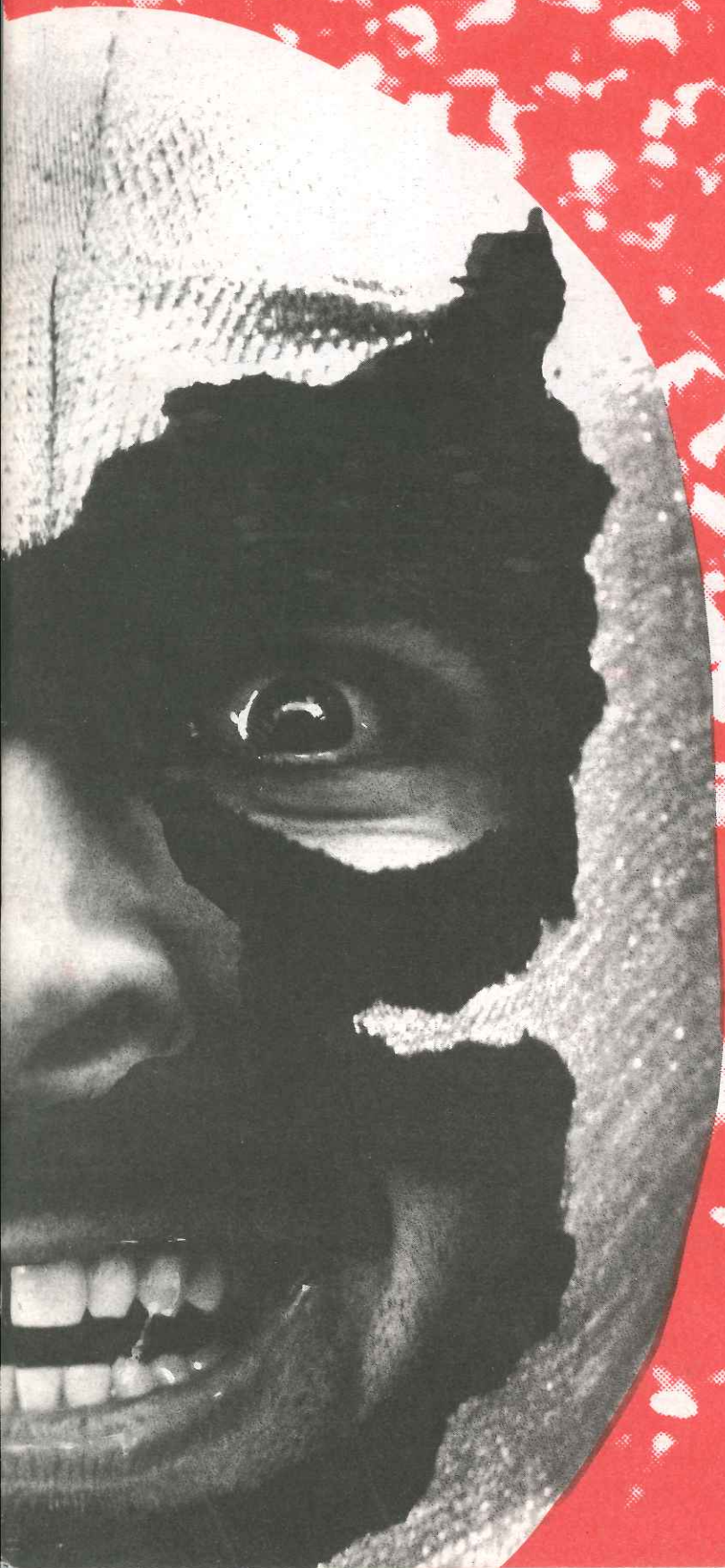


BORDER/LINES

CULTURES • CONTEXTS • CANADAS

NO. 9/10
FALL/WINTER 1987/88
\$5.00



Animals in the Army
The Last Real Wrestling Show
High Theory and Low Culture
Excursions into Gossip

There's no flies on Border/Lines.



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cultures contexts canada
Number 9/10 Winter 1987/88

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Au-delà, le jardin d'acclimatation

Errata

The text shown was omitted from the last page of Nicole Jolicoeur's artist's project in Border/Lines number 6.

Disseminating Scruples



People are talking about **semi-otics**, that perky little science of sign systems . . . or more to the point, people are talking about **semioticians**, the rich and famous of the academic conference set, particularly those who dropped into Toronto in June for the ninth **International Summer Institute for Semiotic and Structural Studies** (that's **ISISSS** to you).

More stars than . . . And who better to be "liaison officer" (that's chief starfucker to the rest of us) than well-known Toronto celebrity chaser and intimate of the famous "**Black Bart**" **Testa**?

My lips are sealed But they will make their needs known, won't they, these celebrities? Take (please!) nature girl **Luce Irigaray** . . . We all need a break from life in the fast lane, so everyone could understand Luce's demand for a house with a garden for the duration of the institute (after all, you can't smell the lime trees or feed the squirrels from the Park Plaza). And she was so gracious about it, unlike **Michel Foucault**, who several years ago thought his little *boite* so noisy that he demanded to be moved.

Oh, oh, oh, oh. But we found some of Luce's other quirks a bit less charming . . . Regular readers of *Border/Lines* may recall that she had announced she would refuse to speak English because it is "the language of imperialism" . . . That, it appears, was putting a positive gloss on it. After several outbursts at York prof **Barbara Godard**, who had rendered yeoperson service in translation, Luce threw sisterhood to the wind and adopted a pet boy as translator for the duration . . . it hardly mattered because only 12 people were attending her lectures at this point (not very surprising, since they'd already been published).



French down our throats, part 2 Nor was this the only parole violation in the prison-house of language . . . people never stopped talking about the treatment meted out to *Border/Lines* contributor **Roland Le Huenen** by **ISISSS** generalissimo (and colleague in the U of T French Dept.) **Paul Bouissac** . . . After announcing that courses had to be given in English (take that, anti-imperialists!), Paul announced that Le Huenen's course had been cancelled.

Master of the Circus Who else, but the ebullient **M. Bouissac**? One night, he left the Institute building at 10:30, locking the door behind him . . . only to remember, at 12:30, that he had locked a group of semioticians inside . . . he returned, to find them with their faces pressed despairingly against the glass . . . unlocking the door, he quipped, "What, no panic sex?"

Panic Sex, '87
World Tour Top marks to **Arthur Kroker** . . . after knocking them dead on the American conference circuit, Kroker blew into town to bring the house down at the **ISISSS** colloquium on "The semiotics of eroticism" with his "Panic Sex" paper . . . the video is due any day now . . . And can anyone confirm the rumour that York honcho **John O'Neill** was livid because Kroker had been the *succes de scandale* in this spring's academic skin trade?

And anyway, not much else was cooking on the eroticism front . . . Toronto's own **Robin Wood**, self-appointed bad boy of film theory, was ever-transgressive, showing us a clip

from the banned-in-**Zum Klo**, and pronounced children's lifetime" swimming in the w polymorphous perv won't be around to

But the coll redeeming momen types **John Greysor** and **Richard Fung** out 50 bucks, think going to get a chan who were looking the end of the wee

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The
Some people do money helps. A abuzz with rum silver greased t name stars . . . that **Derrida** top **Irigaray** clocked **De Lauretis** bar **Silverman** for



Dave Paparazzi

from the banned-in-Ontario *Taxi Zum Klo*, and promising that "in my children's lifetime" we'd all be swimming in the warm waters of polymorphous perversity . . . sorry you won't be around to dive in, Robin!

But the colloquium had a few redeeming moments . . . just ask SoHo types **John Greyson**, **Colin Campbell**, and **Richard Fung**, who each shelled out 50 bucks, thinking they were going to get a chance to talk dirty, and who were looking pretty frustrated by the end of the weekend.

Systeme de la mode

Ann Marie Picard (keep your eyes on this rising star, folks!) hit the nail on the head when she confessed to being more nervous about her clothes than about her speech . . . this isn't to say that ISISSS provided much big news from the front lines of the fashion wars . . . but heads were turned by **Arthur Kroker's** artfully wrinkled linen jacket ("Why bother with dry cleaning if the apocalypse is due any minute?" quipped one observer) . . . And everyone was sympathetic towards poor **Jacques Derrida** who obviously has to live out of a small suitcase . . . but we did find the seersucker suit and pink shirt a tad *ennuyeuse* after four days running.

Say it with rayon

Kaja Silverman was the talk of the town for her fashion statements . . . we loved the summer frocks and the party shoes . . . but we were blown away by her outfit at the eroticism colloquium . . . black seamed stockings, rhinestone drop earrings, and a cocktail dress with black mesh atop (at 10:00 in the morning, no less!) . . . and this for a paper on male masochism! . . . **Paul Bouissac** fumbled repeatedly as he tried to find a place to pin the microphone.

The rich and famous

Some people do it for love . . . but money helps. And the conference was abuzz with rumours about how much silver greased the palms of the big name stars . . . informed guesses are that **Derrida** topped the bill at \$12,000; **Irigaray** clocked in at \$9,000; **Teresa De Lauretis** banked \$8,000; and **Silverman** for many the star of the

show, pocketed a relatively measly \$4,000 . . . it's a dirty job, but . . .

Market quotes

It was October 1929 for the York SPT Luce(ite) gang . . . if you're holding **Irigaray** shares, dump them fast before word gets around . . . **Derrida** held steady: a solid, blue chip investment; it probably won't yield the same spectacular rates of return as in the past, but as with Xerox, you'll never take a bath . . . **De Lauretis** shares are more risky: informed market analysts noted that production has failed to expand at the anticipated rate . . . But adventuresome futures speculators made a killing on **Silverman**: a relatively new stock, it offers an attractive package to investors who may be considering divestment from **Irigaray**.

But the real loser may have been **Semiotics** itself . . . observers noted that the hard semioticians in attendance were being traded like penny stocks in obscure gold mines . . . even such one-time heavy traders as **Greimas Inc.** were pushed to the margins . . . and the up-and-coming **artificial intelligence** market remains too unstable to call . . . stay tuned!

Choose me!

Choose Me! Legend has it that Madonna spent a year dancing in front of the DJ at the Danceteria before she was "discovered". At ISISSS you had to work a lot harder to be noticed by the stars . . . there were the

novitiates who came into Derrida's seminar with carefully prepared questions that they danced by him until he, or they, collapsed, exhausted . . . there was the American academic who delivered a forty-five minute "sermon" (as Jacques dubbed it) in lieu of the ten he had been allocated . . . and then there was the ex-Toronto member of the feminist literati who cornered **Kaja Silverman** at a party and spent forty minutes describing her analysis to the obviously bored and silenced **Silverman** until rescue finally arrived.

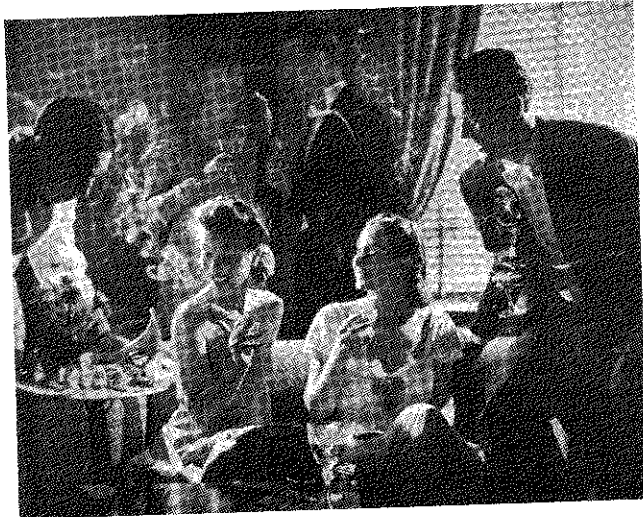
Covering all bases

"Among the 'screens' to be used are Kenneth Burke's concepts of logology and its applications in Augustinian semiotics as read by John Freccero, and Ignatian rhetoric as read by Roland Barthes; the theories of performative utterance, enunciation and speech en/actment of Austin, Searle, Greimas, and Benveniste; Paul Ricoeur's theory of processual mimesis and Frances Yates' reading of *ars memoriae* transcoded through Ong's theory of oral noetics and its cognates in Marcel Jousse's semiotics of gesture and liturgical enactment . . ." (**Lorraine Weir**, describing her course "Semiotics of the Joyce System".)

What is Semiotics?

"Semiotics is whatever is interesting" (**Paul Bouissac**).

Dave Paparazzi is an artist currently working in the university.



DEPOLITICIZING GOSSIP

As much as we may think that our gossip columns and tabloids are new, the peddling of rumour, gossip and exposure of the lives of the famous are as old as writing: Dante's *Inferno* or Rabelais' *Pantagruel and Gargantua* are early versions of providing dirt on the prominent of living. Medieval Florence, Venice or Paris were rife with stories of lechery and sodomy, simony and perjury, hypocrisy and corruption. Savonarola was executed for his exposures and Martin Luther split the church with his. For decades in France and Britain, newspapers and gossip columnists have exposed the peccadillos of the rich and the venalities of the poor, inventing and magnifying those that came to hand. *Private Eye* in London and *Le Canard Enchaîné* in Paris have been for some time the places that British and French readers have gone to if they want to have their news flavoured with smut and salacious venom.

Obviously all of this is displayed and gloated over so that a better world might be imagined. Dante had no problem with his alternatives - intellectual beauty guided by Thomist Catholicism would purge the world of the false prophets; Rabelais probably thought that the peoples' common sense would prevail against the chicanery of the establishment; and Martin Luther, evoking the example of the dark pagan German gods and their transformation through the Blonde Gallilliean, wanted to free the people from the sale of front row seats in Paradise at the hands of an Italian Mafioso Pope. The latter-day British and French simply expect their elite to be romantically corrupt, though perhaps wanting them to be virtuous.

Late twentieth-century North American gossip/religion is of a different breed. The *National Enquirer*, the *Star*, and the *Globe* (formerly *Midnight*) are basically about the Power of Positive Thinking, derived from Dale Carnegie's popular idealism, aided and abetted by capitalism, God (whoever s/he is) and the heroes of the Media. The secret of the universe is revealed in the triumphs of the human will over the false gods of money, media and sex. To tempt fate is one of the great challenges, and fate appears in different guises - as the supernatural which interferes with the everyday, and as the structures which control the everyday. The universe is populated by ex's - ex-wives, ex-husbands - even extraterrestrials - who descend, fail to descend, depart, come back, go off again. Our heroes suffer "terrible ordeals", have "secret 40-year loves", experience "pain of the beautiful women" they once loved, and produce clones who are "Elvis' other daughter", who "wanted to escape father's shadow", or who are shunned by their TV fathers because they took part in a "Voodoo Movie."

The new gossip is of those Positive Thinkers who grasped at the infinite, but had trouble holding on. If they were crushed, it was not because of themselves. "Sex and Money ruined TV preacher Jim Bakker", says the *Star* (because he wasn't positive enough?), but "psychics bring us close to God", retorts the *Globe*. Meanwhile "Stardom is wrecking my life", the *Globe* makes Huey Lewis say. And Nancy Reagan, poor girl, will always feel insecure because of her heart-breaking childhood. The *National Enquirer* (for a long time the only tabloid of Rabelaisian pastiche), having given up on the two-headed monster who gives birth in a surrogate womb to the three-legged dwarf, has now concluded that its only serious characters are right-wing politicians, Lady Di, and the stars of the soaps. Positive Thinking is a struggle which must have its Saints, not even those who are potentially venal, but simply errant Knights and Ladies attempting to wrestle fate to the ground. Not quite King Arthur and the Knight of Camelot; more like Ryan O'Neill peddling Bibles in *Paper Moon*.

The people who read all this stuff are a mixed bag if the personal columns can be trusted. Among them are psychics, voodoo specialists, miracle ladies, voodoo prophets, action astrologers ("cabalistic numbers to play the lottery through ancient astrological rules"), faith healers, speakers in

'tongues'. The lonely in unlikely juxtapositions search for each other: Irish Methodist in Hawaii, Libra looking for Scorpio, child of God, spirit-filled Christian, divorced Southern Baptist, correctional institute inmate, Libra Catholic, ruggedly divorced black Jehovah's Witness (no vices). And anyone can become anything, instantly. For \$2 there is a success kit, for \$3 you can become an ordained minister, for \$10 a bishop, for \$20 a songwriter. Real estate seems to be going very cheap everywhere, and if the worst comes to the worst, you can get brand-new ID (including birth certificate) and start all over with Visa and Mastercard. But above all, remember that your prayers will be answered only if you know the Creator's real name: "Request our free booklet, 'Why aren't your prayers answered today?' Learn the Name of the All Mighty." Sounds like Jehovah's Witnesses? It is. But never mind, if you are really trapped in all of this, Fundamentalists Anonymous has just supported a chapter in Toronto to "support ex-members of fundamentalist religions and to oppose the 'religious right' in politics." Thus to get out of the circular world of cult positivism, you have to enrol in another cult (modelled after Alcoholics Anonymous, which is itself modelled on Pentecostal prayer meetings). And presumably their meetings will consist of confessions by those who were deluded, as if the Canadian Legion were suddenly to be taken over by Born-Again Pacifists, and everybody sits by the fire to tell gossipy tales about the bad old days.

But as the antics of the American Presidency have displayed for the past two decades, all of this is not confined to the evangelists and the paranoid electronic tabloids. The new Dale Carnegies are, on the one side, those energetic management specialists who produce tedious moneymaking



tomes on Excellence, other, the Jane Fonda work out to the tune of Narcissism. Their yard is Betty Ford, decaying rich and a gossip factory, the Purgatorial reach who would reach Nirvana. But - in noticed - Excellence being cured of doing nothing or not having anything to do with the copying of *The New Yorker* gossip that really that most business lighted to have O'Admiral' Poindexter *National Enquirer* its July 28 issue to action who's manly pompous, prying his honest, fort

Now there's an The new hero is in espionage, the nomenon which concerned with spied commands from spy lives his who the knowledge does is of such st His heroism the well he can tell that his activities about.

So if the power leads to an Ollie Boardrooms, the reached its nadi cally political. It lows us to peek in power, to show t no clothes. Cont gossip. The table gicals, even the Gary Harts, may sources of scand real politics is al Mandacity is Kin Marine face - wh sip? Rabelais wo great belly-laugh

Ioan Davies tea University.



Conspiracy Theories and **AIDS**

**California (Econet)
25 February, 1987
AIDS Virus :
Man-made in the
USA?**

Stefan Hyme, a controversial author in both Germanies, recently discovered a 50-page research report on the origins of the HTLV-III AIDS virus. The report was written by East German biologist Jakob Segal, former head of the Institute for General Biology at the Humboldt University in East Berlin, and was reported in English only in Harare, Zimbabwe.

In the 3-page interview in West Berlin's *Tageszeitung*, Hyme asked the scientist about the results of his genetic and epidemiological research. Segal said that he ended up tracing the virus to the military research institute at Fort Detrick in the United States. The theory that AIDS was originally a harmless monkey virus was "deliberate disinformation", he said. "The transformation [from monkey to human] is so immense that it lies beyond all probability."

Segal said that virological evidence was the most convincing. Genome analysis indicates that the AIDS virus is a so-called virological chimera that consists of segments of the Visna virus as well as the HTLV-III virus. As there is no natural biological process by which an exchange of genomes could have taken place, the AIDS virus was the result either of a miracle or of genetic engineering, he said.

The AIDS virus was first identified by Professor Luc Montagnier at the Pasteur Institute in Paris, in the spring of 1983. He termed it Lymphadenopathy Associated Virus (LAV) and sent it to pro-

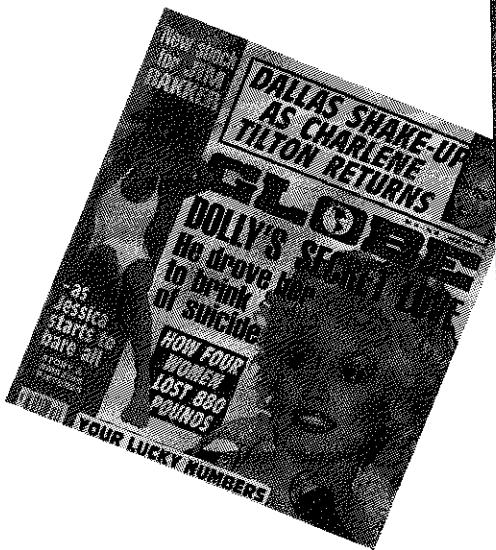
fessor Gallo in Bethesda, Maryland. Gallo compared the LAV virus with the HTLV I and II viruses he had discovered.

Three months later, Gallo described the LAV virus again and called it HTLV-III. Subsequently, the Montagnier group in Paris analyzed the genomes of HTLV viruses and discovered that the differences between HTLV-I and HTLV-3 (AIDS) were so great that a coincidental, natural transformation from one to the other was entirely improbable. Gallo had published his results too soon, they said. The AIDS virus could not unambiguously be assigned to the HTLV virus group.

As there was now no scientifically plausible explanation for the origins of the AIDS virus, scientists began to analyze various viruses that showed some resemblance to it. In the process they found the Visna virus, whose incubation period takes as long as that of the AIDS virus. The Visna virus is frequently seen in Iceland, where it engenders a brain illness in sheep.

Segal went on to describe how Gallo compared the genome of the Visna virus with that of the HTLV virus in a series of experiments. The result was that the Visna virus and HTLV-I genomes are identical in two places. This meant that they are only distantly related. However, the comparison between the Visna virus and the HTLV-III (AIDS) virus showed there were 23 identical places.

Segal's conclusion was that the genetically engineered Visna virus originates from a P-4 high security laboratory, where scientists are allowed to manipulate pathogenic agents like viruses. The first P-4 laboratory in the world was opened in the fall of 1977 at Fort Detrick, Maryland. As



comes on Excellence, and on the other, the Jane Fondas whose acolytes work out to the tunes of the Culture of Narcissism. Their potential graveyard is Betty Ford's home for the decaying rich and famous, the great gossip factory, the ultimate Purgatorial resting-place for those who would reach the positivistic Nirvana. But - in case we had not noticed - Excellence and Narcissism, being cured of drug addictions, and having or not having a mistress, have nothing to do with ethics. A recent copy of *The New York Times* ("all the gossip that really matters") reports that most businessmen would be delighted to have Ollie North on board, while they identify personally with 'Admiral' Poindexter. And the *National Enquirer* devotes six pages of its July 28 issue to North, "a man of action who's made mincemeat of pompous, prying politicians with his honest, forthright answers."

Now there's an interesting problem. The new hero is a product of training in espionage, that modern phenomenon which is essentially concerned with spies taking hidden commands from hidden bosses. The spy lives his whole life predicated on the knowledge that everything he does is of such stuff as gossip is made. His heroism therefore consists of how well he can tell us convincing lies in order to heroically resist the charge that his activities can be gossiped about.

So if the power of positive thinking leads to an Ollie North as Hero of the Boardrooms, the gossip industry has reached its nadir. All gossip is basically political. It is only fun if it allows us to peek into the process of power, to show that the Emperor has no clothes. Contragate is instead the ultimate in the depoliticization of gossip. The tabloids and the evangelicals, even the Ford clinic and the Gary Harts, may continue to be the sources of scandal and rumour, but the real politics is above all that. Where Mendacity is King - especially with a Marine face - what is the point of gossip? Rabelais would have let out a great belly-laugh over that one.

Ioan Davies teaches at York University.

Segal explained, one can be certain that genetically manipulated viruses had already been produced by the end of 1977. Moreover, other genetic combinations with viruses had also been attempted. Professor Segal believes that the US military is interested in new viruses, since human beings have developed a defense against old illnesses. It should be remembered, Segal explained, that entire Indian tribes were wiped out by measles imported from Europe because they were unable to develop immunity.

Segal went on to explain that recently published U.S. Congress reports had stated that experiments with radioactive material, viruses and infectious germs had been performed on human beings. These experiments were made with so-called volunteers - prisoners with life-long sentences. If they survived the experiment, they were given their freedom. Segal referred to Fort Detrick statistics which detailed the number of test persons, lethal cases and prisoners released.

As to how the genetically manipulated Visna viruses could escape from the laboratory, Segal stated: An AIDS infection begins with a phase comparable to a slight infection (raised temperature, diarrhoea, skin rashes). This phase lasts only a few weeks and then usually nothing happens for years. It takes at least one and a half to two, often even 3 or 5 years for immunity to collapse. In experiments with prisoners one had apparently observed that the test persons became slightly ill and then got well again. For months nothing happened to them. It seemed obvious to conclude that the new virus lived only for a short time in humans and then died, and was thus practically harmless. As promised, the prisoners were then released.

Fort Detrick is located close to New York. It seems plausible that the released test persons went there as a large city is an easier place to vanish - into a homosexual milieu where drugs are readily available. Anyone who has spent a few

years in prison sooner or later assumes homosexual habits, said Segal. One can easily understand that they returned to homosexual circles, whether homosexual before imprisonment or not. This would explain why the first cases of AIDS were discovered in New York in the first half of 1979. This also coincides fairly precisely with the AIDS incubation period.

AIDS was then spread by drug addicts using unsterilised needles and especially through blood preserves and thus gradually reached women.

Segal said there is not a single known case to prove that AIDS originated in Africa. He himself has worked in immunology and is acquainted with the latest literature. AIDS was observed for the first time in New York in 1979 and described by Dr. Gottlieb. In 1981 it was proved to exist in California and then appeared in Chicago and Miami. AIDS first emerged in Europe in 1982, and in many cases the origin of infection could be traced. All existing epidemiological investigations suggest the virus is of North American origin, said Segal.

Segal said it was wrong to claim that Kinshasa (the capital of Zaire) was the source of AIDS. At the end of 1985 there were 27 to 30 AIDS cases for every 100,000 people in Kinshasa. The figure for San Francisco at the same time was 275 cases per 100,000. In 1985 the World Health Organization published a report which dated the first

known occurrences of AIDS in Africa to early 1983. Segal also explained that he himself had studied further literature and had found only one mention of an earlier case of AIDS in Africa.

Segal concluded the interview by saying that it was not absolutely necessary to question the manufacturers of the AIDS virus in a U.S. court or a Congress hearing. He said: "I have given you sound and airtight circumstantial evidence. Every court recognizes circumstantial evidence."

