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BISEXUALITY

COOPERATION

**FIGHTING
MEN'S OPPRESSION**

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Fat Liberation

Mayer Aldebaron

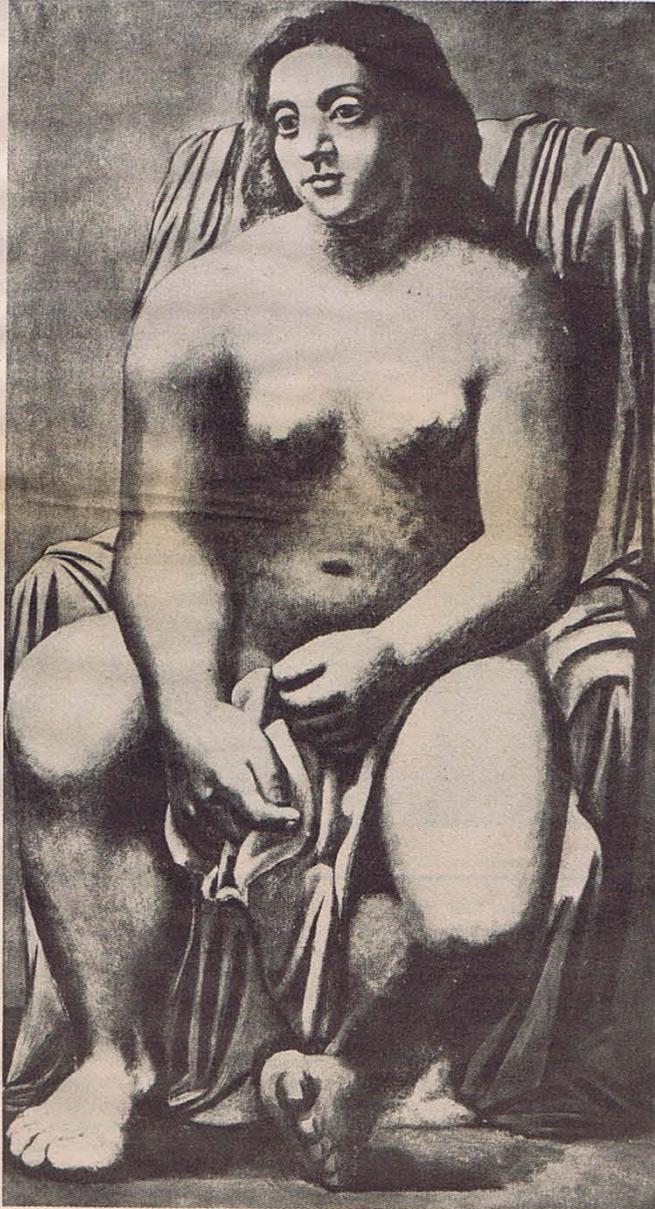
Fat people have many problems in slim-favoring American society. They are rejected as ugly, lazy, self-indulgent and unhealthy. They are ridiculed in the entertainment media and discriminated against in employment. Fat people are harassed by health workers and are exploited by the fashion and diet-aid industries, which make billions of dollars each year selling useless products. For, of the tens of millions of Americans, predominantly women, who try to lose weight each year, less than one in a hundred succeeds in keeping weight off for more than a year or two. Despite the colossal failure rate they continue straining their bodies with hunger and malnutrition and their psyches with anxiety, self-hatred and ultimately more failure—all to achieve beauty, poise and health!

Being a fat radical therapist, I began to gather information about fatness in the hopes of helping myself lose weight. But the information that I found totally turned my head around! Fat is not necessarily a problem at all: not a problem of eating behavior, not a problem of beauty, not even a problem of health! The real problem is the oppression and discrimination under which fat people live. I believe that fat people are a biological minority, an oppressed minority, a minority needing liberation.

The purpose of this writing will be to expose the mystification of medical knowledge which has oppressed fat people. This includes psychiatric oppression. I will present a radical therapy interpretation of fat liberation, and suggestions for working with fat people in a radical therapy problem-solving groups. Be it understood from the outset that fatness is not seen as a problem, and weight loss is not seen as a goal of this therapy. It is not a valid criterion of the therapy's success. Rather, the suggested approach is aimed at developing fat pride and fat power.

Common knowledge holds fat to be ugly, unnatural and unhealthy. Health statistics claim a significant connection between fatness and a host of illnesses, especially heart disease, all leading to an early and miserable death. It is generally understood that fats are fat because we eat too much and of the wrong sorts of foods, chiefly sweets and greasies. Some people blame the fat person's over-eating on nutritional ignorance. With what amounts to high-class snobbery they point to the prevalence of fatness among the poor, the uneducated and the children of immigrants. Presumably these fat people mistake over-eating for affluence. Many people believe that fats simply lack will-power—can't resist temptation as well as "normal" humans can. And many others, who superficially seem to be the most charitable, attribute fatness to over-eating rooted in emotional problems. The fat spend fortunes on psychiatrists trying to figure out *why* they over-eat.

Mental health professionals have generally established (at least in the popular mind) that fats are compulsive over-eaters. As rationalized, fat people eat sweets to make up for loneliness. They're lonely because they're fat; they're fat because they're lonely. Somewhere in the individual's past is buried the inadequacy, the fear, that made them over-eat and get fat in the first place. If therapy could only get at that fear . . . that primal cause . . . ! Psychoanalytical dabbling within the fat



soul has produced some far-fetched and damaging notions.

Fat is Natural

These health studies tend to ignore or discount the most obvious truths: that there are many different kinds and degrees of fatness, and that health workers, especially mental health workers, see only a small, troubled minority from among the millions of fat people. Tremendous harm has been done by those early researchers who generalized from rare, pathological cases of fatness signalling disease, to cases of moderately fat people who have been fat since childhood but are otherwise perfectly "normal." Many fat people are born fat, many others become fat as they grow through middle-age. Sometimes glandular problems or periods of unusual emotional distress cause gains in weight. There are some people, especially women, who are not fat but who think they are. The fallacy is to judge all these different types of fatness by the same criterion, the criterion of losing weight. That some few fat people are able to maintain slimness through controlled eating is used to justify the same expectation for all the others, and to justify their persecution for seeming to resist weight loss. Yet this persecution overlooks biological facts about fatness. It also overlooks the human needs of fats and dieters, and mystifies this oppression to seem like "reasonable" concern.

All along, fats have suspected that their real problem was oppression. Part of me is offended that I had to refer to studies—the lesser-known ones—by the medical experts themselves to validate what my body has known all along. I want it to be clear, however, that I'm not making unfounded claims. Readers who want more scientific documentation will find the bibliography at the end of this writing useful.

Fat is Healthy

Thin people also die of the diseases blamed on fatness. Thin people's heart attacks and high blood pressure are blamed on "stress." But aren't fats also subject to stress? In fact, fats are subject to stress beyond many things—not only living in stressful contemporary society, but also living hated lives in despised bodies.

The most somber claim against fatness is that it shortens life, chiefly by straining the heart. This claim is based on evidence from two sources: doctors, and mortality tables of life insurance companies. Neither of these sources represents an accurate sample of fat people—a point which has been made by many researchers, most notably Dr. Ancel Keys in the early 1950's. When this bias is eliminated, the presumed connection between fatness and heart disease disappears.

People who visit doctors and buy life insurance tend, first of all, to be reasonably wealthy. Since fatness is estimated to be five or six times more common among lower-income groups, well-to-do fat people are not typical of fats in general. But of all fat people these wealthy and educated ones are the most likely to be persecuted for reason of their fatness; they are most likely to succumb to stress-related diseases such as heart attacks. The hostility of doctors toward fat people is well-documented; also fat people have special difficulties obtaining life insurance. Thus, those fat people who persevere in obtaining a

doctor's care and life insurance generally have pressing reasons to believe that they *need* it. In other words, evidence from doctors and life insurance mortality tables are bound to make fat people look sick. The healthy ones stay away!

Following the criticism by Dr. Keys, several studies were instituted to correct the bias in the statistics on fat and mortality. In studies in Boston, Minneapolis and Nashville the distribution of weight in groups of coronary patients was compared with the distribution of weight in healthy control groups of the same age and occupation. The distributions turned out to be identical! →

Yet the life insurance mortality tables were still widely quoted more than a decade later, in 1966, when the United States Public Health Service report on obesity criticized them as invalid. To no apparent avail: they are still used *today* to justify barring fat people from employment with companies offering group insurance. Their debunking and de-empowering will be one of the most important immediate goals of fat liberation.

The Roseto, Pennsylvania study of the early 1960's deserves special mention. Living in Roseto was a large group of blue-collar Italian immigrant families, mostly fat, who were unimpressed by mainstream America's thin

standards of fashion. They ate generously of high-cholesterol ethnic foods, and *liked* their fatness as a sign of comfortable "affluence." They were also astoundingly healthy, with a low mortality rate and with none of the diseases attributed to fatness. The Rosetans were followed as they left their sheltered ethnic community and assimilated into the mainstream culture. With their size no longer acceptable, with pressure on them to lose weight, compete, and stop liking themselves as they were, these people soon were as sick as the fats around them. The study was popularly quoted as proof that stress is a killer. Almost ignored was its suggestion that fat is not a killer.

Fat is Not Caused By Overeating

The belief that fatness is caused and maintained by overeating is folklore. Its origin is easy enough to understand, however, as it is based on the observation that most people lose weight when starved and gain when stuffed.

Only in the last few years has the food consumption of fats and thins been compared scientifically. Studies such as reported by Dr. A. M. Bryans (Canadian Journal of Public Health, November, 1967) show that fats in general eat the same, or less, than thins! Some fat people—and also some thin people—eat a lot. Others, both fat and thin, eat very lightly.



Fat and thin people metabolize food differently. In fact, the metabolism of *some* fats under *normal* circumstances has been found to be *identical* to that of a starving thin person—in high gear, eking the most out of every calorie! These recent findings are becoming widely accepted by doctors. They see fat as a grave health hazard caused by metabolic peculiarities. They are looking for chemical ways to change the fat metabolism. But in most cases the real "health hazard" is oppression, not fatness. And before the kindly doctors turn us into drug addicts, dependent on injections and pills for our social acceptability, they'll also have to "cure" the fat physiology.

Research by Dr. Jules Hirsh of Rockefeller University found that fat people have more fat cells in their bodies than thin people. These cells exist for the storage of fat. Under normal conditions, the fatter the individual, the more fat cells she or he has. However, when one loses weight, the fat cells are not destroyed! They merely drain out like empty bags. When one gains weight, they fill up. There appears to be a comfortable "normal" weight

and fatness for each body, dependent not on the standard height-weight charts, but on number and distribution of fat cells in that individual.

Many researchers, notably nutritionist Dr. Jean Mayer (no relation to the present writer) believe that an individual's tendency to fatness is hereditary. Where both parents are fat, there is a likelihood of 80% that the children will be fat. To some extent this has been passed off as environmental—oversized portions on the family dinner plates. That is too easy a discount. It seems to be part of the general attitude that fatness is caused by willful bad behavior, which, as shown above, is incorrect.

Psychological Oppression of Fat People

The oppressed fat is told that she is ugly and unhealthy, that these are scientific facts, and that the only way to rectify the situation is through recognizing her sickness, dieting, and changing from fat to thin. That 99% ultimately lose this battle against their bodies is hardly surprising. In fact, the 1% that succeed are a demonstration of human ability to alienate soul from

body. Yet for most despairing fats, failure to become thin is seen as personal failure.

A typical fat dieter loses as much weight as she can for as long as she can stand it. As soon as dieting stops, she gains the weight back. She may still be struggling with restricted, mechanical "maintenance" diets. She may be hungry much of the time. (But who believes her?) To be gaining weight anyway is adding insult to injury! But something is wrong, and mystification has it that *she* or *he* is wrong; he or she is over-eating, is crazy, bad and lacking in will-power. Eventually the fat person is overcome with self-loathing and guilt. Once again he begins to diet. As he loses weight he may feel like a penitent fasting in purgatory. But inevitably he gains the weight back. Thus a pattern evolves of losing and gaining over and over. Most fat people who diet go through such ups and downs, shedding tens or hundreds of pounds, year after year. This "yo-yo effect" is a real killer, stress to the body and stress to the soul.

No wonder some fats suffer from high blood pressure, heart attacks, and other ills! Even without dieting, we are

never allowed to feel good to be alive. Advertisements for ways to "lose ugly fat" leer at us from the pages of popular periodicals. We are invisible—unwanted—in the entertainment media except where our fatness is the subject of comedy, pity or villainy. And with dieting, the stress worsens. Comfort that could be gotten from food is denied. And the dieter is really hungry—gnawingly, debilitatingly hungry. To most people, the effects of prolonged starvation—even if voluntary—are not beneficial. Starving people grow irritable, weak and paranoid.

Fats are characterized as "sloppy and unfit." But when we go out for athletics, dancing or other activities which might make us fit we frequently are discouraged by jeers. Embarrassment over body size is one reason why many fats do not treat their bodies well. Another is that fat people believe what society tells us about the "sickness" of our bodies. Complying with social rejection, we avoid healthful fun and exercise. Perhaps some fats even "psych" themselves into sickness and early death!

The foregoing establishes a pattern in

I lost 79 pounds and turned into Casanova's dream girl.

the relations between the typical oppressed fat individual and the world around her. Society says, "You're not okay." The fat person agrees, "I'm not okay, and you're right, you're okay." Then the fat relates by adapting to whatever is wanted or expected, good or bad. If fat is supposed to be ugly, he will think himself ugly. If fat is supposed to have high blood pressure, she will develop high blood pressure. If fat is supposed to over-eat, he will eat more than feels good. If fat is supposed to be jolly, she will take any amount of insulting "joshing" and—in public—remain jolly!

By adapting, a fat gives up her power. But in return she receives some social approval, validation and a measure of "okayness." Fats report strong feelings of okayness—almost like salvation!—when they are losing weight. At such times they may be sick and weak with hunger. A comfortably full stomach, after a good meal, however, soon turns to feelings of misery, guilt and indigestion. Obviously this "okayness" was false, coming from internalized oppression. Its price is alienation from the body—to feel bad when the body feels good and good when the body feels bad!

Americans (and most others) generally believe that merely being alive isn't commendation enough: one has to *deserve* life. The essential commodities of life must be earned: by labor, good behavior and popularity. Thus food, shelter, health care, sex, companionship, stimulation and even love are subject to "economic" rules. Material commodities are obtained through money, which is generally earned through alienated labor. Non-material commodities include love, recognition, companionship and touching. These are called "strokes" in the language of Transactional Analysis. Strokes are as necessary to life as is air. Radical therapist Claude Steiner introduced the concept of the "stroke economy"—who can stroke whom, under what conditions, and in what ways. According to its rules, people are mystified into thinking that strokes are in limited supply and have to be deserved through behaviors (work at unrewarding jobs, sex-role stereotypes, etc.) which support oppressive institutions.

Strokes and Fat People

Society denies fat people basic good strokes and ridicules those who try to get them anyway. Fats ourselves internalize the message "you should not get strokes." Internalized, this enemy message amounts to an oppressor, a PIG, speaking in our heads, coercing us into compliance with our oppression. The only strokes this internalized PIG allows us to have are strokes that feel bad: negative recognition ("You're a fatslob,") or the crooked approval that comes from adapting to the wishes of others, at the cost of our own wishes. Fat people often play games which keep them from getting really nourishing strokes from other people. Those good strokes that are offered are deflected, discounted and distrusted. Psychiatrist Hilde Bruch describes many of the behaviors of fat people which cause them unhappiness in relating to other people. Unfortunately she was a traditional psychiatrist and interpreted the beha-

viors as a *cause* of fat, whereas they may often be the *result* of oppression of fatness. Also she overlooked their presence among people who are not fat and their absence among many who are.

Many therapies, especially those that become popularized as "Common knowledge" through certain diet clubs, assume that fat people try to make up for a stroke deficit by over-eating. ("I always eat candy when I'm feeling blue.") This model sees eating as self-stroking. Food strokes are relatively easy to get. They don't necessarily depend on other people's willingness to give them. With food strokes the fat person presumably nurtures herself and appeases her psychological hunger without having to risk rejection by others. Therapists who ascribe to this model try to teach fats to get the nourishing personal strokes they really want. At the same time, fats are expected to give up the "unnatural" and "less important" food strokes which made and maintained our fatness. The trade-off is food or friends—as though one can't have both if one tends to be fat. Two wonderful changes are promised for the receiver of therapy who loses weight: first she'll become more skilled at getting real strokes. Second, people will be more willing to stroke her than before, when she was fat. She'll have been cured of fatness and no longer need to overeat.

Such psychological reasoning pertains to over-eating, not fatness. Since it is now understood that most fats are biologically fat, attempts to substitute food for strokes are not usually the cause of fat. But for some people they may *result* from trying to fit the "fat and frustrated" stereotype—a way to get acceptance, validation, and crooked strokes, which are better than none at all.

Fats and Food

Hunger, appetite, eating and over-eating are heavily mystified, especially for fat people. Eating and food have too many social and symbolic aspects to be defined by cellular needs alone—this is true for all people, whatever their weight. Humans are not just machines with fuel tanks. Individual variation in appetite may be perfectly natural. Yet social punishment discriminates most heavily upon those who happen to have moderate or large appetites and an inherited tendency to be fat.

