PRESENTING: CULTURAL CORRESPONDENCE and "WE WANT TO LIVE!"
A MAGAZINE COVER AND A SLIDE SHOW PROGRAM IN ONE!

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENCE IS A MAGAZINE OF IDEAS IN SOCIAL MOVEMENT. IT IS PUBLISHED AND EDITED BY JIM MURRAY, IN ASSOCIATION WITH PAUL BOHLE (FORMER AND EDITOR 1973-45), KENNETH BRILL, EVA CROCKETT, C.L.R. JAMES, LUCY LIPPARD, SUSAN McCARR, AND IRVING WEXLER.

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"We Want To Live!" -- Art Works For Peace -- June 12, 1982
A SLIDESHOW WITH SOUNDTRACK THAT SURVEYS THE EXTRAORDINARY VISUAL IMAGERY CREATED FOR THE SARGEST ANTI-GOVERNMENT DEMONSTRATION IN U.S. HISTORY, CO-PRODUCED BY CULTURAL CORRESPONDENCE AND PADD (POLITICAL ART DOCUMENTATION/DISTRIBUTION).

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When we say, "Freeze!" we do not mean to keep things the way they are.

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The Challenge of Cultural Action

By Arlene Goldbard

"An historical epoch is characterized by a series of expectations, concerns and values which determine the work of fulfillment; the acts of living and believing. In some of these generalized attitudes, the concrete representations of many of these expectations, concerns and values, as well as the debates in their fulfillment, constitute the themes of this epoch, which in turn indicate what has to be carried out. The epochs are suffixed to the degree that their themes are grasped and their tools solved, and they are represented when their themes and tools no longer correspond to newly emerging concerns.

"Human beings play a crucial role in the fulfillment and the superposition of epochs. Whether or not they perceive the epochal themes and above all, how they act upon the notable within which these themes are generated will largely determine their humanization or dehumanization, their affirmation as Subjects or their reduction as objects.

"-Paulo Freire, "Education as the Practice of Freedom"

As nineteen eighty-two begins I have returned again and again to Freire's formulation—the themes and tasks which characterize our epoch, and which we must grasp and act upon to be fully human. Parity. I have already had enough pessimism for these lifetime's. treating the new year as my friends hoped against hope, odds to hold the line. This is not the stuff of which great movements are made. If we deceive ourselves that the task of this movement in history is merely to cut our losses, we will allow history to pass us by.

We will also be practicing self-deception if we decide that the task of our movement is merely to combat economic and political systems.

Progressives in the U.S. have traditionally seen their fundamental commitments as economic, democratic, whereby each person is entitled to decent work, decent compensation and a hand in economic policy and decision-making; and political democracy, whereby each person is entitled to basic civil liberties, equality before the law, and a voice in political debate and decision-making. But we have considerable evidence that a human being is more than a worker and a consumer, and that the expectations, concerns and values that Freire has mentioned extend beyond the realm of politics to take in the whole of life.

If we are to understand and act on the themes of our epoch, we must recognize the inadequacy of these commitments as a world-view, and to them add a third commitment—to the achievement of cultural democracy, whereby each person is guaranteed the right to culture, each voice contributes to building culture, and each of us takes a role in cultural debate and decision-making.

In 1982 we should take three steps toward the goal of cultural democracy.

First, all progressive people—artists and non-artists alike—should stop pretending that the world can be understood with the aid of a few simple economic and political principles.

Thinking and action are what's needed. By sensationalizing this threat to freedom and ignoring the stronger impulse for self-determination—because it doesn't come to the standard political and economic package—progressives miss the boat, and give the dogmatists a clear field.

The first step for progressives today must be to articulate an integrated critique of society—one which takes into consideration political, economic and cultural factors—and an integrated vision of the future we are working toward. All of us, religions or not, face the same issues that most concern those who've participated in this revival, we respond to those issues in many ways, depending on our own situations and beliefs.

Our critique and vision must address these issues directly, speaking to people in many situations, if we are to take up the tasks of our time.

The second step is for progressives to become champions of cultural rights in all forms.

Second, the step is for progressives to become champions of cultural rights in all forms.

"A group of neighbors approach a mural team; they respect the artists' skills and also respect their own ability to contribute . . . working together they accomplish the project." This mural directed by Eva Crocko, Newark, N.J. 1979.

Photo: Eva Crocko

In our current system, cultural rights have no legal standing. Yet each public policy and each private action have cultural impact.

Poletown is by no means a unique story. "Urban renewal" programs in practically every city in the U.S. are recounted in similar tales of broken communities and profits before people. But the Michigan county ignored this compelling evidence and foolishly gave the right to destroy an entire neighborhood so a luxury automobile factory might be built.

Cultural Correspondence
The second step is for progressives to become champions of cultural rights in all forms.

Cultural rights are at the heart of our task: they are the principal theme of our time. They do not yield to a cost-benefit analysis. They cannot be expressed as a ratio or an equation. Without a strong commitment to cultural democracy, we cannot hope to speak the aspirations, values and concerns of our epoch.

In growing numbers, artists are remembering their responsibility as citizens, and rejecting the dominant idea that, as Lucy Lippard and Jerry Kearnes have put it, "they must give up art to be involved in the world, or give up the world in order to be an artist." If progressives are likewise able to realize the enormous potential of cultural work in transforming the world, we will have reason for hope.

The myths on which our society is based make it a difficult realization to attain. Arts work has very low priority in the economic and political realms, though it is sometimes paid extravagant lip service. The arts market is dependent on a very high ratio of available workers to jobs; too sellers to buyers. In order to support the idea that quality is scarce and large sums of money must change hands when it passes in an appearance.

During periods of high unemployment (the New Deal being the best example), the government has sometimes recognized the temporary necessity of creating useful work for artists. But we don't hear President Reagan suggesting now that we 'put America back to work' by supporting cultural action. Reagan has proposed a garrison state; he would have us be a people whose energies are dedicated to war and the preparations for war. With a commitment to cultural democracy we begin to see our role as a people quite differently.

Unfortunately, we don't hear progressives advocating this strategy either, though it must be an important element of any program to create productive and meaningful employment for every person who wishes to work.

It has become a commonplace that a plank in the progressive platform is "regionalism." A commitment to cultural democracy extends the meaning of this concept to include all spheres of life. In economic terms, it means that progressives' vision of the future must receive from the garbage heap of pragmatism the notion of finding meaning and dignity in work.

We must propose an economic future that is predicated on a commitment to the arts, not commodities which should be standardized (and therefore centralized in production and distribution), and those which can once again be produced through a more labor-intensive process. Artismhip must be redefined and not treated as frivolous or self-indulgent. Progressives must not be afraid to say that it is better on all counts to put a person to work designing wrought-iron gates which are no more expensive today than mass-produced cyclone fence—than designing delivery systems for atomic bombs.

The third step is for progressives to cultivate cultural action as a strategy.

Artismhip is only one category of cultural work. The society we envision must encourage people to take jobs as teachers and community workers; it must help to develop small-scale cultural industry like local publishing and filmmaking; it must recognize the importance of preserving our cultural commonwealth; it must place much greater emphasis on cultural values in city planning and on the social need for artists working to help a rich cultural life emerge. In short, an integrated progressive vision of the future must place a high priority on forms of work and aspects of life which the current system disignates.

The progressive commitment to cultural action cannot be all hopes and plans for the future, though too main tasks will occupy us in the present. Both demand collaboration; they cannot be accomplished by artists working alone, nor can they succeed if organizers and activists take them on alone.

First, we must promote our critique, and our vision. That will also mean counter-posing messages which emanate from our opposition, which has almost unlimited access to the mass media. We need to counter the message that spending is what life is all about, that the poor are to blame for their poverty, that only a few people are actors and the rest of us left to watch. This means abandoning the notion that we will help to effect a radical transformation of society by distributing leaflets—even by distributing leaflets through an expensive, space-age, New Right-style direct mail operation.

To build a humane society will also necessitate practicing democracy and not just talking about what it will be like when we get some. Within cultural groups, people can be free to choose their own tasks, to give and take and think together, and to decide for themselves the messages they will carry—and to whom.

A group of neighbors approach a moral team; they resist the artists' skills and also resist their own ability to contribute images and sensibilities to the mural design; working together they accomplish the project. The members of a theater group are concerned about unsafe working conditions in local factories; they interview workers and build a theater piece that tells the story. Angry at inadequate local schools, a group of parents call a community meeting; from it emerges an after-school center that exists elders in a program to pass on the skills and knowledge the schools now dismiss as old-fashioned.

Cultural action gives people the opportunity to be creative, helpful and self-determining. In our current climate, when so many actions hope only to nail squads, it is crucial.

The moment could not be riper for a sweeping change in our country. Nobody asks it. If this change fails to come about it will be because the "movement" is, as Freire has written, unable to "perceive the epochal themes and above all ... set upon the reality within which these themes are generated." The themes and tasks of our epoch are there for all who will see and respond.

"We will organize against Reagan or any other administration which says that war is a solution to the depressions."
FREEZE

By Eva Cockcroft

For the first time since the Vietnam War, artists have begun to form political action groups—this time in response to the threat of nuclear holocaust. The massive June 12th march and rally in New York City, marking the opening of the U.N. disarmament session, included close to 1000 artists who marched as a separate contingent. In addition, many artists participated in one of the several anti-nuclear exhibitions during the spring, or contributed individually through the creation of banners and/or performance pieces.

Two artist organizations particularly active in working for the June 12th march were Artists for Nuclear Disarmament (AND) and Political Art Documentation Distribution (PADD). The visual arts section of Artists for Nuclear Disarmament was formed as part of the June 12th organizing committee's cultural task force. PADD is a three-year-old organization of New York left-wing artists "concerned with demonstrating the political effectiveness of image-making."

A third group, "Artists Against Nuclear Arms," was headed by Elizabeth Murray and had a steering committee that included such other big-name visual artists as John Baldessari, Alex Katz, Joel Shapiro, David Salle and Jack Tworkov; together they raised $24,000 for a full-page ad in the Sunday New York Times. The ad, signed by more than 7000 artists, protested the "world-wide production and stockpiling of nuclear weapons and the diversion of resources from human needs."

This upsurge of anti-nuclear activity by artists did not reflect the efforts of a highly politicized fringe, but rather the generalized concern that has also given rise to the nuclear freeze movement. Like the early Vietnam War protests, the freeze movement concentrates on a single moral argument and avoids, as politically divisive, any stand on related social issues or problems. Indeed, many of the artists involved in the anti-nuclear protests are

Top left: Pat Hanks, "Goddess of War!"
Bottom left: "We're All In The Same Boat," by Peter Couzens.
This page, top to bottom: a meal by A.D.B. artists, designed by Cindy Larus and Leslie Bender; A.D.B. banner by Silkscreen Workshop; street action by Stencil Workshop; float by Bread and Puppet Theater.
IMAGINING THE EIGHTIES

veterans of the anti-war movement of the 1960's and early "anti-war" movement. The Art Workers Coalition, the New Art Strike, and various women artists' groups. Nevertheless, the attitudes underlying the issue-oriented art movement, a matter of concern to the general public, are much milder than those of the 1960's.

Nancy Stabile notes that women artists were more politically active in the 1960-70's than they are today. She feels that while more artists are involved in political activity today there are fewer actions, and they are less active in the politico-social sphere. The artist's ability to create political change, as evidenced by the anti-nuclear exhibitions shown this fall, were actually done in the mid-1960's. Among the most sophisticated of the political works of the 1960's was the work of the Leonardo group of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This straightforward documentary presentation is explained by Nagai Solomon-Godabe, a photography critic, and is part of the group's project to put the exhibition together. The only way [the nuclear] horror can be expressed by a photo. Any sort of interpretive or mediated thing isn't good enough, the artist feels. But of course the situation with the intercessors among the photos at Gallery 345 were drawings by survivors of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and these works remain perhaps the most moving to have been done about nuclear war. They combine the immediacy of experience with the authenticity of a historical document.

The avowedly political work done by artists working on the streets for the June 12th Movement had an immediacy that the gallery work lacked and which compensated for its less studied and relatively less subtle character. Styles ranged from the whimsical to classical social realism and conceptual wit, from introspective microscopicestic statements, rituals and performances to pure propaganda statements.

Beginning in March 1982, AND sponsored a number of large autonomous artist-run projects to help build the June 12th Movement. These included a silkscreen banner workshop; a graphic design group that produced placards, logos and buttons; a decorations committee, which helped produce banners for "It's a Family Affair"; the paper maché workshop; a route; paper maché workshops that made masks and masks; a collective mural group, which designed and painted three large murals hung on the bridges above 42nd Street on an outdoor slide show a children's poster contest; and a photographer's brigade to document all of this activity. In a less conventional vein, AND's stencil-graffiti brigade created a series of 152 by-2-foot stencils with such imagery as a dead child's head, mushroom cloud, President Reagan, mother and child, and bombs and bombs; these were spray painted on pavements and walls around New York City along with slogans like "Bread, not Bombs" and "Nuclear Holocaust May Be Any Moment."

The PAD artists concentrated their attention on using windows as a kind of outdoor gallery or billboard for the disarmament message. "Let's take a block-long building at 34th and Lafayette Street, the home of several peace organizations, including the War Resisters League and Gallery 345," transformed via window and sidewalk decorations into a giant anti-war sign for the month of June. At the New Museum on 14th Street, a collective of PAD artists used a large window to display a digicale message in which the cold opposition between weaponry and the good life was cleverly presented. Artists from PADD also designed banners for the Third World and Progressive Peoples Coalition Against, one of the more lively as well as politically left-wing groups in the march.

In another link to the late 1960s, Peter Schumacher's Bread and Puppet Theater brought all their puppets from Vermont to stage an elaborate pageant that led off the march. Theater groups from Minnesota and Boston, as well as others ranging from the simple paper maché to the highly sophisticated, lent their support. Although the artist's contingent as a whole was somewhat disappointing in comparison with some other groups, lacking color and pageantry, many individual artists nonetheless contributed striking images, among them performance artist Pat Ollesko's goddes of war, and the transformation of TV newscaster and art critic Ani Samardza and Storm Flint into Images of Death.

The California-based Sisters for Survival, dressed as brightly covered nuns dancing a "Tribal for Life," were one of many performance groups involved with the political, religious, professional and regional groupings. Perhaps the most elaborate performance piece was Helene Aylon's women's S.A.L. (Survive and Contain) Desert Action Center at S.A.L. San Gabriel by May 2, stopping to gather "sacks of" earth and to perform rituals at S.A.L. (Strategic Air Command) headquarters in the San Gabriel area, N. E. Los Angeles.

The earth was placed in pillow cases donated by people whose sleep does not come easily these days. At the event on Memorial Day the Desert Action of the day was organized by the Destructors Art Club. It provided 3000 silver-colored bomb-shaped balloons which were released into the air. "We were declared the greatest action of the day," says the author of Central Park a symbolic first blow to atomic weapons.

Many banners hadethical or pictorial slogans. "You can't hug with nuclear arms," read one. While the banner on Peter Goughfield's hand-painted contemporary Noah's Ark prescripted, "We are all in the same boat." Some signs were reasonably prosaic. "Taking a bow." "For the human race," said a woman treading his bow-tie, captioned, "Let's get formal for the holocaust after all the first firing." Spread throughout the march were the silhouettes and faces of the thousands of people who had passed through the gate, the silhouettes of people of the occupiers of London's County Hall, the silhouettes of people with the silhouette of the worker, the silhouettes of the worker and the silhouette of the soldier.

Since none of the major commercial or public broadcast stations planned coverage of the June 12th rally, a group of more than 100 independent video artists and producers from the New York area were willing to put money and effort into covering it. The three-hour live program, which was carried in New York by WNET (Channel 13) and transmitted by satellite, was watched by 400,000 viewers. The program was also covered by the New York Times—"a unlikely location for tv criticism"—charged the critic. "The program was a rambling attack against WNET for carrying the program. The lack of live coverage by established media, as well as the media's criticism of previous "artistic" coverage by self-appointed artists who provided an alternative to the news blackout, represented a real change from the 60's. It also offered a clue to the media's "live" on the disarmament rally, and to the reasons for the new activism in general.

The government would like to dismiss the 700,000 June 12th marchers as a relic of a more relaxed day in the past—"a kind of 60's relic. By such views those who have preferred and admired that sterile people out of their equality. Through the art produced around the June 12th mobilization one could see the double message, of which the media would like to see only one part. There was, to be sure, some hope. But there was also the overpowering fear and horror, backed by a serious determination to construct a world-wide movement for nuclear disarmament.

Just republished in Art in America, Oct. 83

Drawing by Hiroshima survivor
I am feeling a most urgent obligation
to question, suggest, or even imagine
any but the most positive possibilities.
but only project willful wishful thinking.

I know the world is still turning
so there must be a chance for peace.

Donna Arones © 1983

THE GROUND WE'RE STANDING ON IS MOVING...

By Lucy Lippard

There's no question that we got
NAPNOC up in Omaha, Nebraska, and
the offspring might just turn out to be a
full-fledged organization. It happened at the annual con-
ference of the Neighborhood Arts Program National Organizing Committee,
now to undergo some change after a
surfeit of fuzzy puffs like the one above
and "NAPNOC's phone call." The name is also becoming more
sociable since the organization has expanded, and, as
Bill Pottenger pointed out, "We can't have neighborhoods; we don't
even have neighbors."

NAPNOC represents some 400 cultural
groups nationwide, including murdered,
theatrical people, public relations, distributors,
artists, and photographers, working to urban, subur-
ban, and rural settings. It was founded in 1976, was soon funded by a contract from
the Department of Labor, and later re-
vamped in 1979 to its current incarnation
as the organizing/consulting wing of the
progressive community arts. Its goal is
Cultural Democracy.

Cultural Democracy. It sounds so sim-
ple, so already all-American. Yet, it is a
movement whose time is clearly not over.
According to the term's
co-founder, Artie Goldbard and Don
Adams, extraordinary staff in two of
NAPNOC, and editors of its newsletter,
Cultural Democracy: "The United States is
a multicultural society with each person
free to participate in many cultural forms
and traditions. Each person and each com-
nunity has the right to culture; all cultures
are entitled to exist in freedom and
equality. To government, there is also
the right to favor one of these cultures above
the other in order to institute a state
religion." Cultural democracy means
that cultural values should be open to
debate—that the values of the big, estab-
lished arts institutions shouldn't be swall-
owed whole."

The three-day conference brought to-
gether some 75 community-artists, of
neighborhood arts from east, west, south,
and middle America. It was inspiring for
several reasons, and especially sound as happy
as the word inspiring—it was heard, heard, and
my own experience there. In their last
newsletter, NAPNOC staff noted
they'd never been to a conference where
people didn't cluster in little groups and whisper
confidentially about the agenda."

Among the participants were David
Olson from Cherry Creek Theater, an
editor of Theatre Arts and an organizer of the
now-legendary "Gathering of the Four
Eights" in St. Peter, Minnesota, in 1981;
Martha Roenig and Phyllis Jone
from the Four of the Mountain
theater in Minneapolis; Fred Whitehead
and John Crawford of Kansas City's Mid-
west Divisions, whose field is labor and
working-class history; John O'Neal from
the 20th Century, SGG-born Free South-
ern Theater in New Orleans; Tim
Dendler of Community Mural Project;
Dwight Loehr from X-change, a "cultural
catalyst" arts group in Seattle; Andrea
Duncan from England's Free From Arts
Trust; Jim Murray and Susan Mckay of
Cultural Correspondence; John Perz
and Liz Lerman from the Chicago Mural
Group; and foto's from the Northern
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Notes Toward a Cultural Democracy

I’d be writing a small book if I started to pull together all the ideas floating around in my head right now. We’ve all crossed paths with these ideas before: the idea that culture is a social activity, that it is a living organism that needs to be nurtured and protected. We’ve all heard that culture is a communal activity, that it is something that we all participate in. But what is culture? What is the role of culture in our society? And how can we ensure that culture is not just a luxury, but a necessity for all of us?

The recent events in the United States have shown us the importance of culture in our society. The cultural boycott of Israel, the Black Lives Matter movement, and the #MeToo movement have all highlighted the role of culture in our society. But what is culture? And how can we ensure that culture is not just a luxury, but a necessity for all of us?

The role of culture in our society is not just to provide entertainment, but to provide a space for us to express ourselves and to connect with others. Culture is a way for us to understand our own history and to connect with the histories of others. It is a way for us to learn about different cultures and to learn from each other. It is a way for us to celebrate our differences and to find common ground.

But how do we ensure that culture is not just a luxury, but a necessity for all of us? One of the key challenges is access to culture. Many people in low-income communities do not have access to cultural activities, such as museums, theaters, and concerts. This is a huge issue, because it means that many people are not getting the opportunity to experience culture and to learn about it.

There are many ways that we can work to ensure that culture is not just a luxury, but a necessity for all of us. One way is to support cultural organizations and to ensure that they have the resources they need to provide access to culture. This could include providing funding for cultural programs, or providing resources such as technology or space.

Another way is to ensure that cultural education is a part of our school system. This could include providing funding for cultural programs in schools, or providing resources such as books or technology.

Finally, we need to ensure that cultural events are affordable for everyone. This could include providing subsidies for tickets, or providing resources such as transportation or food.

In conclusion, culture is an essential part of our society. We need to ensure that it is not just a luxury, but a necessity for all of us. We need to work together to ensure that everyone has access to culture, and that culture is a part of our daily lives.
The conference's two performances underlined this perception. John O'Keefe's monologue play, called "Don't Start Me Talking or I'll Tell Everything I Know: Sayings from the Life and Writings of Johnnie P. Johnson," was funny, angry, and often chilling (albeit with a few problems for feminism). I was equally moved by the other, less formal performance—"Rosa Parks and the Montgomery, Alabama, Bus Boycott"—a lunchtime one-woman show by Alaine Carter. A native of Omaha, she takes the black experience around to small, all-white Nebraska towns. (She also talks about the origins of such traditions and stereotypes as "They Got Rhythm", dep- rived of toy drums and possible tools for revolutionary communication.) American slaves invented rhythm games and sounded the different sounds of body parts to create a new musical vocabulary and a lasting heritage.