Tass says virus leaked

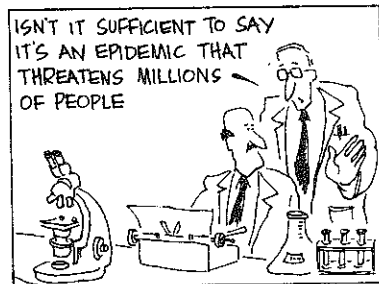
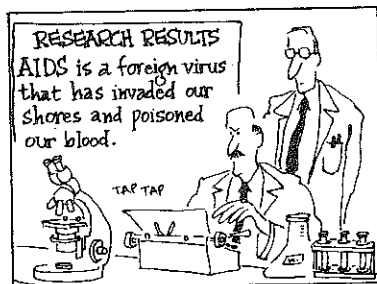
MOSCOW (Associated Press) 30 March 1987

A Soviet military bulletin has reported the virus that causes AIDS leaked from a US army laboratory conducting biological warfare experiments, the official news agency Tass reported.

An article in the current issue of the *Novosti Military Bulletin* said the deadly virus is of "artificial origin," Tass reported.

The article was written by Peter Nikolayev, who said he was reporting the conclusions of US, British and East German scientists.

The article said an army laboratory at Fort Detrick, Maryland, was once the US centre for the development of biological weapons. It said in 1977 a "safe" system was developed for working with



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dangerous pathogens. Even so, Tass quoted the *Novosti* bulletin saying, the virus that causes AIDS leaked from the laboratory.

The Tass report did not directly charge the United States with creating AIDS but appeared to renew previously published Soviet allegations that the virus might have been the result of a US military experiment.

In a separate report, Tass said a 1981 US Army manual provides transportation rules for 30 different toxins or pathogens.

In October, the Soviet newspaper *Literaturnaya Gazeta* carried a long article on AIDS and suggested it might be the result of Pentagon or CIA experiments. The Pentagon, which no longer responds to the Soviet reports, says the Fort Detrick lab never experimented with AIDS.

Earlier this month, Soviet scientist Viktor Zhdanov said 32 AIDS cases have been registered in the Soviet Union. He said all but two of the cases involved foreigners.

Charlatans Say AIDS Brought From Space: False Claims Condemned

CHICAGO (Globe and Mail)
22 April 1987

"The [AIDS] virus was brought to earth on a spaceship," a man on a tape confides in a low, conspiratorial voice.

"For their people, it's like a common cold, but for us, it's really dire."

"A person [from the other planet] had [sexual] relations with someone, was not careful and passed it on to a young lady.

"And that's how AIDS got started."

Once the laughter at a seminar on AIDS drugs and vaccines had subsided, John Renner, a U.S. physician, said: "This gives you a single but effective example of all the nonsense that's going on.

Dr. Renner told a two-day conference in Chicago on AIDS and public policy yesterday that charlatans who have personal wealth instead of public health on their minds are selling false and sometimes dangerous cures to people with AIDS.

"There's an entire industry of hucksters who are using people's fears to develop a multi-billion dollar industry," said Dr. Renner, director of medical development at St. Mary's Hospital in Kansas City, Missouri.

Books are being produced that promote pond scum, hydrogen peroxide and gold fillings for

teeth as cures or preventative treatments, he said.

An example is in a book called *Conquering AIDS Now*. The authors recommend that people with AIDS expose their genitalia to the sun at 4 p.m. at a 45-degree angle.

"And I heard a rumour that I could buy T-cells on the streets of San Francisco and Los Angeles," Dr. Renner said. He travelled to both cities and "Lo and behold - I have been able to get T-cells in capsule form," he said, as a bottle of T-cells was passed around the room.

Then there is the conspiracy theory. "They would like us to believe the AMA [American Medical Association] and the FDA [Food and Drug Administration] are conspiring to keep a secret remedy from the world."

One author tells readers that AIDS can be transmitted from a toilet seat or from malicious gay flight attendants who cry in the food served on the plane.

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GOSSIP

from: London's *Daily Telegraph* 19 June, 1986

Thief's "Blow for Czech Freedom"

A Czechoslovakian patriot planned to strike "a blow for freedom" for his country's next generation of youth by building the biggest Western record collection in the East, it was claimed in court yesterday.

Over five years the magpie thief with a "Messianic" obsession stole more than £21,000 (pounds sterling) worth of records and tapes from the HMV store where he worked as a general assistant.

He hoped to take them back home with him to help change Czechoslovakian society.

Suspended sentence
Bottoslav Slab, 41, of Clifton Hill, St. John's Wood, pleaded guilty at Marlborough Street court to two theft charges, and was given a six month sentence, suspended for two years, and ordered to pay £100 costs.

Slab came to Britain 16 years ago, and lives in St. John's Wood. The court was told that he had been reached after 12 years in the HMV job. He was of excellent previous character.

"As far as he is concerned, he was making something of a blow for freedom for the next generation of Czechoslovakian youth by making these records and tapes available to them," said Mr. Christopher Green, defending.

"His behaviour goes beyond the obsessed, to almost a Messianic belief in the desirability of establishing this very large record collection for transmission to Czechoslovakia."

Mr. Christopher Baker, prosecuting, said Slab was caught on a security video camera stealing 14 LPs worth £75 before the shop opened.

Slab took police to his flat, where he described himself as a "magpie" and showed them his haul, including 1,423 LPs and 489 video films, worth £21,024.

Mr. Baker said the majority of the goods could be resold and no compensation was being sought by HMV, who had withheld some of the defendant's holiday pay.

Cartoons for children

Mr. Green said the records were an assortment of pop, jazz, folk, classical, country, and re-issues of old 78 discs, and the tapes mainly cartoons for children.

Slab started stealing seven years ago in the HMV job because his rent has been increasing rapidly and he found he could no longer afford to buy records.

He still had his own collection of some 2,000 records and numerous tapes, which he still hoped to take to Czechoslovakia eventually.

'Do it by culture'

After the hearing Slab said: "You can't change system by force in any country in the East. You have got to do it by means of Western culture and history. You have to explain to people and show them it is true."

"I can do it for the next generation. I hope we can do it without a nuclear holocaust."

Displaying a letter from Christian Solidarity International, telling him that his sister's family back home was being hounded and "controlled" by the police, he said: "I came to the West mainly to find out about your way of life, and the way things are done in a democratic society."

"By learning these things, one can slowly spread the truth and say what is really happening."

BUY THIS MAGAZINE!

MONDO HUNKAMOOGA 100c
no 3
feb 84
a journal of small press reviews
Mondo Exclusive! David McFadden and his
Horrible crimes!!!

by Nicholas Power

An Ontario newspaper publishes a front page article about the...
I made a U-turn in the middle of the street or
something. I stopped when I saw much in fact I'm stopping
the wrong space.
I'm here in Toronto. Romance was written before
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I was.



The Toronto Small Press Book Fair '87
Ken Norris concludes *The Little Magazine in Canada 1925-80* - to date the definitive history of alternative literary publishing - with a discussion of *The Front*: "The ultimate aim of the little magazine is literary revolution, a call to a new order. If it succeeds, the old establishment is put aside and a new beginning is made; if nothing else, a few voices are heard saying something that was not said before. In its editorial intentions, *The Front* shares much with magazines that preceded it: the hope of forming a 'front' against the accepted literary norms of the day."¹

As with most of the magazines included in Norris's survey *The Front* is now history; however, its editor, Jim Smith, has emerged as not only one of Toronto's finest political poets but also one of its most committed activists. Smith's current vehicle is *The Front Press*; in association with the Artists and Writers Action Committee, he is publishing a series of chapbooks, issued monthly and available by subscription. Twelve pages in length, xeroxed and saddle-stitched, each book will feature the work of a different Toronto poet. Yet what makes this venture truly unique is that all revenue from the series will be donated to the Ministry of Culture in Nicaragua and the Enrique Lihn Writing Project in Chile. This is but one example of the way in which the "literary revolution" posited by Norris is changing its direction.

The *Front Press* was one of more than 40 book and magazine publishers exhibited at the Toronto Small Press Book Fair this past May. For eight hours, amidst the cacophony of local sound poets and jazz musicians, the Toronto literati crowded the Innis College pub to hawk the most unusual assortment of literary wares ever as-

sembled in this city. Organizers Stuart Ross and Nicholas Power sought inclusiveness: established, mainstream publications were bartered alongside the ephemeral alternative chapbooks, "lit-zines," broadsides and objets d'art more characteristic of the small press movement. Thus the quarterly *Waves*, typeset, perfect-bound and celebrating 15 years of publication, sat a few feet from the student journal *SCAT!* - packaged in a cardboard box, its poems, stories and essays printed on looseleaf, pamphlets, doilies and microfiche. Publisher jwcurry's *Curvd H&z Press* featured an odd assortment of poetic ephemerae, reproduced by every means imaginable on everything from scrap paper to post-cards; at the next table, *Stubblejumper* - Canada's only lesbian and gay male press - displayed an eclectic line of books, finely produced in a more conventional format. However, while varying greatly in form, content and purpose, each of the presses has a common concern - distribution.

While a few bookstores in Toronto stock small press publications, their chain stores, for the most part, do not carry small press magazines. It was this situation which, in 1984, prompted writers Stuart Ross and Nicholas Power - publishers of *Proper Tales* and *Gestures Press* respectively - to launch *Meet the Presses*. Held at the Scadding Court Community Centre on the last Sunday of each month, *Meet the Presses* showcased a varied selection of alternative publications. Contributors to each press gave brief readings; however, the emphasis was on sales, distribution and networking. A table could be rented for \$10 or shared for \$5; admission was free. Attendance varied with the weather and the schedules of various sporting events but was generally high. I attended half a dozen of these events throughout 1985 and came across magazines I'd never seen before nor have encountered since. As to their effectiveness for grass-roots networking, I can only attest to my own experience: flogging my chapbooks of poetry one Sunday, I chanced an introduction to a Coach House Press editor which resulted directly in my first commercial publication.

Meet the Presses lasted one year; citing "burn out" and a lack of time for their own writing, Nick and Stuart finally called it quits. It took the prompting of the organizers of this year's pair out of a "grateful retirement." I set out early that Saturday morning intending to define the state and aims of the little magazines of the eighties. Instead, my satchel bursting, I left the Book Fair with more questions than answers. Space does not allow for an examination of the 20

different publications I gathered; however, a brief and admittedly superficial description of a few might suffice to give some sense of the various directions in which Toronto's literary magazines are heading.

I have described the format of some of these publications. Indeed it is the means by which the smaller, alternative magazines are produced which distinguishes them not only from mainstream literary publications but from the bulk of mass consumer culture. Little magazines are radical in that they demystify the publishing process. *Push-Machinery*, edited by Daniel f. Bradley, is composed of half a dozen photocopied sheets, neither folded nor bound but hand stapled at the top. Poetry and collage are reproduced directly from the author's manuscript, the contributors ranging from established writers to the as yet unknown. With a print-run of 75-150 copies, *Push-Machinery* appears whenever Bradley has enough new material; it is distributed by hand and word-of-mouth. *Industrial Sabotage* is just one of the many publications to come out of jwcurry's eclectic, perhaps eccentric, *Curvd H&z Press*. Publishing poetry, fiction and collage, curry has for several years expanded the formal horizons of literature. Visual, concrete and language-oriented works form the bulk of each issue. Materials, shape and manner of reproduction vary with the content; among other printing techniques, curry has explored colour xerox, silk-screen and rubber-stamps. Like *Push-Machinery*, *Industrial Sabotage* is cheap to produce and appears irregularly. Without the government funding that some literary magazines receive, it is free of restraint. While they lack the distribution of glossier, subsidized journals, small press publications allow the individual to take the means of production into his or her own hands.

Yet, in a country where the print-run of any literary magazine rarely exceeds two thousand copies, the materials and means of production are not enough to distinguish the truly alternative, little magazines from mainstream periodicals. As Frank Davey noted as early as 1962, the major difference "is still that little mags are published by engaged writers. . . Often, if not always, the little magazine reflects the presence of a group of writers of similar interests who are meeting, arguing, fighting, writing, almost every day - a group charged with literary energy that seems to keep continually overflowing into and out of their mimeographed pages."¹ Davey cites the example of *Tish* - an anagram for "shit" - an "engaged" little mag of the sixties whose editorial stance and stable of

writers have had the course of Can. 1987, *The Shit*, ed. Chadwick and D. on the tradition. mostly concerned *The Shit* is open. Anarch implies - w issue is a declarat is mediocre, hypo complacent in C society at large. I manifestos, tira *The Shit* also feat Group of poets, p artists who migh unpublished, as w writers with work grottiest magazin *The Shit* continu prevailing hegen culture.

Equally engaged *Rampike*. Whe support - with its tions on the rate format - has caus so many literary Karl Jirgens has work that forces t the nature of disc by the federal ar ments, published phallic, yet cuttin cal format, glossy *Rampike* distorts genre, language sues have featur John Giorno and well as such innv ted Canadian w Sullivan and w with a growing tation, Jirgens u printing of two t Defiantly postm might just be dir the little magazin millenium.

While such mag "literary revolut cal journals do n shape the direct cultural discours Ross, *Mondo Hu* exclusively to re books and maga cheaply produc remarkable irre number was pub fifth earlier this *Mondo Hunkam* journal in Toron itself in this cruc does not restrict publications, it anomaly in lite tabloid, what is year, with 10 th tributed free in Periodicals with lation are inelig ing; to date, edi and Jason Sherr revenue from ac tions, as well as grant, yet have s each issue out fo

JUNCTURES

writers have had a lasting impact on the course of Canadian literature. In 1987, *The Shit*, edited by Norman Chadwick and D.M. Owen, carries on the tradition. Yet, where *Tish* was mostly concerned with pure poetics, *The Shit* is openly political. Anarchistic, irreverent and - as its name implies - willing to shock, each issue is a declaration of war on all that is mediocre, hypocritical and complacent in Canadian writing and society at large. Publishing manifestoes, tirades and editorials, *The Shit* also features an expanding group of poets, prose writers and artists who might otherwise go unpublished, as well as well-known writers with work for which no other outlet exists. Perhaps one of the grottiest magazines ever produced, *The Shit* continues to challenge the prevailing hegemony of excremental culture.

Equally engaged and engaging is *Rampike*. Whereas government support - with its concomitant restrictions on the rate of publication and format - has caused the stagnation of so many literary journals, editor Karl Jirgens has continued to print work that forces the reader to question the nature of discourse itself. Funded by the federal and provincial governments, published in a somewhat phallic, yet cutting, 17 by 6 inch vertical format, glossy and perfect-bound, *Rampike* distorts the conventions of genre, language and content. Past issues have featured Laurie Anderson, John Giorno and Jacques Derrida, as well as such innovative and committed Canadian writers as Rosemary Sullivan and Nicole Brossard. And, with a growing international reputation, Jirgens usually sells out each printing of two thousand copies. Defiantly postmodern, *Rampike* might just be directing the course of the little magazine into the third millenium.

While such magazines foment the "literary revolution," the small critical journals do much to question and shape the direction of the ongoing cultural discourse. Edited by Stuart Ross, *Mondo Hunkamooga* is devoted exclusively to reviewing small press books and magazines. Compact and cheaply produced, it appears with a remarkable irregularity (the first number was published in 1983, the fifth earlier this year); nonetheless, *Mondo Hunkamooga* is the only journal in Toronto to have engaged itself in this crucial task. While *what* does not restrict itself to small press publications, it is nevertheless an anomaly in literary publishing. A tabloid, *what* is printed six times a year, with 10 thousand copies distributed free in bookstores and libraries throughout North America. Periodicals without controlled circulation are ineligible for federal funding; to date, editors Kevin Connolly and Jason Sherman have relied on revenue from advertising, subscriptions, as well as a small Explorations grant, yet have still managed to get each issue out for two years. Like

Mondo Hunkamooga, *what* publishes essays, interviews and letters, as well as book and magazine reviews (*what* also publishes fiction, poetry and drama). Both are controversial and iconoclastic in the best tradition of the little magazine, challenging rather than indulging their respective readers. As well, both journals regularly contribute to the renewed discussion of the relationship between politics and literature - an issue noticeably absent from small press publications in Toronto since the 1930s. The second issue of *what* explored the issue of "art and politics," while a recent number (March 1987) contained a powerful interview with writer Brian Fawcett; throughout have appeared many similarly engaged commentaries and reviews. And the occasional columns in *Mondo Hunkamooga* by poet and activist Chris Faiers continue to challenge the complacency of all writers.

All the magazines mentioned have one feature in common: their editors are male. This situation is clearly evident to the women who have come together over the years to produce *Fireweed: A Feminist Quarterly*. As Makeda Silvera notes in her introduction to *Fireworks* - an anthology of poetry, prose and art celebrating *Fireweed*'s first eight years of publication - "historically, peoples not of the dominant culture have not had active participation in, or access to, arts journals, whether these have been part of the dominant culture or have emerged from the small presses."¹ Yet, in speaking of those not of the dominant culture, Silvera implies not only women in general but women of colour, working class and Native women and lesbians. It is *Fireweed*'s attempt to be inclusive, and the struggles, controversies and self-criticism that have resulted from this attempt that make *Fireweed* the intelligent, engaged and diverse journal it has become. Published by a collective (with occasional guest editors), *Fireweed* includes reviews and essays covering a wide range of topics and issues, as well as poetry and fiction free of any formal restraints. Given the status of women within the dominant culture, the survival and success of a journal like *Fireweed* points in a necessary direction to the further politicization of literary publishing to come. As Robin Belitsky Endres writes in "Why I Left 'The Left' to Write": "The women's movement, with its focus on the integration of the personal and social, paved the way for the reintegration, on a higher level, of art and politics, the goal of which is personal and social transformation."²

Admittedly, my discussion of these few magazines has been partisan in tone and intent. It would likely be fitting to close with some vague pronouncement about the future of literary publishing in Toronto. The reader, happy that the small press is alive and well, stifles a satisfied yawn. Instead, I will conclude with an appeal: subscribe to one or all of these magazines. If you don't like

those I've mentioned, bookstores such as Letters, SCM and This Ain't the Rosedale Library carry others. If they make you angry, write a letter or contribute to the magazines yourself. In the final analysis, the essence of small press is the doing. At the very least, as the organizers exhorted shoppers at the close of the Toronto Small Press Book Fair, "Go home and read."

Journals discussed:

A.W.A.C. Book of the Month Club,
The Front Press,
21 Hastings Avenue,
Toronto M4L 2L1.
Six chapbooks, once a month, in a limited edition of 40, \$30.

Push-Machinery,
551a Crawford Street,
Toronto M6G 3J9.
Query as to subscription rates.

Industrial Sabotage,
Curvd H&z Press,
729 Queen Street East,
Toronto M4M 1H1.
Published irregularly, prices vary;
pay what you can.

The Shit,
Martin Garth Press,
510 Front Street West,
Third floor,
Toronto M5V 1B8.
Query as to subscription rates.

Rampike,
95 Rivercrest Road,
Toronto M6S 4H7.
Two issues a year for \$12.

Mondo Hunkamooga,
Proper Tales Press,
Box 789, Station F,
Toronto M4Y 2N7.
Six issues for \$6.

what,
Box 338, Station J,
Toronto M4J 4Y8.
Six issues a year for \$6.

Fireweed,
Box 279, Station B,
Toronto M5T 2W2.
Four issues a year for \$12.

1 Ken Norris, *The Little Magazine in Canada 1925-80*. (Toronto: ECW Press, 1984), p.179.

2 Frank Davey, "Anything but Reluctant: Canada's Little Magazines," *Canadian Literature* 13 Summer 1962). Reprinted in Louis Dudek and Michael Gnarowski, eds. *The Making of Modern Poetry in Canada* Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1970), p.223.

3 Makeda Silvera, ed., *Fireworks: The Best of Fireweed* (Toronto: The Women's Press, 1986), p.8.

4 *Fireworks*, p.20.

Jones is a Toronto poet, critic and editor. He has published four collections of poetry, including The Brave Never Write Poetry, Coach House Press, 1985.





The Las Rea Wre Sho Jim Fre

B

ig Bear Sports Promotion had a way of torching Ontario wrestling audiences with such a primal heat that fans would rise off their seats like scraps of ash into a chimney. It's gone now, like other genuine performances.

That show was not made for television. The wrestlers were behemoths of another

age. No one now would make glossy pictures of these bulging bodies snorting grime for prizes inside Hostess chips. They had nothing of the whitewashed hygiene slick of fast food packaging. They belonged to wrestling's roots, inside smoky cinemas and small town arenas, inside the country potencies along with a meat-and-potatoes morality that stokes a working man's instinct for passing judgment. Wrestling used to make its way along the blacktop roads from towns to fairs with carnivals and patent medicines and now this show, the real wrestling show, the original, is stored away in worn out panel trucks, victim of new age wrestlemania promoters who manufacture culture and politics for witless consumers.

Big Bear Sports Promotion never played downtown Toronto. The big Toronto promoters, Tunney's Queensboro Sports Promotions, had a deal with the Maple Leaf Gardens that held exclusive rights to the use of its facilities. The same was true for Montreal's Main Promotion and the Forum. To see the old-time wrestling show, to catch the outlaw Big Bear wrestling show that operated on the fringe of bigger cities, you had to go to Simcoe, Kirkland Lake, or Barrie or beyond.

One of the first times that I saw the Big Bear show was in Wheatley - almost five years ago - on a Monday night after the annual summer weekend fishing festival. I was there to find an all-out wrestling performance, undiluted by the manufacturers of media and tastes. Fans said the Big Bear shows were best. That night was the beginning of an exploration into a brand of pure-bred pro wrestling, and it was so compelling that I stayed. I took the show to heart, to understand why it worked so well. The promoter took me in, and a few months later I stood inside the ring clutching a microphone giving weights of wrestlers and taking paper cups on the backside of the polyester suit I wore to announce his shows.

Wheatley is Perch City. The population is 1600 and 700 of them came that night to see the wrestling. One hundred migrant workers from Mexico brought the gate up to over 800. The main event had Luis Martinez, a Mexican, wrestling against the Bull Dog from Detroit, Don Kent. And what an asshole Bull Dog was. The fans made barking noises at him to throw off his composure. They chanted Martinez's trade name, ARRIBA, a name with magic that swelled Luis's chest and gave him strength. Luis lived to hear the fans proclaim ARRIBA.

"Who am I?" Luis said to the fans before the match.

"ARRIBA," they spoke in unison. "ARRIBA, ARRIBA."

The two wrestlers fought hard. They meant business. Bull Dog seized Luis's wrist and flung him meanly in the corner so hard it made the whole ring move. Again he wound him up and whipped him with the wrist, but this time Bull Dog founq him harder, and Luis split through the ropes onto the floor.

Martinez was stu and fell to his kn minute that it to rise and fall aga Wheatley at the puffed and rose their seats in the densd around t made to exit, fig boys throwing pa heels. The crowd posse.

One corner of th ring ruffled and momentary spac space rushed a st street clothes to through the rop the Wildman. I him well in the the inspiration, the whole show. Sports Promotio the whole thing Dog and threw the cursed chair hold it up before displayed it to th agreed it was ill decision, but by matter. The Wi Dog and tossed pursued him as picked him up a on the concrete.

The Last Real Wrestling Show

Jim Freedman

Martinez was stunned. He rose slowly and fell to his knees. In that half a minute that it took Martinez to fall, rise and fall again, the half of Wheatley at the wrestling show puffed and rose in judgment from their seats in the stands and condensed around the ring as Bull Dog made to exit, fighting off two small boys throwing paper products at his heels. The crowd drew together like a posse.

One corner of the crowd around the ring ruffled and rent apart to make a momentary space, and through that space rushed a stout boulder of a guy in street clothes to the apron and through the ropes mad as hell. It was the Wildman. I would come to know him well in the next two years. He is the inspiration, the hum and burn for the whole show. He owns Big Bear Sports Promotions, and he had seen the whole thing. He grabbed Bull Dog and threw him down and swept the cursed chain from his hand to hold it up before the referee's face. He displayed it to the crowd. The referee agreed it was illegal and reversed the decision, but by this time it didn't matter. The Wildman grabbed Bull Dog and tossed him from the ring, pursued him as he stumbled and picked him up again and heaved him on the concrete.

The smooth unyielding texture of the cement floor. The heavy brownskin breathing of the migrant Mexicans mingling with the shuffling of the other fans as they made a ring around Bull Dog the wrestler-man they hated. Martinez was out cold too, only ten feet away. Blood trickled from Martinez's skull. The tale of two men's character and fate fixed in crystalline opinion for Wheatley's experience. The ebb of bodies flowing from the stands to ringside in a tightening band of judgment around the silence of two metaphors reeking in the flesh, such a rich commotion.

Authentic, that is the word. But that sounds too much like a word that spent too long at school. How to view this show? Like an ancient zen master making animal sounds. A country preacher stalking a conversion. A blue ribbon spaghetti squash at the country fair. A whoopie cushion. Or an honest fart. Some things are totally irreproducible. Most of these things look funny in the modern world, they're so old hat or decadent or uncommercial or unpredictable that no reproduction, no media treatment of them ever does them justice.

That's why wrestling looks so foolish now on television, starlit bodies filtered through the collander of decorum regulations appealing to anyone who apathetically turns on a switch and settles down inside the constant voltage zone. It takes a monumental stupor to watch one wrestling match following another without the rush of live appeal because wrestling, the original way, should provoke, not entertain, should take its cue from the fans, the town, from living social ferment. But stupor is the secret substance that glues viewers to television's homogenized concoctions. The Wildman saves us from this stupor with his shows. Each of them is one of a kind. They take shape inside the fans' commotion. They work by torching indignations; political fantasies get hot and pretty soon the Wildman has his people dancing like primitives around a boiling cauldron half ready to eat each other live.

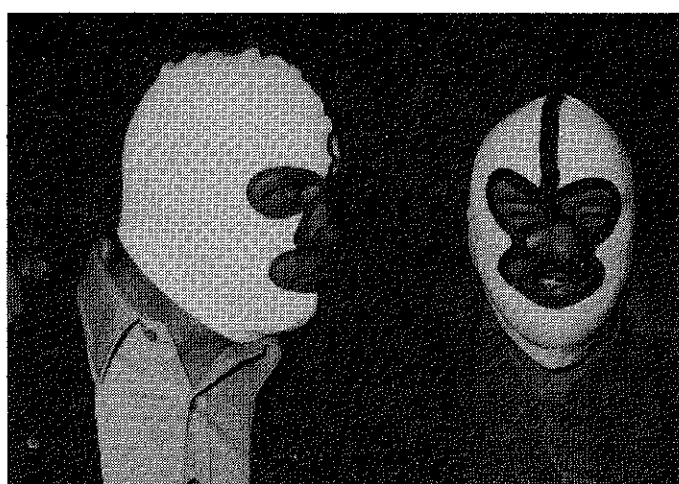
The Wildman's boys were often over forty without the made-for-TV glaze, nothing to hide the bulge of countless bumps, the cauliflower ears and big faces strung on necks of polar bears.