Most fat people whom I know (middle class, upset about their weight) have strong injunctions against eating. Researchers such as Jean Mayer have also observed these injunctions and noted that they apply to *all* eating, not just so-called "over-eating" that presumably makes people fat. The message may be stated as "Don't eat so much," but it is heard as, simply, "Don't eat!"

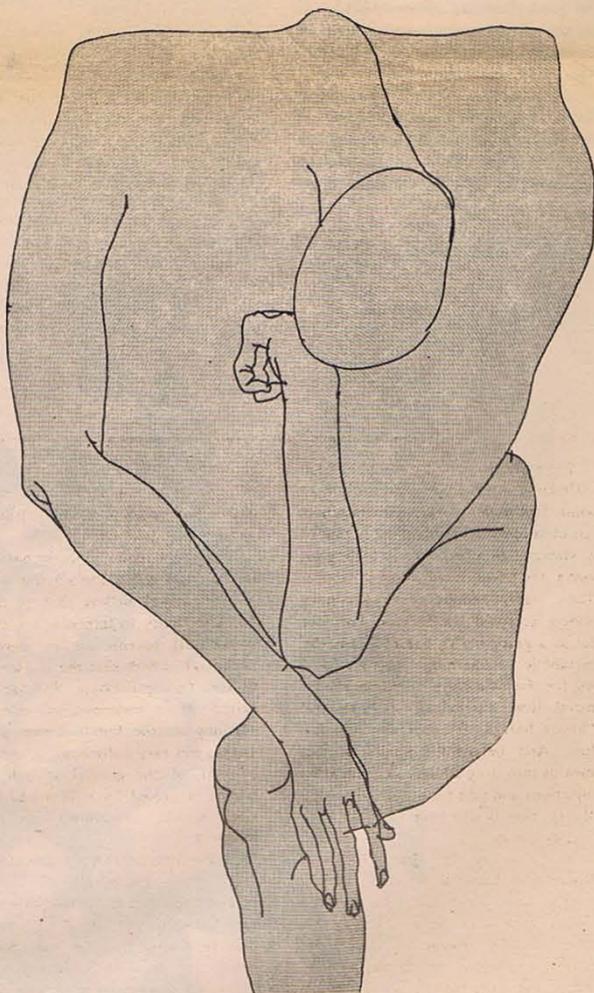
Many oppressed fats consider themselves to be compulsive eaters. That is, they are forced to eat food they don't really want. But when asked to describe their compulsive eating, they frequently describe what sounds like a normal response to hunger and a pleasant indulgence of the appetite! Since oppressed fats are made to feel guilty about every mouthful beyond starvation level, we interpret indulging our appetites as something sinful, not really wanted, and hence compulsive.

It would be much more reasonable for a fat person to say, "Sometimes I eat compulsively." So do things sometimes eat compulsively. Or, like us, they smoke, or chew gum. Many people do things with their mouths when they're feeling frustrated, lonely, angry or bored. When fats do it, their internalized PIG messages make a big deal out of it. Actually, over-eating is a relatively tame way for people to relive bad feelings without solving their problems. Hopefully the person in therapy learns to solve problems rather than continuing to suck, inhale or chew them into temporary oblivion. But the point is that fat people are not the only ones who eat when they're disturbed. The problem is the excessive guilt that such eating brings down on the fat person, and the label "compulsive eater" which victimizes fats so they believe they are crazy and helpless.

A thin person may eat a lot one day and forget about it the next. Oppressed fats obtain little satisfaction from food, because of guilt. Yet they are often preoccupied with food. In the year that I've done radical therapy I've observed that when a person feels guilty about

doing something that she continues to do anyway, the guilt may turn into obsession. Thus I believe that fat people's preoccupation with food, when it exists, is not a cause of fatness, but rather a result of oppression. Preoccupation with food is also encouraged by diets which require that we spend hours computing calories and preparing menus. And if, when dieting, one's thoughts keep turning to hot fudge sundaes, there's no mystery in that: the dieter is *starving*. To starve for weeks or months, without relief, and *not* to think a lot about high-calorie foods, would be the height of insensitivity.

Extreme compulsive eating is the food binge—a terrifying, frantic eating tantrum fairly common among oppressed fats. To an observer, the binger seems to be trying to kill herself with food. She may eat until stupified. Or she may vomit and go back to eat more, until absolutely exhausted with pain and misery. Psychoanalysis has made much of binging—all negative, all tangled up with mother-hatred, Freudian complexes, misplaced aggression, defensiveness and stroke deprivation. As fats seek relief from the hor-



rible experience, therapists try to suppress it and channel its energy elsewhere. But, in effect, they reinforce the message, "Don't eat." Fat people adapt to the "cure" up to a point, then ultimately break out in another binge. I think that the motive for bingeing is really very simple: rebellion! "I will eat!" Binge behavior looks deadly, but that is because logic has been squeezed out of the struggle.

Fat Power—Action

As long as fats adapt, we will not feel okay. Anyone who buys the message, "Lose weight and gain human respect" is adapting—adapting to a PIG that punishes us for not doing the impossible with our bodies. Fat people need to take back power over their bodies, to love them and be good to them. That does not mean to lose weight. The first step is to demystify the medical confusion. Education about fat biology will show that we're not crazy and not sick, only different. Demystification of the stroke economy will show the direction of changes to be made. Fat people will organize to end discrimination and prejudice against themselves and to develop life-styles enabling them to live with comfort and respect in a world where most people, and the facilities which serve them, are smaller in size.

In therapy, awareness that fat is okay will probably be internalized only slowly. The most oppressed fats are starving for strokes of all kinds and think that they don't deserve them. Radical therapy groups can help fat people learn how to get strokes and feel okay.

Many fat people in therapy need permission to eat. A fat person might make a contract in his problem-solving group: "I want to eat what I want and feel good about it." He could work on the contract by eating in an atmosphere of strokes and nurturing support. One way would be to eat meals and snacks with friends. It is important that these friends like to eat, and know and support the fat's therapy contract.

When eating alone, it's especially important for the fat person to be in

touch with nurturing messages like, "You can eat anything you want. You're okay when you eat. It's okay to feel good." Some fat people feel extremely unsafe eating in the presence of others; they may need to work first on feeling good about eating alone.

Radical therapists must beware of hidden agendas: Don't assume, as many other "nurturing" therapies do, that fats will eat less once they really enjoy their food. The suggestion sounds too much like the enemy message, "You eat too much; If you really had it together you'd eat less." What matters is to eat whatever one wants, *more or less*, and feel good about it. If it doesn't feel good, why eat it?

As for binges, they require nurturing. Fats suffer terribly from binges, yet trying to stop them colludes with the injunction against eating. Such efforts only add the therapist's voice to the oppression against which binges are rebellion.

Accepting binges is not the same as accepting tissue damage. Fatness is not generally a health hazard, so there is no need to stop people from being fat. As for painful over-eating, the goal is to wipe out the PIG that makes the pain. Nurturing messages are not conditional—they don't suddenly evaporate when the calorie count goes over two thousand. A fat person, racked by a binge, needs special safety to be able to call on friends for support and strokes, before, during and after. Mao said, "We must make a clear distinction between ourselves and the enemy," and his words surely pertain as much to fats as to any other oppressed people. It's in our own healthy selves' best interests to eat what we want. The enemy is panic, pain and guilt that mystify the want and turn eating into torture.

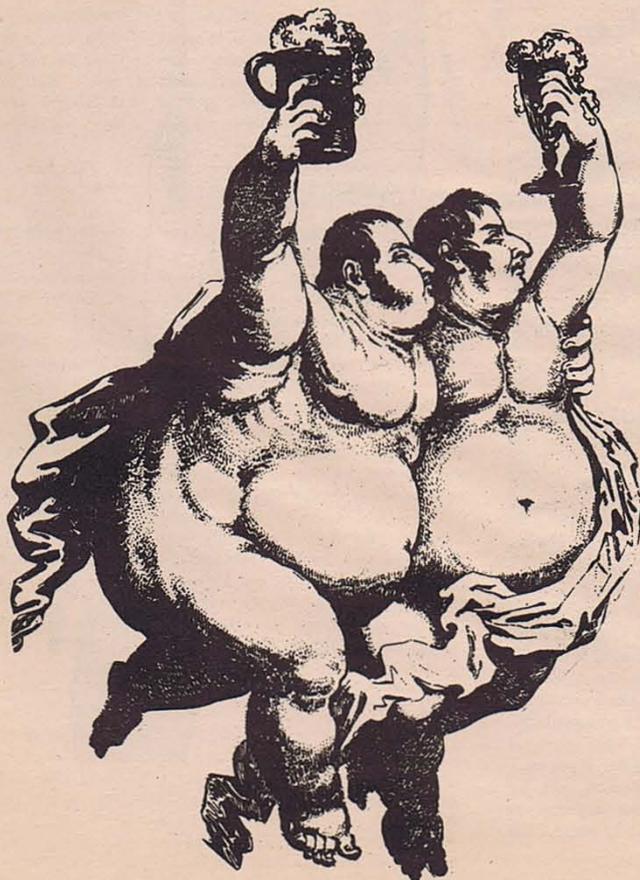
Even with nurturing messages, the process of destroying this enemy will be a struggle. There may be set-backs when the binges seem worse than ever, when the person cannot bear to have strangers, or family, or friends see how fat she is. Such events may be set-ups for the fat person to prove, once again, that

she's helpless. To avoid falling into the set-up, the therapist and group must be firm in maintaining that fat is okay. There must be no suggestion that, "When you really get it together you'll stop bingeing." What *will* happen is that the person will stop hurting. Meanwhile, the process is what matters, the process is the goal.

Along with permission to eat, fats need permission to enjoy other body pleasures. We want to look good, to move our bodies with enjoyment and to enjoy touching and being touched. We want to reclaim the beauty of fatness—all degrees of fatness!—from its oblivion in history. We want strokes that come without performing or adapting—verbal strokes, touching, loving and sexy strokes, all the good strokes that humans can think of and maybe some we haven't thought of yet. As for the bad strokes, no more of those: no more adapting, no more being Victims as well as victims, and no more pretending to be jolly and letting others make jokes at our expense. We don't need that kind of attention. The same is true for fats as for other oppressed people: as we respect ourselves more, we will demand respect from others.

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Cooperation



U.S.A. Arthur Lavine

Claude Steiner

I'm writing this paper outlining the concept of cooperation as a guide to problem-solving group members who are in a couple with another person or in nuclear families into which they wish to introduce the interpersonal behavior which is called cooperation.

We white North Americans are members of a society thoroughly indoctrinated in individualism and competitiveness—traits which have been presented to us as desirable from early in our lives. We are told that, if pursued assiduously, individualism and competitiveness will lead us to happiness and success in life, and these qualities have become an integral part of our life scripts.

This mystification, which has as its main purpose to shape us into pliable workers easily exploited by a ruling class, is not only not the way to achieve happiness, but it is in fact the most specifically successful manner in which to destroy and liquidate our human potential for harmony with ourselves, harmony with each other, and harmony with nature.

Competitiveness and individualism are two most highly touted qualities of the "good" American; actually, they are a conspiracy to put out powers at the service of others rather than ourselves.

Individualism

Individualism gives people the impression that when they achieve something it is on their own and without the help of others and that when they fail it is, once again, on their own and without the influence of others. Belief in the value of individualism obscures any understanding of the way in which human beings affect each other in both good and bad ways; thus it completely mystifies both oppression and cooperation. Individualism results in the isolation of human beings from each other so that they cannot band together to organize against the well organized oppressive forces that exploit them. Individualism makes people easily influenced and also easily targeted when they step out of line and begin to want to remedy their oppression in an individual fashion. Finally, individualism prevents people from validating their growing awareness of oppression with each other. The healthy paranoid suspicions which accompany demystification of oppression are invalidated, and people are reduced to schizophrenia, each person in their individual, impotent, paranoid system.

Individualism as a way of relating to other human beings, while highly

touted, can, in fact, be a most self-destructive form of behavior.

The above should not be misunderstood to mean that individuality, individual action or self-centered behavior is invariably wrong. I am simply attacking the notion that individualism is a super-trait, to be pursued at any cost. It is clear that some individuals and their individual actions have been of ultimate benefit to themselves and others. In fact, it is the clearly positive individual actions of certain scientists or politicians that are used by our educational institutions as show cases to highlight the value of individuality. But these examples are distortions and exaggerations of its value, for the purpose of instilling individualism and competitiveness in the young.

Competitiveness

Individualism goes hand in hand with competitiveness. Since we stand or fall strictly on our individual efforts, it follows that we must think of everyone around us as individuals equally invested in succeeding and, in the mad scramble to the top, also necessarily invested in achieving superiority or one-up status to us. Being one-down is intolerable; the only alternative in our society is to try to stay one-up. Equality is not comprehended by us and often not even considered. Competitiveness is trained into human beings from early in life in our culture. Yet, not all human beings are bred into competitive styles of life, and there are some societies, some American Indians for instance, in which competitiveness is not seen as a positive trait. In an individualistic, competitive society a person who is not highly competitive cannot keep up and is going to become chronically one-down and eventually highly alienated. It is because of this that competitiveness persists in appearing to be a good trait, because it is impossible in our society to achieve any well-being without having very strong competitive skills. The only alternative to individualism and competitiveness which has potential for the production of well-being is collectivity and cooperation between equals. But while we are well trained in the skills of competition, we know very little about how to cooperate or be equal with others. I have observed many situations (communes, relationships) in which people worked hard to cooperate and establish equality with each other. Most of these efforts collapsed, giving way to the well established and familiar competitive and individualistic patterns.

Capitalism thrives on individualism,

competitiveness and inequality. Collectivity, cooperation and equality, on the other hand, have great difficulty in taking hold, with people reared in this society.

Competitiveness is based on the premise that there is not enough to go around of whatever a person needs. If the material needs of human beings are in drastic scarcity, it follows obviously that competitiveness is the mode for survival. If there is one loaf of bread daily to feed 20 families, it is pretty clear that all 20 families will starve. If a competitive member of this subgroup manages to obtain the whole loaf of bread for his family, that one family will survive while the others will still starve. The net effect of competitiveness in scarcity is actually a positive one for those who compete and win, and even for the survival of the species. But as scarcity becomes a thing of the past, as it is in the United States, competitiveness actually creates scarcity and hunger. The hoarding behavior which goes along with competitiveness causes certain people to have a great deal more than they truly need, while large numbers of others, who could be satisfied with the surplus of those few who have, go without. Competitive, hoarding behavior is based on unrealistic anxiety based on fears of scarcity. Oppressive as he is to others, the hoarder is himself oppressed by it.

I first experienced the relationship of cooperation to scarcity when in the Santa Cruz mountains as a guest of the Resistance. One evening everyone sat around in a large circle in the center of which everyone had placed the food for dinner. To my scarcity-oriented eyes it did not appear that there was enough to go around. I was alarmed and scared by the prospects of going hungry and in great conflict about the situation. Portions of food began to be passed around the circle, everyone eating from them as much as they wanted and passing them on. The food circulated over and over, and to my amazement, I found that there was actually enough food to satisfy me quite fully. Yet my experience, because of my scarcity-oriented, competitive and individualist training, was one of anxiety and alarm about not being properly fed. As food went by me I took larger bites than I needed; I felt guilt about this; I schemed about ways in which I could make certain kinds of food return to me; I worried as food went around the circle as to whether it would reach me again. I ate more than I needed and was, in short, unable to en-

joy the meal because I was so driven by fears of scarcity and feelings of competition.

At the next meal, however, I allowed myself to trust that there was enough to go around, and I experienced for the first time in my life the clear sensation of plentitude and satisfaction based on having enough on the basis of cooperation rather than on the basis of getting a big enough portion in a competitive situation.

The above anecdote is to illustrate how we are not only mystified into being competitive and individualistic but into believing that competitiveness and individualism do in some way bring us benefit, when in fact at this point in our development as human beings the opposite is true.

Competitiveness is taught us from an early age by our parents, but especially in school. Sports, grades, tests, are all training exercises in competitive skills—mock scarcity situations that prepare us for the business world, for the assembly line, for the job market. Competitiveness is taught to boys in its most blatant form; girls are taught to compete in more subtle, psychological forms.

Power Plays

The basic interpersonal operation with which individualism and competition are brought into practice is the power play. A power play is a transaction whereby a person obtains from another person something that he wants against that other person's will.

Power plays can be crude and involve actual physical coercion or can be subtle and simple ways in which people talk or mindfuck each other out of things that they want.

The most crude power play is simply one in which a person grabs from another their loaf of bread and then harms her if she tries to get it back. The same effect, namely the taking away of bread, can be obtained by mental, psychological means, which are, however, equally power plays and which have the same outcome. This type of power play could make use of the victim's fear rather than force since no physical force is really applied, or it can be carried out by arousing guilt or shame so that a person willingly gives up what is rightfully hers. In any case power plays have the effect of taking away what is rightfully one person's and putting it in another person's hands. Re-

relationships based on power plays immerse people in a miserable, unhappy series of skirmishes, battles and major wars in which everyone but maybe one always loses.