In view of the tremendous diversity of styles, goals, and backgrounds coexisting within NAPNOC, the notion of grassroots culture expanded. The root of the word radical is the word root. Grass- roots means not only propagation and spreading the word—but is based on the notion that each blade of grass has known roots. The isolation from the rest of the country one often feels when cooped up in New York was temporarily dispelled, along with any hostility toward those of us who've chosen to exercise our influence on the periphery of the mainsteam. Robert Fox's film "The Gathering: Thoughts of Harvest, Acts of Plowing," reminded me that being a community arts worker (even in the alienated New York area community) is sometimes like being a parent; you have to know when to let go, how to develop and maintain independence and growth in your workers and for yourself. The conference itself had a familiar rhythm—going into one's specific concerns or community, then turning back out again for a general overview and additional input. This is, in fact, the rhythm of life itself, and it needn't be seen or lived in terms of conflict, total burnout, and partial re-energization. Spring follows winter; fields are buried to encourage new crops. An endless dilemma for many NAPNOC members is that they often tend to be the people who can't be spared, who can't allow themselves time to rest or as to produce. Nevertheless, I think a lot of us longed time and often grumpy amateurs came out of the meeting. "Because of these three days, I think I'm going to get a second wind.

Subscriptions to Cultural Democracy are $5.50 and will work to address NAPNOC, P.O. Box 11440, Baltimore, Maryland 21229. To order, fill out a form and mail it to the address above. To order a copy of the "The Culture of Cultural Democracy," one dollar. Send a check or money order to NAPNOC, P.O. Box 11440, Baltimore, Maryland 21229. To order, fill out a form and mail it to the address above. To order a copy of the "The Culture of Cultural Democracy," one dollar. Send a check or money order to NAPNOC, P.O. Box 11440, Baltimore, Maryland 21229.
II. BENTON LUCK

When I quit the class, the ruling class-Dad said, "Oh well, you know what you’re doing." One thing I have done is win the Van Benton Trophy. Van Benton is "Uncle Van" to Dad, "Uncle Van" and grand to me. The Van Benton Trophy is a silver knife with the size of half a soccer ball. It sits on my bookcase next to the Apathetic Dingo, The History of the Civil War, and The Causes and Consequences of the American Revolution. I don’t think a lot of objects in my room that Dad could relate to mattresses on the floor, Rochester, Maine where Guggenheim on the wall, Patti Smith everywhere, these things are not exactly the old man’s cup of tea, occasionally, asks, "Still got all those paperback," I’d say, "I placed the trophy; the trophy, he would say, "Do you remember the Annual Hockey Party?"

Did remember? Uncle Van’s Annual Hockey Party was a male bonding ritual performed by Charleston and Chicago until Uncle Van’s was a financial capital, well known for his luck in the market. He had a firm and a few smarts of his own which he used to rest his family status. Every January he invited about twenty business associates and their school-age sons to bring his male relations, and half-school age sons to carry on a tradition dating from my father’s duller days. First dinner at the Yale Club. Then to the Garden, where Uncle Van had bought a section of rinkside seats for a Rangers game. This tradition was on the same side of ice as the former. As The Ranger Club, an all-male place where you could drink hard stuff and take a leak between periods and have some grub in a rinkside stairway. In 1957: Uncle Van’s lawyer proposed a change. He asked if he could change the institution, clip in for a silver bowl to be inscribed the Van Benton Trophy. The man who grew the final legal flower of the game, instead of winning a cash bowl, would get his name right under Van Benton’s, and keep the bowl for a year. I think it was made with your friends and neighbors on this work of the Annual Hockey Party. But Dad didn’t mind what my summer earnings were. Where I was coming from. Now, when I polish the Van Benton Trophy. I gripped my finger, and I’m not going to let it out the visit. Oh well, he knows what he’s doing.

(Regarding the other kids as spoiled brats: they went to camps all the time, they had more money in their pockets than I saw in a year, they never even played baseball or basketball or football or hockey.)

III. AUTO ALARM

It is ten o’clock Tuesday night. As sirens go, this one doesn’t. It is mounted in the engine of a parked Dodge custom van such that its neon-encased shrieks came up into the echo chamber formed by two fourteen-story buildings across 84th Street from each other on West End Avenue. Like most auto alarms, the noise has a high-pitched metallic quality that one experiences within one’s teeth. Unlike most auto alarms, the sound has a thunderous aspect also, "the buzz holds up," meaning you feel the building shaking, because it is. This siren, of unwavering loudness and intensity, is the most destructive noise you have ever heard. (True, I have not worked in a factory, but I have sat close to the Rolling Stones with a headache.) Whoever triggered it was no doubt harried and then warned. Thousands of my neighbors are presently doing nothing but warning them. Itしなてcoming on its scores of apartments. I watch men in T-shirts shout down the street and at each other. I watch bottles being thrown out of the penthouse, imagine mothers and other parents wearily returning, overwhelmed. I imagine a real emergency call to God. I imagine Valium tablets. I imagine the owner of the sirens be must be in the outer boroughs somewhere, wondering why the dogs are howling. If he were around, he would show up for sure. I am in order to minimize the public who are howling, negotiable through it may be to him, but in order to secure his property. Even people who do not think we live in a racist and sexist class society presume that the sirens belong to a rich white male. Unlike the black kids with portable sound systems on the subway, this man’s nookmate is someone who can’t be reached. How couldn’t it be? It’s job is to protect private property.

Thirty minutes pass slowly. At last a cop cuts a wire, hundreds applaud, men bellow, "approval. The cops and I speak for the first time. Don’t you have earplugs for this game?" Then another: "Are you sure?" And another: "I don’t know unless a life is in danger. What if the van is stripped later on tonight? Oh, don’t worry, it will be.
IV. BE CAREFUL

About my only monogamy-law,
My early wife's late moon;
She told me once she'd die before
Her kids would own a German cow.

Be careful, thought this Gentile rebel,
She used to be a Polish peasant,
Now we do boozie her Cherry!

"Tell me, Mother, did you know
That G.M.'s OPEL was wholly owned,
Built every one of Hitler's tanks?"

She said she knew she'd die before
Her kids would own a German car.

And then she spoke of sacrifice,
Compromise, and other words,
I wish I could remember,
For soon she died of U.S. cancer,
Not to know her kids have kids,
And wait in gas lines driving Rabbits.

C.L.R. JAMES ON POLAND

Speech at Solidarity Support Rally, November, 1981

Your welcome was very flattering. I only hope that when I am finished you will still feel the same way.

Where does Solidarity come from? What is it doing? And where is it going? That is my theme. One hundred and ten years ago in Paris the Parisian people formed the Commune. They abolished the police and they abolished the army. (Applause) They finished with their local C.I.A. and F.B.I., finished them completely. (Applause) They said that their council, the Commune, would be both legislative and executive. They said further that the pay of a member of the council would be equal to the pay of an advanced worker. Not a penny more.

When people asked Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels what is this thing the dictatorship of the proletariat that you talk about they told them, "There, look at it, the Paris Commune. It has abolished the police and abolished the army. That is the people." Now Lenin went next with the Soviet, and he kept the Commune in mind all the time. When the Soviet came workers' representatives for every 500 workers, Lenin said, "This is it, we have gone beyond the Commune." Unfortunately the Commune was one complete city. The Russian workers were too small to handle that tremendous body of peasants in that vast country. But the Soviet made a stage of the...

...like Solidarity, a rising of the people, like an earthquake or a tempest as Marx used to describe the revolution.

development of the working class. And now we have the final stage that we have reached today in Solidarity in Poland. Commune - Soviet - Solidarity. (Applause) That is the movement. They haven't come by accident. They are part of the organic movement of the working class in capitalist society.

Now I want to talk about what they are doing today. They have upset the international policy of N.A.T.O. and the Warsaw Pact. The Russian army was supposed to march through Poland and go to the Atlantic. That was the policy that they were working on, that they are working on today. Today, after Poland, the Russian army is not going one foot. It is not going to the Atlantic. It has got to stay at home.

And all these foreign policy experts have to realize that, That the Russian army cannot go anywhere when it will have at its back Solidarity in Poland today and Solidarity tomorrow. Because the Polish people said we are for the Warsaw Pact and we support the Catholic Church (some of us are Catholics) but they do not hesitate to call upon all the workers and peasants in the totalitarian states to come in an international movement. And then comes another problem. A problem not for me. Today they don't want the American armies in Europe but tomorrow they will say if the Russian army cannot march, we don't want the American army either. (Applause) That is a problem that they have to settle and that has been caused by Poland alone. Far less when the European peoples follow the example of Solidarity, which they will, there is no difficulty about that at all.

And now the last thing I want to say about them, tomorrow. I have two countries in mind. One of them is South Africa. They carry on a lot of games there. When we become a parliament we are whites want so much percentage of it. One man one vote. I don't believe any such thing will take place in South Africa. I believe that when the people move they will move as a solid body of people who are reversing the trend of events and taking hold of their country. And it will be a movement like Solidarity and a rising of the people like an earthquake or a tempest as Marx used to describe the revolution.

That is what is going to happen in South Africa and the whites who are sympathetic will be able to join. Not to get so many people, percentage in the parliament and so many rights justified. No. They can join the organization and we shall see an example of what happened in General W.W. taking place in South Africa. (Applause)

And the last country that I want to speak about is the United States. I have spent twenty-five years of my life here and one thing I learned is this is no European country. It has an individuality of its own.
I have been watching the political system especially since Roosevelt came and brought in the New Deal. The only comparative transfers of power that I have seen were during the presidential elections in the United States. There are two big meetings every four years. The Democratic Party meets and the Republican Party meets. These are national mobilizations appealing to everybody. But when the day comes when people feel that those national mobilizations are not doing what they want them to do, there will not be any longer a national mobilization but there will be a mobilization of the nation. That is something else. And number two, the minorities in this country — Blacks, Chicanos, and these — will be able to join the mobilization of the nation, to take part in it, to take from it all that they want and at the same time bring to it all that they want to bring to it. The individual who has been frustrated by developing capitalism will achieve a mobility in such a development of politics.

And I want to end by telling you: I don’t know that I will see that. I have been in the world a long time. But I expect to see it in South Africa before I go and when it comes in the United States I may be away but you can be certain that if I am aware I will do my best to come back. (Applause) I will have plenty to tell you but you will have plenty more to tell me about American Solidarity. Thank you.

By C.L.R. JAMES

Free For All

Free For All. I love that title. Freedom is a very rare thing. It is for example rare in the account of events in the United States. Many years ago the French historian really got down to it and brought out some of the greatest and most important events in the French Revolution. You may think that that is History with a capital ‘H’ because it is one of the greatest events and everybody, particularly the professional historians ought to know something about it.

But enough of that. I have been exercising my freedom to say a few things about history which are not necessarily related directly to the riots which took place in Britain during last summer. Marcus Howe is talking to an American about those events. He picks up a paper and reads this:

"Listen to this", he said. "After the uprising in Moss Side last July they appointed a local Manchester barrister called Hytner to enquire into what happened, and how it started. Here’s what he writes:

"At about 10.00 p.m. a responsible and in our view reliable mature black citizen was in Moss Lane East, and observed a large number of black youths whom he recognised as having come from a club a mile away. At the same time a horde of white youths came up the road from the direction of Moss Side police station. We are given an account by another witness who saw the mob approach the station, led, so it was claimed, by a man called R, and at one time with those with Liverpool accents in the van."

You believe that you have read this and that you understand it? This would be the last time I tell you that I don’t think you have. Let me select a passage and draw it to your attention:

"(he observed a large number of black youths whom he recognised as having come from a club a mile away. At the same time a horde of white youths came up the road from the direction of Moss Side. He spoke to them and ascertained that they came from Withenshaw. The two groups met and joined. There was nothing in the manner of their meeting which in any way reflected a prearranged plan. There was a sudden shout and the mob stormed off in the direction of Moss Side police station."

That my friends is the revolution. There is no highly educated party leading the backward masses. There is an outstanding leader whom the people followed because of his great achievements in the past. There had been no prearranged plan. They met and joined, they shouted and they stormed off, (notice this particularly) in the direction of Moss Side Police Station. The great leader. Before I deal with that, let me quote from one of the greatest historians of the 20th Century. I can quote at once because I made quotations from it in The Black Jacobins (edition Allison & Busby, Page 333).

"It is therefore in the popular mentality, in the profound and lucrative distrust which was born in soul of the people, in regard to the aristocracy, beginning in 1789, and in regard to the king, from the time of the flight to Varennes, it is there that we must seek the explanation to what took place. The people and their unknown leaders knew what they wanted. They followed the Girondins and afterwards Robespierre, only to the degree that their advice appeared acceptable."

"Who are these leaders to whom the people listened? We know some. Nevertheless, as in all the decisive days of the revolution, what we most would like to know is forever out of our reach; we would like to have the diary of the most obscure of these popular leaders; we would then be able to judge, in the light of their own words, how much of these revolutionary days beyond; we do not have it."

And I think for these great leaders. This time we know that it was a boy of nine who was leading this particular part of the revolution. I don’t think I have anything more to say here. But for the greater part of my long life, I have been saying and preaching and teaching the "two groups met and joined" in the manner of their meeting which in any way reflected a prearranged plan. There was a sudden shout and the mob stormed off in the direction of Moss Side Police Station."
C.L.R. James at Black Ink

A TALK ON TONI MORRISON, ALICE WALKER, AND NOTOZAKE SHANGE

I have chosen three books to discuss: Sula, by Toni Morrison; Meridian, by Alice Walker; and Nappy Edges, by Ntozake Shange. These books are by three Black women, but I haven't chosen them because they are Black women; but because they are very fine Black writers. They are first class writers. Meridian and Nappy Edges I would place in the very front rank of books being published in the United States today. There is another reason, also, why I have chosen these three: They represent a definite movement in the United States. Women all over the world seem to have realized that they have been exploited by men. Marx pointed out many years ago that women were more exploited than the proletariat. (This is a remarkable thing for him to have said.) Now women are beginning to say: Who and what are we? We don't know. Hitherto we have always tried to fit ourselves into what men are and what masculine society required. Now we are going to break through this. These three women have begun to write about Black women's daily lives. Black women in America for hundreds of years have been kept behind, picked up behind the scenes, picked up behind doors. And now Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, and Ntozake Shange have taken these Black women and put them right in the front of American literature. They can't be ignored anymore. So this means that in the women's movement, as usual in the United States, Black people took part; and they have taken a poet in it which, as I hope to show you, is important not only to the Blacks, but to society as a whole.

I'm going to talk about these books one by one. I'm not going to read from them too much, except for the poetry, because poetry must be read. Then I will talk about writing, because that is what you are concerned with; and because it is an important part of the Black struggle today.

Now, this Black woman has gone to all of these important towns and places of social life in the United States, found them no good, and has gone back to Medallion. That is a very bold thing to write about. She tells us why Sula metamorphoses—because everywhere she goes the men and the problems and ennui-ness with them are always the same. The important thing about that is that it could, and would, be said by women on every level of society in the world today, from the highest to the lowest. This woman could not find a man who would treat her as another human being, and she got tired of it and went back to her home town. So on the one hand, the friendship between women, that is so often ignored, is of great importance; and on the other hand, no matter how hard she tries, she just learns that friendship with a man is impossible.

Toni Morrison is saying in this society, with the lives they led, this is what happens to men and women; this becomes characteristic of the love relationship. I find it astonishing and revealing that Toni Morrison should insist that this experience be held by a poor Black woman, on the lowest level of American society. She is also saying that the real fundamental human difference is not between white and Black, it is between man and woman.

Now we come to Meridian, by Alice Walker. Walker is one of the finest writers in the United States. Near the beginning of the book, Meridian is told by a group of her friends that she can only join the movement if she makes up her mind that she can kill for the revolution. Meridian is not so sure about this; she is willing to die, but not to kill. She goes against her upbringing and her heart. She goes off on her own to work and live with the people in the South. The story goes on and Meridian becomes very involved with a Black man named Tristan, who eventually be

Ten years pass between the wedding and the beginning of the next chapter. 1937-1937. Sula is still with Judex; they are living well, and have two or three children. Sula returns well-dressed, sophisticated, and over-educated. She and Nell seek to recapture that friendship which they had before, but they are not able to compensate for the self to the old society. One day, Sula comes home to find Sula and Judex together again. She is not able to bear to look at her that day. Sula does not particularly want to see her end up in the same position that she was in, or, of course, at that point that she leaves her.

Sula and Nell see each other only once more in their lives. In 1940 Sula becomes seriously ill and Nell offers to help. She finally asks, “Why did you do
In other words, people had to be able to trust the church. People in this southern church had built it up on trust. And with great love, wrong, so strong that if the thing had to be gone into, one’s soul would have been oppressed. This is a major problem for people who are revolutionaries but the great mass of the people is not, as it were, a problem as a subject. They don’t have that kind of organization, and I hope you can see that can begin anywhere and end up as far as anybody else has reached. He is the way into the poetry, but the point is, to express knowledge to all people, especially the in special writing.

With NO IMMEDIATE CAUSE by Nozuko Shange

I want to say a few words to the writers. You must be able to write what you think—and maybe what you write about your life. I want you every day, in every place, as long as you have time. I want you to know that that is not now and I hope you can see that you can begin anywhere and end up as far as anybody else has reached. He is the way into the poetry, but the point is, to express knowledge to all people, especially the in special writing.

every 3 minutes a woman is beaten

every 5 minutes a woman is raped

a lil girl is molested
eyo ride the subway i sat next to an old man who may have beaten his old wife
3 minutes ago or 3 days 30 years ago he might have sodomized his grandson but i sat there

cut the young man on the train night beat some young women late in the day i sat there

i might not shut my door fast enough you have to be quick

every 3 minutes it happens

woman’s innocence

rushed to her showers from her mouth like the witty willy dolls have been born

rape

men’s red & blue

every three minutes someone

blue

is jammed through fingers the even door

cars push thru the rise edge fast water or boiling sperm devour her body

every 3 minutes i sat up

i am screaming

i am screaming

every 3 minutes a woman

every 3 minutes

women’s bodies are found in salutes & bedrooms at the top of the stairs

cars in the subway by a paper drink coffee

have you seen a woman today a child
did you hurt a woman today

in general, a politician, she said, support and support the public in general

but to me, that’s what i think about it.

Only first class poets write this way.

Write what you have to say, and think about it. You must be able to write what you think—and maybe what you write about your life. I want you every day, in every place, as long as you have time. I want you to know that that is not now and I hope you can see that you can begin anywhere and end up as far as anybody else has reached. He is the way into the poetry, but the point is, to express knowledge to all people, especially the in special writing.

Imagining the Eighties

People keep telling me there are hard times what you gonna do 10 years from now what are you gonna be the job do i think i am gonna bepoet i will be a poet with my poems www.nilaveli.net

cut the young man on the train night beat some young women late in the day i sat there

i might not shut my door fast enough you have to be quick

every 3 minutes it happens

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So what are you, An artist Or an activist?

Wallflower Order is high-quality art that broadens political awareness and inspires social action.

By Susan McCarn

The packed house was on its feet before the lights were off in an ovation for the Wallflower Order. This was Thursday, November 11, at the end of a dance performance benefit for AMLS (the Salvadoran Women's Association). The clapping was thunderous, rhythmic, active; this was applause of enjoyment, recognition, and solidarity. The performers and the audience were celebrating shared purposes and desires, because the Wallflower Order had risen, or leveled out, to the task of speaking what wants having, and showing what wants seeing.

The Wallflower Order is a dance collective that has been in existence for seven years. They are, in their own words, “committed to providing political culture of high artistic quality that broadens political awareness and inspires social action.” They use every form, every voice, every issue germane to their purpose. Reggae, Mozart, cake, Visual Arts, poetry, prose, sign language. They had performance pieces about mothers, adolescence, Stephen Biko, Nicaraguan women workers, techniques.

The opening dance, Immigration was a story about the life of women laborers at the turn of the century. It was rich in image and emotion. This particular piece employed mime and modern dance as its primary movement forms. First we saw the ocean; the journey, the new beginning, all shown with soft sounds and flowing movements. Then we saw the abrupt arrival in the new world in the form of a succession of frustrating queues. After she gets a job, we watch the central figure sewing, with quite literal movements. Her needle-and-thread action resonates reality; it becomes abstract then it becomes one part of a harmonious movement involving all the women, which clearly and successfully depicts the beginning of a new life.

Like all the Wallflower Order dances, the end result of Immigration is uplifting. The woman's life begins to break apart, becomes more human again, more woman—and unabridged! There are five different musical selections used to back the various transitions in this piece. The final and strongest expression of the union is the dance. It is difficult to choose the terms with which to describe the Wallflower Order. They are unquestionably a dance company, but they use the idea of dance as we know it as a springboard, as a cleft. They execute such leaps, stunts, tumbling, that provides a base to expand and reinforce with every possible kind of tangent. In this one selection we saw many styles of physical movement. They moved across an ocean, bewilder'd, abused, and, finally, triumphant. Giving an audience this kind of image-suspense is very important.

A high point in the show was a solo performance by Rhys Keeler, "Resolution for Africa," about Black History in America, and in her life. She began with a faux Bugsy Malone, sitting in a chair, alone on the stage, addressing the audience. She had tried and tried and tried, to dance like Bugsy, but she never really tried to dance about Africans. She went on to connect her own life experiences with her studies of the history of slavery in the United States, and the silence that surrounds it. She said that, in Africa, she moved and was angry, so were we. We all know the toll of dental, and we can all celebrate the struggle against it. And she is perfectly, even if she tried something that didn't go down well, she was trying; she was working, she could be approached and supported or encouraged with. She rose from the chair and danced with pride and determination, to a song by Sweet Honey in the Rock. The audience cheered most of the way through the dance.

The Wallflower Order set themselves the task of addressing their art to and informing it by the political issues that are key to the connected struggles of oppressed peoples, and for the most part they succeeded. Even where they didn't succeed they had an alarming effect on the audience's own thinking. That I for one was far more pointed and involved than I am used to hearing. I heard people actively arguing about the success of which images conveyed the ideas of the dances, suggesting what might have worked better.

Many people, including myself, were offended in one dance, "Not us," by the glorification of upper class coldness and snobbery with cat fighting. After watching these impressive powerful master women man the stage for dances that were performed by the white with long red and black shoes. The very entrance sent the audience into stitches and applause. The absurdity was magnificent.

The characters then began back-biting in a very specific way. Now, cat fighting is bad points wherever you put it. But imagine, the lights go out and people are whispering to their neighbors. That was a great image and a great idea, but they shouldn't use female competitiveness for humor in this way.... We should talk to them.... You talk, after the performance. About the idea. SO what is it? Beware, however, for the performers don't want to hear it. They won't listen. Just what is it? Nobody knows. Shocking.