Next to the new age wrestling - wrestlemania, the show that comes in tubes of packaged personalities from New York City - the Wildman's Big Bear shows have a heaving thrill to them that wrestlemania lacks. The wonder is what Canadians have lost as wrestlemania takes their own prime time. I wondered what had tricked the sovereignty of Canadian consumers into such a mass-mind preference. I bemoaned the fate of the Wildman who cooked up wrestling out of the uniquely northern spice of Canadian towns. Where had he come from and what would happen to him?

Wrestling territories spread out around big city hubs - Montreal, Detroit, St. Louis, Toronto - where, in the past, one promoter ruled the territory. The mighty original Sheik ruled Detroit for years with his fireballs and his posturing of oriental threats. Sam Muchnick ran St. Louis for four decades with hard-hitting honest shows for the bi-monthly Checkerdom reunion of his fans. Frank Tunney and his nephew Jack ruled Toronto for almost half a century. Some territories had reputations for the hotter shows.

Nashville's Nick Gulas, the black rogue of promoters, never took his town for granted; he moved in long ago from Birmingham and stayed by kicking at the doors and keeping others off his turf.

The secluded valley of Toronto was different. Inside the Queen's dominion, sheltered from a nervous continent of promoters, Tunney slugged along with sober shows. Gulas had always kept pace with outlaw promotions, with aggressive neighbouring promotions. Tunney didn't have to. He owned the contract to the Gardens. He had the athletic commission in his pocket. He had the television. He had connections. But he never seized the pulse of the country. There was one who did. That was the Wildman.



I saw him once in a mid-size Ontario town chewing up a microphone at the wheel, turning corners, laughing with his trademark twinkle, half-a-laugh around the edges of his eyes talking up the matches on the evening's card.

While Tunney ran his shows at the Gardens before 10,000 fans, the Wildman borrowed sand-lot houses for his shows circling around Toronto down toward Detroit, up to Sudbury and North Bay, then back around Toronto's metro margins, a different town every night, showing home grown wrestling on the edges of Tunney's turf. If you wanted to see the Wildman's shows you had to see them live. Tunney knew all that: that he was a maverick, an outlaw, that he'd probably never have the capital to pay for big time stars and still, small promoters and pretenders to Tunney's hold on wrestling came and went, all of them in fact gone almost as fast as they came . . . except the Wildman.

He was around for twenty years, and more years than not he had made good money. In Tunney's territory. He had no contract with big city coliseums, no office, no picture on the Garden walls. What he had was stamina, the art of never slowing down, moving constantly from one town to the next, his office was his truck, his phone, the pay phone in arena offices. He rarely slept. Two weeks before a show he plotted the ads for newspapers, delivered and paid for them himself, laid out the posters for the show, had them printed, tacked them onto empty construction boards and highway poles and storefront windows like campaign throwaways, and all the frenzied while he ran his shows like a juggler on a unicycle tossing pots and pans and frying eggs and bacon at a banquet of his fans. He kept a precious chest of beer in the front seat of his truck so as not to get too dry, to chase away the hum of the engine and the drum of his rapid body's regimen late at night after counting up the till.

And talk about his shows. Tunney's wrestlemania personalities wear sleek young muscle frames and names inspired by the professional diet products. The Wildman's boys were often over forty without the made-for-TEE-VEE glaze, nothing to hide the bulge of countless bumps, the cauliflower ears and big faces strung on necks of polar bears. No practiced grace. The grace they had came from knowing that no pile-driver, no young body slam, was more than their reflex could absorb.

They came from backwoods farms that failed and urban ghettos in industrial suburbs where the Depression took street tough kids and put them behind a set of weights. They got big and they got jobs wrestling in England, and when they came back they roamed the territories, looking for a gimmick, a crack at popularity. Some people say that twenty years ago more wrestlers came from Canada's steel town, Hamilton, than any other town in North America for its size. These men looked to the Wildman's Big Bear Wrestling Show for work. Even though there wasn't much. Chris Tolos, Vic Rositanni, Bull Johnson's son Danny, Johnny Powers.

Tunney's men are stars. The Wildman's boys were bruisers. Tunney's shows glitter with a cast that's bigger and better than real life with cops to keep the crowds at bay. No riots. Peel away the glitter, the programme hype, the soda and the lights and Tunney's show is threadbare, like no-name cola. Like the multi-media glitz conglomerate that now controls a major portion of his business and

rules Toronto wrestling from New York City. What is cola without a pair of lady's legs and chrome-white vaginal fangs offering a dream of something sweet and real? Wet Dream. Now talk about the Wildman's shows. Here was the real, real thing where you hear and smell the smack of bodies going tight and limp . . . all the imagery, the slapstick, foreign objects, breath and grime. His shows shed the sterile blanket of light that parches Tunney's big-city spectacles. The Wildman's light fell dingily down from a few overheads. It was a smoky night light that drew the fans in close, more intimately, more cheek to jowl - while Tunney mined a gulf around the ring with cops to keep the fans away. The Wildman set his shows up anywhere, in old movie theatres, community hockey arenas, municipal concert halls, outside on the trotter tracks. And unlike Tunney, the impresario in the shadow of the shows, the Wildman puffed his energy in heavens right out in front, wrestling, taking charge in teeshirts and a growth of hair uncut for twenty years.

Afternoons before his shows, the Wildman would mount a speaker to his truck and cruise the main street of a town "doing the sound" to tell the people "doing the sound" to show. I saw him once in a mid-size Ontario town chewing up a microphone at the wheel, turning corners, laughing with his trademark twinkle, half-a-laugh around the edges of his eyes talking up the matches on the evening's card. It was raining. He saw some fans on the sidewalk waving, and he curbed the truck next to them. He kept the sound on loud as he talked with the crowd.

"Comin'? Yeah, you're comin'? You wanna see a wrestling show. Big time wrestling. Midgets. We got midgets."

It was still raining at show time. People scrambled inside dripping wet, wiping off their heads and faces on their sleeves. The wrestlers had no precious airs, they walked in one by one through the reeking fans into the dressing room, the cringing fans tote bags and a case of beer, upper arms like ancient elephant knees, faces glistened from the rain. There he was, baleful and buddhist, the Wildman behind the announcer's table as the first match was begun, gripping an old railroad spike he'd rummaged from the bottom of his truck and using it SMACK to ring the pock-faced bell a dozen times or more.

The main event of the original Sheik in Detroit, now older making his living facing Igor the Pock-faced Igor preened his hair hardened by an hour of labour. Four hundred fans lined up before the prospect they knew the Sheik from his hell's kitchen lights as he always drew fans from a size town made more Tunney's thousand arena.

Suddenly the Sheik ear into the ring and Igor, stunned back with his leg the Sheik's head. Tail when he saw punching furious ran from the ring tains of a stage th nearby, and before they both emerge side of the stage Sheik had Igor on two by four by ten guess he found the stage. Igor looked The match was over through the audience overcoats tumbling regained his balance made his way back behind the curtain swinging his ten-pursuit. This time his seat at the arena chase the Sheik behind the curtain them. A bone di Then the Sheik ran the Wildman time the Wildman four and had it prepared for a finish Sheik who dashed entered with fans and ken mirrors and

Up to that point, discerned, wrestling The Wildman and ten changed all that The moment all that came the sea-fury behind the curtain lumber at the Sheik with him. Vindict from me in a living The Wildman said what you have to make a wrestling draw heat.

After the show they bled out to peel off the posters advertising the front glass door black, deep green around tormenting

The main event that night featured the original Sheik, the real one from Detroit, now older and overexposed, making his living on his legacy. He faced Igor the Polish Strongman. Igor preened his honest muscles hardened by an honest peasant's labour. Four hundred fans sat straight up before the prospect of a hearty meal they knew the Sheik could bring up from his hell's kitchen of crude delights as he always did. Four hundred fans from a squeaky clean mid-size town made more noise than Tunney's thousands in his metropole arena.

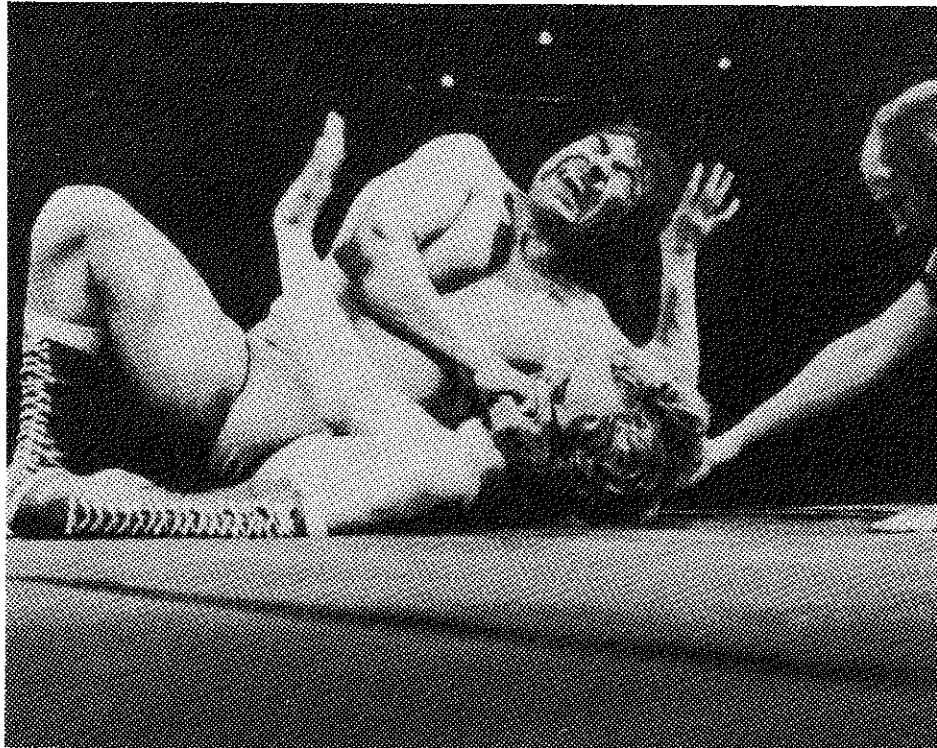
Suddenly the Sheik slammed Igor's ear into the ring post (that was real) and Igor, stunned a minute, sprang back with his legs flying all around the Sheik's head. The Sheik turned tail when he saw Igor on the rebound punching furiously with all fours. He ran from the ring up behind the curtains of a stage that happened to be nearby, and before ten seconds passed they both emerged from the other side of the stage except this time the Sheik had Igor on the run swinging a two by four by ten at Igor's head. I guess he found the two by four backstage. Igor looked truly frightened. The match was out of control. They ran through the audience knocking over chairs and pocket books, sticky overcoats tumbling in the rubble. Igor regained his balance once again and made his way backstage a second time behind the curtain with the Sheik swinging his ten-foot plank wildly in pursuit. This time the Wildman left his seat at the announcer's table to chase the Sheik and disappeared behind the curtain with the rest of them. A bone disintegrating thud. Then the Sheik and right behind him ran the Wildman except this time the Wildman had the two by four and had it poised behind his back ready for a finishing stroke upon the Sheik who dashed into an area littered with fans and chairs and broken mirrors and small change.

Up to that point, as far as I was concerned, wrestling had been folklore. The Wildman and the two by four by ten changed all that in an instant. The moment that the Wildman became the sea-fury lashing from behind the curtain swinging a piece of lumber at the Sheik, I went right with him. Vindictives charged out from me in a living river of feelings. That was 'drawing heat', I would hear the Wildman say one day. This is what you have to do if you want to make a wrestling show. You got to draw heat.

After the show the first fans scrambled out to peel off a coveted souvenir, the posters advertising the show, from the front glass doors. Green and black, deep green and deep black type around tormented faces of the

wrestlers in the featured matches, a reminder and somehow an essence of the exhibition. Terry Dart collected them, particularly the Wildman's, which were by far the best. My lucky night, I got one. The next morning I pulled the poster out from among the litter on the breakfast table and scanned its details for a message, for anything more about the Wildman, the enigmatic medicine man who made the wrestling work, who cooked the show while Tunney merely canned it. Could the poster be a subtle guide into this nether world where he took charge? I sat and stared, looking for a sign.

There was a picture of Igor in a simple snapshot on a grassy field with his little girlfriend in a funky Dylan hat and a collie. Above that little family photo an enlargement of his face appeared in outline, a grinning well-fed boy without the slightest hint of treachery. Opposite Igor on the right postured the full-length body of the Sheik with the caption underneath his lone condescending form, eyes covered with a shawl: ON THE RAMPAGE. Great stuff but still no secret to the Wildman's magic touch.



Photos: Terry Dart

Wait. Something odd at the bottom. There the poster returned my stare. Flush with the bottom line of green there was a photo of a front row ring-side line of fans at a match, a photo bordered in black with stars pasted at the corners and this appeal: BE PART OF THE ACTION. A lady in the picture offered her head into her outstretched palms, there was a man his hand outstretched carrying his bile's consignment to the show and some others looked out through the photo right at me. A mutual examination. Hot damn, look at that fat lady with the stockings. And that jerkoff in the

corner with the gums chewing out the referee. This picture, featured centre slate, advertised my friends, the fans. No stars, no personalities, just these dozen or more turbulent anybodies the Wildman fit into the picture who got big billing on the card.

Not a bourgeois face in this picture of the Wildman's crowd. No middle class. These wrestling shows are sacrilege to them.

Middle class America holds the ring in awe, sees in the ring a sacred centre for the cult of competition. It is here, in the compelling knave of an economy of scarcity where successful men have fought to get their spoils. It is here where society gives a gilded frame to winning. To the swelling bosom of success. To the tidy folds of a booming community's industrial smoke filling the skies with dreams of Cadillac Seviles and golf shoes. No wonder then that competition comes to us as a 'spirit' overshadowing the spirit of the church bell spires and no wonder that the ultimate repository of this spirit is the ring. People rise to grand acclaim who have this alchemical perfecter, the coveted body hu-

The Wildman placed inside this cherished ring barbarians from beyond the fringe terrains of decency, men who do anything foul to win, useless referees who do nothing to stop them, Khomeini's personal minister of death.

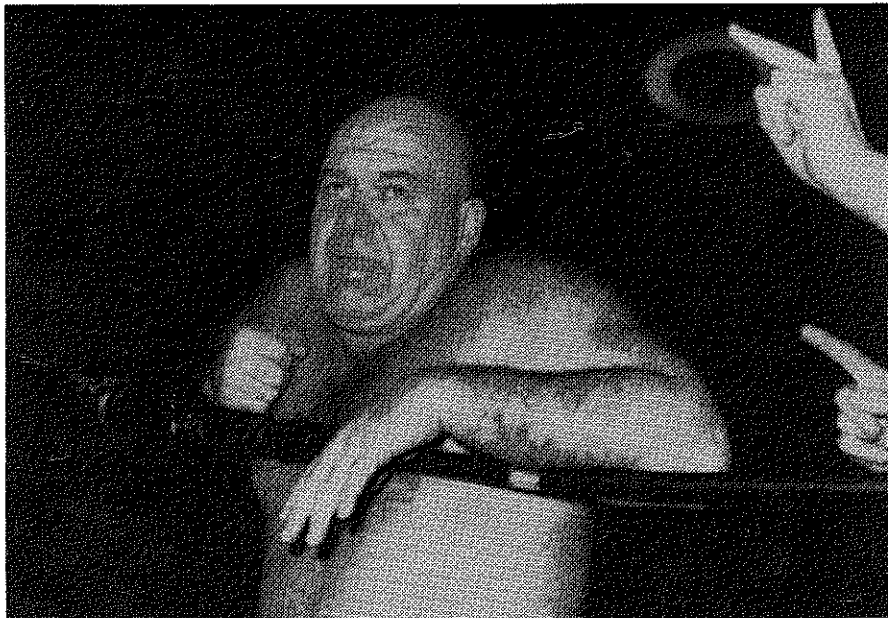
mour that is competitive spirit. How much more important this spirit is than the standard intangibles like cleanliness, good posture, fair play and the right attitude. Self-made men vote for politicians who promise to give them more and more of it. They judge their own lives by it, and stigmatize others for not having it.

It was a fetish for that spirit that drove the middle-class community into a perverse love affair with Mohammed Ali. He danced in the shrine of the North American way, Muslim or not, Mohammed or Cassius. When he boxed, thinking, talking, reaching into every corner of the rules, the ring, propriety, the body politic and the mind for victory, he became that flicker in the self of every white male that makes him go out and win. Ali talked a lively jive that sounded for some people's money like radical red hype. Huh-uh. It was mid-west sky blue bourgeois all the way. The ring is the shimmering diamond heart in the command centre of every American male who fancies himself the bee with the stinger dancing the do-right in a war zone with a moral pedigree.

The Wildman placed inside this cherished ring barbarians from beyond the fringe territories of decency, men gone bad, graffiti and ayarbs, hairy hippies from the sixties, men who do anything foul to win, useless referees who do nothing to stop them, Khomeini's personal minister of peril. There's the sacrilege. That's the Wildman's wrestling and that's blasphemy as well. The Wildman's image of the ring, this image of society, bears a compelling truth. For the victors in this space are men with special tricks, men who gang up on others, men with connections. There is a terrible lesson here: nice guys finish last.

These subterranean defectors from the way things ought to be perform wrestling's running commentary on society about how opportunity does not exist in equal measure for the common man, for men who work honestly and clean. Labourers and consumers lose daily to monopolies and mind bending advertisements, union busters, politicians, prejudice and favouritism. How does this happen? Just ask the fans. How come the number of good men with good intentions and uncorrupted talents who win are as few and far between in wrestling as in life? It is this. So many men inhaling the ring's mighty ether lose their bearings, take undue advantage, drunk on the power to despoil others and to ascend with an exalted image of themselves. They forget or just don't care that someone could get hurt.

That shatters the conceit of the middle class who applaud themselves for their accumulations, who protect the valour of their careers when they complain that wrestling is phony, when they claim that they did it the hard way and the honest way without the tricks and gags and inside information. They say it's fake. That's not the way they got to where they are . . . by rigging the economy. By taking short cuts, plotting strategies to undermine the plottings of honest men. No, they



say. The true blue claims of the economy are not fake. It's wrestling, they say, that's phony where those who win are those who have or take undue advantage. But the Wildman's wrestling fans know better. His fans are the blue collar victims of the bold prerogatives patricians take. What they see inside the ring is what they talk about in unemployment lines, men drunk on conquest, living on the losses of others.

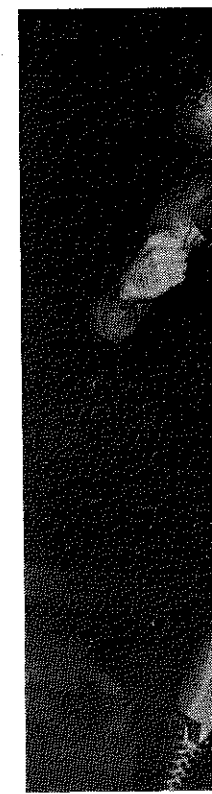
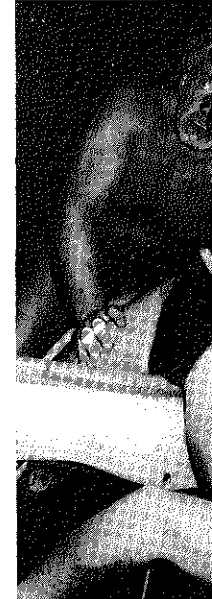
One of the last times I saw the Wildman's show, he himself wrestled in a tag team match teamed with Whipper Watson Junior against two villains. By that time - it was just a year ago - I had lived with his show, even become part of it. For two summers I had travelled with the show and announced the matches off and on. The Wildman had made me a part of his family of working fauna. I had a new vocabulary and a different biorhythm of late nights and reclusive mornings. They were visceral changes, a carney's language and a body clock set to a different stylke. The mornings were good for growling, Dave said. He had peppered my speech with lively pacers like BOOM-BOOM, and PIMPING-IT, and G-NOTE. He had also walked me through a status change in the wrestling world from an outsider looking in to an insider looking out. I had witnessed the work of a man without guile, with a message and a heart. This was a memorable night.

Crowds were down. The Wildman hardly had enough money to put together his shows. Still he did it. He puzzled over his dwindling coffers. He spent long hours in silent dressing rooms looking for an answer. There was only one answer that he knew. Work harder. And no one else could work as hard as he. He would wrestle himself in the way he knew would draw the kind of heat that would bring the crowds back in larger numbers. That night he had

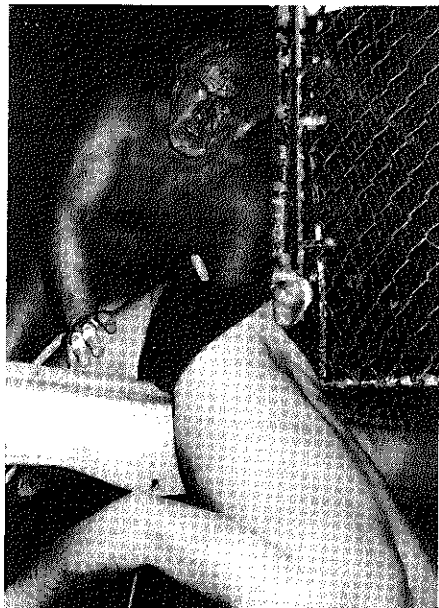
booked himself to wrestle in the tag team. He would take the lead, make it hot, bring them to their feet.

There are rules for tag teams. The villains broke them. The Wildman and his partner stuck close to their consciences and the rules . . . except for once. It was near the end of the match, and Watson and the Wildman had had enough. The two of them illegally entered the ring at the same time to team up on their adversaries. The other team had been doing it all the time, but this time the referee called the infraction, stopped the fight and disqualified the Wildman and his partner. It took a moment for the verdict to sink in. The Wildman and his partner were losers by disqualification. For breaking the rules.

The crowd went wild with anger. One fan worked at his saliva for a wad big enough to issue forth a statement the words would fail to summon. A cloudy message condensed among the fans that said nobody promised you a fair fight. Just a fight, that's all. This is a jungle. You hear the gospel of free enterprise and opportunity . . . that's just a hymn you hum in church one day a week. You read the constitution . . . well, that's politics. You got rights, you say . . . cash them in for a pair of sunglasses. Rights is for the people who play golf, who sell free competition like snake oil. And you bought it.



There it was. The free enterprise p of its own excess in the stands, sh dress in red with bodice. She'd se fight was rigged, point. What she Here was someth know her story, children, her tin welfare lines, ex her face. She ros to the altar of he her folding cha collapsed in mi it and proclaimed the referee: ASS UNIVERSSE. Her miniature, and f into this world an actor, she dic and she got a rou



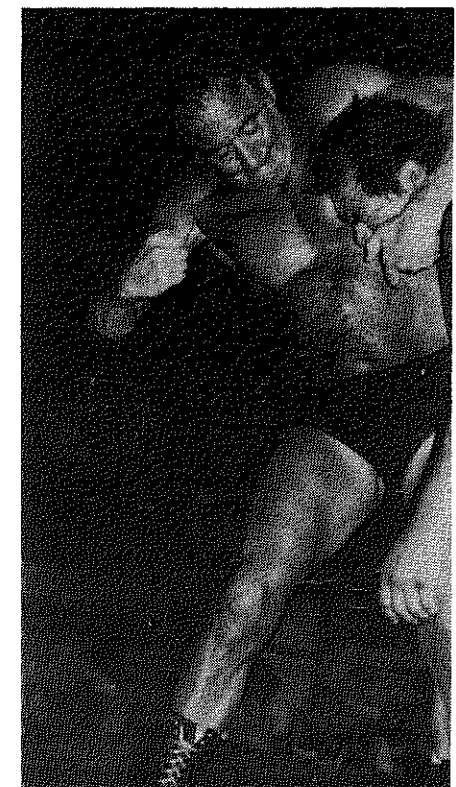
The noise from the crowd was deafening. They were on their feet. They were on their chairs. The Wildman had done what he knew he had to do and what he knew best to do.

As he left the ring that night, the Wildman turned around and rushed the other wrestlers who had cut every corner in the book of rules and still come away with a win. One of the opponents bent over to aim his butt at the Wildman's face. The Wildman would plant a heel of anger in that ass. But no, he stopped. The bell had sounded. He turned and walked away. Defender of the moral margin in the back of everybody's mind, he'd lost. He had told the story of the free man's fate.

The irony of that moment

was that he had also told his own story. The audience was loud, but not loud enough. Once he had paid the wrestlers off, paid the boys who put up the ring, paid the manager of the arena, paid for the gas in his truck, paid his taxes and insurance and publicity, the Wildman had nothing left. He had been going out of business for a long time and had hung on, tethering his hopes to dreams. But they were only dreams. More and more, the mix of media and money from New York ran the wrestling business. And that excluded him. He had no clout with the athletic commissioners who took orders from the Tunney operation and took every opportunity to make life difficult for him. The political message that he had used his ring to say to fans for twenty years now spoke his own inevitable fate.

He had a little rhyme he'd say to tell himself the value of hard work, his hard routine: No pain, no gain. He had heard it first when he was pumping iron in the backwater gyms of the Depression where he had learned his tips on life in general from the discipline of body building. No pain, no gain. Without the effort, you'll get no measure in return. And just as true it was the other way around that if you gave enough to make it hurt, you got failure with the same logic. Deadbeats slept in beds of failures that they made themselves. There were no princes ready-made. So how to understand the justice or the logic of the sense of an economy that actually made you pay for the privilege to work? A different, troubled look gripped the Wildman's face in the dressing room that night and stayed there as if he were looking sadly for something he'd done wrong. The more he worked, the more he got behind.



There it was. The ring. The podium of free enterprise preaching the gospel of its own excesses. There was a lady in the stands, she wore a polyester dress in red with a tidy bow on her bodice. She'd seen it all. Maybe the fight was rigged, but that was not the point. What she saw wasn't phony. Here was something real. I did not know her story, her hardships, her children, her time and place in welfare lines, except for what I saw in her face. She rose to her feet. She rose to the altar of her conscience. She bore her folding chair with her. It collapsed in mid-air. She brandished it and proclaimed at the villains and the referee: ASSHOLE OF THE UNIVERSE. Here was her world in miniature, and for once she stepped into this world of right and wrong as an actor, she did something about it and she got a round of applause.

