the *Born to Raise Hell* tattoo on his arm, he compiled a cool .888 percentage, only narrowly missing a ninth victim.

Ex-marine Charles Whitman responded to this carnage with a vengeance. Climbing to the top of the University of Texas tower in Austin with an arsenal of guns, he displayed the advantages of military training. After two earlier murders at home, he killed 14 and wounded 33 on August 1.

Although his percentage of fatalities was too low for a sharpshooter rating, Whitman's score of 49 may stand for some time as a record for most total hits.

The press did a commendable job in reporting the competition. Using its recent experience in war coverage it added all sorts of descriptive color to the killing accounts. One UPI report from Austin during the Whitman killings went so far as to note that the victims were dropping "like soldiers."

Perhaps it was the battlefield aura surrounding Whitman's exploits which

prompted a legislator from one of our larger states to call for a program to "demilitarize" American fighting men before their return to civilian life. After all, why give ex-marines an unfair advantage in the competition?

The press also displayed its power to shape history as well as report it. By running front-page stories across the nation which told the news of one murderer, hypothesized psychiatrists, the dailies hit upon a sure-shot method of attracting new recruits.

Newspapers also responded to the public's idolization of the killers by seeking to establish Whitman as an all-American boy, kind, good-natured and religious. Stories were printed which compared him with Unruh, emphasizing the fond regard each had for the Bible.

Soon American business began to thrive on the public interest in the murderers. From Atlantic City, New Jersey came a report that *Tussaud's Wax Museum* on the boardwalk had ordered wax images of Whitman and Speck almost immediately after their escapades. A spokesman for the museum said, "It is the policy of Tussaud's to obtain these figures as soon as these people make the news." He added that replicas of Lee Harvey Oswald and Jack Ruby arrived only three weeks after President Kennedy's assassination.

A leading New York psychoanalyst voiced approval of the museum's policy: "T.V. is so ephemeral," he said. "Obviously this also applies to newspaper accounts. People like to contemplate the great killers leisurely, to see them life-size. Their realization in wax—for better or worse—captures forever the human images of evil, power and fame incarnate."

Reliable sources indicate that the wax museums will soon be rivaled by the vast communications media which are now planning extensive coverage of all mass killings, past, present and future.

From Hollywood comes news that Woody Allen has signed to play Richard Speck in a new Hitchcock film, *Is There A Nurse in the House?*

Also in the offing is a new Parker Brothers game, to be called *Mayhem*. Designed for a maximum of 12 players, the winner would be he who: (1) receives a card designating him an ex-marine; (2) lands on the box marked *Texas*; and (3) kills the most players as he encounters them on the board by rolling the dice.

Mark Lane is preparing to publish a book which attempts to prove that the bullets in the Austin killings could not possibly have been fired from the University tower. The appendix of the book will contain exclusive photos of Whitman's brain tumor.

A recent, though little-publicized, conference of television producers in New York left little doubt that the demands of

the home viewer would soon be met. The executives even agreed to pool their resources and drop network rivalries in the public interest:

"It's about time we had some live coverage of these things," suggested one.

"We could call it *Massacre of the Week*—"

"No, that would be too risky. We'd have to guarantee a slaughter every week. Remember, these killers aren't in Equity. They might fink out on us."

"Yeah," said a third. "We'll just have to stay prepared on 24-hour alert. It could be like a live *You Are There*—"

"Maybe we could get Walter Cronkite to announce, like in the old days."

"Hey, for the first show we could hire six ex-marines and let them loose on Times Square."

"Maybe we could get LBJ to run down Pennsylvania Avenue spraying napalm."

"Yeah, that would be a good sequel to the undercover job he did for us in Dallas."

"I don't remember that one," said a younger producer.

"Oh, sure," a veteran assured him. "Imagine! On top of everything else, having Ruby shoot Oswald on live TV! We'll never top that."

"Say," shouted another, "We could carry these things via Telstar—"

"Good idea, but we might have some trouble. It's already booked up for live coverage of the war in Vietnam."

"Wait a minute," objected the president of the educational network. "I don't know how moral all of this is. Isn't it sort of yellow television?"

"Nonsense! We didn't start this or condone it. We're just reporting the news . . ."

And so they're all ready. Cameras are now being secretly installed in cities ripe for a massacre. Any day now Batman serials and Gemini reports will be interrupted by special play-by-play color accounts of each new attempt at *The Crime of the Century*.

Zoom lenses will zero in on a white puff of smoke as commentators speak to hushed living rooms across the nation.

"He's firing rapidly, folks. How many is that, Howie? . . . Seven hit in the last 10 minutes? Check. If you tuned in late, fans, Howie Unruh here is keeping score for us. He's been given special dispensation by the New Jersey Department of Institutions as a public service—to provide expert opinion. How does it feel to see him gunning for your record, Champ? Would you call him a sharpshooter yet? Hey, there goes number eight! Wait a minute. I think it was that guy from the wax museum. Looked like he was running toward the killer with a tape measure. And now let's pause as he goes after number nine. Hey, friend, do it again. . ."

REGINALD DUNSANY

(Continued from Cover)

sexual name was Pinkie—executed Oswald to prevent him from telling all . . . Boiled down, his version of the Kennedy assassination made it out to be the result of a homosexual conspiracy . . ."

Only a man with the cast-iron guts of the Jolly Green Giant would dare to openly challenge the Homintern. According to a former CIA agent currently employed as security officer with a major Eastern aviation company, the Homintern was founded in Switzerland in 1931 by three men, a German, an Indian and a Persian—to this day their names are not known—who pledged to "employ all means, legal and extra-legal, to advance the fortunes of homophiles around the world."

(Of the initial triumvirate, only the Persian is still alive, now occupying an honorary post without administrative authority.)

There is some evidence that the Homintern initially restricted its activities to legitimate fund-raising and propaganda, receiving large sums from certain European industrialists and Eastern potentates, but by 1933 the organization shifted its emphasis to violent attacks on leading representatives of heterosexual values and a concomitant effort to infiltrate its operatives into positions of power and influence in all the governments of the world.

The group's first major setback occurred when its man in Germany, Ernst Roehm, the notorious invert who headed the Nazi SA, was liquidated in the bloody June 30, 1934 purge only weeks before implementation of the Homintern's master plan to assassinate Hitler and insure Roehm's accession to the Chancellorship.

Homintern successes in the succeeding years have included the assassination of King Alexander I of Yugoslavia in Marseilles in 1936 (his successor was Prince Regent Paul, a bi-sexual coprophiliac who threw in his lot with the Homintern in 1935), the abdication of the Duke of Windsor (viewed as a dangerously virile symbol of Empire), the poison death of Franklin Roosevelt (following closely on his discovery of Eleanor's membership in the Androgyne Circle, the Homintern's Women's Auxiliary), the firing of General Douglas MacArthur, the censure of Senator Joseph McCarthy (whose blunderbuss attacks on "security risks" in government came dangerously close to exposing Homintern cadres in the State and Justice Departments) and the infiltration of Homintern agents into key control positions in the theatre, Hollywood and fashion industry.

In the cultural field, the Homintern has worked through the instrumentality of the "Woodstock Group," a closely knit apparatus of artists led by a triumvirate of Truman Capote, Gore Vidal and Edward Albee.

("Scribe," the Woodstock Group's precursor organization was dominated by a prominent playwright known by the code name Janus, and was instrumental in the imprisonment of Ezra Pound in St. Elizabeth's Mental Hospital and directly responsible for the destruction of Ernest Hemingway's sanity through the introduction of progressive doses of belladonna and henbane to his food by a trusted aide now prominent in the Homintern literary hierarchy.)

But as Garrison is now discovering, the Homintern's greatest coup was the Kennedy assassination. Not only did it remove from office a despised symbol of heterosexuality and virility, but it brought to power a man fully amenable to Homintern dictate.

Sources in New Orleans are studiously silent on the extent of Lyndon Johnson's connection with the Homintern—it is generally assumed his torrid affair with Hearst White House correspondent Marianne Means indicates bi-sexuality at the very least—but the association of his most trusted aide with the Homintern is now accepted even by Johnson's political supporters in the FBI and CIA.

Walter Jenkins, Johnson's right-hand man since 1939, has been identified by unimpeachable sources as "Alcibiades"—the near-legendary Washington director of Homintern activities ever since Cordell Hull resigned as Secretary of State in 1946 amidst a shroud of scandal.

Johnson's relationship with Jenkins, who was recruited by the Homintern at the age of 26 in his home town of Jolly, Texas was described by James Reston in the *New York Times* of October 15, 1964: "It was not only that Walter Wilson Jenkins was his personal friend, but that he was also his official confidant, *the last man to leave the White house in the evening . . .*" (Italics added.)

Sources close to DA Garrison are hesitant to reveal the extent and intimacy of the relationship between Jenkins and Clay Shaw, the black-leather cum whips freak who was the bag man for Oswald, Ruby and the "gay Latinos" who fired at Kennedy from the grassy knoll, but there is no doubt the intermediary between "Alcibiades" and Shaw was former New Orleans Mayor De Lesseps Morrison, who died in a mysterious plane crash in Mexico in 1964 shortly after transferring his allegiance from the Homintern to the Mafia.

"If we could grill Jenkins on the stand we'd blow the lid off this entire country," one Garrison investigator who insists on anonymity told me. "But he's still too big — we can't get anywhere near him."

Jenkins' value to the Homintern was destroyed on October 7, 1964 when he was arrested in the public men's room of the Washington YMCA and charged with engaging in indecent acts with Andy Choka, a 60-year-old resident of the Soldiers' Home for Disabled Veterans.

