

FREE

# HARBINGER

N. L. PRECURSOR & PORTENT: "HARBINGER OF DOOM" 2. PERSON SENT BEFORE TO ANNOUNCE AN IMPENDING ARRIVAL OR EVENT, TO PREPARE THE WAY, AS FOR A WAR HOST. . . OR A FEAST. 3RD COMMUNIQUE—DELIVERED GROUND ZERO OF THE NEW MILLENNIUM. A MOUTHPIECE OF THE CRIMETHINC. UNDERGROUND

**TICKET TO A WORLD FREE OF CHARGE**



LEAVING THE 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

*The lives we lead, and the lives we wish we led.*

This world, the so-called "real world," is just a front. Pull back the curtain and you'll see the libraries are all filled with runaways writing novels, the highways are humming with escapees and sympathizers, all the receptionists and sensible mothers are straining at the leash for a chance to show how alive they still are. . . and all that talk of practicality and responsibility is just threats and bluffing to keep us from reaching out our hands to find that heaven lies in reach before us.

## THERE IS A SECRET WORLD CONCEALED WITHIN THIS ONE.



IT ALSO HAPPENS THAT, IF YOU MOVE ALONG THAT CITY'S COMPACT WALLS, WHEN YOU LEAST EXPECT IT, YOU SEE A CRACK OPEN AND A DIFFERENT CITY APPEAR. THEN, AN INSTANT LATER, IT HAS ALREADY VANISHED. PERHAPS EVERYTHING LIES IN KNOWING WHAT WORDS TO SPEAK, WHAT ACTIONS TO PERFORM, AND IN WHAT ORDER AND RHYTHM; OR PERHAPS SOMEONE'S GAZE, ANSWER, GESTURE IS ENOUGH; IT IS ENOUGH FOR SOMEONE TO DO SOMETHING FOR THE SHEER PLEASURE OF DOING IT, AND FOR HER PLEASURE TO BECOME THE PLEASURE OF OTHERS; AT THAT MOMENT, ALL SPACES CHANGE, ALL HEIGHTS, DISTANCES; THE CITY IS TRANSFIGURED, BECOMES CRYSTALLINE, TRANSPARENT AS A DRAGONFLY'S WINGS. BUT EVERYTHING MUST HAPPEN AS IF BY CHANCE, WITHOUT ATTACHING TOO MUCH IMPORTANCE TO IT, WITHOUT INSISTING THAT YOU ARE PERFORMING A DECISIVE OPERATION, REMEMBERING CLEARLY THAT AT ANY MOMENT THE OLD CITY WILL RETURN AND SOLDER ITS CEILING OF CONCRETE, NEON, AND SMOG OVER ALL HEADS.

You can taste it in the shock and roar of a first, unexpected kiss, or in the blood in your mouth that instant after an accident when you realize you're still alive. It blows in the wind you feel on the rooftops of a really reckless night of adventure. You hear it in the magic of your favorite songs, how they lift and transport you in ways that no science or psychology could ever account for. It might be you've seen evidence of it scratched into bathroom walls in a code without a key, or you've been able to make out a pale reflection of it in the movies they make to keep us entertained. It's in between the words when we speak of our desires and aspirations, still lurking somewhere beneath the limitations of being "practical" and "realistic."

When poets and radicals stay up until sunrise, wracking their brains for the perfect sequence of words or deeds to fill hearts (or cities) with fire, they're trying to find a hidden entrance to it. When children escape out the window to go wandering late at night, or freedom fighters search for a weakness in government fortifications, they're trying to sneak into it—for they know better than us where the doors are hidden. When teenagers vandalize a billboard to provoke all-night chases with the police, or anarchists interrupt an orderly demonstration to smash the windows of a corporate chain store, they're trying to storm its gates.

When you're making love and you discover a new sensation or region of your lover's body, and the two of you feel like explorers discovering a new part of the world on a par with a desert oasis or the coast of an unknown continent, as if you are the first ones to reach the north pole or the moon, you are charting its frontiers.

It's not a safer place than this one—on the contrary, it is the sensation of *danger* there that brings us back to life: the feeling that for once, for one moment that seems to eclipse the past and future, there is something real at stake.

Maybe you stumbled into it by accident, once, amazed at what you found. The old world splintered behind and inside you, and no physician or metaphysician could put it back together again. Everything before became trivial, irrelevant, ridiculous as the horizons suddenly telescoped out around you and undreamt-of new paths offered themselves. And perhaps you swore that you would never return, that you would live out the rest of your life electrified by that urgency, in the thrill of discovery and transformation—but return you did.

Common sense dictates that this world can only be experienced temporarily, that it is just the shock of transition, and no more; but the myths we share around our fires tell a different story: we hear

of women and men who stayed there for weeks, years, who never returned, who lived and died there as heroes. We know, because we feel it in that atavistic chamber of our hearts that holds the memory of freedom from a time before time, that this secret world is near, waiting for us. You can see it in the flash in our eyes, in the abandon of our dances and love affairs, in the protest or party that gets out of hand.

*You're not the only one trying to find it. We're out here, too. . . some of us are even waiting there for you. And you should know that anything you've ever done or considered doing to get there is not crazy, but beautiful, noble, necessary.*

**Revolution** is simply the idea we could enter that secret world and never return; or, better, that we could burn away this one, to reveal the one beneath entirely.

IF YOU'VE NEVER FALLEN MADLY IN LOVE WITH A STRANGER'S GESTURES AND SILENCES, NEVER DAYDREAMED DESPERATELY IN A BOARD MEETING OR MATH CLASS, NEVER BEEN CARRIED AWAY BY EXTREMITIES OF EMOTION WHILE EVERYONE AROUND YOU REMAINED UNMOVED AND OBLIVIOUS; IF YOU'VE NEVER SUSPECTED THAT LIFE WAS ELSEWHERE, THAT THERE WAS SOMETHING HAPPENING, LIKE BEAUTIFUL MUSIC PLAYING JUST OUT OF RANGE OF YOUR HEARING, SOMEWHERE BEYOND THE SHOPPING DISTRICTS AND SUBURBS, OFF THE HIGHWAY, OVER THE FIELDS AND OCEANS; IF THERE IS NO PART OF YOU LEFT UNSATISFIED BY PRIME TIME PROGRAMMING AND NEW INTERNET TECHNOLOGY AND THE SELECTION OF FIVE THOUSAND MOVIES AT THE VIDEO RENTAL STORE— . . . THEN PERHAPS THIS IS NOT FOR YOU. BUT IF YOU HAVE A SECRET SELF, READ ON.

# Introductions



## Nietzsche.Guevara

### I. Masters Without Slaves

The third and final world war is being fought on the terrain of our hearts. On one side is our faith in the world and the magic we can work in it, our love of life and our dreams of all it could be; on the other, our fears, insecurities, and inertia—as represented by the corporations and governments that would take advantage of these to divide us from each other and within ourselves, to reduce the grand complexity of life to an economic equation. The stakes of this war are total liberation, or death by isolation and routine—for those not slated for starvation, extermination in factory farms, or slavery in privatized prisons, that is. We are expected to defeat ourselves by fighting against each other for little pieces of the world, rather than uniting to seize and share it. . . . and indeed, many of us seem to have fallen into that trap, competing, resenting, distrusting.

This desire for hierarchical power, for power over others, is created by the frustration of our desire to have power over our own lives. I think it's obvious that at this point, when we live in a world almost entirely constructed by human culture and technology, with no unclaimed land left for those would be self-sufficient, we can only attain power over our individual lives through cooperation. Our destiny rests on whether we can overcome everything reactive and vengeful in ourselves and our relationships with each other to aid each other in becoming masters *without* slaves: then the whole world could finally belong to each of us.

### II. For Myself

All that said, I want to say this: you're welcome here, but I'm not doing this for you. I've spent my whole life agonizing about how much I "owe" the rest of the world: whether I should refuse my own needs for yours, or refuse your needs for my own. Either way I lose: for if I refuse you, I refuse all the parts of myself which rest in you, and if I give myself up for your sake I'll have nothing of value to offer you.

I've decided it must be a false choice, and I'm done trying to make it. Now I let go: I give myself to myself entirely, and thus give myself entirely to the world. Only by realizing myself thus can I live life as it should be lived, and offer things to the world that are greater than the mere material charity of the church and the liberal bourgeoisie. Of course this means trying to satisfy my own needs in ways that provide for others as well, and fighting to destroy the power of those who would exploit or annihilate my fellow

living things—but from now on I do these things absolutely for myself, without any illusions about the glory of service and duty. In the words of the bard: *What I look for in others is the richest part of myself hidden within them. Yet people who realize that they depend ultimately on others must still first of all find themselves, or else they will find nothing in others but the negation of themselves.*

So I am writing this for myself alone. Not to sell my ideas, or perform charity work by enlightening the ignorant, or, even worse, assert my social status as intellectual—but for the exercise of expression, for the pleasure of playing in language and logic and poetry, for the chance to write this world, and thus my life, into a new form.

Reading this will be a different experience, of course. It may give you words and powers of your own, may free you, move you, mobilize you. . . . or it may just keep you paralyzed, my words reinforcing first and last the "fact" that *I* am a writer and you, a mere reader—for whatever is said here in these cold pages, the effects of the saying are all that really matters after my private pleasure in saying it is past. Then having "the best ideas" and "the clearest critique" are nothing, worthless next to the question of what the results of speaking those ideas are.

I write this declaration of selfishness to challenge you, to keep it clear who benefits here and who is at risk—and, most of all, to dare you: join me, for yourself. You don't have to become a writer, or a theorist or artist or activist or any of those other stifling roles that lie in wait for those who would become free women and men. You simply have to pledge yourself to give all, to settle for nothing less than the world. There are as many roads to freedom as there are people; for everyone's sake, find yours.

### III. For Us All

For someone in my situation, then, the greatest challenge is to act in such a way that I do not deny myself the potential of others by paralyzing them. We live in a society where selfhood is seen as a limited resource in a scarcity economy: there is not enough to go around, so it accumulates in the hands of a few rock stars and popular personalities the same way financial capital is amassed by owners and investors at everyone else's expense. All the existing models for self-expression divest others of their opportunities for it: for one man to be on television, there must be thousands at home watching, and the same goes for baseball teams and sports fans, authors and readers, scenesters and admirers, politicians and voters, artists and patrons. Even our rebellions are structured this way: the punk singer or radical hero pontificates before the audience, his speeches amplified to ten times the volume of their voices, the conditions encouraging them to accept their position of spectatorship and routine passivity.

Today we need to discover ways of speaking that *give* voices to others, ways of acting that *activate* others, ways of living that give and share life with others without taking it away from ourselves. I don't want to ever have to reject my desire to express myself, or the pleasure that I take in doing this. I am aware that when I express myself I risk replicating the system that impoverishes me of everyone else's voices; but I hope here to find an infectious voice, one that can create an epidemic of self-expression fierce enough to kill off the demons of self-consciousness and inertia that haunt us all today.

## Nadia C.

For the record, let us revolutionaries never again try to shock people into action. Everyone is already shocked into utter inactivity, if not catatonia, by the harrows of living in this barbaric world. Everyone knows, instinctively, that things are fucked up, and nobody likes it, however much their jobs and social status depend on them insisting that they do. The only way to motivate them is to

show them just how possible free action still is. Ugliness is nothing new to anyone who's seen the news, no matter how censored that news is; the only way to make it appalling to people is to re-acustom them to beauty.

If we want to enable others to join us, then these must be our tasks: to make and live a new beauty, entirely different from the beauty patented by those slaves of slaves who hold "beauty pageants"—to work wonders in a world that no longer believes in magic, or even surprises—to raise the dead, as simply as we will raze empires.

If we could live one miracle, our blood would become an order of archangels, the medicine of alchemy, to restore the jaded and heal those suffering the malady of death—it would howl like sleet before storm winds through the catacombs of our mute, beaten streets, liberating lost souls as it went. We must discover new futures, and proclaim them through a *propaganda of desire* such as this world has never known. The advertisements and stratagems of those who choose to die with the old world will be powerless before this final assault: because, for the very first time, it will be good news.