Cooperation

How then are we who live in a society in which there is plenty to go around, to take advantage of this plentitude? The answer is cooperation. Cooperation is a mode of interpersonal relations which, based on the assumption that there is no scarcity of basic needs (food, shelter, space), provides a mode in which everyone can have everything they need.

One very good context in which to learn and struggle against individualism and competitiveness towards achieving cooperation is in the couple. The situation in which two people are in an intimate, long-term relationship is a situation in which the seeds of individualism

from each other. This agreement is not necessarily always obtainable since in some cases there isn't enough to satisfy both of them. For instance, with respect to sexual needs, one person may want to have sexual intercourse twice a day, and the other person may not want to have any sex at all. When the discrepancy between what people want is so large that there can be no compromise, there is in fact a situation of scarcity which cannot be remedied. In the above situation it's not very likely that a cooperative compromise can be arrived at. However, in most situations the discrepancies are not so large, and a cooperative compromise can be arrived at. A more common situation might be the one in which one person wants to have daily sexual intercourse while another person would prefer to only have sex every third day. Here, based on the assumption that there need not be scarce-

stroking, especially in the presence of another person. But as he asked for what he wanted and she compromised, they broke down the stroke economy and created sufficient and satisfying sexual strokes for both of them.

2. Given that there is enough to go around, the next agreement is that both of the persons have equal rights to satisfaction and agree to a contract which involves them equally in cooperating.

A person may be aware that there is enough to go around and still not be willing to share and struggle to bring about the equalization of what there is. For instance, sex role scripting causes relationships between men and women to have built-in inequities which, on the whole, favor the man.

For example, it is expected that women will do a larger proportion of the housekeeping even if both are employed, but certainly if she is not. She

developed as follows: She wanted nurturing and caring strokes when she got sick or when she was afraid. He knew this and even though he knew what she needed he did not comply with her needs. He also refused to work on the problem on his own accord. He would give her the strokes when she asked, if she asked "nicely," but never initiated nurturing. He didn't show any interest or put any energy in sharing the strokes he had for her.

For a while she tried to deal with the problem by withdrawing her strokes for him, but this only created further scarcity and did not solve the problem even though it equalized the flow of strokes.

Eventually they worked the problem out by a mutual giving up of privilege. They agreed to the following: He would work on his difficulty with giving strokes to her if she worked on her jealousy about his giving strokes to other people including other women. He became willing to give up his unequal share of her strokes, and she became willing to give up her unequal share of him.

3. The effective establishment of a cooperative relationship is also based on the agreement that power plays are not an option under any circumstances. Power plays are based on the assumption of scarcity and competitiveness and are the antithesis of cooperative behavior and must be given up as a method of getting what one wants in a cooperative relationship.

This point seems simple at first, but it turns out to be one of the most difficult cooperative agreements to honor. We are deeply immersed in fears of scarcity and thoroughly trained to use power of one sort or another to get what we want. Threats, sulking, yelling, banging doors, discounting, and so on are more accessible to us as approaches to what we want, than discussion and negotiation. Both partners need to be on the lookout for power plays and willing to call them and stop them as soon as they happen.

4. It is necessary for cooperation to exist that everyone in the situation ask for everything that they want 100% of the time. (See Wyckoff, "Between Men and Women" in IRT, 1, 2, Spring, 1973.) The tendency to use power plays to get what one wants is coupled with the inability to know or ask for what one wants clearly and openly. The reason for this is that in a competitive situation to reveal what one's needs are is to warn one's competitor of where the demand is going to be so that fears of scarcity for the supply will be aroused. As a consequence, people in a competitive, individualist situation are thoroughly trained and indoctrinated into not saying what their wants are, and for good reason, since to express one's needs will immediately decrease the supply of what is needed and create further scarcity of it. However, in a cooperative situation, to ask for what one needs is a basic requirement for satisfaction. Given a context of willingness to struggle against competitiveness and individualism, to say what one wants is the first step to getting it. It will immediately enlist the interest and energy of the others to provide satisfaction of those wants. In the struggle for cooperation one of the biggest problems is that people either will not say what they want or are not actually in touch with it and eventually become resentful because they don't get it.

Paradoxical as it may seem, to ask for everything that one wants 100% of the time seems an individualist and competitive move, yet it is an essential aspect of the struggle against competitiveness and individualism. One only needs to understand that to ask for what one



and competitiveness cause great trouble and can be successfully defeated. Individualism and competitiveness are best pursued as a person standing alone. If one has no close ties to anyone, one hardly notices how individualism and competitiveness are destructive forces. It first becomes clearly destructive in a couple or family situation. Because the couple is the most available and protected laboratory for personal relationships and a situation for which people have a great deal of energy to struggle, cooperation is most easily worked on in a couple. Also cooperation is easiest between two people. Thus, this article devotes most of its attention to cooperation between two people.

Two people who decide that they want to enter into a cooperative relationship need to agree on several things:

1. That there is between them a satisfying quantity of what they need

ity, compromises can be arrived at such that both people can feel satisfied. For instance, one couple in such a situation agreed that the person with larger sexual needs be willing to masturbate while the other person held and gave her loving strokes. This took the pressure off for both and eventually equalized their sexual wants.

We have found cooperation of this sort tends to bring about a plentitude of what might at first have been scarce. The above exemplified how artificial scarcity comes about. This couple had a "sexual" problem which could easily have become complicated into a case of "impotence" for the man as he became more and more anxious due to her sexual demands, ending in complete scarcity of sexual strokes for both. The "problem" however was based on their strict adherence to stroke economy rules which does not allow sexual self-

may work at home as long and hard as he does at his job but it is assumed that he is entitled to more leisure time than she. If she asks for equal leisure he might agree that he gets more but be unwilling to equalize it based on his male privilege.

On a more subtle level, men are encouraged to expect to get more nurturing strokes than they give. Typically, when confronted with this inequity, they acknowledge it, but don't work to change it—once again, they hold on to their privilege.

The inequities are not always in favor of the man, however. For instance women expect men to do most of the work in their sexual life. Men are supposed to initiate, direct and successfully complete sexual relations. When this inequity is pointed out women often balk at giving up their privilege.

One couple's struggle for cooperation

wants 100% of the time is not the same as to grab, to outfox, to cajole, to mind-fuck people out of what they want; it is simply stating one's position, a position with which everyone who has stated their can cooperate and negotiate.

I do not mean to imply that in a cooperative situation everyone will get what they want immediately. However, the process by which what one wants is modified by what others want in a cooperative situation is amazing, an almost magical event, so that, often, when it doesn't seem possible that there will be enough for everyone it turns out that there is. It appears that people's drive towards cooperation is as strong as their drive for food, for shelter, for strokes, so that one's need for food, for shelter, or strokes can be very strongly modified by one's need to cooperate. The pleasure in supplying for others what they need, which is a function of the Nurturing Parent, the source of the cooperative instinct, in many cases overrides the needs for sex, food and other material goods. Felt needs for items which are in short supply actually decrease in the presence of others with whom one can cooperate by sharing, while the artificial consumer needs created by merchandising and advertising are dramatically diminished.

The effect of cooperation on consumer needs becomes most visible in larger groups. This country is made up essentially of pairs of people and their children living under separate roofs with one refrigerator, one stove, one washer, one or two cars, etc. Eight people and their children could live equally well, provided they were able to cooperate, with the same refrigerator, stove, washer and perhaps three cars. Further, the decrease in competitiveness would diminish their need to "keep up with the Joneses." Finally, strokes would be in less scarcity, so that consumer needs which are based on stroke hunger (cosmetics, drugs, new clothing, automobiles and so on) would be sharply diminished. Capitalism and consumerism would definitely suffer from large scale cooperation.

In the event that in the cooperative process a person does not get what she wants, it is part of the agreement that she continue to ask for what is needed as often as possible and that she make clear her dissatisfaction, if not expressed, will be accumulated in the form of resentment which can build into the tendency to become, once again, individualist and competitive. Generally, a person who does not get what he wants, a person who is in need of something, is scripted in a competitive and individualist society to blame himself for his unfulfilled needs. As an example, poor people blame themselves for their poverty, with ample help from the rich ruling class. They attribute it to lack of drive, lack of will power, etc. People who are hungry often feel ashamed of the fact. People who are sexually in need find it hard to admit to it. It is extremely important that the self-blame, the taking onto oneself the cause of one's oppression, be combated by not going along with the feelings of shame and worthlessness and asking for what one wants. A cooperative society is based on the assumption that everyone deserves enough of everything they need and would strive to provide it.

5. A fifth requirement for an effective cooperative situation is that there be no Rescues. While people are supposed to ask for 100% of what they want, it is also important that if they do not ask others to provide for their needs, others do not act out of shame or guilt or misguided nurturing without having a clear sign that the need exists. In this particular situation a Rescue would be to do things or go along with situations which one does not want

because one suspects that the other person, now seen as Victim, powerless to fend for himself, wants them. This is a Rescue which violates the contract to ask for what one wants, for both the Rescuer and the Victim. It also recreates the situation in which power plays to arouse guilt and shame can be used to get what one wants instead of asking for it.

On the other hand, it is also important that in a cooperative situation people do not persecute each other through anti-Rescue, which is an exaggerated disregard of what one guesses other people want. Anti-Rescue, which is a kind of hardening of one's perceptions of other people's needs for the purpose of not Rescuing, is Persecutory. For example, in one couple, the woman decided to stop Rescuing her husband's needs for nurturing, which she had rou-

proper response in this temporary non-cooperation is to be quite explicit about one's feelings of disappointment. The withdrawal of sharing as a response to a clearly uncooperative move on someone else's part, is a legitimate maneuver in a cooperative struggle. This is especially clear in situations with children, who often either overtly refuse to cooperate or give up completely in their cooperative efforts. In this case it's legitimate to act in a manner which withdraws one's own willingness to cooperate and share. This is not a power play because it is an overt, demystified maneuver based on one's feelings. One simply loses interest in cooperating in the presence of uncooperative people. Therefore, once again, based on the rule that one should say what one wants all the time, it is a legitimate approach.

For example, in a cooperative house-

was the child's renewed choice soon after she saw the loss incurred due to her lack of cooperation.

Two, Three or More

The struggle for cooperative behavior, which as I said before is most easily engaged in within a couple, can be expanded to a couple and children, or to three, four, five or more people. In every case it requires that the above agreements be respected, and while the struggle between people who are not couples is not often as committed and has less cohesiveness to carry it through difficult spots, it is also quite possible and desirable. Clearly, the difficulties multiply the more people that are involved, and the two-person situation seems an almost indispensable first step. It appears to me that in a dialectical process where one moves from competitiveness to cooperation, from acting



tinely satisfied without his requests or thanks. She stopped guessing what he needed and took a hard anti-Rescue stance which frightened and angered him. This was an incomplete solution; in group she worked out a non-Persecutory, non-Rescuing stance in which she would still be aware of his needs and make this awareness clear to him but refused to nurture him unless he asked for and actively appreciated her nurturing. She also made a trade agreement for nurturing from him, when she needed it. This was not a Rescue because she did not do anything he didn't ask for, but it also defeated the tendency to Persecute because it offered a vehicle for the satisfaction of his needs.

No matter how smoothly a cooperative struggle goes it often happens that one person is reluctant or unwilling to cooperate at one time or another. The

hold involving children, the expectation is that they contribute their efforts. Chores, being helpful, anticipating people's needs, not disrupting, entertaining and taking care of themselves, all are ways in which children can cooperate. Children who contribute their energy to the household are appreciated and liked. One wants to do things for them, spend time with them.

When a child refuses to cooperate the opposite reaction occurs. One dislikes them, one does not want to do for them. In one household the parents stopped being helpful in many small ways to a ten year old who was not cooperative. They stopped making special treats, taking her to her friends, inviting her to movies, cooking minor meals like breakfast or snacks. This was done without vindictiveness or anger, simply because it no longer felt right in light of the girl's behavior. Cooperation

alone to acting in groups, the first step is cooperation in a couple in which the struggle is most easily pursued and moving from there to larger groups of people. Long term cooperation in large groups of people, it seems to me, is the only path to the overthrow of our oppression, and the most effective weapon to defeat the grip that the ruling class has on our lives.

I deeply appreciate Hogie Wyckoff's large theoretical contribution to this paper as well as the energy she put into the cooperative struggles that created these concepts. Thanks are due, also, to Bob Schwebel for first actively promoting cooperative concepts at the Berkeley Radical Psychiatry Center through the medium of cooperative (vs. competitive) games, and to the people at the Center who provided ideas and a fertile soil for cooperative struggles.



In Behalf of Bisexuality

Hogie Wyckoff

The issue of bisexuality is in many ways at the very heart of my struggles, but until now I have felt unsure of my position and unwilling to speak out. Unsure because I thought I didn't have anything definitive to say and unwilling because I feared criticism, particularly from radical lesbians. But compelling statements made by Sidney Abbot and Barbara Love in their excellent book on lesbianism, *Sappho Was A Right-On Woman*, have stimulated me and created a need in me to articulate my position. They definitely hooked me when they said: "Bisexual women, who have been caught on both sides and in the middle of the heterosexual/homosexual argument, have a unique contribution to make to open discussion on sexuality in the movement."

Although I lack any "final" statement on bisexuality because I prefer to view myself as being in process, I do feel it's important to say where I am at right now as a bisexual woman-feminist-radical psychiatrist. I see my bisexuality as a multi-faceted prism, and I want to share its many sides with you as they flash in my inner vision. My theory has and continues to be transformed by my own personal experiences.

What are my political as well as personal reasons for wanting to love (both physically and mentally) women and men?

First, I want to be loving with women because: a) It feels good. b) I feel that in order to truly love myself completely as a woman I must be able to love others like me (i.e. women) both with my mind and body. c) Being homosexual and homosensual makes twice as many people available for me to love and to develop deep affinity with. d) I want to fight the exploitation women have had in their loving capacities. Women as a class have been partic-

ularly oppressed by the stroke economy (Wyckoff, 1971) which limits the amount of lovings they can get. Women have done more than 50% of the work in producing love and emotional well being in human relationships. Being bisexual makes it possible for women not to be giving more than they are getting by having first-rate loving relationships with other women who can match their loving energy. This may, by producing a scarcity of strokes, force men to learn how to create an equal percentage of the lovings they consume.

Second, I want to love men because: a) It feels good. b) I desire to be in a wholistic struggle with all humanity; I don't see men as the enemy and do feel willing to struggle with men who are actively fighting their sexism. c) In principle, I want to have available to me as much energy to struggle with men as with women. Since being in loving and intimate relationships with people commits us to a more intense level of struggling, I want to have equal energy potential for men. I realize that this is a political principle and that it may be the case that, in practice, I may find more women at this moment in history than men who are actively fighting sexism and on this basis, may in fact relate to women more than to men.

Third, I want to love both women and men because: a) I don't want to make loving men my priority by being heterosexual or make loving women my priority by being homosexual. I want to take a stand in my life that shows that I value loving women and men equally by identifying myself as bisexual. b) I want my choice of identity to be unrelated to gender, that is neither male nor female but rather a third new choice, to be completely human. And since I will be partially created by myself and partially created by my struggles with those I love, I want to base my choice to be

intimate with someone on whether that particular individual is fighting sex role oppression rather than on their given physical sex. c) As will be explained below, bisexuality by its non-exclusive nature opposes monogamy which I wish to fight against because I consider it an oppressive institution.

I want to point out that some of these above reasons are personal and some are political; I consider them inextricably tied together in the same manner as theory and praxis.

Fantasies of Loving Men

Heterosexually, my development has been pretty commonplace and parallels most women's heterosexual programming or scripting in a sexist society: trying to develop intimate relationships with men from a one-down position. These were very difficult to make work because of our sex role programming which made us complementary opposites, seeking to be locked into dependency relationships rather than being cooperative similar totalities relating equally to ourselves and each other. (Wyckoff, 1973) I spent time in relationships with men whom I really didn't want or whom I found oppressive, because I was desperate for lovings and strokes and saw no other way to get them except to adapt to situations that weren't really what I wanted. Also, again because of scripting, I fell in love with my fantasies of the men I was relating to rather than seeing clearly and concretely who they were. When I would fall in love with my fantasy of who a man was I would tend to give myself away to him and not demand that he give himself away in return. My indoctrination into this was deep and subtle. The adolescent years I spent longing and hungering for Marlon Brando without him even knowing of my existence were my training ground. I also diddled myself emotionally with my fantasies about teachers and friends of my older brother whom I had crushes on.

Eventually, I became very angry about this unequal fantasy exchange. For too long a time, if I had a choice either to look at things in a cool, calculating, rational way with a clear analysis of what was happening or to look at things emotionally with a great deal of feeling, my women's programming caused me to choose the heavy or intense feelings. This was very detrimental to me, and now I much prefer to have a clear vision of who I am relating to and what that person has for me. This insures that I don't give myself away more than the other person does and protects me from men's scripting to exploit women for strokes. I also have decided that I don't want to give myself completely away, that I want to always keep half of me and my love for me.