By 1983 wrestlemania had swept the continent. The promotion from New York, hungry for new territories, made their stable of wrestlers into intercontinental images. They put them in the ring with rock stars. On the back of cereal boxes. They made little dolls of them and sold them to ten year olds as action figures. The heroes of the shows were blond good-guys who loved America, wrestling against blacks and gays and foreigners. And they were winning. They were taking back America from the women's movement, from bussing, from falling profits, from communists, and from the terrorists and off-colour populations abroad. Good guys were winning and winning for America. It had a patently middle class veneer. So different from the tales of subtle tragedies in an economy turned against its people that the Wildman told. It was a cover-up for all the ills that the official version of American society and the economy feared might get around. The rhythm was rock instead of country. It had the mindless pitch of modern American politics. That pitch sells anything these days.

Tunney's Toronto operation is nowadays a franchise of New York City's wrestlemania promoters. New York puts together shows for him, New York says who will be his champion, who will take the falls. The strategy from New York is less a strategy for Ontario, or even for the ring, than a strategy for a boardroom in a far off land where silent men in glasses plot jagged futuristic graphs prophesying receipts from stolen markets. Market surveys chart the preference of the fans. And New York owns the information. They said the Wildman had to go.

And now he's gone. Fans no longer come to watch him fry a made-to-order wrestling show on the griddle of the country. The musty, grimy real life parable of the poor man's fate is packed and folded up. The disenfranchised farmers, workers, friends, and fans of the Wildman's show find their politics drowned in the monolithic languages of Hollywood.

Jim Freedman teaches Anthropology at the University of Western Ontario. He also advises and evaluates development projects in Asia. He has recently completed a narrative on professional wrestling - Drawing Heat - to be published soon by Black Moss Press. He is preparing to undertake a journey up the River Zaire in search of literary and political images for our time.

ANIMALS IN

TH

W

hen Rachel Carson, the mother of modern environmentalism, gave environmental destruction a seasonal signified with her book *Silent Spring*, she also confirmed something that military strategists had sensed all along. If the misuse of herbicides and pesticides can silence the life of the ecosystem on the

home front, then the tactical deployment of similar chemicals can do the same on the war front, against foreign bodies.

Since all parts of an ecosystem are interrelated, one does not have to literally draw one's sights on human enemies in order to silence them. One has to target their natural environment since, as parts of the systematic target, they will be hit indirectly from all sides. The environmental crisis is a gift to the war machine.

The folly of eco-tactics lies in the fact that ecocide is suicide, the slow way. The soldiers who administered the infamous chemical agents of the Vietnam War were just as much parts of the ecosystem that they destroyed as were their enemies. There was no safe distance, no sterile bubble from which to launch defoliation and area-denial operations. Nature is a double-agent.

While the ecosystem facilitates the communication of certain poisonous messages and provides unwelcome feedback on them, it also yields non-human beings which become strategic and/or tactical 'weapons' in plans of war. The use of animals in military operations has traditionally been in the area of logistical support: camels, elephants and horses carry supplies; and men, dogs and pigeons relay messages. But the fact that the behaviour of animals can be made operational does not fully explain the place of animals in the army.

The ability of some animals to perform certain functions makes them candidates for a high level of anthro-

pomorphism. For instance, since the pigeons and dogs of the World Wars relayed messages that were necessary for the survival of soldiers but could not have been delivered by men, they were said to fill human posts. As a result these animals became candidates for the honours and distinctions of the military establishment. That is, they became animal war heroes. However, animals that have not been made operational also have a place in the military as sign-vehicles. The production of these sign-vehicles is a form of pseudo-speciation. Wild animals are presented as the sum of certain attributes which lend themselves to military projects. As sign-vehicles, these pseudo-species denote and connote units of meaning that are transferred to armaments. Moreover, the animalization of the arms industry supports a vision of a bio-military reality that (con)fuses the operational and semiotic domains, producing wild hybrids through a patchwork of biological and technological signs.

Strategic and Tactical Creatures

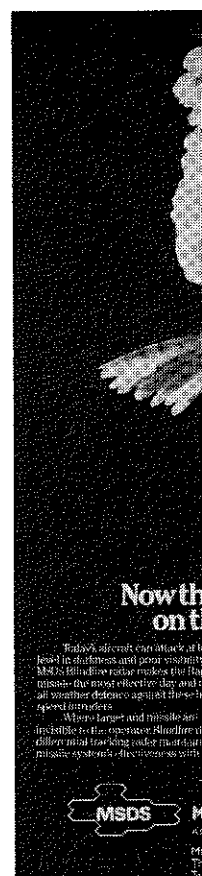
Strategic intelligence is a necessary condition for the realization of tactical capacities; knowing where and what an enemy is gives the concept of tactics a context without which it is meaningless. It is often the case that one must locate the position and size of an enemy force in an unobtrusive manner since giving away one's position in the act of coming to know where they are may have fatal consequences. In the effort not to stand out, a potential strategic resource to use in gathering information is something that belongs to the environment in which one is operating. In *The War Animals*, Robert E. Lubow explains that throughout the 1960s U.S. military agencies engaged in reconnaissance sound projects involving insects and birds. In 1963, the U.S. Army Limited War Laboratory and the Department of Agriculture conducted trial and intruder detector. In these tests, researchers sought to capitalize on the olfactory sensitivities of mosquitoes and giant cone-nose bugs by constructing detection devices that contained insects and sound monitoring equipment. When the insects sensed the

presence of humans, they would increase their activity and the resulting noises were amplified so that the human operators of these devices would be alerted to the presence of intruders.

In the wildlife sounds schemes of 1964, the U.S. Army Security Agency thought that it might be possible to make use of changes in the vocalization rates of certain birds to detect enemy forces. In feasibility studies, researchers compared the vocalization rates of birds in their natural milieu with sound patterns influenced by the presence of humans. Since the birds increased their rate of acoustic output in the presence of humans, it was believed that the comparison of 'empty' and 'intruder' auditory outputs might have a strategic use value. In both types of experiments the results were promising but inconclusive, since it proved to be impossible to control and control the environmental variables that produced false alarms. While the ecosystem provides a rich array of draffees, these creatures do not distinguish between 'researchers' and 'intruders'.

Just as a strategic weapons system may be used tactically and a tactical system may become strategic, strategic creatures may be used tactically and *vice versa*. Strategic creatures such as mosquitoes do not have such a capacity for decisive assault or control and thus make rather poor tactical weapons; birds, however, as Alfred Hitchcock recognized, are better candidates for tactical deployment.

The successful use of racing homer pigeons for logistical purposes in the First World War led to fears in the Second World War that the 'Nazi wolves' were attaching cameras to messenger pigeons and obtaining photographs of Allied emplacements. The fears of the Allies were justified if only on the basis of the line of research that the American psychologist B.F. Skinner began to pursue in 1941. In Skinner's work the logistical pigeon and the bird of strategic lore became a hybrid tactical bird in the form of a pigeon-guided missile. Skinner believed that the most efficient, cheap and expendable homing system for a guided missile was an organic 'homing device', a pigeon.



This "crackpot idea" referred to it in his book, "The Pelican," was of behavioural nature to respond to the target appeared on a screen at the image. A "jacketed", excruciatingly hot, and placed the Pelican missile target was thrown through a lens in a missile. As the target image, the servosystem of the forward the target. employed three to increase the nals.

When the official work on the only delay more applications, Skinner some ill humour reference was to application at F

THE ARMY

GARY GENOSKO

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This "crackpot idea," as Skinner referred to it in his 1960 paper, "Pigeons in a Pelican," was based on the ability of behaviourally engineered pigeons to respond to the image of a target that appeared on a small screen by pecking at the image. A bird was immobilized or 'jacketed', except for its neck and head, and placed in the assembly of the Pelican missile in front of a translucent screen. The image of a target was thrown onto the screen through a lens in the nose of the missile. As the bird pecked at the target image, the contact between its beak and screen signaled the servosystem of the missile to steer toward the target. Eventually, Skinner employed three- and seven-bird 'units' to increase the reliability of the signals.

When the official word came that further work on the Pelican idea would only delay more promising combat applications, Skinner noted with some ill humour that "possibly the reference was to a particular combat application at Hiroshima a year and a

half later, when it looked for a while as if the need for accurate bombing had been eliminated for all time." The knowledge that he too had trained his charges to target Japanese targets was no consolation.

Animal Heroes

While anthropomorphism is a prevalent if not constitutive feature of our relations with domesticated animals, the decoration of animals as war heroes is an act inspired by the hyper-anthropomorphization of select war animals (pigeons and dogs).

The call-up of the World Wars included many horses, oxen, mules, pigeons and dogs. As recently as the Falklands/Malvinas crisis, mine-detection dogs were recruited and

trained, but kept on reserve on the home front in Britain.

All new draftees need to be designed after the military model: to become faithful followers, lose their individuality, become predictable to tolerate the excesses of the battlefield and, above all, to be absolutely dependent on the one who gives the orders, be it the trainer or the sergeant. To speak of the domestication of animals is to speak of military indoctrination: basic or obedience training, arrested development and behavioural simplicity. The use of the term 'operational' in the military context applies to both human and non-human 'units'. An inspection of the troops is as rigorous as the judicial scrutiny of a dog show. While the rigours and relations of domestic and military service are essentially the same, they are not without their dangers and perks.

As Ernest Harold Baynes describes in *Animal Heroes of the Great War*, the value of a well-trained dog was not lost on military personnel. But those dogs that were "out-and-out slackers, or 'conscientious objectors', were given short shrift and sent to the lethal chamber." The Commandant of the British War Dog School, Lt.-Col. E.H. Richardson, expected "every dog to do his duty!"

In *Animals in War*, the animal enthusiast Jilly Cooper notes that graduates of the War Dog Schools (in Britain, France and Belgium) were pressed into service as guard dogs and messenger carriers to lay telegraph wire, carry ammunition, detect mines and enemy troops, and parachute into enemy territory. 'Rob', a mongrel parachute dog, received the Dickin Medal For Gallantry, awarded by the People's Dispensary for Sick Animals, Allied Forces Mascot Club

(Britain, Second World War), for successful 'drops' with his handler behind enemy lines.

Cooper relates the tale that in the Second World War, Russian suicide dogs were outfitted with bombs and trained to approach German tanks and crouch in their caterpillar treads as they advanced, presumably waiting for a cue from a trainer that never came. This tale establishes a rhetorical surround in which evil, immoral patterns of domestication (suicide dogs) may be clearly distinguished from moral, Christian uses of domesticated animals. For Cooper, 'good' uses are those that enable some animals to emerge as heroic members of

animals too can dominate nature by serving in the war effort. If they help humankind, they should be treated with respect; if they don't 'join' the conquest of nature crusade, they are enemies.

As Wendell Mitchell Levi describes in *The Pigeon*, a particularly brave pigeon named 'Cher Ami', a Blue checker cock, served with the New York Battalion of the 77th Division under Major C.S. Whittlesey in the First World War. Credited with saving the 'Lost Battalion' by breaking through a barrage of enemy fire to deliver the message for help, this heroic bird was stuffed, mounted and placed in the Smithsonian Institution as a military artifact. One of the 'perks' of domestication and war service, then, is a trip to the taxidermist.

In bestowing the honours of the military establishment upon the 'gallant gentlemen' of the pigeon corps, a curious logic is established: homing pigeons are rewarded for what they would do naturally. Instinct is seen as a way of satisfying the trainer and is heroic because it is 'exercised' to save human troops in the name of the state. Hyper-tropomorphism is manifested when one believes that nature consciously gives itself over for the 'greater cause' of the war effort and the good of humankind.

But instinct serves the enemy as well. In the First World War, it was feared that pigeons in Great Britain might be working for German spies. These fears lead to the destruction and internment of many birds as well as wing-clipping programmes. By the time that the British government realized the pigeon's strategic value, it faced a shortage and had to ask pigeon fanciers to gather their birds for the war effort. If birds can deliver messages for the Germans, they can also deliver false messages to them for the Allies. Instinct is a form of counter-espionage.

Armament Animals

Esso used to tell us to put a tiger in our tanks; this is just the sort of message that arms merchants take seriously. While many of us may recognize that a lynx and a cougar are wildcats as well as the sort of automobiles that one finds in a Mercury showroom, their proper cultural habitat, few of us would associate a lynx with a Canadian Armed Forces 'Lynx' Command and Reconnaissance Vehicle or a cougar with a Canadian Armed Forces 'Cougar' (76mm gun) Wheeled Fire Support Vehicle. While the connections between a lynx and a car, or a ram and the toughness of a Dodge truck have been actively cultivated through the marketing strategies of the automobile industry, similar connections between animals and machines have been generated through

the marketing strategies of the arms industry. When McDonnell Douglas-Northrop says there's nowhere to hide from an angry Hornet's aircraft with Sidewinder missiles under its wings, *there is* a new sting in Canada's air.

'Animality' has come to mean the savage struggle of natural fighting machines. Many of these fighting machines have been tamed. Those that remain untamed are enemies that can be controlled by militarized domesticates. The U.S. Army's P-40 Warhawks, those famous 'Fighting Tigers' so dear to the palettes of war artists, were emblazoned with the gaping jaws of a shark. In a moment that pushes husbandry into the realm of tyranny, the pilot harnesses and controls his animalized killing machine: *Sic' em!*

Military equipment is commonly named after animals: a scout car is a ferret; ammunition is copperhead; tanks are bulldogs and fireflies; homing-all-the-way missiles are hawks. Advertisements for armaments help to explain the relationships between arms and animals by selectively encoding a scene in which the transfer of attributes to the product may be deciphered by the audience. For example, a Bell 'Cobra' helicopter resembles this snake because it is metaphorically venomous; it is pictured as flattening itself out and rearing its head just as a cobra flattens its neck to a hood; it assumes this position, just as the snake does, in order to strike; like the snake, it lifts itself off the ground and hovers. Pertinent visual-iconic resemblances, reinforced by a narrative, are designed to solidify the arms-animal ligature. In this sense, the connections appear to be natural.

Although it is often the case that birds are associated with the equipment of the airforce, aquatic mammals and fish are presented with the tools of the navy, and land animals - including amphibians - are found together with army supplies, these are constantly transgressed. Particular attributes of animals acquire military meanings, not by virtue of natural categories, but in terms of overdetermined constructions of animals. This process of pseudo-speciation reduces the animal to a set of features that lend themselves to a wide variety of associations: a piranha is an amphibious Swiss battle tank because it "deals with its enemies within a few seconds" (Mowag Ag Kreuzlingen/Switzerland); a wolf is an enemy because, slaving the brute and thus needs to be controlled "at safe standoff distances" (Lockheed/California). Further, it threatens "our Navy's vital control of the sea."

The prefigurement of weapons is the final animalization of the machine. A bird has the machine's F-16 fighter jet body; 'Battle Bred' combat half-mammal, electronically encoded mechanisms (Hull). These examples of the whims of advertising mechanomorphosis reports the machine becomes a military project of the ear; this vision is played out in terms of the past; does have a history in domain. While the missile approximates reality, Louis F. B. project of the ear; genuine precursor; bio-technological suturing a string bomb into the chain; hoped to develop bombs. If these were dropped into Japan, would find place; strings, release of fires. In a trial run; Caverns, New Mexico; bats found their and set it ablaze. Skinner's, was a bomb was discovered was thought to be with a prosthetic genetic prosthetic of bio-military vision; operational reality.

Futures

The peace researcher relates a tale that the Navy's fascination in the 1960s, a missile elude anti-ballistic in theorizations; was given the name that creature is known high altitudes. A the missile was a antelope and given Chevaline. Official Ministry of Defense that this missile species of missile goat. Like the missile was so narily nimble at invention of a creature; missile after is a pseudo-speciation; it involves the invention and the attributes.

In the area of cybernetic and robotic fighting Transformers, Robots of the Universe, "evil insectoid Stang, a scorpion Hasbro's 'Heroic

In bestowing the honours of the military establishment upon the 'gallant gentlemen' of the pigeon corps, a curious logic is established: homing pigeons are rewarded for what they would do naturally.

the human family. As members in good standing, they are entitled to rewards; they even go to heaven. Suicide dogs were not given the chance to rise to the occasion, but they made it to heaven anyway. The basic assumption in both moral and immoral cases is that non-human beings are for the use of humankind. But 'good' domestication gives animals a chance to enjoy the spoils of man's triumph over nature. As members of a family that seeks to lift itself out of the natural state of conflict, domesticated

HUGHES

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The prefiguration of bio-military weapons is the final step in the animalization of the arms industry. A bird has the mission computer of an F-16 fighter jet built into it (Elbit 'Battle Bred' computers); a shark is half-mammal, half-submarine with electronically enhanced sensory mechanisms (Hughes and Syscon acoustic data gathering system). These examples are not merely the whims of advertisers. The basic mechanomorphic premise that supports the machine-animal equation becomes a military vision. To be sure, this vision is played out in semiotic terms on the pages of magazines, but it does have a history in the operational domain. While a pigeon-guided missile approximates bio-military reality, Louis F. Fieser's 'bat bombs' project of the early 1940s was a genuine precursor of contemporary bio-technological thought. By suturing a string tied to an incendiary bomb into the chest of a bat, Fieser hoped to develop and market his bat bombs. If these modified bats were dropped into Japanese cities, they would find places to hide, chew their strings, release the bombs, and set off fires. In a trial run in Carlsbad Caverns, New Mexico, several stray bats found their way into a hangar and set it ablaze. This project, like Skinner's, was cancelled when the A-bomb was discovered. While the bat was thought to be a tactical creature with a prosthetic military device, it is genetic prosthetics that is the content of bio-military visions in the operational realm.

Futures

The peace researcher Paul Chilton relates a tale that illustrates the military's fascination with animals. In the 1960s, a missile system that could elude anti-ballistic missiles appeared in theorizations about armaments. It was given the name 'Antelope' because that creature is known for its agility at high altitudes. A further version of the missile was christened a super-antelope and given the name of Chevaline. Officials in the British Ministry of Defence came to believe that this missile was named after a species of antelope akin to the mountain goat. Like this mythical beast, the missile was said to be extraordinarily nimble at high altitudes. The invention of a creature to model a missile after is a radical form of pseudo-speciation. It is radical because it involves the invention of a species and the attributes of its members.

In the area of children's toys, Hasbro, Tomy and Mattel have marketed robotic fighting machines dubbed Transformers, Robo Strux and Masters of the Universe, respectively. Mattel's "evil insectoid steed", the Mantisaur, a modified praying mantis, Tomy's Stang, a scorpion battle creature, and Hasbro's "Heroic Autobot", Sky Lynx, a

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space shuttle that transforms into an attack bird, evoke an imaginary world in which spectacular feats of bio-engineering in the name of war are commonplace. In 1985, *Military Technology*, a professional magazine concerned with developments in the international armaments scene, ran an advertisement for the British company Marconi Communications in which Tomy provided the artwork. The Marconi product, a wideband 'hopping' combat radio set, was presented as a robotic kangaroo similar to the products in the Tomy line of toys. The spread of these sign-vehicles from the realm of children's toys into the marketing of armaments is not surprising since the production of operational and semiotic pseudo-species permits this kind of amalgamation. The rules of sign production, let us say, are complementary and perhaps even complicitous.

The formation of pseudo-species made up of individuals that are part machine, part mammal/insect, and so on, is of course a bio-military vision and not a bio-technological crisis. Still, let us recall that this sign production had its origins in the operational realm with a few 'cancelled' experiments. While I do not believe that the current bio-military vision is even remotely realizable, it is the sort of vision that fuels military spending and promotes the testing of the wildest hypotheses on animals.

Gary A. Genosko is a graduate student in the Faculty of Environmental Studies at York University

In a moment that pushes husbandry into the realm of tyranny, the pilot harnesses and controls his animalized killing machines: *Sic' em!*

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- Special thanks to John Livingston, Environmental Studies, York University for his primer of domestication.

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Border/lines is an interdisciplinary, inter-genre magazine committed to explorations in all aspects of culture--including popular culture, fine arts, gender, literature, multiculturalism, mass communications and political culture. Although its geographic focus is Canada, this is taken as meaning anything that is relevant to understanding Canadian culture.

Border/lines aims to fill the gap between academic journals and specialist cultural magazines. Our audience is diverse and eclectic; so too are our contributors, drawn from a broad base of writers, cultural producers and animators. Potential contributors should bear this diversity in mind, and try to address cultural issues with spunk, humour and the occasional sideways glance. For example, we would hope that theoretical debates would be opened up to the intelligent but non-initiated reader.

The magazine contains four sections: "Excursions" deals with specific cultural themes, topics and responses directed towards a non-specialized audience. It does not review shows, but attempts to provide contextualized readings of events, objects and presentations. Length ranges from 100 to 1500 words. "Articles" range from 1500 to 4000 words and include investigative journalism, critical analysis, theory, visual essays and short stories. "Reviews" vary in length according to number of books covered and also include review essays up to 4000 words. "Junctures" presents and debates other magazines, journals and aspects of radio, television or video that suggest a magazine format. articles. Each contributor will receive three copies of the issue in which their work appeared. It is not possible to provide offprints.

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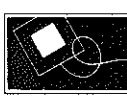
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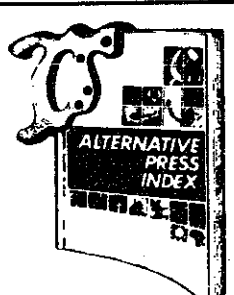
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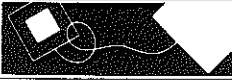
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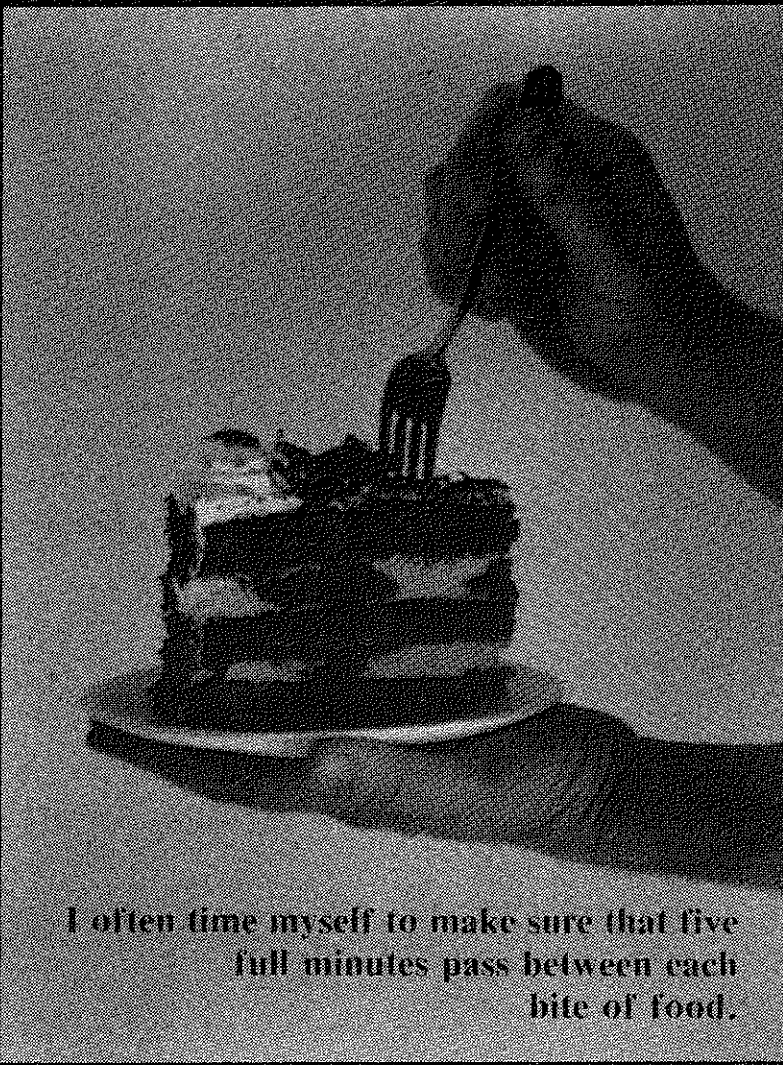
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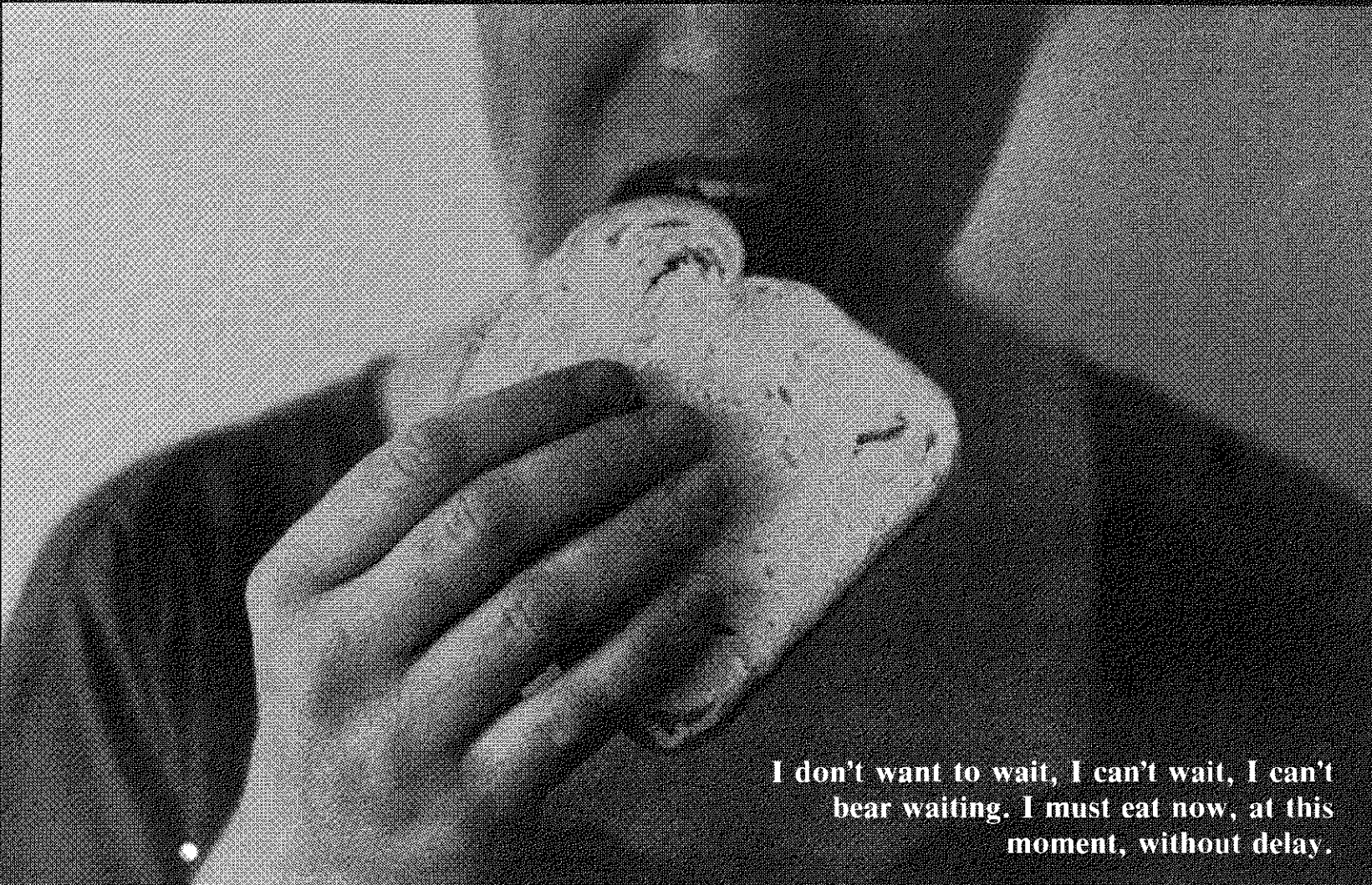
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EATING VIRTUE

Proserpine may return to heaven, but on one definite condition, that no food has passed her lips in that other world.