(Choka now serves, apparently through the intermediary of powerful friends, as Deputy Undersecretary for Foreign Trade in the Commerce Department's European Division).

The Homintern had covered up Jenkins' previous arrest in the YMCA lavatory in 1959, and quickly dispatched Abe Fortas (a recent LBJ adornment of the Supreme Court) and attorney Clark Clifford to pressure Washington newspaper editors into suppressing the story, but their efforts failed when Goldwater forces broke the news and Johnson was forced to accept Jenkins' resignation.

(In a poignant expression of grief, Mrs. Johnson issued a statement on October 15th declaring: "My heart is aching today for someone who had reached the end point of exhaustion in dedicated service to his country.")

But "Alcibiades" was not cashiered or liquidated by the Homintern once his public usefulness was ended; perhaps in recognition for his signal services in Dallas, he was awarded a yearly pension of \$100,000 and still serves as a confidential consultant on Washington affairs.

The Realist is published monthly except for January and July by The Realist Association, a non-profit corporation. Publication office: 595 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012. Editor: Paul Krassner, Box 379, Stuyvesant Sta., New York, N.Y. 10009. Subscription rates: \$3 for 10 issues; \$5 for 20 issues.

The full scope of the Homintern's international activities is evidenced by its handling of l'affaire Jenkins, which politically endangered its man in the White House. According to Earl Mazo in the *New York Times* of October 16, 1964: "The Walter W. Jenkins case inspired high hopes in the camp of Senator Barry Goldwater and dismay among supporters of President Johnson."

To counteract the political impact of the Jenkins arrest, Homintern agents speeded up implementation of "Operation Juno," a brilliant plan conceived by the Homintern's top man in Moscow, Dimitri Schelepin, deputy administrator of the Soviet Foreign Office. "Juno," conceived almost two years earlier, aimed at the overthrow of Nikita Khrushchev, whose earthy peasant mannerisms and bull-like virility were anathema to Homintern.

As initially framed, the plan called for Khrushchev's ouster by the party Secretariat after a disastrous border clash with the Chinese in Inner Mongolia, artfully contrived by Homintern agents on both sides of the Bamboo Curtain.

(Unverified intelligence reports reaching Hong Kong indicate that Chou En-Lai, a well-known pederast, heads Homintern operations in Peking.)

It was now deemed necessary to overthrow Khrushchev immediately in order to distract the American public from the Jenkins case and precipitate an artificial air of international crisis that would rally the electorate around Johnson's banner. Within one day of the disclosure of the Jenkins scandal the Soviet Central committee, acting under the adroit tutelage of Homintern agents, toppled Khrushchev and installed Breznev and Kosygin as his successors.

Breznev is free of all Homintern ties, but MI 5 reports that during the two leaders' state visit to England in 1965, Kosygin was spotted conferring with a notorious Homintern agent, Captain Nigel Deverish (ret.) in a public lavatory in Notting Hill Station.

In the wake of the Khrushchev overthrow, the *New York Times* (October 16, 1964) commented: "Reports from Moscow that Premier Khrushchev has been replaced led many political observers to speculate that the possible anti-Johnson impact of the Jenkins disclosure might be nullified by the effect of an international crisis upon the voters."

And a leading Republican spokesman commented: "That Lyndon Johnson is lucky. The arrest of his man Jenkins accented the whole Bobby Baker corruption mess, which is Goldwater's strongest issue. But then comes this Khrushchev thing, taking the headlines and accenting Barry's greatest weakness, international affairs and the trigger-happy charge." (Ibid.)

By a series of swift, brilliant maneuvers the Homintern had saved the day for LBJ.

When all this is said and done, the Jenkins affair remains a serious setback to the Homintern—almost as grave as the current Garrison probe in New Orleans. And if the Homintern is loyal to its allies, it does not forget its foes.

The two officers who arrested Jenkins, both attached to the Metropolitan Morals Division, were Andrew L. Grevers and L. P. De Witt. In May, 1965 Officer Grevers' wife returned to their suburban Chevy Chase, Maryland home and found her husband dead on the living room floor, his neck broken by a single karate chop.

When interviewed by this writer, Mrs. Grevers reported that Maryland state police investigating the case claimed the motive was burglary, although nothing was taken from the house and no suspect has of this date been arraigned. Her late husband's friends on the Washington police force were "suspicious," she revealed, "but they told me not to say anything to anyone about it."

The second arresting officer, L. P. De Witt, resigned from the police force shortly after his colleague's death. A bachelor, De Witt told friends, "Somebody's out to get me—it's a feeling you get when you've been on the force as long as I have. You know when you're being followed everywhere, you develop a sort of sixth sense. This thing is some kind of a vendetta. They got Andy [Officer Grevers] and now they're after me."

In Baltimore on June 2, 1965 De Witt boarded a Panamanian freighter, the *Aregado*, headed for Montevideo, Uruguay, where his married sister lives with her husband, a construction engineer for the Uruguayan Department of Public Works. When the ship landed on June 17, De Witt was not aboard. The verdict of the Montevideo Maritime Commission investigating the case: "Missing at sea, cause of misadventure unknown."

The Homintern had wiped the slates clean.

Washington insiders charge that the Homintern exercised considerable influence over the Warren Commission from its inception. The rumor has it that the Chief Justice himself, while not directly associated with the Homintern, is sympathetic to its aims and receptive to its advice.

One former White House staffer during the Kennedy years, who resigned in a dispute over Vietnam policy and is now associated with a midwestern university, swears to intimates that Warren left the White House with tears streaming down his face after being appointed head of the Presidential Commission not out of reluctance to shoulder such an onerous task but, as he puts it, "Because that old bastard Lyndon ran out of K-Y."

Speaking of homosexuality, we have always been intrigued by those dedicated foes of McCarthyism and resolute champions of civil liberties who triumphantly clinch their arguments against J. Edgar Hoover by "disclosing" he's a queer.

Apart from the fact there exists not one iota of hard evidence to support this supposition—unless you place a sinister interpretation on his prompt dispatch of flowers to Walter Jenkins' hospital room, which may be considered Hoover's finest hour—the thing that really bothers us is the implicit assumption that if Hoover were straight he'd be a paragon of civic virtue.

Isn't it enough that he's a vain, strutting martinet, that he's transformed the FBI into a button-down Gestapo, that he's blackmailed scores of Congressmen and government figures, that he framed the Rosenbergs, that he falsified evidence to be presented to the Warren Commission, that he's anti-Negro and pro-war?

His public record alone condemns Hoover, without the extraneous introduction of smugly sneering references to his sex life.

This is all rather reminiscent of the frenzied attempts in the 1930s by anti-Nazi groups to present Hitler as homosexual and, on a smaller scale, the trend among interviewers of the late George Lincoln Rockwell to impute by sly innuendo that the American Fuhrer spent his nights cavorting in the barracks-room with his teenage stormtroopers.

Hitler, of course, led a resolutely dull and bourgeois sex-

life, thoroughly "normal" if unimaginative, and there isn't a scintilla of evidence that Rockwell was anything but heterosexual.

Again, what troubles us is the belief that Adolf Hitler and his ideological heirs cannot be adequately condemned without throwing their sex lives into question. Imagine—if we may be permitted a fantasy—Supreme Allied Command Headquarters, London, June 3, 1944: Churchill, followed by Lord Thorneycroft, rushes up to Montgomery and Eisenhower, crying: "Call off the invasion, boys! We just discovered he's straight!"

CRAIG KARPEL

(Continued from Cover)

sion to the United Nations. He had initially been enlisted as a New Frontiersman in the role of ambassador to Guinea (and much of his book is a lively, unconventional retrospect of his African assignment). It was the Guinean ambassador who first broached to Attwood the possibility of a Cuban-U.S. rapprochement.

Attwood says he had received hints from other sources that Castro was growing restive under Communist pressures and was prepared to make "substantial concessions" to achieve an accommodation with the U. S. There were indications of a deepening rift between Castro and Che Guevara, the hard-line Comissar who was said to regard Castro as "dangerously unreliable."

The reports seemed plausible to Attwood; a long session with Castro in 1959 "convinced me that he was too emotional to be a disciplined Communist, though naive enough to be swayed by Communist advisers."

Attwood suggested to UN Ambassador Adlai Stevenson and Averell Harriman that quiet contact be made with the Cuban delegation at the UN to find out "if in fact Castro did want to talk on our terms."

Harriman favored the idea but advised Attwood to explore it with Robert Kennedy "because of its political implications." Meanwhile Stevenson discussed the matter with President Kennedy, who approved the notion of Attwood conferring with Dr. Carlos Lechuga [Wechsler spells it "Lechunga" throughout the piece], the chief Cuban delegate, "so long as I made it clear we were not soliciting discussions."

At a party a few days later Lechuga told Attwood there was a strong chance that Castro would invite him to Cuba. Robert Kennedy said he thought it would be preferable if such a private session were held outside Cuba, possibly in Mexico.

The late Lisa Howard, the spirited TV correspondent who knew Castro well and tenaciously pursued for many long months a dream of U. S.-Cuban reconciliation, learned of Attwood's talks with Lechuga and was in telephone communication with Maj. Rene Vallejo, Castro's personal aide.

On Oct. 31 Vallejo told Miss Howard that Castro would welcome an unpublicized visit from a U. S. official.

On Nov. 5 Attwood met with McGeorge Bundy at the White House; Bundy, he reports, said "the President more than the State Dept. was interested in exploring this overture but thought we should now find out just what Castro wanted to discuss before going into a meeting."

Vallejo called Miss Howard again to emphasize that the Cubans would accept any secrecy arrangements we proposed. He also said that Castro alone would be present—and specifically stated that Guevara would not be.