Another serious problem I had with giving up my power to fantasies was that often, in order not to be held accountable for what I wanted (sexy strokes), I would imagine being raped by someone who turned me on. This fantasy kept me from doing my share of the work to make sex happen and, worst of all, set up a collusion with potential rapists, the collusion being that a part of me was a ready sexual victim. In a sense my sexual fantasies were rehearsals to be helpless prey for rape. This was also supported by my being out of touch with my physical power and afraid of being hurt. I've now gotten over much of my fear of being raped because now I don't collude with my own oppression: I don't get turned on by rape fantasies; I'm more in touch

with my power as a street fighter; and I'm more afraid of the emotional hurt of rape than of being physically hurt. Also, I have a realistic picture of what the actual dangers are for me on the street and part of my self-defense is to keep those facts in mind.

Loving Women

My homosexual development has been continually stunted, repressed, and oppressed throughout my life. But in spite of this oppression, I know I have always loved my sisters—dear, sweet, round tomboy girlfriends. That cherished era of being so-called "tomboys" was a great time in my life. For that brief period it was okay for me and my lovely friends to be strong and wild and healthy. I think that this was the period during which I was given permission (by my mother's smiles of approval) to be an amazon and to love women, but sadly it was soon and very strictly brought to a halt by united forces whose goal it was to indoctrinate me into the rites of sexism. Since then, I have longed for those amazon days in the sun and, now, slowly, I am getting them back.

I have fond memories of how sweet it was to cuddle with my wonderful friend Mary, when we were ten and life was fat and right. I also had exciting times playing doctor with Meredith in the back yard until one terrible and fateful day her mother freaked and said I was *not* to play with *her* daughter any more! I didn't fully understand, but I felt awful and knew that what we had been doing disgusted Meredith's mother and that in her opinion I was a creep. I definitely got the message: what we had been doing was *very* bad.

So later when Cathy and I were adolescent buddies and slept together I was afraid to cuddle with her, although I wanted to. Instead we satisfied ourselves by brushing each other's hair and playing dress-up and talking about boys and sex.

HOW TO MAKE LOVE TO A WOMAN IF YOU'RE A WOMAN

Think of yourself and what you like then do that.
Ask her what she wants then please her.

Imagine the most delicate caress you have ever known and give it to her everywhere, slowly.

Speak her name into the openings of her body and listen to her answer.

Remember the fierceness and power of all our great grandmothers who rode horses and plowed fields and bore children in anguish

and share that with her.

Love her in daylight. Treasure what you learn.

Jennie Orvino

(Editor's note: This poem used with permission from the author. Thanks also to the Amazon Quarterly, 654 Valle Vista, Oakland, California 94610.)

And then when I was a teenager, and ached and longed to be loved and to love—anyone!—I never thought I had the option to be a lover with myself and with my dear girlfriends. Late in high-school when I knew I loved Daryl, my best friend, I never dared to admit to myself how I loved her or what my dreams clamored to reveal to me. The thought of being turned on to her scared me, but even worse was the fear that she would somehow find out about my feelings and be disgusted with me. It seems bitterly ironic that I was unable to be loving and intimate and sexy with my girlfriends who understood me and whom I understood, but it was all right to attempt to be intimate and sexy with men or boys whom I never really knew and didn't have friendships with. In fact, because of social pressures in high-school I was forced to compete in the stroke economy to have dates with men or boys whom I had little or no respect for, or to be involved with men whom I didn't know well and whom I didn't understand. As I have said, with men I was often relating to my own fantasy rather than the real person. When at last I did make friends with a man, he was incredibly important to me. And when he wanted to get married (to please his parents and the Parent in his head) I went along with it even though it wasn't what I really wanted. As our marriage progressed and it became obvious to both of us that we were much more friends than husband and wife, we separated. During the separation I lived with a heterosexual woman friend. We slept in the same bed and both got very shook up one morning when we woke up and found ourselves holding hands with each other. We never spoke of it and proceeded to become even more wildly heterosexual and sexually "liberated."

Then there was a woman friend who often made me feel very uncomfortable because she was so delicate and refined, and I felt awkward and crude around her. The Pig Parent in my head said vile things to me (things that I had been told when I was being broken from my tomboy tendencies): that I was a dyke, that I acted like a man in a woman's body, that I grossed people out by my crude behavior and clumsiness. This friend told me she thought that I was very uptight about "queers" and therefore must secretly be one because I defended against it so heavily. That Freudian mindfuck really set me on my ear!

In my early twenties I had a few delicious "wet dreams" of making love with women, but they terrified me as well as delighted me. I tried to fool myself about these dreams and somehow managed to turn the women into men so that I could even think about it. In my practice I continued being heterosexual.

Coming Out

After some time of being in the women's movement and relearning to love my sisters I began thinking self-consciously about being loving with women. It became obvious to me and a woman friend that we felt attracted and turned on to each other. We had a very nervous and exciting talk about what we wanted to do about it. We decided that we wanted to be lovers although it was a very frightening thing for both of us because of all the messages we had received throughout our lives about how it was not all right to be homosexual. My male lover, with whom I have shared a loving and intimate relationship for almost four years, gave me much sup-

port to "come out" although it was scary for him. Regretfully, my woman friend and I were both pretty much "babes in the woods" and ended up getting hurt in our fiery and exciting love affair. In our naive ignorance and heady excitement our timing was too fast and careless. We were both painfully blind to our own and each other's heterosexist prejudices and neglected to provide ourselves with necessary protective agreements.

Often straight women who want to come out have built-in heterosexual prejudices that collude with the sexism in our society. Our gut reactions have all been programmed for being loving and sexy with men not with women. In an effort to learn from our mistakes and to support women thinking of coming out I want to offer some suggestions for anti-heterosexist contracts that women can make which would have been helpful to us:

First, expose any opinions you have that women's lovings are not as good or as powerful as men's. Don't keep these opinions secret.

Second, agree to actively fight these prejudices and ask others for support to do so.

Third, say honestly as soon as you get in touch with them, any one-down or comparative feelings you have in relation to men; trust your guts and get an accounting for your feelings from your lover.

To go on with my account: later, when I decided to become lovers with another friend, we went very slowly and were careful to make numerous agreements that would protect us against these prejudices. An example of such an agreement is: to insure against adaptation and not talking straight, we decided to be absolutely honest about when we didn't want physical lovings from each other. This protected us from

giving loving strokes and finding out later that they weren't really wanted. If we hadn't had this contract, and this had happened, it could have colluded dangerously with "gay is second best" scares we both had and ended in an unnecessary blow-up.

We moved very carefully in a dialectical (step by step) process to insure each other's safety. I felt that this was particularly important because my friend had not been in a homosexual relationship before. I am afraid that at certain points we sacrificed passion for safety, a delicate balance to maintain. Because I was afraid of being hurt as I was in my first relationship, I tended to want to develop intimacy with women that I had friendships with rather than with women whom I also felt very physically attracted to. This was good for me in that I began to feel stable and secure in my gayness. One negative element of this, however, was that avoiding women I felt heavy passion for became an opening for me to begin to doubt my gayness in that I began to wonder if in my "heart of hearts" I found it more exciting (sexually) to be with men than to be with women. But, later this possibility was permanently disproven as I met other women with whom I felt great sexual attraction as well as personal affinity.

Briefly, here are some suggestions for the dialectic of coming out:

First, decide whether this is what you really *want* to do in your very inner self, rather than something you think you *should* want to do. Decide whether you want to see yourself as bisexual, that is, valuing women's and men's lovings equally.

Second, understand that this may be not where your guts are at yet, so go in stages that are fast and risky enough so that your feelings can actually change but slow enough that you don't scare yourself so badly that you want to give up. You're not really creating new feelings but just getting in touch with ones that you already have and haven't yet reclaimed.

Third, work on loving yourself and other women and be honest about prejudices you have incorporated.

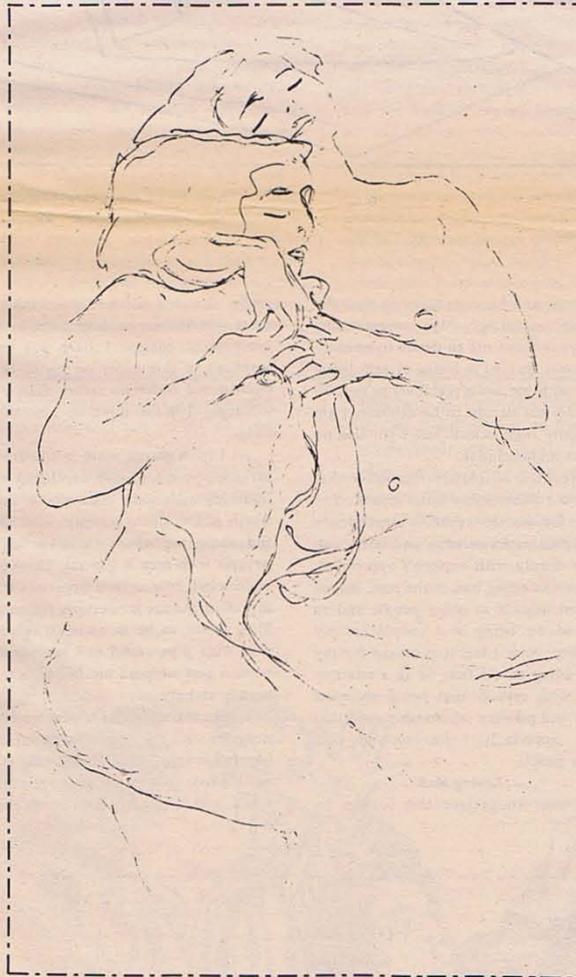
Fourth, get support from as many women as you can.

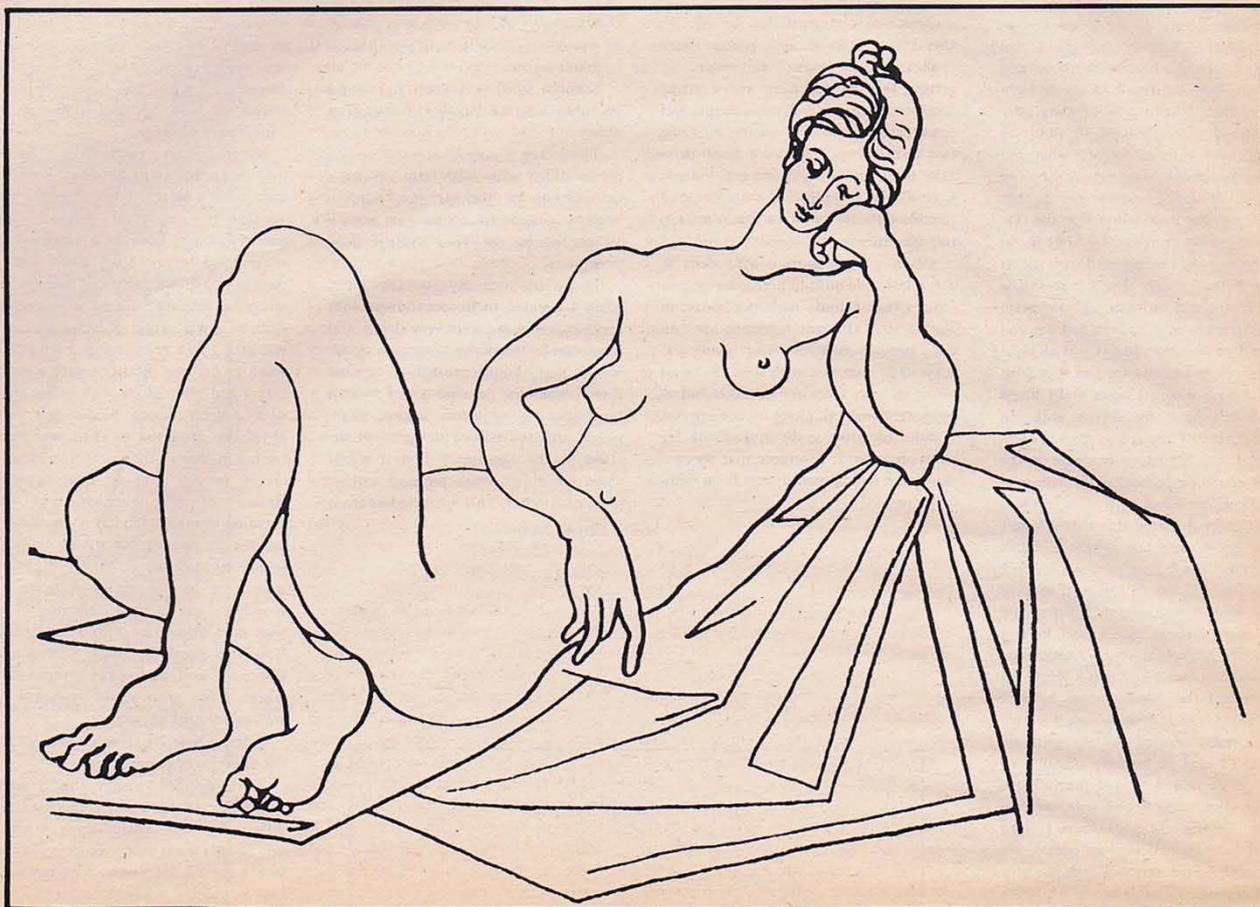
Fifth, commit yourself to struggle with a woman or women who emotionally and physically turn you on and who feel turned on about being loving with you.

I want to encourage women who are relating to women to be loving in public. The impact of this on straight women is profound because it is very beautiful to see and puts straight women in touch with that truth, and it also supports gay women to see it. I hope eventually we can organize ourselves well enough to make it safe for women to be loving in public whenever they want to be without fear of physical attack or losing our jobs, homes or friends.

Self-love

Another, less obvious way, in which my homosexuality was repressed was in relationship to loving myself. I never felt that I had permission—real permission—to be a full lover to myself. When I masturbated, I masturbated to fantasies of making love to a man or a man making love to me. The thought never entered my mind to imagine myself making love to another woman or to imagine myself making love to me. I wasn't able to be direct, to tell me "I love you" and to give up the fantasy of having somebody else mirror my own





love back to me. This was a way in which I was giving my power away; in a manner similar to objectification described by Hegel concerning religion, where human beings project their love onto a god who would then love them back, as opposed to human beings loving themselves and feeling that they were divine or sacred in their own humanness. I think that loving ourselves is the most fundamental and basic homosexual love affair we can have, i.e., to be truly turned on to and cherish ourselves.

I see being lovers with other women and being a lover to myself as very closely intertwined. By being able to truly make love to another woman I am also accepting my own sexuality and womanhood. The statement to myself is that my body is beautiful and O.K. just as other women's bodies are beautiful and O.K.

In becoming lovers with myself I

confront another contradiction with my female scripting. My programming always inclined me to desire to be monogamous. But if I'm loving myself, being sexy with me and a real lover to myself, and do not decide to be celibate, I am not only homosexual but I am also no longer monogamous.

I feel it is absolutely imperative that I have a relationship with myself. The need for women to be in dependency relationships for security and safety colludes deeply with women's oppression. My conditioning has, in the past, led me to lose myself in other people and to depend on being in a couple for my identity. Now I feel it is crucial for my well being that I first be in a relationship with myself—that being my most basic and primary relationship—and that only secondarily I be involved with other people.

Loving Men

I want to preface this section by

saying that because we as women have more permission to love men in this heterosexist society I have put more emphasis in this paper on loving other women and ourselves rather than men, although, I want these options to be equal.

As I have gotten more in touch with my own power, I have developed relationships with some men who make it worth it for me to struggle with them and show me what's in it for me to struggle with men in general. These men understand how sexism oppresses them as well as me are actively fighting it. They desire to be in an equal relationship with a powerful and independent woman and support me in my love of women and myself.

I have learned a great deal from my struggles with the man I have related to for almost four years. He has taught me much about power and about not being afraid, and I've taught him much about

being in touch with feelings and love. We both, at different times, have exchanged sex roles and are now pretty much complete, independent people. We are good friends; feel like family to each other; we have other lovers about whom we don't keep secrets; we live in the same house with other people but have our own separate rooms; and we work hard on not oppressing others through our being a couple.

I have a few other deep and meaningful friendships, some sexual, with women and men in which I feel free to share myself completely.

There are many men for whom I feel compassion and support but because of where they are in the process of their own liberation, I do not feel they can give to me as much as I can give to them, so I talk straight to them about how much energy I have to struggle with them.

LOVE POEM

you: a man:
dark blossom
petals opening
one by one
perfect, as a rain drop is perfect
and glistening
as the leaf it's touched.
I am the leaf
I grow near you:
man: growing open
inside soft like sunrise

Joy Marcus

Are Men the Enemy?

I have understanding for the position that some of my lesbian sisters have taken in reference to heterosexual and bisexual women. In an effort to protect themselves from women who are heterosexual and prefer men to women, some lesbian women have decided that they do not want to be intimate with women who do not proclaim themselves to be lesbian, that is primarily devoted emotionally and sexually to women. I know the hurt that women incur when a friend or lover chooses a man over them because of heterosexual prejudices. I understand their desire to protect themselves particularly from women seeking a "gay experience" and I support their interests to struggle only with other lesbian women.

But I want to support heterosexual women to become bisexual, and I want it to be easy for them to do so. I do not believe it should be necessary for a woman (although she may want to) to make a decision to define herself as lesbian when she decides that she wants to have relationships with other women. But some lesbian women say they cannot support women to become bisexual. They see bisexuality as undermining women's liberation. For instance, Loretta Ulmschneider, in the March issue of *Furies*, says: "Women who practice bisexuality today are simply leading highly privileged lives that do not challenge male power and that, in fact, undermine the feminist struggle."

