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Autumn, 1975

interview
with R.D. LAING

Flaming Faggots

SELF INTEREST

JEALOUSY

FEAR

anger





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ANTHONY ESCHBACH is taking a brief vacation to hibernate for the winter, play a lot, make puppets and recontact his cycles. PATTI HAGUE works at the Woman's Institute for Alternative Psychotherapy in Denver. She is teaching a woman's studies class through the Denver Free University. JUDE LABARRE is enjoying the Berkeley autumn, mailing IRTs and learning to speak Spanish. HANNAH LERMAN is a feminist therapist in Los Angeles trying to radicalize psychology from within. She's personally working 'on living better through getting more and more in touch with her body. SPENCE MEIGHAM is a physician from Glasgow, Scotland. JUDITH MULL teaches yoga and paints murals in Berkeley. DARCA NICHOLSON is mailing out IRTs and dreaming of a farm. KENNETH PITCHFORD is a poet and activist in the Revolutionary Effeminist Movement. LYNN SHALABY is a feminist living in Cairo, Egypt. CLAUDE STEINER lives and works in Berkeley where he is writing a book on power. JOHN STOLTENBERG lives in London and is in a men's group there. MICHAEL VOTICHENKO is a well known personality in the San Francisco Bay Area. SARA WINTER lives in Berkeley where she teaches psychology and co-counseling and works for IRT. HOGIE WYCKOFF just organized a Radical Psychiatry training problem solving group for women and just finished editing an anthology called *IRT: The First Year*. She is in the process of learning to write a book about her work: *Radical Psychiatry for Women*.

BOB SCHWEBEL, on leave from this issue, is working on the manuscript for Vicki Legion's book on *Constructive Criticism*, which will soon be published by IRT.

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editors: Jude LaBarre and Michael Votichenko

IRT Collective: Jude LaBarre, Bob Schwebel, Claude Steiner, Michael Votichenko, Sara Winter, and Hogie Wyckoff.

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MEMBER
COSMEP
COMMITTEE OF SMALL MAGAZINE
EDITORS AND PUBLISHERS
BOX 103 SAN FRANCISCO, CA. 94101



Workers and Authors

This issue contains a number of personal accounts—accounts by people who are coming to grips with fear, anger, jealousy, egoism, professionalism . . . we believe our individual confrontation with these aspects of American life is intrinsically political. It is political not only in the sense that our lives are shaped by society, economy, politics, but also in the sense that we look to our individual lives as the most realistic place on which to base our analysis of the present and plan our strategies for the future.

As humanists we value the individual. But our emphasis on the personal is not the narcissistic ideal of individualistic self improvement. Nor is it the privatistic idea that individuals can evolve in isolation. Neither the nature of our problems nor the nature of their solutions is individual. We look forward to resolving our divisions and overcoming the internalized oppression that prevents us from working together cooperatively. We welcome the time when we will be able to work together on a national level. But in the meanwhile we must also work with what's available in the present and this means working with ourselves and others in smaller groups. If we are to construct a common vision that can hold us together we must start by looking for what we need, want, actually have in common. Historically, people of the left were brought together in a desperate attempt to meet their basic economic needs. Now we are not always sure what our needs are. At the moment we don't have the "correct line," we don't know the overall solutions. But the best place to seek answers is in our day-to-day lives in the culture. The problem with capitalism is what it does to people. That's us.

There are arguments in the left that the "correct" theories already exist; all that remain are questions of organization, strategy and tactics. But if theories are to be of more than academic interest, it's clear the old ones aren't adequate. The fact that so many leftists can find little to do but theorize says less about these leftists as individuals than it says

editorial

about their theories. For, in a sense, there's no such thing as being true in theory and not in practice—if something's not true in practice then there's something wrong with the theory. We need a new vision, one that would be more than a "head trip" that appeals to the intellect or a PR package that appeals to the appetites. In the attempt to construct such a new vision we are driven to the personal, for our lives are the raw material of everything that's going on. We see first hand the way our culture stupefies and bestializes its populations. We sense in our lives the discrepancy between the society we have and the society it's possible to have. And most of all we see in ourselves the needs that capitalism continually generates but is incapable of filling. If we are to formulate a common vision that will bind the left together it will be found here in our lives, not in the writings of earlier generations.

Practice has to do not only with constructing and testing theories, but also with freeing ourselves from the bankrupt culture of our oppressors. To formulate a constructive and compelling theory we will have to move beyond the limits imposed on us by our culture. To formulate a common vision we will have to be in touch with our human needs in such crucial areas as sexuality, work, love and power. Would you ask the pope about sex, Rockefeller about work, Johnson and Masters about love, Nixon about power? How can we make a revolution if we ourselves are entrapped by capitalist conditioning?

For small groups and for ourselves it's possible to make some of the benefits of the revolution a possibility in the present, not a dream in the distant future. By creating 'liberated zones' in our lives and in small groups we can encourage the rediscovery of human needs; we can create an environment favorable to unexploitative human relations. In doing this we invite comparisons to the present and outline the shape of alternatives for the future.

—Written by Michael Votichenko, with ideas from the IRT Collective.



R.D. LAING : an interview

Claude Steiner and
Spence Meighan

Autumn, 1974

Steiner: I am very interested in people's lives. What they do during it, what kinds of plans they have, long lives, short lives, productive lives. I, personally, at age 40, have come to the point where I feel I have done a lot of things I wanted to do and my expectations are to live quite a long time still. What are your expectations?

Laing: I have got, on the one hand, expectations of longevity based on my parents and grandparents, that my uninterfered with life cycle will go on until I am over 80. At the same time, I am acutely aware that I don't know the moment of my death. I have always had a sense of urgency about living. I have the certain prospect of dying sooner or later, further heightened by the lack of any assurance any of us can have that it won't be sooner than later. But with that reservation, my life/body schema extends to, you might say, the normal Biblical notion of the life span.

Steiner: So you still have half of your life ahead of you. Do you have any ideas of what you will be doing, does what you will be doing excite you?

Laing: Well, I sort of observe myself in the midst of a sort of space-ship, as it were, of my body, with certain culturally ingrained (I don't



"I think [diagnosed schizophrenics] dearly need champions, and I think it is a great privilege in my life that in a way I've been so elected by them..."

think possible to lose) cognitive and emotional schemata. And I have spent a lot of my time asking questions for as long as I can remember; what is the scene I'm in, what are these characters up to, what's all this about, how did I get here, and how do I get out of here, what's the entrance into the scene of life, how, where, when, and why do we begin, what are we doing here and where are we going from here, if anywhere? And I suppose I will continue pondering over these sorts of questions, though I have come to the position I have always had; I think I was a sort of born skeptic. My congenial philosophy is skepticism, which is not nihilism, nor dogmatism. I don't find that as depressing as many people do. I read David Hume's discourses on the natural religion: I draw considerable consolation out of the clarity of a mind that doesn't seem to espouse illusions for the sake of the comfort they afford. So, I don't know where I'll be interested but I'll engage in quite a bit of practice in different sorts of mind-mental traditional disciplines. But the outcome of that for me may be eventually to arrive at a position where "A rose is a rose is a rose" and everything is there, as it was and will be. It sounds a very unrevolutionary revolution. →



My acquaintance with R. D. Laing began in 1969 when I first heard a tape recording of his CBC broadcast lecture series. At a time at which I, as a renegade professional psychologist, was casting about for theory with which to counter the psychiatric establishment, R. D. Laing provided a fantastically enlightening insight into the political aspects of psychiatric intervention. (See *Politics of the Family*, p. 69.) My enthusiasm for R. D. Laing grew as I read more and more of his writings and I soon began to hunger for more information about him the psychiatrist and the man. His personality was shrouded in mystery. Rumors about him are as plentiful as real information about him is scarce. Occasionally somebody "who knew somebody who knew somebody who was really close to him" said that he had once again gone mad.

In 1973, I met a Scottish physician, Spence Meighan, who knew Laing. I reasoned that Spence and I (he as a Scot, I as a rebel shrink) would be able to obtain an interview from Laing. We contacted Laing and he tentatively agreed. After a number of phone calls and letters, Spence and I went to England to interview him. We had hoped to be able to spend several days with him, but Laing was in need of privacy and seclusion and only gave us a one-and-a-half hour interview. On the eve of our arrival, however, he invited us to come to his house at 10:00 in the evening and we spent about four hours visiting with him. We explained at that time that we were interested in an interview regarding him as a person, rather than his theories or philosophy. We explained that there were large numbers of people who loved him and who had a fairly good idea about what he thought but would be interested in what his life was like.

Laing lives in a modest downstairs flat in a house in outer London with his two school-age children and Jutta, his wife. Our conversations took place in his comfortable living room, lined with book shelves, with well-worn furniture, a desk, and a grand piano. The children freely circulated in and out of the situation. Jutta was there at all times, interested and I would say almost vigilant. In general, I felt that neither R. D. Laing nor Jutta opened their hearts to us and that their responses were guarded and almost suspicious. In retrospect, it seems that they saw us as representatives of the Radical Left, which we weren't, and with which R. D. Laing seems to have a quarrel. Consequently his general response to us, while frank and honest, was not personal or trusting. This caused me some pain, since I had come to him with an open heart, hoping to establish a loving rapport, but I was well satisfied with the interview that ensued, which took place in the afternoon of the next day.

Claude Steiner

Reference

Laing, R. D. *The Politics of the Family*. Pantheon Books. New York, 1969.



"The main values for me are those simple minded Scottish values that I grew up with.... 'I've taken music up again...'"



Steiner: Does that extend to feeling that in your life, whatever it is, there is no particular thing you feel you want to do or have to do, as you go through it?

Laing: Oh no, I feel an inner thrust towards . . . to somehow or other, actualize my life, realize it, translate it from potentiality to accomplishment.

Steiner: What is the accomplishment you think of?

Laing: To live correctly as a human being, whatever that may be.

Steiner: You mean in your personal dealings with people?

Laing: I suppose first and foremost that, but in every other respect as well. I belong to Twentieth Century Europe at a time when, as Yeats put it before I was born, "The best lack all conviction, and the worst seem to be full of passionate certainty." I feel that under the circumstances that passionate certainty is perhaps one of the worst errors that one can fall into. But if one is overtaken by such passionate certainty, I don't suppose one can help it. I can't say that I have ever really felt it, though I have often wanted to.

Steiner: You haven't felt passionate certainty? It seems like some of the earlier writings had that feeling, *The Divided Self and The Politics of Experience*.

Laing: *The Divided Self*. I think one reason why it has had a comparatively extensive influence is that, particularly in the first chapters, in order, in a sense, to convince myself against the main stream of convictions that what I was writing wasn't nonsense, I had to argue the painstaking way.

Steiner: Still, it seems to me that you had it, had that conviction that you were right. Am I wrong about that?

Laing: I suppose I haven't got whatever conviction I had that I was right, any less now. I don't take anything back. In what I've been writing recently, however, I have tried to face the clash of what may be irreconcilable contradictions more starkly.

Steiner: What do you expect to be doing five years from now? Do you have any idea?

Laing: I hope in five years that the asylum sanctuary household scenes in London which are developing from the grassroots, as it were, will have become even more amplified and consolidated. It would be very nice if five years from now things had opened out so that we had a place where we could have a wide array of valid research into human affairs, including chemistry and all the rest of it, and to use that desperate old cliché, a multidisciplinary team of not very many people working together in the light of a respect of humanity. It would be interesting to attempt the possibility of a human science of human beings now.

Meighan: Are you primarily involved in opening these households or are these houses opened by the people?

Laing: The latter. I haven't taken any immediate initiative in any of these places. There is a certain amount of diversity of style. Most people in our network are, or have been, in therapy and, in association with this venture, develop different things they are particularly interested in—yoga, meditation, music acupuncture . . . For instance, there are several people who have cultivated Hatha Yoga over the last five years or so who now go 'round

our places and conduct their yoga sessions which are popular. One doctor is particularly interested in Zen meditation and Aikido. One person who has got a practical interest in something like that, will attract interest among other people. We recently, for instance, had a Zen monk staying and a number of people on the scene have been meditating with him; a number of people go to Aikido. I encourage all the people who are around—patients, therapists or students—to be more than just casually attentive to bodily processes, to be fit, especially if one is disturbed oneself and living with others who are also disturbed. I think it makes a hell of a difference if one is not frightened of the sheer physical possibilities of intense feelings.

Steiner: Is there any bioenergetics or that kind of work?

Laing: Yes, last winter I had a weekly session in the evenings to which about 40 or 50 came in which we cultivated a rather simple ritual which started off as what we called "birthing." We found it increasingly easy as a number of people stand around one person at a center spot to just give the word "go." People would start to go into, God knows, all sorts of mini-freak-outs and birth-like experiences, yelling, groaning, screaming, writhing, contorting, biting, contending. A lot of physical handling might ensue and a lot of energy would be released and redistributed. I should mention massage, bodily sculpturing, improvised games, etc., are all part of our ordinary ongoing culture: wearing masks, dancing . . . I met Janov here a couple of years ago. Lowen has also been over here, and a number of people I work with had sessions with him. Some people are drawn to this or that way of releasing energy and we have a fair array of competence within and around our network. We are not identified with any special developed technique but we are into it, as the saying goes, for me particularly, music, rhythm and dancing. When I go to one of our households for an evening usually music, drumming, singing, dancing starts up. This often continues after I leave. There is also pottery.

Steiner: Is this an attempt to build a community of people at large? You talk about them being dispersed and I get the feeling that it would be your wish that there was a network of people all of whom shared a way of life. Is that true?

Laing: Yes. Up to a point that exists already in London.

Steiner: Is this a way of life? I mean, is this like a temporary community or is it something that would extend into a way in which people live throughout their lives? That is, does it become a way of life rather than just a way of life when you are upset.

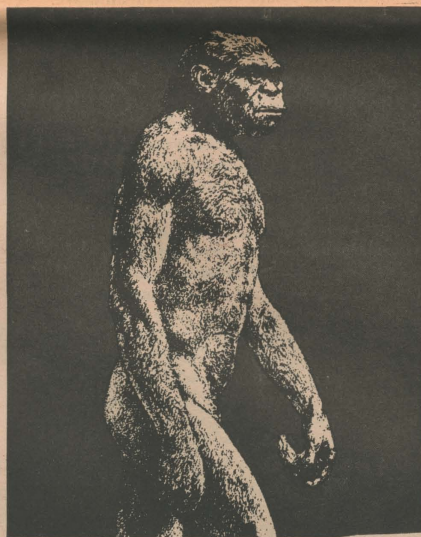
Laing: Oh yes. Oh yes. I share with people, at a certain distance, in terms of my company and presence and so on, my way of life which is, you know, an attempt to find a balance, living in these urban circumstances, making the best of a bad job as far as the environment goes. This part of London, as you can see, isn't too hectic or too noisy. There are lots of trees around, the air is comparatively clean, some sun actually comes through. The common picture of living in a shredded up metropolis, in an unremitting rat race isn't the case between us. But we have to survive in society at large according

to necessities we did not devise, do not like, cannot afford to ignore and cannot change. We all live within walking distance of each other. We are sprinkled around this zone of London and we have taken up houses and bought our houses and moved into our flats, and so on, with that as a conscious notion.

Steiner: I wonder how important you are to this movement. What would happen if you disappeared? How do they regard you? Do they appreciate you?

Laing: Well, in a way I'm the last person to answer that question. At one time a few years ago I wondered, along with a number of people, whether if I disappeared the whole thing would collapse. However, that was put to a reasonable test when I went away for 13 months to Ceylon and India. When I was away I was really away. I mean, I wasn't on the international telephone with people or in correspondence, or personally approachable. I was right away, and the thing went on without me. I think it could survive my death with confidence. To substitute I don't think it needs me. The sort of leadership that, so far, has characterized my style, in this has been one in which,

"It moves me to tears quite often when I really think about what a freaked out species we seem to be."



"The dogmatism of recently sprouted up movements can be as fanatical and as impervious as anything they're opposing."

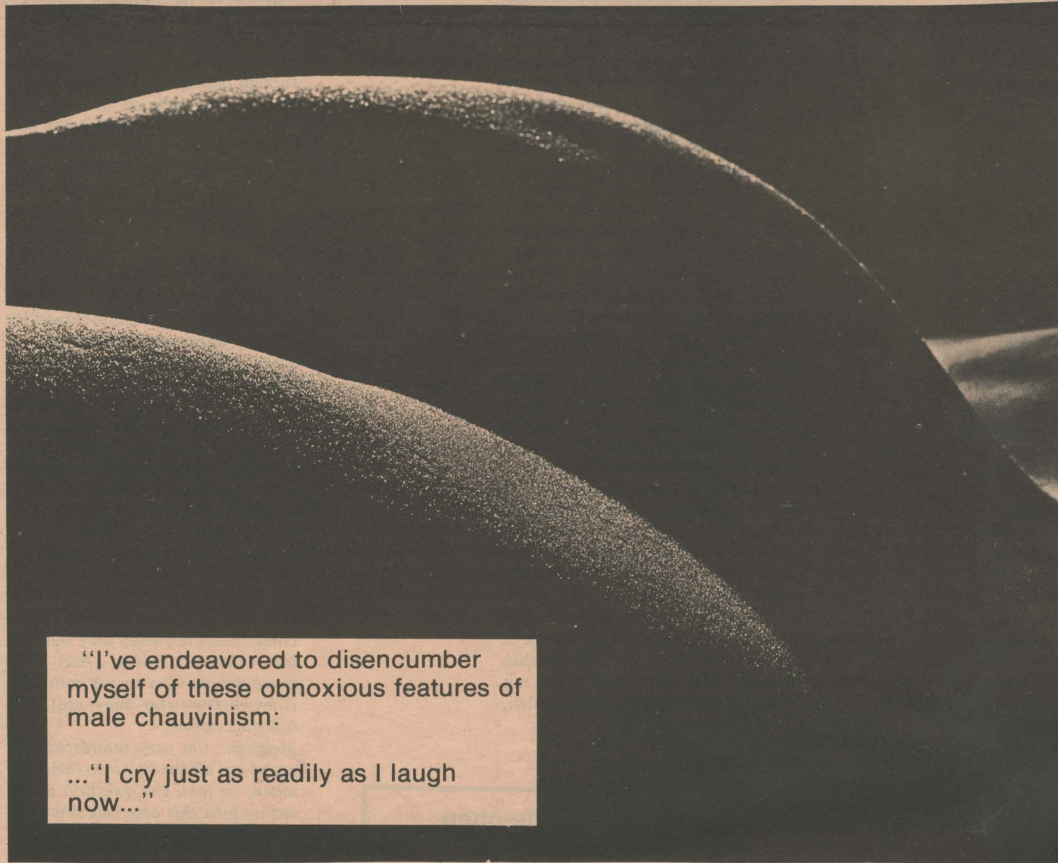
maybe, to an unusual extent, I haven't told people what to do. But rather been glad to spend time with people whom I feel a shared, though perhaps unformulated, sensibility. My way of dealing with people I feel are pursuing an incompatibly different way of life is not to quarrel but to part. You go your way and I go mine, no need to fall out about it. But we conduct our different affairs in different necks of the woods. That's happened a few times. There's been a whole sprout of, for instance, students who have come over and stayed for two or three months to two or three years and then gone off on their own, partly because they felt like that and partly because I was glad to see them work out things in their way in their own scene in their somewhat different style. I suppose also that people have found me a somewhat reluctant leader in that I haven't gone out looking for any such role but actually cringe from it. I've seldom taken the initiative in saying "Do this." It's much more that I'm here, I'm around. People come to see me when they want to, for whatever reason. And with those people who are my comrades (they know who they are), I'm quite accessible.

Meighan: I'm very interested that we've got all the way into this topic when, in fact, the question which led us into this area was what you would like to be doing in five years' time.

Laing: Well, unless I find other things to do in the course of the next five years that I've found to do in the last 46, what I expect I'll be doing is leading something of the life I'm leading just now. I like a balance between having company, having friends; among the pleasures or consolations of life I've always found the company of other human beings. They can be dreadful, but also, I hope I'll be spending some time with other people and some time alone. In the next five years' time I expect to bring a number of the unformulated experiences of my life together. In my life scheme I am halfway through a decade which seems like a time in between, a watershed. I've come to the end of the initial accomplishments generated from the thrust from one's childhood. I feel I'm passing from one stage to another. There is a change of pace, of gear. I now have a chance to lift up my head a bit from being so tightly focused, so concentrated, to have a look around at how other people live and what other notions of life consist in. And out of that might develop something on the other side of my 40's.

Also, in my childhood, I spent quite a bit of time in relationship to music. When I was eleven or twelve it was an issue of whether I should go for a career as concert pianist. I didn't. I did continue with music seriously for a number of years after that and then dropped it completely for eighteen years. Now I've taken it up again sufficiently seriously for me to regard it as something more than an amateur's hobby. And with effect on my writing. A number of a few musicians I know, for instance, recognized in *Knots* what they felt was a musical type of logic.

Steiner: I think your now famous Canadian lectures have that, definitely. The way you speak in those tapes, I early got the idea that there



"I've endeavored to disencumber myself of these obnoxious features of male chauvinism:

... "I cry just as readily as I laugh now..."

was some kind of a rhythm and all sorts of things other than what you were saying.

Laing: Well, I am doing stuff now that is even more in the direction of where words and music meet. That seems to be the way I am traveling, in that direction. So I imagine a life balanced between the family, between people, between theoretical and practical, research and therapeutic endeavor, scholarship, reading, writing, music. These have been the main things in my life.

Steiner: *I would like to ask you some questions about the family. Obviously you have a different idea of the family than the usual and yet you have a family. What do you think about the family? How do you regard your family versus other families?*

Laing: The nuclear family arrangement seems from what I have experienced of it and from what I hear of it from anthropologists and people who can report back on other family styles, to entail extraordinary strain on the members, very often. In other words, if a nuclear family starts going off, when it doesn't work, then it's absolutely ghastly. On the other hand, if it does work it's marvelous. And I happen to enjoy my wife and the children, so there is no ideological problem about them.