Bundy told Attwood that President Kennedy still favored preliminary private talks at the UN to ascertain whether Castro was "seriously interested" in discussing the points Stevenson had raised in a UN speech on Oct. 7. In that address Stevenson said that the U.S.-Cuban cold war could be ended if Castro stopped taking orders from Moscow and

infiltrating other Latin American states, and returned to the democratic promises of his revolution.

Attwood telephoned Vallejo at a private Havana number and confirmed our readiness to listen to Castro. Vallejo said Castro would tell Lechuga to discuss an agenda for the conversation.

On Nov. 19 Bundy told Attwood that the President wanted to see him immediately after he met with Lechuga. The President, Bundy added, would be available except for "a brief trip to Dallas."

Soon after the assassination Attwood encountered Lechuga, who said he had been instructed by Castro on Nov. 23 to begin "formal discussions" with him.

"... I informed Bundy and later was told that the Cuban exercise would be put on ice for a while—which it was and where it has been ever since," Attwood writes.

If . . . ?

I thought this might interest Bill Turner, the ex-FBI Special Agent who is investigating the assassination for *Ramparts* so I clipped the column and sent it off. Turner mentioned Attwood's account in the June *Ramparts*, offering it as evidence of the dramatic changes in American foreign policy that might have taken place had Kennedy lived and, indeed, whose imminence may have helped bring about his death.

I bought *The Reds and The Blacks* so I could see if there had been any errors in Wechsler's version that I ought to bring to Turner's attention.

"The late Lisa Howard," Wechsler had written, "the spirited TV correspondent who knew Castro well and tenaciously pursued for many long months a dream of U. S.-Cuban reconciliation, learned of Attwood's talks with Lechuga and was in telephone communication with Maj. Rene Vallejo, Castro's personal aide."

"Meanwhile," Attwood wrote (p. 143), "Lisa Howard, a television correspondent who knew Castro well and had been briefed on my UN talks with Lechuga, had been in touch by phone with Castro's personal aide, Major Rene Vallejo."

Two things struck me.

First, Wechsler had felt called upon to note that Lisa Howard was no longer alive. Attwood didn't mention the fact of her subsequent death, although he refers quite gratuitously ten pages earlier in the book to the fact that within a year after he ran into Washington painter Mary Meyer in the company of John Kennedy she had been murdered.

Second, only Wechsler thought it interesting that Lisa Howard's interest in our relations with Cuba antedated her involvement in October, 1963.

Neither of these facts could have escaped Attwood. No one in New York's journalistic community could have failed to note Lisa Howard's death in the summer of 1965, or to have known that for some time before October, 1963 she had been exploiting her hard-won contact with Castro in a personal attempt to secure the rationalization of U. S.-Cuban relations.

Both facts were so well known to me that Wechsler's reference to them only barely registered with me on the first reading. It was Attwood's omission of them that renewed my interest.

Lisa Howard was born Dorothy Jean Guggenheim in Cambridge, Ohio in 1926. She entered Miami University in Oxford, Ohio at the age of 16, quit after a year to act. She appeared in a few summer stock productions, in an off-Broadway production of *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, and in a TV soap-opera, *The Edge of Night*.

She joined the Lexington Democratic Club in New York City and energetically began to pursue what she called "the active side of politics." In 1960, with the conventions coming, she decided she wanted to leave acting and the "active side of politics" and "really get in the middle—reporting."

She applied to Mutual Broadcasting in New York and was turned down. She decided she had nothing to lose and flew to Los Angeles to surprise the executives who had turned her down. They were too flabbergasted to keep from hiring her.

That November, Khrushchev was in New York to tighten his heel, and Lisa Howard decided to nail him down. She arrived one morning at the Soviet Embassy carrying a briefcase, wearing an old hat and flat shoes and no makeup. "Goot mornink," she growled to the cops and marched into the embassy.

She hid in the ladies' room for 3 hours.

As Khrushchev and his entourage left the building, she joined the procession. As the Chairman stepped into his limousine she came forward, took his hand and requested an appointment. Khrushchev, astounded, granted her an exclusive interview.

"I don't think my success has anything to do with being a woman," Miss Howard told the *New York Times*. "Call it tenacity or resourcefulness or refusing to take no for an answer." In May, 1961 Lisa Howard was asked to join the American Broadcasting Company as the network's first woman reporter.

During the tense days of the Cuban missile crisis Lisa Howard decided she had to speak to Fidel Castro. As Russian First Deputy Premier Anastas I. Mikoyan was boarding his New York-to-Havana plane in November, 1962, Lisa Howard ran up and handed him an envelope containing a request for an interview and a transcript of her interview with Khrushchev. She asked him to deliver it to Fidel Castro.

There is evidence that Mikoyan complied, but Castro did not reply.

She decided that the only way to get to speak to Castro was somehow to get to Cuba and buttonhole him as she had Khrushchev. She prevailed upon Alex Quaison-Sackey, the Ghanaian Ambassador to the UN, to use his influence to get her a visa. Shortly after Quaison-Sackey returned from a trip to Cuba in February, 1963, her visa application was approved.

By April Fool's Day, she was in Havana with the extravagant notion of getting a TV interview with Castro.

For three weeks she cooled her heels at Havana's Hotel Riviera. Finally, at a quarter past midnight on Sunday, April 21, she received a telephone call from the Swiss ambassador. "Come downstairs," he said.

"I'm in bed," said Lisa.

"Get dressed and come downstairs," said the ambassador.

Lisa leaped into a low-cut brown cocktail dress, went down to the lobby, and was taken out to the hotel steps. Five minutes later, Castro drove up, walked over to her and said, "Lisa Howard, how do you do?"

Then Castro, his interpreter, the ambassador, the Minister of the Interior and Lisa Howard proceeded to the hotel night club. They talked for hours about literature, philosophy—Kant and Camus—and of what Lisa later called "the sacraments of democracy—free elections, free press, the words of Thomas Paine and Thomas Jefferson."

Castro appeared to enjoy it all. He had pictures taken of himself and Lisa with a Polaroid camera given him by

American attorney James Donovan. He ordered one Scotch-and-soda but hardly touched it. "There was a floor show," Lisa said, "but he never glanced at the stage." At 5:15 a.m., Castro suddenly agreed to be interviewed.

The interview was set for 3 p.m. Wednesday in a 20th floor penthouse suite at the hotel. Castro and his interpreter showed up at Lisa's room an hour early. "We sat and talked for an hour—about life, the revolution," she recalled. Then they went upstairs and Lisa interviewed Castro. When it was over, Lisa said, "Come on, I'll buy you two fellas a drink." They went to the hotel bar and talked for three more hours.

She came back from Havana triumphant, with a 45-minute interview in the can. It was aired on May 10, 1963. Castro said that he believed that the United States had "taken some steps in the way of peace" in its relations with Cuba and that these might be the basis of better relations. He mentioned the exchange of prisoners between the two nations and "the stopping of piratical acts against Cuba" as "steps in the right direction."

"I have looked at such steps with good eyes," he declared.

Senators Kenneth B. Keating of New York and Hubert H. Humphrey of Minnesota were interviewed immediately after the film. Keating said that Dr. Castro's remarks showed "a hunger for reconciliation." Humphrey, then Kennedy's spokesman in the Senate, said that Castro was "whistling in the dark" about any reconciliation.

ABC rewarded its lady reporter for her initiative with "Purex Presents Lisa Howard and the News, with the Woman's Touch". It went on the air September 9, 1963. The five-minute afternoon show was the first network news show starring a woman in the history of broadcasting.

Meanwhile she had written an article titled "Castro's Overture" that appeared in Richard Hudson's *War/Peace Report*. In it Lisa Howard noted that during the filmed interview Castro had proclaimed his desire to discuss all points of contention that existed between the United States and Cuba:

During our private conversations, which continued over a period of eight hours, Castro was even more emphatic about his desire for negotiations with the United States. He mentioned his desire for better relations with the United States in a speech at Lenin Stadium in Moscow. Upon his return to Cuba, in a televised address to the people, he referred to our interview and again indicated his desire for discussions with the United States.

On June 24th, Cuban President Dorticos spoke on Havana television and said he hoped Cuba could normalize relations with the United States. At a luncheon held at the end of June at the home of the Czech ambassador to Cuba and attended by all the Western ambassadors to Cuba, Castro continually referred to the subject of his desire for more amicable relations with the United States. This luncheon, incidentally, marked the first time Castro had attended a formal gathering of the Western diplomatic corps in over three years.

Surely these are not mere propaganda utterings. Even to the most casual observer of the Cuban scene it must by now be evident that Fidel Castro has something serious on his mind. An overture repeated so often, and in so many quarters can hardly be ignored.

However, this question may reasonably be raised: If Fidel Castro is genuinely interested in meaningful negotiations, why doesn't he address himself to the Swiss Embassy in Havana, which handles United States affairs there, or the Czechoslovakian Embassy, which represents Cuba in

this country? The answer is a simple one. Castro is an intensely proud man and, therefore, hesitant about making a precise and formal bid for negotiations that might be rejected out of hand—particularly where the United States is concerned.

Castro has spent a good part of his career defying the United States, and now he simply cannot bring himself to beseech us. So he has turned to other, more subtle approaches to impart his message: a U. S. journalist, public speeches, allied ambassadors—hoping that someone on the other side will respond to the suggestion.

Although the "U. S. journalist" had connections on the Cuban side, she was unable to make contact with the Administration. It was instead one of the "allied ambassadors"—the Guinean ambassador to Havana who first broached the topic of a Cuban rapprochement to Attwood—who started the ball rolling.