Behold, the first dawn this world has ever seen!

## Stella%Nera

We're not striking bargains, and we won't shop for them either: what we want is not on the market. All accounts are closed; no further transactions, we're not buying in. Your currency can no longer be exchanged.

We're not signing contracts and we won't abide by yours. We're not keeping score, not paying rent anymore. We don't calculate the return on our investments: we share and bestow, and where it goes we don't need to know. You want "fair trade," "free trade," starting with all the capital in your hands, and sharecroppers' odds for the rest of us? Don't send your slaves to collect the debt—you should foot the bill with your fucking head. You'll be paid in full, all right, if you like.

We don't cut deals, we won't negotiate. We want the moon—and we're going to get there, soon. Don't offer us concessions for capitulation; we won't fall for it this time. We're not taking orders, or filling them. We're not going back.

We give everything so we can owe nothing, so the world can be ours. You devour everything, so you have nothing, and need everything. You are emptiness, all-consuming—look at what you've done to the world.

We are the karma of your civilization. For us there is no theft, just justice; no violation that isn't liberation for all of us.

Perhaps you have a secret: you are one of us. Show it. There is nothing more senseless and tragic than your listlessness when we have a world to win. Kiss with every tooth in your mouth, fight with your heart on your sleeve and blood in your eyes—it helps, I promise.

From here on there can be no more commerce in lives, no more business as usual. Destroy and heal. Perish and become. Take and give. Live, and die; defy, and live.

**Nadia C.** is a dancer in the resistance, a conscientious objector to peace as well as war.

**Gloria Cubana** is a chef who bakes from an anarchist cookbook all her own.

**Nietzsche Guevara** is a pseudonym shared by a rotating circle of writers.

**Jane E. Humble** is a deep cover agent in the world of superficial things.

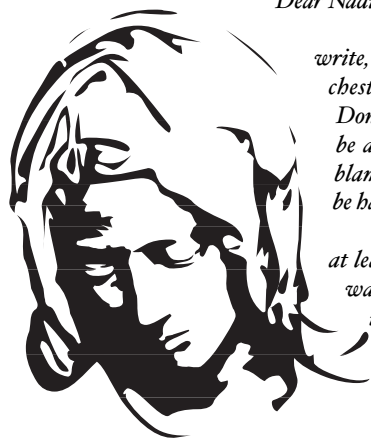
**Paul F. Maul** is the ringleader of a gang of desperado graphic art-terrorists.

**Rolf Nadir** is running for the president of the United States . . . with a pistol in his hand.

**Stella Nera** is a ghost writer on graveyard shift, alive in the land of the dead.

**the Jimmy** is insane. He's a crazy motherfucker.

All texts and visual cues were produced by collective authorship—i.e., plagiarism. Thanks to our contacts in the straight world who offered us safehouses throughout the writing and designing of this issue of Harbinger.



Dear Nadia,

*This isn't easy for me to write, but I have to get it off my chest. You have ruined my life. Don't misunderstand me, I can't be angry with you, and I don't blame you for it. But I can never be happy again now.*

*Before you came here, I was at least comfortable in my life. I wasn't truly happy, I wasn't living my life like I now know a person can, but I didn't know anything else, so I didn't really suffer from it. I could have gone on like that*

*forever, or at least until I died, if I hadn't met you.*

*When you came here last winter and I saw you living the way I'd never known I always wanted to, that changed everything. I'd gotten a hint of it from your writing and the letters you wrote me, but the enormity of it didn't hit me until I got to see you actually doing what you'd talked about: you were really experiencing life, while I was just watching it from far away.*

*I wish I could do what you do, never working or knowing where your next meal will come from, traveling the world having adventures and lovers, fighting injustice and inhumanity wherever you see them, but I know I can't. It takes a much stronger, braver person than me to do it. It's not even the difficulties that scare me, though I know they exist for you. It's just that I can't find the courage to leave my routines, the things I know, even though I know they don't have anything to offer me anymore except misery, now that I know something else is possible. I imagine you out there, always in a new land, always doing what you want, and it makes life absolutely unbearable here. The worst thing is that the thought of you and your life is so beautiful to me that I can't hate it, no matter how much I want to because it makes me hurt so much. You know you really are living out my dreams, the ones I don't have the guts for, and for that I can never forgive you, or myself.*

*I'm not sure why I'm even writing you this, except to say how jealous I am, and how I wish I could join you, but I can't.*

-Jackson T.

Jackson—

Your letter reminds me of the way I felt the first time I really fell in love. I had spent my whole life as a solipsist of sorts: I was the center of my world, my archetypes were all taken from my own memories, and the sun and stars all revolved around whatever was going on inside me. When I fell in love, the world was suddenly, painfully doubled, and everything that mattered to me was locked away in that other realm, inaccessible and unendurably perfect. Being in love was a really radical experience in that it broke down my distinction between self and other in a very real way, it made all those abstractions about identifying with other people concrete and immediate; but it was dangerous, because I thought that person's beauty was the only thing that mattered in all the cosmos, and it made me totally negate myself. I tried to trace the outlines of her world in every glance or word, I obsessed over the subtleties of scent and sensation and song she experienced that I did not, and finally, on the verge of drowning myself in my agony, I realized that while she was indeed beautiful, what I was experiencing was my own displaced passion for life, projected and fashioned into a ghost—for ghosts are so much easier to exalt than ourselves.

My friend Jeanette writes of a similar experience in these words:

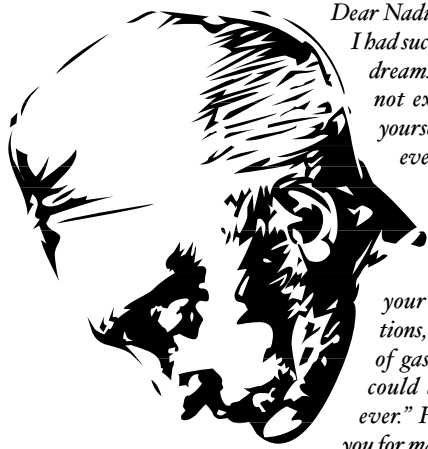
*The beloved opens a door for the lover into a world in which her heart had already been living, so that the rest of her being might join it there. That world is not the province of the beloved—it has been fashioned grain by grain by the lover's dreaming heart while her body slept in another land, and then granted out of the generosity of the universe itself—but it is so easy to misunderstand and believe that one has been given admittance to the paradise of another, a permission that may be retracted at any moment.*

What you need to know, in order to go on living yourself, is that what you are seeing when you look at my life is a potential life of your own. What it feels like to actually be me and live this particular life is something totally un-

like anything you could imagine from where you are now. Reflected upon me you see a path you could take, a route of adventures and freedom which you are not yet prepared to accept as your own idea, your own possible future. That is another thing entirely from the path I am in fact on, which is, in itself, no more magnificent or extraordinary than any path you might follow, wherever it might end up leading. When you are ready to claim what you see in me for your own, it will no longer tower over you as an ideal that eclipses you in its shadow, but will become a vision that guides you to your own destiny.

I would like to think that by writing this I could somehow set you and all the world free from gods, from idols and heroes, and make greatness something in reach for each one of us.

Yours for a world free of charge,  
Nadia



Dear Nadia,

*I had such high hopes—so full of dreams. I feel stupid now for not expecting it. "Swear to yourself that you will never, ever again do anything but chase your wildest dreams, every moment of your life," I read this in one of your CrimethInc. publications, "Or buy yourself a liter of gasoline and a bottle. It could be your last purchase ever." Fuck you Nadia. Fuck you for making this sound simple.*

*Fuck you for making it seem easy.*

*"Chase your wildest dreams"—reading that I think you must have never fucking tried it. I had a wild dream once. I became more desperate than anyone could know. I let myself go completely out, over the cliff, into the abyss. I spent a lifetime screaming my lungs out into brick wall. I fought hard for my dreams because I thought honesty would be worth it. I thought the risk would be worth it. I thought that if I tried hard enough, I would be redeemed, and things would become clear. I was a fool for thinking I could walk on water, that I could "shoot like a rocket through the sky and leave this world in flames" as your comrade so eloquently put it. This fucking charade. I am embarrassed now of the ways I tried, things I said and did, and I wish it could all be taken back. BUT IT CAN'T. I wish I was a fucking coward.*

*I know now that I can't trust you, Nadia; but worse I can't even fucking trust myself. On January 27 I thought I might fly away to the moon on golden wings. On June 23 I felt myself at the center of a million mistakes, of ten thousand wrong things, like there were a hundred knives at my mother's throat. . . I prayed hard for sleep, just wanted emptiness. . . Nothing was there for me. And today? I make myself a vault against you and your bullshit "revolution." I ask you: WHAT NOW? But you haven't got any answers, do you. Of course not. Have fun playing "romantic poets," I'm sure you'll "change the world."*

yeah yeah,  
Stephen Arrows

Stephen—

Oh my poor baby, you sound just like my old friend Daniel did just before he gave up on music and activism and drugged himself to death—then again, you also sound like Bakunin probably did when he was arrested and exiled

to prison in Siberia, just before he escaped to Japan and hopped an ocean liner back to Europe. . . or, for that matter, like I did four years ago when I lay unwelcome on a stranger's floor with bronchitis and pneumonia, thinking I was really going to die.

So you come to me, frothing at the mouth with resentment for the dreams and difficulties you blame on me, somehow, probably because at this point you're ready to strike anything in your reach, and you want me to face down the angel of Death herself for you. OK, I'll give it a shot.

You're feeling pain now. Pain is not a sign of death, it is a sign of life. In that sense, you've already got what you wanted—if not the specific dream you had in mind, then at least the experience of chasing dreams. . . and now you're not sure whether you want it, because you're in one of those dips between the soaring moments (don't tell me you never had one of those—liar!). I think I've experienced something similar, though I know everyone's pain is different and beyond comparison. For me, when I am

in the black moments, it seems that nothing matters, that nothing could possibly justify feeling that agony. And then, other times, I feel so transcendent that I have it within me to embrace the entire world, to declare that anything and everything that has ever happened is beautiful and worthwhile just for that one perfect moment.

For what it's worth, after years of going up and down like that, I've finally found my way to a life in which the joyous moments far outnumber the horrible ones. I have changed my world, and it's a wonderful thing to finally have a life in which, if the world is not yet what I want it to be, I at least feel that I am living exactly the way I want to in it, given the conditions. That's all that can be asked of anyone, I think. . . and if each of us is able to face down her own demons, and give others what help she can, we will make that revolution we all speak of. That revolution isn't a particular world order, anyway, remember—it simply means creating a situation in which each of us can live as she desires. Every single one of us who gets there is another step closer for the world, as long as we don't step on each other on the way.

Now you have two choices. You could give up on following your dreams. The problem with that is that it won't free you from pain—it will just institutionalize failure as the center of your life. You probably know some older people who have done this; you can see the effects on them. The alternative is to come back to us, to rejoin the circle of people who are willing to try. That won't free you from pain, either, but it will give you something to feel in addition to it.

So what now, you ask? You know much better than me, or else you will soon. It's just a question of whether you can find it within yourself to forgive the world and try again. Life is really hard, so no one can fault you if you don't—but you should know that that won't help, any more than Prozac, liquor, psychotherapy, or money would. The only therapy I've ever found that works is just *doing* things, the things I know are right for me.

Yours for new wings for all the flighty captives,  
Nadia

Dearest Nadia,

*Well, I'm still alive, and free (such as it is in this world!) again for a little while at least. My father had to mortgage his house, poor man, to raise the money for my bail, and I'm charged with six felonies—just for getting attacked by the chief of police. The ironic thing is I didn't even strike him, but they always reverse things that way. . . just like the pig who beat Tony when they broke up his barricade, who informed him: "your face is assaulting my fist."*

*I'm doing OK, keeping my head up, despite the uncertainty of my future. The only thing that really gets to me is my relationship with my dad: he's a wonderful man, and I know he loves and supports me, but he can't understand what we were doing, or why, no matter how many different ways I try to explain it. I am who I am today largely because of how he raised me. It really scares me—if I can't make my own father understand, then how are we going to make the rest of the world feel these things?*

I am yours with love,  
Dahlia

Darling Dahlie—

It's so fucking good to hear that you're all right—I was afraid I'd never hear from you again. Listen, the hardest people for any of us to reach are our own parents. Not only is there all the hierarchical conditioning about younger people learning from older ones and never the other way around, but you and he are seeing this from totally different contexts.