My only other major qualm with the performance was in a piece, a dance about growing up different. The total association of deviance from feminine norms was amusing. Not wanting to be prissey doesn't have to mean wanting, to be a boy.

There was even room during the course of the evening to watch the individual personalities and styles of the performers emerge. I could tell whose politics I really identified with, or who may have been the primary influence in a given piece.

These women are talented and entertaining. They are especially good dancers and choreographers. They need some space for their test use, and they need a director for a couple of their skits—but most importantly, they are needed.

These are times of us with tears and eyes thirsty for sense and meaning, long offended by shallow and unreal art. We all feel the oppressiveness of dominant homogenous American culture. We all sense our own absence from it, being white doesn't mean that I am represented by that culture any more than it means that I have cravings for boloney on Wonderbread. American's junk food culture makes even more immediate the need for and the power of multi-cultural art, just as we must understand the connections between our oppression and that of others—a fact, use our oppression to understand theirs, we need mutually informed imagery. Through our own struggles and our will to freedom we are deeply connected to all who have been fighting, stilled, silenced, oppressed—their voices give our own depth and resonance. The Wallflower Order knows this, and helps to make us whole with their art.

Another interesting thing about this performance—the audience was by far mostly women, Now, I know lots of people who wouldn't dare miss a benefit for the people of El Salvador. Really, wouldn't dare. But they weren't at this one. The publicity for this was incredible, every place I went for a week before the dance was overwrought with posters, postcards of a circle of serious and powerful looking women dancing together with, "Benefit for the women of El Sal-

vador," in clear bold print. Who could pass this by? What serious radical could be interested? So a lot of men I know denied themselves a terrific experience. This experience included being a member of one of the most radically mixed audiences I have had the joy to be a part of. We were black, Latina, Asian, freaked, gay, bi, straight, and mostly women.

If you are a radical artist, don't despair, we are learning to connect with one another, and your work is needed. If you are a radical something else, goddammit, it's time to take responsibility for your own need for a culture that reflects your beliefs. Why not find out the name of your progressive theater In your town and check it out instead of blowing your five dollars on the movies this Saturday night just to get mad at Steven Spielberg one more time? The time is now.

It is of great significance that the Holly Near concert the night of June 12 gave those of you here at the strength to avoid those post-demonstration's... it's not going to have any effect anyway-buys that the NAPCAN conference on cultural democracy brought us such strength that the New York Marxist School has had their greatest success this year with a series on the personal and the political that the Wallflower Order inspired a packed house. It is also of great significance that these lessons come directly from the women's movement, fueled by its cultural strength. So the next time somebody says to me, "So what are you, an artist or an activist?" I'm gonna say, "Wise up. Haven't you heard? Specialization is a capital tool."
LIKE ANY OTHER DAY...

Did the children cry? Were the beds unmade? Was the sex a drag? Were the bills all paid? Did the boss approve? Did your poor guns bleed? Could you smell the gas? Did you smoke a weed? Did the faucet drip? Did you both make nice? Was the kitchen clean? Did you pay the price? Was the mirror true? Was your lover false? Was your head on straight? Did he play a Waltz? Were the nights too long? Did the baby balk? Were the dogsies fed? Did the neighbors talk? Was the headache bad? Did you pass the test? Were your fingers cold? Did you try your best? Was the dayunm? Did the air seem dry? Did you laugh too loud? Did you have a good cry? Did you comb your hair? Was the sunlight odd? Did you have a clue? Did you pray to God? Did you wet your lips? Were you quite alone?

Did the grass seem gray? Could you hear a moan? Could you feel the woos? Did the silence grow? Did you sense the end? Did a halo glow? Did the windows melt? Did the phone go dead? Did the rivers hiss? Did the moon turn red? Was the space too dense? Were the lights still lit? Did the crystals crack? Did the center split? Did the sun swoop low? Was your hair on fire? Did the tides go mad? Were the streets a pyre? Were the walls hummed? Did the valleys fuse? Did coronas leap? Did stromos cruise? Did the black bones bloom? Did a blind star wink? Did the dumb wind sighs? Did the shadows sink? Did you cough with the pack? Did a whisper fall? Did you catch any words? Not a one? None at all.

Irving Wexler

WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

Reading the morning desecrations, the muses, the average radical, what ever happened to history? Wasn’t it to be our dialectic, the negation long ago negated, the train of revolution arriving transcendent in the kingdom of freedom? And the singing tomorrows, why were they sealed in silence? And the power, own to share, still in the hands of the beasts?

We knew the going would be hard, the Sisyphus victories forever slipping from our bloody hands. But as the decades drifted by, after the visions and expectations, the leaflets and meetings, after the jailing and beatings, after the wars brought to a halt, after socialism with a human face, we looked numbly at the future only to see a mirror of the past.

And could we have foreseen then, when we breathed promises and roses, the masks of oppression molded in the images of our own faces, and the assassins in our ranks, and the thieves in utopia, and the culsacs with gray funnels, and poor Trotsky, slumped at his desk, with an axe in his battered skull, and shriveled Lenin in his tomb of gulag, with his eternal eyes unblinking, and Che, at the end of his rope, on a mountaintop in a strange land, and Mao, buried in broken China among his red books and withered flowers?

And he thinks, what if dawn hasn’t arrived with nectar on its breath? Was there another way he could live? Turn his back, like an ox, on his comrades and the world’s agonies. Eat crow, make peace, accept the what-is, surrender the what-can-be?

And taking a deep breath, he jogs doggedly into wherever, two steps forward and one step back, toward the twenty-first century, with the unbearable loneliness of the long-distance radical who knows in his heart he won’t be around to see it happen.

Irving Wexler

BLESSLED BE

(For Thomas McGrath)

To those in power
who measure time
In cobalt countdown;
to generals whose fleshy fingers
lie poised on the buttons;
to scientists who count the dead
In megaton millions;
to statesmen whose nuclear earplugs
shut out the looting cities
of those caught in the fire
from which there is no shade;
to madmen whose dreams
swing an orbit of rockets
that annihilate generations
but spare private property.

to those who coo deterrence
when they mean overkill—
to all of you we say...

Blessed be the fighters
who kick America awake
before it dies in its sleep.
Blessed be the marchers
who flow like rivers
down the world’s streets.
Blessed be the protest
the folders of leaflets,
and the tickers of stamps.
Blessed be the bright banners unfurling in the wind.
Blessed be the shout of the soapbox
and the kiss of the poet.
Blessed be the agitator
who redeems the defeated.
Blessed be the organizer
who teaches the magic of numbers.

Blessed be the crowd of us
under the mushroom shadow
who will not sit by,
as silent as bullfrogs,
letting the obscene eyeball
melt down our day.
Blessed, now and forever,
the makers of peace.

Irving Wexler
GREAT MOMENTS OF CARNIVAL KNOWLEDGE

Carnival Knowledge is a traveling educational show about reproductive rights issues with games, booths, sculptures, music, video, and films by over 45 artists. It was founded by artists in June 1981 in direct response to the Moral Majority's political agenda. Carnival uses visual, music, video and performance arts to create more effective participatory political education. Nancy Benton, Linda Ravert, April Ford, Sue Freeman, Lina Garnica, Anne Gilbert, Lyn Hughes*, Sharon Jaddis, Sabrina Jones, Patricia Kansas, Amy Pitroese, Ann Rodman, Karen Ruch, Anton Van Dale, and Jill Swermer. (*Founders)

In our first year, Carnival Knowledge has, for the first time, organized the New York art community to make artwork specifically about reproductive rights issues; worked directly with political organizations and lobbying groups on an artist-generated project; and established the possibility of an artist-run political project gaining access to museums and other cultural institutions, broadening the base of support for political education.

Anne Pitroese

12/81 "Why have a carnival when you can have a leaflet?"

3/81 After driving 5 hours in a 30-foot truck, graciously donated by U-Haul of Brooklyn, we set up the carnival in Binghamton, NY, under the auspices of the Binghamton Women's Coalition. Three AIM, I am bringing the 50-foot Carnival Knowledge banner in the balcony of the gym. It's the final touch on a funky, loveable, interesting carnival just about to open eight hours later. Everybody is so tired they can hardly stand up, except for the kids from Chicana Raza and the Medicine Show, who are having a slumber party. I'm looking around at everyone and everything and it occurs to me that I've just discovered why nobody ever does this kind of art work — it's too hard.

4/82 Nobody wants to do anything.

5/82 We try to do something, but we still don't want to do it. Then someone suggests that we just go to the beach. So that's what we do all summer, with new carnival games and ideas. One difference: everything can be carried in two hands.

7/82 Cherry Hill, New Jersey. The National Right-To-Life party is having their convention at the Hilton in Cherry Hill, NJ. We decide to call the ballroom, the Whirlwind, and get these before the marchers, there is someone walking on the grounds of the rally situated right in back of the Hilton. She is cursing the ground. We and all the demonstrators are the devil, apparently. I don't feel like the devil. I wish I was the devil so I could carry this Senator's Balls piece more easily, and drag it over to where it was supposed to be installed, by the lake on the other side of the rally site. We barely make it through the approaching marchers to set up the piece — the marchers look great.

When we set it up finally, people begin to come over and have these reactions: a. a look of disbelief, then hysteric laughter.
b. by blocking the balls of each Senator HARD, then going down the line, while looking at each one in the face with angry eyes.
c. punching the senators in the face, then pulling their balls off.
d. gentle ball squeezing; genuine interest in where the senators are from.

Sabrina Jones:
I was trying to keep up my performance's spirit and encourage interaction through eye contact, when a bearded young man came up to me, reached into his shirt, and pulled out a small double-bladed ax on a silver chain. He smiled a knowing smile at me. "So, you're a Misan...", I ventured, recognizing the ceremonial weapon found in the Cretan shrines to the goddess whom I was impersonating. He replied that he was not actually a member of the Misan Sisterhood, since they only accept females in their coven, but he was a witch. We began to discuss the problem of sex role stereotyping in the goddess-worshipping community, which was all very new to me.

My initial interest in the goddess was based on art history and my objections to the patriarchal religions that most of us were brought up on. When I decided to recreate her bare-breasted, snake-twirling splendor by doing a painting, it was not a purely secular desire for a historical figure that would affirm women's right to wear their sexuality with pride and dignity. I was a little surprised to discover that people were still worshipping me, 4000 years later, for exactly the same reason.

Susan Fraizer:
First we spread out our towels, put up our umbrellas, changed our clothes, and had a little refreshment — cherries, peaches, bananas, fresh chicken, hot coffee, salad, bread, cheese, rolls, knishes, soda, and beer. Then we read the Sunday paper, took a walk, took a mossel, caught some rays, and discussed a variety of subjects in detail. Then we looked around a little more.

After all our eating, walking, and talking we started to ask each other, "Couns do your art now? How about it? In fact, we each got our first art and do some art. To my great surprise it went as planned, and after an interval a little crowd collected, dis-

show and was incredibly enthusiastic; he insisted his two kids come in, and kept propping his head out of the curtain every ten seconds screaming, "This is great! You gotta check this out!"

Carnival Knowledge has a core group of organizing committee of ten or more people. Up to 50 artists have been involved in the project at one time. Our goals: education, entertainment, empowerment: to work with political groups in developing creative organizing methods; grassroots education about reproductive rights issues; to de-mythify art and artists' lives by doing collaborative work with artists as well as non-artists in a non-gallery environment based on a commonly experienced phenomenon, a carnival to help artists articulate political ideas through their work to develop alternative, financial structures for supporting artwork to work with men and children, as well as women.

Carnival Knowledge started because of the political situation in government (the introduction of the Human Life Amendment) as well as in the art system (rigidity of the gallery structure).

Our constituency is everyone; but teenagers and people who belong to political groups seem to respond most positively.

To get in touch with Carnival Knowledge, call (212) 477-5779 or write: 513 East 13th Street, New York, NY 10009.

"Know Your Right-To-Life Senator" by Susan Fraizer

Photo: Gary Zeck

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U.S. advisers ‘fighting’ in Salvador

SOME U.S. advisers are reportedly “fighting side by side” with government troops in El Salvador — in clear violation of Reagan Administration rules.

CBS News last night quoted unidentified Salvadoran soldiers as saying: American advisers fired mortars against a leftist rebel base Tuesday.

The Salvadoran troops also said “there are 10 Americans based at the government camp, and they are taking part in combat operations” and carrying M-16 rifles.

Two U.S. advisers wearing combat fatigues were spotted by — and ducked away from — a CBS film crew at the Lempa River camp, about 45 miles from San Salvador, “in an area of persistent fighting.”

The Reagan Administration forbids U.S. advisers in El Salvador from carrying weapons larger than pistols.

Rifles are restricted to quarters — for self-protection — and to automobiles, while traveling outside San Salvador.

The guidelines also bar the stationing of advisers anywhere where combat is likely.

Church in Nicaragua

Nu ... so, what else do you have to confess?

Sut popular religious traditions are encouraged by the Revolution. Thus it has become customary to “La Pasion,” and “La Gracia,” which are Marian traditions deeply-rooted in our nation; the Paron festivals, some of which are widely-observed, like that of Santo Domingo of Managua and San Jeronimo of Masaya, and Granada.

Vines that previously were forbidden to Patrones by Somos and its followers, like prostitution, gambling, and drinking, have been prohibited. As a result, the festivals have been made more moral, more pleasing. Furthermore, more Christian, and fit better with more genuine cultural efforts of our nation.

At our festivals one can sample the many native dishes. The festivities provide the opportunity to tighten old bonds with each other, and reenact the importance of community, as manifested in a Paron Saint. The festival is like a real unity where all the needs of the community and of those who pull it together remain for one time to be fulfilled.

To us, culture does not occupy a separate sphere from social development. Furthermore, it is inseparable to have economic development without cultural development in Nicaragua.

In Sandino’s time, a group of peasants gathered together with the stone and corn — bringing their poems. It was a Poetry Workshop. Children came also. One little, a ten-year-old boy, brought this brief poem:

I was a boy in the late
It was my birthday
and I went without
It seems to me to illustrate nicely that definition of culture proposed by UNESCO: that it is everything that man adds to nature.

The boy here had a cultural conscious- ness: The turtle and I swim in Nicaragua Falls, she swims with her toes, and I in a boat. I am like the turtle, but I am different from the turtle . . .

The countryside, this white shirt that I wear, has been the traditional shirt of the Nicaraguan peasant, at one time it had practically disappeared; now it is the most popular shirt in Nicaragua. As a peasant shirt, it is a symbol of work, of struggle, of freedom of the Revolution. The country was the cradle of the literary tradition. When thousands of those young people triumphantly entered Managua becoming the commanders of the Revolution, they put on these coats ...
PARTICIPATORY ART

Notes on the "Say Goodbye to Nuclear Weapons" Project at the June 12th Rally

BY DENTURES ART CLUB

As artists committed to progressive change the June 12th Disarmament Rally at Central Park afforded us an opportunity to put into practice certain ideas concerning political art. Those centered on the creation of a cultural event utilizing the tremendous numbers of people and large spaces inherent in mass demonstrations. Our method was to structure the event so that it would be carried out by the demonstrators themselves during the Rally, and which would embody the day's political message. In this way we hoped to blur the distinction between artist and non-artist, Rally-participant and Rally-spectator. People acting in concert would make their own visual, dramatic "moment." Art and politics would merge.

1. The "Say Goodbye to Nuclear Weapons" Project

Three thousand 16' silver mylar balloons and fifty giant 3' mylar balloons were inflated with "Say Goodbye to Nuclear Weapons" on one side and a two-color silkscreen of an atomic blast on the other. The giant balloons were utilized prior to the Rally by teams of volunteers canvassing the South Bronx, Coney Island, Forest Hills and Chinatown, explaining the nuclear disarmament issue and encouraging people to attend the Rally. The evening before the Rally approximately fifty people assembled at the Delacorte Theatre in Central Park to inflate the small balloons with helium. The next morning they were transported to the Great Lawn and staked in immense anti-nuclear bouquets.

At "...OI!" the three thousand balloon-holders let them loose, and as they rose the entire crowd waved and shouted, "good-bye" to nuclear weapons forever.

2. Accessibility, Focus, Division of Labor

The Project was conceived and designed to be simple, readily accessible to large numbers of people regardless of ideological differences. Our aim was to tap the Rally's shared psychological and emotional currents, leaving to others the tasks of informing and educating. In this we approached the SGTNW Project in the context of the Rally as a whole. We tried to contribute our special skills as artists, trusting our co-activists in other spheres to do the same.

3. Form/Content

The Project's form was empowering — the event existed and was effective to the extent people participated to make it so. Its meaning resided as much in this aesthetic as in its literal message. Several hundred thousand voices counting down, the balloons' release and the mass "goodbye" as they ascended created a collective "moment" — dramatic, visual and moving — that was both a means towards and expression of the day's politics.

4. Traditional and Emerging Forms

While banners, floats and costumes have long been powerful ways for artists to communicate political messages, the continuing re-definition of art has given rise to new artistic forms and possibilities. By applying some of these to the political arena we hoped to reach people in new ways, making art a more effective tool in the struggle for progressive change. Through their participation we wanted non-artists to understand that art needn't be confrontational passively, the raised product of someone else's "Inspiration," but is a particular kind of work — relevant, accessible to, and producible by everyone.

5. Conclusion

We found people not only willing but anxious to participate in the SGTNW Project. Among pre-Rally volunteers it was the first political event in which many had engaged, as spectators or otherwise. A significant number expressed interest in working on similar projects, indicating that the experience had provided them a "'kick,' a small way 'in' to both politics and art. Many factors contribute to the development of political consciousness. Progressive artists can offer a variety of skills in this regard, emerging and traditional. The "Say Goodbye to Nuclear Weapons" Project explored one of them. The Left and its artists must learn to work more closely together to explore many.
Think Globally, Act Locally
NETWORKING IN THE EIGHTIES

In 1965, Cultural Correspondence attended the national meetings of three organizations: PADDD's "February 26th Movement," a weekend conference in NY timed to coincide with the College Art Association's annual meeting; NAPNOC's "Building Not a Conference," and the UDC's "Building Democratic Communication" conference in Philadelphia. All of these organizations are identified below.) CC also belongs to Media Network and the Foundation for Progress, works with the New York Marist School, and supports AIVF and INALASE.

The next issue of CC will be a Directory of Arts Activism. See the call for entries on page 96. (Deadline June 1, 1983.) CC encourages all peace groups, minority groups, and all sorts of grassroots organizations to organize cultural workshops and task forces. We are available to assist you in many ways: just write us at 505 West End Avenue, NY 10024 or call (212) 420-8196. "We Want To Live" done inside front cover is an excellent introduction to cultural activism.

Very few of the artists, performers and writers in this issue earn their living by doing their own work. CC's larger purpose is to build a national support community for cultural activists in all the arts. If you are organizing an event or party or conference or teaching, why not include mention of the talent represented in these pages? You can easily reach all of the people in

1. AIVF: The Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers, Inc. PUBLISHERS OF THE INDIVIDUAL.'A non-profit trade association providing an effective national voice for independent producers. Along with AIVF, (Foundation for Ind. Video and Film, Inc.), provides independent producers with the technical information, trade representation, and direct services that they need to stay in business—Group Medical and Life Insurance, Festival Bureau, Short Film Distribution, Seminars, Screenings, etc. "Independent works in the independent—outside traditional commercial and/or network TV structures. AIVF is working to protect the interests of independent producers and to ensure their opportunities to produce films of quality, character, and integrity." AIVF/MVF, 875 Broadway, 8th Floor, NY, NY 10003 (212) 473-2400.

2. Federation For Progress is an ongoing, multi-issue coalition of grassroots groups and activists who see the need to bridge the various progressive movements by linking issues in organizing. "We are united in developing a comprehensive people's program, and invite support and participation." The Federation organized an extraordinary conference in NYC last summer to organize the national organizing efforts of multi-racial and multi-cultural action groups, to maintain the unity and jobs with peace movements. They have several regional offices; the national office is 325 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10001 (212) 621-8011.

3. INALASE: Institute of Arts and Letters of El Salvador in Exile. Recently formed to promote a campaign and a series of exhibitions of Salvadoran culture to help Salvadoran artists and intellectuals in this country and to broaden understanding of the Salvadoran people. Suggestions, contributions, and requests for information should be addressed to the director, Daniel Flores Avendaño, at the following in the field of music, theater and letters.

4. MEDIA NETWORK is a national alliance of organizations, individuals, and media activists that offers a database for information on films, video tapes, and slide shows on a wide range of issues. All organizations are interested in disseminating and reformatting texts. A report on the creative use of media for organizing in the peace movement is "New York: a media study in 1966, and other media related programs and services. For membership or other information, write or call 208 W. 13th St., N.Y., N.Y. 10011. (212) 420-0071.

5. NVMS: The New York Marvin School. In addition to classes, mini-courses, and lecture series, the school organizes and welcomes cultural events—including performances in the Brecht Auditorium, visual artists for display in the lobby, and course proposals in the arts and music history for the general curriculum. NVMS, 25 W. 18th St. 7th Floor, N.Y., N.Y. 10011. (212) 599-6429.

6. NAPNOC: The Neighborhood Arts Programs National Organizing Committee. PUBLISHERS OF CULTURAL REVOLUTION. A national alliance of community-based arts programs and artist activists. NAPNOC members are artists, workers, art administrators, and others involved in community cultural work in all arts of setting—urban, suburban, and rural. NAPNOC works to provide a forum for sharing and exchanging information and to act as advocate for the movement for cultural democracy. Among its other activities, NAPNOC publish a newsletter, Cultural Democracy, consults with community groups and public agencies and carries out research on neighborhood arts and public cultural policy. NAPNOC is a membership organization. C.D. subscriptions are $15.00/yr. individual; $20.00/year Organizational and Institutional—10% is included. Please return this form to: NAPNOC, P.O. Box 5464, Buffalo, N.Y. 14222. (716) 232-3905.