Although I definitely disagree with the above position I can see the value of a separatist movement in the process of overcoming sexist or heterosexual oppression in this country, at this time. There are positive functions I see that a separatist movement can perform: First, to intensify the contradictions by particularly highlighting the oppression of homosexuals in a predominantly heterosexual society and, second, to help lesbians as an oppressed minority to gain a sense of their own unity and power. I'm sure there are others, and I hope lesbians will articulate them for us, and I support them to do so.

Politically, I support women who desire to struggle with men and who have energy to teach men how they oppress women and how they, as men, are oppressed by sexism. I'm not talking about women continuing to rescue men by doing more than 50% of the work in struggling as they have been trained to do by their programming. But I do support women to make equitable trade agreements with men that will make available to women what men have to offer, such as knowledge and skills about means of production and power. In return women can offer information about sexism, nurturing and being in touch with feelings. Just as white people cannot learn how they oppress Black people without Black people pointing it out to them, men cannot fully understand how they oppress women without women pointing it out to them. It is vital that women have access to Movement men who have power. If communication is not maintained and there is not a willingness and desire to struggle, I fear that it is possible for all men to be seen as the enemy and to be thus objectified. This type of objectification can become bigotry and has been the rationale for genocide and other crimes against humanity.

I believe that the main political

thrust of my bisexuality is that it involves a decision to continue intense struggles with men as well as women. To fight the capitalist system and people's oppressive actions we need to unite with truly revolutionary men to struggle against all our oppression. I know that some lesbian sisters believe that it is politically incorrect for them to struggle with men at this time because it colludes with men's existing privilege and misuses of power in our sexist society. I support them in their decision to follow their beliefs, and I ask for their support of me following mine.

I do see what's in it for me to struggle with men. Just as Black women clearly see their brothers being greatly oppressed, I see mine as also oppressed and desire to see them liberated. They make up 50% of the population, and I do not want to relinquish access to them. I want access to men so I can make demands on them. (See Jo Freeman, "Tyranny of Structurelessness," in *Ms.*, July 1973.) Men's programming disconnects them from their loving emotions and causes them to be afraid by preventing them from nurturing and loving themselves and each other. I think frightened people are dangerous, and I believe that we should keep an eye on them. I want to be able to demand that they learn to nurture and love themselves and other men and stop being dangerous in and to the world.

Bisexuality inclines a person away from monogamy and, as I have already stated, this also happens when people are into having loving relationships with themselves. I believe that fighting monogamy is a very important revolutionary act, that monogamy is the kingpin of the nuclear family which reinforces individuality and competition, and that serial or emotional monogamy reinforces our inability to function effectively and succeed in groups. If we are able to love only one person in a deep and meaningful way, we are seriously hindered from developing a collectivized, socialist movement in this country.

I can easily understand and nurture women who decide that they do not have energy to struggle intimately with men because they don't see what's in it for them. Also, I don't want to discount the fact that although the level of commitment may be less for men than it is for women some lesbians do struggle in a meaningful and important way with men.

However, I won't support women who take the position that they're O.K. and men (or women who relate to men) are not O.K. I do not think it is politically or humanly correct to decide that half of humanity is not O.K. although I can easily understand women having a loving preference for women. I have support for women to be strong individuals, to be powerful, to be brave, to not be afraid, to be beautiful, to have relationships with themselves and with others, both women and men. I think that the ability to maintain sovereignty as an individual while cooperating in long term and meaningful non-monogamous relationships with others which allow you also to maintain your individuality is very important for us learning to work together. These ongoing relationships with women and men provide a continuing source of feedback and support that can help us recreate ourselves and enable us to become the

human beings that we want to be. I support all women to be beautiful, powerful amazons, and to give up male-oriented toughness, cruelty, killing and hatred and replace it with true Human Power which is loving and life supporting.

I think it is important for men to learn to love other men, to learn to love their own bodies, their own sexuality, and the bodies and sexuality of their brothers. I think that it is a very basic contradiction that people are repulsed and afraid of the bodies and sexuality of their own sex. I believe that this is most acute in men where it reinforces competitive and distrustful feelings about each other and colludes with their lack of nurturing for themselves and other men. I think that men who get in touch with their feelings and in touch with their love for themselves and each other will find it difficult to go to war, and will not be able to compete in a capitalist society's brutal marketplace. They will also, hopefully, feel safe enough to give up any illegitimate power they have and understand that sexist oppression doesn't profit them in the long run.

I am disturbed by a tendency that I see developing in which it has become "politically correct" to be gay, and I think that it is possible that this will promote women into wanting to be gay out of competitive or politically inadequate feelings, rather than wanting to be gay because it's an exciting and beautiful thing for them. I think it is crucial for women who are thinking of being loving with other women to be intimate and sexy *only* with women who *really* turn them on in a physical as well as emotional way, women with whom they feel physically and emotionally comfortable. That they do not attempt to develop a relationship based solely on a friendship and/or to be "radically chic." To be gay because it is "politically correct" is unfair and oppressive to the truly gay women involved. Also it is not nurturing of their own gayness, which can be thrown into question by the contradictions created when, on the one hand, a person thinks she should be turned on, but her actual real-life experience is that she isn't.

Finally, I think it is very important that group leaders or anyone working with people in a psychiatric mode demystify where they are at sexually and expose any biases or prejudices that might otherwise be mystified and yet conveyed in that situation. I don't see bisexuality and lesbianism at all being mutually exclusive and certainly think at this point it's an obvious mistake for us to attack each other.

In closing I want to say to women who are thinking about coming out: come out sisters; take your time about it, enjoy yourselves, love yourselves, love your sisters, and don't be afraid to love those of your brothers who earn that precious love.

I especially want to thank my dear friends Joy Marcus and Claude Steiner for their great help as editors and supporters. I also want to thank Korain Powers, Carmen Kerr and Coconut FireRaven for their feedback and support and Anita Friedman for her criticisms and hard work in struggle.

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Awed by her splendor

Stars near the lovely
moon cover their own
bright faces

when she
is roundest and lights
earth with her silver

Thank you, my dear

You came, and you did
well to come: I needed
you. You have made

love blaze up in
my breast—bless you!
Bless you as often

as the hours have
been endless to me
while you were gone

I was so happy

Believe me, I
prayed that that
night might be
doubled for us

Day in, day out

I hunger and
I struggle

You will say

See, I have come
back to the soft
arms I turned from
in the old days

The gods bless you

May you sleep then
on some tender
girl friend's breast

— Sappho



Thoughts on Men's Oppression

Rick DeGolia

For five years I have been relating to and struggling with women who, as part of the process of fighting their own oppression, have demanded equality in their associations with men. It is only in the past two years that I and other men have begun to realize that we were in need of a liberation movement ourselves. We have found our relationships with each other to be unfulfilling, performance-oriented and competitive. As a result, I have been going through important personal changes. The information in this paper is the reason for and consequence of those changes.

Introduction

Men are oppressed. All men experience it, but few men *really feel* it and fewer admit it either to themselves or to others. We are taught that oppressed people are weak and dependent. We are also taught that men are supposed to be strong and independent. Both are lies. Both are *very* important in order to insure the social, economic, and political status quo. Oppression of men is maintained through our isolation from each other. As workers, professionals, and businessmen we are plugged into competitive political, social, and economic systems the nature of which reinforces our isolation from each other. To overcome this isolation and the resulting oppression we must understand our social programming and act against what we don't like by integrating new ways of being into our daily lives.

Sex-role training has no beginning. It is a continuous function. It exists everywhere and within everything in our society. It is impossible to take it at the beginning and to explain it to the end. All one can do is jump in and begin to struggle.

The Real Man

Men have been taught to be cut off from emotions and feelings. We are

taught that there is no need for feelings—that they only get in the way of efficient and successful action. The image of a "real man" is that *he can take it*, that he doesn't feel pain. The "real" man always comes out on top, he always wins. He's big and strong and muscle bound. He's unemotional, and he doesn't get upset. He (gives the impression that he) is *always* in control.

Understanding this description of male sex-role programming is central to demystifying men's oppression. Men are given this package and told to fit into it. Men are trained to believe that all other men are trying to fit into this package, and if something goes wrong it is an individual problem and an individual inadequacy. This kind of conditioning shortchanges men, it keeps us from developing our full human potential.

Alienated Labor

It is important and enlightening to examine male sex-role programming in terms of our economic structures. Our society is structured around work which people do out of economic survival rather than free choice. This work or labor is generally very unfulfilling and alienated because 1) the worker has no control over the product which he creates, and 2) the conditions under which he works are very dehumanizing.

Alienated labor creates a foundation for sex-role oppression (Steiner and Wyckoff, 1971.) The only way anyone can bear the boredom and brutalization of alienated labor is to be cut off from all feeling. It is impossible for someone who is tuned in to his feelings and acutely aware of his well being to stand in an assembly line putting together cars or sit at a desk shuffling papers for eight hours a day. Even if someone were dedicated to organizing his or her co-workers, being cut off from feelings would be essential in order to maintain sanity in an alienated labor situation.

Bearing the physical and psychological pain of alienated labor is one of the things that men have to do in order to survive in this society.

Here the analogy between sexual performance and alienated labor is appropriate (Marcuse, 1964). Sexually, men are oppressed by the drive to "get it over with," and the programming to "put on a show." In the factory men are oppressed by dehumanizing conditions, and alienation from their feelings. In both situations men are told to "do whatever you must as quickly as you can." Each supports the other with the emphasis on the "goal-oriented success" of production. The result is a continuation of the status quo.

Why do men put up with it? There are many reasons, but two which are particularly relevant to this paper are 1) because it is difficult to find alternatives, and 2) because, if we refuse it, we are tremendously guilt-ridden. American society has made the working man synonymous with American Manhood. As President of General Motors, it is very important to keep the vast majority of workers thinking "I can take it" rather than "Why the hell should I?" That way you can turn out more automobiles, more quickly. The worker is made to associate General Motors' efficiency, success, and performance with his own efficiency, success, and performance.

Alienated labor teaches people how to be isolated and powerless. Alienated labor disempowers people; it makes "men into machines" and it teaches people how not to relate to each other. In this context, it is very important that men consider it weak to ask for help or support. As long as people are isolated from each other and afraid of each other it is impossible for us to realize that we are all being oppressed in very similar ways.



"Why don't you act like a man?"

Guilty and Trapped

A basic manifestation of male sex-role programming is that men tend not to be spontaneous. Men are trained to associate spontaneity with loss of control, and thus to fear it. By not being spontaneous we, as men, disconnect ourselves from our gut feelings, and tend to talk about or act on what we would like to feel or what we wish we could feel, rather than what we actually do feel. The result is that "headtripping" becomes the main substitute for feeling and that our society very rigorously teaches men the skill of "rational thinking" in order to insure alienation from emotions. A concrete description of this is a situation I call Guilty and Trapped.

In our society we are taught to get into various behavior patterns. If a person rejects the conditioning and acts according to his true feelings, an internal control mechanism registers guilt. Guilt is the rope around our necks which always pulls taut whenever we begin to "get out of line." Guilt makes people fear that something is wrong with them. Guilt is essential in keeping men cut off from feelings and locked into the social programming. When a person begins to feel guilty he usually gets locked into worrying about what he's doing wrong, or what he should be doing instead. This escalates the guilt. Worrying becomes a substitute for feeling. As long as a person continues to worry about what he's doing, or what he's not doing, or what he should be doing, it's impossible to feel anything but the unpleasantness of worrying. In order to avoid worrying, men also often avoid feeling. The result is that all actions come out in terms of performance.

Performance is the programmed alternative to spontaneity. By performance I mean action which is programmed or premeditated and does not match the feeling state. When a person is afraid of doing something wrong or afraid of showing weakness it is easier to adopt acceptable sex-role behavior patterns than to struggle through the problems involved in feeling. However, the avoidance of feeling creates other, often much greater problems.

In this society we are taught that men should be strong, not weak. And

since making mistakes is considered a sign of weakness, male sex-role conditioning very thoroughly teaches that a "real man" doesn't make mistakes. This leaves men 1) afraid of making mistakes and 2) guilty once a mistake is made. Because of this a man's actions are going to be guarded and performance oriented. The rule "A real man doesn't make mistakes," is enforced through a series of internal messages or voices of doubt and caution. Often the oppressive content of these messages is disguised by a mask of false self-protection. Some examples are "Watch out, you're going to make a mistake; That's too much, you'd better cool it; That wasn't a mistake, but you'd better cool it anyway; You really blew it, you'd better give up, etc." In Radical Psychiatry we call these messages "pig messages" which come from "the enemy." (Anita Friedman has suggested that the "pig parent" be considered "the enemy" in each of us.) "The enemy" or "the pig parent" is that part of us which enforces the oppressive aspects of our social and sex-role conditioning, some people call it "the government in our heads." Everyone has his or her own internal messages and it is often difficult to determine whether they are truly protective (nurturing—i.e., supporting growth) or falsely protective (pig—i.e., inhibiting growth).

A Guilty and Trapped situation is promoted by these pig messages. They insure that a man will feel guilty by continually reminding him of his mistakes and of how he isn't really a "real man." They also help build the trap by keeping a man out of touch with his feelings and locked into his performance-oriented sex-role programming.

Concretely, a Guilty and Trapped situation occurs in the following way: A man and woman are dating. The woman turns to the man and says, "I really like you, how do you feel about me?" The man answers, "I like you too. I feel that we could have a really beautiful relationship." The woman is immediately flattered. The man sounds as if he likes her a lot. However, (as is often the case) the man may not really like her a lot, he may just be saying so because that is what his programming tells him he should feel or should want to feel (especially if she's "good looking"). He may

actually feel, "Well, I kind of like you, and I'd like to get to know you better." But the catch is "relationship"; because it immediately projects a vision of the future, rather than dealing with the here-and-now reality of the present. The relationship can even look like it *should* for a few weeks, but if that's so it is likely that the man is performing a lot in order to keep the relationship looking "good."

The problem is that he gets into the relationship on the false premise that he's feeling something which in fact he's not feeling at all, but which he *thinks* he *should* be feeling. As the relationship progresses the contradictions between feeling and programming (how it is and how it should be) become increasingly exaggerated. With each contradiction the man becomes increasingly guilty, and the more guilty he gets, the more he is isolated in his head and alienated from his feelings.

At this point, the situation begins to get really uncomfortable. It begins to *feel* like a trap. He doesn't know what to do, but he thinks that he should know, and he thinks that something is wrong with him since he doesn't know. The fact is that he's out of touch with his feelings. He has locked himself into a conception of what he wants the relationship to look like, and every time a contradiction comes up he feels guilty because 1) the contradiction exists, and 2) he doesn't know how to deal with it. Because men are out of touch with feelings and afraid of emotions, they are unable to deal with problems related to feelings and emotions. However, because men are supposed to be competent, both men and women greatly rely on men to "take care of business." The result is that the contradictions are often not dealt with until they are overwhelming. At such a time the relationship dissolves with the man usually feeling guilty and the woman feeling angry or hurt. Because the man doesn't say anything until he feels trapped and because he ignores his feelings until they're overwhelming, the contradictions usually come as a surprise to the woman, she doesn't know what has happened, and she's left up in the air feeling very oppressed and probably imagining something to be wrong with her.

continued



Men's Anger

It is very oppressive for men to fear that mistakes indicate an essential inadequacy or lack of manhood. Always having to be in control, to take responsibility, and to initiate action is terribly oppressive. The result is inner frustration and tension which yields a stifled, confused kind of anger.

Because men are taught to feel guilty about anger (control is the name of the game), it is often suppressed and inhibited. Also because there are no programmed ways to directly confront what is oppressive, the anger is often misdirected. The result is a kind of ever-present frustration which is impossible to satisfy. This is important to a Guilty and Trapped situation because the anger is directed at the partner in very subtle, mystified, and guilt-ridden ways. The pig message is that the anger is illegitimate, that something is wrong with you if you feel angry, and that you should take out your anger on whoever is one-down to you, i.e., women, children, and pets. This pig message serves to further mystify the oppressive reality which created the anger. Misdirected anger often makes its victim equally angry and the situation usually escalates until it becomes a game of "defensive anger" in which each person is ridiculing and "pigging" the other person, just to make him or her feel bad. If this game is allowed to go on the result can be a final blow-up or "end-game" in which both people part feeling very angry, very hurt, and often hatred for one another.

Competition

Men are kept isolated from each other through competition and fear. The reinforcement for competition in our society is immense. Praise is often considered most valuable when given in comparative terms; e.g., "You were the best in the class," or "You did better than . . ." Value is placed on individual accomplishment rather than cooperation. We are told to "cooperate" with parental or authority figures, and when we do, we get approval, and are treated as good children. But when we begin to cooperate with each other it is considered weak, or threatening, or cheating.

At the basis of competitive programming is fear, particularly fear of scarcity. The messages behind the fear speak directly to the lack of cooperation, e.g., "I'll be left behind," "Look out, here I come," or "If I can't make it neither can you," etc. The result is that men often think that they are protecting themselves, or taking care of themselves, by competing. This is particularly clear in terms of men not expressing their ideas or feelings. Men are taught to watch out for everyone, especially other men, because if "someone gets to know something you know, it will be used against you." The idea is not to trust anyone and not to show feelings because if a person trusts or shows his feelings, then he is vulnerable, and being vulnerable is 1) weak, and 2) the means through which people get manipulated. These two points are lies. They keep men afraid of their own feelings and afraid of recognizing feelings in other people. They are an essential part of male sex-role programming.