The main values for me are those simple-minded Scottish values that I grew up with: decency, honesty, reciprocal respect, and so on. And if these are met by people whether they are in nuclear families or communes or whatnot, it makes a hell of a difference. But if people regard each other just as things to take advantage of, then it doesn't work under any circumstances. I don't think that the nuclear family is sanctified by any holy writ as the ordained way that we should live. There seem to be different social

systems, different arrangements that are decent and honest arrangements for men and women who wish to have a sexual life together, to live together and to rear children. The nuclear family is not a write-off as a system.

I absolutely detest the possibility of the negative critique of the family being used by the state apparatus to bust up families allegedly on behalf of the children. For instance, you can imagine how the sort of stuff that I have written about families has been taken up. "The family is the pathological agent." "What we have to do is get kids out of families and put them in some sort of state-organized kibbutz in which we have a staff, all with qualifications, accredited by each other with having the capacity to bring up children better than the parents, and the parents almost have to pass a sort of psychological aptitude test before they are allowed to have their own children." That sort of thing is absolutely abhorrent to me and I don't want to have anything to do with it. I have the feeling that that's the way my work on families could be used. That was one factor inhibiting me in publishing a comparable piece of research to the one published in *Sanity, Madness and the Family* on normal families. Esterson and I found some of the so-called normal families we investigated among the most ghastly depressing places we had ever been in. But not all. Let's always remember to avoid sweeping generalizations. It was tremendously disheartening to see the dead, defeated despair under which some people who have got nothing noticeably wrong with them live endemically in the families that we studied in London. Some seemed reasonably happy, but when you go into some places you feel the atmosphere closing in—a sense of constriction and very little awareness, very little consciousness, very

little interest, even. Even the notion of being aware of oneself is quite a strange idea of many people.

Meighan: *What strikes me the most in what you say is that if, in fact, the normal families were like you say they were, it seems not strange that the girls who you described in *Sanity, Madness and the Family* went "crazy." It's strange that more people don't do that.*

Laing: It is strange to me, actually. I think there is a sense in which if sufficient numbers of people go crazy in the same sort of way then that sort of craziness becomes normalized and taken to be normal, and that is one of the arguments in *The Politics of Experience*. If you get a whole crowd of people all developing the same out-of-touchness with things and with themselves then no one within that system has any yardstick from which they can judge the drift as it happens.

Steiner: *My escape from the problem of the family, my theoretical escape, is to propose that people would be happier if they did not live in nuclear families, if they attempted to live in a larger home-places where there are many people, where there are children, but the people aren't tied in some kind of a strict couple.*

Laing: From what I have seen of communes they don't seem to be particularly better. I adopted a policy of not making recommendations to people. I think we are living in a state of very considerably cultural pluralism where once anyone has glimpsed the horizon he can see that there are many options. You can live alone, you can live with one person or two people or a group of people. You can find many sorts of scenes and company in any city. There's a repertoire of possibilities. St. Augustine said, "Love and do what you like" (as long as you know what love is). People may live

in communes, people may live in nuclear families, and in either case, whatever lip service they pay to whatnot they may or may not treat each other in a pleasant, honest, decent way. It is all easier said than done.

The structure of our emotions! Dennis De Rougemont in *Love and the Western World* shows how our tragic patterns go back a long way in our society. Regarding sexual desire and passion, there seems to be a repeated, built-in scenario that ends in tragedy no matter how people twist and turn to get out of the context they put themselves in. I doubt if it is possible to transcend the contingencies of one's historical necessity. But who can say, in these matters, what is necessary?

I don't believe in contrived revolutions. I mean a revolution by *dictat* is no revolution at all. It is just the old dictatorship coming out in inverted terms. Twenty-five years ago people felt terribly guilty and ashamed about masturbating. Now people are ashamed to tell you they don't. In certain circles if someone has only had sexual experience with a member of the opposite sex they feel very embarrassed because they are not bisexual, a new tyranny. The dogmatism of recently sprouted-up movements can be as fanatical and as impervious as anything that they are opposing. You see the same symptoms coming out of them. It isn't liberation, revolution, but more of the same. A number of years ago in many circles it was regarded as very discreditable and very scandalous if a psychotherapist or a psychiatrist had any physical, intimate, or particularly genital relationships with his patients, and now in some circles anyone who doesn't is regarded as really hung up and in need of more therapy himself or herself.

Steiner: And unwilling to help people.

Laing: That's all so silly. I sometimes wonder if it's worth being serious about. I think the nuclear family is a system that takes an enormous amount of social strain, at least certain nuclear families. Take that common syndrome of the company man who has moved

from here to there and so on. He moves with his wife and his kids to meet a new set of associates everywhere they go. They have got no stable friends and they are completely cut off very often by their own choice from the three-generational system. So it is just the pair of them, and the corporation and the insurance company between them and disaster. If one gets ill or one gets a bit down through the whole thing, one has to keep on going, and that can go on for years. It takes quite a lot of energy on the part of both parties to keep buoyant through a lot of the vicissitudes of nuclear family living. It is a great life if you don't weaken. And also if two people cease to have any desire for each other and if they are absolutely so bound into a sense of guilt at no longer enjoying each other sexually then, as it so often happens, instead of being able to face that and resolve it honestly at least, they get into these clandestine affairs, multiple deceptions, where people set up a very damaging situation for themselves and others in trying to be kind, but in fact being extremely cruel. As we know, there is ghastly vicissitudes that can happen in the nuclear family set-up.

On the other hand, there is the attitude we sometimes develop when our aspirations are thwarted by, it seems, the groups we live in—or all these nexuses we form not open to our own human engineering. "We'll abolish this. We'll set up that." There are plenty of people who have tried to do that. I have no quarrel with them trying to do that because I think a lot of the impression people have that they are directing these transformations is like the little children who watch traffic lights go from red to green and say "Red" and it becomes red and then "Green" and it becomes green. The situation is out of our control. We can't dictate to ourselves how we feel. If I hadn't met Jutta and wanted to live with her and she with me I might be living in a commune, I don't know what sort of company I would be keeping. I'm not making any ideological issue out of that.

Steiner: Let me ask you something

else. In reading Knots, the first thing that struck me was that it seemed that the conversations between Jack and Jill were an essay on sexism. I was at the time very interested in the way that men and women express their sex roles in subtle ways. I don't know if you did this consciously. Did you realize that you were breaking Jack and Jill's dialogues down along sex lines?

Laing: Oh yes.

Steiner: So what are your ideas about sex roles, women's liberation, feminism, in this context of the family. Personally, I think that the combination of family unit plus sexism is quite destructive.

Laing: I think the main determining things in these matters, I agree with Marx, when it comes to the crunch, is economics. And when the economic thing is leveled out then the ideological superstructures that justify our economic subservience tend to dissolve. And that is happening. Then I think the whole thing is up for grabs. I don't think that one can discern biological universals that put women and men for the most part into one or the other of the social roles that we have come to adopt in our Western society. But I think there is a big difference between economic liberation of women and the inevitable release of their minds from the domination of male consciousness.

Yet, I think there are certain biological irreducible facts that are not necessarily related to a role. For instance, it is a fact that women get pregnant and men don't. Well, in some components of the women's liberation movement they see themselves as wanting to be freed from the biological necessities by arranging test tubes, or something that could incubate babies; why should they be "stuck" with it? Now, I have no sympathy with that at all. I don't feel that it is correct to try to change one's biological destiny for ideological reasons, once one takes away the artifact of social repression of one sex or another.

I can't get away from the feeling that there is likely to be, on general

"I draw considerable consolation out of the clarity of the mind that doesn't seem to espouse illusions for the sake of the comfort they afford."



biological grounds, certain genetic instinct response systems (hormonally controlled, etc.) that perhaps women have, to very young children which men may not have. Although that is not always so—I mean, we know, in some species of birds that once the new creature is born it is the male that does the nursing. But women have lactating breasts and men haven't. So you could think that there would be a behavioral response system that would be activated under appropriate circumstances and the absence of that on the part of men. It would seem extraordinarily stupid if men have built-in instinctive response systems towards breast feeding with no breasts to feed with, and that women haven't when they have. And there are a lot of women who would like to get out of that as well.

Steiner: I believe these natural instinctual differences between men and women exist and are being exploited. But there is a kind of struggle against sexism that does not include wiping out the difference of the sexes, which is kind of what I'm asking you about. Do you see that as a meaningful thing?

Laing: Yes, well, as far as possible I've endeavored to disencumber myself of these obnoxious features of male chauvinism.

Steiner: You feel that you had them?

Laing: Well, I am certainly tarred with that brush. I don't know how deeply ingrained it was or is. For instance, I've always enjoyed the company of women as well as men. I haven't felt a struggle to not be a member of a male club or not to engage at length in that undeclared homosexual stuff men get into without admitting it. I enjoy being friends with men and with women. But there are other things, undoubtedly because my parents trained me that way. I have never gotten around to cooking well. There is a division of labor between Jutta and I. The logistics of running the house are more her province than mine.

Steiner: How about the more subtle sexist things such as, for instance, as in Jack and Jill: men tend to be less emotional, less expressive of their feelings, they want to touch less, they want to give affection less than women.

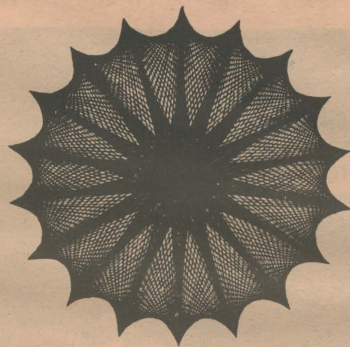
Laing: Till my early twenties I was brought up in that sort of thing—tough sports, rugby, even in a boxing ring, gym, that sort of thing—sent into it. I gave all that up as soon as I felt I could and get away with it. I thought that was a mug's game. Admittedly I had to stick it out too long and there was a price to pay. I cry just as readily as I laugh now, and don't make a point of making myself ill by choking the expression of my emotions. I'm a bit unusual in that respect, but I've found that if you do that, and I've been fortunate in the situation I'm in, you can get credit for it. You're even admired for it; you're envied for it. People like to emulate that. They say, "If he can get away with it, why can't I?" I can certainly get away with that. I've got no embarrassment about that. I used to have. It took me quite a lot to get over it. But I'm very glad I have.

Steiner: Would you say that you are a loving man? Do you feel love strongly?

Laing: It is a bit pretentious to say I'm a loving man. I have to confess



"The nuclear family is not a write-off as a system."



"I think there is a big difference between economic liberation of women and the inevitable release of their minds from the domination of male consciousness."

to the fact that I do feel love and also say that I feel hatred.

Steiner: You have to confess to the fact?

Laing: Well, I'm talking slightly ironically or paradoxically. I don't want to be coy about it. Where I come from actions speak louder than words and love is one of those things, like wisdom, that are not too seemly to lay claim to.

Steiner: What, to be loving?

Laing: When you say you are a loving man . . . I feel warm feelings of affection and love to people I'm close to. I am also moved, sometimes very much, by the statistical state of affairs of humanity and biosphere at large. (Russell talks about how difficult it is to be moved to tears by a table of statistics.) It moves me to tears quite often when I really think about what a freaked out species we seem to be. It doesn't bring me any joy, that kind of thing. I don't see any way around it. These are tears of pity. You sometimes think that the earth could be so nice, and what a mess.

Steiner: Do you sometimes feel joy?

Laing: Yes. Things that are liable to induce tears more than anything is in the tone of a musical phrase, a perfect moment that comes through the ears. I don't get moved to tears so regularly by looking. I embarrassed Jutta on one occasion by crying in the National Museum in Athens. Over the weight of that perfection of form. This creased me up. It's mainly music, though.

Steiner: I would like to talk more about your feelings and emotions. I want to talk about the myth that you are mad. My immediate suspicion from the very beginning was that you have to be called mad because you were saying things that had to be gotten rid of, discounted. And I always compared you in this respect with Reich and with Sullivan.

Laing: You are quite satisfied that I'm not mad? Since we have met?

Steiner: I always was, and certainly since we have met, I don't believe people are mad, anyway. People are eccentric and some people get really upset.

Laing: Well, some people are pretty crazy.

Steiner: The way I see it is some people are eccentric and some people get very broken up about things, destroyed or shattered. What do you make of the rumor that you are mad? What do you make of that situation?

Laing: I suppose that I feel that the wish must be the father to the rumor. As you say, it is a very neat way of disposing of what I've said. There's an enormous amount of money and vested interests involved. At the same time, I think I'm slightly surprised because I don't feel that what I've said is all that different or even more radical or more extreme than a number of people I quote in my books, a number of such people I've met and know quite well. For instance, I doubt if Paul Tillich would find anything to disagree with. The view of society as corrupt or the view of the world as more an evil place than a good place is a very traditional, establishment view. There are very many people in official intellectual positions, both as scientists and as philosophers and theologians who hold very much the same view as I. I think my intellectual ancestors in that respect in Europe are Erasmus, Montaigne, or even Shakespeare,

David Hume . . . No one has imputed madness to many of these people. Maybe it's because I'm a psychiatrist; it's very unusual for psychiatrists to say these things.

Steiner: Not only that, but you put a political cast on it. You said not only are people not schizophrenic, really, but the whole thing is a police operation to bring people back into conformity.

Laing: The way I've put my critique of society—compare what I said to the diatribes of Marx or Engels, Lenin or Trotsky, or more contemporary writers about Western society. I wouldn't call myself primarily or even to any significant extent a Marxist: I think my attitude to society has been very much in line with most of the people that I've most respected whom I've read in my life. For instance, Erich Fromm, especially recently in *The American Way of Death*, well, that's a massive condemnation. But the attribution of madness doesn't seem to have floated to him. Harry Stack Sullivan had the tactical misfortune of being diagnosed as schizophrenic when he was about 19, a stigma which people who didn't like him were not going to let pass. But as far as I know, in the middle and towards the end of his life, Sullivan was regarded as a brilliant, eccentric, Irish, Roman Catholic, psychiatrist humanist, very perceptive . . .

Steiner: But there also was a rumor that he was mad. When I was a student I was told, "Yes, this is Sullivan and he was mad, and this is Reich, and he was mad, and this is Laing and he is mad." I think it's also the way, I think that you did say it in a convincing, haunting way, and because you were a psychiatrist you were given the maximum punishment a psychiatrist can get—you were called mad.

Laing: Of course, it's very paradoxical, because I think that the books (as far as books went), that generated this as much as anything, were *The Politics of Experience* and *The Bird of Paradise*. And there was a movement, as it were, of integration in that book in that two different types of relationships to the reader could come from the same person, which is very opposite of being split or schizoid.

But, as we know, paradoxically, in the country of the blind, the one-eyed man get his one eye taken out. I certainly have a very healthy fear of that sort of hatred. Nathan Ackerman said to me once in Italy, "Ronnie, you're a schizophrenia lover. That's what these guys have got against it, you know."

Steiner: I'm sure you don't feel that you couldn't go mad. What kind of madness would befall you? Which would you choose?

Laing: We're consenting to use this term even though . . .

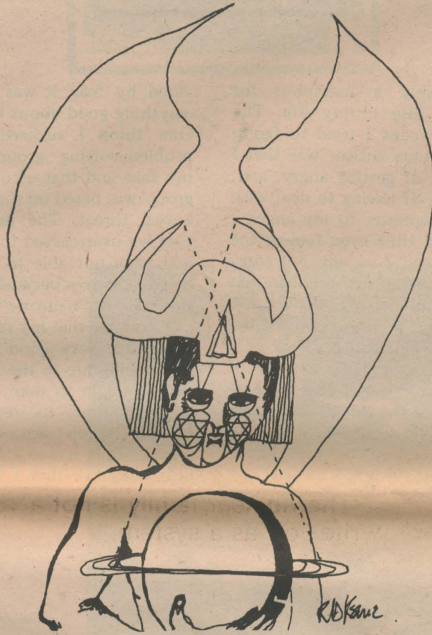
Steiner: If I were to go mad I would probably crawl up in a corner and not eat, and that would be it. I think everyone has a choice—the way that they see they would go if things really fell apart.

Laing: Well, I haven't got a set piece there. I think what I'm most beset with is a component of melancholy, so I think I would likely exaggerate in that direction.

Steiner: You would be very sad, you would be depressed.

Laing: A dispirited, involuntal depression less agitated than despairing. A depletion of energy, hopelessness, helplessness. Curiously enough, schizophrenia seems to

me not something that I have a great degree of internal preoccupation with. Rather, I got involved, partially stumbled into it, because I was originally interested in neuropsychiatry, embryology and neurology. I got involved with meeting psychiatric patients whom I examined thoroughly and neurologically and all the rest of it and couldn't find anything the matter with them. I was a sufficiently well-trained doctor and taking my medical training literally, I saw nothing the matter with these people, medically.



"Well, some people are pretty crazy."

Yet there is something the matter somewhere or we wouldn't be in this situation. So I got interested in that situation, and most of the people who were in the situation were subject to this diagnosis of schizophrenia. So I became interested in how this diagnosis and all that went with it arose. I then didn't cease to relate to the person who was diagnosed schizophrenic because he was diagnosed schizophrenic. I never felt that I needed to do that number on them myself. There seemed to be, and this is the testimony of patients, a feeling among a lot of patients that I understood them, but I never felt that I understood "patients" better than anyone else.

Steiner: I think that's very important. Because whether you wanted it or not, or expected it or not, you are kind of a champion of schizophrenics.

Jutta: You don't threaten them.

Steiner: People who have never heard you or seen you . . .

Laing: Well, I think they dearly need champions, and I think it is a great privilege in my life that in a way I've been so elected by them because I think that these people are put on, put down, and put upon, to an insufferable degree. I don't know—it was a sort of naivety about me that the medical brainwashing just didn't work on me. It never happened. Perhaps because I was particularly interested in neurology and from there to neuropsychiatry, that I never took it seriously. I was a neurologist who was presented with people who were supposed to have some subtle thing that you couldn't actually detect. I don't believe that. I mean, I can believe that there are all sorts of chemical transformations that occur in conjunction with the vicissitudes of one's life, social and otherwise. There's nothing more sensitive to social stress than one's biochemistry. There are experimental stress experiments which amply attest to that. So I never had that sort of split in my mind between the chemicals and the social thing. And then, I was also very interested in genetics—still am. I've remained in touch with embryology. I was particularly interested then, and am still fascinated by embryology and the relationship of embryology to our psychic life. And because I got a real hold of that subject I thought that the Kellman, Slater vintage of psychiatric medical genetics was a big joke. I've said this around several of the world's leading geneticists and got back very interesting letters completely agreeing with me about the sheer tawdriness of the primary research designs upon which these psychiatric theories are based. But, you know, it's difficult for them to come out with that.

I think the reason why a lot of people in that bracket feel that I'm their champion or understand them is not so much, as it were, the positive understanding of them that I've got, but the absence of laying them under this heap of rubbish that they are buried under.

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F E A R



Jude LaBarre

"I've had to change my attitude to fear. Everything I've ever done that has been of any value for my personal growth has always been preceded by fear . . . It means that fear is O.K., that it is a natural thing to encounter it when trying to learn."
—Betty Dodson

I have been afraid a lot in the last year because of many different causes. I have been afraid I would become sick without anyone to take care of my little boy. I have awakened at three in the morning to listen to vague night noises after our house was burglarized. These fears were rational. It is natural to be afraid alone at night in the month after a burglary. But in the last year I have come to know another kind of response to fear, a reaction that has been as powerful and overwhelming as any emotional response I've ever had. What was I responding to? Firecrackers.

I've been afraid of fireworks, especially firecrackers, since I was four. On the Fourth of July I was sitting on a blanket with the fireworks watching the celebration. Someone came too close to the blanket with sparkling sparklers and ignited the fireworks setting there. I was rescued, unhurt but scared. I don't remember this happening but I do remember being afraid every Fourth of July.

By the time I was around 24 I was learning to handle the fear pretty well. I would spend the evening of the Fourth at a movie and I could handle being somewhere (a football game or rock concert) and hearing a firecracker without having to leave. Last summer I moved to Berkeley from Southern California. I left my husband and began living away from my parents for the first time. I believe that the insecurities brought on by my move triggered the intensification of my fear of firecrackers. By late fall hearing a firecracker set off an explosion of fear in my stomach that would shoot all over my body making me want to run, making it impossible for me to sit still. All I could think of was that someone would light a firecracker right next to me. I got to the point that I couldn't walk down the street or sit in the park without thinking about firecrackers and feeling the physical effects of this fear. My whole body would tense, starting in my solar plexus and radiating out. I would feel energy pushing at my back to get me to move and I would quickly look for a way to escape in an unobvious way.

After a couple of months of this, I decided to get into a problem-solving group to try to learn how to handle the fear. I had been trying to work on developing the skills I had read about on my own, with slow progress, but I really had no idea how I could not be so afraid, or how I was going to be able to live my life this way.

When I had talked about the fear and imagined seeing a lit firecracker and talked about how that made me feel, Becky (one of the group leaders) said that my fear

was probably a metaphor for something else in my life. The next few weeks I tried to figure out what. One answer was that I was afraid of getting angry, and, even more, of having to deal with people's responses to my anger. I had a hard time even feeling the anger, instead I usually felt sorry for myself. Another problem was my inability to say what I was thinking and feeling, I realized the similarities between my fear of a lit firecracker and the anxiety of having people respond to my feelings. One of the things women are not supposed to do in this society is to feel and act on their anger. This inability undermines our strength and adds to our feelings

lated by fear, it was hard to see anything good about being afraid. One thing I realized from my problem-solving group was that my fear and that of others in the group was based on things that are a real threat. The problem was that we overreacted to the danger and were not able to function or enjoy our lives because of our "irrational" or "neurotic" fear.

I now see that my fear has done something very good for my life by pushing me to the point that I had to begin to take care of myself. I began to remember to breathe when the fear hit. I learned that it was alright for me to make sure that I felt safe, to size up the situation and take the



of powerlessness. As oppressed people feel powerless, they channel their anger into themselves or onto weaker people like their children. Fearful people are easier to control than angry people, so as people working for liberation it is important to examine our fears and reach through them for our strengths.