7. P.A.D.: Political Art Documentation/Distribution—An artist's resource and networking organization coming out of and into New York City. PAD's main goal is to provide artists with an organized way to do their art, to demonstrate the political effectiveness of image making, and to provide a framework within which progressive artists can discuss and develop alternatives in our current art system. PAD holds a political forum on visual art every Sunday of every month, and holds open meetings on the last Sunday of every month at the office. PAD has an upcoming workshop, open to new membership—the PAD journal, UPRIGHT, an Archivist Networking/ Art Project. Write the study group, Write or call 339 Lafayette St., N.Y., N.Y. 10012. (212) 420-8196.


9. UDC: The Union for Democratic Communication. A national organization of communication, media production and activists devoted to the critical study of communications issues and policies, production and distribution of alternative media, and the development of democratic communications systems in the U.S. and abroad. Includes individual members, local chapters, national organizations, and a national steering committee. The national organization works to facilitate communication among regions, local chapters and individual members. UDC held the first national conference on critical communications in Philadelphia in November. For further info: Karen Passell, UDC, N.Y.C./FITP, 725 Broadway, 4th Floor, N.Y., N.Y. 10003. (212) 599-3828.
RADICAL HUMOR

By Paul Buhle

We are definitely at a new stage of...well, an unpredictable hilarity, a disorganized army of revolutionary laughter is in lockstep with peace and hunger marchers, a hashwagon of red clowns. When Jan Hoffman announced in the Village Voice that its own fragile, often wrong-headed and unfunny way, the First Radical Humor Festival finally did start something, the time was set. James Wolcott's third attack in Hamer's plunged the infant movement into the sort of controversy normally reserved for media hype and events. How delightful to be weaned as "the disinterested mummies in a cheapie horror film...there's no escaping them, they're relentless, they pursue you with their bandaged outstretched hands." What is humor but the revenge of the Repressed in History upon the composers of repression?

For Wolcott, the Radical Humor Festival held at NYU, April 22-24, was "the last wheezing gasp of the counter-cultural left." So it might have rightly seemed, from time to time to the observers of Paul Krasner, Paul Krassnberg, Florence Kennedy and the host of other erstwhile notables. But the great majority of performers, like the audience, came out of a different place. Feminists most prominently, amateur and local club poets from just about every social stratum, cartoonists from Europe, Latin America, US and Canada displaying their work together after decades of scattered work, video freaks, radical

HUMOR: A New Movement

...a disorganized army of revolutionary laughers in lockstep with peace and hunger marchers...

— the bigger the idea, the greater the headaches is the...approposite low-budget formula. As usual, a few people took an enormous weight upon themselves. In the last two weeks of preparation the planners also had another shining example of humor agitation from at hand. "Carnival Knowledge," a reproductible rights street festival with fascinating/informative booths and exhibits in the sense transferred to the Humor Fest. Know Your Right to Life Senator, the passerby squeezes the testicles of the politician to see what state he comes from, entertainment, food, and agitation, crowds engaged as directly as possible. Some of the energy spilled over while varieties of fresh people joined various committees. Meanwhile, key people seemed to represent whole ranges of different experiences. Bertell Olman, inventor of the Class Struggle Game and founder of the Center for Marxist Studies at New York University; Bob Carroll, a political "Fourth World" New Age radical; Jim Murray, once-styled regional traveler, in recent days activist with FADD; and along with various artists and graduate students a feminist cadre, notably the person Patti Lehr-witz. Willy-nilly, the main idea had become performance.

In this light, the opening session had a curious significance. For Robin Tyler, Paul Krasner and Pio Kennedy — arguably the humor personalities of the Left (Abbie Hoffman was out of town and Professor Irving Corey declined to appear at night) — came on very serious. Tyler had been touring the US for NAM chapters among other sponsors, determined to find an alternative route to the commercial avenues mostly denied her. Kennedy stressed the importance of cable television for the political period opening ahead. Krasner, who had recently re-emerged from a semi-retirement to do club dates, mused the legacy of Lenny Bruce and the significance of comedy when the outrageous ceases to shock. All three talked about the necessity for something which, to my memory, no one raised even in the utopian days of the sixties, a radical humor movement united in its attack upon society's ills and its imperative of autonomy within the larger Left.

Could that movement be created with more serious talk about humor? Panels and workshops had been a special importance for that not inconsiderable number of attendees who were engaged in some kind of local humor practice. Lots of information was traded problems technical and political discussed frankly by professionals with their critics (who isn't a humor critic?). On these first warm Manhattan Spring days, a lot of meetings turned up empty. All others, panelists had not been able to formulate the questions, couldn't quite figure out why they were in the same room together. Then again, not every
Marxist meeting has sometimes-sude-cellist Charleen Menken crawling around on the floor, Barbara Ehrenreich giving off punchlines like a seasoned club entertainer, Jules Peiffer exchanging qips with undersized comic artists. If all the talk became a side-show, it was perhaps because the feature performance were destined to be spectacularly good or bad.

The difficulties of Performance Night have been analyzed and mocked in The Guardian, The Voice and Harpers so thoroughly that only a few misunderstood elements remain to be elucidated. The crowd of some 900, brought in by notices in The Voice and the New York Times as well as our own publicity, had that heterogeneity we are all hoping to find in a repertored Left. Lots of real veterans, labor activists, ex-CPers, grizzled Trotskyists mixed with the young generation of college kids; and your functional post-New Left couple who had gotten a babysitter for the night. They were a hopeful group in all, sensing (as a number said to me) that something historic was about to take place and that they were on hand to see for themselves. Among the problems they rapidly discovered lay technical flaws which symptmetized deep political ambiguities. The show required a producer, a manifestation of collective discipline, pace, rapport with the audience to be strained, altered and reached upon some new ground. Instead, individual performers and the M.C. impatiently conducted themselves as individuals within an artificial whole, adding contradiction upon contradiction. Virtually every performer played too long for the strength of the material. Variety says that stand-up routines should about 15 minutes and be separated by music, dance, anything. The cerebral prejudice of the Left brought one comic after another; worse, almost without exception each seized the moment—probably for a long-awaited chance at a good-sized audience—and ran to a half-hour or so. The two feminist comics who stayed on schedule—Joy Behar and Taffy Jaffe—were arguably the best performers in the show. Don’t Richard Pryor and Lily Tomlin and Robert Klein go on for an hour? Sure, their material is super-polished. And more important, the audience knows what to expect, even how to get past the rough spots. That mood has to be established, and the high-scale forum is not the place for easy experimentation.

Thus the rampant misunderstanding between Spiderwoman, a Native American woman’s theatre group long established in Off-Broadway, and the audience. The performance was pure Third World confrontation, a stylized piece from the early 1970s. The ethnic jokes don’t go down so good anymore under Reaganism; and anyway we had grown tired of the style long before. Ironically, within weeks Spiderwoman would perform Chekhov to rave reviews. Here, they had found just the wrong thing to do at the right time. Audience restlessness passed into revolt. The feeling of expectation dwindled back toward the idea of radical humor and of a premier Left laughter’s night.

Nevertheless, there were many charming mo-

notes. The exuberant childishness of an a capella Tulli Koppang’s satirical songs; Steve Ben-Israel’s verbal sound-effects; amplified version of the bomb noises little boys make in mock-battles, had a similar innocent originality even when the schtick of Behar and Jaffe came down to the old ethnic variants of neighborhood growing-up jokes—nothing inherently radical—the bravery of autobiographical expression bespoke some grasping toward a new comic principle. At their best moments, Robin Tyler, Paul Krassner, and a dozen others seemed to be addressing members of an extended family, getting off not cheap-laugh one-liners but a critique whose manifest irony did not diminish political determination. The intertwining of technicians, performers and audience earlier that day and the next reinforced the sense of process which has been the New Left and Women’s Movement’s greatest contribution. Not since the days of the ethnic theatrical and choral movements, when the number of actual relatives and life-long friends of the performers counted among a majority of the audience, had the intimacy in a large-scale Left event been so evident.

The failure of Performance Night was, finally, that the organizers had not figured out what to do with the sense of support and anticipation that flowed from the listeners. Many people went away with a curious attitude—they had been by turns interested, bored, at last intolerably restive and worn out. But they felt part, even an antagonistic part, of some promising larger development. Not a normal reaction to entertainment, by any standard. We live in strange, expectant times.

The next day more than saved the Festival. The cabaret, Club Rockefeller, put the event over the top. Barbara Kopit and Barbara George, activists in the ostensibly apolitical but loony Halloween Parade which crossed the Village each year, had led a committee to stuff out and invite talent in a more informal setting. Meanwhile Lucy Lippard directed a PADD crew hanging the Art Show in a makeshift gallery at the Loeb Student Center. The show described in the Voice as having “practically bolted” off the walls—yet curiously ignored in other accounts—comprised a potpourri of cartoons, paintings and art objects, perhaps half gathered from West Coast, European and Latin American sources on the basis of a Humor Manifesto artists signed a couple years ago in Cultural Correspondence, the other half from artists in the New York area. In this space, Vangelis Pavlidis, the leading Greek political artist (and

member of the ruling Socialist Party) had his work exhibited along with Meston’s famous Rites, Italy’s Lido: Contemorari’s editor of a suppressted satirical magazine, Ca Bal, Quebecoise feminist Mira Paradies, New York photographer Laura Pettinone (who worked with the film Missing) and literally hundreds of others. In the midst of this, a make-shift stage served the Club Rockefeller, while a sandwich bar let the nailing crowd munch and drink. The acton began at noon, and already people were ready for a truly affable occasion.

Boston row left: Steve Ben Israel, the Lenny of the 80’s right: Tulli’s work the streets workshop, middle row: Art Spiegelman and Jules Peiffer at cartoonists’ party; right: Spiderwoman Theater’s unforgettable performance; top; Bob Carroll, another species.

politic Mc Rosenberg

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Eight hours of entertainment followed. If Jan Hoffman considered the performance a "plucky success" and Wolcott wrote it off as a succession of "squeals and doubts," the dynamic clearly lay in the eye of the beholder. Las Vegas it definitely wasn't. But most of the watchers seemed to get a kick out of the very unevenness. The elderly men and women who had done small-time, unpaid or hardly-paid gigs in the Borsal Belt, told their jokes or sang their left-wing songs from the 1940s-50s. The youngsters just launching their careers with every conceivable talent from theatre to dance to wild comedy were out there, too. The occasional star was the Lesbian group Women's One World, operators of their own coffee shop in New York. They knew already what it was to have a supportive crowd, the give-and-take of an eighties political-cultural format, but here they tried out a new constituency. Paul Zaloom's taped and graphic humor programs captured the lunacy of the time, as we barely need to exaggerate. Magician, poets, singers — too long has much humor been bursting out, ready to be put to radical use, or rather how much radical energy is waiting for the opportunity to shift the consciousness of what "Left" means. Once more, process and once more, the 'heroes' of the New Left and of Feminism carried over into new times, updated to the depth and complexity that the former movements lacked the time to develop.

Then again, some of the high energy took events place off to the side, to every side, away from featured performances. The "Media Lounge" showed twelve hours of news and sets from Groups ranging from the Chicago Comic Book people (producers of the "Shrinking American Dream") to the RCP we should have demanded to see their humor publications before we took their registration money for a table) carried on uncreative conversation with the story stream. Trying to raise the selling tickets and art catalogues, I heard about work in Philadelphia, Minneapolis, Quebec City and a multitude of" unintelligible conversations. But at last all of us had been able to find some place in the Left where we didn't have to be embarrassed about our convention of humor. When the smoke cleared, that was the main result. No wonder the highbrow culture critics missed the point. As Jim Murray, perhaps the hardest-working organizer in the Festival, reported its aspirations much further than it could possibly fulfill. And yet in so doing it conveyed something important about the green movement. There was a great feeling from many of the approximately 1500 who stopped by. To have expected more, the first time out, was utopian.

Immediately after, a core group of organizers and participants came together to carry on the work. The cabaret had to continue. And most especially from the viewpoint of performers and technicians the development of theory is the broadest sense — history, criticism, interpretation — had to come alongside the moment of performance. The new group could have called itself any number of possible names, but the "Radical Humor Union" seemed to resonate with the proper spirit. Their newsletter, "RHum," evokes visions of old Ebba Field (the "rabid patch") populist and barbed wire wits on the Left. While the Art Show set out arrangements for Seattle, Berkeley and other local stops the RHR New Yorkers began working on the Permanent Cabaret.

What does it mean anyway? Could technique be brought into line with enthusiasm by some managerial expertise, or would audiences somehow begin to share more in the creation of humor? Were "Art Shows" viable or too boxed into fixed space? Would the same talent flow over into cabaret and/or establish itself in some localistic, semi-coordinated fashion across the country?

We are a little too close to judge. In one way the Festival struggled to be a vindication of that which we rightly treasure from the New Left. In the 1960s, grotesque Wolcott's "left-wing visionaries" confronted by what they considered to be frivolous expressions of wit, would fix their adversary with a look of disdain and unleash that deadly quotation from Robert Brecht: "He who has laughed has not heard the terrible news." I wonder where he was, anyway? My memory is of local visionaries running off leaflets half-stoned and giggling, of hawking underground newspaper with more comix and poetry than news analysis, of generating new gags almost daily from the hypocrisy expressed by the government, university administration and official culture critics. The sources for humor were a small and unimportant sub-culture until the contradictions rent the New Left; they mostly picked the corpse clean. On the other hand, Abbie Hoffman, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Flo Kennedy, Gilbert Shelton and a multitude of others were really funny. If their (and other) humor does not extend mechanistically from era to era, the verve, the energy, the lessons positive and negative need to be taken up again and examined. Otherwise we capitulate to the mechanicality of the sixties. Mark from Ork trapped in an alien time-zone, flower-child irrelevancy for the Hard Questions of Life.

Second, the Festival sought to get beyond what experience, smash tab into the eighties. That was still more difficult, because a partially resurrected Left is only now locating its bearings. The very presence of the Festival made a statement, perhaps nailed down on the pole that humor might play in every aspect of our political life. If so, the accomplishment cuts both ways. A Left which can accept the humorists on more than a utilitarian ("they get the crowds") basis, more than a New Left do-your-own-thing basis, is a Left that has taken steps forward toward its own wisdom and maturity.
I've never had access to big words, so I know my guts are right. I can just sort of move from my guts and know that they're right. Everybody thought I was very sophisticated politically. I bring this up so you don't think there's some kind of superior education you need to be right — or left. You just have to know the truth, and get in touch with your guts.

There is a very good play called The Comedians, by Trevor Griffiths. How many of you are familiar with it? It's a play about a woman, excuse the sexist language in this, women. You'll notice I never use the word "girl." A friend of mine had a baby. I sent her a telegram; congratulations on your bouncing baby woman." I don't fuck up when there's feminists around. Anyway, in this play a teacher with tremendous political awareness is teaching eight young male comedians how to be stand-up comics. She shows great promise; he is political — originally political — and he has a lot of heart. He puts up and tells a joke — a sexist joke. And the student says to the teacher, in effect, "Well, so what? After all it's just a joke. Why not? So what? I did a spit-throwing joke." And the teacher, Waters, says to him something that's very important, that sums it up.

It's not the jokes. It's not the jokes. It's what lies behind 'em. It's the attitude. A real comedian — that's a daring man. He dares to see what he's aware room to express. And what he sees is a sort of truth, about people, about their situation, about what hurts or terrifies them, about what's hard, above all, about what they want. A joke releases the tension, says the unanswerable, any joke pretty well. But a true joke, a comedian's joke, has to do more than release tension, it has to liberate the white and the black to the land. It is a revolution. There's very little won't take a joke. But when a joke bases itself upon a distortion — a stereotype — the thing is not funny. It's not the truth so as to win a laugh and stay in favour, we've moved away from a comic art and into the world of entertainment and sales success. You're better than that, damn you. And even if you're not, you should bloody well want to be.

Heavy, isn't it? I wish I had written it. Oh, by the way, I'd like to thank the organizers for arranging this very important historical conference; I think it's absolutely phenomenal that you pulled it together.

You know, the whole history of comedy has always been political, and right now you are looking at me, who has been on television and done a lot of establishment things. I had Daisy Commond's dressing room, I starred on the Croft comedy hour, I was the fore-runner of the show that is now called the Barbara Mandrell show, I was the star. I quickly understood, without anybody telling me, that I was a fast-food product. That in comedy today you are corporately controlled. You do not have control over your own material. You want to get on television, and you do your three minute shot on the Carson show shot on Johnny Carson; well you can be a little bit, but that's a real different from being political. They use you up.

Freddie Prinze was a friend of mine, a brilliant young comic, and Freddie had to do "Oliver." He would cry in his dressing room and say, "this is not my material." Which it wasn't, because he was pretty political. And yet, they put you on these sitcoms. Freddie Prinze, Red Fox, the people I know that have been really brilliant — and you have to go and literally prostitute yourself in front of millions of people in exchange for this thing they call stardom. And, you know, we are like cars. It becomes them to be able to have us wear out in three or four years, just like an automobile or something, because then they can replace us, and we don't have a sense of our power. We can do a sit-com for five years, and then we're out. There is no sustaining art form in establishment show business today. So that elusive thing called stardom means what you get is to be famous, for a few years, and then if you're knocked off television, basically there aren't that many places to work.

All my life I wanted to be a star & I was really isolating, it wasn't a lot of fun, especially when I was political off stage. Patty and I, Harrison and Tyler, were very political, a guy named Fred Silverman, used to call us on the Tomorrow Show and said, "These girls will be great!" so they spent three years and a million dollars trying to put us on television — sort of as the Smothers Brothers. In the end, the most radical thing I said was, "We'd be right back." So you need television to make you want we call a star in the United States; and what you are, as an entertainer up there on television, you are a salesperson. You are their product, that's that, and you're there to sell products. So it's very important that conferences like this happen; that there are alternative circuits out there where we can stay alive, because we do exist. We do exist.

Well, ah...There's a wrinkle behind here. It's for when those professors deliver those hour and a half lectures, you wonder why they don't...while the students have to kind of wiggle and wait there.

This is the first of a three day festival called, "Let Falkland be Falkland." These proceedings are are all being taped for the Red Brigade next time they kidnap a general, they're going to play comedy instead of rock music to keep him there.

When some people heard about the Radical Humor Festival, they immediately thought of some kind of ideology. For me, being a practitioner of radical humor, I have always transcended ideology. For me, radical means going to the roots of something. I mean, if you hear somebody say they need radical surgery, you don't figure they're going to some Marxist-Leninist. When I hear Marx and Lenin, I think of Griffin and John. There is, as Robin was pointing out, a kind of co-optation of performers who show any direction that's against the grain. They go through the mainstream culture and become assimilated. There have been exceptions. There's one comedian, Tom Dreessen, who goes on the Carson show occasionally (I think he was on the Dave Letterman show a couple of nights ago) he teaches a course in comedy at UCLA, and he tells the students to be sure to get five clean minutes if they want to get on T.V., and five clean minutes is not just titis and ass, he's talking about political and religious, and all the aspects clean means to the people who pay the detergent that sponsors these programs. Even the National Lampoon, which has a reputation for being totally irreverent, I once did a column for them. The first column I talked about how I had to justify for myself how this magazine had all these full page ads from cigarette companies, the column ended the column with — (my rationalisation was) — "anybody buy cigarettes because they read my column in this magazine, they deserve to die of cancer." So the Lampoon, ever careful of its readers sensibilities, edited out the words "of cancer," and then it read, "If anybody buys cigarettes because they read my column in the Lampoon, they deserve to die." Paragraph, Period. Now that's a slightly different stance, somehow.

So people think that with the advent of cable television there'll be more freedom, and there probably will be, just out of competition to get viewers. But the greed is the same. I was the head writer for a Home Box Office special satirizing the last election campaign himself that I don't a redundancy. Steve Allen was going to be the anchor host on the show. What they told me was that they wanted hard-hitting satire. But Time-Life owns HBO, and they wanted...
kind of frothy stuff, T.V. sketch, because that's what people were used to. So what it means is that commercial television wants to get a lot of numbers of people watching, so that they can then get more money from sponsors who want to get a lot of numbers of people seeing their ads. So if you're going to write a sketch about the Big Sitter abortion clinic. This would be where there would be a teenage girl who was pregnant and then she was not, the rhythm of the cycle was wrong and they only had a 1974 conception. Her younger brother was out playing with her diaphragm in Central Park and it's perfect, she got pregnant, but she didn't want to have an abortion and she's not ready to be a mother yet. So they introduce her to a big sitter, who is a wealthy woman, and his name is John Anderson, and he wants to have an abortion, and she's not ready to be a mother yet. This is the reason, because the issue is choice, and she just wants to have the choice. So what they arrange for is a fetal transplant. This is where the cells from the womb of the poor teenage girl, are transplanted to the womb of the wealthy woman. Now this is a perfectly safe operation, it's legal, and, best of all, it's paid for by medical aid. Now the wealthy woman, the big sitter, is not going to carry this pregnancy to term. She's not going to have a baby, what do you call it — a surrogacy, that's cheating. She's going to sue — as soon as the scones from the fetal transplant heal — she's going to get an abortion. For all she can afford it, it's legal, she's not violating any laws; the young girl doesn't have to carry the pregnancy. So everybody's happy; no laws are broken. For some reason, Steve Allen said he didn't want to introduce a sketch like this. He sent us a long memo saying that, "even though I've written a book that says satire is tragedy plus time, nevertheless, there are important issues that are really too tense to air on television, and hard to make light of, and I don't want to do it." Even when it's justified." So I said, "Oh, that's a pretty funny line, let's put it in the sketch." So there was a sketch after another. I had a debate between the old John Anderson and the new John Anderson, and they didn't want to do that. We had a sketch on the Secret Service. Any line from the original sketch, because it goes through the egos and creative direction of the actors and the writer, and the producer, and the people who flew into L.A., from New York — and even the cues comes from the producer would add a few little things of their own — things get cut out and it goes through several filters and gets toned down, and it's nothing like what originally went in. So the Secret Service sketch, which took place at a Secret Service base, where the agents hang out and they're, you know, "Boy, I get nervous guardin' the President," and "I don't need to guard Reagan when his Vice President is the former head of the CIA?" It's not a very secure feeling. So...I don't believe, by the way, that it was ever fair to say
The nineteenth century Puerto Rican artist, Oller, was a friend of the Impressionists Pissarro and Cézanne. In his "calaver," a wake celebrating the death of an infant—in both Christian and Taíno beliefs an occasion for joy rather than sorrow—there is a transformation of Courbet's "Funeral of a Gypsy" into an examination of social diversity and anarchy within Puerto Rico. Jorge Soo Sanchez, the New York born Puerto Rican artist, continues this transformation in the crucible of the East Harlem ghettos.
Then I led up to this climactic scene on the plane, Air Force I, flying the corpse of Kennedy back from Dallas to Bethesda Hospital in Maryland; a scene where Jack Kennedy, who had died, was magnesium-leaming overhead the casket, and chuckling to himself, and spinning his head, as if he didn’t know what was going on, but what he thought was some Mexican rite that he had learned teaching children in Yucatán; but then he suddenly realized that Lyndon Johnson was having intercourse with her husband’s throat wound. Now, some people found this to be in bad taste, that’s American, the lack of distaste and expression. Actually there was more to it; this was not simple, casual necrophilia, because it had a purpose to it. The purpose was--and the entry wound was from the grizzly knoll, to make it look like it was an exit wound from the boot. Bonfire, that was to be part of the whole thing, to fool the Warren Commission. So it was functional necrophilia. So this became everything from a street rumor, to being believed in the intelligence community (if that’s not a contradiction in terms) -- because they, in the CIA, knew that kind of stuff goes on. So they believed it to be true. Daniel Elsberg said he believed it, but that was only because it was wishful thinking.