MARRIAGE



**"Genuine equality between the sexes
can only be realized
in the socialist transformation
of society as a whole."**

--Mao Tse-tung, 1955

Body Awareness

Men have been taught to relate to their surrounding world from an almost entirely intellectual perspective. This perspective ignores feelings and fears emotions. Our sex-role training discounts not only our feelings, but those of others. We can confront part of this oppressive training by listening to and accounting for the feelings of others. But what about ourselves? Unless such change is a head-trip the answer is obviously yes. In order to reclaim our feelings—and it is a process of reclaiming—we must start to reclaim our bodies. We need to stop giving our power and self-determination up to verbal messages which keep us locked into rational jail cells. I am not suggesting that we give up the much treasured skill of being able to think well. However, I am suggesting that we begin to take responsibility for the feelings that exist throughout our bodies.

Some important steps to reclaiming feelings are 1) To feel safe to experiment with feelings in the presence of people we trust. Support and honest feedback from other people is essential. 2) To be conscious of the fact that there are feelings which have been ignored for a long time. 3) To let those feelings come to the surface on their own timing, don't force them. 4) To become aware of your breathing. Very few of us breathe to our full capacity. Our bodies suffer. Deep breathing which expands the diaphragm into the stomach distributes more oxygenated blood throughout the body. The result is a surfacing of feelings. Men tend to breathe only into their chests because it makes them look and feel strong and muscle-bound. In order to breathe just into the chest one has to "lock" his diaphragm, keep a tight gut, and a tight anal sphincter. This literally "locks out" a lot of feeling and sensitivity.

Trusting intuition is a part of reclaiming feelings. Intuition is a very human capacity which men have been trained to ignore. Men can learn a lot about intuition from women. If one gives himself permission to pay attention to his intuitive fantasies, his intuition will develop on its own. (See Steiner, IRT #1 for further discussion.)

Performance and Sexuality

How to perform is something both boys and girls are taught very early. Boys are taught to go outside and play, to learn how to take care of the world. They are given lots of reinforcement for "showing off" and "proving themselves," i.e., performing. For men, performance "rules" are clearly manifested in sex.

In our society men and boys are given a lot of unstated permission to masturbate. On the surface this may seem like a good thing, but it limits men's sexuality to their genitals. Instead of being encouraged to make love to themselves as whole human beings, men are encouraged to "jack off," "jerk off," or "beat their meat," all of which are very limited genital approaches to masturbation. In this way, masturbation acts as an incomplete release which is very oppressive.

It is oppressive in three ways. 1) The permission is genital, and has little to do with bodily sensual feeling. 2) The act of masturbation is entirely goal-oriented. The orgasm is all that counts. 3) The permission involves a double message: do it, but don't feel good about it. It's OK, but it's not OK. The guilt which all boys associate with masturbation can seriously inhibit sexual well-being throughout life. This guilt is

very important in that it conditions men to be paranoid and uneasy about any kind of future sexual involvement. One consequence is the tendency to "get it over with." The correlation between this tendency and a hurried sexual contact is obvious. Rushing through a sexual experience is a programmed way of retaining genital sexuality without experiencing an emotional loss of control.

Boys are taught that "real" sex is "getting laid." It is necessary to go out into the world and get it. It is something which a boy often tries to do before he is emotionally ready because it will prove his manliness. On every high school and college campus across this country sexual performance is considered a major proof of manhood. In this context, sex is conquest and the performer is alienated from feeling and emotion.

Sex has glory (in that it brings manly respect) and it inevitably becomes goal-directed. Even as the concept of sex has changed from "getting laid" to "making love," and as men have begun to relate to women as human beings rather than as mysterious sexual objects, much of the goal-directedness has been retained. The most blatant act of sexual performance is when sex becomes totally oriented toward the male orgasm without any consideration for the sexual partner.

Pleasure: The Source Of Good

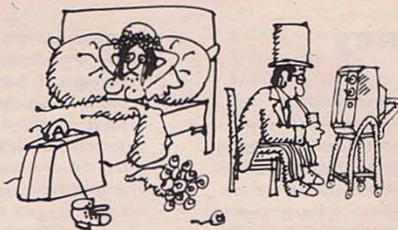
PLEASURE, Alexander Lowen, Coward, 1970, \$5.95. Lancer, 1971, pap. \$.95.

The body, as opposed to the ego, desires pleasure, not power. Bodily pleasure is the source from which all our good feelings and good thinking stems. If the bodily pleasure of an individual is destroyed, he becomes an angry, frustrated, and hateful person. His thinking becomes distorted, and his creative potential is lost. He develops self-destructive attitudes.

Even between a man and a woman struggling to experience sex in a warm, gentle, physically sharing way, the problem of sexual performance continually crops up. Now that men are aware that women can have, and want, orgasms, there is a strong tendency to put energy into "giving" women orgasms. That is, the central focus of sexual performance moves from the male orgasm to the female orgasm. Men "prove their manhood," i.e., are good performers, by giving women good orgasms; but they may lose the experience for themselves. They aren't really experiencing the love feelings and animal sharing. It is fine to

men. Girls are taught to play with dolls, to be responsive to the family baby, and ultimately to take care of and nurture other people. They are taught to pay close attention to mother and to learn from her. Boys are taught to play with blocks, and trains, and cars, and friends; but it is considered feminine and unnatural for boys to play with dolls. Boys are taught to accept nurturing from mother and to learn how to be a man from father. Thus men are programmed to be dependent on women for love and for support to grow.

In our society the only time a man is given permission to nurture is when



Lou Myers

"Television is a very poor substitute for human relationships."

UNBECOMING MEN. Times Change, 1971, pap. \$1.25. Penwell, Washington, NJ 07882.

Jeannette was the last woman I dated before growing up. She was the most self-aware person I'd met, and I determined that all I wanted of her was to make her, partly just for sex, but a lot for the make itself, the ego, the conquest, the thrill, the power. Everything I did and said I calculated, psyching her up and manipulating her toward the kill. By our third date I knew I'd won. It was just a matter of time.

learn to be a good lover, but as Wilhelm Reich has pointed out, a total letting go of control, not to the other person but to the unity of the experience, is important in a fulfilling sexual experience. If a man is performing sexually, that is, always initiating, and always taking responsibility for the sexual excitement of his partner, he will be significantly limiting the depth of his sexual experience and even his sexual involvement. Most decisions such as timing or setting have traditionally been the responsibility of the man. Men can begin to demand that women make more of the decisions, take more of the responsibility, and do more of the initiating. Women are oppressed by and collude with male sexual oppression by "laying back" and letting men do most of the work.

Nurturing

One of the most important things for men to do is to learn how to nurture themselves and other people. To nurture is to give the right kind of love at the right time, essentially to support growth. Women are taught to nurture everyone but themselves (Wyckoff, 1973). Men are taught that we will be taken care of by women. For men to overcome their sex-role programming and to be autonomous, whole human beings, we must learn how to nurture. Nurturing is a learned skill which is encouraged in women and inhibited in

someone else is one-down, or in no way threatening. In this situation the social message is "Don't give anyone strength that can be used against you." This insures competition and the status quo. This is clearly exemplified by the fact that men can easily give nurturing to women when women are crying. The underlying message is "So long as you are one-down, I'll take care of you." In this context a woman soon learns that if she wants to be nurtured, indeed, if she wants any strokes at all from men, she must act one-down. Male nurturing, if given only in this context, reinforces a woman's oppression. She learns that if she comes on strong and asks for what she wants, she will be considered demanding and uppity and men will walk away, thus making her feel that if she wants anything from men she has to remain in her oppressive, one-down role.

Conclusion

Women are oppressed by men as a group, but men are not oppressed by women as a group. What is oppressive to men is their dependence on women. This society is structured and run by men for the material benefit of men. It is necessarily oppressive to women. However, for men, everything hinges on the fact that men can't do it alone. "Behind every great man there is a woman." Men are oppressed by their inability to be autonomous, complete, loving human beings.

The work men need to do on their sex-role conditioning is twofold. One: men need to learn how to stop oppressing women. In order to do this men must stop exploiting women, but also stop being afraid of women, stop competing with women, and start understanding women. Two: Men need to learn to be autonomous, i.e., how to stop believing that women are necessary to validate a man's humanity. Men need to get in touch with their feelings, and to stop being dependent on women for emotions. Men have had their emotions stolen from them by a system which delivers only material benefits to a few. In order to feel, men have been forced to rely on women. This must be stopped. Men must begin to open themselves up, to go into their souls, and to rediscover their feelings. This process may be painful and may be time consuming. It is the process of reclaiming one's humanity. Sex roles have defined human behavior for a very long time. There are reasons why they have existed. The reasons are built on moral values which are no longer relevant; and on social, political, and economic values which are oppressive. Sex-role behavior used to be viewed as cooperative, as give and take, and as necessary for human survival. This is no longer true. Social, moral, political and personal values, needs, and wants have all changed decisively in the past two hundred years. The complimentary give and take of the sex-role exchange is no longer cooperative, indeed it is oppressive. Sex roles directly inhibit growth and change. They insure the personal oppression of men and women, and they coopt us into furthering the political oppression of capitalism and imperialism.

Men's consciousness-raising groups and problem-solving groups can be very important in helping men to gain the freedom to make decisions from want

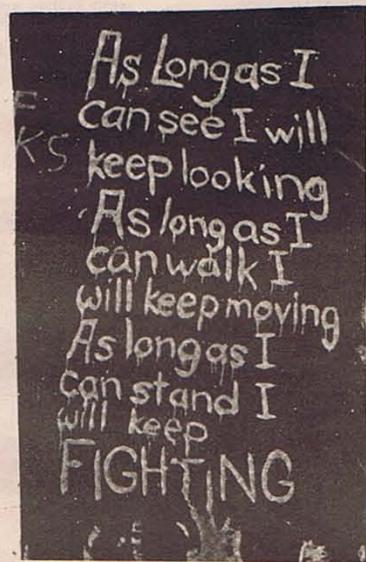
and need, rather than from incapacities or guilt. Making decisions that lead to changes which oppose many years of programming are often very difficult and very frightening. Open support from a group, a community, or a family becomes essential.

We have all been mystified about both the quantity and quality of support and friendship we can get from other human beings. We have never been taught how to support each other to radically examine our present behavior and values. Likewise we have never been taught how to create a revolution. Confronting these problems and working them through enlightens us to the possibilities of deeper and more extensive human relationships. In order to create meaningful change in ourselves and in our society, it is essential for people to break away from their guilt, unhappiness, and despair—all of which I believe have direct ties to sex-role programming. Support from other struggling people, particularly other brothers, is absolutely necessary for men to overcome their sex-role oppression.

The information in this paper comes from a workshop I did with Jed Pogram in August at the Berkeley Radical Psychiatry Conference, from a men's problem-solving group that we lead together, from basic Radical Psychiatry theory, and from the continuing dialogue of the struggling brothers and sisters at the Berkeley Radical Psychiatry Center. Also I would like to give special credit to Jed for the contribution of his ideas and to Hogie, Lian, Claude, and Anita for support and work in helping to put this paper together.

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Intimacy

Joy Marcus

Preface

I have written this article for two reasons: 1) because I believe that happy intimate relationships are, and will be, an inextricable component of a revolutionary force—as I envision such a force—(indeed, I don't want a revolution that doesn't give primacy to the value and development of loving human relationships) and 2) because I believe that while intimacy is a basic human need from which many people are alienated it has been, at best, of only peripheral interest to psychiatry and, instead, it should be a central concern of psychiatrists. Surely, I feel, the issue should be taken very seriously by soul-healers and organizers who are also committed to radical, i.e., thorough-going, political change in this country.

People need intimacy to be happy. People need a variety of intimate relationships to be happy and they need a variety of environments or contexts in which different types of intimacy can be realized. People need the intimacy of community. (Marcus, 1971) They need work which is non-alienated; non-alienated labor carries with it the potential for intimacy. And people need intimacy in their living situations.

When people seeking psychiatric help complain to me that they're unhappy and don't know why, one of the earliest questions I ask is: "Do you have friends who are honest with you, whom you trust and who love you?" I ask that question because I believe, based on my experience, that people who have enough loving friends willing to talk straight to them seldom need psychiatric help. Work in group with people who answer the question in the negative usually includes the development of intimacy skills. Intimacy skills have to do with how to say hello and what to say and do after you say hello.

In this paper four things happen: 1) I talk about how psychiatry keeps us apart; 2) I offer a general theory and definition of intimacy and I divide intimacy into types; 3) I talk about different types of alienation which operate as barriers to intimacy, and 4) I indicate a relationship between intimacy and political power.

Conspiracy

There is a conspiracy to keep us apart. There are a number of participants in the conspiracy; at the moment I am most concerned with the psychiatric industry.

Psychiatrists collude to keep people apart. They seldom talk about intimacy and when they do most people don't understand them. It's notable that in the vast body of psychiatric literature there is no theory of intimacy. The closest Freud got to it was to say that what "normal" people should be able to do is "to love and to work." And he said it in passing; it was an off-the-cuff remark made to a reporter at an airport.

Eric Berne said that of the five ways people structure time intimacy is one; he described it as the absence of withdrawal, work, rituals, pastimes, games but he also is reputed to have said most people don't experience more than fifteen minutes of intimacy in their lifetimes. Erik Erikson categorized intimacy; he called it the sixth stage of human development occurring in young adulthood. But he didn't define intimacy, and he didn't tell anyone how to achieve it. And, according to Erikson, little kids can't get right with each other.

Fritz Perls said, "If we meet that's

beautiful, if not, it can't be helped." At least Perls held out the possibility of getting it on, but he had nothing to say about commitment or duration. In a paper published in the *International Journal of Psychiatry* (1970-71) a doctor, named Alan Stone, writes that intimacy "... can be viewed as a re-experiencing of the dyad and those narcissistic gratifications (I think he means being in love—J.M.) that precede the solidification of the super-ego. Thus intimacy may carry a special burden of psycho-sexual and analytic meaning... But intimacy, however it is defined, as one learns at great length from *patience and from the existential literature of alienation and aloneness, is not easily attained.*" (Emphasis added—J.M.)

A bit later in the paper, which is actually about the encounter movement and sensitivity training, Stone describes the release of love feelings. He says: "There is a striking resemblance to an ego state of hypo-mania, if not one of joy or intimacy."

I chose to quote Alan Stone because he exemplifies well for me how traditional psychiatry contributes to keeping people apart. First, the language is nearly unintelligible. Surely, real people were not intended to understand it. Thus the doctor colludes with people's alienation by mystifying them. Second, once all the gobbledy-gook is unravelled, one can see his message is incorrect. Indeed, what I get out of what he's saying is that it's not quite "healthy" to be happy. And third, he says that even if it is okay to be happy, forget it kids. *Anyone* who's read a few 20th century novels, psychology and sociology textbooks *knows* that ain't nobody (except *maybe a very few special* princes and princesses) gonna get it on. We're all doomed.

I suppose one of the reasons the issue of intimacy has not been duly confronted in psychiatry is because the field is male-dominated and most men, due to the oppression of their sex-role training, are not very available to intimacy. That is, men have been trained to be generally turned-off and tuned-out. (See Steiner, IRT #1 and Wyckoff, IRT #2.)

Therefore, another way psychiatrists cause alienation (which is antithetical to intimacy) is by withholding their own feelings from people "in therapy"; they don't let people know if and when they're feeling close to them or feeling turned-off, nor do they suggest to their "clients" that they would be happier if: 1) they had *several* intimate relationships; 2) they were involved in a community or in the process of creating a community; and 3) their work was non-alienated.

Admittedly, there are a few psychiatrists around who have written books which tell people things they can do to get closer, but those books are written for heterosexual, white, middle and upper-middle class people. In short, although they do say you don't have to be married to have *sexual* intimacy, they are sexist, racist and capitalist.

Psychiatry supports the maintenance of the nuclear family which, with but a few exceptions, is a tremendous barrier to intimacy. In order to understand how the nuclear family is a barrier to intimacy it is helpful to understand "the stroke economy." (Steiner, 1971) A stroke is a unit of positive human recognition—hug, smile, compliment, etc. The stroke economy is an artificial limit placed on strokes. We've been brought up to believe there's a scarcity of strokes and we've been taught a bunch of crazy and crazy-making rules





photo/Steven Shames

about stroking: you can only stroke certain people at certain times in certain places in certain ways, etc. (Wyckoff, 1971) Further, as relates to intimacy, some families say: it's okay to stroke other people outside the family as long as you don't fall in love with them.

Intimacy has to do with sharing—love and work. So the way the nuclear family operates against intimacy is by perpetuating the society's competitive values and behavior, following rules which coerce people into suppressing love feelings (not to mention other feelings, too). Essentially, people become alienated from their capacity for sharing. When people must suppress their love feelings in one place, the feelings will be suppressed in other places. In other words, if I am in a family which has forbidden me to love anyone outside its boundaries, then I will either turn off my feelings (I'll become alienated) or I will become angry. When I feel anger for a long time I won't feel love. My love feelings for people within the familial boundaries will have been squelched. And I won't be able to get close to anyone. There are many more specific ways in which the nuclear family oppresses people's capacity for intimacy which can be understood in terms of sex-role scripting.