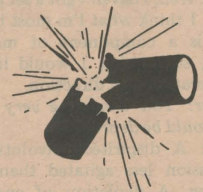
During the time when I was so afraid, I thought a lot about fear. It is a natural human emotion and must serve some positive purpose. Obviously, a cave woman seeing a hungry tiger coming toward her would be prompted by her fear to hide or run, but in today's world emotions are more complicated. When my life was being manipu-

lated by fear, it was hard to see anything good about being afraid. One thing I realized from my problem-solving group was that my fear and that of others in the group was based on things that are a real threat. The problem was that we overreacted to the danger and were not able to function or enjoy our lives because of our "irrational" or "neurotic" fear. I now see that my fear has done something very good for my life by pushing me to the point that I had to begin to take care of myself. I began to remember to breathe when the fear hit. I learned that it was alright for me to make sure that I felt safe, to size up the situation and take the

I began to see that I was not just immature or silly, but that I had a real problem to be dealt with openly, not just hidden away. Accepting the reality and validity of my fear was the most important step for me toward doing something about it. So for a while "running away" from terrifying situations gave me a feeling of strength because it meant I was accepting and acknowledging the existence of my fear and keeping myself safe. I am finding that the more I know what I am feeling and what I want and the more I take care of myself, the less I'm afraid of firecrackers. I have learned to see fear as a signal of not feeling secure. It can warn me to assess my strengths and look for support and know where I will be safe.

Another good thing to come out of my fear was joining my problem solving group. I need this kind of clarity and support in working on taking care of myself rather than struggling to learn how to on my own.

I have progressed enough that I spent a fairly comfortable Fourth of July with two supportive friends who were willing to risk that I might freak out. I still haven't gone to any large concerts or to the circus with my son, but I feel about ready to do it, with a little help from my friends.



Accepting Anger

Patti Hague

When I was young I absorbed all of my sex-role training about being the family mediator, the one who smoothes things over, the one who gives in if necessary to keep peace despite the personal cost. Thus I was morally against anger. A good person was one who never got angry. As an adolescent and young adult I came to realize that this view was unrealistic, oppressive to me, and an oppressive rescue of others. I was losing more, both personal dignity and friendships, by being the ever sweet, smiling, giving soul than by being honest, reasonably demanding, and taking care of myself as much as others. I grew to no longer see anger as something to be morally avoided.

I realize now that I'm overcoming that fear. But in learning to accept my own anger, I am realizing that I also need to take further steps in accepting others' anger as well. I have learned how to better identify my own anger. In fact I am gaining some pride in my ability when upset and/or mad to get straight in my own head and then to say as clearly and directly as possible what's bothering me to the people involved. I am proud of my honesty. But, somehow problems still feel unresolved. Something is still wrong. Here are my thoughts on the next step I must take in learning to accept anger.

After stating what's bothering



that they won't move beyond the initial anger, pain, or silence.

My fear of an angry or hurt response to my anger causes me to plead for an acceptance of the rationality of my anger (i.e., please tell me I'm justified in this anger) and/or to get into a one down position by crying so as to elicit a Rescue. Thus the impact of what I say is quickly shoved aside because its power frightens me and I cry for comfort. In fearing the response to my anger I maneuver the situation so as to discount my own statements. Where now is my pride of being honest? What value is there in being honest when I allow no gut level responses to my honesty, when I don't allow my words to soak in or elicit a response?

I feel now that I can express my grievance and vent my anger without threatening or losing any love, respect, or comfort. I only need to become more patient and confi-



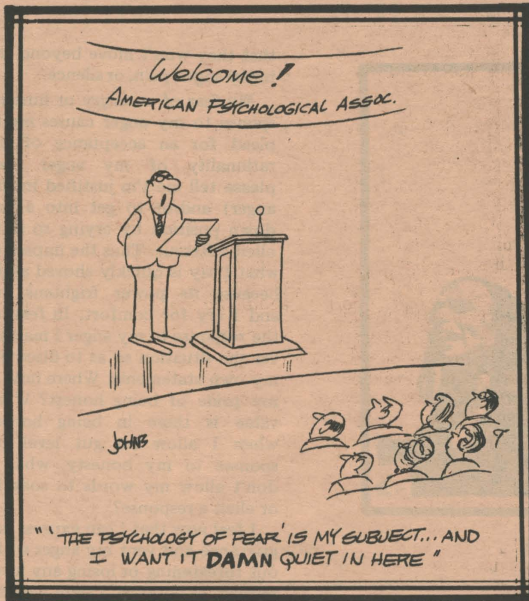
me to someone I care about (or while stating it if I'm really upset) I usually end up crying. I attempt to stay rational, speak clearly from my adult, and keep the dialogue going while crying—ignoring the tears as just a weakness of mine or a sign of exhaustion. I talk as though I want the person to listen to my words and take them seriously, but to ignore the tears and the display of weakness. This shows a lack of understanding of my tears, and an underestimation of their effect on the person I am angry with.

I think now that my tears are a plea for that person's love/respect/comfort. In getting angry with a close person and expressing that anger I feel I am threatening a source of these things. I want the freedom to express my grievance and vent my anger, but not to

threaten or lose any love/respect/comfort. Fearing that I don't have that freedom, I accompany my expressions of anger with tears. Crying is a great way of soliciting comfort and love. It's also a great way to come on from a one down position, to come on needy. Thus my tears, my one down position, balance my anger which I fear will be perceived as an aggression and one up position. Thus my sex role training wins out; I discount everything I say by crying.

If I really take my anger seriously and if I really expect the person to whom it is directed to take it seriously, I realize that it will probably elicit a response of anger, hurt, or confusion. Anger has an impact; it elicits strong responses, unless it is watered down or discounted. To let my anger soak in, to let the essence of it take effect, requires time and patience. It requires moving through the initial impact, beyond the first response of return anger and/or hurt, to a place of dialogue and give and take. I must allow people with whom I am angry to move in that direction instead of sidetracking them with tears in fear

dent of myself and the love and respect offered to me. Next time I'm angry, I'm going to prepare myself to expect an angry response for a while. I'm going to let my honesty and my words be powerful, take effect, and soak in instead of sabotaging their power by coming on in need of a soft, giving response. This means that I'll have to be prepared to nurture myself some. I'll need to reassure myself that the love/respect/comfort I get from this other person will return later because I am worth it, what I have to say is worth it, and the other person is responsible enough to hear me in anger and still offer their love/respect/comfort. If not, perhaps the relationship isn't worth it and it's time I reevaluate that. I deserve to be loved, even though (perhaps because) I sometimes have anger to express. Maybe by nurturing myself and having more faith in my loveableness and my relationships I'll not be so fearful of angry responses from others and I'll let my new found freedom to express anger become powerful instead of dwarfing it with tears.



Professionalism

Hannah Lerman

This is a personal statement on the dichotomy I experience between the values of professionalism and the opposing and contrary pull of feminism. The feminist woman professional is isolated both from other feminists and other professionals. As a way out of the dilemma, I suggest a redefinition of the professional psychologist in terms of training and values.

From the time I received my Ph.D. degree some ten years ago until recently, I tried to act in a manner which seemed appropriate as a member of the psychological profession. Although I thought that my behavior successfully approximated the type of behavior I saw in fellow (I do mean male) psychologists, full recognition of my efforts and full acceptance of me into the professional fraternity was never quite forthcoming. It was only after I had stumbled onto the feminist viewpoint (and my entrance into feminism was accidental enough that "stumble" seems eminently appropriate) and began to understand its concepts that I truly comprehended my dilemma.

Certainly, I had not previously understood that the profession was indeed a fraternity and that what I had been striving for was practically impossible. Like many other women in relation to so many other aspects of our society, I had been feeling that my failure to achieve peer equality and full professional recognition meant that there was something wrong with me and that the "something" in this case was an incomplete understanding of what was expected of me.

Besides the personal support and consensus from other professional women which I received once I had fully entered into the feminist movement and met and recognized my sisters, I gained information from factual studies which also supported my new awareness of what had really been happening to me. Among the most significant which came to my attention were Wolman and Franks'¹

findings that males experience lessened self-confidence when solo women take part in professional peer groups, the high rates of suicide recently reported among women physicians and women psychologists², the identification of self perception difficulties among women physicians³ and the reports of lack of public acceptance of women professionals.^{4,5}

Until the advent and general extension of the feminist movement in professional spheres, women professionals like myself had no alternatives to plodding along in relative isolation with less than full status other than those of withdrawing from professional politics (with additional isolation) or withdrawing even further into full time housewifery and motherhood. The immediate effects of entrance into feminism, for those of us who have taken this route, has been the establishment of alternative support and identification systems outside the traditional, professional framework. The effect of this for me has been a deeper sense of my own values and competence, and a general freeing of energies which has led to enhanced efficiency and productivity of action and thought.

Another set of issues, however, has arisen. This is the wideness of the gulf between professionalism and feminism. I see and experience the differences as they occur in psychology, although I suspect that the dichotomy exists between professionalism in all forms and feminism.

Women's organizations are likely to operate in a democratic fashion, assuming that competence and ability do not solely reside at the top of an organizational pyramid but are widely distributed throughout. Sometimes organizational activity conducted on this basis is chaotic but the strong possibility exists that new forms of organization will emerge from women's activities. Feminist women seek to take back their personal decision-making functions from others and regard themselves as fully competent to perform activities delegated to professionals of various sorts until now. There is a vocal segment within the women's movement who actively dislike professionals and all aspects of professionalism. They claim, with justification, that women too long have allowed men individually and collectively, as represented by professions like law and medicine, to

usurp their own personal decision-making functions and to hoard knowledge as if they were the guardians of wisdom. The feminist movement has reacted by developing medical self-help, legal self-help and psychological self-help. This segment of the women's movement distrusts women professionals, even those affirming their own identification with feminism, as supportive of an oppressive system. They see us as accepting the old male definition and as functioning within them.



This, of course, is painful for those of us who do identify ourselves increasingly with the women's movement rather than with our "fellow" professionals. For, we are isolated from the professional establishment, even as we still work with its members, and are distrusted, ignored or ridiculed for our views and our actions. The difficulties encountered by feminist women from within the professions have not decreased. Sex discrimination continues as do problems of public and professional acceptance. Women professionals are still punished for personal deviations from "feminine behavior." Within psychology, as the woman professional accepts for herself the task of investigating women's issues which

have been neglected by the professional establishment, she runs headlong into the pressures generated by that establishment. Psychology has an extra lethal personal weapon in addition to those used by other groups. If all else fails, it is always possible to question the motives of the women advocating the study of neglected (actually tabooed) topics. What unresolved conflict induces a woman to wish to study rape, or sex between therapist and client? Why won't she let well enough alone like other people (men) and recognize that humans have universal drives and that it is unfair, improper, inappropriate or unscientific (check one or more) to study women's issues?

Friction between feminist women professionals and other feminists often occurs over acceptance of the value of different strategies toward the same goal — whether to work toward changes in the system from outside or from within. Those outside desire functional changes and suspect that any changes possible from within will be minimal and insubstantial.

A recent article by Robert Reiff⁶ suggests, similarly to feminist theorists, that the power of helping professionals is obtained through the process of keeping knowledge scarce and representing the professional as the sole source of knowledge for all others. He grants the possibility, however, that professionals can participate in the democratization of professions and act as "client advocates" and he concludes that "there is nothing intrinsic to helping others that requires the indifferent, dehumanized, self-perpetuating, entrepreneurial enterprise characteristic of professionalism today."

Some feminists, such as Tennov⁷ do not grant the possibility which Reiff offers. Rather, she categorically

states that "to be a Professional represents a major lapse" from feminism and that a psychotherapy relationship, since it must always include status differentials, must always perpetuate the ills she would like to correct.

Reiff and Tennov suggest to me the need to radically redefine "professional." This redefinition would include democratization of access to knowledge, other means of measuring competence than by the sole fact of the possession of a degree, recognizing life experience as providing education in addition to (and perhaps at times instead of) academic knowledge. It would also require professionals to work toward broadening the access to knowledge and services, rather than working toward an increasingly burdensome credentialing process. Perhaps much of the incentive for increased personal profit would have to be removed through the socialization of helping services. I, for one, would not be distressed by this.

In addition to the redefinition of who is designated as a professional, redefinitions of accepted and appropriate professional behavior would also need to follow. The growth of consumer protection in the general society could be extended to professionals, holding them more directly accountable for the value of their services. In addition, deeper regard and respect for individuals would necessitate change from the authoritarian determinations made in the form of diagnoses and interpretations.

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eugene legerud 1975

self interest

Michael Votichenko

In my experience one of the most difficult things is knowing what I want. I've spent years chasing after things other people wanted me to want and only later figured out they weren't things I wanted at all. Not knowing what I wanted has screwed up my dealings with other people and confused the nature of my relationships with them. And even when I had a vague idea of what I wanted, I would often persuade myself it was selfish, uncooperative, immoral.

I propose that knowing what you want isn't an easy matter and the difficulties it involves aren't accidental. Most cultures consider self interest the un-okay thing *par excellence* and set up a barrage of cautions, injunctions and punishments to obscure it from us. I'd like to unmask some of these and suggest techniques for exposing more of them.

What Is Self Interest?

It's often difficult for us to disentangle the idea of self interest from its cultural meanings. In America, for example, self interest has come to denote getting a bigger share of the bucks or the power. We're also taught to identify self interest with national interest: what's good for America is good for me. Religious groups, political parties, and commodity manufacturers seek to identify our self interest with their products. Self interest, in short, often evokes the interests we identify with.

The kind of self interest I envision here doesn't equate itself with outside causes or movements. As the name implies it's exclusively interested in a self. It would be like an articulate faculty for self-preservation. More than fangs and claws that can only preserve and maintain, self interest would also show us how to improve our situation. It would show us how to get what we want.

I am tempted to say that self interest is something like reason. During the last 50 years, however, philosophers and social scientists have divorced reason from goals. They declare that goals are selected by an irrational process and that reason is purely the calculation of efficient means to arbitrary ends. Thus "reason" has become instrumental and manipulative; it often appears to be in the service of anti-human ends. "Reason," says one prominent social scientist, "serves fascists as well as democrats, capitalists as well as socialists." Self interest would be the complement to this kind of reason. It would choose goals that would be in our interest. In its pure form self interest would be the human side of reason.

But of course self interest has never existed in its pure form. It's always at work in the "real" world and is molded to fit different social forces and conditions. If it molded itself adequately our sense of self interest would be a reliable ally in planning our lives. But too often something seems to have gone haywire and our sense of self interest doesn't function properly. Sometimes this involves a blurring

between what we want and what someone else wants us to want. In other cases we are conditioned to hate what we would actually want, for example a life of idleness and pleasure. Nazi propagandists and members of the American media played on this when they said of Jews and hippies that they didn't work and had libertine sex lives—and Americans and Germans responded with violent indignation to precisely what each of them really wanted—not to work and have swashbuckling sex.

The Birth of Self Interest

The way we think and feel about our self interest, the repair or disrepair of our aptitude to recognize and pursue what we want, has been culturally conditioned. In the case of self interest the influences had their origin during the Italian Renaissance. In the writings of Cola, Savanorola and Machiavelli we find some of the earliest expressions of the idea of individualistic self interest, or ethical egoism, a doctrine that claimed the proper recipient of human action should be humans themselves. The arguments that citizens should have the right to pursue their self interest appealed principally to a still numerically weak bourgeoisie, and to a smaller extent to the urban poor and the peasants. They were directed against the medieval belief, supported by the feudal aristocracy, that the proper end of human action was service to God. Since kings, popes and emperors were considered God's representatives on earth, it's not difficult to understand the attraction the idea of service to God had for them. The idea of self interest thus appeared as something like a campaign pledge by the emerging bourgeoisie. Interest, along with everything else, would be democratized. "Emperor's interest" would become self interest. In a moment we'll see that like most campaign promises this one remained unfulfilled.

Examining early bourgeois views of self interest may seem (and seems to me while writing this) unnecessarily discursive. Yet in these early bourgeois accounts we can already see some basic contradictions in our understanding of self interest, contradictions that are still with us today and warp the sense of what we want. For these writings contain a double message: In Machiavelli no less than in Luther and Calvin we find a defense of the abstract right to pursue our self interest but the specific contents of our inclinations and needs are declared evil and must be curbed with iron discipline. Even those such as Rousseau who appear to argue for the goodness of primitive human nature (*Emile; The Social Contract*) believe egotism to be wrong and personal interest (*volonté de tous* as opposed to *volonté générale*) to be bad. In these early descriptions of self interest we find a paradigm of internalized oppression: Our desires are depicted as sinful and dangerous. Real egoism is frowned on. Describing the period one historian puts it this way:

Egoism, which in the new period is spoken of in holy terms, the "*sacro egoismo*," is for the common individual precisely the opposite of self interest and leads him to renounce his claims to prosperity, security and freedom. Egoism designates the transcendence of a small group and has nothing to do with the happiness of most individuals.¹

In short the early eulogies to self interest were what we'd now call a hype. Like "freedom" (which became the freedom to exploit) or "equality" (which became the equality of all humans as wares on the market), the right to pursue self interest was promised in theory and discouraged in practice. "Emperor's interest" would not become self interest but bourgeois interest.

Self Interest Under Capitalism

Students of this period such as Marx, Tawney and Weber emphasized changes in religious, political or moral beliefs that supported and justified the rise of the bourgeoisie to economic power. And by the 18th century self interest, like protestantism, "equality" and "democracy," seemed to be tailor made to fit the needs of the new ruling class. Under the bourgeois idea of self interest were catalogued a series of permissions that were ideally suited to the needs of a capitalist entrepreneur. He could steamroll his opposition, starve his workers, line his pockets and still delude himself with the belief that he was serving the common weal and exercising his human rights.

At the same time however, something dangerous and revolutionary was contained within the idea of self interest. This was the fact that like "freedom" and "equality," the right to pursue one's self interest had been (supposedly at least) extended to all people. Yet in a society shot through with inequities and grievances the poor had distinctly different interests, interests that would impel the capitalist revolutions to move further than the destruction of the feudal order. Moreover, even within the bourgeoisie, capitalist society sets each human against another; a potential for destructive conflict is always just beneath the surface. The stability of early bourgeois society thus appeared to be threatened from all sides: the self interest of the poor might lead them to take over factories; the self interest of a capitalist might lead him to liquidate his competition. Under bourgeois capitalism any conflict could spark total conflict.

This then is the situation of self interest under capitalism: On one hand it's praised as an abstract right. On the other hand, in a stratified, competitive society grievances are so deep that if anyone actually pursued self interest it would lead to extended and perhaps destructive conflict. So the rules for pursuing self interest under capitalism become: Your egoistic desires are all right so long as they don't produce conflict. "Respect authority. Be cooperative." "Your freedom," the moralist reminds us, "ends where someone else's nose begins" (Camus).

This ambivalence is embodied in both our individual programming and the culture as a whole. On an individual level it says "What I want isn't worth the

hassle." On the cultural level it's contained in the grotesque and occasionally comic juxtaposition of ruthless competition and polyanna morals—Nixon and Billy Graham.

Conflict

"The difficult problem with respect to freedom," writes the author of a 20th Century business school text, "is balancing the freedom of one man to do something with the freedom of another from having something done to him. As Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes once sagely observed, 'Freedom to swing ones fist is limited by the proximity of another man's jaw.'"²

Here again we have the image of an inviolate private space. The implication is that humans are basically independent. Entering someone's private space is a clear and occasional happening. We are free to do whatever we want just so long as it doesn't involve other people.

What this argument obscures are the subtle ways people's "private spheres" are interconnected, principally through the economy. It also neglects to say that some people have larger private spheres than others. If I am propertyless my sphere literally extends no further than my nose, but if I am a captain of industry it might extend over an empire. (In fact in American law a corporation is considered a person and is protected by the same rights that protect an individual.) Putting them on the same level makes it appear that someone with a very small sphere, merely by squirming, is entering someone else's private space, and that others can run amok within what's allegedly (and legally!) their own space. The capitalist nose theories depict conflict as an aberration that happens if we trespass on someone else's private space. The physical image of someone's nose or jaw obscures the reality of different nose sizes and has the effect of justifying the capitalist distribution of power and privilege. Secondly, the nose theory implies that conflict is created by people who cross over into someone else's private territory; this is what we call "starting it." It pretends that conflict is an unnatural, terrible exception to our happy, tranquil lives. What it really means is that conflict upsets the profitable lives of a small clique who benefit from the status quo.

Conflict Avoidance

Moral injunctions not to "start it," to be cooperative, to respect authority and the noses of others are designed to avoid conflict, specifically conflicts that would disrupt the smooth running of capitalist society. Nobody likes conflict. It is dangerous—we may come out the worst for it. And it is unpleasant, even if we don't, for it always involves risks. Nevertheless, these moral injunctions don't change the conditions that stimulate conflict, nor do they stop people from feeling violent about the grievances these conditions produce. When acted on, these moral injunctions push conflicts beneath the surface where, unresolved, they fester. And unexpressed antagonisms often grow larger and more explosive than they initially were, or need to be.

Experience provides an abundance of examples—between nations, classes or individuals—where

minor problems are smoothed over only to reappear as war, class struggle or felonious assault. Too often the strategy of avoiding conflict merely postpones it. And in the interim antagonisms grow far out of proportion to the original problems that caused them.

There are many varieties of conflict and surely some of them are unnecessary. Here I'm concerned with authentic conflict. Authentic conflict results from situations where interests are mutually exclusive; where if I get what I want, you'll be less likely to get what you want. Authentic should not (and cannot) be avoided, though it can be smoothed over or postponed. Authentic conflicts must be resolved. This means changing the situation so blocked interests can be advanced. Successful conflict resolution means growth.

The resolution of authentic conflict is always achieved at someone's expense. It always involves pain. Yet it does not have to be a zero-sum game, winner take all. In successful conflict resolution the costs to the loser will often be less than anticipated, and the benefits to the winner more than expected. In destructive conflict the opposite is more likely—the loser is banished to the galleys while the winner presides over a hollow victory.