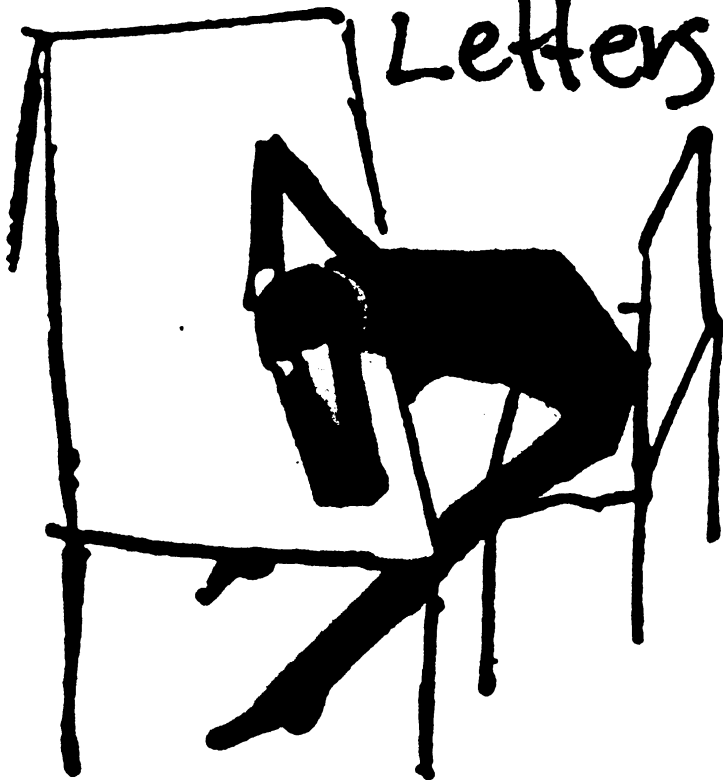
Your father comes from another era. Perhaps he smuggled every shred of radicalism and love he could through all the old struggles and out of that world, to have it to pass on to you—and now it's your turn to see what is possible and necessary here, to act on it and then pass what you save on to those who come next, who will certainly see things differently than we do. Time doesn't run backwards. Neither should we.

This is the way I always reassure myself when I am speaking with an older person who can't understand where we're coming from: it's not my responsibility to persuade him, I try to remember, but rather to reach his daughters and sons, since the world is going into their hands. You've reached your father's daughter, haven't you—you've shown her everything that's going on in this world, and now she has the power to know what to do about it.

I'll be joining you soon, baby. Yours for a world free of charges (!),  
Nadia



## Letters



# What could there possibly be BEYOND DEMOCRACY?

text courtesy of  
special agent Rolf Nadir



Nowadays, “democracy” rules the world. Communism has fallen, elections are happening more and more in those poor underdeveloped third world nations you see on television, and world leaders are meeting to plan the “global community” that we hear so much about. So why isn’t everybody happy, finally? For that matter—why do less than half of the eligible voters in the United States, the world’s flagship democracy, even bother to vote at all?

Could it be that “democracy,” long the catch-word of every revolution and resistance, is simply not democratic enough? What could be more democratic?

## Every little child can grow up to be President.

No they can’t. Being president means holding a hierarchical position of power, just like being a billionaire: for every one president, there have to be millions of people with less power. And just as it is for billionaires, it is for presidents: it’s not any coincidence that the two types tend to rub shoulders, since they both come from a privileged world off limits to the rest of us. Our economy isn’t democratic, either, you know: resources are distributed in absurdly unequal proportions, and you certainly do have to start with resources to become President, or even to get your hands on more resources.

Even if it was true that anyone *could* grow up to be President, that wouldn’t help the millions of us who inevitably don’t, who must still live in the shadow of that power. This is an intrinsic structural difficulty in representative democracy, and it occurs on the local level as much as at the top. For example: the town council, consisting of professional politicians, can meet, discuss municipal affairs, and pass ordinances all day, without consulting the citizens of the town, who have to be at work; when one of those ordinances inconveniences or angers some of the citizens, they have to go to great lengths to use their free time to contest it, and then they’re gone again the next time the town council meets. The citizens can elect a different town council from the available pool of politicians and would-be politicians, but the interests and powers of the class of politicians as a whole will still be in conflict with their own—and anyway, party loyalties and similar superstitions usually prevent them from taking even this step.

If there was no President, our “democracy” would still be less than democratic. Corruption, privilege, and hierarchy aside, our system purports to operate by majority rule, with the rights of the minorities protected by a system of checks and balances—and this method of government has inherent flaws of its own.

## The tyranny of the majority

If you ever happened to end up in a vastly outnumbered minority group, and the majority voted that you must give up something as necessary to your life as water and air, would you comply? When it comes down to it, does anyone really believe in recognizing the authority of a group simply because they outnumber everyone else? We accept majority rule because we do not believe it will threaten *us*—and those it does threaten are already silenced before we can hear their misgivings.

No “average citizen” considers himself threatened by majority rule, because each one thinks of himself as having the power and righteous “moral authority” of the majority: if not in fact (by being so-called “normal” or “moderate”), then in theory, because his ideas are “right” (that is, he believes that everyone would be convinced of the truth of his arguments, if only they would listen sincerely). Majority-rule democracy has always rested on the conviction that if all the facts were clear, everyone could be made to see that there is only one right course of action—without this belief, it amounts to nothing more than the dictatorship of the herd. But such is not always the case—even if “the facts” could be made equally clear to everyone, which is obviously impossible, some things simply can’t be agreed upon, for there *is* more than one truth. We need a democracy that takes these situations into account, in which we are free from the mob rule of the majority as well as the ascendancy of the privileged class. . .

## “The Rule of Law”

. . .and the protection afforded by the “checks and balances” of our legal institution is *not* sufficient to establish it. The “rule of just and equal law,” as fetishized today by those whose interests it protects (the stockbrokers and landlords, for example), does not protect anyone from chaos or injustice; it simply creates another arena of specialization, in which the power of our communities is ceded to the jurisdiction of expensive lawyers and pompous judges. The rights of the *minorities* are the very last thing to be protected by these checks and balances, since power is already reserved for those with the privilege to seize it, and then for the lumpen majority after them. Under these conditions, a minority group is only able to use the courts to obtain its rights when it is able to bring sufficient force upon them in the form of financial clout, guileful rhetoric, etc.

There is no way to establish justice in a society through the mere drawing up and enforcement of laws: such laws can only institutionalize what is already the rule in that society. Common sense and compassion are always preferable to adherence to a strict and antiquated table of law, anyway, and where the law is the private province of a curator elite, these inevitably end up in conflict; what we really need is a social system which fosters such qualities in its members, and rewards them in practice. To create such a thing, we must leave representative “democracy” for fully *participatory* democracy.

## It’s no coincidence “freedom” is not on the ballot.

Freedom is *not* a condition—it is something closer to a sensation. It’s not a concept to pledge allegiance to, a cause to serve, or a standard to march under; it is an experience you must live every day, or else it will escape you. It is not freedom in action when the flags are flying and the bombs are dropping to “make the world safe for democracy,” no matter what color the flags are (even black!); freedom cannot be caught and held in any state system or philosophical doctrine, and it certainly cannot be enforced or “given” to others—the most you can hope is to free others from forces preventing them from finding it themselves. It appears in fragile moments: in the make-believe of young children, the cooperation of friends on a camping trip, the workers who refuse to follow the union’s orders and instead organize their own strike without leaders. If we are to be real freedom fighters, we must begin by pledging ourselves to chase and cherish these moments and seek to expand them, rather than getting caught up in serving some party or ideology.

*Real freedom cannot be held on a voting ballot. Freedom doesn’t mean simply being able to choose between options—it means actively participating in shaping the options in the first place, creating and re-creating the environments in which options exist.* Without this, we have nothing, for given the same options in the same situations over and over, we’ll always make the same pre-determined decisions. If the context is out of our hands, so is the choice itself. And when it comes to taking power over the circumstances of our lives, no one can “represent” us—it’s something we have to do ourselves.

## “Look, a ballot box—democracy!!”

If the freedom so many generations have fought and died for is best exemplified by a man in a voting booth, who checks a box on the ballot before returning to work in an environment no more under his control than it was an hour before, then the heritage our emancipating forefathers and suffragette grandmothers have left us is nothing but a sham substitute for the true liberty they lusted after.

For a better illustration of real freedom in action, look at the musician in the act of improvising with her companions: in joyous, seemingly effortless cooperation, they actively create the sonic and



emotional environment in which they exist, participating thus in the transformation of the world which in turn transforms them. Take this model and extend it to every one of our interactions with each other, and you would have something qualitatively different from our present system: a harmony in human relationships and activity, a real democracy. To get there, we have to dispense with voting as the archetypal expression of freedom and participation.

## Representative democracy is a contradiction in terms.

No one can represent your power and interests for you—you can only have power by acting, and you can only know what your interests are by being involved. Politicians have made careers out of claiming to represent others, as if freedom and political power could be held by proxy. Now, inevitably, they have become a priest caste that answers only to itself—as politician classes have always been, and will always be.

Voting is an expression of our powerlessness: it is an admission that we can only approach the resources and capabilities of our own society through the mediation of that priest caste. When we let them prefabricate our options for us, we relinquish control of our communities to these politicians in the same way that we leave technology to scientists, health to doctors, living environments to city planners and private real estate developers; we end up living in a world that is alien to us, even though our labor has built it, for we have acted like sleepwalkers hypnotized by the monopoly our leaders and specialists hold on setting the possibilities.

The fact is we don’t have to simply choose between presidential candidates, soft drink brands, competing activist organizations, television shows, news magazines, political ideologies. We can make our own decisions as individuals and communities, we can make our own delicious beverages and action coalitions and magazines and entertainment, we can create our own individual approaches to life that leave our unique perspectives intact. Here’s how. ✨

## Consensus

Radically participatory democracy, also known as consensus democracy, is already well-known and practiced across the globe, from indigenous communities in Latin America to postmodern political action cells (“affinity groups”) in the United States and organic farming cooperatives in Australia. In contrast to representative democracy, consensus democracy is direct democracy: the participants get to share in the decision-making process on a daily basis, and through decentralization of knowledge and authority they are able to exercise real control over their daily lives. Unlike majority-rule democracy, consensus democracy values the needs and concerns of each individual equally; if one person is unhappy with a resolution, then it is everyone’s responsibility to find a new solution that is acceptable to all. Consensus democracy does not demand that any person accept the power of others over her life, though it does require that everybody be willing to consider the needs of everyone else; thus what it loses in efficiency, it gains tenfold in both freedom and goodwill. Consensus democracy does not ask that people follow a leader or standardize themselves under some common cause; rather, its aim is to integrate all into a working whole while allowing each to retain her own goals and ways of doing things.

## Autonomy

In order for direct democracy to be meaningful, people must have control over their immediate surroundings and the basic matters of their lives. Autonomy is simply the idea that no one is more qualified than you are to decide how you live, that no one should be able to vote on what you do with your time and your potential—or for that matter how the environment you live in is constructed. It is not to be confused with so-called “independence”—in actuality, *no* one is independent, since our lives all depend on each other (“Western man fills his closet with groceries, and call himself self-sufficient”)—that’s just an individualist myth that keeps us collectively at odds. The glamorization of “self-sufficiency” in the present cutthroat-competitive society really constitutes an attack on those who will not exploit others to “take care of themselves,” and thus functions as an obstacle to community building<sup>1</sup>. In contrast to this Western mirage, autonomy is a free *interdependence* between those with whom you share a consensus, with whom you act freely (i.e. without waiting for permission or instructions from anyone else) in order to cooperatively establish self-management of the whole of life.