Definition and Theory

Intimacy is the experience of loving relatedness. It is being and feeling close to people whom we like and/or love. While people need strokes in order to survive, they need intimacy in order to grow, to learn, to be validated and renewed and to have a good time. Without strokes people get depressed and sometimes even die. Without intimacy people are static, predictable, non-dynamic, easily manipulated and exploited. While intimacy is impossible without stroking, all the strokes in the world do not necessarily constitute intimacy.

People seek intimacy—so much so that many people I've known were willing to sacrifice a certain amount of high-quality strokes, if necessary, in order to insure the stability of an on-going intimate relationship.

Intimacy is not just intense stroking. It seems a bit more complex than that. (Not that stroking is always the simplest matter in the world!) I would say that intimacy can be an intense experience and that stroking is integral to it. However, unless we re-define stroking to include a wider range of possibilities than we've defined so far, I would say that often the experience of feeling close to people can be achieved with quite a minimum of stroking. When people are open to themselves and to each other they feel close; they are kindred spirits, soul-mates. What people reveal when they open up to each other and to themselves might not be strokes, per se.

Intimacy is a condition in the process of loving. One need not feel love, it appears, in order to experience intimacy. Intimacy and love are not synonymous. Some people feel permission to love, to feel love—"at a distance"—but have been programmed against intimacy, against being close to others.

There is a range of intimate experience. On an imaginary scale of 1 to 10, "1" is "hangin' out with your favorite long-time buddies" and "10" is the experience of being at one with another person or persons—total unity.

There are two types of intimacy that I wish to discuss right now. Type-I intimacy is the experience of enduring and loving relatedness. At its best it carries with it explicit commitments of nurturance and protection in the service of mutual (or collective) as well as in-

dividual liberation. People involved in Type-I relationships usually, but not necessarily, live together. Type-II intimacy is experienced in the "here and now." It is a peak experience; it's a "high." Type-II intimacy is the experience of oneness, of unity; it is ecstasy.

Intimacy-II is often a mystical experience. Many psychiatrists (other people, too) discount what we experience as mystical. They call it aberrant, schizophrenic, or hypo-manic. They associate it with self-delusion or dreamy confusion. Historically, mysticism has been associated with dark and evil forces; it's been considered beyond human comprehension, transcendental, not human and not of this world.

Actually, I think our mystical part is our intuition operating at its most exquisite human level. It is our ability to tune-in, to empathize, to read minds, to feel souls.

People who have intimacy-I do not necessarily experience intimacy-II, and people who are able to experience intimacy-II are not necessarily involved in type-I relationships. The ideal is to have a variety of loving relationships and intimate experiences which elicit a maximum amount of ecstasy or, at least, mellowness.

Everyone Can Do It

Everyone has the capacity for intimacy. The problem is that people have been deceived and oppressed. Either nobody ever told us about being close or we've been told intimacy is not available to us and/or that we are wrong, bad or crazy to seek it. And the other problem is survival. People who must work very hard for long periods of time, especially at meaningless tasks, just don't have much time, energy or interest to cultivate relationships—either in the work context or outside of work. Or if there is time it is used to purchase and consume things which we've been told is the main reason for working. Also some people have grown too dead inside to be aware that intimacy is something they need. And, as further reinforcement for alienation, people believe or have been led to believe that if they feel dead inside that that's how life is and just accept it.

On the other hand, if everyone could fulfill their capacity for intimacy anytime, anywhere we'd all feel quite high and be active. We wouldn't be consumers, we'd be actors, participants. There is a link between people's capacity for intimacy and political power.

Intimate relationships, like all relationships, can be viewed in terms of power. The kind of power I'm talking about—and advocating—is the organic, self-determined, potentially anarchist-type (grassroots), as opposed to authoritarian-type power which is forced on us by this country's government and its rulers. If we accept the idea that the personal is political (political being directly concerned with the distribution of power) then it would follow that the extent of a person's political base—sphere of influence, ability to act effectively—would be determined in direct proportion to her personal (intimate) relationships. In other words, the more intimacy people have in their lives the more power they are likely to accrue. And the more power people have, based on the quality and quantity of their intimate relationships, the more they will be able to change themselves and act against their oppressive, exploitative society—while having a good time doing it. ■

(See Bibliography for this article on page 34.)

class and status, but the dynamics remain appallingly the same. Much of the resistance to equal employment opportunities for women and gay men stems from the realization that their presence would disastrously disrupt these closed male clubs.

Since nearly everyone needs some close relationships in order to maintain a sense of well-being, most straight men do occasionally initiate special friendships with another man. However there is always something threatening about these relationships and this is handled by an elaborate and unspoken ritual. Initially the taboos found in the group are strictly maintained. Frequently the friendship never progresses beyond this impoverished level, and indeed the fact that two men continue to seek each other out may in itself be a simple satisfaction which exceeds the group experience. In many cases, however, one partner will eventually test the other with a tentative and minor violation of one of the taboos. ("Say, George, I thought you looked upset yesterday when that deal you worked so hard on fell through. Anything I can do?") When this happens, the second partner may ignore it. ("Oh, that's the way it goes. How's your contract coming?") He may react negatively with a covert signal that the overture was not welcome. ("Are you kidding? I never let things like that get to me. What's the matter? Don't you have a thick skin?") Or he may react positively with a small violation of his own. ("I appreciate your mentioning it. I was feeling pretty upset.") This tentative exchange may continue until one or the other person signals distress, usually by abruptly changing the subject. This marks the point at which one partner's masculine self image has become threatened by intimacy with another man. The other partner must then desist from pressing further; if he fails to do so, the conversation, and quite possibly even the relationship, will be broken off immediately by the threatened member, frequently with bad feeling and a smoke-screen of excuses. ("Harry means well, but he tries to mother everybody!")

This ritual is followed with great solemnity by most men and transgressions among straight men are very rare indeed. Gay men become very adept at these ulterior exchanges and use them as a means of identifying one another in situations of high risk, such as places of employment. Among straights, the limits of the more reserved partner are scrupulously respected, no doubt because the stakes (heterosexual masculinity) are so high and the vulnerability of most straight men is so great! The fact is that very few friendships between straight men ever become really intimate.

Gay men, of course, are not so threatened by intimacy with other men, and inasmuch as sex is by no means an essential of intimacy, gay men readily form close relationships with the few straight men who are willing to sustain them. Significantly, the straight partner is likely to panic if he finds out that his

friend is gay, even though there has been no sexual overture.

My own experience illustrates the point. Several of my straight male colleagues found the revelation of my sexual orientation so threatening that at a party shortly after my announcement they engaged in what amounted to a public exorcism of my influence over their lives by denying that they had in fact ever been my friend. And shortly thereafter a student who came to me for counseling began by congratulating himself for having the courage to be seen entering my office and closing the door even in midday.

These reactions clearly demonstrate the deep fear of homosexuality which straight men harbor—whether because they fancy "guilt by association," or because they fear seduction and dimly recognize their susceptibility to it. This fear strongly reinforces the taboos against intimacy among men and indeed serves to prop up the entire *macho* role structure by which so many men (and of course women and gays) are victimized. It is for this reason that no attempt can be made to modify the prevailing standards of masculine behavior without directly confronting the issue of male homosexuality.

The fairy bogeyman

The stereotype of the male homosexual, limp-wristed fairy that he is supposed to be, is tailor made for the purpose that it serves: namely, keeping straight men in line. Were this not so, large numbers of straight men would undoubtedly defect from the oppressive and unsatisfying role that is thrust on them. The stereotype consists of a mixture of traits and attributes, some of which merely lie outside the conventional masculine image and others of which are so unattractive that no one, gay or straight, would willingly aspire to them. The myth thus serves to bind together qualities which have no necessary connection whatever, and thereby neatly restricts the number of options available to straight men by defining their masculinity in a negative way. Whatever else they may be, no one must ever suspect them of being a fairy!

Gay men are widely regarded as effeminate—a term which implies something more than feminine. It includes, for example, a certain sensitivity and gentleness of temperament usually attributed to women, but it also implies superficiality, weakness, helplessness, and mindless flitting about. Gay men are expected to be artistic and expressive, but they are also thought to be promiscuous, over-sexed, irresponsible, and not capable of critical or rigorous thought. In short, effeminacy is a caricature of femininity, just as gay men themselves are thought to be caricatures of women. This is the alternative posed to straight men. No wonder they opt for machoism!

The institutions of our society cooperate to reinforce the homosexual stereotype in several ways. For example, housing discrimination as well as the understandable tendency of oppressed minorities to stick together tends to



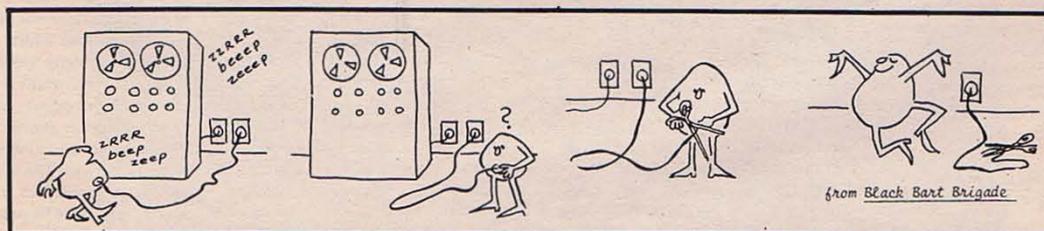
prevent contact between gay and straight men under conditions which might erode the old myths. Laws and rulings which forbid marriage and the adoption of children by gay people help to foster the illusion that gay relationships are unstable and without roots—an attitude which is especially ironic in the face of the considerable evidence that the nuclear family as a heterosexual institution is in deep trouble.

Finally, job discrimination against professed homosexuals is rampant and serves to reinforce the prevailing stereotypes. No federal or state civil rights laws, and few municipal ones, ban discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Very few homosexuals dare reveal themselves for fear of getting fired. The New York City Council has repeatedly refused to pass a fair housing and anti-job discrimination bill for homosexuals, despite the fact that well over 10% of the electorate in the City of New York is gay. Professed homosexuals can find relative job security in only a few positions: menial jobs (where they are lumped with other "undesirable" minorities), in hairdressing, women's fashion design, and similar positions (where they perpetuate the caricature of femininity), and the artistic professions (which although highly regarded stand largely outside the traditional masculine domain). What engi-

neer, truck driver, or business man dares to reveal openly that he is gay? Gay people stay in their closets for good reasons: to abandon pretense is to risk one's livelihood.

Nevertheless, so long as the millions of gay people in this country continue to hide, the mythical fairy bogeyman can still be used to prop up the whole sexist system. It does not matter that a physicist is gay, or that the lathe operator across the aisle lives happily with his lover, if no one knows it. So long as gay men from all walks of life remain in the closet, so long as only the few remain visible who seem to fit the stereotype, the myth and its oppressive power go unchallenged.

Although the Gay Liberation Movement, now scarcely four years old, quite rightly exists to further the liberation of gay people first of all, it nevertheless holds within it the promise of liberation for all men, gay and straight. For as gay men proudly begin to demand their rights and the respect to which they are entitled, then the power of the fairy image will be broken and every man will be free to define his manhood in his own way. Gay men, in increasing numbers, have been finding the courage to seize this freedom. There is an ironic sense in which it is the straights who remain behind, who are still in drag. We say, "Come out! Join us!"



Up Against Monogamy: A Personal Account -- Part II

Mano

Up until the time that I met Libra I hadn't given much thought to monogamy one way or another. Red Hawk Woman, "Red," and I had been growing closer and closer since the day we'd met a year and a half before. During the first month or two we'd known each other we saw old lovers a time or two, but from that time on we were monogamous, not by design, but because we weren't inclined to get involved with other people. We had discussed the possibility of our having other sexual/intimate relationships; it was something we were open to, but not wanting or needing.

So "breaking down monogamy" was the farthest thing from my mind when I met Libra. She appeared to me as extremely attractive, full of energy and loaded with sexy vibes. I felt turned-on in my guts pretty much instantaneously. I knew that I wanted to follow through those turned on feelings, and I realized I had already begun to!

Before I did anything more I wanted to tell Red about what was happening to me. I was afraid of how she might react, but I knew it was essential to our remaining close that I tell her what I was feeling and what I wanted to do. The next day I told Red about my feelings; that I had met an attractive woman, was turned on to her and wanted to follow through on the feelings I had. Red was upset and scared; she was afraid it was all over for us. (see Red Hawk Woman, IRT #2, Spring 1973) At that point I felt sure that her fears were exaggerated if not unfounded. I reassured her that I did not want to leave her for Libra, but that I only wanted to get to know Libra and be sexy friends. At a later point my guilt about the whole thing clouded my sense of what I wanted and played into Red's fears.

Red asked for several concrete things during our discussions that day and the next. She wanted to struggle through her fears and I wanted to help her and felt o.k. about the things she wanted. Red wanted me to be straight with Libra about my relationship with Red; up to that point I hadn't been, but I intended to lay out to Libra where I was at as soon as she and I got together. Red also wanted me to limit the time I spent with Libra to one day and one night per week. This was harder to agree to—part of me wanted no limits, but since I felt I could still get what I wanted within those limits, I accepted them. We were both working full time then and were righteously jealous of our free time. Also considering that Red's wants at that point were for Libra to disappear, I felt we were meeting each other half way.

I think that a monogamous relationship is fine until another person comes

along with whom one partner wants to have a sexual/intimate relationship. There is a difference between being open to new relationships and pushing oneself into new relationships, and I think it a mistake to seek new relationships because on some theoretical grounds you think monogamy is not O.K. or because you want to be even with your partner.

At this point I had told Red my feelings and what I wanted to do, but nothing really existed between Libra and me except a casual meeting or two in work situations; it was all in my head. I called her to get together for dinner; she agreed; and I felt real good that I'd decided to follow these feelings through. I was excited about our becoming friends, lovers and felt o.k. about it vis-a-vis Libra.

Libra and my first evening left me even more turned on. As we talked about ourselves and our lives, I sensed an energy and a spirit that turned me on as much as her appearance; they meshed. It seemed that we would become friends and lovers. I told Libra that I had a partner with whom I had discussed my feelings and that I was turned on and would like to become friends and lovers. Laying out where I was at so directly was a first for me. Previously, with new women there was no talking before the first time in bed; just maneuvering, and sometimes there was no talk of feelings at all. Going straight to the point felt strange, but the only option is to play along, beat around the bush, when what's really in the back of your mind is that you're turned on! Libra was, I think, surprised and taken by my directness; she was relating to a number of men sexually, some more, some less regularly, however this open way was as new to her as it was to me. But we knew where each other was at; there was no guessing and wondering, no dreaming and fantasizing. That was so refreshing!

At this point, when I was feeling optimistic about Libra, I became confused and uncertain about Red. Things got heavy. I was afraid that if I were so turned on to Libra, I'd lose touch with my feelings for Red. I felt panic when I compared these feelings; was I now "in love" with Libra? did I still love Red? This uncertainty and panic played right into the hands of Red's greatest fear, that I'd leave her for Libra.

But this was not the end of this mind-fuck; when I calmed down and figured out that yes I was turned on to Libra and wanted to be friends and lovers, but no I didn't want a real heavy relationship and didn't want to leave Red then I felt guilty for only wanting a "superficial sexual fling" with Libra. This guilt worked hand in hand with the "swept off my feet" feelings. It was a kind of "damned if you do, damned if you don't" situation.

In addition my want for a limited relationship with Libra and being straight with her about that, was difficult because I thought she would turn me down; I didn't consider myself "dashing" enough for her to agree to something limited. The temptation was to offer whatever I figured was enough to "close the deal," rather than be clear and honest about what I really wanted. At other points in my life, I'd imply a better offer than I was really willing to make in order to get the prize—i.e. to get laid. Then I'd say "no, don't get any ideas about a heavy relationship"—feeling guilty all the time because of my duplicity.

How did I get through this confusion? It boiled down to weighing things and realizing that though I was real turned on to Libra I did not want to "trade" Red in for her, rather I wanted to have sexy-play times with Libra in an open-straight atmosphere and I wanted to develop an open supportive friendship, but all in the context of my life with Red. I had a limited amount of time and energy; I decided that this sort of arrangement was what I wanted and I told myself that it was OK—just be straight about it with Libra.

That was hard because it sounded like I didn't care at all for Libra, but just wanted a "lay." (Somewhere in there was a discount of myself—i.e. no one would want to be a part time friend of mine!) But in being straight I was offering more. Sex is fun for both men and women, the more so if there is clarity about what it means, and in committing myself to begin straight with her I really offered myself as a real friend—giving honest feedback and strokes, *with no games*. I think I was the first man to be honest with her in this respect and not keep her guessing.

Another message that hit was "having a limited affair is just a concession to Red." Red wanted limits on the amount of time Libra and I spent together. These limits and lots of reassurance were important in helping her to overcome her jealousy and fears. I was able to give plenty of reassurance as I got clear in my head what I wanted. However, I felt uneasy at times, as did Libra, about "limits." I would get the feeling that my new relationship with Libra was somehow marked and crippled from the beginning, because it could not "flow as it may."