Attwood does not mention who brought Lisa Howard into the picture at this stage. Most likely it was Bobby Kennedy. On the Attorney General's instruction, Attwood told Lechuga that he "couldn't very well go to Cuba but that if Castro wanted to talk to us we were prepared to meet him or a personal emissary at some convenient place like the UN."

But Attwood notes that "Lechuga's message, which went through the Foreign Office, had apparently not reached Castro."

This is why Lisa Howard was informed of the Administration's interest in arranging talks with Castro: because she was the only person in the United States of America that could run Castro's interference and get through to the man himself.

Humphrey had said that Castro was "whistling in the dark" about any reconciliation. Now John F. Kennedy had picked up the tune, and Lisa Howard danced between them.

Castro called Lisa Howard on New Year's Day 1964, the eve of the 5th anniversary of his seizure of power from Fulgencio Batista. While thousands of red flags and pictures of Castro and Khrushchev decked the streets of Havana for the next day's celebrations, the Cuban Premier spoke in English for a half-hour.

Parts of the conversation were quoted in the next day's *New York Times*. He said that he was hopeful that good relations with the United States might be restored that year, that until President Kennedy's "tragic death" he believed that "an eventual normalization of relations with the Kennedy Administration was possible."

"We have spoken," he said, "and we repeat that our wish is to normalize that relationship. But now it is not for us; it belongs to the United States Government to take the next step to help that normalization because it is difficult to answer what we can do . . . We are ready to speak about indemnification of American property nationalized by the revolutionary Government and so you see that sincerely we are ready to speak, but it does not depend only upon us . . . I want to say to the people of the United States that in spite of the fact that President Kennedy was hard personally toward us, of course we are really sorry about his tragic death."

Lisa went to Cuba again in the Spring of 1964. She spent 10 days inspecting bull farms, villages, housing cooperatives and agricultural schools. She was with the Cuban leader on five occasions.

"We talked and talked and talked," Lisa said. "He's read Shakespeare, Camus, the Greek philosophers, Thomas Paine.

He is an intellectual who also has a sense of humor."

The admiration was apparently mutual. Castro allowed her to film another interview. "I don't believe this interview is going to do a thing for me," he joked, "but it's going to be great for your career."

It wasn't. The interview was aired on April 19th. Castro said that at the time of Kennedy's death he believed the President was "persuading himself of his mistakes about Cuba. I had some evidence that some change was taking place in the mind of the Government of the United States . . . a new situation . . . and we had evidence I do not want to speak about."

Jack Gould, television critic of the *Times*, the next day criticized the interview as "vague."

"But," he added, "the A. B. C. news department did treat Miss Howard rather oddly in one respect. After her program had finished, the network offered a spot announcement in support of the International Rescue Committee. Viewers were asked to contribute money to aid the thousands of victims of 'Castro tyranny.' The matter of the refugees preferably should have been incorporated in the body of Miss Howard's program. The announcement was so pointed in its content and its placement on the air as to suggest that the network was second guessing."

Lisa Howard kept up her contact with Castro through that year. On July 6th, the Cuban premier telephoned her to inform her that he had sent telegrams to 25 American publications inviting them to send reporters to cover the 26th of July celebrations in Cuba. Any one of the 25 publications was of course free to make the invitation public. Castro called because he was anxious to give his blonde friend the scoop.

In the late summer of 1964 Bobby Kennedy announced that he would run for the New York Senate seat held by Keating. On September 10th, Lisa Howard and Gore Vidal—both known as prominent figures in New York City's Democratic reform movement—met with Keating to pledge their support to his campaign, to forestall what they called the "Bobby Kennedy power grab." The meeting was at Lisa Howard's home.

She told the *Times* three days later that the group was organized because "if you feel strongly about something like this you can't remain silent—you have to show courage and stand up and be counted." One of those attending the meeting said, "Bobby is the very antithesis of his brother, the late President. He is ruthless, reactionary and dangerously authoritarian. We feel he must be stopped now."

The first public meeting of Democrats for Keating was held the evening of September 28th. The following day ABC suspended Lisa Howard and plugged Marlene Sanders into her news slot. ABC News released the following statement:

"Miss Lisa Howard has been relieved from all ABC News assignments for the duration of the political campaign because she has chosen to participate publicly in partisan political activity contrary to long-established ABC News policy."

Lisa replied that she had notified ABC on September 19th that she was working in behalf of Senator Keating as a private citizen and that her television broadcasts would not reflect her political position. She had, she said, participated just as actively in politics during the campaigns of 1961, 1962 and 1963.

Shortly before her suspension ABC had renewed her contract through the following September. She insisted that

there was nothing in this contract that prohibited political activity on her part. The network admitted that this was so, but that she was suspended nonetheless.

Saturday evening, October 17th saw the debut of a series of debates called "The Controversy" at the Strollers Club, once the home of *The Establishment*, the English satirical revue and now the site of Arthur's, a discotheque. It was a panel show with food, drink and audience participation, moderated by Betty Furness.

Lisa Howard and Stephen May, a lawyer and Keating partisan, debated two pro-Bobby attorneys, Robert H. Clappitt and Justin Feldman. Edwin Guthman, a top Kennedy aide, sat silently in the rear of the audience. Lisa dropped the bomb of the evening. "Brothers are not necessarily the same," she told the audience. "There was Cain and Abel."

There was loud applause and a woman's voice that said, "That's disgusting." Betty Furness rapidly closed the refrigerator door on that salient of discussion. As Lisa walked into the foyer and saw Feldman talking to Ed Guthman, she must have realized that her days in broadcasting were numbered.

Election Day came, but Purex was still Presenting Marlene Sanders. The day after Bobby was elected the network informed Lisa that her particular woman's touch was no longer in demand at ABC News. They allowed as how she wasn't in violation of her contract and that they would reciprocate by continuing to mail her the \$500 minimum weekly paycheck to which she was entitled until she resigned—and would she please resign.

"She's being canned," an unnamed ABC executive told the *Times* on November 8th. "She doesn't fit. She's a mystery girl. We just don't want her on our staff."

On December 15th, she filed suit against American Broadcasting-Paramount Theatres, Inc. for \$2,008,000 in damages. She asked for a court order requiring the company to show cause why she should not be reinstated immediately, and asked for a temporary injunction to prevent ABC from using her format on the program during her absence.

"The exercise of a sacred right and citizenship," her affidavit stated, "by participation in a public election campaign cannot possibly constitute a legitimate justification for permanently removing me from ABC television."

At a hearing the following week, Clarence Fried, ABC's lawyer, replied that the company had suspended Miss Howard because she had ignored directives to desist from participating in partisan politics and had "sabotaged" network programs. Moreover, he said, she had been insubordinate to her superiors on several occasions.

State Supreme Court Justice Louis J. Capozzoli thought actual restoration to the air would be "an extraordinary action" and reserved decision. On January 18, 1965, Justice Capozzoli denied her requests for damages, reinstatement and an injunction.

With the possibility of returning to ABC nil, Lisa didn't bother making the rounds of other broadcasters. She was convinced that she was blacklisted. "ABC," she lamented, "has, in effect, created a blacklist on which they've placed my name." Instead she exploited some of her contacts in the reform movement and landed the job of Publicity Director of New York City's anti-poverty program.

She would begin her new job on July 6, 1965.

Slightly more than three weeks before she was supposed to go to work, Lisa Howard suffered what was described as a miscarriage and was admitted to Mount Sinai Hospital. She stayed there for 3 weeks, and was discharged on Fri-

day, July 2nd. Her husband, Walter Lowendahl, a film executive, drove her to their summer home in East Hampton, Long Island.

Shortly after noon on Fourth of July Sunday she was observed "acting strangely" in the parking lot of a pharmacy by "two friends," who helped her into their car and then called the police for assistance.

Patrolman William Brockman, who responded to the call, later told the *Times* that Miss Howard appeared dazed and glassy-eyed and was almost incoherent.

"She kept mumbling something about a miscarriage," the patrolman said. He escorted the friends' car to the East Hampton Medical Center, but "she collapsed before we got her inside."

The doctor at the clinic performed a tracheotomy to clear an airway and gave her oxygen. She never regained consciousness. At 12:15 p.m. Lisa Howard was pronounced dead. Dr. Mary Johnson, assistant Suffolk County medical examiner, tentatively ruled the death a suicide pending an autopsy. The police said that a prescription Miss Howard obtained Saturday for ten sleeping pills had been altered to 100 before she had it filled.

The *Times* reported that "according to a close friend, Miss Howard had been depressed since the loss of her unborn child. Speaking from her home at 63 Spring Close Highway, he said 'Lisa had taken a normal prescription last night to counter the depression. But she woke up and wandered into town seeking more barbiturates. She got them. Then she felt sick and asked two friends for help. They drove her to the East Hampton clinic, with a police escort, where she lost consciousness.'"

Two weeks later, Dr. Sidney Wenberg, Suffolk County medical examiner, ruled the death a suicide. Lisa Howard, he said, had taken enough barbiturates to kill five persons.

I first met Lisa Howard the last week in October 1962, the week the Russians were hauling missiles towards Cuba. I was contact man for the UPI film crew and we set up on a balcony overlooking the ballroom. The cameraman shot an establisher over the balustrade and when he was through he pointed to a knot of people on the floor.

"There's Stevenson, in the middle," he said. "Watch when she comes through—she doesn't care who he is, she'll strong-arm him out of there like he was her little boy."

And indeed within a few minutes Lisa Howard came through a door and made a beeline through the people and tables to where Stevenson was nodding politely, one hand in his coat pocket, his head tilted toward the floor. She stood in the group for perhaps half a minute before she lost her motherly patience and pulled Adlai out of the sandbox.