Autonomy is the antithesis of bureaucracy. For autonomy to be possible, every aspect of the community from technology to history must be organized in such a way that it is accessible to everyone; and for it to work, everyone must make use of this access.

Autonomous groups can be formed without necessarily establishing a clear agenda, so long as they offer the members ways to benefit from each others’ participation: the CrimethInc. Collective, the Dada movement, and knitting circles of the past and present all offer evidence of this. Such groups can even contain contradictions, just as each of us does individually, and still serve their purpose. The days of marching under a single flag are over.

Autonomous groups have a stake in defending themselves against the encroachments of others who do not believe in the rights of individuals to govern themselves, and

expanding the territory of autonomy and consensus by doing everything in their power to both destroy the structures of coercive societies (including those of representative “democracy”) and replace them with more radically democratic structures. For example, it’s not enough just to block or destroy highways that are creating noise and air pollution; you also have to provide free transportation by means such as communal bicycles and community repair centers, if you want to help others replace the

<sup>1</sup> The politicians’ myth of “welfare mothers” snatching the hardworking citizen’s rightful earnings from him, for example, divides individuals who might otherwise unite to form cooperative groups with no use for those politicians.

# WHAT ARE THE DEMOCRATIC ALTERNATIVES TO DEMOCRACY?

competitive/authoritarian relations of car dependency with cooperative/autonomous means of transportation.

## Topless Federations

Independent autonomous groups can work together in federations without any particular group holding authority. Such a social structure sounds utopian, but it can actually be quite practical and efficient. International mail and railroad travel both currently work on this system, to name two examples: while the individual postal and transportation systems are internally hierarchical, they all cooperate together to get mail or rail passengers from one nation to another, without an ultimate authority being necessary at any point in the process. Similarly, individuals who cannot agree on enough issues to be able to work together within one collective should still be able to see the importance of being able to coexist with other groups.

For such a thing to work in the long run, of course, we need to instill values of cooperation, consideration, and tolerance in the coming generations—but that is exactly what we are proposing.

## How to solve disagreements without calling “the authorities”

In a social arrangement which is truly in the best interest of each participating individual, exclusion from the community should be threat enough to discourage violent or destructive behavior. It is certainly a more humanitarian approach than authoritarian means such as prisons and executions, which corrupt the judges as much as they embitter the criminals. Those who refuse to integrate themselves into any community and reject the

assistance and generosity of others may find themselves banished from human interaction; but that is still better than exile in the mental ward, or on death row, two of the options which await such men today. Violence should only be used by communities in defense, not with the smug entitlement of post-divine judgment with which it is applied by our present injustice system. This applies as well to the interactions of autonomous/consensus groups with the “outside world” which does not yet abide by cooperative or tolerant values.

Serious disagreements within communities can be solved in many cases by reorganizing or dividing the groups. Often individuals who can’t get along in one social configuration will have much more success cooper-

ating in another setting, or as members of parallel communities. If consensus cannot be met within a group, that group should split into smaller groups who can achieve it internally—such a thing may be inconvenient and frustrating, but it is better than group decisions ultimately being made by force by those who have the most power and ruthlessness at their disposal. All the independent communities will still have it in their best interest to coexist peacefully, and must somehow negotiate ways to achieve this. . .

## Living without permission

. . . that’s the most difficult part, of course. But we’re not talking about just another social system here, we’re talking about a total revolution of human relations—for that is what it will take to solve the problems our species faces today. Let’s not kid ourselves—until we can achieve this, the violence and strife inherent in non-consensus relations will continue, and *no* law or system will be able to protect us. The best reason to transcend representative democracy is simply that in consensus democracy there are no fake solutions, no easy ways of suppressing conflict without resolving it, and thus those who participate in it *must* learn to coexist without coercion and submission and all those other nasty habits we are so tired of in our present society.

The first precious grains of this new world can be found in your friendships and love affairs, when they are free from power relations and cooperation occurs naturally. Take this model, and expand it to the whole of society—that is the world “beyond democracy” for which the heart cries out today.

It seems a challenging prospect to get there from here. . . but the wonderful thing about consensus/autonomy is that you don’t have to wait for the government to vote for them to apply these concepts—you can practice them right now with the people around you, and benefit immediately. Once put into practice, the virtues of this way of living will be clear to others; they need no pointing out once one is experiencing them firsthand. Form your own autonomous group, answering to no power but your own, and create an environment in which you chase down freedom and fulfillment for yourselves, if your representatives will not do it for you—since they *cannot* do it “for” you. From such seeds, the real democracy of the future will grow.

Next time we state our demands and grievances and they refuse to acknowledge them, saying “just be thankful you live in a democracy,” we’ll be ready to respond: *That’s not enough!* . . . and know clearly what we want instead, from our own experience.

**Whoever they  
vote for,  
we are  
ungovernable!**



# Divided



## Sex Tips for Restless Youth

Do you experience sexual problems? Do you have trouble getting aroused, or having sex that is fulfilling, or simply meeting the right partners to share that aspect of your life? Chances are you do—just have a look at the magazine rack in any grocery store, and it's clear from all the advice columns and feature articles just how sexually lost and frustrated modern men and women are. Unfortunately, these magazines only offer symptomatic treatment (otherwise, they wouldn't have to run the same articles over and over every month!), no real, radical solutions. And to date, few people have really dared to be open about their troubles, thanks to the social pressures to be "successful" in all affairs. So, in keeping with our general program of providing aid wherever it is needed, we offer some tips:

—Stop trying to make your sexuality serve in your efforts to be a good citizen (responsive lover, macho man, etc.)—it won't, it will just go on strike. Better to serve *it*, if serving must be done.

—Stop trying to make your sex life (or romance, or anything else, for that matter), by itself, provide you with qualities that should be intrinsic to every moment of your life. It is not the role of your sexuality to be your sole source of excitement, or intimacy, or pleasure—it is the role of sex to be just that, to be sex. If you feel trapped or insecure or bored everywhere else, you will probably have a hard time shaking off those feelings in bed.

—If your idea of seventh heaven is having perfect sex with a beautiful partner, dispel it. Heaven cannot be an isolated moment of life; it has to be a complete way of living, or else it will be just another barren myth to denigrate and impoverish the moments of our real experience. Better that we find ways to make every moment of life as exciting as great sex can be (and believe me, it can be done!), considering that we can't have sex *all* the time—such a thing would get boring, anyway, since living has so many facets we must not neglect! You can feel and share passion as deeply while building puppets for street demonstrations together, sneaking onto rooftops for late night conversations, or stowing away on ferryboats. Most people just haven't had the chance to be free and wild together anywhere outside the bedroom yet—and consequently, it hardly comes naturally between the sheets.

—Rescue your sexuality from the definitions and delineations slipped around it like a noose by external forces: the leering billboards and romantic comedies, the expectations of your friends and parents and paramours, the television programs and other social programming devices that would dictate desire and limit the erotic to the strictly sexual. The powers that be have everything at stake in keeping your sexuality emaciated and confined to the specific act of physical intercourse, to one routine and one partner and one ghettoized category, so you won't discover in it the freedom that you could be living around the clock, outside their control, beyond their target markets. But one step outside the lines, and the world is yours.

—And that means throwing out your pornography. Pornography isn't obscene because it's sexual, but because it's *not*—replace the representation with the *real*, in every instance, for maximum possibility. Masturbation is a beautiful thing, but don't let the pornography industry buy out your libido. A two-dimensional woman, no matter how transgressively posed, will do exactly what you command her and no more: that means she can never challenge you with her own needs or perspectives, never open new doors to you, never assert her selfhood. That refusal to be challenged is a rejection of the vast expanses of freedom that can only be reached with others. We should be wary of giving our fantasies such slaves to rule over, lest we learn to fetishize the violence of domination implied by such one-sided sex—and end up living in the sterile, determinist world of control mania. Do you want to explore, to reach unimaginable climaxes, to try out things you've never seen in movies? Do it with other people—they *are* out there. Let them know you're ready.

*Sexuality as art—now there's a start. But more art "about" sexuality? It's doubtful that the world of images will ever belong to us again. . . that's just another diversion of our attention to that domain from this world, where we should be practicing doing, being, feeling with one another, not with the dangerous safety of an object. Make love and speak about your best kept secrets, your blackest needs, the demands the culture of fear places on your sexuality, held hostage as it is (never fear, you're not the only one who thinks he has things to hide—your secret's safe with all of us!). . . We can get out of here, together, but first we have to be honest to figure out where the fuck we are!*

*To find indulgences that simultaneously satisfy and subvert our programmed, poisonous desires, and thus remake ourselves—that is the key.*

Over a century ago, a famous writer quipped that the industrial worker was "a mere appendage of flesh on a machine of iron." Today, that description can be applied across the board: each of us is no more than an appendage of flesh on the vast machine that is our society, for our lives and communities are atomized into isolated sectors. If we want to change the whole of life, we must first become whole again.

### SEPARATION: THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE SELF

Modern man's activity is compartmentalized: it is divided and subdivided into separate components which can only interfere with each other. He experiences life as an ongoing conflict between achievement, romance, social responsibility, fitness, relaxation, adventure, and so on, because all these pursuits seem to be mutually exclusive. He would like to spend more time with his wife, but if he doesn't stay at the office another hour he won't be able to advance his career, and then he has to go to the gym to firm up his belly and ward off poor health. . . and there's that damn vacation at the beach to plan for, and world news to catch up on, before he even gets to think about being romantic with her. Perhaps he buys that Mozart CD that the advertisements said would relieve stress and help focus his concentration skills—hoping some new medication will serve to fend off the symptoms of a life in which he never does anything for its own sake! Perhaps he would like to get involved with some sort of volunteer social work, but doesn't know where he would fit it into his schedule; he has a hard enough time just taking the time out to watch his favorite sitcom, and even that doesn't provide him with much relief from his busy life. *Meaning*, of course, is absent everywhere when life is disjointed; without unity of self in his pursuits, the modern man can find no lasting satisfaction in any one of them.

Compare this with the integrated, holistic life of the "savage" or young adventurer. For her, there is no distinction between working and playing, between spending time with her friends and lovers, taking care of her practical needs, and seeking pleasure. She moves through the world, finding sustenance and getting exercise from the same activities, using her creativity with her friends to weave a daily life that is both challenging and familiar, at once adventure, livelihood, and religious ceremony.

Perhaps you've experienced this kind of lifestyle before, when you were doing something that incorporated every aspect of your being into a perfect equilibrium. We all need to find ways to integrate our lives, so that we will not always be trying to make impossible choices between equally necessary pieces of ourselves. . . and if we want to make this world a better place, we have to find ways of living that are revolutionary in their very nature; for politics, activism, or social responsibility as a separate domain of life, as a hobby or part-time operation, can never outweigh the effects of the rest of life.

*Example:*

*My friend Mark practices Yoga to focus and relax himself. He is also an artist and musician, who often travels around the country with his work. Mark realized one day that when he neglects his exercises on the road, he still feels focused and relaxed in ways that he simply couldn't at home without Yoga. He concluded that the voyage itself must be a kind of Yoga, perhaps the same kind of Yoga referred to by Ken Kesey in his eulogy for Neil Cassidy:*

*"His life was the yoga of a man driven to the cliff-edge by the grassfire of an entire nation's burning material madness. Rather than be consumed by this he jumped, choosing to sort things out in the fast-flying but smog-free moments of a life with no retreat. In this commitment he placed himself irrevocably beyond category."*

Analysis

Production

Art

Work

Lovers

Intimacy

Farms

Management

Youth

Entertainment

Exercise

Words

Technology

Self-interest

Poetry

Workplaces

Responsibility

# Common Ground

## SPECIALIZATION: THE SUB-DIVISION OF LABOR

Action

Just as our individual lives are fragmented by compartmentalization, our society is fragmented by ever-increasing specialization. Every sphere of life is relegated to the care of an elite core of specialists, who administer it without consulting the rest of us. Every profession is divided and subdivided: from scientist to chemist, from chemist to biochemist, from biochemist to pharmaceutical neurobiologist until no one outside a handful of experts can understand what is going on. At that point, the division of knowledge itself becomes authoritarian, for it grants small groups of people vast powers over others who cannot even fathom what those powers are.