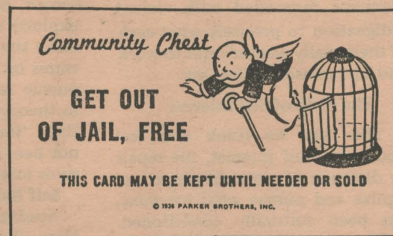
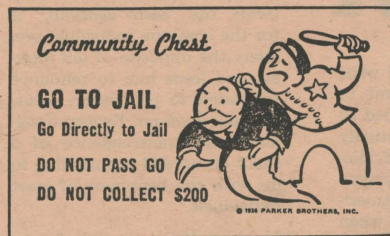
Conflict Resolution

Both historically and personally, self interest is linked up with the resolution of conflict. Conflict can be destructive or constructive.³ In its destructive forms conflict seems to take on a life of its own; it seems to mushroom and envelop the antagonists who lose sight of what they initially wanted, of the interests they intended to pursue. The conflict becomes everything. The antagonists become more interested in battering one another than advancing their interests. In successful conflict resolution someone advances their interests; someone gets what they want.

The main obstacles to successful conflict are: 1) a moralistic attitude (teaching a lesson, being "right"), 2) linking issues, 3) threats (or massive deterrence), 4) turning the other cheek and 5) putting yourself in the other person's shoes. Let's consider them in the context of an everyday conflict of interests.

Sonya has a yen for Mustafa and would like to sleep with him. She is married to Tancredi and during five affectionate years they have been faithful to one another. Now Sonya would like to change that, while Tancredi is dead set against it. This is an authentic conflict situation—if Sonya gets what she wants Tancredi won't and vice versa. Let me examine some pitfalls to its successful resolution.

1) If Sonya employs the ideological approach she might deliver a speech on the evils of monogamy and Tancredi could counter with an elegant lecture on the sanctity of the family. This could get nasty without either Sonya or Tancredi actually saying what they really wanted. Tancredi may think that Sonya wants to leave the family for good (which isn't so) and Sonya may be deceived into thinking that Tancredi wants her to lead the life of Church, Children and Chores (which isn't



so either). But the main pitfall of the ideological approach is that it brings in all sorts of feelings that don't bear on the actual conflict. The ideological approach often raises the emotional stakes. Suddenly a proposed affair has put Tancredi's Catholicism, his devotion to his mother and his love of Italy right on the line. Similarly Sonya feels that more than Mustafa is at stake and she finds herself defending democracy, the rights of women and the future of socialism, all which seem to hang in the balance. A little fucking has brought into question the legitimacy of Sonya's and Tancredi's world views—and these are things that it's supposedly worth killing or dying for. Cute Mustafa is not.

2) Linking issues has the same effect except that the connections are actually made rather than spontaneously assumed or imagined. Sonya says that she wants to sleep with Mustafa, have her mother move in with them, and return to school. Tancredi counters that Sonya better not sleep with Mustafa, that he hates the way she treats the children and that he'd rather die than have his mother-in-law visit him. These may be genuine issues, in which case they'll have to be resolved sooner or later. But linking them

up raises the stakes. Defeat becomes more costly for the loser. It can also draw attention away from the actual conflict about Sonya fucking Mustafa.

3) People and countries often link together a series of threats. Sometimes this is called massive deterrence. Massive deterrence isn't usually considered a way of conducting a conflict; on the contrary, it is intended to make the costs of conflict so high that it's less likely to occur ("if you mess with the Balkans, we'll invade Alsace and King Umberto here will kick your ass in the Tyrol"). In the case of nations it appears that massive deterrence doesn't end aggression if there really are conflicts of interest. It only makes it more massive when it finally comes.

People also play *escalatio*:

"If you fuck Mustafa I'll fuck Passionella."

"If you fuck Passionella I'll leave you."

"If you try to leave I'll beat the shit out of you."

"If you so much as lay a finger on me, I'll kill you."

Here again a sense of proportion has been lost. The stakes, and if they're collected, the costs, far outweigh the alleged joys of cute Mustafa. A constructive resolution

of their conflict requires of Sonya and Tancredi a clear view of their respective self-interests and an equally clear view of what are not their self-interests—killing, beating the shit out of someone, divorcing, advancing the cause of world revolution or the Catholic church. Successful conflict requires isolating one's interests and adhering to a law of proportionality. It also requires an amoral, concrete and non-resentful outlook. This is nourished by an atmosphere where conflict has previously been permitted. Where it has been avoided there is the opposite: moralism, generality and burning, unexpressed resentment.

Unresolved Conflict

"Turning the other cheek" and "putting yourself in the other's shoes" are different kinds of obstacles to the successful advancement of self-interest through conflict resolution. While the first three pitfalls exaggerated antagonisms, these two diminish them and in doing this minimize the prospects for successful resolution.

4) Turning the other cheek: When Sonya announces her plan to fuck Mustafa Tancredi "turns the other cheek." Brimming over with cheer and goodwill, wishing Sonya a "good time," he skips off to his bedroom. Tancredi has just abandoned his self interest; in the future Sonya will walk all over him.

This scenario rarely if ever occurs. Instead, Tancredi sulks off and mutters to himself that he'll collect his dues. He records every second of Sonya's imagined abandon and every iota of his unexpressed and undefended self-interest in a secret ledger book, "accounts pending." When he finally collects them, like all debts, they will have accumulated interest. For Tancredi this may involve off-the-wall rages, assault or even murder.

5) Putting yourself in the other's shoes, imagining how it must seem to the other person, is the beginning of humanitarianism, a necessary ingredient in fair-mindedness and compromise, and essential for true cooperation. It also sometimes makes understanding and expressing self-interest more difficult and it's this that interests me here.

First it can be annoying to have your shoes entered, to have someone constantly interpret your interests for you. In some cases that come to mind—parents, politicians, union bosses—it often appears they don't really understand our interests. And perhaps more importantly they rob us of the right of pursuing our own interests and this seems insulting and condescending. But the main problem with putting yourself in someone else's shoes isn't that you anticipate their interests, but that you distort your own. In situations that involve conflict it's difficult to keep an unwavering aim on what you want; if half your efforts are dedicated to figuring out what the other person wants it's just about impossible.

After making her announcement Sonya sees Tancredi's pain and steps right into it. Any pleasure she might snatch with this



ESPIONAGE

Steal one Power
Play card from
any player or
your turn

POWER PLAY

Stake one of your
investments against
an opponent's
investment of equal
or less value.
High roll wins both.
Play on your turn.

moorish rake will be balanced off with Tancredi's anguish which she carries in her stomach. But Sonya's gifts for empathy make even mixed pleasure unlikely. A phony compromise is more likely; say, all three will have a terrible dinner together. In this scenario no one wins. Each person suffers not only because they've failed to advance their own interests, but also because they've internalized the unadvanced interest of the other person. And of course the authentic conflict, like a time bomb, ticks on unresolved.

False Interest

For historical materialists, conflict resolution isn't only or primarily a way of dealing with interpersonal conflicts. In this view societies develop along a similar pattern: groups of individuals seek to advance their interests by changing society while other groups pursue their interests by maintaining the *status quo*. So long as this tension is not resolved the potential for conflict grows and the nature of the opposing interests becomes clearer. Growing tensions articulate the nature of the conflict and the character of a successful resolution becomes obvious. Finally, on this view, there's a revolutionary struggle whose inevitable outcome is the successful resolution of conflict.

For historical materialists, groups grow and adjust to changing situations through the resolution of conflict. Conflict resolution could be seen as a way of bringing societies and individuals into line with their new possibilities, adjusting their inequities, articulating their grievances. But what happens if, acting on the bourgeois virtues, conflict is avoided or at least stopped short of genuine resolution? Does what we want become clearer when it's stymied, as historical materialists believe? Imagine Sonya avoids a confrontation with Tancredi. Out of fear of disrupting her marriage she doesn't pursue or even say what she wants. Perhaps like the bourgeois puritans she distrusts what she wants and thinks her egoistic desires are immoral. Or perhaps she doesn't accuse herself of wanting evil things but thinks that what she wants is less valuable than stability—"it's not worth the hassle." Both reproduce the bourgeois lesson; "what you want

isn't worth the disruption it causes." Stability above self interest.

In my experience plugging up the spontaneous expression of self interests doesn't make them clearer, as historical materialists thought. In fact it has precisely the opposite effect. As soon as it isn't expressed, the connection between her sense of self interest and her surroundings has been broken; Sonya no longer confronts what she specifically wants. With the avoidance of conflict she's confronting not the discrete issue of Mustafa, but the general issue of Tancredi and her marriage. Avoiding a specific conflict often creates a general grievance, which in turn is more difficult to resolve and is more likely again to be avoided. Avoided conflict can touch off a spiral of resentment, more avoided conflict, more resentment. Unexercised, Sonya's sense of self interest becomes blurred and the prospects for successful conflict resolution become less likely.

Our sense of self interest is a faculty that must be exercised to be reliable. Our stunted sense of self interest might be seen analogously to the sense of intuition that is traditionally undeveloped in men, or the art of linear thinking that is traditionally undeveloped in women. A sense of self interest is undeveloped in us all. Blocked by the virtues, blurred by resentment, thwarted by generations of conflict avoidance, it often appears an unpracticed and unreliable guide for planning our lives. It is naive and open to suggestions from admen, professors, priests, parents and politicians: "Your self interest is to fight for your country, race, family, religion, for more money, commodities, status. Here," they say, "this is good for you, fun, delicious."

Articulating Self Interest

I understand the aptitude for knowing what I want as a crucial connection I need to have with the world around me. I see self interest as a delicate faculty, like a compass, that should give me information about how to deal with the world around me—"What do I want; what is my interest in this situation?" When self interest appeared in the 15th century it was immediately (and rightly) recognized as disruptive to the emerging bourgeois status quo, and since then considerable effort has been spent in manipulating our sense of self interest and avoiding the conflicts it confronts us with.

The process of reclaiming our sense of self interest, like the process of losing it, can snowball. The more we exercise our aptitude for knowing what we want, the more reliable it becomes; the more reliable it becomes, the more we trust it; the more we trust it, the more we exercise it. And as we experience a sharper notion of what we want, we become more aware of what we don't want. Once we have opened the connections between our wants and the world, we would be less likely to rely on the suggestions of our friendly allies, the admen, priests and politicians.

The problem is to get the process started, to get in touch with what we want, to establish a working trust with our aptitude for self interest. The first step would be to strip away our bourgeois programming about self interest: the idea

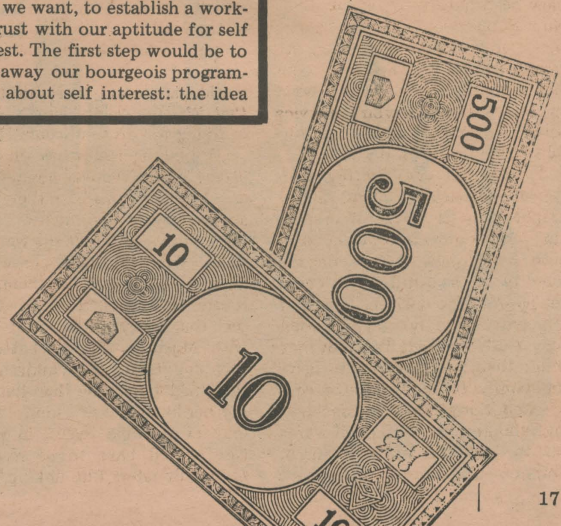
that we (that is, everyone but the ruling class) should act cooperatively is used to domesticate us no less than outright oppression and religion. We don't have to cooperate with our oppressors and we don't have to renounce our individual interests in oppressive situations. Our self interest is legitimate. It is not selfish as we have been taught. It's not dangerous. It doesn't put us in a state of war with other individuals (in fact I believe our self interest would often lead us to cooperate with one another). Self interest is dangerous only where conflict has long been avoided and stores of resentment have been built up. Here conflict is risky mainly for our oppressors. Otherwise conflict is a fairly benign process that regulates our interests and the status quo.

With this as my conclusion, and with my own undeveloped sense of self interest, I harbor few illusions that I've come anywhere near solving the problem of getting in touch with what I want. Over 2000 years ago Aristotle said we could get in touch with music and the virtues only by practicing them. So in the art of developing an aptitude there hasn't been much progress, though in the contents perhaps there has been. For unlike virtue, pursuing your self interest is its own reward.

Notes

1. Max Horkheimer, "Egoism and The Freedom Movement," *Kritische Theorie*, Vol II, S. Fischer, Frankfurt, 1968, p. 10.
2. Gordon C. Bjork, *Private Enterprise And Public Interest*, Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, 1969, p. 5.
3. Morton Deutsch, *The Resolution of Conflict: Constructive and Destructive Processes*, Yale, New Haven, 1975.

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THE FLAMING FAGGOTS

(for a confrontation with the Venceremos Brigade)

KENNETH PITCHFORD

"So you're for the revolution,"
somebody always seems to say,
rubbing his white male thick-wristed hands.
"Well, then, it's time to get serious, you know.
It had to come to this—
it's going on all over the globe,"
—as if I didn't know
the whole third world is going up in flames
and unless they win, the species is in danger,
imperialism the ecocidal enemy, in fact,
of all life everywhere.

OK, if that's what you mean, right on, et cetera,
I say,
but what's the catch?

"Nothing, except that, of course,
to be on *our* side, on the side of the *people*,
you'll certainly be willing to give up
certain little quirks
that hinder all of us getting down
to maximum work
in the minimum of time left to us."

Quirks?

"Well, like your homosexuality, like wearing
your hair too long, like acting—well, just
generally being effeminate, unmanly;
that gets the *people* uptight as much as
women wanting to be engineers or something.
We don't have time for games."

Sorry to report this typically tiresome stereotype
of a thousand conversations
but it's exactly here that I say
Absolutely not!
and he says, "Utopian faker,
faggot, fairy, fuck off,"
and I do.

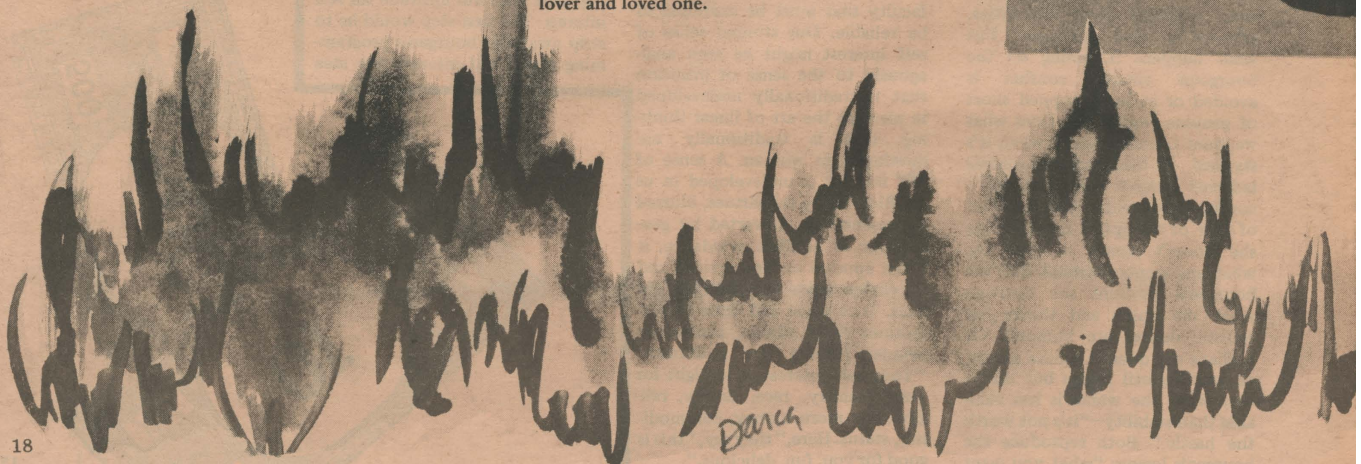
Because my revolution is to the left of his,
because his would preserve the old Prison of Gender
which brutalizes
millions of people, its inmates, daily,
because he would actually jail me for being queer
as soon as he was in power;
and therefore it had better not be him who wins,
my comrades, it had better be all of us
who refuse to settle for
enslavement as the price of freedom,
who will fight and die—and win—
for exactly what we are and want
and have a right to
and nothing less:
a revolution total and permanent and never-ending.

To say it one last time, wiping out the kinds of
human want the rich white straight man
has afflicted the world with
will be easy once we win
the worldwide war against his madness
and are free
to begin the work of revolution itself.

Who among us wouldn't volunteer for that?
who wouldn't put in whatever hours are needed
in whatever free fields and factories
until we get the whole species
on a non-crisis basis, everyone having
enough to eat, enough of everything.

But with all of our liberated machines and
imaginings, that might require everyone
in the world—a statistical fact—
to "work" several whole
hours a week. Gladly, gladly—
because everything would belong
to us—and no one
could fire us or starve us
or jail us or anything.
But my revolution is beyond *that*.

Mine catches glimpses of what we could be
when there is no more religion or family or
male domination
or money or property or mine or yours or
forced obedience
when women are free
not only to shape their own lives
but to realize a vision of liberation
that will shape the lives of all of us
when men are able
to hug and kiss babies *not* for show,
but able to care for them in every sense
and for each other
when I'm no longer called queer
for wishing my father had held me
with a love like that,
for loving still any rare stray
glimmer of tenderness in a man,
for wanting to touch that transmutation
in the flesh, but only to share,
not to hoard, such a miracle
when I no longer have to suspect myself of being
resistant to struggle
for wanting the collective help
of my brothers
in fighting my own male supremacy,
for wanting to embrace in real arms
all comrades brave enough
to risk with me
the righting of old old wrongs,
no more the victimizer and victim,
leader and led,
lover and loved one.





Listen! No matter how powerless we are as yet,
 both our pain and our demands
 give us every right to face any
 roundtrip U.S. cane-cutter who tells us
 we don't know what it's like
 to be oppressed. He's really talking about
 his own white butch self, marking himself
 as a collaborator in *our* oppression, signer
 of the current Gender Nonaggression Pact
 with the likes of David Rockefeller.
 Machismo is fascism, as the women
 of the Young Lords Party have said.

—All the more reason why we have to get ready.
 The enemy thinks that our demands aren't
 important, that we won't fight for them
 By Any Means Necessary,
 that we will go on being that meek and unarmed
 people who "are slaves or are subject
 to slavery at any given moment."

We'd better make The Man understand
 right now
 how wrong he is.
 We're fighting a total fight
 in which it remains to be seen
 whether he can *ever* be
 part of the solution
 in any revolutionary future.
 Because we're the majority—and we're rising up,
 we're on the move:
 we're all those people
 who can't and won't and mustn't
 fit in to his pattern
 of white male sado-dominance,
 though we have so far been
 psychically lobotomized by him,
 gang-raped in prison and the army,
 fired from jobs or barred from them, blackmailed,
 extorted, jeered at, beaten up, spit on,
 and finding no relief in alcoholism, addiction,
 self-mutilation, delusions of grandeur,
 no relief in his hireling psychiatrists
 who get rich telling us it's all personal,
 not political—*our* fault, not his—
our hang-up, *our* guilt, *our* shame
 —no wonder we are finally driven to suicide
 when we see no way out of his lies.



When witches were burned in the middle ages,
 the Inquisitors ordered the good burghers
 (all of them men, of course)
 to scour the dungeons for jailed queers,
 drag them out and tie them in bundles,
 mix them in with the bundles of wood
 at the feet of the woman,
 and set them on fire
 to kindle a flame
 foul enough for a witch to burn in.

The sticks of wood in bundles like that
 were called faggots
 and that's what they called the queers, too,
 and call us still,
 meaning our extinction, or complete extermination,
 androicide and gynocide their one response to
 any heretical blasphemy against
 a god-given manliness.

Isn't it time we said yes,
 yes to faggot,
 proud to reclaim our martyrs
 —who else will have them, or feel their pain
 but we brother-lovers, we flaming faggots who
 embrace the coal of final rebellion,
 women already ablaze,
 we catching fire from them this time,
 a whole planet groaning with relief
 as the bonds of
 an expiring masculinity
 glow like wicks, then break,
 slipping from all our backs.

In that holocaust, I *will* risk my whole self
 and body
 even should I perish.

My melting flesh—

My screams are only
 the death of everything they stand for.
 My pain short-circuits so quickly
 I can't believe it.

My hand is a trellis of fire.
 I can do it. It's easier than I thought.
 The crisp odor has stopped.
 It's they who are fading away,
 perishing, our liberation their execution.
 My screams are bullets,
 blood stuttering through their skin.
 I can't hear my own words anymore
 except that I think we must all
 still be chanting, demanding, welcoming

freedom freedom freedom





Sara Winter

I've finally decided that long-term monogamous love relationships are impossible. I used to say they were impossible for me (because I'm so greedy and selfish), or that they were possible for other people but not ideal (too restrictive, bad for growth, too many compromises necessary). But I always cherished the idea that somebody, somewhere, could pull it off: a loving, committed, changing, life-long union. I idealized gay or straight couples I knew who seemed to come close to the ideal. Some people managed five or even ten years together, but then... And anyway, isn't there something wrong with an ideal which after years of effort has been attained by so few? I believe now that "forever" won't work, even with compromises and resignations.

Anyway, the possessive monogamous relationships we idealize aren't good for anybody. Against their own best intentions, people in monogamous couples resist change. They lose sight of their individual wants (since these might threaten the couple relationship) and thus they lose touch with their personal power. They control each other, since "security" depends on the other person doing and being certain things. They're unwarily oppressive to people not in couples. They limit their availability for relationships or cooperative projects outside the couple, for fear of rocking the boat, and thus they help perpetuate isolation and individualism in society as a whole.

Having lived in such a couple for eight years, and outside one for five more, I believe none of us would settle for a system like this if we didn't live in a sexist society, and if we hadn't been brainwashed since

childhood to believe that this was the best or only route to happiness and security. I'm convinced now that it's not necessary to pay this price for the love we all need.