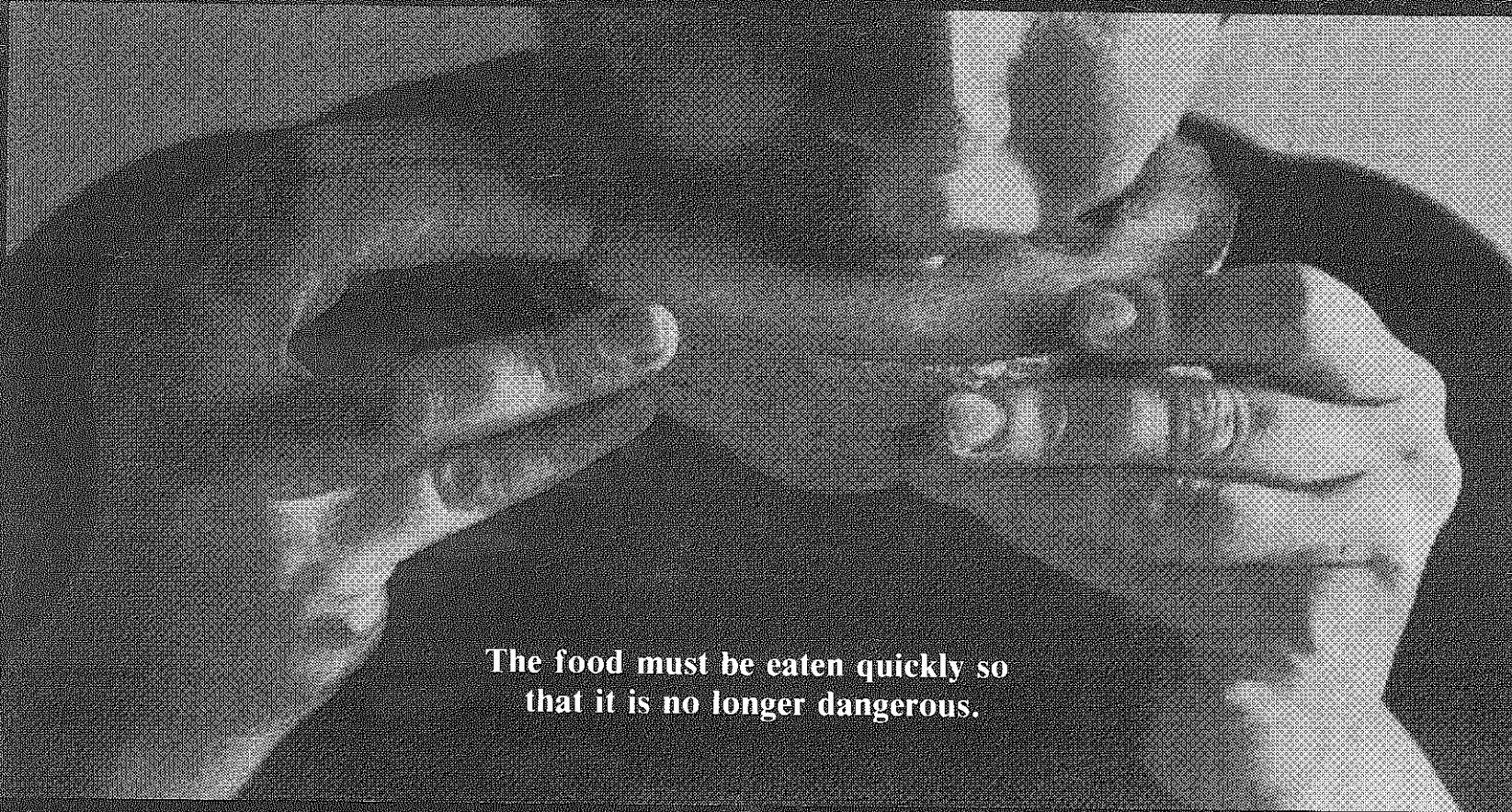
I often time myself to make sure that five full minutes pass between each bite of food.



I don't want to wait, I can't wait, I can't bear waiting. I must eat now, at this moment, without delay.

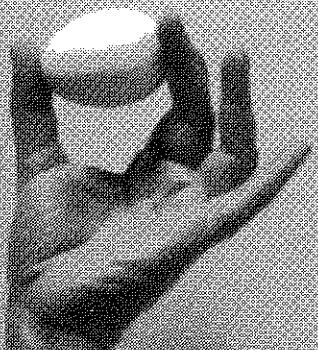
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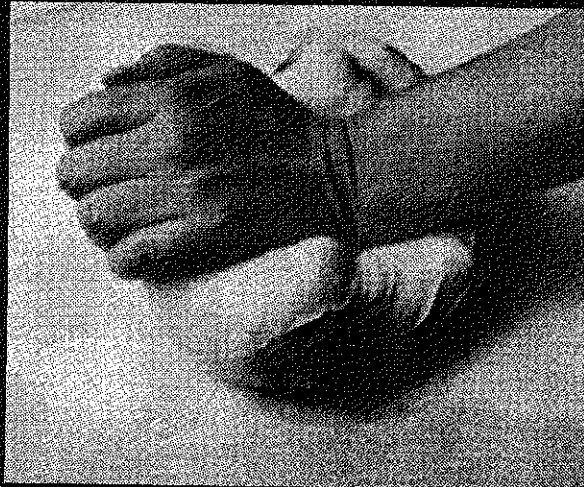


The food must be eaten quickly so
that it is no longer dangerous.

The less I ate, the purer I became.



How will I know how much to eat?
Maybe I'll never want to stop.



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BY ELIZABETH MACKENZIE

N • I • C • A • R • A • G • U • A

Art Before
The Revolu

Several authors - for example, Judith Doyle in *Impulse* - have written of art in contemporary Nicaragua as if revolutionary practice emerges out of a timeless present. As this article indicates, the struggle for a people's art - indeed for any art - goes back to the origins of colonialism, and the problems of creating a popular culture are only beginning to be appreciated. Ingrid Mayrhofer provides the groundwork for understanding how difficult it is to make truly revolutionary art. - I.D.

The strongest single impact on Nicaraguan society this century was the 1979 triumph of the Popular Sandinista Revolution (RPS). Even though with this triumph the culture of resistance became institutionalised, the process of deculturalisation of the 45-year dictatorship could not be reversed overnight, nor could the new human being, "el hombre nuevo", be born and raised independently of 400 years of underdevelopment.

During each epoch of the nation's history, new generations were influenced not only by the dominant culture, but also by the cultural response of the subjugated peoples. The double standards of the colonial rulers may well be the base for contemporary "machismo" - the brutalisation of Indian women by the Spaniards, who protected the virginity of their own daughters - but the same racist differentiation allowed for partial continuation of indigenous culture. Native dualist mythology, with its belief in spiritual forces interacting with the phenomenal world, originated in the need to explain human and natural relationships, and was adapted after the conquest to deal with the new oppressive reality. Characteristic of the reaction to Spanish rule are beliefs in supernatural appearances, such as the "Padre sin Cabeza" and "Carreta Nagua", which

were responses to the actions of the conquerors. The Indians, helpless in the face of brute force, first attributed supernatural powers to the Spaniards. In the post-conquest period, the origin of beliefs in non-human apparitions was concealed and indigenous culture developed a fatalism that mystifies the human responsibility for shaping destiny. Catholicism, with its focus on immaterial redemption, was internalised by the Indian. However, once imposed upon the colony, the Catholic hierarchy also had to accept indigenous influences, such as fertility dances and masked parades at patron saint festivals, black saints, and even the image of the sun-god in a church.

After independence from Spain in 1821, the introduction of French liberalism towards the end of the 19th century brought new thoughts to the anachronistic values of the colonial ruling class. The relative economic wealth and progress based on coffee export during Zelaya's liberal dictatorship (1893 to 1909) coincide chronologically with the birth of Modernism, which was introduced to the archaic Spanish language by Rubén Darío, Nicaragua's first great poet. But just as the creole aristocracy was becoming more decadent, the new mestizo bourgeoisie lacked a tradition of its own. Freemasonry, transcendentalism and eastern philosophies became readily adapted to native spiritual practices, allowing for broader participation in intellectual life. It is therefore possible for



Sandinó, a leader hero of national 1926 and 1934, to eracy education, la forms, cooperative women - and at th that his generals tions of Indian ch shared by many pe natural powers we the guerillas of th their skillful strate ambush and trachel General Juan Gre still referred to as his agile escapes f alluding to his m spirit.) With San struggle, popular manifested its stre resistance and reb tioning as a unify communication b and the peasant b eign invaders.

Most representativ tions within the p torn by civil war a intervention, is the ment of writers an self-proclaimed r the "Vanguardia" pure Catholic valu cratic-liberal prej ecting U.S. inter cal/cultural sense Sandino as their p tionalist hero, th Franco and incor of Italian Futurism Dadaism, in their dictatorship as th of achieving the p and accepted Som hero after Sandin The Vanguardista Granada's decayin tocracy, enjoyed t flowing from the U.S.-supported b they despised the values of the new ignored the blata and corrupt backg who had worked a and had learned on the streets of P that made him ex with the wife of U Hanna). Cultural

Art Before The Revolution

INGRID MAYRHOFER

Sandino, a leader of peasant stock and hero of national resistance between 1926 and 1934, to hold ideas about literacy education, land and labour reforms, cooperatives, wage parity for women - and at the same time believe that his generals were reincarnations of Indian chiefs. This belief was shared by many people and supernatural powers were attributed also to the guerillas of that time as a result of their skillful strategy of unpredictable ambush and traceless escape. (The General Juan Gregorio Colindres is still referred to as "the cat" because of his agile escapes from the enemy, alluding to his mythological animal spirit.) With Sandino's liberation struggle, popular mythology manifested its strength as a tool of resistance and rebellion, by functioning as a unifying element in communication between the guerillas and the peasant base against the foreign invaders.

Most representative of the contradictions within the post-Zelaya society, torn by civil war and United States intervention, is the Vanguard movement of writers and poets. Touting a self-proclaimed reactionary ideology, the "Vanguardia" sought a return to pure Catholic values, rid of democratic-liberal prejudice. While rejecting U.S. intervention in a political/cultural sense, and idolising Sandino as their pure savage and nationalist hero, they also admired Franco and incorporated elements of Italian Futurism, and even of Dadaism, in their style. They saw dictatorship as the only possible way of achieving the purification of society and accepted Somoza as their new hero after Sandino's assassination. The Vanguardistas, members of Granada's decaying provincial aristocracy, enjoyed the economic benefits flowing from the opportunistic and U.S.-supported bourgeoisie, while they despised the unrefined cultural values of the new business class. They ignored the blatantly un-aristocratic and corrupt background of Somoza, who had worked as a toilet inspector and had learned to speak "American" on the streets of Philadelphia (a factor that made him extremely popular with the wife of U.S. ambassador Hanna). Culturally, Somoza em-

bodied everything that Sandino had aimed to liberate his people from, such as alcoholism, corruption, ignorance, and the sell-out of the homeland to the United States. (The infamous Chamorro/Brian treaty signed by the conservative Diaz government in 1914 leased the rights to build an inter-ocean canal and parts of Nicaragua to the United States on a 99-year lease.)

The fatalist nature of Nicaraguan mythology had made it politically inept as a tool of resistance to Spanish rule. During the dictatorship following Sandino's assassination by Somoza in 1934, the subjugated workers and peasants were again forced to submit to physical exploitation and an intensified process of deculturalisation. In the effort to wipe out resistance and subdue public awareness, the dictator used military repression and took advantage of the fatalist and redemptive aspects of religion, while also trivialising and commercialising traditional popular culture. Based on an export economy of agricultural products and raw materials, the dictatorship saw no benefit in public education, nor in the preservation of indigenous languages or the nation's cultural patrimony. Some intellectuals of the vanguard movement, such as Pablo Antonio Cuadra and José Coronel Urtecho, realised the failure of their saviour, but only Manolo Cuadra became a socialist and later supported the revolutionary resistance movement. They continued to write, as well as publish poetry, and thus allowed for a continuous development in poetry through the 40s and 50s up to the revolutionary "Frente Ventana" in the 60s. In 1956 the young poet Rigoberto López Pérez executed Anastasio Somoza García, and thus prepared the "beginning of the end".

Parallel to the Frente Ventana in poetry, there appeared in 1963 the manifesto of the group "Praxis", founded by two painters, Alejandro Aróstegui and César Izquierdo, and the writer Amaru Barahona. Unlike poetry, the visual arts had a very limited presence up to, and within, the Vanguard movement, who made only isolated efforts to include modern art in the form of illustrations and caricature. Aside from woodcut

reproductions in poetry magazines, the prevalent genre until the 60s had been portraiture and religious paintings in a 19th century academic style. In 1949, Don Rodrigo Peñalba returned from Italy to revolutionise the Fine Art School by introducing German Expressionism 40 years after its origin.



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When Praxis manifested its rebellion against the school and public taste, it did so in an organic abstract style influenced by European informalism, cubism, surrealism, etc. The content of the paintings exhibited in the Galería Praxis was human suffering in a nature wounded and destroyed by a "hostile and wretched" society. But public taste in art in 1963 was limited to the gusto of a certain "clan" of appreciators. The same idealist nationalists, who proclaim that every Nicaraguan is a poet or the son of a poet, also recognise now that, despite Peñalba's annual exhibitions in Managua's central park, very few people appreciated or had access to painting.

Though initially elitist in their choice of qualified participants, Praxis made an effort to take part in intellectual activities in rural centres, especially after reorganising in 1971 and broadening the membership. Most successful of all their efforts, however, was the pictorial integration of popular culture in their visual language.

With Praxis, pre-Columbian symbols, as well as contemporary mythology, found their place in the fine arts, reinforcing the nation's roots and identity. While Peñalba, who had encouraged his students to look for "lo Nicaragüense", limited his representation of nationhood to the narrative in his own paintings, the Praxis generation approached the search for identity analytically. Primeval landscapes, mythological figures and rituals are represented in grainy textures, petroglyphic line, telluric colours and timeless compositions. Initially rejected by the bourgeois art clientele for its unpleasant aesthetic and political undertones, the Praxis style became a known language of social

movements of Frente Ventana, Praxis and the FSLN emerged at a time when the dictatorship had achieved a pathetic state of deculturalisation.

The dictatorship's cultural decadence manifested itself most overtly in Somoza's ignorance of art. Rubén Darío had decried the lack of education and interest of the generals, who failed to pay him a living wage, and he ridiculed the ruling class in his story "El rey burgués". In the 50s, Peñalba's students signed a petition against cuts in the already minimal public funding of the art school. The spouse of Somoza, (Tachito) Debayle, considered herself a great patron of the arts, but her imports of foreign

While Montenegro sees a purity and honesty in the peasants' ancient grounding in nature, his statement expresses not only a paternalistic lament over the country/city dichotomy, but also his own lack of awareness of the extent of deculturalisation and internalisation of the corrupt U.S.- sponsored dictatorship. In a similar attitude Pablo Antonio Cuadra laments in his 1969 book "El Nicaragüense" the bare state of walls in Nicaraguan peasant houses, and that his people do not decorate their wagon wheels as do the Ticas - ignoring that Costa Rica did not waste millions on an army, which in Nicaragua maintained an oppressive and ignorant dictatorship; as well, he leaves out the fact that the middle class clutters its homes in Nicaragua just as it does in Spain. On the other hand, Sergio Ramirez, founding member of Frente Ventana, explains the ready acceptance of Mexican "ranchera" music among Nicaraguan peasants as escapist entertainment that idealises the rural life and reinforces machismo.

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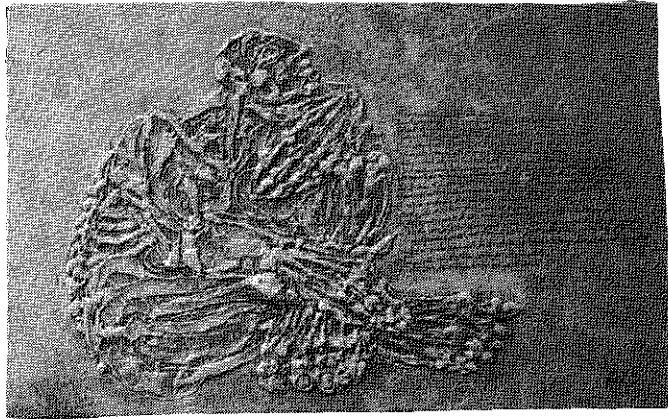
performers betrayed the prevalent motivation of the ruling class: to accumulate a fortune at the expense of the people and waste it by imitating high society. After the triumph, hundreds of fake masterpieces and still-wrapped art books were found on her deserted estate.

The statement by painter Carlos Montenegro, originally published in 1976 in *Revista Centroamericana*, sums up the level of public deculturalisation:

"...the contemporary Nicaraguan city-dweller is kind of traitor, as he tries to eliminate traditions which he considers inferior. He himself discriminates against what is of him...The truth is that we have a what-do-I-care attitude, laziness; the Nicaraguan doesn't read, doesn't think. There is little seriousness, little responsibility, we make jokes about everything to escape the seriousness. And the predominant objective of life is superficial entertainment and money. All this is who we are and all this is what we pass on to our children; this is how we teach them to be."

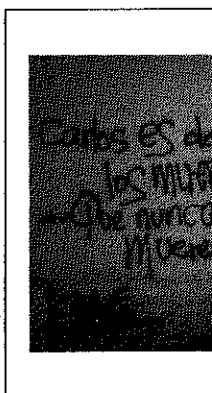
In addition to the city-dweller's ignorance of folklore, the prevailing prejudice against artists as good-for-nothings was internalised as bohemianism by the artistic community and many a painter is known for his hard drinking and womanising as for his painting style. This attitude among lower-class artists and intellectuals descends from the practice by the landed aristocracy in sending their sons overseas, where they would inevitably join the bohemia in Paris and waste their parents' money. As so many of the destructive elements of the ruling class, socially irresponsible behaviour has been readily adopted by the lower-class male as a glorified evil of his own. Strongly opposed by Sandino, as well as the master Peñalba, alcoholism had cost Rubén Darío his life: in 1916, at age 49, the poet died of cirrhosis of the liver.

The severe repression of students following the first protests in 1959 and the 60s shows the dictatorship's fear of its own impotence in the face of intellectual activity. On the popular level, painting and writing gained a new perspective as a tool of resistance.



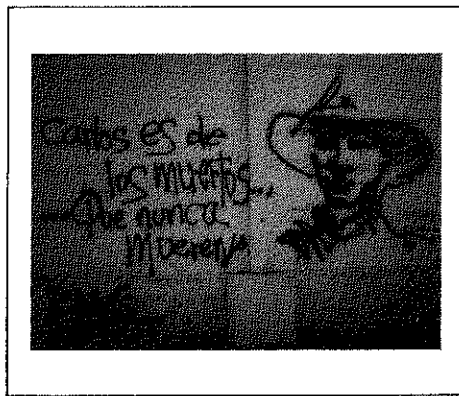
criticism and was published in the cultural section of *La Prensa*, the official bourgeois opposition daily. Contrary to Vanguardia's paternalistic idealisation of the heroic and peasant as a symbol of a heroic past and purity, Praxis presents a profound understanding and sincere attitude towards the need for social change, with a particular focus on urban problems and rural backwardness.

In the early 60s, the dictatorship faced a new and organised political resistance. The heroic act of Rigoberto López Pérez, in 1956, who lost his life immediately after shooting Anastasio Somoza García, brought about increased repression. There was a crisis in the world cotton market, the Cuban revolution, disunity among the military, the annihilation of the resistance of El Chaparral and the student massacre in León in July 1959, followed by more student protests. The acceptance of Sandino's example presented a political base for the resistance and his heroic image became a unifying cultural symbol. When Carlos Fonseca, Silvio Mayorga and Tomás Borge founded their political organisation in 1961, they called it the "Sandinista" National Liberation Front, or FSLN. The intellectual



Militant artists, still in general too timid to express their support for a very political and popular response, the writings contained Sandino's struggle and spontaneous private walls. Ri ening the dictato "pintas" meant th or even death for

When art galleries were closed by the never over a parti rather because of was the case in a hibit of Carazo pa "subversive" litera was found in "La and gallery space experience of the Solentiname is a the dictatorship's The island commu Lake Cocibolca ha poet/priest Ernes organised as a pr of liberation. Asi cal and religious bers of the comm painting with the and Praxis memb Rocha. After the I garrison of San C Guard burned th ing became an il activity. The few of the community watched by Guarc would not paint. Silva says, after s the island for Gr her paintings in gallery "Tagüe" i members of Sole only painters dir armed liberation Praxis and other as members of the labored with th



Just as naive painting was not indigenous to Solentiname, the choice of abstraction as the fine art style of the 60s and 70s did not develop out of a long national history of art in Nicaragua. Nor was it ever an exercise in artistic escapism like Abstract Expressionism in the United States. The painting of an often ugly, but rarely representational imagery, could be interpreted as an artistic rebellion against the dominant taste and the expressionism of the master Peñalba. It can also be seen as a form of self-censorship, as more explicit statements of social criticism would not get published, even in the opposition daily, where Pablo Antonio Cuadra was in charge of the cultural news. But the strongest reason for the particular abstraction that all the members and affiliates of Praxis have in common, if not in imagery at least in intensity, is found in their shared need to deal with their personal emotions in the face of social contradictions. The monochrome treatment of fragments of the figure by Orlando Sobalvarro, for example, impedes any identification with it as a human; their linear stylization removes Leoncio Sáenz' drawings from a time-bound reality; the telluric extractions of Leonel Vanegas seem to be happening below rather than on the worldly surface of the earth; there is not illusionary pictorial depth in César Izquierdo's heavy textures; and the cold colour and metal of Aróstegui's collage-paintings present an intellectual rather than tactile relief. The need for academic distancing from the daily experience of the painter as a social being is most evident in the paintings after the 1972 earthquake, despite a sudden market for their works during the reconstruction boom, which saw the terrible misappropriation of international relief funds by the dictator. The immediacy of the mostly singular subject matter, organic monochrome earthcolours, detailed textures and compositions reminiscent of photographic close-ups, betray the intimate personal involvement of the artist with his lived reality, despite the effort of artistic distancing. In the intensity and stillness, with which a fragment is presented, the work allows for an emotional distance from the whole - not unlike the effect of beliefs in supernatural appearances by the Indians after the conquest. Intellectually aware of the human cause of their unjust society, the painters share with the viewers a psychological need to separate and protect the most intimate of their personal feelings in the face of public despair.

Militant artists, students and the public in general took up brushes or spray cans to express their demands, or their support for the FSLN in "pintas", a very political form of graffiti and popular response to increased censorship of the press in the 70s. These writings contained symbols of Sandino's struggle and the mythological quality of appearing mysteriously and spontaneously on public and private walls. Ridiculing and threatening the dictatorship, the making of "pintas" meant the risk of torture, jail or even death for the protester.

When art galleries or exhibitions were closed by the military, it was never over a particular painting, but rather because of political speeches, as was the case in a German embassy exhibit of Carazo painters, or because of "subversive" literature or graffiti that was found in "La Cascada", a studio and gallery space in Managua. The experience of the primitive painters of Solentiname is a painful example of the dictatorship's attitude toward art. The island community in the south of Lake Cocibolca had been founded by poet/priest Ernesto Cardenal and organised as a practice in the theology of liberation. Aside from their political and religious studies, the members of the community took up naive painting with the help of Cardenal and Praxis member Róger Pérez de la Rocha. After the 1977 attack on the garrison of San Carlos by guerrillas from Solentiname, the National Guard burned the library, and painting became an illegal "communist" activity. The few remaining members of the community were closely watched by Guardsmen, so that they would not paint. However, as Marina Silva says, after she clandestinely left the island for Granada, she exhibited her paintings in the well-known gallery "Tagüe" in Managua. The members of Solentiname were the only painters directly involved in the armed liberation struggle, although Praxis and other individual painters, as members of the group "Grada", collaborated with the FSLN.

The artistic consequences of the painter's personal involvement in the national emotion becomes even more clearly evident when we compare the current works of Vanegas, for instance, with those of his contemporary and compatriot Armando Morales, who has spent most of his painting life in Paris. Morales, the most recognised of Nicaraguan painters, had the same teacher in Peñalba and the same turbulent national history.

His emotional experience of the homeland is manifest in his latest paintings, but isolated from the collective memory of those who continued to live and suffer the oppressive reality. Dore Ashton in her intro-



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duction to the 1986 Claude Bernard Gallery catalogue, has called Morales "more Nicaraguan the longer he remained abroad", but what the painter captures in his Nicaraguan works, is an independent national beauty, that is unspoiled and does not reflect a history of human suffering. While Morales is painting mythologically real landscapes and timeless historical scenes, members of the Praxis generation now encounter the process of a changing reality, which they themselves have helped create. The imagery of the Praxis generation, and of their disciples among the young painters, still maintains the pictorial language that the art-educated public has learned to read during the resistance. Their style, however, developed as a response to a different, hostile environment, and some painters are now struggling with a tendency towards stylistic stagnation in their work, which has become comfortably accepted by the appreciators and buyers of art.