Consumption

Becoming a specialist is a self-selecting process: only those willing to concentrate on learning one subject to the exclusion of all else can excel at it. Thus the engineers and computer programmers with the greatest skills are willing to work for the government building weapons of mass destruction and cracking the codes of “subversive” groups, for they have never taken the time to reflect on what the effects of their efforts might be. They simply do what they have been taught to do, for whoever provides the chance to do it.

Life

Each expert in this system of specialization is able to do his job well, in a vacuum, but unable to see the larger whole. Without an analysis of the part he plays in society, he sees it as an external force, acting on him without his participation. And the people who form the various parts of the machine are unable to relate to each other to take action together when they want to change something about the world they are making, separated as they are spatially and socially and psychologically into their individual spheres; in fact, each tends to conceive of problems in terms of its needs versus those of the other components of the machine: the library would get the funding it needed if only it wasn't going to the linguistics department, etc.

Play

Specialization also discourages the rest of us from being well-rounded and understanding the workings of our society. Painting is left up to artists, the maintenance of our cars to automechanics, social change to professional politicians or amateur activists. The more complicated technologies become, and the more alienating the terminology used by those who work with them, the fewer of us are able to exercise any control over our environments: “Call the repair man,” we chant, waiting in intimidated ignorance and powerlessness. Similarly, all of us but the recognized “artists” miss out on the joys of being creative in the aesthetic world. The true value of a painting cannot be captured by purchasing it in a gallery and hanging it on the wall; it lies in the moment when the painting is conceived, when the artist is comparing sketches with her comrades late one night, arguing about narrative and form, and has a sudden, exhilarating insight. This is something we must all take part in, each with our unique talents. The supposed divinity of artists, and the expert credentials of the art critics who deify them, just like the genius of scientists and the arcane knowledge of locksmiths, have fooled us into denying ourselves this irreplaceable pleasure.

Friends

The role of the political activist as authority and expert paralyzes the rest of humanity in correspondingly disastrous ways. Saddest and most absurd of all is the way so many political activists unconsciously act to alienate others, the very others with whom they hope in theory to find common cause. Conditioned to believe that they need to be superior to others to have value of their own, and believing in the scarcity economy of self which demands that they stake out their identity in contrast to the identities of those around them, today's

Sexuality

Supermarkets

Labor

Age

Education

Relaxation

Deeds

Nature

Generosity

Protest

Apartments

Pleasure

insecure activists mistakenly presume that they somehow benefit from showing off how much more knowledgeable, more committed, and more ethical they are than everyone else.

Specialization *within* political circles is equally crippling. Oblivious to each other's efforts and the strength they could wield as an alliance, single-issue activists agitate about their chosen topics in parallel ghettos; marginalized into a thousand individual campaigns, they exhaust themselves trying to cure the symptoms of the dominant system, rather than developing a resistance that could undermine the world order that is ultimately responsible.

When being active is no longer an off-putting specialty, and partisans of different struggles are able to find common cause, the world will finally change.

## END SEGREGATION! INTEGRATE OUR LIVES!

Somewhere across the world there is an underground circus or punk rock band on tour as you read this. Unbeknownst to themselves and others, they carry with them the seeds of a new and yet ancient social structure, which could totally transform the ways all of us live and interact. Within the group, responsibilities are shared and valued equally, and whenever someone wants a break from doing something or is curious to learn about something else, people switch roles. No one member's participation

is less important than anyone else's, whatever their individual strengths may be, for the cooperation and contentment of each is crucial to the functioning of the group. Each member's daily activities satisfy her various desires: she feels at home with her friends while she travels through new environments, she makes art that simultaneously entertains and educates others, she gets exercise and learns new things repairing the van, she has adventures collecting food and other supplies through an urban hunting and gathering that does not conflict with her anti-consumerist ethics. Best of all, she no longer has to distinguish between her own needs and those of the people around her, which eliminates the greater part of the stress of human interaction. Together all the participants function as an extended family, and the positive atmosphere is so strong that over time they are able to lose some members and gain others without losing any momentum.

Yes, we'd have to downsize and restructure our whole civilization to follow the lead this merry little band offers, but for the past few centuries we've been struggling to deal with the difficulties of *not* living in such communities—and we haven't had much success. If we're going to struggle anyway, it might as well be towards a utopia in which our lives can encompass everything the cosmos has to offer.

## Revolutionary General's Warning: CrimethInc. Rhetoric Can Be Hazardous To Your Mental Health

Intellectuals have quite an aptitude for displacement—when they suffer from the ennui of their dry, disembodied existence, they respond to this suffering not with action but with more desiccating and disembodiment. All too often their real discontent ends up being diverted into theory and abstract analysis, and from there back into career and status . . . and thus, more status quo.

Ideology creeps quickly into *any* language, languages that seek to oppose it no less. It might well be that the language of radical theory, dreary and unbearable as it was with so many academic code words and so much talk about “responsibility” and self-sacrifice and the inevitability of history, would have died out on its own (and right on time!) if we had not revitalized it with our reference to real life needs and fantasies. But now our innovation has become a routine of its own, and we all know what to expect from the mouth of any radical: the same old standard-issue rhetoric, but now even more disheartening, for it comes dressed in the robes of our own hearts and dreams. All the talk about joy and seizing pleasure and desiring freely seems as stilted and forced to our ears today as the Marxist class struggle diatribes of twenty years ago. You can talk all you want about spontaneity and pleasure, but once you've written the word “passion” a thousand times in redundant, repetitive demands for immediate change, it loses whatever power and beauty it had to start with.

So what can we do about all this?



. . .chants the chorus of anguished anarchist robots. Well, exactly—and, at the same time, no, not at all! For heaven's sake, if it's passion you want in your life, the last thing you should do is make up more slogans about it. This little disclaimer is itself a pernicious little thing, just more *talking* about talking about life—put the paper down, stop conceptualizing, and get out there and do something *real*, something that escapes the claws of routine! No more expounding, rationalizing, glorifying . . . distrust any words or symbols that attempt to capture the things that make life matter—political pomposity above all! Words can only hold reality *by accident*,

and then only for brief moments. Cornered by the inertia of our own rhetoric, we must finally take a stand against description—and *for* expression, but in *action* alone, the only place where it can be free and unburdened by the dead weight of ideology. That is to say—it is only sufficient to speak when, by speaking, you *are* acting. So unless you have hit upon a way to turn all this theory into actual life—throw this treatise aside!

MESSAGE COURTESY OF THE CRIMETHINC. ACTION FACTION

<sup>1</sup> The treatise, of course, goes on from this point, undaunted, forgetful of its own demands, as ideology always does and is.



# Adultery

(and other half revolutions)

*A spectre is haunting the Western world: the spectre of Adultery.*

If the two-party relationship system is the pinnacle achievement of a hundred thousand years of human loving, why is adultery so common that it's practically counted on as material for bourgeois drawing room humor. . . and employment for a whole army of marriage counselors? If all any of us truly desire is our "one true love," why can't we keep our hands off everyone else?

If you really want to know, you should cut straight to the source and ask the adulterer herself. Or maybe you don't have to go that far—maybe *you've* had adulterous affairs or inclinations of your own, as the statistics suggest.

## **"Good Marriages Take Work"**

Growing up in an environment dominated by capitalist economics teaches certain psychological lessons that are hard to unlearn: *Anything of value is only available in limited supplies. Stake your claim now, before you're left all alone with nothing.* We learn to measure commitment and affection in terms of how much others are willing to sacrifice for us, unable to imagine that love and pleasure could be things that multiply when shared. In a healthy relationship, conversely, friends or lovers enable each other to be able to do and live and feel *more*. If you feel, in your gut if not your head, that monogamy means giving something up (your "freedom," as they say), then the patterns of exploitation have penetrated even into your romantic life. Such cost-benefit calculations just don't compute.

We all know that Good Marriages Take Work. There it is again, *work*: the cornerstone of our alienation culture. Wage labor, relationship labor—are you ever not on the clock? Do you accept stifling limitations in return for affection and reassurance, the same way you trade time for money at your job? When you have to *work* at monogamy, you are back in the system of exchange: your intimacy economy is governed, just like the capitalist economy, by scarcity, threat, and programmed prohibitions, and protected ideologically by assurances that there are no viable alternatives. . . again, just like the capitalist economy. When relationships become work, when desire is organized contractually, with accounts kept and fidelity extracted like labor from employees, with marriage a domestic factory policed by means of rigid shop-floor discipline designed to keep the wives and husbands of the world chained to the machinery of responsible reproduction—then it should be no surprise that some individuals cannot help but revolt.

Adultery, in stark contrast to the Good Marriage, comes naturally, arriving without even being invited. Suddenly you feel transformed: awakened from the graveyard of once-vital passion that has been your relationship, to feel that excitement again. You shouldn't be feeling any of this, damn it, and yet it's the first time you've been carried away by pure, unforced happiness in who knows how long—and oh, the sweet optimism of something new, something that isn't yet fucking predictable. . . it's as if surprise, risk, gratification, fulfillment were again genuinely imaginable possibilities. Who, if they could feel what you're feeling right now, could possibly demand you resist?

## **Stolen Moments. . .**

The adulterer gets a crash course in just how occupied the space and time she lives in is. It immediately becomes clear just how little free time she has, time when she is not *under observation*—it turns out that the workday does not end when she leaves the workplace, but extends in both directions before and after it, consuming practically her whole life. The domination of her space, too, is revealed: how many places are there for her to spend time with her new lover, places she need not rent with money, respectable explanations, and the image of social responsibility? In what few moments of her life is she not held to guidelines imposed by outside forces, guidelines which plainly have nothing to do any longer with her emotional and physical needs?

The adulterer becomes a virtuoso of petty theft, stealing the moments of her life one by one from their "rightful owners": her spouse, her employer, family and social obligations. Just like the vandal, she resists the ownership of her world in the only way she knows how—by tiny and largely symbolic acts of daily sedition, out of which she carefully constructs an infinitely fragile alternate universe. There she hides, in spirit when she cannot in body, hoping not to be found out and called to account for what she has become: a traitor to the entire civilization that raised her.

## **"Honesty is the Best Policy"**

Society, personified by her unfortunate spouse, demands that the adulterer be honest and frank about all things, when it will only punish her for this. It attempts to secure her compliance through routine interrogations ("who was that on the phone, dear?"), surveillance ("do you think I didn't notice how much time you spent talking to him?"), search and seizure ("and just what the hell am I supposed to think this is?"), and more serious intimidation tactics: the threat of total expulsion from the only home and community she is likely to know. The adulterer who would like to be able to tell the truth is forced to use the Misery Quotient to compute whether she can permit herself to: *divide your current unhappiness by the harmful consequences of contesting it, multiply by your fear of the unknown, and then think twice about whether you really need to act after all.* This is the same formula used by exploited migrant workers and children locked in private school hells, by battered wives and sexually harassed secretaries.

What our society is missing here is the wisdom to know that telling the truth is not just the responsibility of the teller.

If you really want to know the truth, you must make it easy for people to tell it to you: you must be genuinely supportive and ready for whatever it may be, not just make self-righteous demands or play good cop/bad cop ("just tell me, I promise I'll understand. . . you did WHAT?!"). That can only lead to evasive action, or at best to the subject of your cross-examination finding ways to lie to himself as well as you. Neither our society nor, consequently, its cuckolds and cuckoldesses, are ready for the revelation of truth that the adulterer has to offer; it is only safe in the sheltering ears of her illicit lover.