I want to emphasize that I'm still as heavily programmed as anybody to feel insecure when I'm not giving or receiving exclusive love. For the past year, the three people I've been deeply committed to have also loved others, and have made important commitments to others besides me. This has been painful for me, but since I'm not willing to go back to my old way of life, I've chosen to wage a major internal war on my own emotional attachment to romantic monogamy. Hence my personal work on jealousy. I feel that jealousy is inevitable as we take our first steps away from the possessive romanticism that's been programmed into us for so long. I'm also sure that in the long run we won't act and feel this way. I'm glad that I have been in a strong position in the world (with enough money, free time, self-confidence and allies) to be able to take on this work of bringing my emotions closer to my ideals. In this article, I want to share some of what I have thought and learned as I have waged loving war on my own jealousy.

Jealous Movies

Heavy jealous feelings arise when we react to present love situations as if they were past ones. Actually, jealous feelings are not different from any other painful feelings between people in close relationships. In my article "Intimate Cooperation" (IRT, Fall 1974) I proposed that peoples' intolerable pain always turns out to include the replay of painful experience from the past. In the past the person was *actually* as helpless, one-down and needy as she *feels* (but is not actually) in this present situation. Example: Vincent spends Saturday evening with Annabelle, not me. I feel helpless and excluded; I doubt his love for me. These feelings (which I have experienced in similar situations for as long as I can remember) were appropriate where

they first arose, when my mother preferred my little sister to me in childhood. I *was* powerless then (she was the only source of adult attention). I *did* need more than I was getting. When these feelings replay in the present, however, they're inappropriate to what's actually going on. I describe these replays from the past as Movies: a small present event which resembles a painful past situation is all that it takes to start the projector rolling. As the old painful Movie runs, I can't see clearly or deal effectively with what's actually happening now (since it feels to me like it's exactly the same intolerable situation I was helpless in and defeated by before). In our intimate relationships we deal as best we can with these Movie reactions in ourselves and others all the time.

Our intimate relationships get better as we learn to interrupt our own and our lovers' Movies and to deal with what's actually going on in the present. This is strikingly true in jealousy-making situations. When we get past everybody's Movies, the conflicts which remain may be real and important, but their resolution is well within our grasp. For example, as an adult I get everything I need on a Saturday night *while* Vincent is having a good time with Annabelle, and I'm also capable of working out changes in my relationship with him (or leaving) if things don't please me over time.

I see two reasons why it's hard to bypass jealousy Movies (compared to other kinds of Movie feelings in close relationships). First, all of us who grew up in middle-class American families share certain jealousy-making images and experiences which rise from the family and work arrangements of this culture. Mother took on the whole job of child care in each isolated nuclear household. This laid down in each of us the feeling that when one "main" or "special" loving person isn't there for us, we're not safe or we're not being loved right. Elsewhere in the world, babies get love and care not only from mothers but from grandparents, fathers, other adults, sisters and brothers. But we were frequently in direct competition with our brothers and sisters for our mother's limited time and attention. We all grew up with experiences of hurt and anger about

times we didn't get love, pain when we lost out to others, guilt when we did manage to get love but others got less than we did.

Because these distressing experiences happened to almost all of us in relatively similar form, we tend to get stuck as adults in the same places. Then our collective stuckness feels inevitable, and we lack the perspective, hopefulness and ingenuity that we bring to other, more individual problems.

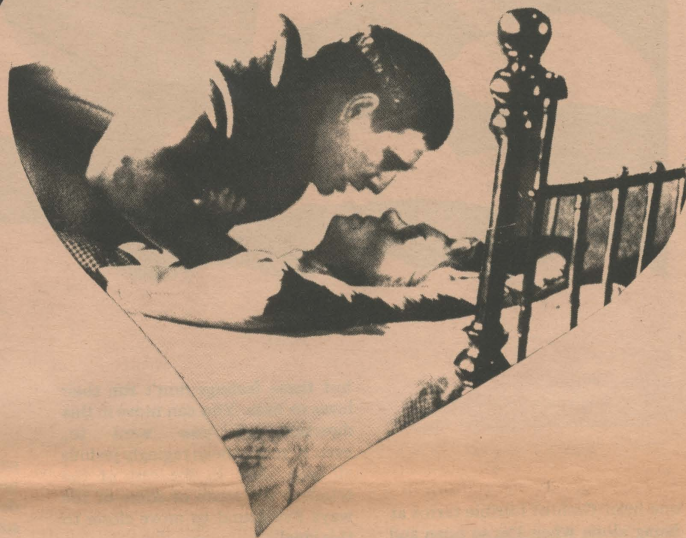
Romantic True Love

The second main reason it's hard to overcome jealousy Movies is that the culture actually values jealousy as a sign of romantic True Love. If our lover isn't jealous we wonder what's the matter, or we conclude she/he must be dissatisfied and want freedom too. We have been deeply conditioned to believe that exclusive love is better love. A short-term relationship, or one where we see each other just once a week, or one where we fuck others, is universally assumed to be less serious, less committed and less life-valuable than a "Primary Relationship" (defined as a long-term or permanent relationship where we spend most of our time together, monitor and restrict our contact with others, and feel jealous).

Actually, there is no such thing as the Ideal Love Relationship we've all dreamed of since childhood. Much jealousy comes from our shared misconception that all relationships can be compared on a single scale. How close are we (or, are they) to that perfect and eternal mating which we're all seeking? With everybody thinking this way, each fact about another relationship becomes a statement about better or worse, a cause for elation or fear.

Good experiences with one lover, or commitments made to that lover, absolutely do not imply that there's less for anyone else! What I share with Vincent is a product of his individuality and mine; there's no way this could be "the same thing" or "better" or "worse" than what I share with Jake, a different individual who

JEALOUSY



connects with different sides of me. Vincent and I can explore our particular connection to its fullest, at the same time both of us find different (not better or worse) love in other relationships.

In the Romantic Ideal, everything connected with True Love is depicted as scarce and rare. We are conditioned to believe that "once in a lifetime" we feel "that special glow," etc., etc. If I love a lot of people, I'm conditioned to doubt the sincerity of my feelings, to feel guilty for my promiscuity, or to discount my love as "not the real thing." If someone else is overflowing with love for lots of people, I don't experience her love for me as valuable or real.

No Scarcity

In fact, very little in the realm of love is scarce or rare. Perfect moments come along all the time. We are all able to feel infinite amounts of love for dozens of persons and to take in love from all kinds of people all day long. But we distrust this richness because our culture tells us that only certain kinds of love (given or received) "count" (for instance, sexual love; long-term love; heterosexual love; exclusive love and so on).

These points are important because most jealousy involves the feeling that scarce resources are going to someone else instead of me. I'm afraid my lover will place someone else first in his heart (whatever that means). I'm afraid that she will "get" his commitment, his devotion, his intense feelings, his delight. I demand reassurance that he loves me "more," or that these things are "special" with me. But actually *both* Regina and I can receive an infinite amount of Jake's commitment and "special" feeling as soon as *all* of us believe that none of this is in scarce supply.

Certain forms of real scarcity do have to be dealt with in multiple relationships. For example, time is a scarce resource. It's conceivable that two women are actually in

competition for, say, who gets to spend Saturday night with the man they both love. Sexual attention may or may not be scarce in a given situation. Some people have virtually unlimited sexual energy for everyone they love, but other people (or, people at other times) feel like making love only so often, and this may create a situation where sex is an actual scarcity for the people they love.

We can work out contracts and compromises about scarce resources (e.g. time) more easily when we separate these from the meanings they are given in our culture. For example, more time together means something, but it DOES NOT mean greater love. More frequent sex DOES NOT mean I'm "special and number one" in my lover's heart. We can learn to ask for, receive, and feel good about the kinds of reassurances that DO exist in the world in infinite supply. We can stop demanding that our lovers prove their devotion by giving us things that actually are scarce, where someone is bound to lose.

No Secrets

In working with jealous feelings, I like the No Secrets contract Hogie Wyckoff proposes in her article "Between Women and Men" (IRT # 2, Spring 1973). For example, I want to know what Vincent feels for Annabelle, what they do together, what he told her, what she promised, what they did in bed, how they both felt about it. I need to tell the same about me and my lovers too, even when this is hard to give or painful to hear.

No Secrets gives me power because it helps me distinguish the present reality from the Movie jealousy feelings that pain me. When I have sufficient information to see HOW their relationship reminds me of past pain, I can invariably begin to find the power and security which actually exists in the present situation.

With No Secrets, I can also stop being jealous of imaginary things that aren't really going on. When Vincent gets it on with Annabelle and implies (no details) that they have a really good sexual relationship, I'm deeply hurt and I want

that "really good sexual relationship" for ME. In the absence of real information, my images of what they're doing come from the media, from romantic ideals, from the opposites of things I feel bad about in myself, or from my own past sexual good times with Vincent or others. No Secrets lets me see how their actual relationship differs from all these and from that ever-threatening Romantic Ideal.

Facts which I find super-hard to tell or super-painful to hear, become clues about places I'm still hooked to my own Movies or to the Romantic Ideal. For example, from my own spots of special pain it's clear that I still believe good sex is the only core of a Real Love Relationship. I'll be glad when I get rid of this particular Movie so that I can experience Vincent's deepest love for me all the time, not just when he's sexual with me in particular ways.

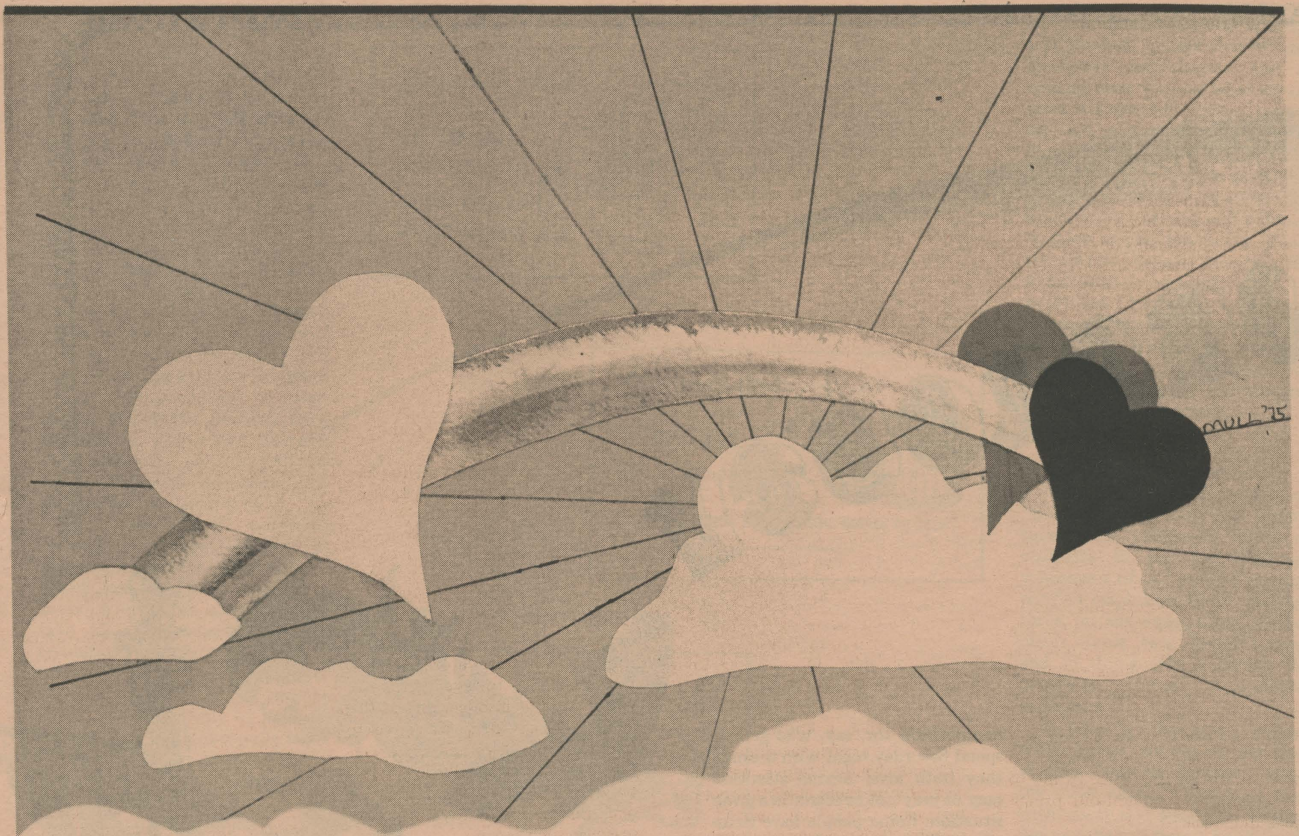
Guilt and Jealousy

I have found that guilt complicates jealousy in various ways. Guilty people either feel jealous themselves, or engender jealousy in the people around them. Examples: I want to fuck everybody or I want to leave my lover to do my own thing. I'm too guilty to admit this (even to myself). So the feelings crop up as projections: I'm afraid the "other woman" wants to fuck everybody; I'm afraid my lover wants to leave. My lover's

guilt leads him to keep secrets about what is going on in his other relationship; jealous fears are aroused as much by his withdrawal as by whatever is actually going on.

Another example: Vincent is violently jealous of Annabelle's outside relationships (which happen to be very minor compared to her involvement with him). He is hardly jealous at all of my outside relationships (which are not minor at all). One important difference between Annabelle and me is that she feels and believes that sexual monogamy means deep commitment, and she's guilty about sexy thoughts or feelings toward other men. I have had multiple relationships all my life, and don't make the link between monogamy and commitment. When I get together with other men it seems that I don't send guilty messages to Vincent that there might be anything for him to worry about.

I have noticed that I sometimes keep myself stuck in a jealous place in order to avoid experiencing some even deeper painful feelings. Example: Jake is leaving for a long summer trip. In the month or two before his departure, my jealousy about his relationship with Regina, who he'll visit on the trip, reaches epic proportions. The whole situation confuses me because I know that he's coming back in three months; yet the feelings don't go away. Finally one day I catch myself in the act. Jake and I have just made love. I'm feeling loving, open and vulnerable; I think of the fact that he is leaving soon; I experience



one brief flash of terrible terror at being alone when I'm so open and unprotected; and I feel myself think of Regina and sink down into my familiar jealous state ("he'll be fucking her soon . . . there's probably nothing special about his and my relationship," etc.) It seems that I am using the familiar round of jealous thoughts and feelings to avoid experiencing my very deep fears about being abandoned when I'm more open than I've ever been.

Loving My Jealous Feelings

When I'm jealous, it makes no sense to me to pretend (to myself or to others) that I'm not. I love my jealous rages and fears and pains along with all the other emotional parts of me. I get mad at people who tell me not to feel jealous, or who try to argue me out of my feelings. I believe that I am never to blame for my jealous feelings. They arise spontaneously when my partner's actions combine with my own past painful experiences; none of this is within my control right now, and *no one* is to blame.

People who "aren't jealous" fall in three categories. Some are pretending or are cutting themselves off from all their feelings (neither of which I find helpful in the long run). Some are genuinely clear: their childhood hurts aren't touched off by their partner's present actions, they feel loved, and it's easy for them to genuinely wish their partner well. Some other people have worked with their jealous feelings until they can experience them deeply yet let them ride by. Jealous anger, hurt and fear arise,

but these feelings don't run their loves or lives. You can move in this direction if you want to, even if you've been ragingly jealous all your life. In the rest of the article I will share of some of the ways I've found to move closer to this ideal.

Changing My Jealous Actions

I like to maintain a clear distinction between jealous feelings (which I don't have much choice about) and the action choices which I *do* have in jealousy-making situations. Jealous feelings don't compel me to act in any particular way (although I often feel as though they do). No matter how helpless I feel, I always have three choices: (1) to leave, (2) to get my partner to change, (3) to change myself.

Any of these choices can be the right one. I choose to change myself, to "work on my jealousy," only when FOR ME (apart from what the other person wants and even apart from the consequences for the relationship) I know that I don't want these jealous feelings and I'm tired of letting them push me around.

In my experience this is a tough choice (especially given the cultural view that jealousy is O.K.). My own work on jealousy always seems to include periods of backsliding, when I withdraw angrily or pull power plays. The backsliding seems to occur when I feel especially powerless, unloved or threatened in the relationship. Sometimes this is be-

cause of events that anger or scare me (e.g., Vincent and Annabelle's decision to live together). But sometimes my feelings of powerlessness don't seem to have much to do with outside reality. For example, I often *felt* helpless and one-down in the presence of Jake's relationship with Marilyn, even though the reality was that Jake and I were increasing our commitment to each other at the time, and often colluded to use our power as a couple in ways oppressive to Marilyn.

From this and other experiences, I've learned that it's important to take seriously the sexist aspects of many situations where women "work on jealousy." In my experience, most men deal with heavy jealous feelings by leaving relationships or by enforcing faithfulness on their partner. Women, influenced by economic realities and past conditioning, are much more likely to hang in and "work on feelings." In the future I intend to be more vigilant about avoiding situations where the "other woman" and I both suffer a lot and compete with each other as enemies, while the man we both love experiences much less pain. I want to avoid this particularly because I now recognize that the "other woman" has much less power than me, in a triangle situation.

It makes sense to me to choose to change myself only when conditions are ideal for me. I do not work on jealousy in every relationship or every time I feel jealous. I certainly do not try to change my jealous actions or feelings just because my

partner wants me to. I choose to work on my jealousy only when (1) what I'm getting in the relationship is really good for me; (2) I can count on support and nurturance from my partner; (3) I am not simultaneously trying to handle other major crises in my life; and (4) I have help from other people besides my partner.

If these conditions are lacking I think seriously about getting my partner to change instead, or about leaving the relationship. Jealousy generally includes feelings of desperate neediness and powerlessness. These feelings make it hard to notice that I might be better off outside the relationship, or that I may have the power to persuade or force my partner to cut out whatever I'm jealous about.

In the grip of needy and powerless feelings, people frequently hang on in jealousy-making intimate relationships even when they do not have the support necessary to work productively on their jealous feelings. In these situations, the partners get stuck in painful and unpleasant indirect attempts to force each other to change. People sometimes say they are "working on jealous feelings" when, in fact, they are actually using every tactic at their disposal to control the partner so the awful feelings will go away.

I try to look at each jealousy-making situation clearly so I can decide what is in it for me and whether there is nurturing support for working with my feelings. I try to be clear on what kind of contract I want regarding me and my partner's other relationships. I try to

discuss the situation frankly, and to leave the relationship if my needs can't be met. I try to do all this with awareness that I'm a powerful person with many other loving relationships available for me in the world, if this one isn't as I want it to be.

Paths for Action

Working on jealousy is a serious task of personal development; there are different paths to take. Each person works with the one which for her has most heart.

Thinking Path: I can often use clear thinking as a source of safety and orientation in the midst of jealous pain. It helps me to *think* how the emotion I'm experiencing comes from past hurt, how it is not a necessary or inevitable consequence of the present-time things going on with my lover and his lover. It helps me to know about my jealous Movies and to have *thought out* in advance what reassurances will help me counteract those old angers, hurts and fears. In the midst of the feeling that I'm dying, I can THINK, "Here we go, these same old feelings again." It helps me to seek and get full information about what is going on in the other relationship. Writing this article is, for me, another step on the thinking path. It helps me to articulate my thought-out principles and ideals.

One danger of the thinking path for me is that part of me feels (despite my thinking to the contrary) that if I understand the situation this well, I shouldn't still be hung up here. The thinking path is only good for me when my thinking makes room for my emotions and helps me accept them.

Feeling Path: I try to feel it all, as deeply as I can. Jealousy is anger, hurt and fear. When I permit myself to feel these emotions fully every time they arise, I discover that this experience *in itself* constitutes a cleansing, a change, a "solution" to my seeming problem. Many times I can set others on this path more easily than I can follow it myself. Given my family conditioning (suppress your feelings; it's dangerous to get angry or scared; if you feel like that we won't love you), I can't go far on this path when I'm by myself or when the person with me is scared and upset by how I feel. But when I'm with someone who feels safe, experiencing my emotions to the core invariably takes me to a better place. The aftermath of deep crying or heavy fear is often clearer thinking about how I can take action to change my situation.

Body Path: I can sometimes experience jealousy as body sensation. I am beginning to learn that it is possible to transform any *emotion* to *body feeling*. Lying on my back in bed, I begin to experience the fear that Jake won't come back to me, the anger that he is off with Marilyn tonight, the deep hurting emptiness inside. Breathing, breathing . . . how can I let these feelings down into the inside of me? My mouth wants to open, I let it open . . . I'm scared . . . fears from my tonsillectomy, I'm five years old, alone, they are cutting me, where's mommy?, scared, scared . . . breathing, breathing; that's not what's happening now; let this go deeper . . . now I feel it in my stomach, emptiness, sadness, scared, confused; when did this happen?, no one's here, baby in crib, darkness, all alone . . . breath-

ing, breathing, feel it deeper still; I'm not a baby now, I'm safe in my body, let the feeling go down, down. Feeling in my pelvis, in my cunt, a deep deep wanting; I'm trembling; scares me to feel myself open, waiting. My whole self wanting, wanting . . . I'm whole, I'm whole. Hitting bottom; "wanting" not as terror-filled incompleteness but as the most complete integration, my whole self "wanting"; I exist, wanting . . . I'm back in myself; Jake and Marilyn feel far away; my reality is here, I'm in and for myself again.

Body feeling still scares me, so that it's hard for me to use this path alone. When I'm by myself I get stuck in thinking and feeling. But one or two times I've been able with a friend to follow the path down into my bodyself, to complete grounding.

Working Rules

Action Path: Often I can take concrete action to change the situation. The best working rules for jealousy that I know are those evolved by my friends Hogie Wyckoff and Claude Steiner, used successfully by them and other people for years. These rules are: (1) No secrets; (2) No power plays (a commitment to avoid heavy moves known to be coercive on the other person, such as leaving or threatening to leave the relationship, walking out in the middle of a fight, physical violence. The particular details would be worked out for each relationship); (3) No expectations of the other, except what has been explicitly agreed on (e.g., I don't assume he will spend Saturday with me, help me when I'm sad, or whatever, unless we've made this an agreement); (4) Ask for 100% of what you want at all times (although you can't assume you'll get it); (5) Nurture each other at all times; be thoughtful and careful about change; use good judgement about timing.