They came out of the elevator arm in arm. Stevenson looked quite pink as people whom we are used to seeing in the *grisaille* of the media tend to look in the flesh. Lisa Howard had Clairol blond hair pulled back in a bun and a pretty, heavily made-up face. She conducted a business-like interview, after which Stevenson good-evening-gentlemen us and walked out alone down the hall.

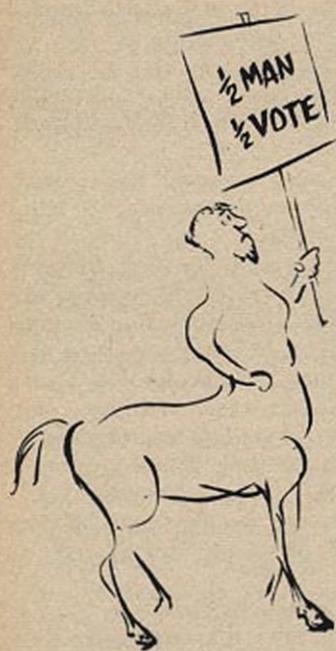
"I've seen him better," she said, shaking her head. "They want this for the 11 o'clock," she said to me.

"There's a rider downstairs waiting," I said.

"They said the same thing two weeks ago and the stuff didn't come through till the next day. They put it on overnight by mistake."

The sound man rolled his eyes and stuck his tongue in his cheek.

"I'll call the lab myself," I offered.



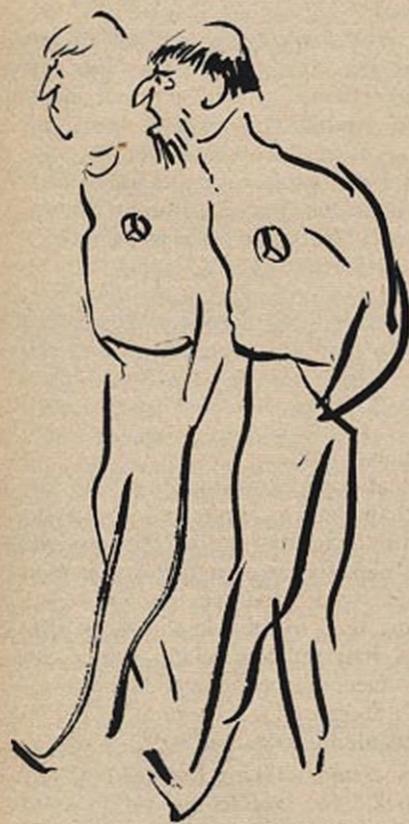
"—Moreover, peace in Vietnam would free enormous quantities of napalm for use in Yemen, Aden, Israel . . ."



"He's in underground films. I know that foot!"



ed fisher's page



"—Don't you see, making the autos safe is just Ralph Nader's way of preserving a lot of guys so that the Establishment can send them to fight in Vietnam . . . And Jonas Salk's a fink, too!"



"Wait till the Supreme Court hears how you got *this* confession!"

"You'd better do that," she snapped. "This wouldn't be the first time you guys balled things up." She gathered her things and walked out the door.

"That mirror mirror on the wall must have not told her she was the fairest one of all tonight," said the sound man.

Lisa Howard struck me as the sort of person who took out her moods on others, not on herself.

She could indeed have killed herself; her self-possession may have been merely so much veneer over a core of pure mush. But the quality of the evidence that she did kill herself makes her suicide less than plausible. Evidence is often like Swiss cheese—it is the holes in it that make it interesting.

Lisa Howard suffered a "miscarriage" and was hospitalized for three weeks. The period of hospitalization for a miscarriage is ordinarily three days. One can assume that there may have been other factors which required her extraordinarily long stay at Mount Sinai.

She was supposed to have been despondent over the loss of her unborn child. Yet the day after her discharge from the hospital her doctor gave her a prescription for barbiturates. A doctor might as well have given her a loaded gun.

The "friend" who spoke to the *Times* says that she took the barbiturates Saturday to counter her depression. Barbiturates are pharmacologically depressants. Lisa Howard was no dope.

Two anonymous "friends" are said to have found her in the parking lot. Perhaps these "friends" partook of the same sort of anonymity as the "unidentified person" who, on March 27th of that year, had taken Jack Ruby's former attorney Tom Howard to a Dallas hospital to die [see *Ramparts*, November, 1966, p. 42].

If you found a friend of yours wandering around a pharmacy parking lot acting strangely, dazed, glassy-eyed and mumbling incoherently, would you wait for the police to arrive before taking her to the hospital? Put it another way—if you had just poisoned a "friend" and wanted someone to witness the simulated effects of barbiturate poisoning before the "friend" passed out or away, whom would you call?

Patrolman Brockman said that Miss Howard appeared dazed, glassy-eyed and almost incoherent. When he arrived at the scene he was told that she had been wandering around the pharmacy parking lot. If the physician who heard these facts assumed that the patient was suffering from barbiturate poisoning, standard procedure would be to remove the contents of the stomach by inducing vomiting or pumping the stomach and to administer large doses of amphetamines and an adrenalin solution.

None of these procedures was attempted.

Physicians in resort towns are exposed to the symptoms of barbiturate poisoning daily. Why didn't the doctor who treated Lisa Howard take routine action?

(Lee Bowers, the railroad terminal employee who stood in a 14-foot tower directly behind the Grassy Knoll was fatally injured on August 9, 1966 when his brand new company car veered from the road at 50 miles an hour and hit a bridge abutment. The doctor who rode in the ambulance with Bowers noticed something strange about the victim. "He was in a strange state of shock," the old doctor said, "a different kind of shock than an accident victim experiences. I can't explain it. I've never seen anything like it.")

Patrolman Brockman said Lisa Howard kept mumbling

something about a miscarriage. Does this ring true if her death was a suicide? Do people who attempt to commit suicide ramble on about the substantive cause of their attempt? If at this point Lisa Howard was in fact demented, why such extraordinary lucidity? More likely, she would be mumbling about how she was tired, or how the midday sun was hurting her eyes.

Assuming Patrolman Brockman's memory was not affected by what he later was told about the case by those close to Lisa Howard—by others with a more sinister interest in her death—what could Lisa have been trying to say? Could she have been trying to say that there had been no miscarriage? That the "miscarriage" was a ruse she used to find sanctuary in the hospital? Or that she had been poisoned and they were now going to say she had done it because of a miscarriage?

The *Times* reported that the police said she had altered her prescription "from 10 to 100." The *Times* style book dictates that the word "ten" be written out in the text—digits are used starting with 11. By quoting the police this way the reader is assured of the plausibility of such an alteration.

In fact, however, it would be impossible.

There is a law in New York State that prescriptions for barbiturates, amphetamines and narcotics be written out in words—even the time-honored practice of using X for ten and C for a hundred is not permitted in prescriptions for this drug. A pharmacist who filled a prescription for "10" barbiturate tablets would be committing a misdemeanor and putting his license in jeopardy. To dispense "100" he would have to be mad.

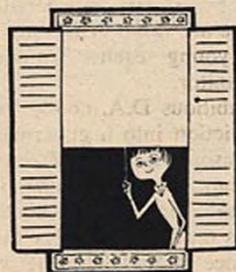
So we are presented with the picture of the lady newsman striding forth from the mad druggist to chew down one-hundred barbiturate tablets in an exurban parking lot at high noon without benefit of a glass of water, there being no evidence that she did not commit suicide.

You will excuse me for not going after the evidence that she did not commit suicide, but I prefer not to die mumbling "Lisa Howard" and I like water with my pills.

It is too bad that Lisa Howard is no longer with us. I should have liked to ask the only American who was in constant communication with Fidel Castro whether, in the Fall of 1963 or later, he had any intimations that forces in the United States had been plotting his death, or that those forces, finding their plans truncated by presidential order, decided to vent their anti-detente spleen on our young and beautiful President.

Perhaps she could have told us whether, as she found herself moving within earshot of the titans, she had reason to believe that there were among the honorable men of this land those who viewed political questions through the reticule of a gunsight.

Perhaps she could have told us the root of her perception of Robert Kennedy as Cain and John Kennedy as Abel. Mystery girl.



A Case of Anti-Semitism

by Michael Valenti

Last year, after having written a string of light books, all instant best sellers, Harry Golden took on in "A Little Girl Is Dead" what must be described as the stickiest murder case in American criminal history. And the Golden luck held out. Reviews were laudatory and some reviewers, following the current vogue, even linked the martyrdom of the lynch victim, Leo Frank, with those of Emmett Till and Medgar Evers.

I suppose what they were trying to say, in their well-meaning way, is that if Leo Frank had not been a Jew he might have been a Negro. To say this is to miss one of the strangest ironies in the case: that liberal opinion in America, while believing Frank innocent of any crime, has done little to clear his name, preferring to sacrifice him to a "higher good."

And so once again the buried Leo Frank case has refused to stay buried—but has also once again proved to be something of an embarrassment. It is a case that won't fit into our times, or perhaps any time. It is a case that perhaps best exemplifies what justice is all about.

At the conclusion of a 1937 Warner Brothers' "social documentary" based on a murder and lynching in the South, a reporter (Allyn Joslyn) casually remarks to the District Attorney (Claude Rains): "Now that it's over, Andy, I wonder if he really did it?" The D.A., who has just been called a murderer by the dangling man's widow, replies (with Rains' inimitably evil equanimity): "I wonder, too!"