Now I want to read you a sentence, because the question comes up often, ‘Is radical humor effective, or is it just a steam valve to let off pressure?’. This is the autobiography of Harry Reamer. (Very loud laughter.) Isn’t that amazing—now wait, what’s funny about that? I mean, I know it’s funny, but I just think, I could—Harry Reamer.” I’ll have to remember that line, ‘Harry Reamer.’ (Continued laughter.) You’ve seen him on Sixty Minutes, he’s the third tick-tack from the left. This is called ‘Before the Colors Faded’, it’s from an old Arabian proverb, ‘Fists on it, before the colors fade.’

Now, this is a chapter on Little Rock, Harry Reamer covered Little Rock, which became a generic term for racial hatred. ‘This was in 1957; probably some people were not even born till after then, and think that Little Rock is a sparkling water, like Perrier or something. But it was the incredibly horrible, heinous, absurd situation, with grownup white adults spitting at little black kids trying to go to school, throwing rocks at them, setting their buses on fire. O.K, now here we have Harry Reamer’s insight into understanding Little Rock. He says, “The key to understanding the story, and in turn, there are two keys to understanding most stories. One is that usually distrust always at least two sides to any story.” (You can see why they call him Harry Reamer.) “The other is that the world doesn’t have many real good guys. If you define a villain as a person who thinks of himself as a villain. I’ve only been aware of two figures in the news during my career who were willing to shake hands if called to deal with them professionally. I suppose that what Thomas Jefferson called, ‘the decent respect for the opinions of mankind’, requires us to identify those two. They were Senator Joseph McCarthy, and a man named Paul Krasner, or something like that.” (Terrific applause.)

KING REAGAN’S COMPLAINT

I’ll tell you, this was the most perverse compliment I ever got. First of all, when I started doing stand-up comedy in 1953 I was making fun of Joe McCarthy in night clubs, and he told me not to do it. So now we’re coupled with him is just bizarre. I mean, when I read this...now there are ways you have of knowing whether you’re dreaming or not—I thought I was dreaming when I read this. I mean, you can dream that you’re reading, ‘case this is a linear society. I mean, they don’t dream about that in our literate societies. (What we should do is ship our surplus television to pre-literate societies, so they can go directly from pre-literate to post-literate, without having to read all those books in between save all that sleep that sleep.)

All right, so, I go on here, I got out of my shock, and I continued, ‘Joseph McCarthy and a man named Paul Krasner, something like that, who published a magazine called The Realist in the 1960’s. I guess everyone knows who McCarthy was,’ but he explained me, ‘Paul Krasner and his Realist’ were part of a 60’s fad —
publications attacking the value of the establishment, which produced some very good papers and some very bad ones. Kramer has not attacked establishment values, he attacked decency in general. Isn't that something? I mean, it gives a whole new dimension to the meaning of "decent." "Harry, are you decent?" "Yes." "Okay, I'll come in there and attack you." If anyone has anything decent about the quarter period, just ask and I'll attack it. Generally nothing specific. "Attacked decency in general, notably with an alleged lost chapter from William Manchester's book, the Death of a President. To paraphrase critic Clive Barnes' remarks about a movie: The Real Jellis was the kind of paper that gives dirty papers a bad name.

My grounds for despising them were that, based on their speech and actions, they had to know they were villains. Which is true. I would get up every morning and look in the mirror, and say, 'Good morning, happy villains! What villainous things will we do today?'

Then he says, 'I suspect that even those two, who seemed inevitable to me, thought of themselves in a much better light. And in Little Rock,' this is his evolutionary jump in consciousness, 'the people, the people, the people, leading the opposition to desegregation, with the exception of Governor Faubus, and a few other opportunists, did not see themselves as oppressors of black human beings, but as defenders of a system that worked best for both whites and blacks.' Isn't that inspiring?

So, I went through some changes about this. I thought, 'should I use that? But, I mean, is that a defense? Suppose he proved that I attacked everything decent, then what would I do? So I thought, 'decided I'm going to do it. I'm going to stick.' Harry Reasoner, I'm going to follow him from cocktail party to cocktail party where he least suspect it. I'm going to go up to him and say, 'You're Harry Reasoner? Let me shake your hand.' And then I'm going to shake it. I'm going to say, 'Harry, you don't know how much I enjoyed your coverage from Little Rock.' I'm just going to use it. Let me get him all heated, then I can say, 'By the way, your name is Paul Krause, or something like that.' And see if he gives any reaction. And I'm going to have a picture of Harry Reasoner and me shaking hands, and I'll have a blurb, "Paul Krause attacks decency in general." — Harry Reasoner. Make the fucker pay for his blurb. So... guess my time is about up. We'll continue that later.

Thank you.

**VASECTOMY**

I asked a boyfriend's home, Spoke with his mother. She said he lives in California. I asked if he still has his sense of humor. She scoffs at his wife (ma belled his data) Ditto, wife and kids. Then she said, "Tell me, Jimmy, are you married, single, living with someone, or what?"
I said, "Well, I've been all those, plus divorced, and now I'm into being with someone I don't live with." She said, "Oh, did you have any kids?"
I said, "No." (Almost said "When")
And she said, "Well, that's good. Divorce is painful, but it isn't harmful. unless you have children."

**LATE NIGHT**

Would you like to lose a few pounds? Try Mrs. Glandstone's Frozen Diet Pizza, the perfect low calorie way to enjoy your favorite nun-sพอใจ delicious pizza. Buy Mrs. Glandstone's! It's pizza not by the slice or the slice but the bite, yes, the bite! And don't forget Mrs. Glandstone's Frozen Diet Pizza Deluxe. One bite, with everything.

Jim Murray

If you're too scared to bite

By Flo Kennedy

Hi y'all. I'm only going to tell one joke, and that'll be towards the end so don't feel you have to laugh, because nothing's going to be funny. I think it's important for us to recognize that this Radical Humor Festival will give us a chance to recall humor before the pigs got a monopoly on it, as they have in the case of the flag, the family, and morality. So it's really timely, because there's not very much left, and humor's going to be a good way to get back some of the shit they've already taken over.

It's very important to use ridicule, because ridicule is a very free, effective, and available tool. We have to be kind of busy, though, because we always have to watch doing what's already been corrupted. As Robin and Paul, (both Pauls, actually) pointed out, they keep making you extend your limits because they make "O.K." what you started, not that you did it and lived, and made money on it. We have to understand that if we're going to make and keep humor radical, we have to be...well they describe us as "outrageous" — and I think I'm not so outrageously except that I say things that you don't say at the time that they say you don't say them. Of course, once you make it O.K., then they say it. It's the same as the 17th deviant that was "verboten," until everybody started wearing it you have to do that with humor.

For example, sexuality is now "in" because it's commercialized, so meaning on T.V. is O.K. So what you have to understand is that there is still somewhere to go from sexuality, because in recent years the right wing is sort of becomes the pot of gold that you're looking for when you get to the end of the rainbow — you find yourself in marriage, which often turns out to be a crock of shit, instead of the pot of gold. Sexuality has become the right wing joke, in a sense, because it gives them control, just when women begin to decide that they want to free themselves from crotch control.

You have to understand that what sexuality is really about is "embarrassment." You begin to analyze it, how can you appreciate that this is not just a part of the right wing plot, because they have not yet given us the permission or the permission to use the concept. Still, if you think about what it means when you say you're too fat, or you're too thin, or you're too skinny, or you've too heavy, or your ass is too small or too big, or you don't just think about your pretty little arms and you think about your pretty little legs too — that's mostly about sexuality. In other words, if someone is too old, what are they too old for? You're too old to be fucked.

The other aspect of sexuality is oppression. When you say somebody gets fucked, you mean that they've been oppressed. Someone recently reminded me that men use sexuality in different ways: all men don't get fucked. When you say a man's been fucked, it means he's been treated like women are quite often treated.

The main thing is we must not let our rage go without expression. If you're too scared to bite, try humor.
Then it makes me think of "niggerization", which is a concept that shocks a lot of people — it shocks while people more than black people, because they think it means they're black — but you don't have to be black to be niggerized. It helps, but you don't have to be. Niggerization is a way that you're abused and mistreated. It's also a way that you can free yourself from having to conform.

I think that the main idea of radical humor, in addition to being something that the establishment has not yet accepted, is that it's a form of ridicule. For example, imagine five or six years ago we came up with the concept of the "prestigious" people didn't quite understand what was going on. It was just the idea that there are certain, like Burke Farber and George Will, who seem to be relatively intelligent, yet they can't keep it up long enough to reach the logical conclusion — so what they do is they lose the hard-on in the middle of the fight, you see, though they start off sounding like they know what they're talking about. It's like Dan Rather did it when he was analyzing the assassination of John F. Kennedy. You use concepts that are insulting, and that fit the people and you get comedy out of what they're serious about. When my producer and I were talking about this comedy festival he came up with the Idea of calling It. "Play-Booie", because if you called him, "Ambass-Booie", you would be sort of ridiculing him, but at the same time you would be using what he is to smear him, which could easily get very popular.

I'm doing this live thing tomorrow is because I feel this radical festival has importance beyond just this set up down here. I've gotten a lot of three and four for like a live broadcast which I will be using a few of the people from here to you, know, take this thing beyond the confines of the actual festival itself. I think it's going to be on channel 3. It's going to be one of our specials and it will be 60 minutes, and I hope to get our brand new beautiful star now that opened up the thing (Dianne van. What are you doing between three and four tomorrow afternoon?

One of the things I want to talk about, in addition to radical humor itself, is why you're going to do with communications, because humor has been taken over by the mass media — and, actually, smiling and laughter has become a sort of right wing relief opportunity. In other words, they make comedies out of just about everything — whether it's the police, or the shift workers — everybody is funny and everybody is grinning. You really almost have to be bitter and satirical in order to have any room left, because they've practically occupied the entire area. What we have to do is to analyze what it is that they've taken away, and take it back.

I'm post-monopolist but I'm very interested in sex, because that is one of the best control mechanisms. It's the basis for much of the pill of guilt, it's the basis for much of the moral majority, and it's the basis for much of the religious control that even though of us who don't think of ourselves as being particularly religious are more or less bound by it culturally.

So it seems that one of the things you have to do is to analyze the techniques of niggering, for example — and recognize that the struggle of those of us who have been in a certain amount of education, or a certain amount of money, or a certain amount of technique in dealing with the society, is to avoid becoming niggerized. The teacher is essentially, as far as the society goes, a niggerizer — it's their job to niggerize the people. We need to get to the social workers and get to a great extent even the lawyers, maybe especially the lawyers. The problem we have in mind is first to analyze what needs to be debunked or dehumanized or whatever, and then just do as complete a job on it as we possibly can.

We've got to appreciate a concept that one of my friends, and what I call "Square Table Regulars" on my program on television, Hallock Schipko, calls the "ballock syndrome". It's one of those things we've had to work in our humor — because radical humor has to hurt some few people at least pretty badly, first to analyze what needs to be debunked and get some damage done to the kind of humor than most people really read. Quick, before the right wing discovers some of this, because everything else we've come up with they've taken over and commercialized and, as in the case of electronic ministry, made it into a multi-million-dollar thing and we have lost out completely. It's almost as ironic as discovering that white folks are making all those selling fried chicken and fish to black folks, and if there's anything in the world that black people do better than just about anybody, it's fry fish and chicken. It's this kind of understanding that makes us know that we have to come kind of fast, because we're losing whatever little bit of ground we had left over.

One of the several things I'm suggesting concretely is that more of you, whoever thinks they could possibly relate to it, should get time on cable television. That's going to be the last position for those of you who are anywhere near adulthood. This low power shit is going to take, who knows how long, maybe a day or two, or a week or two, or a month, or whatever. It doesn't mean that it will still be something that is going to go pretty fast, I think we need to take over cable.

We've also been working on a thing called the "American Folliettes", which I haven't talked to Robin or Paul about, but the idea is to do some more sophisticated fund raising which would involve satirical songs and humor that we would take to various areas of the society — whether geographically or just constituency — to make a travelling show of sorts out of humor, because if we're not going to get back on television, then we need to go live somewhere. The problem in our fund raising is so hectic and so clumsy and so childish and so unfortunate that I think we need to get it more sophisticated, and to make humor a basis for fund raising — which means records, cards and live performances.

We need a little more time for questions, so I'm cutting my stuff a little short. I think we need to understand that peasants are the best people in the world, and I think that's one of the reasons we need to focus on getting television before RCA and Warner Amex and Cox cable and all the rest of them gobble up all that's left, that vacuum that we created by falling pick up on cable. I think we've got to grab what there is left of cable and move on it fast — it can be very political and I think we'll come to that possibility at another time.

I just want, quickly, to tell you the one joke I promised to tell you — which is not exactly a joke, it's really my explanation of what I think is the proper approach to oppression, and nigirization, and fuckability — our fuckability. It's called the territorial approach, and it's based on a story of those of you who've heard me before know it already cause I don't alter my material that much, but anyway, it's just in my opinion the super time less way to explain the power of the weak. It's based on a story about a woman whom I first called "black", and then changed it to "colonized", because she's very very unpolitical and not at all bitter or anything, like I would be if I were normal. She's in this dentist's chair and he's hung over, it's a Monday morning about 7:30 and she's his first patient, and he cuts out her gum, and she's rimming and spitting, and then he cuts the inside of the same area of gum, and then she cuts his tongue, which scares a bit much — and then the next thing he knows she has a guy in the office. And having gone to a fairly good dental college, but not having known what to do when a patient wants to put his hands, she says: "What is this?" And she says, "We are not going to hurt each other, are we, doctor?"

The basis of the bit is that you don't have to get so weak and pathetic that you can't put pressure where it hurts most, and that, I think, is why we must be irreverent, not only through humor, but in other ways. But the main point is we must not let our rage go without expression; and if you're too scared to bite and you're too proud to suck, then try humor. Thank you.
Why do we care about the history of humor? Because when we laugh, something mysterious happens. We step outside the civilized boundaries of polite conversation. We recall a primal impulse, like sexuality, the context of humor changes. But when we pass back to the covers, a lot of the wit and whimsy from the ideas and feelings in the same. To try and understand the meaning can be a stifling exercise. Who wouldn't rather catch five good minutes of a Marx Brothers film than read a tired academic analysis? But we need to seek out the element in our humanity which wants to laugh as much as an organisms. Everywhere we have been, everything we might become is now endangered. To recall the strengths and truths of humor from the darkest recesses of our collective history is to help us go on living, so that we may one day laugh with a relief and a happiness that we have never laughed with before.

The comic is the first and last magician of human history. The Wisconsin had a cycle of old, old stories about him. He has magical powers (one of which is a voluntary amnesia) but seems stupid about the most obvious things, like how to catch fish or when to take a shit. And he will, notoriously, do anything for a laugh. Finally, a disgruntled Deity says, "You are the oldest of all those I have created...I made you a sacred person...you became the butt of everyone's jest. You, although you were given the greatest of powers, made light of my creation..." He is so busy that not until he dies can order his established among the peoples and animals of the earth. According to Jung, his mythic origins must be pushed back to the dawn of society. He is the "fore-runner of the savages, and, like him, God, man, and animal at once," both subhuman and superhuman, above all unconscious of moral restraint.

The Greek Joke offers a more intellectual approach. Why? The father of all comedy, becomes the mythic keeper of the great secrets from some long, long ago. Invented by Hesiod in the 4th century B.C., the riddle is not an ancient Egyptian deity in the Greek period. Thoth, even by the standards of the age very ancient. According to the recent illumination of Immanuel Reiss, Osiris-Thoth had been a wise god, agriculturist and musician, believer in the Black Mud Soil of fertility and rhythm. The ultimate symbol of hope, freedom, love, guiltless heroes that paste organized religions of repression right down to the present day and the formulation of the "hermetic" mysteries which early Arcadian (or Thomist) rationalism and predict dialectical logic. The real-life big problem of Greek Antiquity, by the way, was Heraclitus, the most famous dialectician till Hegel and Marx.

Jung says that civilization pushed these myths into the background, but cannot get away from them. They are not the source of Freedom, and of its child Imagination, remains dark, Eric and Good mixed together and seen through symbols, vision, revelation. If Magic tan, as the mystics insist, be as the original state of Nature, then humor infallibly offers the expression which is beyond the power of Reason, but not beyond the power of the enlightened mind, the class society conflicts bring humor into action. Oracles, with a special relation to the spirits of the dead, deliver extemporaneous gags lines which literally drive violators of the common code to madness, shame or death. Some scholars think the Druids should be seen as humor-priest-bitches. Organized bands of women definitely had a presence, and to the spiritual power that nature-religion, gastronomy and alchemy attribute to them. Fragmentary evidence, like the Song of Thanksgiving partially preserved in the Old Testament, shows public attack wielded the golden sword in the name of a vision of the future society lost somewhere in the past. Agrarian communalism that had once existed in ancient Israel? A mithological age (as Lewis Mumford once suggested) of harmony under the sign of the goddesses and peaceful agriculture? Or that original state of consciousness where the mythic god-man-animal signaled the proximity of Nature retained to subjectivity — the moment of a potential evolutionary leap into higher magic that man did not take and has ever after longed to achieve? Perhaps the distinction is not so important. In any case, humorists went on the attack in the name of someplace outside the existing civilization. Indian culture resists of the other place because the "simplicity," fool and shaman, remain alive in the joke. "The clown's behavior is a vivification of his knowledge of another reality," Yomrame Hightower says. As we move through class society to self-organization, humor reminds us of what we may have been and what we may yet become, if only we can set ourselves free.

From the mixture, humor faces tremendous repression. Because its militants resisted and mocked the emerging rulers, the program of expanded exploitation, dangerous humor became perhaps the first ideological enemy of the State. History records the forced dispersion of organized humorists, in the Middle East, in Europe, in Ireland and elsewhere by means of torture, banishment, execution — especially when the humorists were women. Christianity and the State calls it "primitivism," an especially vicious role, perhaps because "the Laughing Jesus" was one of the major heretical claims of the occult and revolutionary Gnostics. A God who joked had to be a kind of conjurer himself, leader of a mystic brotherhood. He would never accept the State religion preached in his name or the accompanying repression of women's sexuality, after his own erotic embrace (the Gnostic texts insist) of Mary Magdalene. As its economics and politics, Christianity had to suppress the revolutionary elements within its religious background. It succeeded not only because it is the State power, but because the
The duplicity of life, the fakery of our lives, the hollow parts of our lives, the heaping of worthless upon worthless is an existence. When I look into the faces of people, I see only the, a kind of mechanical repetition of the same pattern. There is no originality, no individuality, no uniqueness. It is as if everyone were a clone of the other. The only difference is in the way they dress or the way they talk. There is no depth, no substance, no real life. It is all just a facade, a show. And this is what we call civilization.

The American Dream, the idea that anyone can make it if they work hard, is a sham. It is a rejection of what it means to be human. It is a rejection of empathy, of compassion, of community. It is a rejection of the natural order of things. It is a rejection of the beauty of life, of the complexity of life, of the richness of life. It is a rejection of the truth.

The American Dream is a lie. It is a lie that has been told to us since we were young, a lie that we have believed, a lie that we have repeated to others. It is a lie that has been repeated for so long that it has become a part of our culture, a part of our society, a part of our way of life. It is a lie that has been repeated so many times that it has become a part of our DNA.

But it is not just the American Dream that is a lie. It is the entire system that we live in. It is the entire structure of society. It is the entire way that we think and act and live.

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movements of the impoverished. Winchesky, Nadir and others said in their jokes all along that the continuation of Capitollism meant disaster for the Jews, and that the Jews were going to socialism, reification, nationalism; any added to the disaster. They spoke for other immigrants from Finland, Italy and Eastern Europe, each group with their own leftist laughters aimed at the same goal. For those who arrived from an old culture, humor signalled that deeper knowledge, that other reality they held within themselves to keep strong. The Marx Brothers and the Three Stooges speak of bourgeois reality to the delight of every immigrant group. They mostly considered themselves fortunate to be in a land of relative plenty; they did not wish to lose their souls to it. And almost every immigrant first- or third-generation, joke about American life shows just that fear. They not the journalists knew that fear.

No medium meant so much for the immigrant, especially the immigrant radical, as the movies, and when Winchesky, Nadir and company did make a movie, no figure meant so much as Charlie Chaplin. The often lampoon prophet, the human in a society remade for machine scale — Chaplin represented to his vast world audience the triumph of the spirit over conditions. Socialism, which Chaplin cherished in his own old way, has not triumphed and the Little Tramp had to disappear into the sunset. But the moments of pathos, like scenes of recent years in Bread and Chocolate or Bye Bye Brazil, capturing the essence of those scenes that seems to have fled the Woody Allen's since they left their own childhood in Brighton Beach. To the present, of any ethnicity, mass society is a mass wonderland and house of horrors all at once; he or she carries along (like the great mass of entrants into the cities of the current day) a bagful of books, oral tradition and class instincts developed over the centuries.

The task is to make the society different by discovering beauty in the common streets, the unexpected quarters. Like the athlete or dancer who discovers in motion some fundamental and inexpressible human capacity, the humorist finds in the irony between what is and what might be the promise of the future.