## **"People Will Get Hurt"**

Inevitably, despite the best intentions and most secretive schemes of the adulterer, people get hurt. More to the point: people already *were* hurting, only invisibly, in the enforced happily-ever-after of domestic silence, or else such drastic measures would not have been necessary in the first place to bring dead hearts to life. Would it be better that the routines and illusions of the marriage remain undisturbed, forever, so that everyone's ennui could proceed on course to the embittered end? Could it be preferable for the unsuspecting partner to go on measuring his value as a lover and spouse according to the standard of a fidelity that boils down to self-denial, a standard which has already been violated in spirit of not in letter? Of course, instead of cheating you could have gone to counseling, been "honest" with your spouse instead of yourself and turned away from the new landscapes you saw about to be born in the eyes of your potential lover, trying instead to achieve a passable imitation-substitute with your officially sanctioned partner—or resorted to medicating yourself into numb submission with television or Prozac, if that failed. . .

To cut to the heart of the matter: is it ever really wrong simply to desire not to be emotionally dead? What vast measures of self-confidence and entitlement would it take the modern married man or woman to risk feeling alive, unarmed with the twin weapons of self-justification and self-abasement, the excuses and apologies and self-recriminations? The adulterer discovers that she is trapped in the life she had adopted under the encouragement and threats of the established romantic standard, and, despite her best attempts to restrain herself, has begun to plot an escape. Were she to reflect lucidly on her situation, her secret self might rebel and begin to ask the important questions: What kind of life does she really aspire to live? How much freedom and fulfill-



ment does she *deserve* to feel? How has it come to be that she hurts others just by reaching for what she needs for herself?

The fact is, people always get hurt whenever someone contests the long-entrenched order, even "innocent" people, and sometimes not the same innocent ones who were suffering at the hands of the old regime. That's why anything less than complete prostration to the status quo is considered bad ethics. But once the itch to mutiny has struck, the alternative to it becomes unthinkable (consider how much thinking those who opt for it do). . . so the adulterer takes it upon herself, often unwillingly but without being able to resist, to do things that hurt others, but no more than she absolutely has to. If she were prepared to embrace and proudly proclaim her outlawed desires (rather than ultimately rejecting them in a fit of apologetic revisionism: "I didn't know what I was doing!"), and take responsibility for the further pain that would cause, she would finally stand in a position from which she could *step out* of the circle of hurt that is the scarcity economy of love. But she lacks the courage and analysis for this final act: that is why she is still a mere adulterer, one who makes half a revolution—and the worst half, at that.

### **"What About the Children?"**

"What about the children?" demand the shocked sentries of the bourgeoisie when they hear about yet another marriage endangered by an affair, terrified that their own strays might come out next. Well, what about them? Do you think you can protect the next generation from the tragic tension between the complexity of desire and the simplicity of social prohibitions just by knuckling under yourself? If you smother your own aspirations for happiness, displacing them instead onto your expectations of future generations, you will end by smothering your children as well as yourself. Your children would be better off growing up in a world where people dare to be honest about what they want, whatever the consequences. Would you prefer that they learn to beat their own longings into flattened reminders of shame and remorse, as you do?

And it's worth pointing out that nuclear-family monogamy, which these self-appointed judges would protect from the assault implied by adultery, is the very thing that replaced the broader, more fluid, extended family structures of the past. By all accounts, children were better cared for in those environments, and their parents had more freedom as well. Could it be that adultery is a blind, desperate lunge for the extended community that we once had, from the cage of the contractual relationship—or at least could act as a stepping stone to a new form of it?

### **Adultery is Marriage's Loyal Opposition.**

Ultimately, adultery is only possible because the questions it asks are left unanswered. Just like the shoplifter, the rioter, and the suicide, the adulterer makes only half a revolution: she violates the decrees of authoritarian convention and law, but in such a way that they remain in place, still dictating her actions—be those actions obedient or reactive. She would do better to expose what she is and wants to the whole world without guilt or remorse, and demand that it find a place for her and her desires, whatever they might be—then her own struggle could be the starting point for a revolution in human relationships from which everyone might benefit, not just a flash of isolated passion and insurgency to be stomped out before it even becomes aware of itself.

Let us shelter and defend her from the shaming of this society whenever she does step forward, so that she may do so—for she acts, as we do, out of a passion burning unquenchably for a new world.

"A woman can never be too rich or too thin."

# One Dimensional Man in the Three Dimensional World

**Why abstractions, norms, and absolutes are an assault on humanity and existence itself.**

The anorexic and the body builder are both pursuing ideals that recede before them. Once one starts to measure oneself against a one-dimensional standard, such as strength or slimness, too much is never enough: the goal is always ahead of you, no matter how far you go. These ideals cannot be reached in this world. . . but if you follow them far enough, they *can* lead you *out* of it, into the abyss which is their true domain—as Arnold Schwarznegger's early heart problems, and the suicides of our rock stars and sex symbols, clearly attest.

It's true that Arnold Schwarznegger, Hollywood actresses, and others like them were practically factory farmed by this competition-obsessed society; but the rest of us are infected with these values too—think of us as free range versions of the same livestock. All our judgments, all our conceptualizations of the world refer to absolutes and ideals: Sara is pretty, but not as pretty as Diana, who is not as pretty as the girl on the magazine cover; Jane is smart, but not as smart as the boy who was accepted to Harvard, who clearly is not as intelligent as Albert Einstein was; serving free food is revolutionary, but not as revolutionary as setting a police station on fire. We are truly one-dimensional thinkers: unable to see each individual quality or action for what it is alone, only able to apprehend it in terms of how it compares to others. . . the implication being that there is some fundamental scale against which *everything* can be compared. This is *one* way of conceiving of the world, yes, but *not* the only way, and not the best way in most circumstances, either.

This way of thinking makes everything into a competition, for those who don't want to accept their inferiority; it makes us disregard the value and unique significance of every event and entity, in favor of finding a place for them in the system of calibration. The truth is that every human being really does have a value unlike any other, every radical action and approach is important to "the revolution" in irreplaceable ways (the important question is *not* which means to apply, but how to make them complement each other), and we desperately need ways to articulate this to ourselves. **We need a language with which we can celebrate through description, not comparison.** Without this, no matter how clearly we know we should

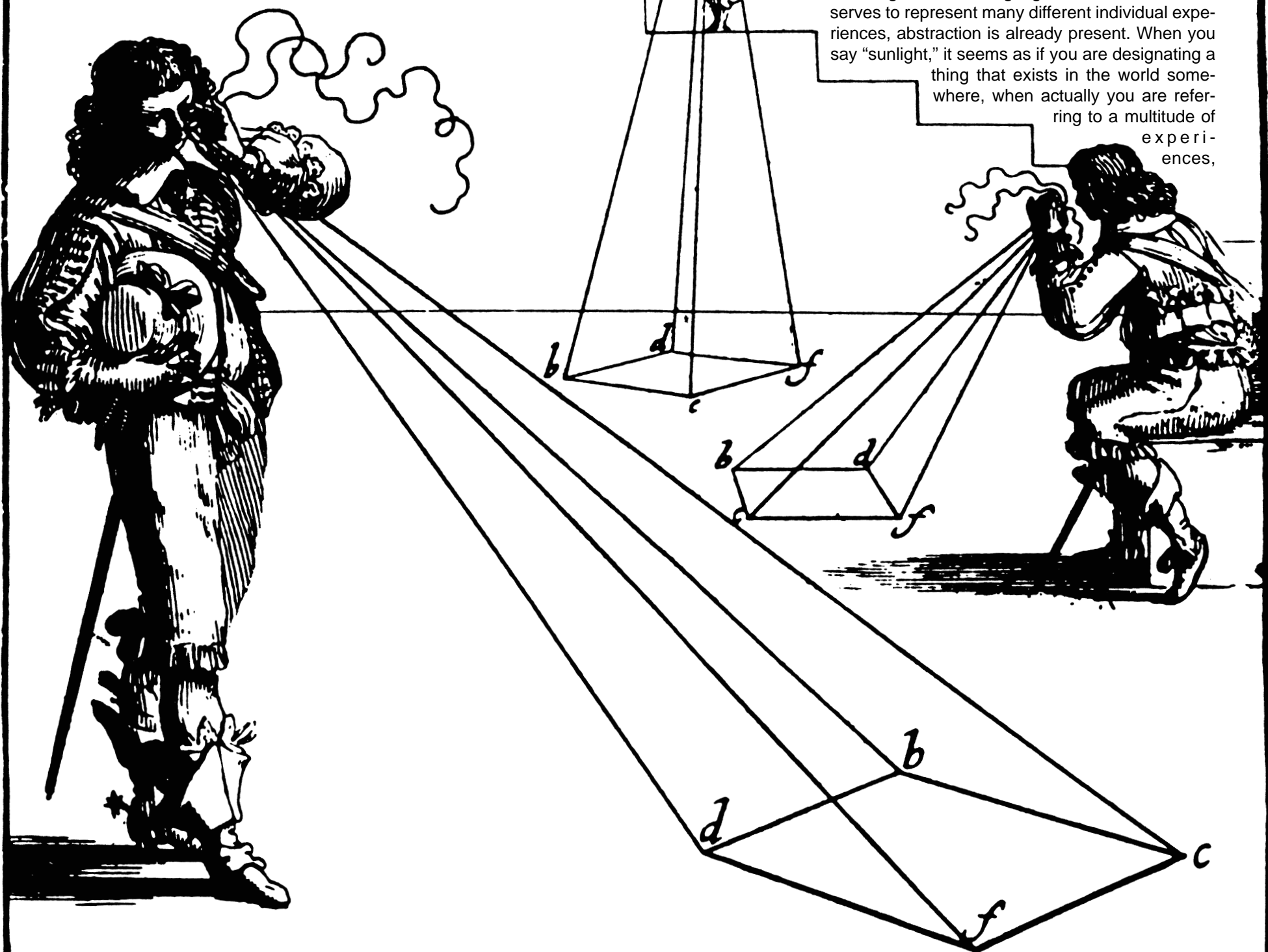
value every little thing for its own sake, we are trapped by the assumptions of our own means of expression:

"I love you," whispers the young girl.

"Do you love me more than anyone else, more than anything?" demands the boy.