The rules are to be followed absolutely; they are there to guide right action at those times when feelings are strong and it seems like nobody knows what to do. Actions taken under these rules will always

move situations in a good direction.

Other right actions are those which increase resources or support for the relationship. Share information with friends; ask people's help in refereeing conflicts. Move out of isolated couple living situations. Find other people who are struggling with the same problems. Make friends with whom you can be open about what you are doing and how you feel.

I and people I know have made many kinds of reassuring contracts to help with jealousy. Some examples are: we won't make love with anyone else without discussing it in advance. We will only have affairs when one or the other of us is out of town. We won't spend more than two nights a week apart. I agree to wait two months before going to bed with him, to give us time to work out the implications of this change in advance. We agree to spend Wednesdays and Saturdays together. It's especially important to work out contracts in areas of real (as opposed to imaginary) scarcity, such as time.

Another way I take care of myself is by choosing to limit my involvement with people who are unable or unwilling to make a reassuring contract with me. For example, when I met Jake, made love with him a few times and felt myself beginning to feel attached and dependent, I asked whether he was willing to agree that each time we parted I would know when I would next see him. He agreed; if he hadn't, I probably wouldn't have gone to bed with him again.

Spiritual Path: I believe that the final answer to jealousy is to grow

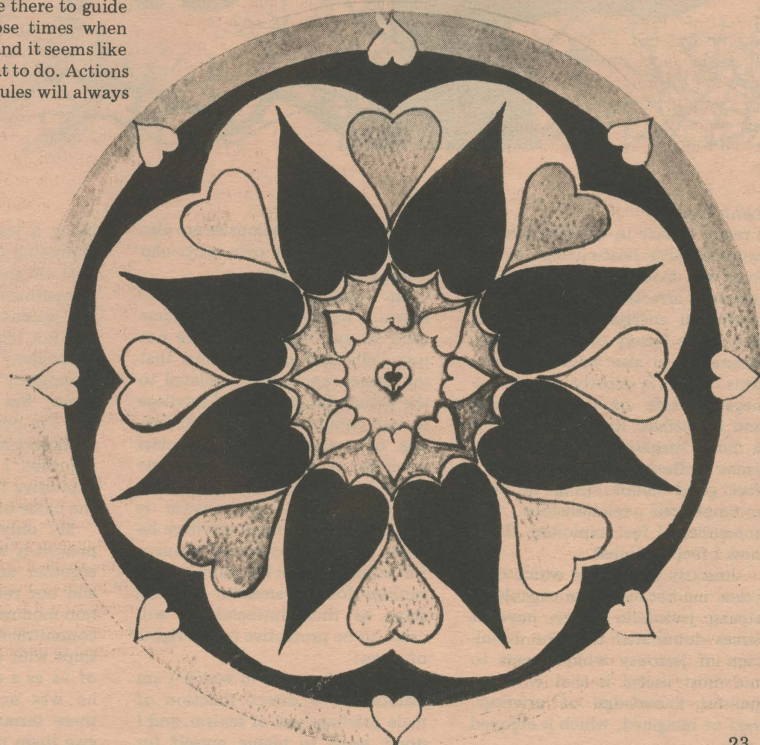
into autonomy in the universe, to mature into a whole person who feels united with all beings and therefore knows that she/he can prosper outside any particular relationship. In the moments when I know this, I simply don't experience jealousy.

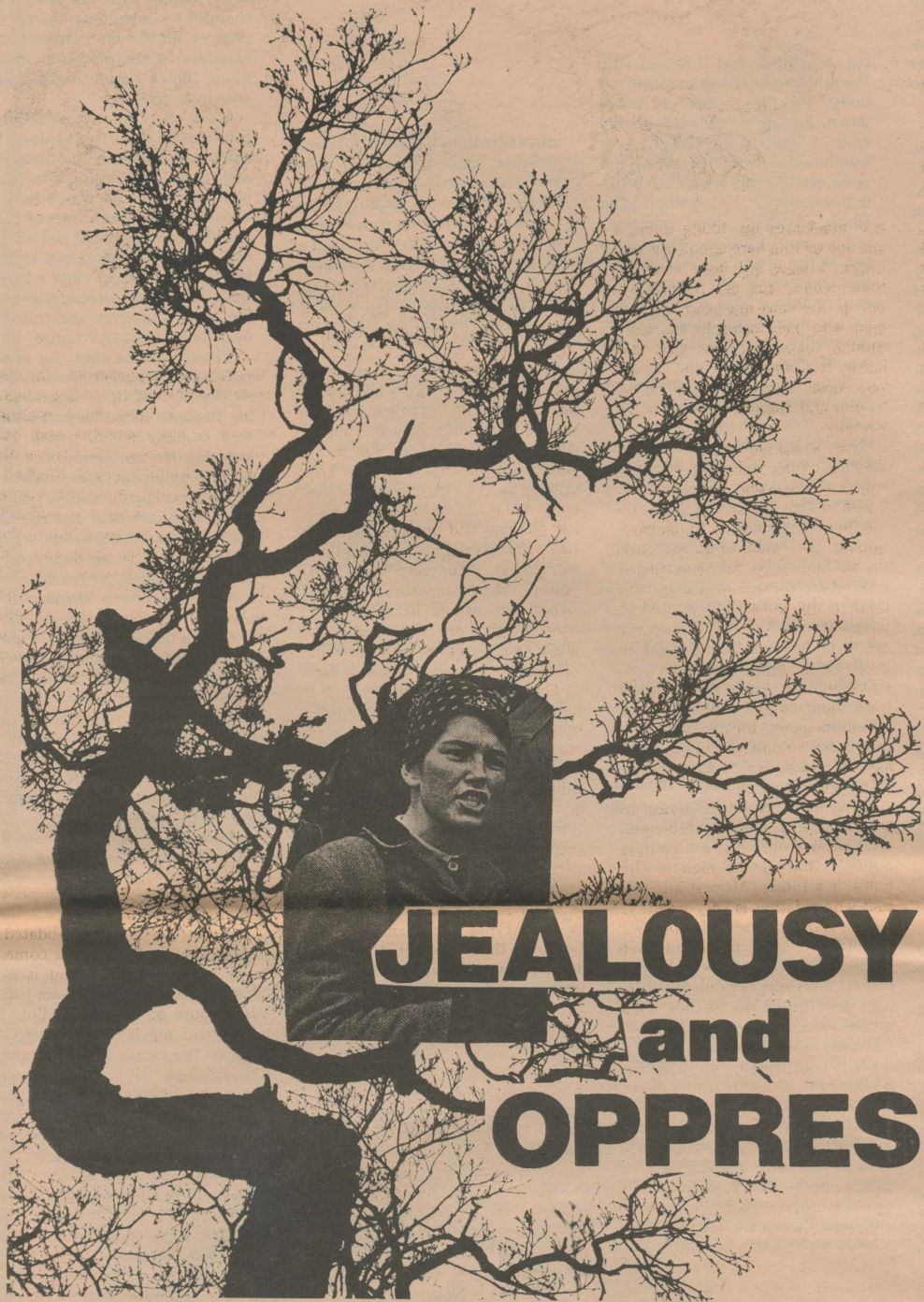
Most of us enter close relationships out of fear of being alone. We make commitments to others, and seek their commitments to us, at least partly so we won't have to experience our deep fears of being abandoned, powerless, out of control. When we choose not to control one another in close relationships, we choose a strong challenge. We make ourselves vulnerable to deep fears of loss and change.

Though this is hard, the potential gain is very great. We shift from an illusory "security" based on trying to control another person, to a true security which comes from knowing we are powerful beings safe in a bountiful universe. Each of us is always surrounded by humans who want closeness and relationship with us. To the extent we can open ourselves to see them, and be unafraid enough to reach out to them, we are never abandoned or alone.

I often feel that jealousy will kill me, but there are moments when I realize that the only thing which will actually die is my insecure, controlling self, romantically programmed in this sexist society to believe that I can't live without the eternal love of the Perfect Man. I have felt many times the magic of letting go, of refusing to use my jealousy to control the people I love. Trusting the process often seems utterly impossible, but to the extent that I do trust it, let go, and love more, I find myself safe in a world richer than I could ever dream.

In my long work on this paper I've especially appreciated critical and confronting feedback from Claude, Hogie and Anthony; Claude and Hogie's writings on man-woman relationships and coupleism; and the loving help of the people who've struggled with jealousy with me.





JEALOUSY and OPPRESSION

Lynn Shalaby

I really believe in working toward nonpossessive relationships in the long run. Contracts which limit a person's affections and bind up emotional energies are not good. But while I envy others' freedom sometimes, I also value my own. This paper is mostly about the negative side of nonmonogamy and its pitfalls. Right now I am in a fairly negative space and the paper reflects that. Sometimes I feel good about being in non-monogamous relationships and sometimes I feel exploited. Right now I feel exploited.

Jealousy is an issue which concerns me because I am capable of strong jealousies which have at times dominated me. The definition of jealousy which seems to me most useful is that it is the painful knowledge of privilege, real or imagined, which is enjoyed

by another. Our jealousies are also a function of our own particular insecurities and fears.

As I thought more about what it was I was jealous of, it became clear to me that these were not just individual hangups, but that my envies were clearly related to the actual distribution of privilege in our culture. I was and am jealous of male privilege and class privilege. A man once asked me when I was going to stop feeling jealous of him. The answer is when I have the same privilege he does. When fifty-year-old women, for example, have the same opportunities for extramarital relationships as their husbands, I will cease to be protective of the rights of wives.

I think the ways in which I am jealous are a direct function of male privilege and of sexism, and I don't want to blame myself for

being a jealous person. (My programming says: you are so hateful. You are so demanding.) I want to sympathize with myself when I am jealous, understand my fears, and not impose a standard of non-monogamy on myself. Non-monogamy appeals to me sometimes, but it seems "idealistic" and I'm not sure that it is possible until sexism is dealt with as a prerequisite. I have seen some really exploitive trips done to women in the name of idealism.

My only sexual relationship at present is with Jim. We have been together and apart several times, and our relationship is defined as non-monogamous and we have no commitment to limit our relationships with others. I had fantasized of us as a couple at one time but he was not willing to think in these terms, and I was forced to give them up (after which I had a

lot more power in our relationship). We met in Death Valley in March and were there together for about a month. Then we traveled together unhappily and separated, rather traumatically for me. Since then, he has come twice to visit me in Oakland, where I live now. He has been here about a month this time.

Jim is a somewhat passive man who refuses to be programmed into American life roles. He is 30 years old and has never supported himself. He was married for five years to a wife who supported him. When I met him in Death Valley he had just left a woman in St. Louis with whom he lived on-week-ends. (The rest of the time he lived with his parents.) Within a week in Death Valley we were living in some ways as though we were married, spending most of our time together. I was working

and he was not. We both had strong needs to form a couple.

I have some very programmed attitudes toward work: I have to support myself and everyone else should, too. Those who don't are privileged. Jim and I have had many arguments about my stingy attitudes toward the Telegraph Avenue panhandlers; those fuckers are imposing on my space. Let them steal their own or trudge through the food stamp/welfare/unemployment procedures. Besides, they are white, male, young, healthy and privileged. They should give money to me. These arguments are really about my attitude toward Jim's not supporting himself.

Later, after Jim's first visit to me in Oakland, I wrote him suggesting that we travel together again. He wrote that he wanted to do that and also wanted to visit the woman in St. Louis and that he also wanted to go camping with a male friend. I wrote him that it didn't sound like he knew what he wanted. I was furious and very jealous of his many options and of the woman in St. Louis. There was nothing much I was enjoying in Oakland at the time, and I wanted to be saved from that environment.

My fantasies of the woman with whom Jim lived briefly in St. Louis and with whom he maintains a correspondence are interesting because I know very little about her. When I am jealous of her, I imagine that Jim likes her better than me because she does not hassle him in ways that I do. She provides a place for him to stay and does not feel ripped off. She is (I imagine) helpful and giving. She does not insist (as I do) that he pay half of everything. She does not point out the ways in which he is exploitive. She is more feminine and less threatening to him than I am. Jim has told me, "It is hard to be a man and to be around you."

I have also been jealous of a woman friend of Jim's with whom he stayed when we split up for the first time after traveling together. We had decided to separate, we made love in the afternoon, and then Jim went to stay at Kathy's house, and I slept in my car for three days and wandered about in a strange town where I didn't know anyone. I was too upset to accept help from people there, although it was available to me. Jim had better options. Later in a discussion of this, he said that he didn't have any heavy love thing with that woman anyway and didn't see why I should be angry because he had a place to go and I didn't. I knew damn well why I was angry.

I would not be jealous if a lover had a gay relationship, because I am not in competition with men. If he preferred a man it would not be because he was more feminine. I also do not imagine that I would be jealous if a woman with whom I had a sexual relationship wanted another relationship. My jealousies relate directly to my fears of being unacceptable to men. Most of all I am afraid of appearing masculine.

One area of uptightness with me is my attitude toward my hairy legs. It took me years to tolerate letting the hair on my legs grow, and probably I have been able to feel good about them only because Jim likes them that way

and reinforces my liking them. I am not talking here about my attitudes. I have my *head* clear on these issues, but my *feelings* are not in line with my head. When a man who lives in my house said I should shave my legs and that hairy legs disgusted him, I was very upset because I was attracted to him and wanted him to like me sexually.

The irrationality and inconsistency of my jealousies becomes apparent when they are examined. I said to Jim, I don't see how you can be very involved with me emotionally and want to go see Chris (in St. Louis). At the same time I was very attracted to a man who lived in my house and wanted to have sex with him. It was easy for me to understand how I could be involved in more than one relationship at a time. (One of the least convincing arguments for non-monogamy, for me, is the one that goes: No one person can meet all my needs, which to me says, "You are not enough.")

I live in a run-down house in Oakland with five other people. We consider ourselves a "feminist house." One of the men in the house is a foreign Marxist intellectual whose father is very wealthy. He is a gentle and sensitive person. Because he is a nurturant and stroking male, he has a lot of power. I became very attached to him and turned on to him. Two other women live in the house, and they also like him. He has a wealthy girlfriend in London whom he visits there and in Greece.

Sherry, who is one of the other women in the house, is a working-class woman who is studying auto mechanics at the East Bay Skill Center. Sherry has been self-supporting since she was eighteen. One of the things that Sherry and I share is the feeling that since we have been forced to take care of ourselves financially, we have not been allowed to develop the kind of gentleness that this man has. We feel that this man is protected from life. He does not get uptight about wasted food, or worry about who pays for what. He is not stingy like Sherry and me,

who live with day-to-day financial insecurity. We resent this and at the same time I feel ungenerous in my resentment.

I am jealous of the other woman who lived in my house and her relationship to this man. She would do things like fix him a drink and take it to his room which I would not do under any circumstances. Like most upper-class males, he likes women who are pleasing and doesn't have any real understanding of feminist women in a concrete sense. His politics are very abstract and intellectual. Sometimes he thinks that Sherry and I are very irrational. While he is nice to me, he does not validate me. Sherry validates me.

The feelings that Sherry and I have about this man, and our jealousy of him, are expressions of class inferiority feelings. They are also the outcome of the way things really are. We know that we don't have the right images to attract upper-class men, as confirmed by the hairy legs incident.

I hate writing about people I know in this way. Identifying them by social class reduces them to stereotypes and I am dissatisfied with this. However, I want to demonstrate how social class and jealousy interact and I don't know another way to do it. My main point is that jealousies are related to actual available options.

When Sherry and I went to the mountains with Jane, the third woman in our house, we stayed in Jane's family's cottage. Her sister joined us. The cottage was very nice and I was very jealous. I was feeling poor and like the "beggar at the table." I didn't know how I would ever be able to own a cottage like that (I reject private property, but I *wanted* one). I really got to feeling very resentful and hateful. I got to feeling very oppressed and alienated and at the same time I knew that my feelings were coming from somewhere else.

In this case this woman was generously sharing her class privilege with me and I was feeling

hateful and ungenerous. In my jealousies I wind up feeling stingy. The man I have been writing about is also generous and has loaned me money. I am driving his car now while he is in England. This generosity does not negate class however. What was difficult for me during the week-end in the mountains is that Jane and her sister do not really view class as I do, and it is painful for me to be in that situation. All the assumptions are different. At the same time Sherry was mellowed out and enjoying herself and I didn't want to spoil everyone's time. It was a difficult time.

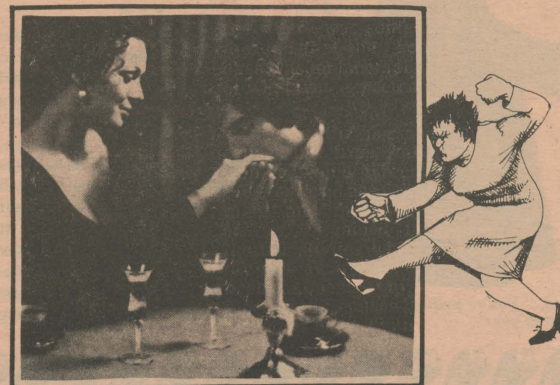
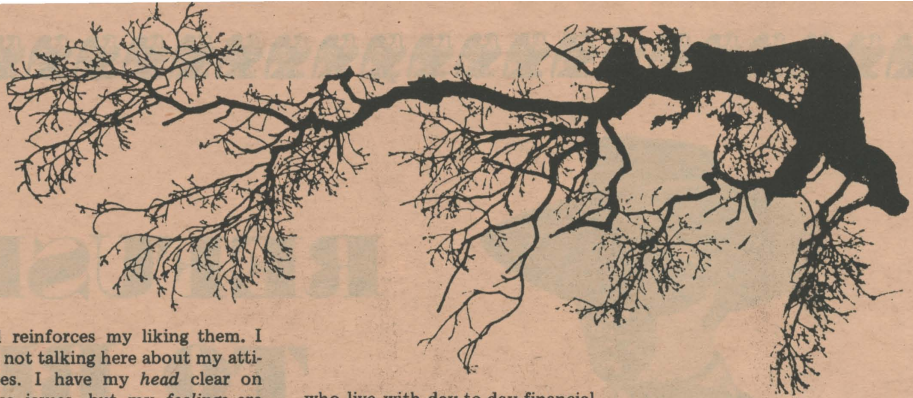
I think of jealousy in the same way that I think of anger. Anger is a negative feeling. We do not talk about overcoming our anger, however. Women's anger needs to be validated before it is put aside. It is a relief to me in my life not to live in a rage any longer. I am sure it will be a relief when I get ready to set aside my jealousies.

Jealousy needs to be validated. It is a negative feeling that comes from power inequities and is related to class privilege. I am jealous because of negative feelings I have about my body. Those feelings are the result of my oppression and of a culture which insists that women must be passive to be sexy. Male privilege is real.

A standard love triangle in straight America is a husband, a housewife and a girlfriend. The power of the husband results in part from the insecurities of the wife, who is getting older and considers herself less attractive than previously. The husband "protects" his wife and therefore doesn't have to deal with how she would feel if she knew he was no longer interested in her. The girlfriend is a swinger and "enjoys her freedom."

In our love relationships the roles are not altogether different from straight scenes. One role is the jealous person, who is insecure, and one is the freedom-loving nonmonogamist who is reassuring, sometimes in a rather crooked way (of course, no one can satisfy all my needs). There are many triangle games which depend on insecurities. The most common is one male and two females. One party expresses "freedom" needs (the high power party) and one "security" needs (the low power party). Also couples often have contracts which are very oppressive to third parties. They maintain their security arrangements and third parties get fucked over. I believe open marriage contracts are often

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REFUSING TO BE A MAN

John Stoltenberg

I wouldn't say I'm bisexual. That is not a word I would use about my life, my body, or the people with whom I make erotic commitments.

I would be angry if anyone carelessly called me a bisexual, a heterosexual, or a homosexual. Those are not merely inexact words; they are bad words. They are the words of a masculinist culture. They are the vocabulary of male domination. They come from a language devised by men in order to perpetuate a system in which men are conditioned to be the pursuer, the aggressor, the possessor, and the fucker.

I renounce being that kind of man. I reject any use of language which in any way defines me as that kind of man. And I abhor the language which indicates gender when that language would be used to objectify the bodies of the persons with whom my body has felt intimacy, sharing, mutual respect and

trust. The language which objectifies those partnerships objectifies both partners in the relationship. I am not an object; I reject anyone's erotic objectification of me. And I do not make love with objects, nor with people who clamour for objectifying attention. Not anymore. I no longer want "to be a man" in any conventional sense of the word—and here I refer specifically to masculinist genital functioning.

The truth of my body and the sexual ethics of my life have nothing in common with the lies of the culture in which I live. I would like to say of myself: I intend to live as a moral androgyne. I am genitally male, but I endeavour with my heart to rid my life of male sexual behaviour programming. My body never accepted that programming in the first place. I used to think there was something wrong with me. Now I'm dead certain there's something wrong with the pro-

gramme.

My body doesn't lie. The truth of my body contradicts cultural masculinist expectations.

My body longs to be together with someone I love. We live in a rhythm of reunion and separation. Our love is recent. We plan to live together soon and for the rest of our lives. The truth of our reunions is the shared truth of our friendship, our work, our moral intelligences, and our bodies. Our bodies don't lie. I can only imagine life together. I cannot imagine life apart.

And there are a few other people in my life, whom I care about with my heart. And we are compassionate companions. And with each of them my body has been, or could be, for the time being intimate, in the moment that became our mutual choice—a way of being together appropriate to the fullness of our feelings for each other.

But I could not be in the bed of a man who is masculinist—whose sexuality has the theme of prowling and pronging, whose body has internalised all the cultural expectations of exertion, tension, and performance—of getting erections and having orgasms—of making something happen. I reject encounters with such men as biologically inauthentic. They toxify me. I don't want to know them. I don't even want to hang around.

And I could not be in the bed of a woman who has internalised those expectations of male sexual behaviour and response. I refuse to be her oppressor.