The celebration of women's self-confidence, or immigrant-racial tenacity we move to the next stage of American culture from within. The continuities are obvious but something has changed. Earlier radical humor contributed to the general culture; the next radical humor has to tear itself down, rip apart and reconstruct, in the most self-conscious terms.

We can see the movement earliest in the most important medium, comic strip. The genius of the radical humor here, Harvey Kurtzman, took the stage at our April Festival, "Data in the Drugstore," Marshall McLuhan called the comic strip of the early 1950s that Kurtzman single-handedly edited. Just at that time comic book production had reached a peak, and the medium had come to be as much a part of what we call Cold War society which murdered the Rosenbergs, militarized American domestic life to a previously unimaginable permissive degree, and developed a

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**Radical Humor**

Pebble, DD; CC: founder of the point of production

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**Bibliographical Note**


Radical Humor

Paula Bulted's voice is strong, direct, and somewhat sarcastic. Her comments are insightful and often humorous, despite their serious subject matter. She seems to be someone who is not afraid to speak her mind, even if it means going against the grain. Her presence in the conversation adds a layer of wit and intelligence to the discussion.

Ironically, Paula Bulted is a woman who is known for her work in the field of human rights, specifically focusing on issues related to gender and sexuality. Despite being a member of a minority group, she has managed to make her voice heard, and her words carry weight. This is evident in the way she speaks, which is both confident and compassionate.

It is clear that Paula Bulted is a woman of great intelligence and integrity. Her words are a testament to her dedication to her cause, and her ability to communicate effectively. She is a role model for all those who wish to make a difference in the world, and her message is one that needs to be heard.
Flo Kennedy: By the way, that's Hal Miller, my associate producer on the Flo show.

Paul Krasner: And it was from Tomno's, toilet training that Ronald Reagan got his idea for the trick down theory.

Daniel Del Solar: I think the key question is distribution, because we can do as funny all get out in this gathering of two hundred people, and we can be as sharp and truthful as ever. We have all referred to... there was a good comic, but they went into the mainstream because they wanted to be stars, and they had to drop certain things, and what they had to drop was the essence of their truth-telling. Every major mass of communication seems to be closed, television, of course, cable-television, maybe a little more—

Flo Kennedy: It's completely open.

Del Solar: Cable television?

Flo Kennedy: Completely.

Del Solar: Not at all, because they won't pay you.

In this culture people need to store up jokers, deadpan images to give them something to think about when they're making love, so... no, maybe it's the other way around. I think there's something to think about when you're mastur-bating...

Flo Kennedy: Well, then you go off to war and fight that war, but right now the programming is open; and if nothing's happening, it's because we aren't on there making it happen.

Del Solar: Radio, also possible, National Public Radio, possibly. Local community stations like Pacifica stations, we do tried to that. That'll cover one-third of the population of the United States, but nothing in print. In Mexico... there's a cartoonist, his name is Rius, he's had a comic book, so-cori comic book that came out every week. There were a hundred and ten so a hundred and fifty thousand copies printed every week. This is one man; he eventually got a group together, too. What does need to get there?

Robin Tyler: You do not have to go through the establishment to work and to get to the world out. Artist cannot consider themselves poor, you always have to consider yourself broke—bequeath is poor with hope. So we may not have money in our pockets, but we're artin.

There's a thing called the women's distribution system now. There's Olivia, which is a record company, and now there's Holly Near and there, Chris Williams. Since Olivia is out in 75%, the women's distribution network has sold out to put out promotional albums that all the radical producers in every city. I play all over the United States all the time through women, or coffee clubs, to tell you a lot of the radical left has to get together and get any club in any city that will produce us. All you have to do is get the guy in Detroit and get him to produce you... Forget about the big money of television, the point is to get to Detroit and get prominent. Women had no money, they were totally underground; now Holly Near draws thirty-five hundred people, and Chris Williamson; I play city to city. The idea is to get to the network going... to stop this pessimation that we can't do it.

What's a producer? One person who's willing to get the ball and just put no judg-

Flo Kennedy: It's completely open.

Audience Member: I just had a good question about the way that the media is treating gay people. What I see is there are constant attacks from the televised religious right wing... You also have the rather new annual prom at NAM and of course, in our, only a bit, but they pulled more people out to my show than they had to any of their political meetings. So get the organizations that are organized and get people who are left out and get them to put on shows. Hey, let's get a bar and put on a show. And you'll be heard.

Paul Krasner: It's not as if one empire crumbles and there's another empty shell, but it's happening simultaneously: that one thing that gives you any hope is that this empire is crumbling, is being attacked, is being altered... empire is being attacked...

Robin Tyler: Empire?

Paul Krasner: Yeah, well, empire... The new age male, the guy who dikes you, they just give you sad vibes.

Robin Tyler: I thought it was the straight motor cycle gang.

Audience Member: What do you think of the ways that the movies are treat-

Robin Tyler: If they can make money, they'll sell it, if it's sex, sex sells, they put out the Popular Sex, if they sell, they'll put out something. If it can't be openly gay in Hollywood, you cannot be an open lesbian in Hollywood. It's a straight world, and the fact that people cannot be openly gay in Hollywood, you can be an open lesbian in Hollywood. I'm not saying that it's one world, but they're frighting the hell out of you and they're frighting the hell out of you. As long as industry can make a buck off of you, they'll use it, they don't care what the hell it is. And there's no more faggot jokes on Carson, because they're afraid of losing the network. So it's too afraid to do it, too obviously anymore. But he does do his stuff as well as the jokes, and anti-women jokes, which is kind of scary.

In our culture we have to store up jokers, deadpan images to give them something to think about when they're making love, so... no, maybe it's the other way around. I think there's something to think about when you're mastur-bating...

Dianne Vose: "Our bland new Beautiful Stars"... you were saying that starlings are initiating, and the fact is I see reaction-male initiating male. I think there's some virtue in the macho. And I don't mean all of you guys out there. I'm talking about what they do, what they sell, what the corporations sell today. Some reactionary gay men are initiating what they think they will make them acceptable to society, which is the macho at-titude.

Paul Krasner: ... I live in San Fran-cisco... and there are five gay newspapers here. When "Making Love" was being advertised, in the straight papers they had Kate Jackson in the photo in front of the two men; in the gay papers they had the two men in front of Kate Jackson. So bankability is the bottom line.

Ronny Davis: It seems to me there's a question any comic has to play with, and I'm being touched by a number of things: what would you ridicule, and what would you not ridicule? What's too reverent for you to touch, and what's irreverent to you?

It's easy enough for you to ridicule yourself, the society, an underdog, and attack the system and Reagan and Carter. But the question is a greater question—is there's two parts to it: if something is important, how can you deal with it in a humorous way? Will humor, as a matter of fact, interfere with the revolution? Is there something that we call an "revolutionary radical?"... Silly comedy sometimes interferes with the political. The question is, what you're really saying, it interferes with the political. There are certain things to a person to a certain amount of comprehension about the society, then a silly joke can decimate them from it, and it's a risk you take, of course, comic. That's a constant problem. I think it's necessary to do, and what is irreverent and how shall you deal with the positive in a humorous way.

Robin Tyler: I don't think radical humor has been used by the people, the very intellectual and give all these talks, and nobody's listening to you because nobody understands it and people are bored. This is a consumer society, where you have to sell yourself for your living. Part of the fault of the left has been not to use some of the tools of the right. This is a very sophisticated society, and people are interested in things that are very well packaged, and radical humor says take a look at things—Billie diet with "Chas Struggle," instead of Monopoly. We should not regard radical humor as the things that they use.

I think that something is so serious that you can't do—I don't think silly—but do fun on it, so I'm taking myself seriously... I think that by dealing with them that way it takes away from the political meaning... I do not attack the left. A little bit we make fun of our-selves, about the language and stuff... maybe vegetarian since as, while. We like still fun on it, so I'm very careful about picking my subjects. But I don't think there's such a thing as radical humor being silly. I think you listen to any radical humor—we are so deadly serious. We are revolutionary people, I am.

In a society where pen-tagonorhrrs is a disease that the whole country is financing, through our taxes and every other way, I just don't know where for-giveness would begin.
Indian Reservations are classic examples of the failure of Socialism, quips funnyman James “Killer” Watt. Under the American system "entrepreneurial" farmers have the "right" to succeed or fail, deadpans Agricultural Secretary John Blockhead and predicts more farm foreclosures with a straight face. Not to be outdone, the old Show Biz pro himself tops his Thanksgiving belly-laugh, "Tax the Unemployed," with his uproarious "Abolish Corporate Income Tax!" The rest of the Dunce Pack pop off similar sawdust-filled, marshmallow thoughts, laughing with the titillation of ice cubes and jawjery from the Hamptons to Palm Beach. Can the aging Left hope to compete with these Black Humorists of the Radical Right? Can it evoke laughter from the lengthening lines at soup kitchens and gas stations?

These were the questions I pondered as I was passed the reprint of the Moley cartoon from its Seattle home, Doug Kahn, subject to a bizarre urge to watch the nightly news with its depiction of an even more apparent dictatorship of the rich & accompanying imposition of poverty, racism, militarism, sexism, and repression of free speech. I had long ago realized I could choose to feel one of two ways about it. I could be swept into misery and resignation in the face of Society's self-perpetuating race toward extinction with a "Woe is me bob." Or I could laugh at these folks transparent attempts to peddle the bill of Rights, National Reserve land, protection from toxic waste, etc., in exchange for their blood-drenched Corporate kickbacks. Resist, protest, demonstrate, overthrow, for that matter, but don't approach it like a cruel, self-righteous zealot. Ridicule the hideous moron doses from the oval office to your local business aum, deflate their pompous seriousness and induce others to laugh at them—a powerful strategy.

To accomplish the latter I collected my graphics and distributed them as a low-cost magazine and included them in public exhibitions from galleries to the sides of buildings. Ammunition for anyone with a mind to use it. Discovering the contemporary works in the show I was introduced to many who had similar ideas. A cartoon by Stuart Perr, for example, consisted simply of three panels in which a hooded figure approached saying "We're coming to get you...You can't stop us...So don't even try.

To me it perfectly displayed the intent of the rightists to convince us of the futility of resistance as requisite to their success. Paul Bunche's historic collection of American Artichoke cartoons, with the vivid images of Art Young and Robert Miner, show how well they comprehended this immutable fact. The extensive collection of European radical cartoons, from Gros & Stevens to Yonah and Heartfield, demonstrates how little has changed. A German leaflet from 1930 by Der Wer de Jacob shows Hitler at a fat cat banquet taking credit for cuts in benefits to the unemployed, the old and the poor but wishing to accept blame for cutting social security. Its message perfectly applicable to the current vitally of the Reagan Reich.

After a preliminary showing in Berkeley in December, the show had a triumphant opening at the New Arena Arts Project in San Francisco. Local political scene weekly, the Bay Guardian, not only listed it as a "political alert" but also gave it the critic's choice as the art event of the first week in February. A large crowd turned out for the reception and many arrived daily to get the charge offered by artistic statements of those who refuse to be made to suffer in silence. People literally spend hours carefully reading and examining the several hundred pieces on display, comprising maybe two-thirds of all materials received due to limitations of gallery space. More and more artists express a desire to contribute to the show as Paul plots a European leg of the tour. Scores of others currently produce work akin to the exhibits therein. One can only imagine the thousands of us as out there who boomerang the humiliation the controllers dish out to the old, poor, black, & out-of-work. Working with a smile, although a bitter one, they doctor news-photos, draw caricatures, make banners and effigies for marches, mail entries to anti-capitalist mail-art shows, perform comedy or topical songs, scrawl graffiti or otherwise pass it on.
A constantly encountered comment during presidential election years is "What difference does it make? They're all the same, anyway." While this may be true in the overall political sense, it indicates supreme ignorance of the real role of each chief executive and of his important bearing on the most intimate aspects of our existence. Historians may debate the fate of one another policy or proclamation, but the presidential decision most immediately underwrites exists in the physical person of the officihood himself, the turn of his smile, the tone of his voice, the light in his eyes. During each administration, the President, who determines the character of the President, determines what the line of the President which determines the kind of sex we were, the people with whom we shed our organs, their number and extent. In sexual congress every American couple becomes for a brief instant the President and First Lady. Most societies have come to distinguish the everyday identity of their mosquitoes from the being they assume when consumed by sexual energy. The logic seems obvious: as the blood rushes, senses stiffen, monstrous demands of daily existence fall like sand­ruff from the "human form divine." The name and personality under which one eats breakfast and makes a living go away to a beach to make love. And yet the rhythm of fertility, the body of the Virginian culture survives, the desire which obscures a vision of Knight errant and homo economicus. Erotic attraction was governed by the chivalric code.

TOP-DOWN SEX

THE PRESIDENCY AND YOU

By David Poindexter

We live in more secular times, the easy transportation of experience to a mythic plane no longer our prerogative. By secular standards, secular figures must be more and more to occupy the terrains of the public. We must abandon the notion that they become, increasingly sacralized. Whether our political power is now the supreme sex of our American body. In the Freudian sense, Irish hard-hat is in his mind the President of the United States and the man who could excite the passions (he does they could only own and control, Vengeance on the offensive and the well-fed.

If Kennedy had taken America outside to play, there was still an object to the game. With Johnson the game collapsed as called quick time out which grew to a decade. Like cartoon figures whose own black lines exist with them, the difference with the recognition of their weightlessness, America was seized by a vertiginous red to disappear. Organism available to all aid for the aiming became dreaded. The nightingale of high office gave way to the guttural manipulation of congressional motion and the manipulation of sheer competence.

"I like to press the flesh," said Lyndon and walked into the White House, breathing heavily.

So the group became, a great group, a constant gathering of faces in the crowd trying to find in their own way to be trusted, with the recognition of their weightlessness, America was seized by a vertiginous red to disappear. Organism available to all aid for the aiming became dreaded. The nightingale of high office gave way to the guttural manipulation of congressional motion and the manipulation of sheer competence.

"I like to press the flesh," said Lyndon and walked into the White House, breathing heavily.

"You know, the generation of young people who are there to be trusted, with the recognition of their weightlessness, America was seized by a vertiginous red to disappear. Organism available to all aid for the aiming became dreaded. The nightingale of high office gave way to the guttural manipulation of congressional motion and the manipulation of sheer competence.

Sex, no longer the forbidden object of fear, but, and of which the social aspects of life. Press conference or summit conference, affaires of state or family affaire, the body of the Virginian culture survives, the desire which obscures a vision of Knight errant and homo economicus. Erotic attraction was governed by the chivalric code. Sexual by reinventing the myth of the dark secret. His was the weapon of the secular, dirty tricks and campaigns, all were predestined to the private, the secular, and the public self. Power lay in "female" access to the privacy of others. But since the idea of sex as a natural, healthy expression of heterosexual attraction had taken such strong hold, becoming a media hoody, he had to go beneath this kind of sex to find the dark terrors. Hence the rise of homosexuality, glitter rock, and the cult of decadence.

Coming one the closet remodelled people that there was in fact a closet to come out of, and who knew what lurked in its more secret rooms? Gospel and blackmail took the place of street theatre and exhibitionism. The ritual openness of the means-to-end point was replaced by cocaine and the locked bathroom. The world of hedonism became social structure, the unconditioned orgasm of genital democracy giving way to a hierarchy of perversion. Not all organisms were created equal.

But if each person must stand in shame before his secret purposes, then ultimately the man with access to all their secrets must stand in shame before the basically race. As top cop, grand imposter, "big Religion," he becomes the great devil, the last as most full of truth of all the collective truth of Human Beast. He must initiate the moment when the group once was the unique promise of the sex act itself. Life itself was a re­working old trip, a wide world of sports.
HEGEMONY AND ME

"A child is born into a world of phenomena all equal in their power to enslave it. It calls—it sucks—it stroke the eyes over the whole uncontrollable range. Suddenly one strikes. Why? Moments snap together like magnets, forging a chain of shackles. Why? I can trace them, I can, even with epms. They fall, pull time apart again. But why at the stary they..."

By Jim Murray

The hegemonic figure of my sister's media youth was Superman. The man of steel sent here to humiliate petty men. If you don't think in terms of hegemony ("he-GEM-in"); that's okay, it's a helluva powerful world. ("It's a hell of a powerful world.")

Hegemony is the power that you cannot see. But it explains why I can see Mickey Mantle's lefty crouch, his running body over-the-shoulder reach, to catch a bases-loaded running-ending liner deep in left center.

Mantle could hit it out, or lay it down and beat it out, from both sides of the plate. When he took too long the opponents' only hope was to strike him out. Mick often went down swinging, sometimes looking, but he always came back up.

Mickey Mantle only played in black and white. (In those days you had to go to the gin house to see what the players looked like. Now you have to see it in color.) When we spent too much on domestic politics his home, I had a bedtime. As early as 8:30, as late as ninth grade.

That's okay. I thought every kid had the same.

If Richardson, Kubek or Maris didn't get on, Mantle's first-at-bat would come with me in-bed. "Al-'ka-mom, Mom, Whitey's pittching; Just out in three minutes. Lemme watch Mickey come up."}

Hey! Up! Time out! Notice the social forces in that phrase. Mickey, provided me with a reason to function, a mediated object, a useful, necessary disguise. I am not saying "Mom, come on, be with me." It was Mickey who was coming up. Mom had already hegemonicallynat ("he-DGEM-in") changed me channel. My mind was on the next morning's box score.

When Mantle retired, he addressed 70,000 emotional fans at Yankee Stadium: "I never understood, until today, how a man who knew he was going to die, could stand here and say I'm the luckiest guy in the world." (He was referring to Gary Sheffield's Lou Gehrig.)

A few years ago Mickey was asked, "Are players better today?" Neben seven gave a brilliant history lesson: "I think I've never subscribed to that Old Timer myth that our old guys are always better."

In other words, "There is no sense comparing me to Reggie Jackson. What matters is that I was better than DiMaggio." The next question, in the era of Reggie Jackson, was, "What about the modern guys?" Mickey chimed up, "The players or the owners?"

"Number seven is Mickey Mantle. The hegemonic ("he-DGEM-in") figure of my media youth. If you don't think in terms of hegemony ("he-GEM-in"); that's okay, it's a helluva powerful world. ("It's a hell of a powerful world.")

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That's okay. I thought every kid had the same.
WOMEN IN COMEDY

BY SUSAN MCCARIN

I have read and listened to sixty-one comedy routines with the specific purpose of exploring the representation of women in each and all of them. I was seeking the common or disparate attitudes towards women suggested by their portrayal in this medium. My sources were records and books of popular comedy routines from the past thirty years, that is, mainstream culture: Joan Rivers, Flip Wilson, Nichols & May, Lenny Bruce, George Carlin... and two down others.

I came to this work with some expectations: that there would be insulting of women; that there would be individuals whose humor transcended sexist and was sympathetic with women; and that I would find an evident chronological change in attitudes. My first expectation was fulfilled; my second two were not. Instead, I found in this sample an unchanging and unrelenting view of women as a traiting, and — hopefully — insignificant, "other." All of the routines were sexist; many of them were also very funny. I hope that this study prompts the reader to question the assumptions and judgments that may be the cause — and the result — of many a "good joke." I think I have learned much about the pervasiveness, the depth, yet the simplicity of male chauvinism.

The representation of women — at all — seemed so accurate and true. That this is not the case, that it is not the number, but the passive and unrealistic quality of female characters that made them barely noticeable. The list of roles and major activities assigned to males, and only males, numbers about a hundred. It includes being a priest, a policeman, Christ, a farmer, a bank robber, a dope harvester, also owning a car, getting high, being bony, paying rent — many of the ordinary and special activities that give even a stereotypical characters richness and resonance. The list of roles and activities assigned to females, and only females, is shorter: twenty-six.

Female characters also were never defined by their activity or profession, as a male would be, except by the significance of its implications as to their relations to men. There is an activity that is not on the list: the pursuit of and competition for male attention. This is one thing that women always do; even passivity is just another means towards this end. Joan Rivers' 'Nurses' joke is an example of this. "The woman in the passenger plane died while the nurse was talking to a single man!" In performing this routine, Rivers does what she ridicules. She separates herself from other women and degrades them; she uses the same tactics to get a laugh that her nurse uses to get a man.

Writers attitude is a common one: she is hostile towards her female characters. In fact, female characters were never sympathetic characters in these routines, except where they were the chaffel of sympathetic men. Phyllis Diller and Joan Rivers are so spiteful, nasty, and vicious, that any attempt to identify with their characters becomes a lesson in true oppression. Male humor about males often involves sympathizing with the underdog; female humor about females is derivative, the laugh is in the offense. Phyllis Diller's routine "The New Cosmetic" illustrates the other side of this negation of women: with a uniquely feminine masochism she gets a laugh by implying that she herself is short, snally, and ugly. "Mirrors keep me humble," Lily Tomlin's operator routine is not so extreme; still, her character comes off as a curiously combination of ignorant, wimpy, ruthless, and bitchy.

There is a male kind of negation of women that is not as direct as women's treatment of themselves, but is more frightening and constant. Even if women are present in a routine, they are hollow. The Burns and Schreiber routine "The Convention" is full of women — anonymous women, shells of women. Here is the fantasy of women everywhere, pluralities for each man, hanging on his every word. Immediately after their exchange about all the wonderful ladies at the convention, Schreiber nails Burns who was there every name in the list that follows is male. The women are merely adjuncts to this meeting of men, like gipsy populaces.

This attitude is similarly apparent in "The Old Philosopher," by Eddie Lawrence, in which the central joke is about having everything that could possibly go wrong do so, all at once. The routine seems to be directed at the average citizen/audience member. His routine includes having no money, no suit, no car, and a dead "girl." So, the average audience member must not only be male, he must experience family, categorically similar to property and responsibilities.

The female characters in all of these sixty-one routines are nothing more than very narrow stereotypes, defined through male eyes and primarily by their relationships to men. What this suggests is that women are not comprehended as individuals; that we are perceived as a distinct group. Thoughts about a woman immediately evoke thoughts about all women similar to the racist's response to blacks, or the homophobe's to gays. Reality has not successfully intruded on fantasy: the real individual does not seem to effect or break down the generalization. It is almost a cliché about racism that races do not respond to the individual, that they use the stereotype type for purposes of acting out aggression which they could not, as easily and guiltlessly inflict on an individual as on an abstract foreigner; and that one thing that can begin to change such an attitude is the experience of a person of another race as an individual, a real relationship — the intrusion of reality on fantasy. The general attitude in these routines is that "girl" (alas "woman") is a category like "colored," or "queer."