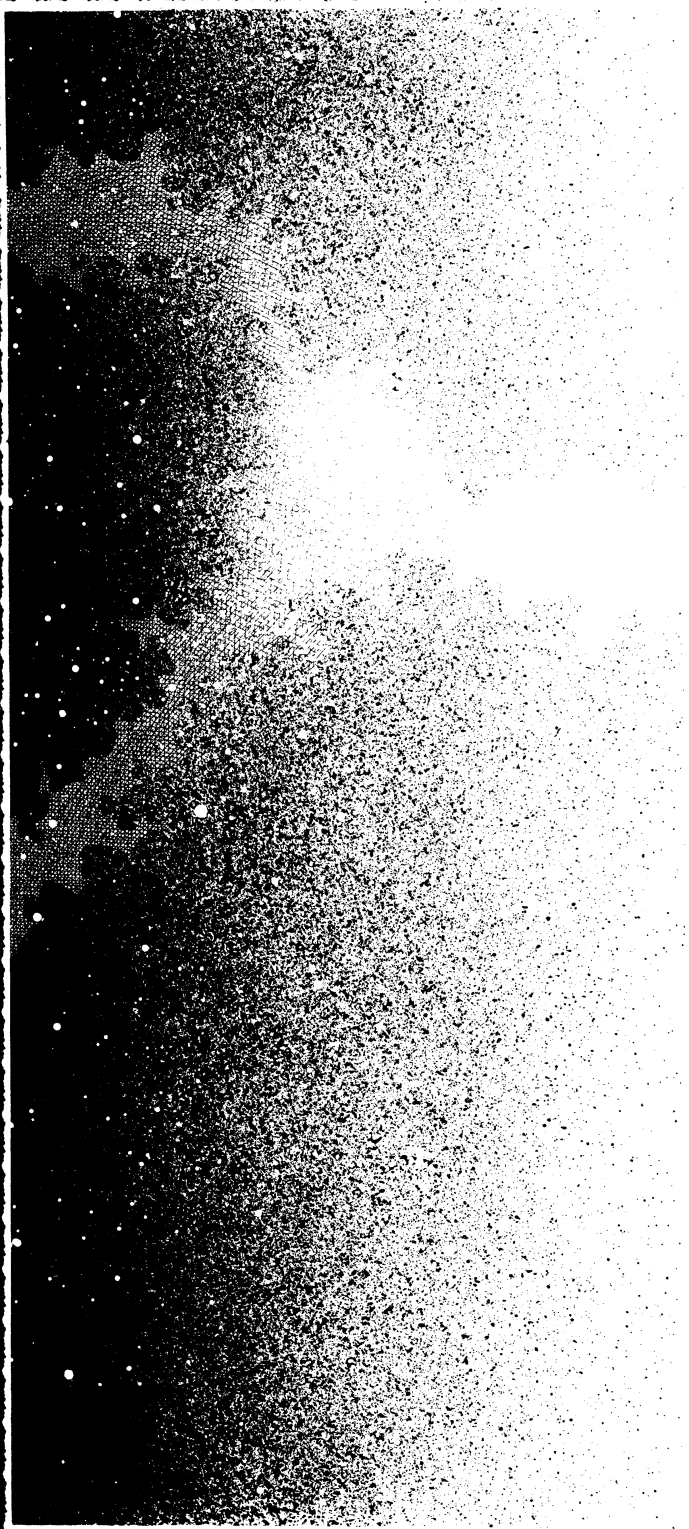
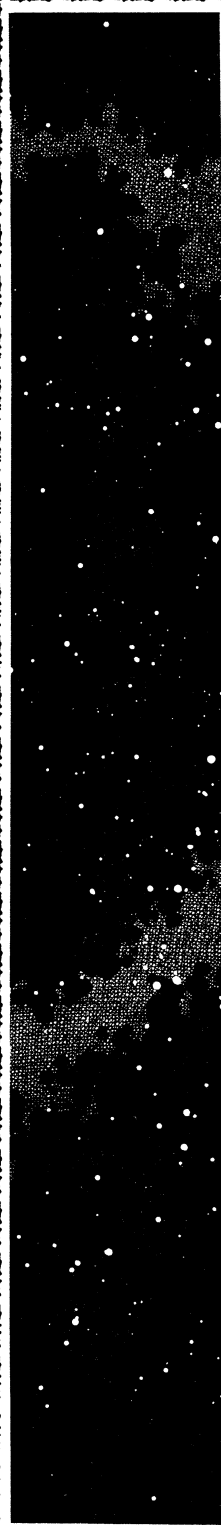
"I love you. . . differently, because of what you are. Not more, not less—there's no comparison with love, for love cherishes what is. Love is not judgment, it is measureless, matchless. . ." she replies—but he has already turned away.

Where did this obsession with one-dimensional standards come from? It originated with language itself: where one word serves to represent many different individual experiences, abstraction is already present. When you say "sunlight," it seems as if you are designating a thing that exists in the world somewhere, when actually you are referring to a multitude of experiences,





It is only now that I can recognize your beauty and deny no part of my own.



all different but with some very basic similarities. **What is most precious in experiences is not the lowest common denominators, but the once-in-a-lifetime particulars**—but words leave those out entirely. What use is a word that only applies to one moment of one individual's experience? That is not a currency that can retain value from one to another, and thus is useless for communication. Communication is a necessary part of being human; but it is crucial that each of us remembers that no word or concept could ever capture the infinite depth and complexity of a single instant of life.

The birth of Western civilization, which is founded upon one dimensional thinking, occurred in ancient Greece, when Plato took the abstraction of language one step farther. Plato declared that our abstractions referred to some "higher" world of ideals, in which "courage" and "honor" and "justice" exist in their pure form; in doing so, he turned everything backwards, placing our broad generalizations *before* the experiences they are drawn from, and claiming that it is those vague generalizations that have truth. Thus he took the reference point of our concepts out of the world altogether, suggesting that our real experiences in it are unimportant, irrelevant. Paul, the founder of Christianity, extended this philosophy into the world of religion: the "ideal" existed in heaven, and the earth was the flawed, evil imitation of it.

Ideas and doctrines alone were not enough to bend human experience of the world to the system of absolutes, of course. Against the wisdom of bodily experience, in which the unique qualities of every entity and event are encountered up close, they were powerless. But slowly, it became possible to enforce the doctrine of the ideal upon the world of daily perception.

It began with the end of the barter system, and the beginning of subdivided time. Suddenly, everything had a certain, set value, and the day was divided into measured segments. Time and worth cannot really be measured—the man who has truly lived knows that the stopwatch cannot capture the way time speeds up when he is in bed with his boyfriend and slows down when he is "on the clock" at work, he knows that the best and worst things in life cannot be "deserved" or earned, let alone appraised—but the pay-by-the-hour jobs of the exchange economy forced people to measure them anyway, and the habit sunk in.

Soon, everything was measured and calibrated: women's clothing sizes, for example. Until the end of the nineteenth century, women's clothing was made by hand, for individual women. A woman was seen as possessing distinct personal qualities, not as a "size 6" or "plus size." It's very telling that over the last few decades, the perfect ideal of the woman has been described numeri-

cally—"36-24-36"—and anything that varies from that perfect Platonic form is less than beautiful. Women now occupy a scale of value according to their measured weight. Some struggle with scales every morning, hoping the number will be lower so their value will be greater.

It only remained for brand names to finish reducing the real complexity of the

world to the empty simplicity of abstractions. Once upon a time, human beings had gardens; in those days, every fruit or vegetable was unique, and looked it. Now our food is scientifically engineered to total uniformity, and comes with a brand name identifying which absolute it represents: the supermarket's generic brand is the Platonic form of the "inferior banana," the name-brand banana is the perfect incarnation of the banana as abstraction, and the archetypal banana of the rich, eco-elitist consumers comes marked "organic."

Those who would resist these attempts to bend the real world to the flatness of the conceptual world often fall into the same practices. The world of political theory is rife with abstraction and one dimensional thinking. Many make it through childhood with their ability to appreciate the irreplaceable details of life intact, only to fall to the maladies of generalizing and idealizing when they begin to read theory and attempt to form an "analysis" of life: their impressions and emotions are converted into an ideology, and where their struggles and goals once referred to real people they now see those people only as playing pieces in a war of symbols.

Ultimately, the pursuit of "ideals" which cannot exist in this world constitutes a rejection of this world, the *real* world, and thus of life itself—as demonstrated by the sad fate of the body builders and anorexics who take it to its logical extreme, the grave. We are so used to denigrating this world, saying it is a fucked up, imperfect place—and so it appears, compared with our "perfect" standards and ideals, which seem so perfect only because they cannot exist. A truly radical resolution would be to embrace existence just as it is, as the only thing that matters, to proclaim that this world itself is heaven, made for our total enjoyment and fulfillment. . . and then, to ask: *If that's the case, how do we act accordingly? What have we been doing wrong all this time?*

In doing so, we would finally have to accept and embrace ourselves exactly as we are, in all our diversity and variety, and free ourselves from the shadow of the false heaven of Plato and the advertising agents, where "real"

beauty supposedly resides. Liberated entirely from standards, from the lingering ghost of Christian judgment and condemnation, we could see that *what we are* must itself constitute the measure and meaning of beauty, of dignity and magnificence, if such concepts are to exist at all.

I took off my paint-splattered jacket and my shirt, and gazed at myself in the mirror of the airplane restroom. What I saw was something I had only glimpsed before in the eyes of my most adoring lovers: the curves and textures of my skin, the scars and tattoos and lines cut into it painted a picture together, telling a life of wild adventures and undreamable extremes, a story more poignant and thrilling than any other. I was beautiful — beauty itself was incarnated in me, as the vessel of a world of struggles and longings and triumphs bigger than anything that could fit in any book. It was a moment of blinding brilliance, but I rested comfortably into it, confident, as if I had known through all the squalor and desperation that I was simply being primed for this. And, for once I felt that I could live a hero's life as well as die a warrior's death.

# TRANSGRESSION

I would like to rebel much more than I actually do.

I would like my hatred to be pure and clear again, not diluted and staged as it is. How much I would love to love and not feel that I did it out of habit or duty, how much I desire to suffer truly at these tragedies, not in the empty, practiced way I do. For all my talk of being my own master, how much I long for some new feeling or sensation to take me and make itself my master!

Even without this deliverance, there is much in me that eludes your descriptions and prescriptions. And you must hear about this, too, or else all your well-intentioned talk of better worlds and men will be worthless.

When you speak of building community, I permit myself a furtive sneer, because I don't want to hide from myself in the safety of your numbers—I want to be alone in danger and the agony of solitude which I know and love. While you speak of action, I cherish my passivity, passing indifferently through a distant world, wrapped up in the turmoils of my own gloomy spirit.

When I see the way you celebrate romance with ribbons and ceremony, I feel all too painfully how little of myself can fit into that mold. And then when I speak of other kinds of relationships, without borders or contracts, and you are persuaded as I outline all the advantages of such arrangements, suddenly I feel within myself a longing for a single companion, with whom I could flee the maddening crowd, in whom I could lose myself and chase that impossible immersion which all lovers hunger for as moths do flames.

And when you exalt the courageous, and the bold, and the good, there is a proud, evil part of me that is possessive of my faults, my cowardice, my selfishness, and I want to be faithful to that part, too, lest I split myself into fragments.

As soon as I have finished my plea for acceptance, the devil in my recalcitrant heart will urge me to strike away your outstretched arms. Build a paradise for me—I will still revolt, I will bring heaven down around my ears: that is the only way I can express what

I am, and I will not be denied. For there is no life without laws, no world without boundaries; and I can only feel utterly myself in the act of transgression, sailing on the borrowed wings of violation, destruction.

I am the secret part, the forbidden part that must be silent, nocturnal, invisible, that can never reveal itself, that could only betray itself by so trying; I am communicated across history through the subterranean depths of the imagination, secrets, plots, affairs, deviations, forgotten dreams and smothered impulses, guilty pleasures that can never be embraced or erased entirely. You cannot live without me. I am as irrefutable as the petals of a flower, as unaccountable as the snake that bites. I am all the more a part of you, the more you pledge yourself to all that is noble, permissible, comprehensible.

I would like to write the story of the most anti-social, indefensible man, to speak aloud his untold treasures and torments, to expose his tangled humanity in so compelling a portrait that you would be made to see the absoluteness of his needs as you do your own. Then the unforgivable would be on *your* conscience, and you'd have to find a way to wash the world of it once and for all or perish with them, the untouchables you're so proud to outrank. . . for once *you* have felt those emotions, the bitter draught of spite and envy and annihilation, you are guilty, too, aren't you. So it's not so humanitarian of you to present yourself as perfect, is it—better to show off your blemishes, in solidarity with all of us. Besides, if you're here to show mercy, everyone knows only the sufferers, the lowest of the low, can minister to each other. Give me the sympathy of whores any day, over the busybody do-gooding of impotent priests.