Please understand why I am about to say what I am about to say. I believe that in the so-called male bisexual, his masculinity is a constant. Whether he is "attracted" to men or "attracted" to women, he obtains his manhood as he takes his pleasure. For a man to call himself bisexual is to pride himself in the functioning of his cock: it pops up and is ready to have sex with more warm bodies than before. There is a dangerous consistency in male sexual programming

which makes not very difficult the shift from fucking men to fucking women or from fucking women to fucking men. The fact that male bisexuality has become trendy worries me a lot. I think for males, bisexuality is just another form of phallic imperialism—just another adventure in the quest for assistance in masturbation—and just another escalation in masculinist sexual aggression.

The man who can bang away to orgasm in the vagina of a woman is just going to bang away in my ass. The woman whose sense of herself depends on male approval is just going to expect me "to be a man to her" in a way that would be wholly dishonest for both of us.

So I don't want to talk about bisexuality. I don't like what it means when it refers to male sexual activity and response. I don't believe in bisexuality. I reject it as a word. I reject it as a way of life. And I don't want to have anything to do with it.

But I want to talk about masculinity. I want to say something about male sexual biology. And I want to say something about the difference between what I feel to be the truth and what I understand to be the lies of our culture—our male dominated, female-victimizing sexual politics.

I want to talk about two lies: the lie of the male orgasm, and the lie of the male erection.

First: the lie of male orgasm. The lie is that male orgasm and ejaculation are the same thing. The lie is that if you're male, you first have a genital sensation of two or three seconds of "inevitability" during which you couldn't stop if you tried, and next you experience certain internal genital contractions which include squirting out of semen, and thereafter you have a "refractory period" during which your penis usually gets soft and rather uncomfortable if touched very much. This refractory period lasts from 15 to 30 minutes or longer, depending on age and so forth, before the man could presumably have another erection and



The one at the door went toward Harry, said, "You're pulling something funny, and I'm going to slug you."



come again.

In my experience, this is not true. In my experience, orgasm and ejaculation are not the same. In my experience there is a male orgasm separate and distinct from ejaculation, and these non-ejaculatory orgasms can be multiple. These non-ejaculatory orgasms can and will happen over and over again if stimulation continues. And the only built-in biological cause for stopping is fatigue.

There is no sensation of "inevitability" before such orgasms. My body doesn't know in advance that such an orgasm is going to happen, but my body knows that such an orgasm has happened after it has happened. There is no discomfort or extreme sensitivity afterwards, but there is a clear refractory period, which seems relatively short.

To me, these orgasms seem to

of my body, ejaculation is something else. I have learned that if I have strived for ejaculation, or put effort into ejaculating in any way, the result is a rather uncomfortable refractory period—which I take to be the body's message that I strove inauthentically to achieve some cultural lie about "release of sexual tension."

In my experience, my body has learned and remembers that ejaculation will happen naturally, of its own accord, if in fact my body has an authentic wish to discharge an accumulation of semen. And my body will tell me if that's what's about to happen. I can let it happen or not let it happen, because I prefer the truth of my body to the lies of the culture in which I live.

And if I think about ejaculation, it is in the context of the politics of birth control—and the responsibility

means the urgency for something called "release of sexual tension." In fact, I now believe, rigidity is usually a symptom of tension artificially induced. (I say "usually" because I am discounting those rigid erections which occur naturally in males when the bladder is very full.)

The truth is that bone-hard erections aren't very comfortable. They stick out from your body and are painful if bent. And they feel a little dead. They function in fucking very well, in that they are good for rape. But the idea that they feel good—that they are sensate—is only a cultural illusion.

I believe that the culture reinforces stiff hardons as symbols of male aggression and power. And I believe that in order to fulfill that cultural expectation, a man growing up in this society learns how to

ing appropriate? Am I male enough? What will my partner think? How can I manage to keep up passions and appearances? And so forth.

I realize, now finally in my 30th year, that the society I live in had an economic use for me and tried to groom me: for the military . . . the police . . . the government . . . the corporations . . . the universities . . . the professions . . . the religious power structure—all the positions you have to "be a man" in order to get to and in order to perform in. Somehow, in my case, society failed. Somehow I never made the connection between aggression and my sensual feelings.

My father, I suppose, was not society's accomplice. Inadvertently, and quite naturally, he never helped society to programme me as a domineering, pleasure-seeking



occur in waves. They are without effort and tension. I do not "make them happen" nor does my partner. They seem to occur naturally in the general flow of erotic communication. I do not internally "jack myself up" in order to function, perform, and come. In fact, since that was my conditioning, I went through a period once when I rather consciously unlearned that old way to have an ejaculation. My body still knows how. But my body doesn't like to do that anymore, and I avoid encounters where that would be expected of me.

I know for a fact in my body that there is a sensation of completeness, of being-one-with, and of wholeness during and after—if I have not strived in any way for that other fiction of sexual achievement.

Ejaculation is another phenomenon. Sometimes ejaculation happens also, but I have come to mistrust my conditioning which identifies the so-called "necessity of ejaculation" as being part of a scenario of male sexual success and satisfaction. In fact and in the truth

ty that I take for ejaculation in relation to the body of a woman.

So-called "premature ejaculation" I understand to be an instance to ejaculation without orgasm—a natural biological discharge mechanism similar to nocturnal emission in young males. And were it not for the fact that the culture puts such a premium on inauthentic male sexual performance, it would probably not be such a big deal. Similarly, what's called "impotence" is another internalization of a perverse system of male-dominant cultural values. Men (and women) are taught to believe that a cock is either limp and disfunctional or erect and functional, and anything in between has no sense unless it's clearly on its way to erectness or legitimately on its way to limpness (a legitimacy which can be presumed only if ejaculation has been achieved).

Which brings me to the second lie I want to talk about: The lie of the male erection.

The lie is that rigidity means arousal, rigidity means power, rigidity means manhood, and rigidity

make himself hard by certain internal muscle constrictions and by certain fantasies of penetration and violation. The culture teaches men those fantasies all over. The man learns to induce that muscle tension in his body on his own, by various pelvic thrusts and squirms. The muscled, tense, and aggressive body of the macho-male-American is the product of this conditioning. All forms of social aggression—in speech, dress, body movements and military and economic exploitation—help men support their erections—erections which, if the truth were known, would be perceived internally as biologically inauthentic.

* * *

I have suffered these lies in my life. My mind has asked questions: will it stay up? Will I get it in? Why is it getting softer? What's wrong with me? I wish I were harder. Now my mind asks: What's wrong with the society I live in? Why has this society made me keep thinking about the hardness of my cock, so that to this day my mind has been trained to wonder: What am I feeling in my genitals? Is this feel-

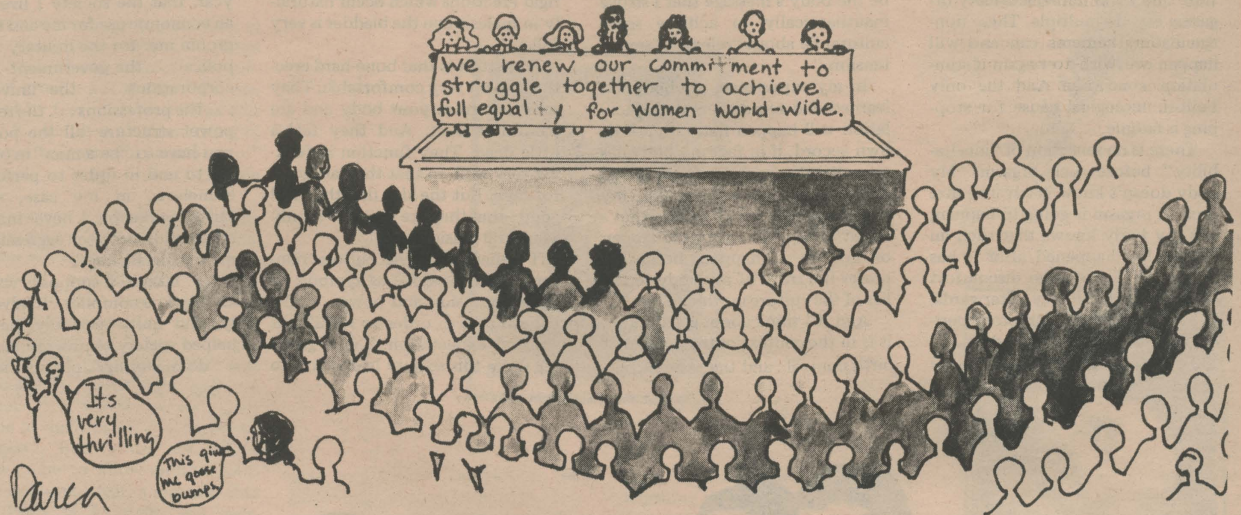
male. My father is gentle, loving, caring and responsible. I can't recall him ever having given me another kind of message that there is any other way to be a man. He really broke the rules.

I guess in my life I have tried masculinity: during the period of a marriage which ended without re-creation, and during a period of coming out and acting gay. But I never imagined or pretended I was good at it—neither in relation to the bodies of men nor in relation to the bodies of women. So I was at liberty to learn the immorality of the politics of male-ism: the politics of genital objectification, sex role delineation, and the oppression and profound victimization of women throughout their lives.

Finally, I feel at liberty to say: I intend to do what I can to renounce and to overthrow the culture we live in with its masculinist lies. And to discover and speak, with my words and with my body, some other truths instead.

This article first appeared in the British publications WIN and Permanent Damage.

Feminist Action at AHP



Hogie Wyckoff

I want to tell you about an experience I had recently at the AHP (Association for Humanistic Psychology) conference in Colorado. It was a good example of the spontaneous feminist organizing that I have experienced at various conferences. Such occasions offer me a release for pent-up energies that often do not find expression in my daily work. I have many opportunities to experience intimacy and work in cooperative relationships in small groups on a daily basis. But I feel a lack of sufficient opportunities to express myself in large gatherings with people from all across the country. It thrills and excites me to be able to make contact with women who are doing similar work and to be able to quickly and easily organize a political happening that affects many people.

This type of organizing gives me an opportunity to release energy that I have been longing to use, and renews my faith in our ability to act collectively in large numbers. My experience in Colorado acted not only as an expression of our collective feminist power, but also as a celebration that left me in a very high place. It felt as if I had been with a wonderful lover for a brief enriching interlude, and it is because I feel that we need more opportunities like this that I am sharing with you the details of what happened. It was as if this experience can somehow be seen as a political or social orgasm, with respect to which too many of us remain pre-orgasmic.

Although I am not usually involved with AHP, I felt an enthusiastic response as I read about the theme of *Revolution* in the program. They said, "On this 13th annual meeting, we will explore revolutionary alternatives, involving significant change at the roots of our institutions and our value systems—personal and cultural." I was asked to speak on an early morning panel entitled "The Revolution's Edge," and help give reports from four fronts along

with Walt Voight, Joan Hertzberg, Anthony Eschbach and Claude Steiner. We talked about urban clinics, Feminist therapy, gays and therapy, being outlaws, Radical Psychiatry, and other topics that were common and important to us all.

The seeds for our action sprouted during a break that morning when a woman named Ethel mentioned that this was the 55th anniversary of women getting the vote. Although we had a women's caucus planned for the following day, there was nothing specific for women scheduled that day. We decided to bring this issue up at the end of the panel and make plans to meet together later. Even though the program said "The women's movement . . . had far reaching effects, touching all of our lives in ways we are sometimes unaware of," there was a definite lack of planned feminist panels just as there was a conspicuous lack of any gay therapy presentation. And, if it had not been for Anthony Eschbach who was asked barely a week before the conference to fill in for Mickey Duxbury from NAPA (Network Against Psychiatric Assault) there would have been nothing on gays at all.

Fortunately Nora Weckler, the program committee chairperson, was attending our panel. After hearing the announcement, she asked me if I would make a short presentation on the anniversary of women's suffrage at the evening keynote speeches. I did not feel it would be correct for me to individually take over to represent this idea so I referred her to Ethel, who had suggested that we do something in the first place and offered to help in any way I could. It was decided that any woman interested could meet with us at 5:30 that afternoon to talk about what we wanted to do. In the half hour before dinner, seven of us met and made our plans. That meeting was beautiful! We worked together cooperatively and efficiently, and had some real creative fun together. In that short

time we designed a presentation that turned us on. I was most concerned that we make political points in the short amount of time that we would have to present before that evening's audience. I was concerned specifically that we talk about how women's Feminist energy and their drive for real equality had actually been co-opted by getting the vote. Women got to vote but the drive for real equality did not succeed.

We all put in our different ideas and decided that we wanted to have a three-part presentation. We took different responsibilities, worked together on them and planned to meet again briefly before the 8:00 speeches. Our plan was that I would begin by making a short statement about what we were doing. Then we would each make a pledge to the woman next to us on stage about what we intended to do in terms of further actions to express and renew our commitment to Feminism. We would end by asking the audience to stand, join hands, and make a pledge renewing all our efforts for Feminism.

When I walked into the auditorium, I was shocked and pleased to see so many people. *There were about 2,000 people there.* But that was nothing compared to what came next. The first thing Ethel said to me was, "That guy reading the announcements says *we can't do it!*" This surprise obstacle was nothing new to me, however. I have experienced its bitter taste before at other "liberal" conferences. After a few moments of high level sparring, I finally got to talk to the president of the organization. I explained our situation to him and amazingly he responded, "Well, if Nora Weckler said it was OK, it's OK." Yea for women with power!!! That kind of "liberal" male power play sure gets your guerrilla adrenalin going. I could hear it in my voice when I began . . .

"This short presentation tonight has been organized to celebrate today, August 26, as the 55th anniversary of women get-

ting the vote. (Spontaneous applause occurred at this point.) It is the result of a spontaneous collective effort.

"Since our theme this week is revolution, we wish to re-commit our energies to Feminism. Our hard working sisters for suffrage were successful in achieving the vote but their movement for actual equality was stopped cold. We will not be co-opted this time around. Our movement for liberation does not just include the vote, equal pay and affirmative action, but also extends far into the horizon. We want women to be full participants in creating and running this world."

And then Nina stepped forward and introduced the next part of our program. She said, "We women, here now, wish to commemorate this day by renewing to each other our individual commitment to struggle." And she took her daughter's hand and said, "My name is Nina; as a woman and as your mother, I pledge myself to struggle against the stereotyped roles of women and to relate to you as my friend and equal and as my sister in struggle." And then her daughter turned and took the hand of the woman next to her and said, "My name is Pec. I would like to join with you, sister, in reaffirming my commitment to struggle for women all over the world in ending economic oppression."

"My name is Lillian and I give you my hope."

"I am Joan and I am committed to have women feel good about themselves and to get what they want and need in this world."



"My name is Ethel, I am a woman and I give you my commitment to continue to struggle so that women can function as full human beings in this society."

"I am Fae and I am a woman and a therapist. I pledge to you and all women I will work with you to facilitate your finding and taking full power as a woman and as a person as we do therapy together with equal power."

"I am Hogie. I commit my full energy to finish my book about my work with women."

Then we unrolled the banner on which we had written the pledge and Ethel stepped forward and said, "So that we can experience our collective power here tonight, I would like all of you who are in support of the statement just read to stand, join hands, and repeat with us a pledge of commitment." And I was absolutely mind-blown as the whole audience, men and women alike, stood, joined hands and repeated:

"We renew our commitment to struggle together to achieve full equality for women world-wide." It absolutely thrilled me to hear thousands of "therapists" say that pledge and was further thrilled by the loud appreciative applause and exhilaration of the women who ran up and greeted us on stage.

Here are the names of those who were involved: Lilyan Frank, Ethel Herring, Joan Hertzberg, Nina Indman, Pec Indman, Fae Pannor and Hogie Wyckoff. I want to express my appreciation to you again, sisters, and send you my best wishes. May we all have many more joyous organizing adventures such as this.

Gay Organizing at AHP



Anthony Eschbach

The AHP Conference showed me many things. It revealed to me who my first therapist (1967) was and where he got his "hip" philosophy of "I don't believe in homosexuality or heterosexuality, and I'm not willing to relate to you through these labels." This was in response to my statement of "I'm homosexual; I don't want to change and I want to be able to live a fulfilling life." The next nine months of therapy were spent on me working on my "bisexuality," my ability to "relate to 100% of the world instead of only 50%" and my actualizing his concept of the "fulfilling life." This basically is the theme of the humanistic psychology movement ... that we've passed from labeling, that



Gay or Straight are no longer issues and that we are now working on expanded sexuality . . . or "touching each other's feelies." This is supported by the fact that in over 50 pages of seminars in the program there was not one specifically set up for Gay people, and that in over 2,500 people at the meeting there were no visible Gay people with the exception of myself and two other men.

As we put up signs for Gay meetings, to form a Gay caucus and for Gay social events, more and more Gays "came out." It was a beautiful experience for us all. We ranged economically from those of us on welfare to Bel Air residents, and politically from right of center to radically left. We struggled and worked to identify our common issues, to reach collective decisions and to support each other with the fears of confronting "those nice but somehow very discounting people." At the end of three days and nights of meetings and decisions over 100 Lesbians and Gay men drew up a speech to the general assembly, demanded seven minutes of time and did some consciousness raising.

The first part was delivered by Penny Rossiter and Linda Barone representing the Feminist Lesbians, pointing out the need for more conscious effort in the A.H.P. to address women's issues. I presented the speech below with a follow-up by Jim Vaughan calling for a moment of silence for all people who have been oppressed because of their sexual preference and a show of support for us by having the audience stand. The majority of the audience and

A.H.P. officers on the stage stood and applauded. Among those who didn't was the incoming president, who in response to a demand from the audience requested respect for the right not to stand whenever anyone called upon him to do so. He was then requested to stop doing "therapy" on Gays until he could support us.

* * *

Last night 60 Gay people met to discuss their experience at this conference. The major concerns that were voiced were feelings of being isolated, lack of any seminars that spoke to Lesbian and Gay relationships, Gay oppression and therapy, and Gays . . . and a general feeling of our struggle not being taken seriously.

We felt that the underlying theme to our concerns in the A.H.P. movement is that Gay is no longer an issue: that it's been dealt with and we've moved on to talk in terms of expanding sexuality. For those of you who do think in these terms, we as Gays at this conference and people in the

Gay Rights movement throughout the Society want you to know that Gay oppression, both overt and subtle, is very much alive. We are not playing "Ain't it Awful" . . . it is awful. We are not pretending to be victims . . . we have in fact been victimized and persecuted for who we are. We want this situation to stop and we want and need your *active* support to do so.

While I'm sure that most of you would not overtly oppress us or support horrors like behavior modification or aversion therapy, the kind of discount and disinterest that is present at the conference is very likely a microcosm of the subtle oppression many of your Gay clients may experience.

We are among you as clients, students, co-workers and teachers. Don't assume we're heterosexual. Don't ask us to be invisible. Support us to be Out, to be outrageous. As disenfranchised members of this society we need to feel powerful, not tolerated or grateful for being invisibly accepted. We don't need to work on being open around non-gays until we feel safe to do so and get a commitment by non-gays to work on their heterosexist biases. This conference has not provided that environment or commitment.

It is not minority groups that are separatists. It is the majority group who is. Oppressed minorities must band together for support when there is no visible support in the majority or when their oppression is ignored or discounted. If the dominant group does not actively extend itself and integrate into itself the issue of oppressed people, they will produce a conference such as this which has "revolution" as a theme and only token seminars on racism, sexual politics, class analysis and almost nothing for Gay people.



JEALOUSY and OPPRESSION

(continued from page 25)

oppressive of single people. It is clearly more comfortable to be in the role of reassurer than of jealous person, and whoever is in that role has more power. Needless to say, men are more frequently in the high-power role than women.

It seems to me that any situation in which one relationship is defined as the "primary relationship" and another is defined as a "secondary relationship" is inherently exploitive of the third party. I resent, as a single person, marriage contracts which play on my insecurities while protecting the privilege of married status. I won't participate in these deals. I don't want to buy anybody's secondary relationship. If couples want to be non-monogamous, let them cease to enjoy the privilege of being couples. I want equality with the second woman in any triangle I am in.

Actually if I am going to be in a triangle, I would prefer the high-power position and would prefer to do these experiments with two men. Let them be jealous of each other, and I will take the role of freedom-loving non-monogamist

and I can go from one to the other and never be alone in the way that I am when I am in one of the other roles in the triangle. The person who has the most lovers has the most options.

I don't want to be a jealous person, because it is painful, but it is essential to validate my jealousies and not just blame myself for them. Women are sexually jealous because of sexism. We have been taught that the route to privilege is to be loved for our beauty and gentleness. I want to change my definition of jealousy as knowledge of privilege, real or imagined,

because the more I have thought about my jealousies, the more I have decided that they probably are never wholly imagined.

One of my main experiences in sexual relationships is abandonment and hanging on when a man wants to leave. I think this is a common women's experience, being lonely and needy and abandoned. To try to be nonjealous under these conditions seems foolish. In a nonmonogamous situa-

tion, power analyses are needed. Who has the most power? Who has the most options? Who is richest in feelings of being loved and in security? Who can get what he needs most easily? If power is unequal, there can't be any real non-monogamy.

I don't think this in any way negates the experiences of those who are able to live in a non-possessive way. I don't want to contradict the experience of those who are doing this, but just to describe how things seem to me. If men can really give up power, and women can really take power and can be nonmonogamous and non-jealous without denying aspects of themselves, then I think that it is very fine.

FOOD AND HEALTH ISSUE: SPRING 1976

We want to do an issue on the personal and social problems involved in the Politics of Food and Health.

We would like to see a discussion of such topics as: Food and Health as Power (uses and abuses); Imperialism and Food and/or Health; The Profit System Agri-Business; Radical Solutions for Worldwide Food and Health Problems; Over and Under Indulgence; Drugs; Nutrition and Diet; Food as a Mind-Altering Drug; The Internal Politics of the Body; How to Care for Your Body; Alternative Medicine; Healing and Health Centers; Smoking—How to Get People to Stop; You Are What You Eat; Body Work; and all other related issues.