Clearly these are not self-evident aspects of this collection of humor. It is not humor about role models, not conscious or directly anyway. Rather, these are constructs and definitions that are implicit in the humor in the world view, style and common experiences of the comics and their audiences. What assumptions are suggested by these jokes? What do they rely on? What do we have to accept — so readily that it doesn't strike as the least bit odd in order to laugh at these jokes? We have to people who are not offended by the degradation of women; we have to be people who see women as women qualities in a man as an insult; we have to be accustom windows to the exclusion of women from the world of social intercourse; we have to have the expectation that men always want sex, and that women never do and we have to be able to cathode male representations complex and individual male representations as male-defined and categorical. This means that whether a woman or a man, we have to accept a set of social expectations and definitions; it means an enormous repression of the truth. It is a set of constructs stretched tight like the skin of a drum over soothing contradictory reality — a hard coat to keep in place. Maybe this is precisely where some of the humor comes from. That kind of repression is not easy, it is not easy to make women to learn masochism and self-denial it cannot be easy as a man to believe that women are less, when they clearly are not, and to try to take on responsibility for them like children or prisoners.
Statement of LAMB (ML)*

ON THE CURRENT CRISIS IN THE SO-CALLED FALKLAND ISLANDS

By Howard Rodman and Michael Sorkin

The Mohair: A History of Oppression

The age-old question of man's inhumanity to man is today nowhere more clear than in the Mohair, that chain of islands which English-speaking peoples call "The Falklands." We are the original inhabitants of the Mohair, here long before the oppressors arrived, and pasturisation.

Centuries ago, in Egypt, men commended the dark practice of blowing of ram's horn, and Pharaohs sang the degrading "Woody Bully." We were not delivered from Egypt to live in bonded tyranny here in the Mohair. We are free, yet everywhere in fetters. Let us call these pastures by their rightful names: concentration camps. Barbed wire has given way to cunningly-placed bushes; but the fact that we appear to wander at will should not obscure the modern, subtle oppressions of the 'hearts' tepidary hegemony. As Karl Marx has written — in that section of Capital which explored the concept of slave labor — "He who makes the price of cotton, the sacrifice remains constant for the lamb."

Analysis of Recent Developments

We are a nation of sheep. The current "dispute" over the provenance of the hand which wields the spear is of no interest to us. However, we must view with the gravest apprehension the landing of large numbers of rambly British soldiers on these shores. We do not wish to be brushed with these same armies. What the people must do is to allow the invasion. The invaders are wolves in sheep's clothing.

Victory to the LAMB (ML-1)

The Liberation Army of the Mutton Brotherhood (Mohair-Lambwool) is the true representative of all alpacas. Other pseudo-revolutionary groups, comprised of Bo-Peruvian shepherds and splitters, would have you believe in socialism in one pasture, in compromise with scrapders and their running dogs. Our leadership have not strayed. As Chairman Woolley wrote in The Mirror and the Lamb: "Are we not sheep? We must no longer exist merely to satisfy the oppressor's craven desires for food, clothing, and sexual relief. All the world's woolfords will not suffice to wash the fleas from their sweaters.'

Our Ten-Point Program

1. Full Montyman for the Mohair!
2. Restore to the so-called Strawberry Field the historically just designation of "Sheep Meadow!"
3. No more processed wool — an end to felt oppression.

4. All condoms to be latent!
5. Every sheepdog must have its day — before the tribunal!
6. Withdrawal of occupation troops from the S. Georgia Peninsula!
7. A Marshall Plan for the Mohair: International has failed!
8. Recognition of OEO, the Organization of Latin American Organizations, as our sole representative!
9. Serve Thatcher-Galati — with mint jelly!
10. Solidarity among foodstuffs! Self-determination for yam-bearers!

Our Call

Mutton Cadets are on the march. No more will any sheep dip the flag of nationhood before the pasturiser blips. Let the woolgatherers beware! Flo or be dead. The Mohair is ours. Revolution comes from the kick of a heel.

In floocks,

Monty Woolley, Chairman
LAMB (ML-1)
Defense Minister Baa Baa Ram
Education Minister Woolitch

* Liberation Army of the Mutton Brotherhood (Mohair-Lambwool)

If I am rejected and ignored I will be filled with pain, confusion, and finally bitter rage. I then likely reach out to all those similarly betrayed who will join me in my rage.

LESLIE KLEIN'S PETITION

By Arnold Sacher and Robert Roth

The following speech was delivered at the Caucus for Radical Concern during a three-day conference in Shaim Auditorium, N.Y.C. in February 1985.

Several years ago the gay and feminist movements came along and introduced a new form of consciousness. Women and men expressed over centuries that weren't thought about before. Feminists and gay activists spoke out with deep instrument; they were ignored and belittled, but they insisted on the truth of their complaints and the validity of their demands. It was embarrassing and uncomfortable. It was a long process but much of what they said has been incorporated as a regular part of our thinking. Now in that tradition I bring a new problem and a new consciousness — difficult and embarrassing once again, something that will cause confusion and hostility. Let me explain the background here much in the style of the earlier consciousness raising.

I live with my father in a middle class neighborhood. I go to the neighborhood park and people say to me: What do you do? How do you earn a living? I say: I have significant contacts, people in an active intellectual community, people with whom I work appear in the Village Voice, the Nation, the New York Times Book Review as well as several small periodicals devoted to social and political activism. That sounds exciting. Does it pay? Are you respected? Do you enjoy being with those people? I say it's intense and exciting. I might be on the verge of something very big. But it's complicated; these things are hard to spell out exactly. As I say this to them I am filled with confidence and there is pain in my heart. I am telling only half the truth. I do have some connections. I know some people who are important to me, but I have no real sense of security and dignity.

I sit alone at home often frustrated and sad. I feel extremely angry and frightened. I am also very embarrassed. What I am asking might seem presumptuous, but all these things will appear presumptuous at first. I repeat again that a legitimate response to what I am might demand a new consciousness and action.

I can't seem to do coherent and sustained work. I try. Occasionaly I do call up the talk shows on the radio and make an intelligent statement, and every so often I will write a reflective essay. I feel the neighbors mock me behind my back, and I use my contact with you to justify myself with them. But I really don't know how I am seen in your eyes. This is a problem, I think, for many among us, which makes it a problem for all of us. That is why I have chosen to present a formal petition. In doing so I feel hesitation and ambivalence. I don't know if I will be listened to. If I will be paid attention to or will be rejected and ignored. Also even if I am listened to I don't know how much trust I can feel. If I am rejected and ignored I will be filled with pain, confusion and finally bitter rage. I then likely reach out to all those similarly betrayed who will join me in my rage. I hope we will never have to come to this point.

Now I will offer an explicit set of demands that are particular to my situation, but hold out the possibility for a solution to the problems of isolation, neglect and abandonment that I have raised. It's not a rigid formula or blueprint. On the other hand, I would not want to whistle down the force and essence of the demands I am here presenting. I want the substance and essence of them to be preserved without dilution or compromise.

1. I would like a phone call once a month from a prominent person.
2. I would like to appear three times a year on significant panels.
3. I would like at least a couple of my reflective essays to be published in respected journals.
4. The organization of an important symposium devoted to a critical review of my work and its overall coherent pattern.
5. However little or much writing I do must absolutely not be a criteria for attention or acceptance by members of the Caucus for Radical Concern.
E.T.'s DEBRIEFING

"The small white earblings with many clean things took good care of their E.T. except that they never asked about me. They thought I was a boy because a boy said I was a boy and boy, was I lucky he thought so! When I said 'Come,' he said, 'Stay.' He didn't know it would be okay."

"Free Women Free The World" was created for the June 12th march against the nuclear arms race in order to show the connection between feminism and anti-militarism. The woman holding the shield forward with one arm and grasping the world in the other expresses that if women were free we'd be in the position to refuse to let our children be sent to war. We made our woman nude with wild body painting and a huge blob of colored hair so that she'd look sexually flamboyant and proud. We did this because we believe that if we women were allowed to express our sexuality openly and with full reproductive freedom, we'd be freeing the world of the macho/military mentality of protecting and dominating the little women at home. This mentality has a arms race. We want to create strong new images of women in order to portray our ideas of how things could be.

"Uncle Sam Wants YOU to Have Babies" comments on the anti-feminist backlash to escalating militarism.

Part of the reason for trying to keep women at home with limited reproductive rights is so that we will have to produce babies who will grow up to be drafted or be forced to join the military for lack of other options.

April Ford and Katie Dodd

THE LAST Supper OF THE I.R.A.

"That's the dominant hysteria."

—Tony Hughes

Hunger has settled in their hearts forever. There is no end to it. [He laughing] There's death only to be clean, to dance against each other in the sink. Whatever food is brought is eaten right away no waiting for the host to eat, the guest to eat, the blessing. No silent toasting of the dead...

Then sex goes first.

The body cannot reproduce which does not eat. And so it loosen its hold on the hair, empty eye sockets fill with air...

Mary McAnally

and sight turns inward, toward the sea of silence in the blood.

The naked is a sinkhole swarming in the belly. These fasting feet will never march a Beloit street.

The chalice mists the lung's cancer, the hands begin to flutter like severed wings of butterflies. Where does water go when it dies?...
By Vananlye Green

Eight o'clock in the morning. The day begins. I don't hear other working people outside my windows, making deliveries, mowing lawns, and creating birth defects for pregnant women who happen to be sleeping in the vicinity, New York. My secretary tells me that markets being 'in' to the rest of America. But my whole identity was based on being out...out of the mainstream, out of the system; and out of money. Which is why I get this job. Working to make television commercials for advertising agencies.

9:30 a.m. The elevator stops at the sixth floor. I get off, pull my key out of the pocket and walk towards the office. Then I lose my body against the door and my head to see if there is a light in the crack between the door and the molding. If it's dark, I'm first to arrive — if it's light, someone is already in the office, which is the not preferable alternative. I like to be first, because then I can set up my scan at the desk.

With phone against my ear, the pen in my right hand, and the message pad in front of me, I sit and look busy. Then on a piece of paper below the top sheet I write down a list of things to do for myself — friends to call, bills to pay, errands to run. The only problem is that after about 40 seconds I start going berserk with the "do, do, do" sound the phone makes. I have to call four times before I call up someone I need to talk to anyway. But then I have to be careful that if Edward or Jean Pierre walk in that I don't appear.

The point of all this is to look so busy with early morning emergencies that I couldn't possibly go to the bathroom and find I'm most humiliating — wash the dirty coffee cups.

I AM THE BEST PAID DISHWASHER IN NEW YORK CITY...I am the best paid dishwasher in New York City, the best at my job. The best paid dishwasher in New York City...I say to myself. However, since no one actually knows how long it takes to do dishes, it gives me a good chance to improve my take-out pictures, and chat with Gladys. Next to me, Gladys spends more time in the bathroom than anyone on the sixth floor. I hardly get to work on the last but what she isn't there. When I decided to take photographs of Gladys, I was afraid she would insist that we go out into the hallway — that there's not a sufficient place to have your picture taken. Gladys, I rehearse, this is why I've grown to know you and this is where I want to take you.

Before my interview I already knew the company usually hired younger, skinnier and more devious women for this "front desk" job. So I developed an image that seemed to appeal to them: she is an unmarried woman, happy but a bit of a punk, a force of nature surrounding her, interesting in culture, in the world, in popular culture in a vaguely 19th Century style. In essence, a prairie woman. This accomplishes several things. It can cry if she wants because she is a "sensitive" person. She can be distant and estranged, which is good because the more distant she is, the more she can hold onto an interior identity far removed from the one they think she is. And being slightly tubercular means she gets more sick time off.

10:00 a.m. Edward arrives. When I look to Edward I see the real person but inside my mind I see this I find one like it every morning on his desk. When I try to describe Edward, I sometimes say he's cruel, which is true, but that's not really it. I could say he's decendentist. That's accurate. But the thing is, to really understand Edward you have to know that was raised in the high British boarding school system, and that he was beaten publicly 17 times. You see, Edward was trained to be an Empire Builder.

Now the great tragedy of this situation is that I am Edward's sole subject, and my desk is his only original territory. He opens the drawers of my desk as if I wasn't sitting there. When he uses my scissors he leaves the trimmings for me to pick up. I got to pose for these pictures that demonstrate his obsessive behavior by telling him I had a great idea for a card to send home that would be a spoof of me making it in a man's world. I told him that I needed to see a man at his desk, and he absolutely wouldn't.

Sometimes, when he asks me to bring him a cup of coffee, I do so. But I pour the coffee in a dirty cup that has a ring of dried coffee scum on the inside of the cup. And I smile as I hand it to him.

It's 10:45 a.m., as Jean Pierre walks in looking responsible and perturbed. That's my cue to go on stage as a lackey for the bourgeoisie. Smiling sincerely and suitable to Carolee. Massey for balms, salves and potions is mandatory, in addition to visiting Harcourt, Brace and Javoxich bookstore.

I never used to want to rip off the company. I would recompense the company for every 20st stamp I took. Until I started typing Edward's expense accounts.

Sometimes in the morning, sometimes in the afternoon. This is the point I don't want to say anything about. This is the point that is most confusing. Many men come into my office, for whom I am gracious, for whom I smile. Many men smile at me, but not at me. I flirt with Angela. After the first week Angela arrived, I noticed she was in the bathroom half an hour, while I'd just be there for five minutes. But I knew it wasn't because she didn't like her job. Then I noticed the way she carried her purse with her. I hardly took my purses to the bathroom was not an acceptable purse to a punch. But then, Angela was not really carrying a purse tucked under her arm, she was carrying an arsenal, her tools, the equipment, the tools of her trade, her makeup bag.

4:45 p.m. Errands. Girls go to ad agency for her boss. Girls need a boy's parochious at boy's house some incident later in the week. Girl sees boy has 24 newly sharpened pencils arranged aesthetically on coffee table. Girls gather, Girls discover boys is creative director for "I'm a Pepper, You're a Pepper..." and "It's so nice to feel so good...but so bad...". Boy, after his medium rare swiss cheeseburger, relaxes with a cigarette. Boy then proceeds to pull out a blue hardback, the title of which is a mystery. Girl cannot believe her eyes. Is this corporate ad man really playing artiste? Do people still do that?

Boy says 8:00 p.m. and it's the end of the day. I am bedrooms. No kidding. For some reason I cannot explain, after Jean Pierre and Edward leave, after all the clients have drunk their Columbia blend, the cold cream, sugar or sweet magic...I have this inexplicable urge to crawl on top of the desk and curl into a fetal ball. Lagardere, the advertising man, curls on the other side of the room. Looking at that, I wonder how the world is contructed so that I feel this way. Then I imagine that person who could realize that the producer training position would go to Jean Pierre's son and not to me. Of course I also wonder how I would explain being found on top of the desk, if someone had to come back for an umbrella or a file.

I can't stand being a secretary now, but it didn't always feel that way. When I first got this job, I said we would be a production assistant. Worked hard, because I wanted very much to advance.

This is the text of a multimedia performance piece Vananlye did in the Beholden of Federal Hall during Thanksgiving on Wall Street in November 1981.
Andrew Devon Logbook
By Dan Georgakis

Newfoundland — July 5, 1939
In the old days, the storm would have been a well
received excuse to spend a day free of sea and god.
The men would have used the morning hours for
repairing the nets and winches, and in the afternoon
they would have congregated at McPheers Inn for
an exchange of ale and gossip. In the old days, there
had been a dozen booms. Now, there were only three
and the Devon traveler was in dry dock for hull and
motor work.
"Can we go out at all?"
"Not if we want to come back."
"That's it then. I'll have to see Pietro about signing
on."
"Do you want that, too? Deep water sailing?"
"What I want doesn't much matter. We couldn't even
make a down payment on a new motor, and the wish
won't last the summer."
"I'll write to Davie in St. John's."
"Dad..."
"I know... I know..."

Lisbon — January 2, 1940
He didn't blame Pietro. He had been told at the
beginning that they wouldn't need him more than ten
or eleven months, but that had been before the war
began. Much as he wanted to stay on the Atlantic,
a month in the strange port, his only offer was
from the China War. At least, there were no
submarines in the Pacific.
"Be careful, kid. These oriental trips have a nasty
way of stretching out with the money fixed to draw
off faster than you can look at it."
"I need the berth, old timer."
"Something could turn up if you hold out a bit longer."
"Now, I've waited too long already. I need to send
some money home. Hell, this is only for one year."

Manila — June 4, 1947
He didn't blame the shipping company or the captain.
At first, the war had meant he had a pick of jobs. The
pay was very good, but somehow, as the old sailor in
Lisbon had warned, a man found himself taking an
advance on a second cruise before the first was even
over. He didn't blame anyone in particular. The
merchant marine was tough and unfair, exactly what
he had been told to expect.
"How long since you've seen the Americas?"
"Nearly six years. I'm glad we're going back; I've
forgotten what a white city looks like."

Saskatoon — July 11, 1950
He didn't blame the owner for canceling the North
American run in favor of the Singapore to Yokohama
shuttle. It was good business, and Andrew understood
the reasoning even though he jumped ship and took a
job steaking tankers to Vancouver.
"The fields look lamy, don't they?"
"Like a sea dyed orange-yellow."
"Had a rough time of it?"
"Not especially."
"But glad to be back home in Canada."
"Oh yeah."
"How far you going?"
"St. John's."
"To Nova Scotia?"
"Newfoundland."

(End of logbook extract)
Montreal — February 13, 1951
He didn't blame the railroad cops. They had caught him fair and square. He didn't blame the judge, and the fine had been the usual one. They weren't to blame that he couldn't pay. The sentence was not unreasonable. There was nothing to do but serve his time and not get caught short like that again.

"Newfie, I thought you was in that South China crew."
"I was, but I got out the same way you did."
"That's the only way. You ready to sign on again?"
"I want to see my father and brother first."
"They still live in St. John's?"
"Up the coast from there."
"Tough. I have a soft deal you could get in on. I'm going to do a Montreal to San Diego freight run. Back and forth. Easy as pie and regular. They still need two more guys."

Panama City — August 8, 1952
He didn't blame the captain for making them take lower wages when he got wise to their jumping ship. He didn't blame Pete for keeping him from seeing his family. And the ship was a good enough ship, the captain a good enough captain.

"Let's lay on a big one, Andy. I know a swell bitch up in the Alley."
"Haven't got the dough for it, Pete."
"Oh me, Kelly. It's time you started pulling a little luck. What do you say?"
"Let's go, mate."

The Pacific — August 14, 1952
He didn't blame Pete for taking him. He didn't blame the old woman who sold them the brolley. He didn't blame the American marine. He didn't blame the shore they fought over.

"Why did you take so long to show me this?"
"I thought it would heal by itself. It was only a little slice on the arm."

"What do you think, Cookie?"
"He shouldn't have waited. We'd better get the captain."

"Will there be time to call shore?"
"I don't know. I think you'll better get the captain down here quick."

"Cookin..."
"Don't worry, Andy."

The doctor told me another week for sure.

"What happened anyway?"
"It was careless. The fog had made the deck slippery, and I was careless like some green hand."
"The company will take care of all the hospital bills. They're good that way, Hook. It ain't like it used to be."

"Yeah, I could try this joint like a hotel vacation if it wasn't for the old man."
"He'll hate. You Devens are tough bastards."

The China Sea — October 10, 1960
If things had gone the way he'd wanted, he'd have inherited the old Devens' estate. His life would have been Newfoundland and cod with the companionship of Brewater, McPcanes, and the other kids he'd grown up with. But things hadn't worked out that way. He didn't blame the corporations or their power scopes. He didn't blame the old man. He didn't blame Pietro. He didn't blame the China Stars. Didn't blame the woman. Didn't blame Cookie. Didn't blame any of the captains. There was no one person, no one place, no one thing to blame or curse. Without anyone's conscious planning or forcing, things had managed to go wrong.

"I hear you're a Canadian too, Hook."
"That's right, kid."
"Maritimes?"
"Newfoundland."
"Ever get sick for home."
"Sometimes."
"I guess it's kind of stupid feeling like this when you're as old as I am."
"Maybe."

"How about you? Ever think of going back?"
"What for? All my people are gone."

Jaktara — November 4, 1970
The Ambassador dictated a cablegram:

The benevolent seamen's association and local officials have sent us condolences for the unknown seaman who played such a hero's role in last week's blaze. We know of his national-ity only because of a tattoo on his one good arm and the coins in his trousers. Although such identification is tenuous, we think we should bear the expense of bringing the body back to Australia so that he can be put to rest in his native soil.
AN OPEN LETTER TO THE AMERICAN WRITERS CONGRESS

A t the same historical moment that the media of communication have expanded the sum of possible experience more than ever before and comprehended that experience is shrinking. As the power of the media grows more absolute, only those ideas bearing its sanction are deemed fully real. The writer today confronts an interlocking directorate of consciousness, by which each medium verifies and substantiates the fictional creations of others. To turn off the TV tonight is to face it tomorrow in People magazine and novelized the day after. What power can the testimony of lived experience aspire to before this omnipresence? We are not the first generation to know the war between literary vision and the literary commodity. But in our time the terms of battle are more extreme. The ability of the media to penetrate all facets of life and disseminate themselves universally has destroyed regional difference, historical peculiarity, and personal eccentricity as outputs of cultural alternative. All lived experience stands devalued before the prefabricated image of the world constantly before our eyes.

The absorption of all facets of life under the media rubric means that no aspect is free of their imposed fragmentation. There is a place for everything which consents its prior definition. Those items which defy the categories cannot be named and are thereby denied a place in the narrative.

Like Aztecs surrendering their gods to the icons of conquistadors, the writer must relinquish the creations of his being and imagination before the

faith in the power of words to transfigure, but only in faith in the power to appear and thereby turn the wheels of commerce.

As that species for whom the transformation of life into picture is not simply a need but existence, writers bear the brunt of this conflict. Shall they pursue an art that is fast losing its audience, power, and authenticity, or devote themselves to means of expression requiring the surrender of the verbal imagination? As heirs to the craft of language at its most concentrated, will they consent to a marriage of convenience with the media bent on their divestiture?

Shall our fictions lead us to a vision of our being and possibility or to denial, limitation, and ultimately repression of the human spirit?