The film, *They Won't Forget*, was a memorable movie of its day for at least three reasons. In what was then thought to be the descending order of importance:

(1) It was produced by Harry Warner's son-in-law, Mervyn LeRoy, the boy wonder who had made his reputation with *I Am a Fugitive From a Chain Gang*. *They Won't Forget*, the reviewers pointed out, was flawed, to be sure, but nevertheless was in the laudable tradition of Warner Brothers' social documentaries.

(2) It introduced a milk-and-honey Lana Turner in her first cinematic sweater, and, despite the fact that she is murdered in the first reel, fixed for all time the American male's erogenous preoccupation.

(3) It was based on the Leo Frank case, or, more correctly, on a Ward Greene novel based on the case, called *Death in the Deep South*. To their credit, most of the reviewers recognized that LeRoy had taken broad liberties with the story, some of which had a striking, turn-about irony.

The setting for *They Won't Forget* is a women's business college in an unidentified Southern town. Buxom Mary Clay, a student, is raped and murdered on Confederate Memorial Day. There are three prime suspects: the school's elderly principal, a young teacher from the North and a stereotyped Negro janitor.

The politically ambitious D.A. coolly weighs his chances for parlaying a conviction into a gubernatorial nomination. The principal, he reasons, is too well respected; the Negro janitor too insignificant. But the young, handsome Northerner teaching in the alien South—called Robert Hale in the movie version—is made to order for the role of fall guy.

With the connivance of the press, he whips up the mob

spirit necessary to get a conviction on the flimsy evidence he can present. He gets his conviction and, when the Governor intercedes, the mob finishes the job. The closing scene, described above, follows, and is the movie's ultimate noncommittal statement about the case.

They Won't Forget has since been swept into the dustbin of movie history. It is of interest now only as an example of the kind of spurious "realism" of the social dramas of that time and because of its ironic echoes of the sensational—and buried—Frank murder case.

Briefly, these are the facts in the case. On Saturday, April 26, 1913, Confederate Memorial Day, a pretty little 14-year-old girl named Mary Phagan was raped and murdered in an Atlanta pencil factory. Two illiterately scrawled notes were found near her body, obviously intended to set the police on a cold trail.

The superintendent of the factory—and the last person to see Mary alive—was a 29-year-old Brooklyn-born Jew of intellectual bent, Leo Frank. His uncle owned the factory. Two other men were in the factory that morning, a night watchman and a porter, both Negroes.

The Solicitor General, wavering, had indictment forms drawn up against both Frank and Newt Lee, the night watchman, and kept both names before the jury until the last witness had been heard. Then, at the last possible moment, he asked for and got a true bill against Frank. The indictment charged him with first-degree murder.

There were broad hints in the newspapers of sexual perversion in Frank's background. Tom Watson, a satanic political demagogue and prolific disseminator of anti-Catholic literature, switched overnight to anti-Semitism. One of his publications, the *Jeffersonian*, referred to Frank as "this filthy perverted Jew of New York" (oddly, Harry Golden never mentioned this); its circulation jumped quickly from 10,000 to 50,000. The Southern press at large, less explicit, charged that \$250,000 had been raised "to make certain that the guilty Jew Frank escaped the gallows."

The chief witness against Frank was to be Jim Conley, the itinerant porter. While still a suspect himself, he had told seven different versions of what had happened on the fatal afternoon. In most of them he implicated Frank as the murderer, saying Frank had offered him \$200 to dispose of the body. At first he had insisted he could neither read nor write. But when Frank inadvertently alluded to his literacy, he finally admitted that he himself had written the misleading notes—at Frank's direction.

With this flimsy case against Frank—with the only "eyewitness" an admitted liar and an admitted party to the crime—Solicitor General Hugh Dorsey went to trial. The trial attracted large crowds, who cheered Dorsey as he entered and left the courthouse daily. The same spirit prevailed in the courtroom itself, spectators frequently breaking into wild applause and foot-stomping when Dorsey made a point or when the Court ruled against the defense.

The defense did its best in this hostile, jeering atmosphere. Fifty-six witnesses testified to Frank's reputation as a law-abiding citizen. Forty-nine women employees of the pencil factory upheld Frank's moral reputation. Three physicians who had examined him testified that he was sexually normal. Several witnesses who had seen Frank that Saturday afternoon in various parts of the factory and on the streets of Atlanta corroborated his professed minute-by-minute movements.

Most damaging to the prosecution's case, two women employees testified that when they saw Conley at the factory on the Monday morning after the crime he told them he

was so drunk Saturday that he couldn't remember what he did or where he was. Frank, he assured them, was "innocent as a child." Another woman employee testified that when she spoke to Conley two days later he said "Frank was as innocent as the angels in Heaven."

Finally, four witnesses testified that George Kendley, one of the State's rebuttal witnesses, had publicly declared that Frank was "nothing but a damned Jew and should be taken out and hung."

But Dorsey and the state of Georgia had naked crowd emotions going for them, and no amount of "reasoned evidence" was going to take the show away from them. In addition to Conley (who buckled badly under brutal cross-examination), the most damaging testimony against Frank came from a 14-year-old co-worker of Mary Phagan's, Monteen Stover. Seeking her paycheck (as Mary had), she had arrived at the factory at 12:05 on the fatal holiday Saturday and waited for five minutes in Frank's empty office. Then, when she tried to get into the ladies' dressing room, she had found the door locked, she testified.

But after Monteen Stover, Dorsey had little left in the way of witnesses. He got one woman employee to testify that Frank had occasionally put his head in the door of the lounging room to ogle the girls with a "sardonic grin" on his face. And a former male employee, alluding to after-hours "orgies" that had presumably included Frank, could only offer the presence of a stretcher and old cot in the basement of the factory as evidence. Dorsey was scraping the bottom of the barrel to build a profile of Frank as a sexual degenerate.

As to Conley, as long as he stuck to the story of the disposal of the body he was letter-perfect. He also spelled out the degeneracy angle, describing Frank as the hands-and-knees lover of other younger girls in the factory. To all other questions his answer was that he didn't know, didn't remember or that he had previously lied.

Both sides were completely callous in cross-examining him. To the defense he was a "lying nigger scoundrel" and the crime was a "Negro crime." Their reasoning, no doubt, was that if Frank was innocent then Conley was the murderer—and they were going to lead him onto the steps of the gallows at any cost. To the wily Dorsey, Conley was a "nigger" with a chain-gang history, while Frank was a white man with powerful and influential friends.

If they were just looking for a conviction, he argued persuasively, who would be the easier man to nail to the cross?

What Dorsey omitted to add was that there had been nearly 20 unsolved murders in Atlanta in the previous two or three years, that the Atlanta police greatly feared a pending investigation into charges of graft and corruption in high places, and that framing a helpless Negro porter for what was probably the most sensational crime in Georgia history was a very small sop indeed to toss an aroused and hysterical public.

But the Jew, Frank, with the mythic world of Jewish wealth and corruption sitting in the dock with him—that was a headier brew to slake the thirst of the mob.

As the farcical trial came to a close, Judge A. M. Roan suggested that both Frank and his attorneys might be in physical danger if Frank were found not guilty. Therefore he asked that the prisoner not be present when the jury read its verdict. Without Frank's knowledge, both sides agreed to this.

The jury was out two hours. With Frank and his counsel absent, they brought in their verdict: Guilty as charged.

A primal roar of approval filled the courtroom, and spread to the overflow crowd outside it. The crowd broke into a spontaneous chant: "Hang the Jew!" All through the polling of the jury the pandemonium continued, so that the Judge, only ten feet from the jury box, could not hear the jurors' individual responses.

On October 31, when Frank came before the Court for sentencing, Judge Roan admitted that no other case he had ever heard had troubled him more. He added that although he himself was not thoroughly convinced of Frank's guilt, the jury was the final arbiter of that decision. And the jury was convinced. He then sentenced Frank to death by hanging.

One by one all the defense appeals failed. The following February the Supreme Court of Georgia upheld the lower court, though two of its six justices dissented. In April a writ of habeas corpus was presented before a Federal court, and denied.

A few days later the Supreme Court affirmed the judgment of the lower Federal court, and also denied the writ. Again, two of the justices dissented, however. Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote (with Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes concurring) "that the jury responded to the passions of the mob . . . Lynch law," he continued, "was as little valid when practiced by a regularly drawn jury as when administered by one elected by a mob intent on death."

But now the strangest twist in what had already been an extraordinary case occurred. The only man who stood between Leo Frank and death was the Governor of the state, John Slaton. Frank's luck had been consistently bad throughout the case; now it assumed preternatural proportions. Governor Slaton had not stood for re-election and would soon leave office. In addition—the salt in the wound—when his term expired he planned to enter into a law partnership with Luther Rosser, Frank's chief defense lawyer, opening the door to the possibility of conflict-of-interest charges.

With 16 days remaining of his stay in office, Slaton received the defense's last-ditch appeal for clemency. Over the practical objections of those around him—Slaton had hopes of running for the Senate—he tackled the facts in the case with resolution. He visited the factory, read and re-read the testimony, the briefs and the court rulings.

In an atmosphere of growing apprehension he announced he would hold public hearings at which anyone with information—pro or con—would be heard. A number of hearings were indeed held, at which more than 100 people testified. From his death bed, Judge Roan wrote to the Governor strongly urging clemency for Frank.

On July 21, having sifted through the facts, Slaton made the most important decision—political or otherwise—of his life. He commuted Frank's sentence to life imprisonment.

From one end of Georgia to the other there were boisterous anti-Frank demonstrations. A regiment of state militia battled angry mobs outside the executive mansion. "When mobs are no longer possible," Watson's *Jeffersonian* screamed editorially, "liberty will be dead!" A few newspapers, like the *Atlanta Journal*, called the Governor's action high courage; most of them either denounced the decision or remained ominously silent.