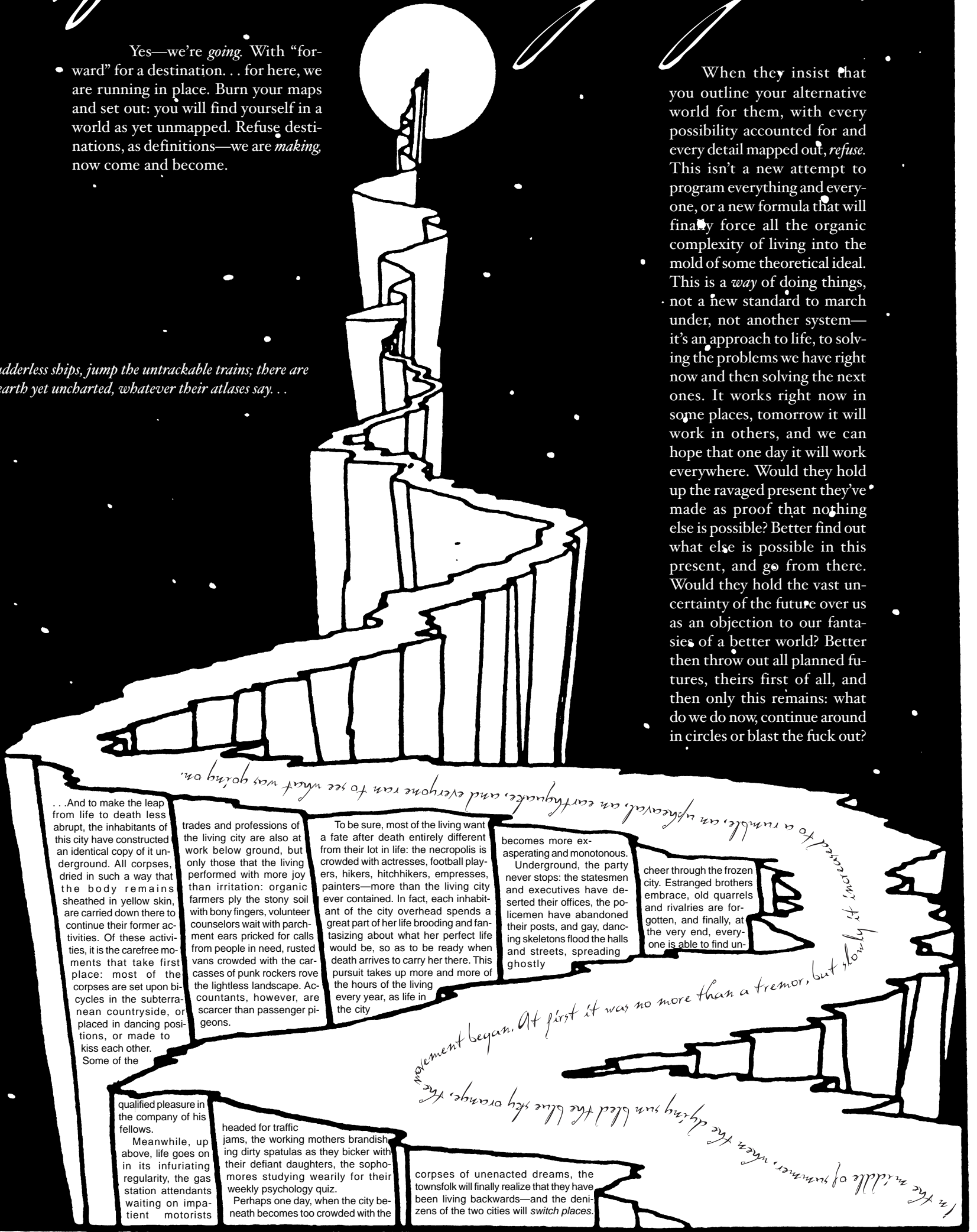
This is absolution for the cast-out and the shameless, for the addicted and the infected and the weak, for the ones who had to prostitute their souls to survive and the ones who know that freedom always belongs to he who is evil. The world must make a place in the sun for us, too, or else we will continue to poison it as we rot in its closets and catacombs. For a world that knows no monsters, for a world that feels no shame, we show our faces to stake our claim.

# Where are we going?

Yes—we're *going*. With "forward" for a destination. . . for here, we are running in place. Burn your maps and set out: you will find yourself in a world as yet unmapped. Refuse destinations, as definitions—we are *making* now come and become.

When they insist that you outline your alternative world for them, with every possibility accounted for and every detail mapped out, *refuse*. This isn't a new attempt to program everything and everyone, or a new formula that will finally force all the organic complexity of living into the mold of some theoretical ideal. This is a *way* of doing things, not a new standard to march under, not another system—it's an approach to life, to solving the problems we have right now and then solving the next ones. It works right now in some places, tomorrow it will work in others, and we can hope that one day it will work everywhere. Would they hold up the ravaged present they've made as proof that nothing else is possible? Better find out what else is possible in this present, and go from there. Would they hold the vast uncertainty of the future over us as an objection to our fantasies of a better world? Better then throw out all planned futures, theirs first of all, and then only this remains: what do we do now, continue around in circles or blast the fuck out?

...board the rudderless ships, jump the untrackable trains; there are regions of this earth yet uncharted, whatever their atlases say. . .



## Breaking and Entering a New World.

Against the fascist pigs! Smash fascism!

anxieties and tools of control, and set out into them?

edges of this factory farm civilization, and that all we have to do to be free is to drop the the real, inseparable tragedies of our lives, and to contest the rest without hesitation or doubt. Could it be that the bountiful jungles of old still wait for us somewhere beyond the Let us be great enough to follow our fears out of this darkness, to recognize and face ourselves, and into new worlds.

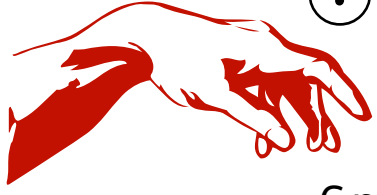
more certainty than any compass over the unnecessary boundaries we have built around a different purpose: if we make a practice of doing what we fear most, it will guide us with that these absurdities can be transcended. But fear, once recognized for what it is, can serve of trying and failing with success in reach that restrains us from letting ourselves believe It's not even utopian to demand that we put an end to forces like these. It is simply our fear let alone more beautiful. That's *unnecessary* tragedy, stupid tragedy, pathetic and pointless— to share ourselves honestly, to use our talents and capabilities to make life more bearable— dering voids. It doesn't have to be that we never dare to fall each other what we really have to be that we let meaningless traditions and doctrines atop our lives into bewil- lives away working to serve the hollow greed of a few rich men, just to survive; it doesn't food or buy mansions. It doesn't have to be that men and women are forced to waste their

times cue—but it doesn't have to be true that some people starve while others destroy true that every man is fundamentally on his own, and that life is capricious and some- way we flee from those inevitable truths into the arms of more horrible things. It may be catastrophes, and beautiful moments be forgotten. But what is most heartbreaking is the they are ready, just as perfect relationships will end in ruin, adventures be cut short by Perhaps this world will never be free of misfortunes—people will always die before control manias.

chance cannot entrust us with anything greater than our routines, our expectations, our ducted to binary code for virtual reality. We won't trust anything to chance—and thus dual tourist and commuter tracks. . . while the final fugitive aspects of existence are re- our natural resources into war machines and waste. In place of the joys of wandering new provide for us as its children, we have the defenses science affords us as it spins the last of which develops and manufactures more and more of our fate that nature would in today. In place of gifts and sharing, we have competition and the "scarcity economy," for the hard labor of the fixed farming life, they laid the foundations for the world we live When our ancestors first traded the liberty of hunting and gathering in the forests

## Leaving the 20th Century.

# CRIMETHINK MANIFESTO Part 72-A



## What Is Crimethink?

Crimethink can be reached from the subway station only by means of a daring double somersault. It is only a multiple orgasm away from the checkout counter of the grocery store, and a mere lobbed brick distant from the witness bench of the courtroom, but it is much harder to access from the closed playpens of your homes, schools, workplaces, and punk rock clubs—only a mystical revelation or masterless revolution will suffice.

Crimethink riots rather than diets, so as to love itself body and soul. Crimethink cannot be captured by the cameras of the photojournalists. Crimethink dies on its feet before it lives on its knees, but it's more likely to be found on the run in between. . . just like you, perhaps.

Crimethink is the burning bush in the desert of industrial society, which can still be found between the thighs of the most mercilessly free and beautiful. Crimethink is revenge for that fucking flag they put on the moon.<sup>3</sup>

Crimethink doesn't speak, it acts, and only speaks when speaking *is* acting. Crimethink stakes out its dominion where the body is the jagged edge of the world, stopping proudly short of the abyss of abstraction. Crimethink says to you: *I put a spell on you, because you're mine.*

For the market manages the managers, hierarchy bosses the bosses, capitalism owns the owners, but a crimethinker is truly a human being, free and wild.



## What Is CrimethInc.?

One must be enough of a crimethinker to adopt a crimethoughtful stance towards one's own crimethink. Crimethink is *not* CrimethInc.—it is, rather, the spirit of playful destruction that saves CrimethInc. from itself.

CrimethInc. throws up contradictions around itself like fences, to protect itself from ideology, from stiffening—yet still sends out a call to revolt that *will* be heard in every corner of the Occupied Territories by this year's end.<sup>4</sup>

Listen hard to silence, and you'll hear thunder deep inside.

CrimethInc. is the hip gnosis of a new youth rebellion that goes beyond both youth *and* rebellion. CrimethInc. is a Non-Prophet Organization: it is full of love, but if it comes down to pledging allegiance, it will be nadaist rather than dadaist, or -ist at all, for that matter. CrimethInc. is beautiful: it's ugly. . . in a world where every old pretty thing has been copyrighted by the greeting card companies, the calling card companies, and the credit card companies, it is a foray into the unknown, to seek new veins of joy before we all suffocate like yeast in our own excrement.

CrimethInc. is the cure for the cancers with which they propose to cure cancer. CrimethInc. sweeps through the streets with fire and banners, and steals through the classroom in xeroxes and whispers. CrimethInc. pilots the rudderless ships of the Movement movement, coded into the paths of those nomads who trade bondage for vagabondage; CrimethInc. smashes tourism and all other despicable formulas for running in place.

CrimethInc. is the Last Loosening: it is here by order of those out of order, so that nothing may ever be in order, or made to order, again. O ye rabble without a cause, CrimethInc. is the ticket out of here you've been waiting for—if you're willing to cash it in yourself, that is. *CrimethInc. is very much more what you do than what we do.*

CrimethInc. is constantly in effect at lockdown faceoffs on city blocks, in banks that are being robbed, on airplanes passing over the Brazilian desert at sunrise. It maintains office hours in squats under riot squad siege occupied by boys and girls who have escaped the suburbs to fall in love. Take the last night train from La Plata to Buenos Aires, and if the doors are open so you can sit on the steps of the train listening to the young passengers beating out a samba rhythm on the seats and singing along behind you as the Argentinean night speeds past, you might realize there is a letter or a novel you need to write—and at that moment, you'll enter an outpost.

CrimethInc. is present wherever anything or anyone is on fire. CrimethInc.'s field of operations extends as far as there is crimethought, and beyond, into some places where it is impending or unnecessary:

it speeds through Arctic waters in the wake of comets fallen and swallowed up by the cold,  
into mythical Russian cities ringed by vast rivers at

the end of winter—the crack of thawing ice bellowing into the night,

arriving at the magnetic poles<sup>5</sup> where compasses spin, and moving on

to the bottom of the ocean where the waterlogged corpses of whales lie.

In Conclusion:

Obviously, gentlemen, if you fear for the morality of your wives, the education of your children, the peace of mind of your investors, the submissiveness of your mistresses and housepets, the solidity of your armchairs and privatized prisons and factory farms, the manner in which your warehouses are licensed and the security of the State. . . then you are right. But what can you do? You are rotten, and the fire has been lit.

But as for you would-be revolutionaries, radicals wedded to a license without limits, girls and boys who love without leave, we urge you:

More rigor in your recklessness!  
More ambition in your hedonism!<sup>6</sup>

*When you're young,  
and it feels like  
you're invincible,  
it's because you are.  
From this moment forth,  
no one shall ever die.*

<sup>3</sup> . . . and you know why they put it there? Because there's no oxygen, so we can't burn it.

<sup>4</sup> Don't believe us? Well, you've heard it, haven't you?

<sup>5</sup> It's important to point out here that the magnetic poles are not actually fixed—they wander across the surface of the earth. That is, in fact, exactly the kind of voyage sanctioned and undertaken by CrimethInc. operatives: invisible, detectable only by effects registered thousands of miles away, yet of global implication. . .

<sup>6</sup> . . . and vice versa, vice being the key word.



Crimethink is the first stirrings of a new world, smuggled across every border in the heads and hearts of a dissident nation of millions, thrown through plate glass windows on notes tied to bricks. It is everything that evades control—the stolen sick-day at the seashore, the shared meal free when the manager is away, the city street liberated for an hour during a demonstration. . . the proud look in her eyes when she walks into the principal's office holding her girlfriend's hand.

CrimethInc. is the underground railroad from this world to the next. Hop on.

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