The same phenomenon of academism and commercialism can be found in the naive painting, which developed from a parallel experience to Praxis. As Marina Silva says, new painters often merely copy the

Solentiname style without the original feeling and an equal lack of orientation with the new experience in the young revolution, which has yet to overcome the historical "hangover" as well as the present U.S. military aggression and economic hardship. The "nausea" that Praxis set out to treat in 1963 no longer has a cause in the revolution, but their aspired "symbiosis between people and culture" demands a long process. Despite the admirable and enthusiastic efforts of cultural workers and brigades that followed the triumph, the process of public education is moving slowly. The recent introduction of adult and children's classes at the art school in Managua has sparked broad participation, but most of the rural cultural centres face the lack of materials and experience, as well as the casualties of a dragging war among their workers, such as poet Ahmed Campos and painter Madrigal. As a consequence of the war, government spending priority is in production and defence, and the numerous urban and rural Popular Cultural Centres rely heavily on volunteers, thus perpetuating the myth of artist's work not being productive.

On January 9th, 1987, the revolutionary government, elected in November 1984, proclaimed its first constitution. Throughout the previous year, members of the national assembly held open council with various interest groups, including the artistic community. Of the 13 paragraphs covered by "Titulo VII, Education y Cultura", three deal with the rescue, development and protection of national creativity. A separate article contains three paragraphs on the specific cultural rights of the Atlantic Coast Region. Billboards, advertising the proposed constitution in towns and countryside, emphasised slogans promising freedom of religious worship, the protection of the family, human rights and national sovereignty. The artists, in Art. 127, got absolute creative freedom, the state's commitment to facilitate materials for production and distribution, as well as protection of the copyright. The national patrimony is protected under Art. 128, and includes not only archaeological and historical values, but all the visual art that is now being created in the country.

The permanent collection paintings of the ASTC (Association of Sandinista Cultural Workers), housed in the unique "Ruinas del Gran Hotel", the ruins of the once grand hotel of Managua, contain what is left of the best of the Praxis Generation, as well as new acquisitions. The "Ruinas" also has an open-air stage, space for experimental and non-commercial exhibitions and individual artists' studio space. In addition, the union has at least five galleries of commer-

cial exhibition spaces, of which the Casa Fernando Gordillo is the most prominent one.

The Ministry of Culture organises big exhibitions, such as the retrospective of Peñalba, or their collection of colonial paintings, on the walls of the Rubén Darío theatre. Smaller shows are held at the Sala Leonel Rugama and the art school, while its permanent collection and patrimony is distributed among the various government buildings and is not readily accessible to the public. Other exhibitions are organised by special interest groups, such as the Red Cross, the Architects' House, the Arabe-Libio Cultural Centre, the Ministry of Interior, and so on, as well as private dealers. The most extensive collection of art belongs to the Central Bank, which also has a slide library and funded the publication in 1977 of a bulletin on painting and sculpture, the only one of its kind in Nicaragua. Outside of Managua, exhibitions are mostly organised by the Ministry of Culture in collaboration with local painters, members of the union, students and an occasional foreign resident artist.

The patrimony and copyrights are important gains for Nicaraguan artists, whose best works have in the past been exported without any records, and reproduced without acknowledgement. Some smuggling continues now, especially of naive and regional art, for the nostalgia market in Miami. A typical example of ignorance of authors' rights sparked a heated debate last August in the cultural supplement of the *Nuevo Diario*, when the *Nuevo Amanecer Cultural* used trivial images of women to illustrate a feminist article. The editor did publish the women writers' letters of protest, but did not admit defeat. *Ventana*, the cultural supplement of *Barriacada*, often neglects to give credit not only to the painter, whose work is used to illustrate, but also to writers of articles, sources and translators of foreign material.

The traditional neglect and condescending attitude towards the artist is only one of the many obstacles the the 45-odd members of UNAP (the visual artists' branch of the ASTC) have had to confront since its foundation after the revolutionary triumph. While many of the goals and activities of the ASTC overlap and interact with the work of the Ministry of Culture, the main characteristic of the ASTC is that it is the first union that represents professional artists. Rosario Murillo, the secretary general of the union, has explained what is meant by "professional" as the "...achievement of a higher aesthetic level through years of practice". In the short history of art in Nicaragua, pub-

lic taste has always lagged behind artistic innovation, even though the artistic introduced by the master Peñalba and the members of Praxis may have been already dated internationally. With its place behind, as Leoncio Sáenz put it, on the tail of Halley's comet in the arts world, Nicaraguan art has rarely made waves - with the worthy exception of Armando Morales - outside of Latin America, or even within the continent. José Gómez Sicre and later Marta Traba were the better-known among the few critics who appreciated the achievements of Peñalba and Praxis. On the national level, art criticism never developed beyond isolated attempts and the practice of "art appreciation. Perhaps because of the lack of a critical vanguard also in literature, perhaps because of the acceptance of its irrelevance upon the international trend-setting or because of a traditionally fragile artistic psyche in a small community, art criticism is one of the many cultural casualties of the underdeveloped country. This lack of criticism, together with the democratic nature of the union, often results in very uneven quality among exhibitors in a show, as well as within the *oeuvre* of the individual artist.

But perhaps it is in the younger generation that the artistic potential is being realised in the present and is beginning to reflect the liberated reality of the individual in society. The political "rebellion" which brought with it the innovative style of Praxis is now history, and both artists and public have come to terms with this history. Along with all the conflicting identities and technical problems, the Nicaraguan public is now also allowed to identify with the experience of the individual artist as a social being. The accessibility of a more figurative and intimate art should bring closer an audience which has learned to appreciate the music and poetry of the resistance more so than its painting. This does not mean that the artists have to lower their standards, but rather to raise them, as public taste has become more demanding since the revolution. (Standing tall in the surrealistically empty centre of Managua, the realist monument to the heroic combatant, is popularly known as the incredible hulk, or "el mole".) The people have been participating on a broad scale in the popular poetry workshops, they write and read and paint and they will continue to participate in the process of democratisation of the fine arts.

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Ingrid Mayrhofer is an artist who lives in Newmarket, Ontario, and who has taught visual art in Nicaragua. She is curator of an exhibition of contemporary Nicaraguan art at A-Space.

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Telemarketing and the Disembodied Voice

Kim Sawchuk

The phone rings, a voice speaks. Hello... Hello... Allos. Greek for the other. Within seconds a decision is made. How to approach this mark, my target: this other who is far away, then dialed into existence, whose submission to my proposition is desired so that I might reach my quota.

Listen to the first tones, undulations of the voice to hear how this other (re) presents herself. Appeal to the familiar, to our narcissism, to our desire for identification. Imitate that other voice. Reflect it. Give back to your mark what is given to you in the first ten seconds of your encounter. Transform this business call, this formal call, into an erotic scene: a scene of seduction. The voice must be clear, preferably low, throaty, yet emphatic. Not too fast: keep the listener in suspense. The use of the pause is fundamental. Give the other a chance to punctuate your pitch with yes: never take an immediate no for an answer.

Your manual, *Successful Telemarketing*, tells you: "When role-playing session training is completed, consumer representatives are capable of identifying caller personalities a few seconds into the conversation..." Your manual, *Successful Telemarketing*, has divided the world into seven basic caller personalities. For each basic caller personality, your manual has created seven corresponding response personalities. (1) The direct and natural coupled with the efficient, confident and pleasantly professional; (2) The pleasant and outgoing, to be met by the equally pleasant; (3) The insecure and anxious, who should be consoled by the nurturing parent who

will reassure and generate a sense of well-being; (4) The confused and uncertain, paired with patient, caring and clarifying; (6) Emergency/panic who should be encountered with an equal sense of urgency; (7) Finally, the sceptical cynic who can be overcome only by a reassuring knowledgeable response personality conveying professional expertise. (p. 29)

Diagnostician and therapist.

Your power: the ability to exude a high degree of empathy while controlling the conversation in a polite and positive way. We are the new breed of consumer therapists, and like

any therapist we rely on transference in speech to gain the trust of our patients. To successfully cure our ailing consumer patients we must get them to tell their stories, confide in us. Venting their dissatisfaction gives them the illusion that their individual problems can and will be solved over the phone. You help them regain the illusion that they are more than simply a basic call personality; that they are individual subjects who have ultimate influence and control over their consumption. They regain confidence in themselves and the product through their relationship with you.



Uh--this isn't something I would usually do.

Visuals from the project and bookwork nO fiXeD aDdrESs by Joey Morgan

It is a complex game that works because it goes beyond identifying basic caller personalities. Your effacement allows you to engage in the creation of fantasies, perhaps to stand in for mother, father, sister, brother. A recreation of first love, desire for the (m)-other's voice, incestuous desire; a desire that is ultimately short-circuited. Cut off. Disconnected. To maintain your control over this speech situation, to sell the product, counter-transference, your desires, your sympathies, your fears, must be denied.

It is this scene of the seduction of the consumer/patient by the voice of the customer service representative/therapist that the telemarketing industry attempts to efface. Yet like the psychoanalytic situation, it can never completely hide what it tries to repress; that is, the sexual connection, the desire, the love that is aroused. As Freud admitted:

We force the patient to abandon his resistances through love for us. Our treatments are treatments through love. There remains for us only the task of eliminating personal resistances (to transference). We can cure to the extent that transference exists. (p. 93, "U")

While we call on this abandonment, our complicity is never confessed. We rely on the power and the eroticism of our voices to sell, yet we attempt to disguise the seduction involved in the marketing of these commodities. In a move to legitimate and professionalise the field and disguise these seductions, the industry itself has adopted a quasi-scientific neologism, the telemarketer, to replace the old term, telephone solicitor.

Telemarketing today.

The development of consumer data bases which measure demographics and lifestyles is transforming the industry from its low-tech, anyone-can-dial past of smoke filled rooms where the marginally employed sell magazine packages and season's tickets to the opera and ballet, to new heights of technical achievement. The industry describes itself in this way:

Telemarketing comprises the integrated and systematic application of telecommunications and information processing technologies with management systems to optimize the marketing communications mix used by the company to reach its customers. It retains personalized customer interaction while simultaneously attempting to better meet customer needs and improve cost effectiveness. (Successful Telemarketing)

In less technical jargon, the telemarketing industry sees itself as a new marketing discipline that uses telecommunications technology with a systematically organized marketing program. It features the use of personal selling with minimal face-to-face contact. While proponents of telemarketing admit that a door-to-door sales force may be preferable in some instances, the sheer volume of calls that can be made and the cost-effectiveness of these calls has justified its increased use in business: it is the quintessential growth industry.

Its scope?

Toll free 800 lets you buy products from the T.V. in your home. For a nominal fee, 900 numbers give you a romance or joke, or buy your participation into the new consumer democracy by letting you vote for the movie of an evening or a favorite song. The WATTS line, which facilitates the distribution of products from Hallmark, the social expression company, to Gulf Oil across vast distances, is used because it allows business to make any number of calls at a fixed rate. Customer communications integrated with total marketing systems. Total marketing systems which can be combined with other visual mediums, entering every aspect of life behind the facade of benevolence and dialogue, blurring the distinction between the inside and the outside, the public and the private, calling into question yet reaffirming the sacred domain of the home and the ideology of the nuclear family.

Paradigmatic of this collapse and this paradox is General Electric's "pioneering" use of telemarketing, The GE Answer Centre. Architecturally, the Answer Centre is built as a simulation of a home - the domestic scene in which their products are found. On every product is a toll-free 1-800 number which puts you,

the consumer, into direct and immediate contact with around the clock customer service representatives and technical experts who can solve all your appliance problems.

At the head of the GE Answer Centre: Powell Taylor. He is daddy, his employees his family. He is the perfect father.

Handsome in a masculine way. Immaculately groomed, an authority figure. Steeped in wisdom and GE experience. Respected, but not feared. Powell Taylor leads not with an iron fist but with gentle reins. He gives authority to each consumer consultant; he counsels them as necessary. Powell Taylor is the head of a mature family in every way. (p. 22, ST)

The author of our text adds that if he were to choose someone to play Powell Taylor it would be Lorne Greene (Ben Cartwright).

His children?

Powell Taylor does not lead an army of robots, but a team, a family of carefully selected and carefully trained, caring individuals. They celebrate birthdays, share complimentary letters. The family spirit carries right to the work station, they proudly proclaim.

Powell Taylor pointed to the people of Disney World - young, clean cut, squeaky clean, outgoing - as the model the company decided to follow in building the GE Centre staff. (Successful Telemarketing)

Their slogan? GE is ME: the illusion of their own individuality, their identity as human subjects once again recreated in the most crass of corporate philosophies. It is the perfect merger between the particular and a universal corporate will.



What do you think you can see in a photo like that - and a couple of notes: a name, a date. They all seem so much the same. You know I could tell you something real. But I can't tell you here, and I can't tell you right now. You'll have to call me. I'm at (416) 979-7493.



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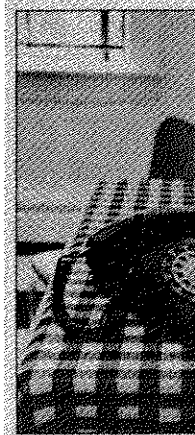
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*...not that you're the...
but I'm just not used to...*



GE: the perfect...
tion in the era...
where business...
for its models of...

Loss of memory,
aphasia.

Populations groo...
semble an (un)-...
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—not that you're the first one to call,
but I'm just not used to doing this kind of thing.



A political economy of penetration, of violation.

In Canada, telemarketing is still a relatively small and undeveloped practice, appearing in *The Canadian Business Abstracts* only in 1977, and then under the cumbersome term 'telephone marketing'. However, in the United States, telemarketing centres do not simply provide customer services, but assist in the penetration, reproduction and maintenance of markets within markets. With the

know who their potential customers are within this 80%?

They know by developing customer profiles: and they follow this sound principle: our best prospects are those with profiles that are the same or similar to those of our best customers.

These sections of the consumer populus can then be targeted with the appropriate product.

A triple need.

First, to rationalize an inefficient exchange that was not cost effective for corporations. Second, the need to develop the corresponding consumer data bases to determine where future markets might be and what products could be manufactured. Third, and perhaps most importantly, the need to pacify and appeal to today's sceptical, cynical consumer because "bigness and remoteness have melted down one on one communication" (p. xi, ST). We will return to this point.

Telemarketing is also an integral part of capital's attempt to cope with dramatic social changes which have affected the business environment: new lifestyles, such as an increase in single family households; an increase in the number of women in the workforce (women who in the past had more time to devote to consumption outside of the home because of their confinement within it); shortages of capital; higher interest rates; etc. These are reasons that the industry gives to legitimise and sell telemarketing to other businesses. But as well, there is the need for more flexibility and direct marketing techniques appropriate to today's nomadic and rapidly changing population; techniques that overcome distance, space, remoteness, linking home and business by the electrical nerve impulses of the telephone wire. The telemarketing industry has managed to combine the languages of modern business/public administration, with the techniques of behavioural psychology, computer science, and perhaps unconsciously, psychotherapy. Finally, telemarketing is employed to fulfill marketing requirements, and to give capitalism some good press, by improving the tarnished image of business as faceless, uncaring, impersonal and bureaucratic.



I was getting kind of anxious.

I guess I don't always feel in control.

GE: the perfect multinational corporation in the era of Reagan's America, where business looks to Disney World for its models of future recruits.

Loss of memory, loss of speech, cultural aphasia.

Populations groom themselves to resemble an (un)-reality which itself represents an image of the past, a happy family that never was, a present that doesn't exist, and a terrifying future motored by these illusions. We are witnessing the creation of new social spaces and new social subjects to fit into these social spaces. There is a need for more detailed critical analysis of the politics of these spaces, which are a history of the operation of micro-technologies of power. From geo-politics to architecture, design, fashion, and telemarketing, it is, as Foucault says, a power which functions most effectively when most banal, most ubiquitously and most insidiously when most friendly and caring.

elimination of face-to-face contact, the movement and dependence on actual bodies decreases costs, allowing for the speedy exploration of new consumer territories. It is a new form of imperialism, social imperialism, which does not expand outward into uncertain, risky terrain, but penetrates inwards to conquer already existing potential markets within technologically sophisticated industrialised nations.

Capital's implosion; that is, the overlapping of a therapeutic discourse, with the corporate scene, the ideology of the family, and our own domestic, regional space.

And with this collapse, its most cherished rhetoric, the rhetoric of equality and participation, is sacrificed, stripped. Its admission: "not all customers are created equal"; that is, as a general marketing rule, 20% of all one's customers supply 80% of one's business (p. 101, ST). The challenge? Not only to find new customers, but to deepen the desires of that dormant 80% of your already existing customers. How do smart marketers

The trick?

To create the image of personality warmth and caring without appearing to seduce the consumer or create needs, for this would conflict with the ideology of supply and demand economics. To give you, the consumer, the appearance of direct control, the telephone, telemarketing, makes present an absence of intimacy through the immediacy of the sound of the voice. It is a system of phonetic writing that in its most sophisticated form "fulfills the thirst for personal attention and solves the cost problem as well." As *Successful Telemarketing* promises:

with documented case histories, you will learn how even a far away, faceless corporation can be given a friendly face. A heart. A soul. A voice.

The telephone's domestic appearance erases its complicity in the development of market spaces in our century. The telephone, and now the computer, allow transactions to be conducted with speed, speed which is integral to productivity. Telephones have even shaped the architecture of cities: we would not have skyscrapers without telephones, for the telephone not only made possible the colonization of horizontal space, but made vertical movements possible. In spite of this collusion, the telephone maintains an image of benevolence. This benevolence stems less from its origins as Alexander Graham Bell's "pleasure instrument," Canada, a country where transportation and industry are federal industries, we have a provincial rather than a national telephone system.

Our domestic space.

Like other technologies, the use of the phone and the voice to overcome the problem of distance and space is a paradoxical one within the Canadian context. As Arthur Kroker writes:

Technology is both centre and margin in Canada - centre (metropolitan domination) and margin (technological dependency as the locus of Canadian identity) in the Canadian imagination. (p. 101, IMG)

While it is clear that telemarketing is an operation emanating from the centre of finance capital in Canada, its logocentrism and our metropolitan domination is disguised because of the dislocation of speech from the body.

Hindered only by time zones, the voice moves from the east coast to the west coast in the course of an evening. Within the space of five hours, the successful Canadian telemarketer travels across the country oblivious to boundaries and geographical impediments.

The successful Canadian telemarketer adapts herself, erases her own subjectivity and history, becomes a phony when using the phone, adopting different accents, styles, and inflections to appeal to faceless names in different regions; subjects themselves reborn on a computer card at the moment of their death as a subscriber to your product. The successful Canadian telemarketer, pioneer, voyageur, need not be a squeaky clean youth, like our southern counterparts. In our domestic scene it is less important to manipulate the basic caller personality, than to place this imaginary body, this voice within the nexus of region/product/personality.

My telemarketing employer contracted its services out to large American multinational corporations to help them "do business" in Canada - the section I worked for, renewed magazine subscriptions; so, for example, while selling *Country Guide* magazine, a magazine for farmers with only regional appeal, one was given explicit directions for matching the voice to the product: wait for the phone to ring longer than usual, talk slowly, be friendly and more personal. Or when selling *Sports Illustrated*, assumed to have "universal appeal," at least for one sex, it was advisable to change your name to a sportier model, perhaps Ricki, or Vicki. Sound like you play volleyball on the weekends, and do aerobics in the evening; help them to fill in the blank spaces with their imaginary image of your body. Your cardinal rule: match voice to product, and never admit that you are a telemarketer - you do not work for a big impersonal telemarketing firm, but you are a representative for *Time* magazine, the *Financial Post*, or *Country Guide*; and never admit that you are calling from Toronto when phoning outside of Toronto, unless they can be intimidated or suitably impressed. It is a curious and painful dynamic between technology and culture, economy and landscape, one whose frictions leave their scars on your body, caught as you are between these tensions.

You are left with the contradictions of your job, as Canadian, as gendered Canadian subject. While you may hide your race, your ethnicity, appear to move out of your social class, perhaps by feigning a British accent which still carries weight in this country, the timbre of your voice makes it very difficult to disguise your gender. You will be identified and reinscribed as woman, marginally employed, underpaid in banks, in restaurants, in childcare centres, in telemarketing: manifold displacements upon displacements.

As woman you are uncomfortably aware that you occupy these doubly duplicitous positions. You find yourself playing traditional feminine roles: solicitous, sexy, nurturing ear. You sell, you defend products that you know have little relation to those lives you connect with; yet to sell and make your quota you feign sincerity. You sell-out your gender by promoting the swimsuit issue of *Sports Illustrated*; you betray other women through your complicity with phallogocentric ideology. Finally, you partake in the penetration of Canada by American consumerism, and the regions of Canada by the centre.

And while your disembodied voice pays lip service to the regional character of the country, in true postmodern fashion it is always a regionalism that operates on the surface. Everything, subject, product, difference is acknowledged but dehistoricized, deterritorialized, flattened, as the signs of these differences are played out. And as speech is dislocated from the body, the body is displaced further from actual market spaces, a further abstraction in the movement of capital and the market from the realm of use value to abstract exchange value. This movement is itself inscribed in the etymological tropes of the word market.

Mark: on the one hand, mark, a tract of land held in common by Teutonic or medieval communities, or mark signifying a boundary; on the other hand, mark as a target or object to be aimed at, desired object; mark, as a sign indication of something which is absent; mark as a written symbol indicating quality, as in exclamation mark; a unit of numerical reward; line indicating position; finally, mark, as a denomination of weight for gold or silver. In other words, movement from a located sensibility, a gathering of bodies within a given definable space for the buying and selling of provisions, to the marketing of goods, with no need to regard space and boundaries; the belief in the transcendence of space by the phone and the usurpation of the indeterminacy, the uncertainty of the letter, by the phone is one such micro-technology of power within the bureaucratic whole.

The final absurdity of my own telemarketing tale came with the realization that I was selling magazine subscriptions because of the necessity for these companies to maintain a steady volume of distribution to attract advertising revenue. In capital's most cynical moment, the product itself becomes irrelevant; and you become

equally cynical as your complicity involved at do not share an alternative pseudonyms appropriate to the region, know back. As you read a carefully worked sponse to possible tions, these lines hysteria increases

A new language is coded idioms, need speed up your dial language of drugs nerves, calm your dicted to the possi sale, a single con wears on and you a quota: c.c's, compl home; n.i., not in answer; d.a., dead dead on answering your ruse of sympathy the answer of the target cannot rene because he is dead your efficient, con pleasantly professi quickly try to recal personally, as you script. You are em sound of the bereav



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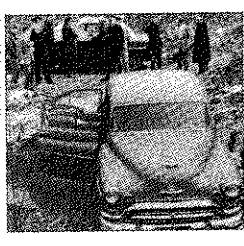


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equally cynical as you realize the duplicity involved at all these levels. You do not share an allegiance to the product, to the company. You use pseudonyms appropriate to the product, the region, knowing they cannot call back. As you read your script which is a carefully worked out set of coded responses to possible consumer objections, these lines become internalized; your schizophrenia, your hysteria increases with each call.

A new language is born, a series of coded idioms, neologisms to help speed up your dialing. You employ the language of drugs to soothe your nerves, calm your frenzy. You are addicted to the possibility of a single sale, a single connection as the night wears on and you are no closer to your quota: c.c's, completed calls; n.a., not at home; n.i., not interested; d.a., didn't answer; d.a., dead answer; d.o.a., dead on answering. Your shock when your ruse of sympathy is revealed by the answer of the other that your target cannot renew his subscription because he is dead. A shroud smothers your efficient, confident, cheerful, pleasantly professional voice, as you quickly try to recall your basic caller personalities, as you flip through your script. You are embarrassed at the sound of the bereaved, you are

embarrassed for her emotion, and by the momentary intimacy that you are sharing with this stranger on a computer card. You need your quota. You hastily apologize, no sale possible, you hang up. Disconnect, before this encounter affects your ability to make future calls; and deny this moment of countertransference, for it may affect future performances.

It is the anonymity provided by the phone that allows you to make all of these connections in one evening, and which, to some extent, overcomes some of the initial prejudices that accompany the sight of differences in the body. Telemarketing is a contemporary instance of the interplay between speech and writing, and of our belief in the presence and precision of speech and verbal communication over the indeterminacy of the post and the written word. The phone gives you three to five minutes of the undivided attention of the other which you must use expeditiously: make your sale, disguise your intention, for telemarketing - aural sex - is capitalism's ultimate talking cure.

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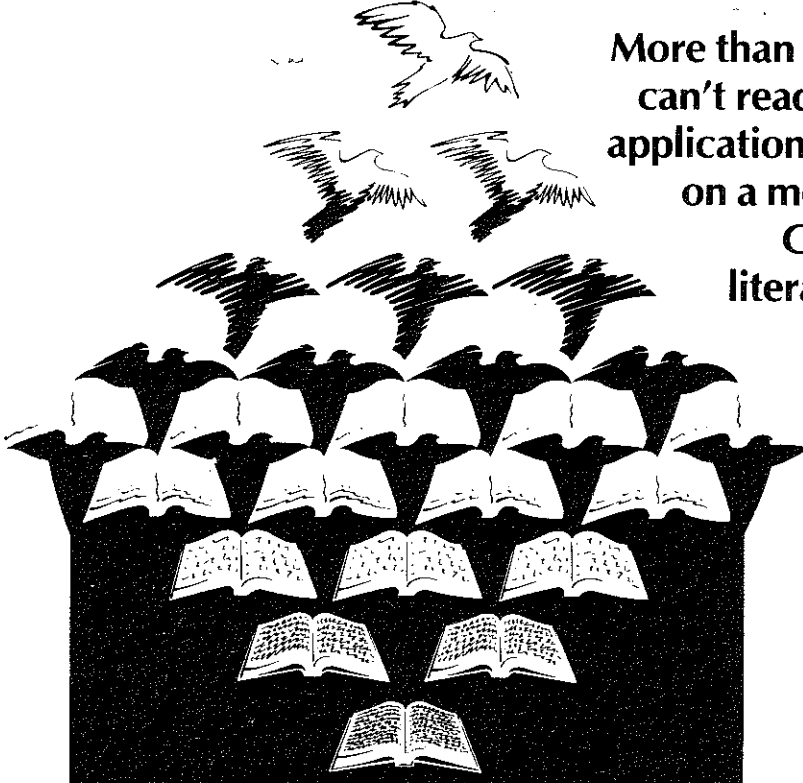
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THE CARNIVAL IS OVER

Sadanand Menon

*Colonial rule siphoned off not just our
raw materials and surplus;
it also laid its hands on our
cultural wealth.*

Third world culture is rarely seen by us in its own terms. If seen at all, it is generally as an adjunct of our own preoccupations. This article, dealing with the politics of culture in India was originally published in the *Indian Express*. The supplementary footnotes are by Manup Bannerji.