Please strive to keep articles short, easy to read and understand, and as practical as possible.

POWER: SPECIAL ISSUE

The winter issue of 1975 will be devoted to power. Send us your thoughts about this important topic. Demystification of power and its abuses, Personal accounts from people one up or one down, Bad power and good power, Elitism and Cooperation, Power in the Movement, How to divest oneself of Power and how to acquire it, Child Power, Gay Power, Black Power, Gray Power, Women's Power. Deadline for contributions, December 1. Send Contributions to IRT or directly to Editor, Power Issue, Claude Steiner, 2901 Piedmont, Berkeley 94705, CA.

Postscript on Transvestite

I would like to comment on the publication of my article on 'Transvesticism' in the summer issue of IRT. Specifically, I would like to talk about the strong impact produced on me by the pictures illustrating the article.

At first I freaked. I have lived in almost complete isolation from other transvestites, a consequence of the extreme suppression of this experience. Suddenly seeing the pictures of other transvestites attached to the article I wrote was somewhat as if I had just seen a mirror for the first time in my life. Surely these pictures could not be connected to me! Surely this was not what I was talking about! But of course it was. I was made once again to realize the extraordinary power with which we are all taught to react in horror to a visible contradiction to patriarchal sex roles.

Particularly I reacted to the two pictures at the bottom ... one showing a man in stern masculine garb, the other showing the same

man in elaborate feminine costume. For me this evoked memories of the many long years of painful oscillation between the two sides of the masculine/feminine duality. For public view, in chameleon-like fashion I took on the coloration of my social environment, giving the appearance of a normally masculine male. In private I experienced a transformation frightening in its intensity and bewildering in its strangeness as I experimented with the symbols of femininity. The result was that at no time did I have an identity which was truly my own, and at all times I was left alienated and powerless.

I would like to support strongly the idea that public violation of patriarchal sex roles is an important and powerful political act, but I sense certain dangers which I would like to point out. First for men there is the ever present danger that if not done carefully and sensitively, such experimentation with stereotypes which have been used

to oppress women can only result in oppressing them further. Second, for everyone there is the danger that constant oscillation between masculine and feminine roles will result in inability to see beyond those roles. In my own life, I am trying to evolve an identity which feels continuous and which transcends masculine/feminine categories. Depending on my activity, I may dress in a practical (masculine) fashion or in an aesthetic (feminine) fashion, but at all times my sense of who I am is constant. I no longer experience an alternation of identities. This relieves me of the feeling of being a psychological closet even though the censorship of patriarchal society still forces me to be less open than I would like.

Finally I believe the political statement is even stronger since to the extent that I am able to forget masculine/feminine categories, my energy is free to explore new space beyond patriarchal society.

Guy
San Francisco, Ca.

First Annual Midwestern Radical Psychology Conference

On May 6, 7, 8, and 9, 1976 in Iowa City, Iowa there will be a Conference with such topics as: organizing collectives, training therapists, demonstrating problem-solving bodywork, groups for women, groups for men, massage and breathing. The conference will be held in a campground outside Iowa City. There will be cabins, electricity, running water. Members of the IRT collective will be there and it is open to everyone. The cost will be determined by a sliding scale. We need your input. Please write to the Hera Collective. Tell us what you want to do at the First Annual Midwestern Radical Psychiatry Conference. For more information write to:

Hera
c/o Ana Eisbach
727 Dearborn
Iowa City
Iowa 52240



Feminist Therapist Conference
Dear I.R.T.

We are planning a national conference of Feminist Therapists at the University of Colorado in Boulder, Colorado, for the weekend of Jan. 23-25, 1976.

The goal of our conference in January is to bring together for the first time, that we know of, the many different women across the country who are struggling on their own or in small groups to define and practice feminist therapy. We want the conference to be a time of enthusiasm generation, theory and technique brainstorming, and idea and information sharing for those

in the field. The issues we intend to address through speakers and workshops will include: definitions of feminist therapy, the political issues of feminist therapy, and techniques for teaching therapy.

For more information please write to me.

With care,
Patti Hague
For The
Woman's Institute
P.O. Box 356
Boulder, Colo. 80302
303-443-5110



THERAPY TRAINING

To whom it may concern,

I am interested in becoming a psychotherapist. Do I have to go through a regular university program or do you offer an alternative such as The Arbors Association program in London? I would greatly appreciate hearing from you on the subject. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
B. R. Ficarra
Chico, Ca.

We have received quite a few letters asking about training. IRT has a reprint available of an article on training collectives by Anita Friedman for starting groups.

The summer seminars did not take place, but the idea is still alive. There is also some thought of traveling during the summer to teach therapy skills.

—The IRT Collective

Area Contacts

We receive many requests for information about local radical therapy services. We have talked a lot about this problem, trying to find a way to provide information within the range of our available time and energy. In the last issue we printed the names of some radical therapy workers under the title of Therapists. We have since learned that many of these people do not think of themselves as therapists and prefer to be called radical therapy workers.

With this issue we are starting a new system involving area contact people. Anyone wanting to find out about radical therapy in their area or to meet others interested in r.t. can get in touch with these area contact people. This is a list of the area contact people we have now. We will be adding names and areas in future issues.

California

Berkeley
Jude LaBarre, 415-849-2125
Marin County
Beth Roy, 415-388-0576
Palo Alto
Mary Councille, 415-324-8493
San Francisco
Anthony Eschbach, 415-664-4583

Iowa

Solon
Melissa Farley, 319-644-2637
Jesse Singerman, 319-351-3152

New York

New York City
Betty Lamont, 212-473-6265



LESBIAN THERAPY

Dear IRT People,
In your last issue of Radical Therapy I enjoyed the article "Therapy and Lesbians" by Josette Mondanaro. The article is significant for me because one, I am a lesbian, and two, I am a therapist. I have practiced for the past five years at a counseling center in Westwood, California (Pastoral Counseling Center). Recently we have formed an association that will be a vehicle to communicate our ideas in print, very much in the way that your newspaper does for RT. I personally, as the President of the association, will use it as a forum for researching the issue of lesbianism as well as other issues.

I share Josette's comments on the scarcity of investigatory work that has been done on lesbianism. Where research has been done it is not by a lesbian but rather by heterosexual researchers (mostly male). I hope to make a small contribution to the research needed when I complete my master's and doctorate programs. I feel qualified both personally and professionally. I disagree with Josette's statement that "any therapist raised and trained in this society, who is not a lesbian herself, is not equipped to work with lesbians." I find this way of thinking as prejudiced as society's views on lesbianism. I understand the fears and prejudices that can interfere with the therapist's work but this happens all the time in therapy, especially on the most basic level of feelings. Therapists unconsciously set limits on their clients' anger or hurt because of their fear of expressing these feelings. Professionals need training which facilitates their working with people, most are trained in working with objects that have labels, one being homosexuality.

Lesbianism is an issue in one's growth, but too often this issue is used as a smokescreen for a client's anxiety or for whatever reason she may have come to therapy about.

Narrowing the qualification of a therapist to a lesbian appears to be feeding into the paranoia of the establishment.

When I seek individual counseling, a prerequisite for the therapist is to be open and honest—not her or his sexual orientation.

Thank you for the opportunity to let me express my views.

Pamela Marks
President of the
Association of Kraftigus Geful
Long Beach, Ca.

BIRTH DEFECTS

Dear Persons,
I am a ninth grade student at Clarkston Junior High. For my independent study class I am doing research into mental and physical birth defects. I would appreciate all information on this subject.

Thank you.
Steve Lyons
c/o Rick Powers
Clarkston Junior High School
6300 Church Street
Clarkston, Michigan 48016

RESPONSE TO "GAY MEN'S WORK"

Dear IRT:
Anthony Eschbach's article on gay men's work in the special issue on working was absolutely superb. I too serve the state's artistic pretensions, and although I am not gay, I think that in that particular passage he could have substituted "feminist," "Marxist," or any number of anti-ruling class classifications. My politics, just as the sexual preferences of my co-workers, are "tolerated" by the particular theatre group which employs me. But it always comes down to one thing: we are all living these vicarious ruling class existences since we are constantly kissing our sponsors' asses (i.e., partying with the elite but making about the same as a factory worker). As much as they claim to listen to us when it comes down to various company policies, everything is always done fait accompli. The only bona fide arts organization (i.e., one getting some kind of establishment arts council support) I can think of where decisions are made collectively is Salt Lake City's Repertory Dance Company which has no artistic director, but I think that they would rather declare bankruptcy or the non-profit organization equivalent of it before any of us outside of the director, managing director and general manager had anything to say in policy making ranging from whether we should switch over to major medical or what plays will be in repertory. (Suggestions are always welcome, of course, always ignored.)

Unfortunately, most artists that I have come in contact with have always considered themselves members of the elite and refuse to admit that they are vicariously

playing ruling class while earning working class salaries and living in working class or lower middle class neighborhoods.

I would appreciate any feedback from other workers in arts organizations about what I consider a unique position.

In struggle,
Madeleine Tress
St. Louis, Missouri

E.C.T.

Dear IRT Collective,
I am an ex-clinical psychologist with 10 years experience in Australian mental hospitals and alcoholism clinics and it is exciting to hear someone say at last the feelings I have felt for many years. In a spell as mental nurse I "helped" administer ECT to hundreds of patients and have felt since then it was a barbaric institution. I could not agree more with your articles on ECT. I learned to respect patients as human beings of great courage because of their mutual support and help for each other in their own private terror—and conditions in our mental hospitals in the 1950s were pretty horrifying.

I have been involved in the Women's movement for six years and a mixed liberation group is just getting off the ground in Sydney. I find your articles clarifying many of the issues we are just beginning to discuss. It is a continual surprise how close our experiences are to yours and how relevant the common solutions.

I wish you every success and will continue to tell anyone interested in Australia about IRT.

Greetings from a long way away.
(Ms.) Judy Hay
New South Wales

OSAWATOMIE

Dear IRT,
The third (Fall 1975) issue of OSAWATOMIE—a seasonal publication of the Weather Underground Organization—has been reprinted and is available for countrywide distribution. The magazine—named for a small Kansas town where John Brown and 30 other abolitionist guerrillas defeated hundreds of pro-slavery fighters in 1856—contains the ongoing analysis of the WUO, reports of the activities of the underground, and many well-researched articles on various facets of the world-wide anti-imperialist revolutionary movement.

This issue features "Break the Chains"—an in-depth article on the prisoners' movement in this country. Also included is a speech made by Bernadine Dohrn to a national meeting of the WUO on September 2 of this year. She self-criticizes the organization's class stand in past practice and challenges Weather cadres to build a stronger working class practice. Other articles discuss "Country Music," "Korea: The First Defeat," anti-racist organizing in Boston, the revolution in Portugal, and the movie being made with WUO by Emile de Antonio and several other filmmakers. The book review section is of three books by and about women.

OSAWATOMIE is free to prisoners and available in bulk free to people and organizations that will get them to prisoners. For the rest of the movement, our prices reflect only our costs: bulk orders of ten or more 27¢ each and single copies 50¢ postage included. Write to JOHN BROWN BOOK CLUB, P.O. Box 22383, Seattle, Washington 98122.



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HOW DO WE MAKE A REVOLUTION?

Dear IRT people—

There are a lot of goodies in your "Work" issue (especially Joy's article); but . . . it's funny; there's no intrinsic connection between discussing economic relations and getting into macho, vanguardist power-politics trips—but it almost always seems to happen. I want to talk to you a bit about that.

To start with, examples of what I mean: the editorial, "we celebrate the victory of the Vietnamese people etc etc." Is there really so much left pig pressure over there that it's impossible to see the Vietnamese CP for the pigs they are? Sure, we celebrate the defeat of the US; but out enemies' enemies, in this world, are hardly ever our friends. If you want documentation of the contemptible, bloodstained history of the groups currently giving orders in that part of the world, I would refer you to the pamphlet, "Vietnam: Whose Victory?" produced by the British group Solidarity and available from New Space Bookstore, 1509 N. Halstead, Chicago 60622.

Still, everyone fucks up somewhere, and it was only reading on that I developed a sinking feeling. Hamish says "fighting against oppression is not just a string of educational and an endless round of . . . speeches . . . not just the building of the disciplined consciousness of an anti-capitalist military force. But is fighting against oppression these things at all? Maybe he just expresses himself badly; but it all dovetails in horribly neatly with Michael's rantings at the other end of the paper about revolutionary cadres and suchlike.

I didn't mean to write "rantings." Shit, that's heavy. But really, you know, it's your fault too: see what this kind of capital-P-Political robot language breeds?

Maybe I can make myself clear if I talk about the scene over here. In my "political career," covering the last five years or so, the same movie has been played out several times: people have come together around their opposition to the manipulative, domination-oriented "organization" of the various Parties and Groups around; and, in the course of a year or two, have turned into exact replicas of what they were opposing, except for a novel line of rhetoric to disguise the contradiction of telling people not to obey orders . . . Well, a lot of us have decided that nobody knows shit about how to "organize" without lying, cheating and oppressing. So we've stopped organizing.

You see, there's no historical evidence whatsoever that some people going around "organizing" helps the revolution. It certainly fucked up good in Russia and Spain and and . . . The modern examples (all failures too, of course) of anything remotely representing Total Revolution—mainly France in '68—suggest a very different perspective: that, in advanced capitalist countries at least, people just suddenly decide they've had enough and do something about it. Or not. And if not, there really isn't too

much anyone can do about it: the "majoritarian" nature of revolution in advanced capitalism is guaranteed by the fact that success depends on the active and creative participation of just about everybody. Anything else isn't revolution, just a change of bosses and probably can't happen anyway.

So where does that leave people like me? Trying to fight our own oppression as we experience it; and finding more and more that it does link up with other people, does feed into a revolutionary current. But slowly, and carefully; because the chances of blowing the whole thing (for ourselves, naturally) are too great otherwise.

Christ, I'd love to be able to get into a mass political therapy movement. I'm a compulsive organizer and manifesto-producer. And I really get off on the energy you're transmitting. But I've come painfully to the conclusion that I can't handle mass politics and stay sane, as long as mass politics means me trying to lay stuff on other people. I dunno how to unite theory and practice—yet. I don't think you do either! What do you think about all this?

Love,
Nick Tottan
London, England



LETTERS OF SUPPORT

IRT is the most useful and real—and the almost only—magazine of its kind. In looking through the back issues, it seems to generally be getting even better all the time.

Keep it up. Sometime in the next six months or a year I may have something to contribute.

How much would it cost for more durable paper? Just wondering. Don't waste the time to answer

that by mail. Better yet, I'll make that into a statement. I would gladly pay 15 or 25 cents more for that.

All yours,
Darrol Draper



REFUND FROM A PSYCHIATRIST?

Dear friend,

Years ago, concerned about my sexual fantasies, I went to a psychiatrist, who told me he could "cure" me of them. About 3 years and \$10,000 later, out I came as in I went.

Now, I'd like to find a way to get at least a partial refund of that money, and I'm wondering how to go about it, whether to move ahead as an individual, or if there are any class action suits in which I can participate.

Cordially,
A. Richard Lovell
1677 McCollum
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

LETTERS FROM PRISON

Dear IRT People,

I am presently in Prison and have just read the first issue of Radical Therapy I've ever run across. It is a delightful trip to run into a paper such as yours that's strictly of an earthly source that I am fully related to. Most papers dealing with the issues you do usually alienate me quick. I suppose that is because I'm a practicing Occultist, into Magic (white) and Paganism.

Yours,
David Borrie
864769
San Luis Obispo, Ca.

People,

I am a California youth authority ward at O.H. Close School in Stockton and would really be happy if I could receive your quarterly newsletter. I am also in the process of writing a book about the youth authority's institutions and programs. I might be able to supply you with information about what is happening, so please send me Radical Therapy.

Brian Cuttle
P.S. I am also involved in Gestalt and Transactional Analysis.



NEWS FROM CANADA

Sir,

We are here in Montreal a group who wants to start a sort of Health Center, a Radical Therapy group where political, social matters would receive special attention. How to do work in therapy that would further the social consciousness of participants, how to concretely organize a center (i.e., how to make people pay in proportion, I mean related to their income), what are the means to function effectively. I would like to hear about it from any organization. I've heard about a Health Collective in Boston, but cannot find the address. Could you help us to find someone to share their experience? Maybe the address of the Boston Collective if you know it. Thank you. Excuse my English—I have not spoken it for a long time.

Merci,
Claire Laramie
4911 Be Avenue
Montreal, Quebec
Canada
514-527-5992



THERAPY OF POWERLESSNESS

Hello Joy!

I try to reach out from the confines of concrete and steel to greet you as one human to another; children of the moon, sun, and wind. Upon reading of your departure from IRT I felt compelled to write and express a certain emptiness in my life by your leaving. For I always looked forward to reading the articles you write. In view of the facts it appears many peoples lives will become more fulfilled because of the personal contact they will have with you.

Also I write you Sister for the last article inspired me to do so. (Notes on the therapy of powerlessness.) I found it to be a synthesis of subjective conditions of the highest quality. With so many heavy thoughts so closely woven together, I found myself pacing this 8½ by 5½ foot cell, reading it over and over. A thought occurred and reoccurred several times and that is: being here under unnatural conditions; absence of an important biological function, homogeneous sexual relations, Powers of comprehension are lost amidst the layers of pent-up energies. I know this all could be discussed more professionally or maybe a better word would be clinically, but lately I have been disciplining myself to deal in simplicity. It is just another supporting factor to what you were saying and also Wilhelm Reich.

What I would like to question is this: if I hold what you said in the article to be true in its entirety (which in fact I do), then it would be a contradiction to believe that in the light of all present conditions in fascist America, it would not be possible at this time to achieve those goals which are dialectically implied or inherent in your article? To further explain, what I specifically question is this: if through therapy we take people to the level where they are able to negate the dominant culture's ideology and internalize the most natural ideology that would act in our best interest (rendering them a healthy sex-economy and work democracy) would they find some mainstream in an alternative lifestyle where they could function in their new capacity? Or would they once again have to mingle with the coarse fabric of imperialist society? If the latter be the answer (which appears to be true presently) will they be able to maintain their new order; or after a period of time—constantly being bombarded from every side and angle with the old reactionary ways, fall from infestation of the sickness all around them to the same powerless being they were in the first instance? I seek your answer and advice most intently. This question has always plagued me.

I wrote a letter to the IRT collective concerning their last issue commending them and inquiring solutions to a few things. I am also going to write Michael Lerner.

I thought the issue was fantastic and found the dialectical cover (front and back) to be the best cover I have ever seen. I extend all my most positive will to you in your newest task, may victory be

there. And as a person I send my love in the name of "Che" and "Tania." I shall close with my favorite quote from Reich: "... from the soul of he/she who is attuned to the universe, the voice of silence springs forth; whispering into her/his ears an eternal message as yet unheard by the masses of people, that all is one, none is of itself independent, the sum total of everything is reality. The purpose of us is to know the oneness of all, but knowledge cannot exist without understanding, understanding cannot be without wisdom, and wisdom is futile without love. The dynamic action of love, produces the cosmic energy of life. Few are there who can hear the voice of silence emerging from the point of cause. Still fewer are those who can fully comprehend... love work and knowledge are the well springs of life. They should also govern it."

Forever,
In the spirit of struggle,
Joey Ventresca Monaco
Steilacoom, Washington

individual functions is to exhibit (at least) a strong heterosexual basis; perhaps, it is one of our functions to recreate ourselves individually and symbolically thru the creation and sharing of love...

I obviously agree with your conclusion that we are essentially loving beings (both as human truth and as a means, a firm grounding, for bringing about an awareness of the need for creative, even loving, labor). But my own experiences point to a much broader scope of being than your statement defining us as "sexual beings before any other kinds of beings" would imply. Closely linked with this, I find myself strongly critical of your statement that "we are our bodies"; I see the need to *reclaim*

our bodies, to *own* our bodies, to feel good about our bodies, but I do not recognize that we *are* our bodies; I think I see your point in attempting to create a particular awareness as part of a "Therapy of Powerlessness"; however, are you stating this and meaning that we are essentially, at our *essence*, physical beings? If so, I wonder if that analysis can be used to even further alienate people—already conditioned to view MADISON*AVENUE*BODY*AESTHETICS as an indicator of social value.

Essentially, I am not my body anymore than I am my toe or my elbow; each statement violates a *whole* truth, leaves too much unsaid, and splits us further into pieces when a more complete inte-

gration of human "components" in a sense of self is demanded!!

Perhaps most important, I support your conclusion that a crucial element of the creative function is indeed political; there is indeed a monster to be dismantled and a truly human COMMUNITY to be raised; and, there is a crying need to foster an awareness of the potential that stirs, waiting to be released, in creative political struggle.

Thanks again for an incredibly stimulating article; I do not stop here; we do not stop here.

Love,
Bill
Capitola, CA.



Joy,

In reading the special IRT issue concerning WORK, I was particularly moved to active participation, self-examination and discussion with friends by your "Notes on the Therapy of Powerlessness." It has been my experience that people will rarely "insist on pursuing pleasure in a work context": I have worked at many jobs in which I was physically uncomfortable, mentally dulled, and possessed of that same sense of powerlessness, in the guise of biding my time for minimal monetary reward; in working such jobs, I would often voice complaints to myself and my closest co-workers, but it is obvious that—in order to make the transformation from alienated, bitter, individual complaining to a collective response and reorganization of work to meet basic human needs—we must indeed create a "Therapy of Powerlessness."

I would note, first of all, that with major shifts taking place in the working population to jobs that are involved with "processing, transmitting, and the coordination of information" that the most "powerful psychological reinforcer of alienated labor" is much more than "shame about one's body." I suggest that our area of concern be expanded to include the generally low, *overall* opinions of self-worth that are fostered to prevent people from seeking truly human, creative work situations; I strongly agree that shame about our bodies is indeed pervasive and destructive; I wish though to broaden a concept of major psychological reinforcers to include personal views of mental and psychical self-worth as well.

Further, while I support your conclusion that our function is to recreate ourselves personally and symbolically thru our work (and play and the blurred realm in between), I feel that to list biological reproduction as one of our primary

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