As to Frank himself, he had been transferred for security reasons to the Milledgeville Penitentiary 84 miles south of Atlanta. As he lay sleeping one night, a fellow prisoner placed the blade of a butcher's knife against his throat and slashed a seven-inch gash in it, severing the jugular vein. Only prompt medical attention saved Frank's life. For days

he hovered between life and death, nevertheless.

But the public fury was not spent. Ex-Governor Slaton and his family were forced to leave the state under threat of death at the hands of angry crowds that seemed to spring up daily. The *Jeffersonian* goaded them on with bombast: "Are the old lessons lifeless?" it demanded. "Are the old glories gone?"

Four weeks after the attempt on Frank's life, a band of 40 unmasked men drove up to the prison in the early dawn. The guards, showing little or no disposition to resist, were held at bay with shotguns. Frank was dragged from his bed, handcuffed, hog-tied and thrown into the rear of an automobile. The caravan of cars and trucks then drove the 150 miles back to Marietta, where Mary Phagan was buried.

In the early afternoon light of August 16, 1915, Leo Frank was offered a grim trade: his life for a full confession.

Gamely, Frank refused.

At least one of the self-appointed executioners was so moved by Frank's naked courage that he tried to persuade the others to return him to prison. But passions that had been festering for so long were not to be so easily quenched. Leo Frank was hanged by the mob from a pine tree near Mary Phagan's grave.

When news of the lynching reached Atlanta, people fought in the streets over the first copies of the *Jeffersonian* to appear. "Jew libertines take notice!" the paper trumpeted gleefully. The going price was 50 cents a copy, with no shortage of takers.

Governor Nat E. Harris, after an investigation, held the prison authorities "absolutely blameless." (Telephone and telegraph wires in and around Milledgeville had been cut, he explained.) The Northern press condemned the lynching as the "work of lawless fanatics." Most Southern papers condoned it as "justifiable execution" by an outraged citizenry. The *Atlanta Journal*, fearless to the end, bluntly called it "mob murder."

Thus ended the Leo Frank case. His name quickly fell out of the news, first from the daily press, then from the national magazines. The former was perhaps inevitable. But the latter was surprising, considering that between December 1914, when the first two articles appeared in *Collier's* and the *Outlook*, and December 1916, when the last one appeared in the *Forum* ("Why Was Frank Lynched?"), more than a dozen major pieces had been written.

But none of the magazines — the *Nation*, *New Republic*, *Everybody's*, the *Literary Digest* and the three mentioned above—saw fit to run a retrospective view of the case. No article entitled "The Leo Frank Case: Ten Years Later" was ever written. Considering that doubts about the case had not only not been laid to rest but had been compounded by the fevered lust to see Frank dead, this was indeed remarkable.

In the 20s, one of the *Collier's* articles was published in expanded form as a slim book, the only nonfiction account (until now) ever written of the case (C.P. Connolly: *The Truth About the Frank Case*). But it was not until the 30s that Ward Greene, who had covered the story for the *Atlanta Journal*, wrote his fictionalized version of the case, *Death in the Deep South*.

Then, in November 1943, a former judge of the Georgia Court of Appeals, Arthur G. Powell, revealed to the *New Republic* that he had evidence of Frank's innocence. He had to withhold this evidence (which had been given to him as an attorney, he explained) until "certain persons"

were dead. Perhaps these "persons" are still alive; at any rate, Powell never told more.

Over the last 20 years, references to the case have been few, usually oblique, sometimes cryptic. The focus—if it can be called that—has shifted to Governor Slaton. A recent television series based on the late President Kennedy's *Profiles in Courage* included an hour-long accolade of Governor Slaton and his role in the Frank case. But once again, as in the movie version, all references to anti-Semitism were carefully excised, and an innocent viewer might have wondered just what Tom Watson's heavily stressed villainy consisted of.

The movies and television seemed determined not to let the issue of anti-Semitism in the case burst onto the national scene. This has been the pattern in the Frank case since its inception.

Immediately after the lynching, the Anti-Defamation League began a quiet but determined campaign to combat anti-Semitism in the communications media. Movie producers, booking agents, vaudeville comics, theatre owners and radio stations were approached. Private persuasion was the League's primary tactic, but threats of boycott were also occasionally used. The effectiveness of the campaign, ironically, seemed to militate against any review of the Frank case.

Then, through the Depression years and war years, there was virtually no mention of the abandoned case. Except, of course, for the movie, which effectively disguised Frank as an Anglo-Saxon schoolteacher, and transformed the setting from a gloomy pencil factory to a cheery women's business college!

No time, it seems, has been the right time to revive the case and to fix the true guilt. Now, in the racially conscious 60s, the case is an embarrassment, presenting, as it does, a civil rights conflict of interest. If Frank was innocent, if he was the victim of a vicious anti-Semitism, then who was guilty? Was Jim Conley, a Southern Negro, spared by Southern white men after murdering and raping a pretty 14-year-old white girl?

The case, while a simple one in terms of the physical facts, demanded subtleties of interpretation that not many civil rights-minded liberals are prepared to give. To many it will seem an academic irritant: Frank is long dead, the case is virtually forgotten and, they will hasten to point out, this is no time to belatedly uncover a Negro rapist and murderer.

Let Leo Frank's own words, spoken before his executioners, answer:

"Your Honor, in this presence and before God, I earnestly ask that God in His mercy may deal lightly with those who unwittingly, I trust, have erred against me, and will deal with them according to His divine judgment. If the State and the law wills that my life be taken as a blood-atonement for the poor little child who was ruthlessly killed by another, then it remains for me only to die with whatever fortitude my manhood may allow. But I am innocent of this crime, and the future will prove it. I am now ready for Your Honor's sentence."

We have the word of the lynchers themselves that Frank's fortitude did not fail him at the end. But the future *has* failed him. A brave man, cruelly vilified and then murdered for a crime he never committed, has not been cleared and, in the process, we have all been diminished.

**IBM Makes Sure Freedom
Doesn't Become License**

Editor's note: The following listings are from a manual (pages 124-126) prepared by IBM for State Motor Vehicle Departments. When license plate numbers are figured by computer, these combinations are eliminated in the programming. IBM labels them "objectionable." They are the forerunners of a new machine morality.

Objectionable Two-Letter Plate Combinations

AH AS BM BO CT DT IN KP NG OD OH
ON OO OX PE PO PU SB TB TS TT VD

Objectionable Three-Letter Plate Combinations

All the following prefixes and the letter "Q" are eliminated.

AAS ABM ADA AIG AIL AIR AIS APE APU
ARS ASB ASE ASS

BAB BAD BAG BAN BAR BAT BED BEG BIB
BLA BLO BOF BOM BOP BOR BOX BRA BRP
BUB BUG BUM BUN BUS BUT BVD

CAD CAN CAT CHP COC COK COM CON
COO COP COT COW COX COY CRD CRO CUL
CUM CUN CUR

DAF DAM DDT DED DEM DIC DIE DIK DIP
DIX DIZ DMV DOG DOX DRP DRY DTS DUB
DUD DUF DUK DUM DUN DUX DYX

EAK EEK EGG EGO END ENO EVE EWE
EZP

FAG FAN FAT FBI FCK FEM FEU FEY FIB
FIE FIG FIL FIX FIZ FKU FLU FOC FOD
FOE FOG FOK FOO FOP FOX FRT FRU FRY
FUC FUD FUI FUK FUN FUX FUY FUG

GAB GAL GAM GAS GIG GIN GIP GOD
GOM GOO GOP GOV GOY GUI GUT GYP
GAG GAT

HAD HAG HAM HEL HEN HEX HIC HIK
HIP HMO HMP HOG HOK HOL HOO HOR
HOT HUG HUJ HUN HUY

ICY IDO IHS III IIO IJU ILL
IMP INK INU IOD IOO IOX IPE IPP IPU
ISB IVD

JAG JAP JAZ JEW JIG JIN JIP JIT JIW JOB
JOC JOK JOO JUE JUG JUU JYP

KAD KAT KEG KID KIK KIL KIS KIX
KKK KOB KOC KOM KON KOP KOT KOW
KOX KOY KRO KUM KUN KUR KIC KOK

LAE LAF LAI LAP LAV LAX LAY LEG LEY
LIC LIE LIK LIP LIT LIX LOG LOV LOW
LOX LUG LYE LYN

MEA MEE MES MEX MIC MIK MIS MOB
MOC MOE MOK MOL MOM MOO MOP MOX
MUC MUD MUG MUK MUT MVD

NAG NAM NEC NEK NGR NIG NIL NIT
NIX NUN NUS NUT NYG

OAF ODD OFF OII OLD ONE OOF OOH
OOO OPU

PAT PBA PEA PEE PEI PEK PET PEU PEW
PFU PIG PII PIL PIP PIS PIT PIU PIZ
PMP PNS POO POT POX PRO PSS PUD PUE
PUG PUI PUP PUS PUU PUW PWE PYS PYU

RAG RAT RAW RAZ RED REP RFD ROB
ROD ROS ROT ROX RUM RUT RYE

SAC SAD SAG SAK SAP SAS SEK SEX SHT
SIC SIK SIN SIP SLB SOB SOC SOK SOP SOT
SOW SPY STY SUC SUK SUX SYN

TAN TAX TIT TON TOT TOY TTI
TTY TUB TUM TYT

UAK UBO UDP UGG UGH UHS UOO UOX
UPE UPI UPN UPP UPU UPY URI
URN URP USB USR UUP UVD UWE

VAG VET VIR VPE VPP VPU VUC VUX

WAC WAD WAG WAK WAP WED WET WIC
WID WIG WIK WOO WOP WOW WPA
WRM WRT WUM WYG

XDP XUJ XUY
XXX

YAC YAK YAP YAW YAX YEG YEL YEP YID
YIS YIP YIT YOW YPE YPP
ZOO ZOW

ERIC NORDEN

(Continued from Back Cover)

Burke, who is not himself a necrophile but a confirmed ozolagniaist, puts it this way: "What does the average guy in the street think of when he hears the word necrophile? Right away, he pictures some filthy bum digging up the rotting remains of a corpse and copulating with it. Nothing could be further from the truth! The true necrophile is disgusted by corruption and decay as much as anybody, which is why we're trying to make contact with the mortuaries on a 24-hour call basis. All the necrophile desires is the passivity and gentle repose of his love object, no more and no less. In a society where more than two million people die every year, is the necrophiliac five or six per cent of our population forever to be denied sexual gratification? Remember, this is the 20th century, and we're living in a country which prides itself on efficiency. Why allow these two million bodies to go to waste? All we demand is an intelligent and mature allocation of the natural resources represented by our dead population. After all, that's what the Great Society is all about."