Just as the industrialization of publishing made the reader a consumer, the science of marketing reduces the consumer to a calculation. The division of the audience into collections of buying habits requires the bureaucratization of the imagination according to salability. Each word beyond the predictable means the loss of a mathematically determined percentage of sales. Discarded is that multiple resonance and merging of the categories capable of producing vision.

The apparent diversity of literary expression, like that of the conglomerates which manipulate it, masks the fact that none of it really matters. The magazine rack spells our possibilities: gay or straight, feminist or Cosby girl, chic or serious, rocker or jogger, or any combination thereof. No one sector is essential as long as all the sectors maintain financial solvency and the overall expansion of profit. That language which identifies in question and the world yet to be revealed can no longer find an outlet when the object of writing is not to reexecute but to simply reconfirm.

Certainly one can now write and continue to write for oneself and friends or avail oneself of the mom & pop apparatus of small presses and independent bookstores. But what is forbidden from the outset is the belief that one's creations can lay claim to the same terrain as the dominant mythology. Among the multiplying fragments of the social whole, the literary world is just one more. For all the most resolute, the most inspired, the most blind, the urge to verbal creation is undercut by a pervasive sense that hollow victory will be its only form of triumph.

To cure ourselves, the suicidal weapon at our temple must be turned in homicidal rage upon the present. Our words must become Duns-Duns bulleted, penetrating the press and expanding within. We must pronounce the words which undo the media bewitchment, creating the world's own existence equal in their power to the images which fixate the public mind. This is as much a matter of self-definition as of means. The vehicles of expression and forms of organization may vary the commitment is to the uncompromised imagination.

The truth remains unknown. All the facts and all the reasons are not at our disposal. Reality is constructed through fictions, but the fictions of our rulers have been declared the only reality. The question is: shall our fictions lead us to a vision of our being and possibility or to denial, limitation, and ultimately repression of the human spirit?

David Polansoff
September 1981

We stand surmounted by the comfort of an antique table these healing shades of yellow blues and greens in your room.
The rest of our spilled blood is masked, but not at all. My fingersbrace your wish and I kiss your scars.
My hands on your face Rovana and you in my arms. Men peel back as I caress you. Your breasts Rovana.
How you shudder when I place the yellow tulips executable through the heart.
We close our eyes and the treachery of men is black and lost and forgotten.
CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS AND IDEAS

BY ARNOLD SACHAR

People are holding back tears. Their seemingly playful putdowns have a lacelacing stent. The therapist was being interviewed about the self-indulgent young. He was full of pity about their narcissism. He certainly did not want to put us back to the old times. He was just terribly upset about people losing their moorings. No clarity or commitment. Everyday, he has a chaotic binge. He has a settled personal goal. Some young college students are studying intensely for next week's exam. Static and identity hang precariously in the balance. The future is at stake. Even the student's past future has no immediacy or definition. The therapist has a nervous stomach, and it is overcome with feelings of helplessness and stupidity. One day a woman's husband picked up and left. They were having a complex, ambivalent relationship. She often felt abused and manipulated. Trapped as if in a cage. Robbed of vitality. Yet she was praises and angry at his departure. She felt the pain of loss and loneliness.

The sense of wasted years. Also tossed into the world without stability or affection.

El Salvador, the Middle East, etc. We hear of endless discontent. The people in many parts of the world seem to be challenging America's power and strength. They spit insulted in our faces. Nazis are violated. There is widespread rebellion against malnutrition and disease. We are no longer invincible and omnipotent in the world. We are made weak in post-ure. We see many young men and women walking briskly to their places of work in mid-Manhattan. On the surface they have a kind of day-time serenity. The shadows are not visible. It is a heavy question what goes on beneath the surface. But they are perfectly popular and share their equilibrium. I find it difficult to similarly go about my business. I often experience a pervasive inertia. I feel stiffened and weary. They seem even superfi cal energy.

They argue every issue on the Pat Boone Show. Homosexuality, Abortion, Labor unions. All the emotions and ideas that agitate our common life are present. But underneath the explicit surface there is a revealing background and subtext. Each person in the audience loves to stand up during the question and offer an articulate, well-structured opinion. This is largely irrelevant to the issue at hand. It is a simple need to appear in public with power and dignity. There is also an attraction to the chaos of to-and-fro argumentation. Non-reflective position-taking. Wild screaming and laughing. And finally people are always ready for extended confessions of pain. And also a strong defense of whatever choices they have made in life.

Every ten-year-old knows about the attempted killings of President Reagan and the Pope. And the actual killings of John Lennon and Assam Sadik. There is an immediate world of random, publicized violence and more than life-like symbols and archetypes. And then one inevitably hears the abstract commentary. Distant from the originality and force of subjective experience. A world fragile and precipitous.

All that is strange made familiar. Mediated by bizarre, efficient technology. You hear talk all over the lazy people on welfare. They get away. It seems, with everything. They take the liberty of appropriating what belongs to us. People do not seem to think that they have very much. They pathetically envy those who are in desperate poverty. Indescribable satisfaction appears a remarkable luxury. They take drugs. They throw garbage in the street. They smell bad. They speak like there is no tomorrow. They indulge urges of criminal violence. The people are holding back tears. They are seemingly playful putdowns have a lacelacing stent. Pointed and ultimately hostile.

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENCE

POEMS BY HELEN KENDLER

DETROIT, 1955

On Saturdays my father mowed the lawn.
He'd leave the dinosaur around
And make it chew the yard until he'd call for water.
I'd be ready with his sailor mug
And as he drank, I'd thumb the sharpened blades,
thanking him for being seed or grass.

The beat of houses moored along the street
Bobbed quietly as he resumed his task.
I can't say what he dreamed of as he staggered
The old machine; but when his sun-dried eyes
Turned in my direction, they scudded leagues beyond
Our small frame house, our urgency, our arms.
Water menu, mowen, mower dipped in black.
Because of him, I've been them all.
He refused to mend the porch, which snagged a bit
And threatened us with groups, but never tell.
He knew it wouldn't. I'm convinced of it.
I'm standing on it still.

SLIDE AND LECTURE

"Beauty is what's thrown into relief
Against the plane of human suffering.
As in the fire before us.
The mother mounts her son.
Two stoned sailors kneeling.
One or either side.
Closed eyes, faces of lament.
"Noise be consumption
Of the artist's grief.
Perfectly cannot even sorrow could invent."

Marble hands Arrested.
Clothing marble breezes.
Sculpied sarcocloth torn in disquiet.

THE SHARK

When she dresses up blue
Her sleek black hate
Is a shark's fin skimming the ocean
And I am the first thing
Floating in its path.
which to broadcast their performances. This balletic approach expanded into the three remind fans "The Fireign Theatre" and its back-incarnations "Live From The Magic Mirror" and "The Magic Mirror Goes On" (but not "The Querwyns") which in turn developed into the more-familiar talk series "The Four Cowboys". Ultimately, the music and the information about these early years proved a challenge to radio frequencies shifted waves from (to itself) to KILA to KMET to KFJQ and back to KFYQ and KPIB and KEMP, none of which is likely to be answered or repeated in another, and to theслава сервера the current studio infrastructure is likely to be answer or repeated in another, and to the strain set for the following recording productions, comprising all Fireign-related albums.

WAITING FOR THE ELECTRICIAN, OR SOMEONE LIKE HIM (1969, Columbia)

HOWN CAN YOU BE IN TWO PLACES AT THE SAME TIME IF YOU'RE NOT ANYWHERE AT ALL (1969, Columbia)

DON'T CRUSH THAT DROP OF HEAVEN (1970, Columbia)

I THINK WE'VE ALLOWS ON THIS BUS (1971, Columbia)

DEAR FRIENDS (1972 double album, Columbia)

NOT INSANE OR ANYTHING YOU WANT TO (1972, Columbia)

TV OR NOT TV—Proctor & Bergman (1973, Columbia)

ROLL THE TALE OF THE GIANT RIDDLE OF SUMATRA (1974, Columbia)

EVERYTHING YOU KNOW IS WITH A NING (1974, Columbia)

IN THE NEXT WORLD, YOU'LL BE ON YOUR OWN (1975, Columbia)

WHAT THIS COUNTRY NEEDS—Proctor & Bergman (1975, Columbia)

I have encountered through my research (1169 West Pico Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90064), and through which I have written an account of the role of public music is provided by the Warner Brothers, Lawless Records, and the Columbia Records company.

JUST FOLKS . . . A FIREIGN CHANT (1977, Butterfly)


SHAKESPEARE'S LOST COMEDY (1982, Rhino)

LAWYER'S HOSPITAL (1982, Rhino)

I have also included, for your perusal, an interview done with Proctor & Bergman concerning the 1977 presidential running of George Orwell Popo (in a plain white jacket) and entitled "A Fireign Chat With Poppo". Recommend this vinyl plus releases one, two, and four for introductory listening for the unbiased, and then that House produce in chronological sequence.

As for TFA 1983, I have so far garnered a few details from my source. Proctor & Bergman put out a video album done by him plus members Bergman and Austin, titled THE VOLKS OF ONAR proposed by Bill Pearl and due for release through Michael Nesmore's Pacific Airs company in late 1983. Member Osmann currently resides in Santa Fe, New Mexico, where he writes himself with poetry, radio, art, and other creativity. Although not cur-
REVOLUTIONARY ART
Dear CC,

It seems to me that the most impressive contribution to the art world which provide not only a new image or a new type of visual representation, but also a new way of thinking and acting. It is a self-conscious and critic analysis of the function of art. It is a revolt against the existing system and a new way of looking at art. It is a new way of thinking. It is a new way of acting. It is a revolt against the existing system.

Yours,

A Concerned Citizen

SHELTER FROM THE STORM
Dear CC,

I have always been interested in your work and I have long admired your dedication to the cause of justice. I have also been impressed by your ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of people, from the disadvantaged to the powerful. I am sure that your message will continue to be heard.

Yours,

Robert Long
The Syndicated Anarchist

SAVE THE PAST
Dear CC,

All of the reasons people give for wanting to discontinue the ride on the New York Central Railroad are wrong. Children and grandchildren, sure, they deserve a train. But what about parents and grandparents? Do we not deserve to enjoy a time when we were children? I am sure that there are still many people who ride the railroad for the memories it brings back. It is a trip that is rare and precious.

Yours,

A Concerned Citizen

A SAILOR'S TALE
Dear CC,

I don't know what radical humor is, but I'll tell you what happened in Newark Airport. I was walking down the crowded airport section a few days ago and a group of people came up to me and asked if I could help them. I asked what was going on and they said they were trying to get to New York. I told them I couldn't help them, but I would try to give them some advice. One of them was a sailor and he told me his story. He said he had been in the navy for ten years and he was trying to get home to his family.

Yours,

Robert Long
The Syndicated Anarchist

LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS

THE SYNDICATED ANARCHIST
Dear CC,

The first newspaper I ever wanted was the Buzzard's Nest, a leftist underground newspaper, distributed clandestinely at Grace M. Davis School. The newspaper was written, illustrated, and distributed not by the newspaper itself, but by the students. The newspaper was a publication of the Buzzard's Nest, an anarchist newspaper with shocking results. It was distributed to all the students who were interested in it.

Yours,

Robert Long
The Syndicated Anarchist

GO ON
Did you see Andre Gregory's film advertising June 12? Not without good reason. "The best of one's life times. The one that you hope to repeat in the future. The one that you are looking forward to."

Yours,

Robert Long
The Syndicated Anarchist

PLACER OF ORIGIN
Dear CC,

Let me tell you about my country, Mexico. It is a place where people are friendly and welcoming. There are many lovely places to visit, such as the city of Mexico City, the lakes of the highlands, and the beaches of the coast. There are also many delicious foods to try, such as tacos, quesadillas, and enchiladas. I would be happy to share more about my country with you.

Yours,

Robert Long
The Syndicated Anarchist

Mistaik Indians were lined up among them a number of women—clearly expectant, but smileless. Tombs began to talk to them—talking about their situation, about the situation on the Coast, about how it had been necessary for them to be rounded up, and investigations made to determine their degree of responsibility in the events of last December, but how there was no actuality of the part of the Government.
LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS

APRIL 16th

Dear CC,

The P.T.O. is holding a bake sale next week. I'm thinking of bringing some cookies to sell. Do you have any recipe suggestions?

Sincerely,
[Name]

CC:

ON THE ESOPOS

Dear CC,

I've been thinking about starting a new hobby. Any suggestions on what I should try?

Best regards,
[Name]

CC:

STAGES

Dear CC,

I've been feeling a little down lately. Do you have any advice on how to lift my spirits?

Yours sincerely,
[Name]

CC:

DELTA DELTA DELTA

Genevieve wrote me yesterday about her new job. She's really excited about it. I'm happy for her. Do you have any tips on how to excel in a new position?

Warm regards,
[Name]

CC:

LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS

INTO THE MOVEMENT FOR SUE McCANN

Diction movement

Get cracking you flabby activists.

How do you expect the people to rise if you can't talk the talk.

Diction, passion, conviction

A prismatic - awkwardly - overthose you admire, within yourself

and within the flow of history

then seize our story

stretch, bend, crawl

crane your neck, hinder

mine Kampf

and mine kinder

come to me.

Then the chains

of the old steps

would be unity

push up

kick up

your feet

from the ground

to run

to tumble, to bend

to scream our sounds

and make the end real

take the future

steps, schlep and bounds

Joel S. Cohen 3/29/85

BLOOD MEMORIES BY Holly Zox

first memories are blood memories

blood red stripes

in the flag

on Kennedy's coffin

Vietnam death counts

war chips

blood of oranges

the arms and bodies

blood rushing to my head

as Moon tried to fly

in pigeons when I was two and I screamed

NO!

blood in the first words

I read and read

about Native Americans

slavery: a fact, an imposition

the Holocaust

blood of the pogroms

that all my great-grandparents

came to this country to escape

stained in the creases of

Grandma Fanny's hands

and in the sugar of the candy her hands gave us every Shabbos blood

in my nightmares

in my underwear

for so long

and I never told anybody

blood in all my pores

when the Flash flashed

blood in Shelia's eyes

when I was five

but as if he tried to
catch her in her room

blood that would have been on the knife

I carried her blood

as her trembling

became my trembling

as I watched

became a channel

our blood pounding

in my throat

my ears

my eyes

my mouth

swooning

"Was she asleep?"

"Was she really screaming?"

blood not really screaming NO!

blood bathtub

blooding bathing

bathing rebirth

reclaiming blood

all blood

blood lost in the translucent

in the mending

in the shooting

shooting flames

flaming my blood

reclaiming my first bleeding

and my broken

no longer are not only destruction

but also

joy

The poem is part of an installation I did for the "P.A.D.D. show, "Detours, Stress Two, Two," 1977, "Breaking Points in the Lives of Art Activists." The installation consisted of a right fist full of screws with arms wrapped around and painted on the wall; a broken mirror, a urinal, and a newspaper clipping of a Palestinian woman from the British mandate inside an old black frame; and an altar with a burning candle, a jar of menstrual products, and various other sacred objects. The words of the poem, painted in red, yellow, and green, were cut from the program无忧无虑, and the logos of my work present a mural on a rural pole. The viewer can step into the"The Walk" and witness and experience Palestinian. The words carry meaning expressed in my shadow.

-Molly Zox

92 Cultural Correspondence

99 Cultural Correspondence
Send us your entries.

JUNE 1, 1983

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENCE
365 West 111 Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10025 (212) 924-0399

Send us entries. NAME OF GROUP, ORGANIZATION, OR INDIVIDUAL, ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBER OF CONTACT, DESCRIPTION OF STATEMENT OF PURPOSE, WHAT KIND OF WORK DO YOU DO, HOW WOULD YOU IDENTIFY THE COMMUNITY YOU WORK WITH, HOW WAS YOUR GROUP FORMED, WHAT IS YOUR GROUP AIM, WHAT IS YOUR GROUP'S GOAL, WHAT ARE YOUR GRANTS, WHAT ARE YOUR HOPES, SPECIAL INTERESTS, WORKING CONDITIONS...

Please limit this information to an 8 1/2 x 11 page, but use any other materials you have available.

DON'T MISS THE NEW WAVE!

**Deadlines for Entries:**

We want to live!

The text of the soundtrack

On June 12, 1983 nearly a million people participated in the largest anti-government demonstration in U.S. history. Countless thousands came from other countries, making this the largest international peace demonstration that has ever happened.

This demonstration was the visual imagery of June 12. The artwork represents the entire demonstration. The art is to June 12 what June 12 is to the society at large: an organized attempt to build our own culture, to establish our own values, our own relationships, to forge the new society growing within the frame of the old.

We come from all parts of American society, and we come from our own history of opposition to American power in the Nuclear Age.

We are scared to death of nuclear war, but we did not come to New York on our knees. When we say, "F*** you!" we do not mean to keep things the way they are.

Consider the bomb: On August 6, 1945 the United States nuked Hiroshima in order to win an unconditional surrender against Japan. President Truman wanted to show the Russians and the rest of the world that we had such a powerful weapon and that we were willing to use it. The bomb, real as it is to the Japanese, became an image, and deliberately so. It was to be the logo of the newborn Nuclear Age, the symbol of America's ability to get away with murder.

The American image of the bomb is the mushroom cloud, the exploding bomb. The image requires distance: the mushroom cloud is an image of horror, or on TV. The image does not disappear as our eyeballs melt. Instead, our senses are heightened by the apocalyptic power mushrooming forward.

Explaining Hiroshima, Truman said, "The bomb is the greatest thing in history." He told the world he did it for God. And he did it the way God would have done it: an announcement of a new fact, something he decided to do, a top-down action which changed the world militarily, politically, psychologically.

The same image that proclaimed the Nuclear Age now demands an end to the Nuclear Age. The meaning of the mushroom cloud did not get reversed because of any inevitable process or magical act. History did not do that by itself.

Instead, a politically conscious people's movement has struggled in fits and starts to redefine life, to establish our own expectations and values, to make us the subjects of our own sentences, to give us our own sense of time.

Since 1993's political and social movements of ordinary people have rejected the Cold War mentality and fought for self-determination. Among them are the Civil Rights Movement, Black Power, the New Left, Women's Liberation, the Ecology Movement, the Anti-Nuclear Movement, the Veterans' Movement, Trade Union, independent progressive religious groups, senior citizens, Native Americans, gay liberationists, and other grass-roots activists of all kinds.

An important democratic aspect of June 12 is that there were first-time demonstrators of all ages, and veteran demonstrators of all ages.

Washington knows that the American people will not support a conventional war or an anti-war war. As to nuclear war, the Reagan policy towards the Soviet Union is unconditional surrender. He advocates first strike, and he is building a new superweapon to be used to defeat the Soviets in a winnable nuclear war. There is no such thing.

We say the Cold War is being waged by Washington against us, and we will not take it anymore. We will not surrender our lives, our hopes for a future, to the foolish idea that the Soviets will throw in the towel. We know that every dollar spent on usarmament we would pay more jobs and more security if it were spent on things we need. We will organize against Reagan or any other administration which says that war is a solution to the depression.

A thousand artists marched together on June 12, and thousands of others made artworks for peace. Artists have the same responsibility and rights as any other citizens to organize for peace. We want our images, our songs, our poems, to express the unspoken aspirations of our people, a people currently struggling against nuclear terrorism. We support the right of all people to their own culture. Culture is not a hierarchy of individual talent, nor is it just diverting entertainment. Culture is the total fabric of our daily lives.

June 12 says, "We want to live!" In America in the 1980's this is a radical demand. It is based on an accurate analysis of what we are up against, and it offers hope. We want to live in a society that isn't a jungle, a world that isn't racing the核. No messiah is coming to save us, no scheme is going to land from the sky. We are going to build it ourselves, we are going to give ourselves time.

"We Want to Live!" was produced by (Political Art Documentation/Distribution) and Cultural Correspondence. The photographs were Eva Cocke, Marlene Forst, Sophie Hanson, Linda Sargent, Barry Jolin, Van Lipsey, Marcia Lehman, Peter McCallister, Michael Riggs, Jon Spiegel, Sheila Stiles, Michael Thomas, John Wilson, Mike Yack, Steve Young. Audio mixing by Jim Murray and Marcello Scudalano. Work by Jim Murray. Eva Cocke's, Irving Merzly. Adapted by Donnamand and Jim Murray. Sound recorded and mixed at Double K Studios. Music by Donny Higginbotham. Memory: "I Can't Keep Moving," Carla Sings; "The World Is My Problem," John O'Connor and Steve Young; "I Want to Be Back Home," Peter Dranga; "Mother of War," Richard Matheson; "An American Folk Song" (arranged by you by Donny Higginbotham). The Wenches (1982): "We Want." The CountDown (led by W.G. Cuff) wrote the script for "We Want to Live!" The music available for publication. The text may be used for anything, please credit us.
IMAGINING THE 80'S

ARTICLES, POETRY, PHOTO, ART, PHOTOS, CARTOONS, RAPS, LETTERS
FEATURING JUNE 12TH AND THE RADICAL UNION FESTIVAL

—Lucy Lippard: "Grassroots means not only propaganda—spreading the
word—but is based on the notion that each blade of grass has its own roots."

—C.L.R. James: "If a new, radical and truly American movement is going
to come into existence, it will come because people say the government cannot
do what should be done and they will do it for themselves."

—Robin Tyler: "... they spent three years and a million dollars trying to
put us on television, sort of as 'the Smothers Brothers.' In the end, the most
radical thing I said was, 'We'll be right back.'"

—Arlene Goldbard: "We need to counter the message that getting and
spending is what life is about, that the poor are to blame for their poverty,
that only a few people are actors and the rest of us left to watch."

—Paul Buhle: "If the superpowers show their bankruptcy day by day, if
religions go haywire, the patriarchal family slips, and mass culture begins to
turn us upon itself, horror approaches a new stage."

—Flo Kennedy: "What we have to do is see it as an analysis of what we
that they've taken away, and take it back."

—Paul Krassner: "These proceedings are all being taped for the Red
Brigade; next time they broadcast a general, they're going to play comedy instead
of rock music to keep box there."

—Jim Murray: "The hegemonic figure of my sister's media world was
Superman, the man of steel sent here to humiliate petty criminals."

—Eva Cockcroft: "The independent coverage (of June 12th) had an
unusually high viewership rating for public television. Yet three days later,
the editorial page of the New York Times charged the program with a
pro-disarmament bias and attacked WNET for carrying it."

—Carnival Knowledge: "Why have a carnival when you can have a baseball?"