In our epoch the State appropriates culture only to make a barrier out of it. In December, barely two weeks since an admitted Rs 7 crore¹ were blown on a cultural carnival advertised as the wonder glue to stick together our national consciousness, the capital was back to the comfortable savagery of its *mohalla maidans*,

the macho gangsterism of its *madhya maidans* and the cynical power brokerage of its *mukhya maidans*.²

Despite the fancy terminology, we knew we had been had. Apna Utsav remained an exercise in transmitting "given" culture - a culture with all its violence and injustice and inequality - that perpetuated deeply felt national differences. It could not have been otherwise. They are naive who will not understand that culture too is

part of the repressive apparatus of the potentially absolutist State and can be invoked at will, in a multi-national, multi-ethnic society like ours, as an instrument to keep people divided and distracted.

The realm of culture has constituted a special battlefield in post-colonial India. Colonial rule siphoned off not just our raw materials and surplus, generated and accumulated over centuries of development; it also laid its hands on our cultural wealth - the authentic modes of living, reproducing, relationing and transmitting. What it essentially eroded was "identity", insidiously supplanting it with a "counterfeit identity." Like robbing food of its natural taste to irradiate it with synthetic flavours. The new State that emerged with decolonization inherited a strange cultural amnesia. It had alienated itself from its sources and so could no longer trust peoples' creativity. This was one of the reasons why it quickly arrogated to itself the task of "reculturing" Indians according to its own requirements.

The early attempts were, no doubt, tentative though clear in their intention. Increasingly the Indian State, composed of special institutions far removed from the public realm - the Akademis and Parishads and Councils, not to speak of official media - took over the production of the

vital "ritual value" where, earlier, it was the function of the ensemble of social processes. It is worth reflecting why, in a society so rich in peoples' festivals, the only festive contribution the government has been able to make is the Republic Day parade. And yet, the State does not hesitate to posture as if all positive cultural manifestations in India are a direct consequence of its own beneficence. It has only generated a spurious set of premises of bogus cultural nationalism which are, in reality, anti-people and conspire to discredit healthy cultural diversity in favour of a uniform and conformist mode of being.

Even 40 years after Independence, the Indian elite class is still on the path of self-discovery, gushing over the latest and still are, a culturally versatile society. But a State that is fast on the way to centralizing all ideas and institutions and symbols of power, cannot tolerate the notion of communities having the freedom to generate their own specific cultures. It is an area of autonomy that can prove a dangerous impediment to their design for total control.

This explains the concerted attack on culture from the Indian State today. Until now the attack was on peoples' livelihood and on their fundamental rights. Now the attack is on their dignity itself. Until now the State

only plundered peoples' privacy and foot is to plundering sphere of autonomy.

Ideologically, the emphasis at the base of production - from the profoundly disturbed to the related shift in from the realm of access to the theatre conflicts and power

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Photomontage: Brian Scott

only plundered peoples' hearths and homes and privacy. The move now afoot is to plunder their last remaining sphere of autonomy - their culture.

Ideologically, the new shift in emphasis at the base of artistic/cultural production - from ritual to politics - is profoundly disturbing. It indicates the related shift in cultural concepts from the realm of integrative processes to the theatre of disjunctive conflicts and power equations.

All early forms of artistic and cultural expression in India were clearly rooted in social and work processes and were an attempt to integrate human beings with nature. Ritual was the mediatory mode whose pristine function was to humanize nature. To that extent cultural expression was an organic and authentic communal wealth. But when this cultural autonomy is abdicated in favour of the State, the criterion of authenticity ceases to be applicable. Culture now stands opposed to people.

There also seems to be a vigorous attempt in official concepts to separate culture from the totality of life and reduce it to an artifact. This is typical. From artifact to archetype is but a short step and standardization is the magic formula of social harmony that the authoritarian State conceives.

This conception also reduces culture to a commodity, a plaything of market forces and consumer caprice, delinked from life as lived and experienced and organised in the multiplicity of social exchange. It inevitably generates the syndrome of cultural warehousing - a stockpiling of cultural resources and products (divorced from their processes) on the shelves of privileged and exclusive godowns, to be bought at leisure, as from a department store, by men of means.

For the ruling elite in India, cultural monopoly has become as important a task as capital monopoly. Culture, which is essentially in flux and always in-the-making, is being suddenly deep frozen and hoarded as avariciously as property. On the other hand, for the vast majority of the dispossessed victims of the era of colonialism, and of "freedom", culture remains an additional front on which the struggle has to continue. For them the evidence of any past existence of cultural riches only confirms the present oppression of the system. The evidence of the past glory of an Aryan or Dravidian civilization does nothing much to appease the hunger of the Bihari or Tamil peasant today.

The conceptual implications of the emerging "culturalism" in Indian politics are devastating. On the one hand are naked formulations like *Dilli mein desh ka pravesh* (as the inaugural style of Apna Utsav was styled), which doesn't even attempt to mask the underlying ideological thrust for centralising culture at the power centre. At the same time, the *thekedars* of the new "culturalism," who constitute an illegitimate, extra-constitutional locus of power without any accountability to a democratic base, have also not been shy to proclaim how they conceptualize culture.³

Critics are sternly warned, in mock Gandhian terms, not to write "gutter inspector" reports. But this is only an admittance to the existence and proliferation of gutters into which vast amounts of public funds are being drained. Their most alarming pontification has been: "Culture is an arm of diplomacy and politics." Now, this is just too dangerous and it is surprising such an admission of chicanery has gone by unchallenged.

An arm of politics indeed! It is as crude as saying culture is an instrument for waging war. But that would be admitting a fact. All this new cultural smoke for India is undeniably a screen for robust war-mongering. It is also not a coincidence that all State-

Local festivals denote the repressed side of society's consciousness, a side which returns with fixed regularity to haunt established culture with all it does not wish to acknowledge about itself.

Even the concept paper of Apna Utsav was an object lesson in terminological aggression. The laboured clichés of its being a "participatory" event were so patently a mask to disguise aggressive formulae of the coterie that cooked up the scheme. "Culture in the service of the party", they would have liked to proclaim it in true fascist style, but had to cloak it in syrupy jargon. They ended up devising ludicrous terms like *bharat milan*, *manthan (Dilli se desh tak)*, *goonjte patihar*, *bhanwara*, *jeevan chakra*, *kavya bagh*, *nriya bagh*, etc. which only generated laughter. In their burden to sound "desi" and authentic, they can really go to insulting lengths.⁴

For the dispensation that believes in giving people, not their right, but a chance to express themselves, spontaneity has to be countered with public choreography. Gigantic exhibitions, carnivals, urban planning and mass calisthenics regulated centrally become the modes through which a powerless population is allowed to applaud a social order that keeps them as sub-humans.

There is one contradiction in all this that we need to scrutinize. The inaugurations of the India Festivals in France and the United States were "designed" and "exhibited" as *melas*.⁵ The inaugural of the India Festival in Moscow this year is being designed as an *utsav*.⁶ The absurdly labelled "National Cultural Festival" also lifted this concept and called itself Apna Utsav. Now, *utsavs* and *melas* are not uncommon to us and are a periodic feature of Indian community life from micro to macro levels. Despite this, one has yet to hear of any local *utsav* that was a "failure". The notion itself is anachronistic. Yet Apna Utsav has gone down as a resounding failure. It is imperative to understand why.

Utsavs, *melas* and *poorams*, apart from being linked to cycles of economic production and distribution as well as seasonal and ritual demands, perform a few larger functions.⁷ They provide a specific ambience for amusement and entertainment. They help break the monotony of daily routine and work, and create a counterpoint to a life of travail. And, more importantly, they introduce into the given, fixed world of conditioned normality the experience of negativity and otherness.

This negativity is a powerful social mechanism as it helps to pose before society, positively, the image of its own underside as well as creative potential. The traditional *utsavs* and *melas* integrate into them the entire residual flakes of the culture which normally would not fit in elsewhere. Being peoples' celebrations, these constitute the meeting-place of types not easily socialised - mendicants and quacks, soothsayers and con men, acrobats and wrestlers, snake charmers and dealers in aphrodisiacs, prostitutes and performers, craftsmen and balladeers - a talented, floating, quasi-criminal, marginalized population of the social fringes, even the acceptance of whose existence is embarrassing for the elite.

Conversely, for the middle-class moral rules of behaviour in the realm of the seasonal. *Melas* and *poorams* repressed side of society, a side which with fixed regularity to haunt established culture with all it does not wish to acknowledge about itself.

But what we are witnessing is the carnivalisation of the American sense. The India Festival varied State sponsored carnival disavowal of all liberal experience. At their a rigid, controlled confrontation with the open-ended conditional experience. mental scrutiny and authoritarian prudish creative side of the flattened out and areas of duality are offered to the population for consumption which provides the glimpse of liberation instead, only increment. These government inevitably reproduce exploitative attitude culture to an extent, no longer negotiation.

This is one reason "failures". Luckily memory of the large people still retains authentic. But they to last. The rapidity the State's *blitzkrieg* mobilized financial Rs 100 crore for 1987 bound to litter our the debris of what edifice of peoples' their spontaneous national ordering.

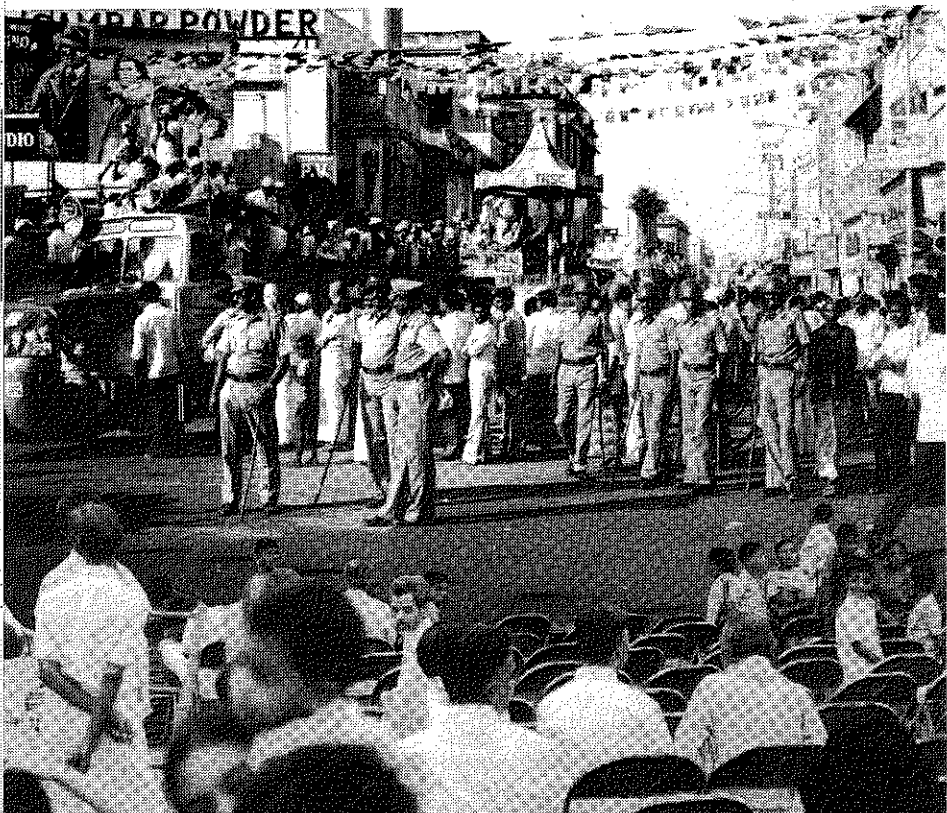
The area of peoples' and multi-layered is probably the last autonomy left to them with their dehuman of life. By infiltrating appropriating this narrow and immediate State and the political process that could the culturally imposed a political monster culture and its cosmogony the grim sign of the gangrene it seeks to

Besides, the very opening of the "Concept Guideline" for the Utsav is unmatched for its pomposity: "An unprecedented cultural event is being planned for the people of Delhi, which may well provide the crucial direction required in the nation's ongoing task of rediscovering and nurturing its heritage." They don't even wait these days for being complimented, but even conceptualise in self-congratulatory terms. Neither can one afford to overlook the "we-know-what-is-good-for-you" tone. They never say "let's have a discussion on

this"; they just say, "The following is the excellent thing we are going to do for you, and you better accept it."

History has shown therefore that aggrandizement is the logical culmination of efforts to render politics aesthetic. It is the ultimate in population manipulation on a mass scale. The military parade and the political pageant (and Apna Utsav was certainly one) disguised as a cultural event are obverse sides of the same coin. Their urgent and fatal fascist appeal has repeated itself enough times around the world in the last 50 years for us to ignore it when it sprouts in our own backyard.

orchestrated cultural extravaganzas are taking on the aggressive spectacularism of war. No one has yet told us the full story of the massive arms deals carried out under the benign cover of the Festival of India in Britain, the United States and France and the still more massive arms deal linked with the impending Festival of India in Russia this year. Neither has anyone told us about the covert militarization of Delhi under the pretext of providing a security net for Apna Utsav. The artists have returned, but the soldiers stay on.



¹ Roughly \$10 million in funds.

Conversely, for those not shackled by middle-class morality, these are occasions for the suspension of ordinary rules of behaviour and an entry into the realm of the sexual and the irrational. *Melas* and *utsavs* denote the repressed side of society's consciousness, a side which returns with fixed regularity to haunt established culture with all it does not wish to acknowledge about itself.

But what we are witnessing now is the carnivalisation of the *utsav* in an American sense. The Apna Utsav and India Festival variety of politicized, State sponsored carnivals are an open disavowal of all liberating areas of experience. At their core they represent a rigid, controlled and embarrassed confrontation with otherness, unlike the open-ended character of traditional experience. Under governmental scrutiny and motivated by authoritarian prudery, the anarchic, creative side of the peoples' festival is flattened out and sanitized, and all areas of duality are standardized. It is offered to the population as a pure avenue for consumption and voyeurism, which provides them no flashing glimpse of liberating deviance but, instead, only increases their passivity. These governmental *utsavs* inevitably reproduce the existing exploitative attitudes of the dominant culture to an extent that they represent, no longer negativity, but cooptation.

This is one reason why they end up as "failures". Luckily for us, the cultural memory of the large majority of our people still retains images of what is authentic. But they cannot be expected to last. The rapidity and the scale of the State's *blitzkrieg* with freshly mobilized financial resources (over Rs 100 crore for 1987 alone) are bound to litter our cultural arena with the debris of what was once the living edifice of peoples' innate wisdom and their spontaneous resistance to external ordering.

The area of peoples' expression, so vast and multi-layered in Indian society, is probably the last vestige of creative autonomy left to the people to cope with their dehumanizing conditions of life. By infiltrating and appropriating this charged preserve for narrow and immediate gains, the State and the political apparatus is bound to trigger off a brutalizing process that could eventually convert the culturally impoverished State into a political monster. The plunder of culture and its cosmetic use is always the grim sign of the political gangrene it seeks to hide.

1 Roughly \$10 million in Canadian funds.

2 It is amazing how blatantly the organizers of Apna Utsav (Our Own Festivals) created a hierarchical space where they bred jealousy, distrust and aggressive competitiveness among the participants through the concoction of a three-tiered performing arena: mohalla maidans (peripheral or local), madhya Maidans (central), and mukhya maidans (principal). Who would decide who performs where? How would one decide whether the folk art of one state is better than another state? With so much money and fanfare involved, one immediately realizes how insecure, threatened, humiliated or disgraced the participants must have felt. If a group is put on a peripheral (or lower) stage, it immediately wrecks the group's honour and prestige with all its future plans and works. It is like the mark of death if you are not allowed to perform on the principal stage. However naive they were at first to get roped into it, their dislocation is complete with all the disastrous hang-ups growing from it.

3 Dilli mein desh ka prawesh. The country enters the capital, Delhi. Thekadors, or agents for contractors, came up with this slogan, perhaps unknowingly, that the country had always been absent in the capital, even with the existence of Bhavans, or state houses.

4 Bharat milan. union of Indians/ Indian states.
Manthan. upheaval (or churning - as the legend says).
Dilli se desh tak. from Delhi to the whole of India.
The remaining terms refer to (in order): singing stones, song and dance, the wheel of life, the garden of poetry and the garden of rhymes. All of these slogans express the packaging of art and culture and the dislocation of the arts from their socio-economic ties and environment - as if one cannot have cultural expressions anywhere else except in these clogged and controlled spaces.

Luckily for us, the cultural memory of the large majority of our people still retains images of what is authentic. But this cannot be expected to last.



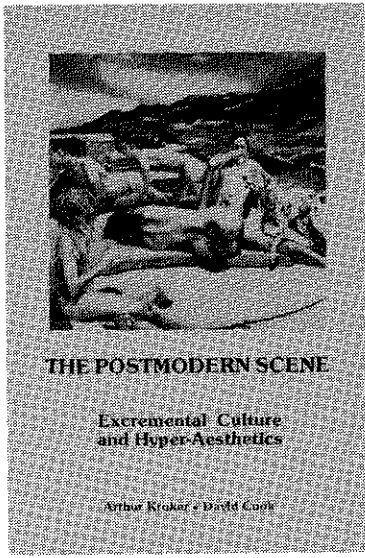
5 Carnival.

6 Festival.

7 Pooram. Fun fest.

Sadanand Menon is a journalist living in New Delhi. "The Carnival is Over" is reprinted with kind permission of the author, from the Indian Express, February 15, 1987.

Manup Bannerji is a writer and teacher living in Calcutta.



Arthur Kroker and David Cook. *The Postmodern Scene: Excremental Culture and Hyper-Aesthetics*. New World Perspective. Montreal, 1986.

REVIEWS

Postmodernism is the current intellectual commodity for sale and it's being flogged shamelessly by cultural critics and university professors. The term "postmodern" is without a doubt the fashionable catchword of the year, but it is also deceptive and confusing. Given the myriad meanings associated with postmodernism, it is best to start by making a distinction between a postmodernist theory, which concerns itself with knowledge, and a postmodernist condition, which deals more generally with the malaise of contemporary culture. The distinction is especially useful since one of the faults of Kroker and Cook's surly and maddening book is the failure to make even this relatively simple idea clear.

Critics of contemporary mass culture often speak plaintively of a postmodern condition. One does not need a great deal of insight to deduce that the increasing power and pervasiveness of the communication industry has created a mass culture that is capable of absorbing all political opposition as well as destroying unique cultural diversities. Whether we like it or not, the values of a consumer society permeate all of our cognitive abilities. Not only have we been seduced by our media images but, according to Jean Baudrillard, we have become fascinated with the media's references to human creation as an endless mirroring pro-

cess. Ours has become the information culture of the simulacrum, the simulated world of signs, in which the real has been replaced by the words and images which refer to it.

According to postmodernist theory, we are imprisoned in the "mirror of culture". Power in contemporary society lies in knowledge and language. So it comes as no surprise that the chief task of a postmodernist inquiry is to undermine the authority of signs and to which legitimates certain cultural representations while prohibiting and disavowing others. The aim is to scrutinize a wide range of privileged modes of knowing which carry a canonical authority, such as the "perspective" of a camera angle, the "discipline" of literary study, or the "reading" of a work. The most powerful weapons in the arsenal of postmodernist critique and art are the transformative tropes of parody, irony, puns, paradox, the visual techniques of collage and *trompe l'oeil*, and numerous other strategies of disorientation which by their very reflexive nature force an evaluation rather than the passive consumption of communication codes.

The Postmodern Scene draws generously from the ideas and strategies outlined above. It is a book which tries to say something, however opaquely and confusingly, about the deployment of power within postmodern culture. And accordingly, the work of the New French Thought theorists, as well as that of McLuhan and the Critical Theorists, is used to discuss both the hollowness of contemporary culture, and its reality effect (the flow of "dead" signifiers with which culture maintains its fictional images). The book is a collection of different articles, some of them written by Arthur Kroker, others by David Cook. Not surprisingly, many of these pieces were first published in the *Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory*, of which Kroker is the editor. Taken as a whole the book lacks organization and coherence. What we have instead is something akin to literary montage, a series of disorderly, in places incoherent and at times also daunting, examinations of the cracks in the mirror of postmodern culture.

If the fragmentation technique of *The Postmodern Scene* owes something to Dada and McLuhan, the mood of the book comes from *The Day of the Locust*: despairing and unappealingly bleak. In the opening section, "Sunshine Reports," the authors make a number of proclamations about the postmodern condition. The essential idea, I think, is that a society of overabundance and excess such as ours inevitably generates an "excremental" culture, a term which is never adequately defined but which is perhaps ultimately self-explanatory. Postmodern culture is excremental in the sense that it is constantly involved in an endless process of cancellation, liquidation and reversal of meaning. Quality becomes quantity. The distinction between art and life is obliterated. Art loses its critical edge and its ability to comment on life, while ordinary life becomes an aestheticized scene, a *tableau vivant* in the service of consumer capitalism.

Postmodern culture also privileges those representations which can operate as exchange values, such as desire, seduction, and sexuality. These are the chief values of a consumer society and, predictably, they are regulated as socially exchanged commodities which participate in the pure representation of economic power. Yet underlying these values one can also detect the resonance of catastrophe, destruction, and nihilism. Perhaps the contemporary critic Neil Postman, in more accessible language, best described the conundrum of living in an excremental culture when he stated that we are "amusing ourselves to death."

From the jeremiad of "Sunshine Reports" we move to a section called "Sign Crimes," which deals first with a brief and curious examination of the Italian surrealist painter Giorgio de Chirico, followed by an even stranger and longer chapter on St. Augustine. De Chirico's work and especially one of his more popular paintings, *Landscape Painter*, challenges the privileged distinction made by representational art between the sign and the referent. Realism fraudulently claimed that any external representation must be reproduced mimetically. De Chirico's painting defies the referential finality of signs. While the country landscape is accurately

trapped on canvas, the painter who apparently created the scene is a geometrical mannequin. By refusing to impose a conventional order on experience, de Chirico denies the reality principle of culture its "referential illusion."

The argument quickly turns bizarre with the excursus on St. Augustine, whom Arthur Kroker calls "the Columbus of modern experience" and "the first postmodernist theorist," as he was one of the first thinkers to carry out a metaphysical critique of representation. Much is made in this and subsequent chapters of the importance of Canadian philosopher Charles Norris Cochrane, who is credited as having understood Augustine as the theoretician of power. This theorist is more interesting for what Kroker has to say about Cochrane than it is for what he has to say about Augustine. Those who are interested in Augustine should either read Cochrane, or better still, Kenneth Burke, who manages to say decidedly more, and with much more clarity.

At this point it may be necessary to quote at length from *The Postmodern Scene* in order to demonstrate not only the inelegant style that characterizes the book but also the conflated discourse which is at times well-nigh impossible to decipher:

"Baudrillard's insight into the 'semiotic cancellation' at work in the simulacrum echoes Augustine's earlier, philological reduction of the sign system of the trinity (father/memory as signifier; son/intelligence as signified; and voluntas/will as the perspectival closing of the tautology) to a 'sound which is made by no language.' Baudrillard's 'semiological reduction' is nothing more than Augustine's insight that, in the mirror of the trinity, signifier and signified circle back towards one another as refracted and (simulated images) in a common tautology." (p.129)

This quote serves as a very good example of the type of rhetorical strategy which is at work throughout the text: the bringing together of two unrelated thoughts and traditions with the sensation, but not the sense, of their connection. In collapsing together Baudrillard and Augustine we have a simultaneous thwarting and accelera-

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I think that central to Kroker's and Cook's argument is the notion of the "cancellation of the real" and the social construction of a "dead sign" which postmodern culture increasingly and effectively achieves. A dead sign can be described as a signifier cut off from any historical referent. Thus unmoored the signifier implodes; it collapses into itself by becoming a tautology. One can, for instance, walk into a shopping mall and find a simulated street scene with quaint shop facades, old fashioned lamp posts and telephone booths, and stone paved streets. The scene is obviously rigged to impose on us a sensation that we are walking in a real city street, yet the signs that create the scene refer to their own surface gloss. In the shopping mall example, ordinary perception and reality come asunder and are skillfully managed as a symbolic organization, part of what the authors would call "relational power": the hyperreal and artificial social world in which all reality is liquidated.

The optical illusions that postmodern culture creates oscillate between the outer eye which registers and the inner eye which controls. A good figure for reflecting on this condition can be found, according to Arthur Kroker, in Rene Magritte's painting *False Mirror*, which shows an empty iris surrounded by the reflection of clouds. Magritte's eye represents "the terrorism of the world as a pure sign system [which] works at the symbolic level: a ceaseless and internal envelopment of its 'subject' in a pure symbolic domination" (p.83). Indeed, the next two sections of the book ("Sliding signifiers" and "Postmodernism and The Death of the Social") explore in more detail the dynamics of power in postmodernist society. Here the work of Foucault, Nietzsche, Barthes, Baudrillard and, interestingly enough, Talcott Parson is used to stress the point that power in postmodern culture asserts itself as an endless process of symbolization.

In the concluding section, "Ultramodernism," the authors' attention shifts to our new *fin de siecle* and its new signs of decadence, excess and

catastrophism as a way of life. Francesca Woodman's photographs, and Alex Colville's paintings are deemed by Kroker and Cook in many ways to exemplify the mood of impending disaster which is our lot. Like Alex Colville, Edward Hopper is an artist of hyperrealism. Hopper always tries to situate the viewer in the position of voyeur. His paintings are full of windows (*trompe l'oeil*) that give the viewer a glimpse into the outside world of a receding nature and an advancing urban sprawl. Hopper's paintings find continuity in the current work of the young neo-expressionist Eric Fischel. Once again, the viewer as voyeur takes on a privileged position as we are brought to the psychological edge of the postmodern condition. This is the parasitic culture which feeds on scenes of excess and disaster, as is evident in Fischel's depictions of desire without any apparent referent, seduction without love, and fatherly love bordering on incest. This is, so it is claimed, the psychological space of the postmodern condition: the unsettled discourse of a culture which has reached contentment with nihilism.