RENFREU NEFF

(Continued from Back Cover)

dencies in perverse directions even though we may not be full-fledged card-carriers.

But unless one is an active, practicing Necrophiliac, one is a Necromancer—the ersatz, catch-all Death Freak.

The true Necrophile would be hard-put to stir up sympathy for any cause that he might set forth—benefit balls for aged necrophiliacs, contributions for necrophilia victims of cancer, population control through necrophilia, etc.—no matter how worthy his cause might be, outsiders, an impulsive lot at best, would flee.

But then, on the other side of the coin, he has complete privacy. No one tries to interfere with him. There is no law which makes it illegal to serve alcohol to a necrophile, and the police have yet to raid a "necrophile bar."

If two necrophiles of the same sex walk down the street holding hands, we call them "queers" or "faggots" and we sneer at them accordingly. It is only when they overstep the bounds of propriety that the necrophile's privacy is invaded, and even in these instances they are never clearly pin-pointed as necrophiliacs. We call them "criminals" or "hatchet murderers" or "homicidal maniacs"—and their cachet is maintained.

It was once estimated that there are approximately 25,000 necrophiliacs in the metropolitan New York-New Jersey area alone, but this statistic was brought under sharp scrutiny when it was shown that there weren't that many available bodies in this area.

The latter statement can be questioned on the grounds that an assumption of *fidelity* has been made; do they necessarily have to "go steady"? Why should this group be exempted from suspicions of promiscuity?

Also, the statistics are not broken down into specifics—home-owners, divorcés, income bracket, number of cars, etc. Statistics are useless unless they tell you something.

The oldest and most respected newspaper for the necrophile is *The Afterlife*, which over the years has had such illustrious Contributing Editors as Ed Giens and Albert Fish, two of America's foremost creative killers. The format of

this paper is very similar to that of the *New York Times*, but it is composed entirely of obituaries, with just a few major news columns buried, so to speak, toward the back pages.

It is available by subscription only, and its present managing editor—whose name I have promised not to divulge on the condition that he, in turn, not put my name on any of his mailing lists—claims with justifiable pride that his newspaper boast the poorest circulation in town.

The bulk of its advertising comes from undertakers' auctions, taxidermists, and manufacturers of home-freezers and "blunt instruments." My interview with *Afterlife's* editor happened to fall on a "deadline" day.

We see then that the cult of the Death Lover is unique primarily because its dedicated adherents are never attacked directly on the basis of their eccentricity, and they are able to go about their business with the same protection afforded all ordinary citizens.

In these days of ever-increasing classification and "numbering" when personal privacy is at a premium, we are forced to respect the necrophiliac and give him credit for using shrewd subterfuge and not having lost his cool.

The modern world is constantly making inroads on aberrations, and there is always a reaction to its influences. Consequently, it is of vital interest to note that in recent years the entire process of supply and demand within the necro world has been beautifully simplified through the application of two plans for better distribution, both of which are derived from familiar facets of American life.

The first plan had its start in rural areas where population was sparse and communication slow. This is the way it works:

At the beginning of each month, four bodies are sent to each subscriber who chooses the one he wants and sends the others back. He may keep them all if he wishes, and he is billed only for those he keeps. After every ten purchases, he is sent one free and, of course, he can always order additional.

For obvious reasons of health and freshness the same body is never circulated twice; all those returned to the club are passed on to university medical schools. Since its start four years ago in Omaha, Nebraska, this method has spread rapidly throughout rural America, and over a dozen chapters are now in operation.

The second system works on a grander scale and is used in our more densely populated cities, and its origin is easily recognizable as the chain-letter, or pyramid club. It demands more active participation from its subscribers, and if one subscribes, it operates like this:

Someone sends you a body.

You then have to go out and find four more bodies that resemble it. Neatness counts.

You send these bodies to five subscriber-friends.

Finally, your name comes to the top of the list, and you win. You receive ten thousand bodies! (As one very prominent necrophiliac said, "It's the living end . . .")

It is easy to see how this system could tend to free-wheel at times, and it isn't surprising that it has often been attacked as being politically left-wing by its more conservative rural brotherhood whose members blanche at the very thought of ever having to sign for ten thousand Puerto Rican bodies.

Regarding their various political hues, we wish them all Bon Appetit and/or Dig We Must.

Some of My Best Friends Are Necrophiliacs

by Eric Norden

Columbia University is to be warmly congratulated for its courage in defying ossified trustees and chartering the Friends of Necrophilia on campus.

Under the able direction of two brilliant graduate students, Peter Burke and Francis Hare, the group is now relentlessly agitating against the state's archaic laws on necrophilia and urging increased public understanding of a minority persecuted for centuries because of their sexual preferences.

"The important thing to remember," Burke and Hare stress in a statement published in the *Columbia Spectator*, "is that in cases of necrophilia the question of consent never arises. At a time when FBI statistics indicate a serious rise in incidence of rape and assault it seems only logical to re-evaluate necrophilia as a healthy and harmless outlet for the sexually frustrated."

Feelers have been extended to several undertaking parlors in the Morningside Heights area on the feasibility of granting mortuary privileges to practicing necrophiles on the Columbia campus but, contrary to Burke and Hare's claim, problems of consent have arisen.

"They're both nice, clean-cut kids," one undertaker director told me shortly after he'd been visited by Burke and Hare, "but they have this youthful genius for oversimplifying things. Sure, there's no problem of consent as far as the corpse goes, but what about the family, the bereaved ones? After all, they're paying for all of this. I know if I laid out \$4,000 to have my daughter buried, I wouldn't want her fucked by some college kid before she's even cold."

On the other hand, Irwin Latimore of the Gentle Rest Chapel on West 155th Street, while refusing to commit himself, expressed qualified interest in the student group's approach.

"It could be a whole new source of revenue for the industry," he told me. "But I really haven't thought it through in all its ramifications. As far as the wishes of the deceased's family goes, I agree that's a sticky problem. But how many people object today to their relatives donating eyes, or kidneys, or ears to the organ banks? As a matter of fact, in their hour of grief it might even let through a shaft of light to know that their loved one even in death is bringing happiness to another human being. But as I say, we'd have to make an industry-wide survey before any policy line can be laid down."

Burke and Hare stress that even more important than gaining access for necrophiles to morgues and undertaking establishments is their drive to change the public's whole image of necrophilia.

(Continued on Page 15)

by Renfreu Neff

Contemporary man is left with few "pure" perversions—sexual whimsies which have not in some way been tampered with and spoiled by the over-popularity and vulgarity that follows inevitably in the wake of technological assistance.

Possibly because of their close tie-in with Western religion—the dietary and sexual limitations imposed by the Judaeo-Christian code of ethics—Necrophilia and Necrophagia, or Cannibalism, have never gotten the popularity that they so richly deserve, and they have remained untrammelled by the mauling hordes of perversion-seekers—the arrivistes, the nouveau-freaks—whose practices are appliance-and-machine dependent, and, therefore, lacking in tradition.

A second reason why the necro's have been slow in catching on may be that they require more *sincerity*, more *commitment*, than the other freakeries. They are too time-consuming and one can't be a "dabbler" on these grounds.

A third reason may lie in the mass prejudice, the petty biases, the squeamishness—the total revulsion, if you wish—with which the outsider regards these deviations, and which would tend to detract from the appeal of just about anything.

Necrophilia is the most private, the most subterranean, of all perversions, and it is the only one whose "identifiers"—or fringe-practitioners,—fall into a separate clinical category, Necromancy. Every perversion seems to have its passive hangers-on, but with necrophilia, you either are one or you're not. It's that simple.

It is extremely difficult to spot a practicing necrophiliac without endangering one's own person. You can't really say that someone is definitely a faggot unless you yourself are a faggot who has had relations with him. And so it goes with necrophilia; you have to die before they dig you.

Freud startled us with his insistence that we all carry within ourselves the seed of homosexuality, and so we can identify in some way with the homosexual—we can fear it, we can accept it, we can make jokes about it, and many of us can ignore it completely, although it has become so modish that we have often been told that even this disregard holds significance.

After a bad meal we can frequently form a vague identity with a Coprophagist.

Fetishism undoubtedly boasts the largest number of fellow-travelers, with Masturbation and Voyeurism running neck and neck for second place in the would-be disciples tally. The point is that most of us do have borderline ten-

(Continued on Page 15)



"Everyone at the mortuary is out to lunch; can you come back at two?"