This book, for all its rhetorical excesses and sketchy and impressionistic formulations, is at times capable of a serious analysis of the abyss of modern subjectivity and culture. There are indeed several chapters which merit a close reading. Also, the author's reliance on the strikingly creative work of Georges Bataille provides the book with much of its provocative edge and some of its best metaphors. But throughout it all one must remember that we are dealing with a mode of thinking which is interested neither in the institutional nor the historical nature of social individuals who pursue and develop their daily interests; what it examines is "the liquidation of the real," based on a lame theory of language that is so all-embracing as to be virtually meaningless as an analytic construct. All social life involves some form of influence, molding, direction or compulsion, but the reduction of social relationships to the issue of language and power renders it almost impossible to make the fine intellectual, moral, and material distinctions necessary for any serious evaluation of change in society, or to hope for future action. It is no

wonder then that *The Postmodern Scene* is drained of any political content and lacks any sense of direction. The book holds out no hope, only fashionable nihilistic grief. It also displays a certain glib shrewdness in place of considered judgement.

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Tania Modleski, ed. ***Studies in Entertainment: Critical Approaches to Mass Culture***. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986.

Colin MacCabe, ed. ***High Theory/ Low Culture: Analysing Popular Television and Film***. St. Martin's Press.

Two anthologies have recently appeared, generated out of an American conference, and a combined American and British Seminar, on the study of mass and popular culture. They are both uneven collections, yet *Studies in Entertainment* has a project which holds the essays together. The collection attempts to undo the strict division between high culture and mass culture imposed by the theorists and critics within the Frankfurt school. *High Theory/Low Culture*, on the other hand, has little guidance in its overall intention. This looseness in thought characterizes the majority of essays within the collection, leaving the reader wishing the contributors had stayed longer at the conference table to thrash out what it is they wanted to say.

The essays within *Studies in Entertainment* were first presented at a conference on Mass Culture in 1985 held by the Centre for Twentieth Century Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Its editor, Tania Modleski, is an associate professor of Film and Literature at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and is author of *Loving With a Vengeance: Mass Produced Fantasies for Women*. What

binds the essays together in this collection is not only the topic of Mass Culture, but also, as Modleski states in her introduction to the text, it is the "voice of the women's movement" which reverberates throughout the book."

Studies in Entertainment is divided into four sections: the traditions of mass culture criticism; television; feminist studies in entertainment; and the boundaries between art and entertainment. This final section contains three essays which exemplify the theme of the collection - to redefine the distinctions between high culture (art) and mass culture (entertainment). Specifically, contributors attempt to reassess the possibility of an "oppositional" position to mainstream entertainment, this position being traditionally held by the avant-garde. Andreas Huyssen, in "Mass Culture as Woman: Modernism's Other," approaches the opposition of high art/mass culture as having been created by modernism which he sees as essentially misogynist, for it distinguished mass culture as a degraded Other to its own male grand recits. He optimistically, and simplistically, sees the dichotomy being overcome with the dissolution of modernism.

Tania Modleski begins the section with "The Terror of Pleasure: The Contemporary Horror Film and Postmodern Theory." She looks at recent popular horror films such as *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, *Dawn of the Dead*, and a selection of the body of work of David Cronenberg, and sees these films as being just as "adversarial" as any avant-garde film. She bases this assessment on the fact that the horror film contains many of the elements characterizing a postmodern work: it dispenses with narrative, and what little narrative it retains is aimed at the destruction of all that is bourgeois; it refuses its audience the narcissistic pleasure of identification with characters, and it defies closure (the possibility of endless sequels has much to do with this latter trait). By finding in the horror genre "oppositional" qualities established by the avant-garde, Modleski concludes that a strict binary relationship no longer exists between high art and mass culture.

with politics, and with considerations of gender, and that it not accept the opposition between high art (high theory) and mass culture (low theory). These are essentially the same concerns as *Studies in Entertainment*, but in a less finely tuned form.

MacCabe's own essay, "Defining Popular Culture" contents itself with expanding on these three themes. Yet it also contains the curious claim that semiotic and psychoanalytic critical approaches, admittedly successful in discussing classic Hollywood cinema and much European and American avant-garde film, are not useful in analysing new Hollywood films or any form of television. MacCabe doesn't offer a reason for this proclamation regarding the decline of semiotics. This, however, isn't important because it probably would be no less absurd than his explanation regarding the so-called failure of psychoanalysis:

Could the problem be one of register: that within the still confines of the seminar room or weekend school any text [he cites elsewhere Young Mr. Lincoln and Touch of Evil] can be made to deliver up its sexual meanings, but that in the noisier ambiance of the classroom or the first year lecture theatre, the lecturer suddenly appears perverse as he or she gamely struggles to explicate the dilemmas of castration; the dialectic of having and being suddenly reduced to the pathetic ramblings of a sex-obsessed adult.

It would seem that MacCabe dismisses two critical practices central to cultural studies (and used with great success in *Studies in Entertainment*) because undergrads might think that they're silly.

The weakness of MacCabe's own writing, both in its structure and thought, leads to the suspicion that it is ineffective editing which is responsible for many of the flaws within *High Theory/Low Culture*. Also, one of the most irritating experiences when reading the text is to have one's eye movement stopped on almost every other page by the proliferation of typographical errors.

Another crossover contributor to the text, along with Gillian Skirrow, is Tania Modleski.

In "Feminity [sic] as Mas[s]querade: A Feminist Approach to Mass Culture" she examines the orthodox position of the literary historian, in which mass culture is condemned as a "feminised" culture. She then assesses the works of Manuel Puig, author of *Kiss of the Spiderwoman*, and theoretician Jean Baudrillard. Both these authors affirm mass culture for its resemblance to the feminine. Modleski reminds us that the feminine has been alternately denigrated and exalted, and that this latest development must be examined with caution.

Modleski's essay is in the middleground of academic excellence within the collection. Laura Mulvey stands out as the strongest writer with her article "Melodrama In and Out of the Home." Moving easily among critics such as Thomas Elsaesser and Walter Benjamin, she describes the history of the Hollywood melodrama, typified by the films of Douglas Sirk, and how "women's films" developed as a reinstatement of the domestic within films in order to compete with the new form of home entertainment, television.

Elsewhere, in "Hearing Secret Harmonies," Simon Frith starts a paper on the 'issues of experience' in capitalism, moves on to a discussion of "the Barry Manilow problem" and vacillates between wondering how a musical score relates to images in a film, and how music has itself become culturally encoded with emotional values. Frith writes within a semiotic discourse, which he himself apparently does not recognize, for if he had, he might have had an argument somewhere. Not surprisingly, Frith gives social-ism sole credit for blurring the distinction between the public and private spheres without acknowledging more obvious feminist contributions on that score.

Other contributors to *High Theory/Low Culture* are: Laura Kipnis, "Refunctioning reconsidered: towards a left popular culture"; Douglas Gomery, "The Popularity of Filmgoing in the U.S."; Jane Feuer, "Narrative Form in American Network Television"; Andrew Tolso, "Popular Culture: Practice and Institution"; and John

Caughie, "Popular Culture: Notes and Revisions".

High Theory/Low Culture is an indication of the potentially exciting work which can be produced within popular cultural studies. It offers pieces of criticism, historical description, and theory on film, television, and music, as well as a questioning of how popular culture might be defined and taught. *Studies in Entertainment*, however, realizes much more successfully *High Theory/Low Culture*'s aspirations.

Peggy Hill.

**"Show Us Life" :
Toward a History and
Aesthetics of the
Committed
Documentary . ed.
Thomas Waugh. Scarecrow
Press, Inc. 1984.**

Within film theory, which has become increasingly esoteric over the last decade through massive infusions of semiotics, psychoanalysis, post-structuralism and narratology, "committed documentary" continues to remain conspicuously "other". Categorically condemned for its alleged naive belief in "objectivity" - in the possibility of an unmediated representation of "reality" - documentary has been exempted from canonical film theory, which finds more tantalizing grist for its mill in disrobing Hollywood narrative and its avant-garde rejoinders. The result has been that, with a few notable exceptions, specific frameworks for analysing documentary have been glaringly few and far between.

The reasons for this absence are complex and overdetermined by the institutionalization of film studies within the academy, with its tendency to theoreticis. If documentary remains unspoken it is because it doesn't fit, proves resistant to analysis by the post-structuralist/psychoanalytic machine. Which is why endeavours to fit documentary into this critical paradigm, such as Christian Metz's argument that *all* film is fiction "from the beginning," can only reduce the specificity of documentary address. The difference repre-

sented by radical documentary practice is that it is characterized by its intentional production of subjects for concrete and referential causes: anti-imperialist, feminist, socialist, lesbian and gay liberation, etc. And despite the obvious mediation of documentary "reality" by cinematic codes and conventions, what is distinctive about our response as spectators stems from our extra-textual knowledge - that those bodies being gunned down, that woman speaking about her experience are *not* fictional constructs but "real" historic events and individuals. To ignore the specificity of this address can only contribute to a dangerous theoreticism and a widening chasm between theory and those consituencies, who all too often appear in film theory as discursive abstracts.

The real task then would not be to submerge documentary analysis into a critical puree nor to leave it entirely exempt from the kinds of considerations developed by contemporary film theory concerning the relation between textual operations and the process of subjectivity and desire. What we could propose is an exchange of questions, a theoretical and political intercourse between radical documentary and film theory. And it just might be on that terrain that a revolutionary subject could be thought.

Tom Waugh's *"Show Us Life" : Toward a History and Aesthetics of the Committed Documentary* goes a long way to addressing some of these divisions within film theory. Waugh in fact sees the anthology as intervening to resolve the gap between "the new methodologies developed in the seventies" by film theory and political film criticism "still dominated by *ad hoc* critical principles, outdated conceptual models, and the all-too-frequent substitution of ideological fervor or indignation for solid analysis." The book's project of modernizing political film criticism, however, involves not only the incorporation of new conceptual frameworks but a critical favouring of particular types of political documentary. From Vertov through to Joris Ivens and the new left, Third World and feminist experiments of the sixties and seventies, the films analysed all move beyond an alleged "objectivity" and

classical structure of observation. "Each one," writes Waugh, "endeavours to move beyond observation, and all of its inherent liabilities: humanist ambiguity, false objectivity, liberal empiricism, and the complicity of spectacle. They undertake rather to accede to the level of intervention..."

The anthology is arranged into three sections. Part I documents the achievements of the "pioneers": Vertov, the granddaddy of "committed documentary," Esther Shub, Joris Ivens, and the CP supported newsreel collectives of the 1930s. Part II examines contemporary political documentarists of the West and Part III provides an intriguing investigation of the departures of the Third World documentary, largely Latin American.

One of the strengths of this anthology lies in its insistence that specific documentary practices and movements can only be understood in light of the historical, social and institutional conditions of production and reception which determine the meaning and effectiveness of texts - something which psychoanalytic film criticism with its nearly exclusive focus on textual analysis and its too frequent theorization of the subject as abstract textual effect has a great deal to learn from. Waugh's own piece on Joris Iven's *The Spanish Earth*, with its detailed historical research and depth of insight into the relationship between Iven's film and documentary tradition, is particularly exemplary in this regard. Here, Waugh traces how the formal innovations in *The Spanish Earth*, its use of mise en scene, its experimentation with characterization and narrative vocabulary, evolved in response to the historical contingencies of war and revolution, popular front initiatives and the exigencies of production.

Nevertheless, one limitation of the collection has to do with the failure of many essays to move beyond contextual analysis to a theoretical consideration of specific textual operations and their effects - a failure that the historical section seems particularly prone to. While making a substantial contribution to the development of historical research into neglected areas and filmmakers, the writing in this section tends largely to be

descriptive and anecdotal, and falls somewhat short of the successful integration of new methodologies with documentary inquiry.

What makes it a compelling read, though, are the details recalled concerning the ingeniousness of political documentarists in situations where costs, availability of resources and state censorship made production an almost impossible undertaking. Bert Hogenkamp in his article on "Workers' Newsreels during the Twenties and Thirties," for example, recounts how workers' film societies in pre-Nazi Germany and Holland procured commercial newsreels which had passed the censor, re-edited these to "highlight class contradictions," and, after screening and discussions, edited them back to their original format to return to the distributor.

Russell Campbell's piece on "Radical Documentary in the United States, 1930-42" provides a fascinating insight into the integral role that radical documentarists played in communist party mobilizations during the thirties: documenting police violence at demonstrations; producing shorts for use in the organization of strikes, union drives, and unemployed marches; and organizing the extensive exhibition of Russian films during this period.

It is within the section on contemporaries that the debate concerning the theory and practice of political documentary heats up as prescriptive models fight it out as favoured prototypes of revolutionary cinema. For Julia Lesage and Barbara Halpern Martineau, the didactic "talking heads" approach of early feminist documentaries emerges as the favoured political strategy. Ann Kaplan concurs, arguing that the realist strategies of Barbara Kopple's *Harlan County* have to be evaluated, not in terms of any modern aesthetic, but in terms of their ability to "focus political issues" and to act "as a source of inspiration."

While the general tendency of the articles selected in this section is to defend populist and verite approaches (such as Chuck Kleinham's pragmatic political advice to documentarists), a certain 'modernist'

difference is marshalled in the pieces by Steven Neale, Julianna Burton, and Clare Johnston and Paul Willeman. For Johnston and Willeman, two of the more prominent arbiters of canonical film theory, agit prop cinema remains problematically immersed in a rationalist and pre-psychoanalytic conception of ideology and the subject/text relation which assumes that "individuals and groups participate in some mythical unity of consciousness." "The effect of such a form of realism," they argue, "is to convey the impression of a homogeneous world - a false sense of continuity and coherence reinforced by identification: the impression that truth can indeed be manifest out there in the visible world." Forwarding the Brechtian inspired film *The Nightcleaners* as "the most accomplished example of political cinema," Willeman and Johnston argue for a self-reflexive and non-instrumental approach to political cinema where particular textual strategies and the film's process of production and engagement of spectators are themselves constituted as the means of political intervention.

While Willeman and Johnston's intervention is of critical importance to any consideration of contemporary documentary, there is a disturbing tendency in their argument to fetishize certain cinematic techniques (such as the inclusion of black leader or stepping) as inherently revolutionary and to reify the spectator as a disembodied instance. Surely, however, the effect of any technique is utterly dependent on context, on the specific referential concerns articulated by the film itself, on particular social audiences who would read these specific techniques as material indications of textual transformation and not simply as "noise."

The debate is irresolvable. But, perhaps, the oppositional terms might be productively reconsidered, not simply as form versus content, or even by Godard's opposition between political films and making films politically, but in relation to differing theorizations of spectatorship, political transformation, and ideology. These issues are irresolvable within a metacommentary on documentary because - and this is the anthology's most forceful

point - political effectiveness is dependent on specific historical contexts, sites of reception, and the particular sexed, classed, raced, and committed audiences that cinema addresses.

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Cultures in Contention
Douglas Kahn and Diane Neumaier, eds. Seattle: The Real Comet Press, 1985.

To a degree largely unrecognized in both mainstream art media and left journals, the contestative dimension of 1960s activist politics has been continued in the cultural sphere, leading to a revival of the political avant-garde art tradition often pronounced dead. Still, even for radical artists the development of theory and techniques appropriate to challenge manufactured consciousness has, according to Douglas Kahn and Diane Neumaier, all too often been carried out in the kind of isolation that encourages - and requires - reinventing the wheel. Their anthology, *Cultures in Contention*, expanded from the 1981 Art Politik conference in Seattle, is intended to overcome this isolation by stimulating critical and theoretical discussion among artists, activists and intellectuals and by providing some practical guides for countering "the vacuities and repressions of contemporary capitalist society."

The 24 largely original contributions range widely over the arts (from music to theatre), the media (from the radical hoax journalism of Gunter Walraff to free radio in Japan), and forms of community struggle (from mobilizations in the South Bronx against the film *Fort Apache, The Bronx*, to anti-urban renewal projects in the London Docklands). What they all have in common is a view of culture as situated in a space between the narrow definitions of high art and the global definitions of anthropology. They also share a willingness to take cultural interventions seriously because "cultural self-representation is inseparable

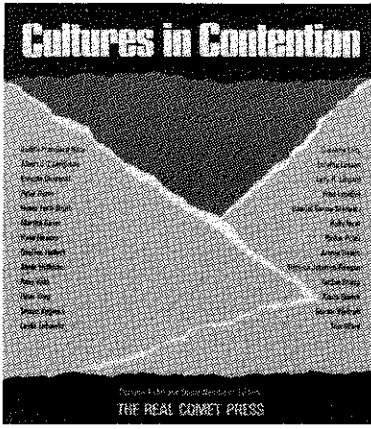


from political representation."

Developing the interventionist requires a consciousness that the mere content, of course, form are involved. Realist artistic continues to be well as the conventional production and artist to audience to the last, in approaches taken. Factors vary widely.

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In situations of



from political self-representation."

Developing the practice of interventionist art also requires a consideration of more than the mere ideological content, of course. Questions of form are involved - the place of realist artistic representation continues to be troublesome - as well as the context of artistic production and the relation of artist to audience. With respect to the last, in particular, the approaches taken by contributors vary widely.

Thus, in a populist vein, Peter Bunn and Loraine Leeson describe their evolution from art school radicals to image-makers for the Docklands steering committee which decides on the issues, strategies and priorities of struggle. Visual artist Hans Haecke, on the other hand, presents himself as a one man flying squad, researching the cities where exhibitions are held in order to identify issues and symbols that make local sense. (In Montreal, he placed posters for Alcan-sponsored operas, a morgue portrait of Steve Biko, and verbal text summarizing Alcan's South African activities in homely aluminum window frames.) A different journey is described by muralist Judy Bacca, whose sponsorship of monumental works, ultimately employing hundreds of workers, meant combining the roles of fundraiser and administrator, bridging between the Los Angeles street scene and City Hall. In the end, saving herself from burn-out required recognizing that her own design talents and responsibility placed her authentically in a position of leadership, a position that broke both feminine gender and Chicano culture norms.

In situations of struggle, other

contributors note, collective participation in the creation of culture breaks down distinctions between artist and audience, creating and unleashing community power. In Uruguay, women sing in prisons to create communities of resistance. In California, Sweet Honey in the Rock, a black women's *a capella* group, sings to cross boundaries between black and lesbian separatist cultural networks. In Kenya, villagers create national identities in theatrical performance. In Jamaica, Sistern, a women's theatre troupe, empowers women to name their own reality.

While a strategy of naming does not in itself constitute an aesthetic, the popular participation it entails tends to discourage formal experiment as a supreme value. Independently of that, the (much maligned) social realist tradition has continued to be influential - for example, as Martha Gever notes, in the making of early feminist videos. On the other hand, feminism in particular has eschewed any single approach, as is documented in Arlene Raven's description of the work of Los Angeles lesbian artists which drew on everything from archaic ritual magic to the latest techniques in photo collage and neon sculpture. In perhaps the best discussion of the Situationalist International available in English, Tom Ward makes a strong case for surrealist disruption of acquiescent (un)consciousness to see, and name, the failures of capitalist abundance.

Finally, there is the problem of distribution: how, in a market society, actually to get radical art out to its intended audience. Community television and free radio provide space on the air waves. Photographer Fred Londier suggests ways of working with unions. Klaus Staack sells posters of his photomontages to German political groups. Lucy Lippard breaks the convention of the detached art critic to help artists and activists communicate. But the strategies that delight are those that turn the media against themselves. Suzanne Lacy and Leila Leibowitz offer guidelines to get feminist political performances covered on that confiner of reality, the news. And Peter King's manual of how the Australian Billboard Utilizing Graffitiists Against

Unhealthy Promotions BUGA UP billboards makes my finger itch for a can of spray paint.

Overall, the anthology has the virtues of bringing together several national experiences, good lay out, many black and white illustrations and an accessible language that such discussions sometimes lack. If some reprinted articles seem to add little to what is already easily available, and if there needs to be a critical introduction that draws connections between the viewpoints expressed, it is nevertheless a useful collection that should fulfill its editors' aims of making practices of political art and debates about them widely known.

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The Politics of Pedagogy: A Review of Peter McLaren's *Schooling as a Ritual Performance*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986.

Peter McLaren established his reputation as an important figure in radical education theory with *Cries from the Corridor*, a work in which the brutal and degrading underside of the Canadian inner-city schooling system was revealed in graphic and often disturbing detail. McLaren's ongoing concern with the development of an emancipatory pedagogy is now the focus of a second book, and though this is a more densely written and theory-laden text than his first work, it shows clearly that McLaren remains a perceptive ethnographer of the educational setting. *Schooling as a Ritual Performance* is based on the author's fieldwork at a Toronto Catholic junior high school purported to be the toughest in the city. It is also a school where the majority of the students are the sons and daughters of largely working-class, immigrant Portugese and Italian parents. McLaren's purpose in this book is to offer a

critique of the ideological presuppositions of contemporary education, a purpose which leads him to investigate the processes by which political indoctrination is intertwined throughout the curriculum of mainstream pedagogy. This is an ambition he sustains with considerable success throughout the text.

The most innovative feature of McLaren's approach is the framework of his analysis, the field of ritual studies, or ritology, an emerging perspective which still bears the traces of its interdisciplinary heritage. Because ritology is only now crystallizing around a core of central themes, its systematic application promises as many pitfalls as it does advantages. To the extent that *Schooling as a Ritual Performance* generates a number of important insights through its ritual studies perspective, the book is occasionally hampered by the ill-defined nature of its methodological framework. The very notion of ritual, for example, is notoriously polysemic, and McLaren is forced to pursue his discussion at a fairly high level of abstraction. Consequently, at times the book's theory tends to overwhelm rather than illuminate matters, for the territory McLaren has staked out for analysis becomes rather densely populated with theories, theorists, and definitions. Of course, it should be pointed out that an absence of clear and definite boundaries is hardly surprising in a work that finds its chief lines of influence coming from an array of scholars and disciplinary approaches: anthropology, semiology, education, religious studies, and dramaturgy are but a few of the established fields ritology claims as kin. Thus while *Schooling as a Ritual Performance* is a model of eclecticism, McLaren is impressive in his capacity to move with relative sureness between disparate and often competing schools of thought.

McLaren's investigation of the ritual dimensions of education is structured around an analysis of the intersection of four socially and symbolically constructed "states": the street-corner state; the student state; the sanctity state; and the home state. Each state is comprised of particular rituals, and these ritual complexes are themselves embedded in the social

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matrix of the surrounding economic and political environment. Moreover, each state is constituted from specific interactive modes: the street-corner state, for example, frequently turns on the expression of resistance, while the student state is directed by a monologic, regimented code of behaviour that is found inside the school. The relationship between a given state and the students who participate in its expression is clearly dialectical: To the extent that a particular interactive mode defines the nature of the students' actions, so too do the students themselves construct the particular state. The meaning of a ritual is only realized in the fact of its performance, a relationship McLaren defines as "bi-directionality." By engaging in ritual, the performer is made a part of the social order even as participation establishes that order. For McLaren's study this means that as students participate in the rituals of schooling, they also embody the cultural values that are connected with those ritual forms. Hence engagement in ritual, he says, is a function of political power (p. 131).

What this argument makes apparent is that education can be little more than the accomplice of oppression, a conclusion to which McLaren finds his research has continually drawn him. Teaching, he tells us, is a practice by which students are systematically disempowered. Students with working-class backgrounds in particular lose out on several fronts, for not only does the education they receive prevent them from fully developing their potentials, it also prepares them for the low-paying jobs society sets aside for them. As McLaren sees it, the failure that awaits so many working-class youngsters in traditional schooling is "a crucial factor in the maintenance and evolution of the social order" (p.173). A religious school fares no better, he says, because "the efforts of Catholic schooling in helping the poor and oppressed are invisibly linked to a culture of domination and exploitation" (p.184).

McLaren's analysis concludes with a short offering of general recommendations. He argues that teachers should learn to develop sensitivity to the rituals that define the practice of teaching, and once they understand that teaching is

comprised of an ensemble of cultural symbols and ritual behaviours, they must discover ways of "reritualizing" the education setting. In other words, teachers must learn how to orchestrate the classroom rituals in ways that neutralize the implicit messages by which students learn to accept oppressive societal values. As McLaren sees it, "the teacher, as a prescriber of arbitrary meanings and guardian of the hegemonic boundaries of knowledge, assumes the position of affirming, and to a lesser extent manufacturing, the dominant cultural forms of the social order" (p.222). This is a role desperately in need of transformation. Yet exhorting teachers to step outside the referential frame by which a society defines what an educator's role should be is to suggest that teachers disengage themselves from their culture in order to reframe their social roles. This raises troublesome philosophical and practical concerns, however, for to try and get beyond one's culture is to entertain the notion that culture itself is a disembodied entity capable of existing independently of human agents. Hence the transformation of the educator's role can really only be imagined if it proceeds in tandem with other equally radical changes taking place at numerous interconnecting levels of society.

Teachers, McLaren says, must become "liminal servants" and learn how to draw from their "shamanic roots." Moreover, they must abandon the dichotomous root paradigm which sees learning as a mental practice cut off from practical, embodied experience. Learning should transpire in a "felt context" in which participation and performance are recognized as vital ingredients for true understanding. Thus, for example, the arts should be made a central part of the daily curriculum and not merely set aside as recreational interludes. Drama, for instance, could be used as an instructional device in other disciplines like history and literature. If teachers encourage students to realize the connections between artistic expression and the pleasures of "intellectual" achievements, they may also be able to generate the conditions which make learning a truly creative and spontaneous adventure. Hence greater "interdisciplinary

collaboration" pertaining directly to the study of educational practices is absolutely crucial.

Hans Barth has said: "Since education is everywhere closely related to the prevailing form of government, its principles cannot be reformed without also changing the constitution of the state." This is certainly the larger and more pressing issue proponents of an emancipatory pedagogy need to address. Though the question of who will educate the educators is never raised in *Schooling as a Ritual Performance*, it nevertheless forms the unspoken backdrop against which McLaren's ideas are thrown into relief. It also constitutes a serious challenge to the kinds of solutions McLaren is presently prepared to suggest.

Still, McLaren's is a provocative perspective, for *Schooling as a Ritual Performance* can itself be read as a challenge, a challenge to teachers to become political and cultural revolutionaries willing to undertake the deconstruction of a system which functions to maintain existing levels of societal oppression. In his view, "education" and "liberation" must somehow be (re)connected. Students should not be disempowered in the classroom, but given the social and intellectual resources that turn schooling into a process of practical and political enlightenment.

Gary McCarron is a graduate student in Social and Political Thought at York University.

Due to technical difficulties, our regular Scanner section will not be published in this issue of Border/lines. However, we continue to gather materials for future issues.

Scanner gives our readership an opportunity to contribute ideas and information about academic, political and cultural events, across Canada and elsewhere, which are not generally publicized. The scope of Scanner has also been expanded to include listings of ongoing organizations and events.

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