On one level "limits" were something Red and I had worked out right at the beginning; they were a form of support that she needed and I felt able to give. They had largely to do with the amount of time I would spend with Libra, but not with what kind of time Libra and I had. As things changed and Red got more secure, these became a lot more flexible and all but disappeared.

On another level "limits" could more appropriately be called agreements or

contracts, and were based on putting together what all three of us wanted and giving and taking until we all felt satisfied. At one point fairly early on, all three of us talked and did just this, and it felt good. Underlying this is an agreement to ask for 100% of what you want 100% of the time, though there is no guarantee you'll get it.

I think it is important to see "limits" in the most positive way possible. So when one person says "I want so much," or "I don't want this," the other person can focus on what is possible rather than what *isn't*; in reality, "limits" are a protection against dreams and fantasies that have little or no possibility of fulfillment.

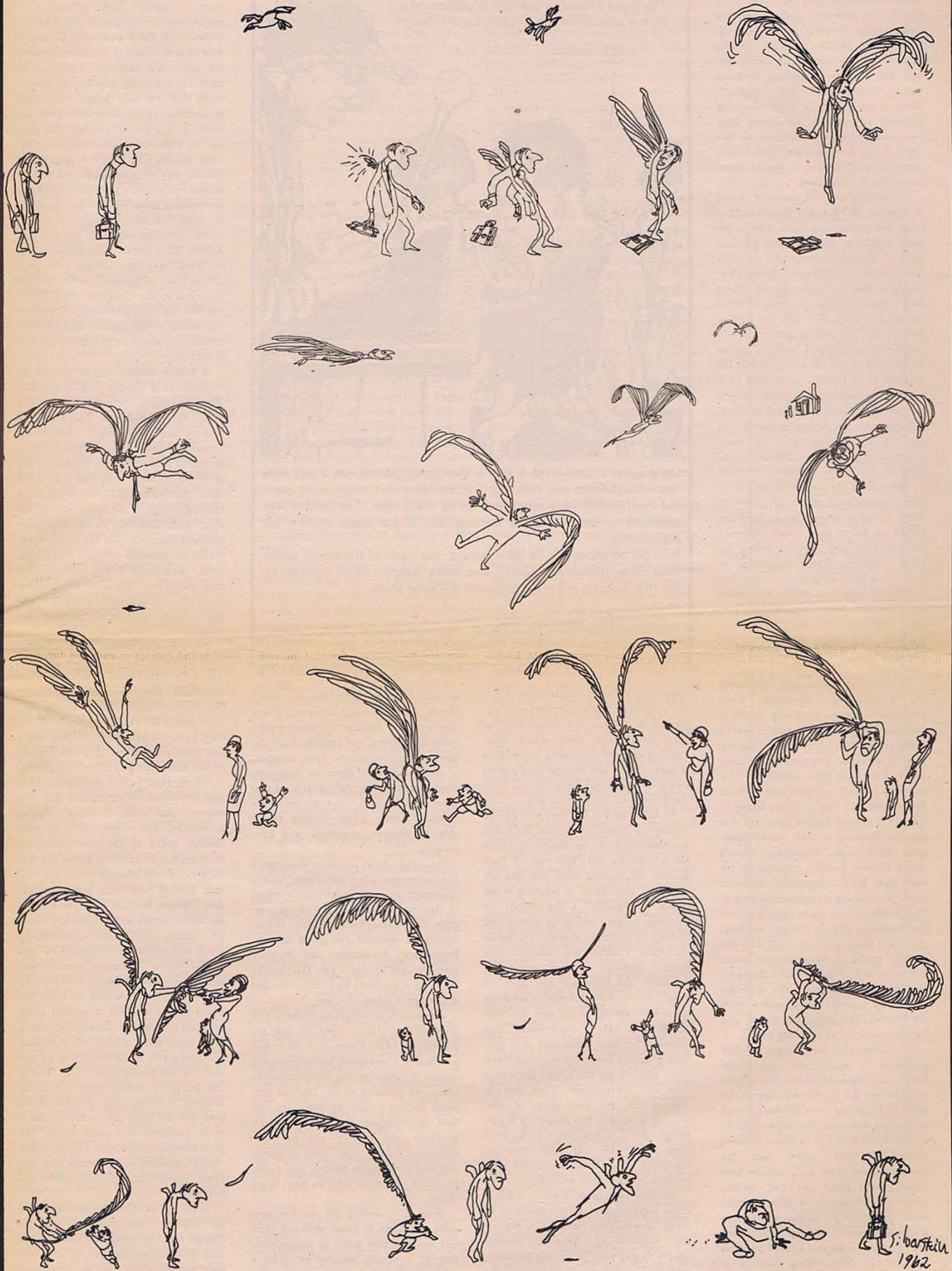
At this point Libra and my relationship started to grow. It was marked by ups and downs which aren't particularly unique or relevant to this account. They involved building trust and dealing with new and different feelings, especially negative ones. For a time one of us and then the other was not into getting it on sexually; we worked through these doubts and feelings of guilt and distrust which are probably common to any relationship.

So Libra and I were lovers and friends, Red and I were partners and I felt really good about how things were going. I was turned on to both of them; they they discovered each other and that completed the circle or triangle in a most satisfactory way.

This "completion" of things came about when Red, in order to combat her competitive feelings for Libra, decided to see Libra and tell her where she was at and find out where Libra was at. I was happy about this because up to this point I had been a conduit for information between the two, an uncomfortable position. They liked each other and decided to get together some more; they became friends and eventually lovers. I had some jealous feelings like "Red taking my new friend," but I realized that would happen only if I let it. The energy Red and Libra generated was powerful and their becoming friends enabled all three of us to get together and work things out. It also took a lot of pressure off me. And finally it brought all three of us closer together.

This arrangement is to my mind the ideal. There were three, one-to-one relationships which were kept intact and growing, and there was the one relationship of all three which we all shared. The chief difficulty here was the fear of being *left out*, which in a three-way relationship circulates from person to person, but rests heaviest on the third, (presuming the first and second are partners.) in this case Libra. But from time to time everyone feels it, and it is important that there be permission for the person feeling left out to check out their fears and ask for support, reassurance and love.

THE WINGS



Political problem of the month: Find the real oppressor.

S. Barstein
1962

Teaching Psychology to High School "Misfits"

Carmen Kerr

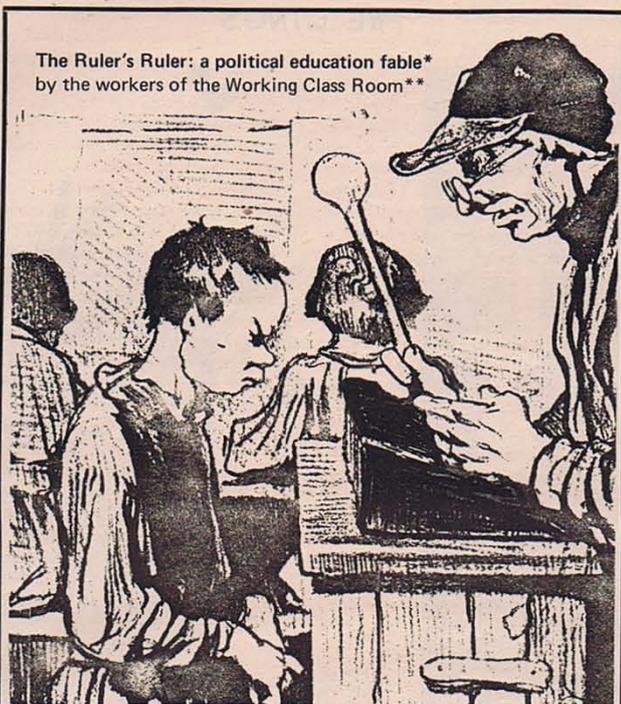
Psychology courses and therapy sessions are offered in many school systems today. However, they are not being taught to promote changes in the system or in the people. They, instead, seem to be additional, more sophisticated forms of control, with administrators and faculty instructing students about "adjustment" and "coping"; There is no change or clear awareness provided to students concerning their lives and oppressive situations. In this paper I will comment on what I have observed and suggest a potent alternative which I have used.

My ideas about the uses and abuses of therapy are probably quite different from the average teacher's. This is because I believe teaching is a political activity. Politics is concerned with the use of power. Children are almost universally under the influence of others with power. Teachers are some of these powerful people; they are part of the government and defend the status quo that keeps us down and "teaches" us for many years. After all, young people are required to be students up to their 16th birthday in California. Thus, in a way, a teacher is a politician because she/he is using power: the power to instruct, to affect a life, to influence and create attitudes. A teacher can, like any politician, use this power to create awareness or abuse it in the service of mystification. In teaching, abuse of power is lying. Lying is something teachers are taught to do so they won't "offend" anyone. One way they do this is by being "objective," that is, neutral, in their views and explanations. Neutrality is deceitful because it implies an approving viewpoint. Many students have gotten double-crossed by "objective" teachers, who encourage students out on a limb but don't go out on a limb themselves.

Another way teachers lie is by using the "Wonderfulness" approach. "Wonderfulness" means pacifying students with fun and gimmicks which appear to reveal truths, but in the end are merely cute, fun media. Teachers do this because they have been told, and it is painfully obvious to them, that students hate school. So like a doctor trying to distract a cancer patient from the disease by covering it with pretty bandages, teachers use "Wonderful" lessons about history, politics, ecology to try and cheer bitter, distrustful students. After all, learning is supposed to be fun. The problems with these neutral, pointless lessons is that in the end students say, "So, what is the truth?" And the teacher smiles a Wonderful smile and says, "Oh, I just present the facts, You decide what's true." The students, tricked by another marshmallow from the teacher, feel angry and bitter, and "Wonderfulness" or not, hate school.

A teacher who lies is like a crooked politician. A teacher who uses power fairly and creatively and in the service of liberation is a teacher who speaks the truth and is doing what the trust placed in her/him demands. This type of teacher uses her/his power to make students aware of their power and the powers around them and explains how power, both good and bad, works, where it exists, how it affects them. Most importantly, he/she encourages students to realize and use their individual power. To do this kind of political work means demystifying students. It means making the classroom a place of truth and a safe place for many views and ideas to happen.

Demystification means that the teacher takes an active role in explaining to students how, why, where they are



Once upon a time (and it is still that time), school was a very bad place for children and teachers. Children were sent to school to learn but really they were sent there to be disciplined. The school was supposed to be a place for learning. But it was really a place for disciplining.

In order to make this lie seem honest, the rulers of the school asked their close friends the people who make theories about learning to say that *learning and discipline were the same thing*.

* excerpted by IRT with thanks to the authors.

** A non-residential learning community for young people affiliated with CFC (Collective of Liberation Centers). Located on W. 85th Street, N.Y.C.

oppressed. Students are members of several subgroups, each one potentially oppressed as a class; the youth class, of their social class, their sexual class. Pointing out the traditional boundaries of these classes and making the students aware of the possibilities beyond societal limitations is a political act.

It takes power on the part of the teacher to constantly assert the belief that individuals do not have to be taken for a ride by life, but can, if they decide, create their own ride and see their own way. Thus, in teaching in my school of "misfits" I concentrate on studying people. Studying others and looking at ourselves demystifies the lie that these students are "misfits" with genetic stupidity as their major life handicap. All students are open to People Study. For example, in math we spent time talking about why different people feel better about math than others. The class concluded that girls have generally been told they can't and don't have to do math, and boys have been told the opposite. They also discovered that they were scared of math because a teacher had made it a frightening subject a few years back. With these discoveries, old fears were demystified, as students found out they could do math if they wanted to.

Because awareness is seeing what is really happening at all the levels of an event, objectifying behavior is important. Objectifying behavior enables people to step back from their behavior, look at it, and decide if that's really the way they want to behave. Students and teachers both will find this important because of the power of self-determination they learn from it. Objectifying behavior can be scary, too. It makes behavior something we are each responsible for rather than something

we just do because we "are that way." Hence, a teacher might begin to see how she/he causes negative or positive reactions in students, and students learn the same about themselves. Also, however, it can mean that those in authority, often much against their will, learn that they make errors, and students are educated—made aware—enough to be able to observe, comment and even criticize.

Learning about ourselves is always a fun, sometimes scary adventure. So it is important to make it safe; one method of therapy, Transactional Analysis, suggests three therapeutic attitudes and an existential position for group leaders: Permission, Protection and Potency (Steiner, 1971) and "I'm OK You're OK." As a teacher I find these attitudes important in being effective.

Permission means giving students and yourself the OK to open up and try something new. Permission isn't just pointing to alternatives, but encouraging action. It means getting the go-ahead to break old patterns of life and old attitudes toward things, try new ones, and find out what one really wants to do. Teachers can provide this by role-modeling, having fun, being a warm, supportive surrogate parent, and giving examples of people who do new, brave things.

Protection means the teacher provides the safety to break with old ideas and try the new ones. It means, too, that if a person decides to make a change and make it permanently, the teacher will support that. It is scary to change and scary to expose oneself. Teachers provide protection by participating in all the work to demonstrate its safety; by guaranteeing the secrecy of some of the work; by keeping a sensitive eye out for students minds being blown

and moving slowly enough to avoid this; and by watching for change and supporting and encouraging it when observed.

Potency is the energy or power the teacher puts behind Permission and Protection. A potent teacher creates a positive atmosphere for change and risk. She knows what she is striving to do and is confident in asserting herself to achieve her aims, thus inspiring confidence in those she is leading. Teachers are potent when they are very honest with their perceptions of students and their actions. It is a potent teacher who goes out on a limb to oppose the prevailing value system and gently explains to a student why an abortion should be considered; who tells a favorite student she knows he is shooting junk and demands he stop. In other words, a potent teacher sees oppressive life patterns and doesn't let students hide behind them but always exposes them and pushes for alternatives. A potent teacher doesn't just stop at the classroom level—he/she watches for reinforcements of student oppression at the faculty and administrative level and acts to expose this and change it.

A potent teacher will be viewed by students as a strange and wonderful, sometimes scary, person from another world. My students think I am a witch. I think I am, too. I make good things happen in their lives that have never happened before; I bring truths to their attention in ways they can use and I make changes and risks the safest, most exciting things to do. Even when I am angry with them they know I love them and hear them. Despite my strong viewpoints on subjects which I share with them, they know I am eager to hear their views and very open to changing mine or to renegotiate. I am not unapproachable, despite my potency and magic.

I'm OK—You're OK. In addition to these attitudes, another important concept from Transactional Analysis is the existential position: I'm OK—You're OK. Most teachers operate on the attitude I'm OK—You're Not OK. Thus they look down on their students, don't like them even before they meet them, or like them but pity them, and give up on them even before any interaction. And the classroom air reflects this—it is negative and tense. Sarcasm, arguing pointlessly, dull discussions, long surly silences, make up the atmosphere and transactions; everyone is bored and dislikes everybody else. However, the attitude OK-OK will bring about remarkable changes. Because it is true that we are all princesses and princes and really OK, acting on this will automatically throw one major mystification—lie—out of the room. Awareness step number one! With this oppressive, immobilizing lie gone, the teacher and students will begin to feel a mood of general goodness and friendliness. Jokes, silly stories, sexy references, zillions of questions, and many new ideas will spring up like seeds in the sunshine. I'm OK—You're OK brings an end to snide comments, sarcastic remarks, long speeches about how terrible kids are today. I know these pastimes may seem funny and provide comic relief, but it's about time teachers decided to be friends with students rather than critical, snide and resentful.

Speaking of criticism, this leads me to another recommended attitude change. Most teachers treat students like they do their own children, or how they were treated when they were children: they don't listen to the students; or if they do they don't believe them; they don't care about the students and are bored with them; or they may constantly try to tell them how to live. This

transactional tendency can be recognized by the fact that there is no real fun going on in the classroom between the teacher and the students and the teacher has the hunched shoulders of a martyr. More Free Child, in T.A. lingo, is the antidote to this classroom toxin. Learning is a fun thing, and all kids love to learn the truth. They like to discover and solve—but they don't like to be told and ignored. I join in games with my students, share jokes and funny incidents in my life, let them poke fun at me, and devote the first 5-10 minutes of each class to people-to-people talk and relaxed non-lesson exchanges. This sets the mood for a fun, open, easy-going classroom where everyone is OK and knows it's OK to have fun and work, too.

I want to stress that I believe teaching should lead to changes. And I disagree with teachers who are teaching psychology and therapy courses with the attitude that students today need to learn to "cope" and "adjust" to this world. Using the teaching of therapy or psychology for purposes of control and adjustment in place of real learning for change is a flagrant violation of an individual's right to know and own herself or himself. Particularly in adolescence, students are becoming cognizant of their individual power and their need to decide for themselves what they want to do. Thus, we cannot ignore the world around them which is influencing those decisions. When they ask real questions like: *Is there any place safe to live? Will we die of pollution? Will our country survive? Can I control of this? If so, where do I start? As a teacher you have two choices when answering these types of questions: either "You'll have to get used to it—that's just the way it is" or "Yes, those things are going on, and you can do something about it." If you answer the first way you are saying "Adjust and shut up," and if you answer the second way you are saying "Go make changes—go make revolution." Either way, you are making a political statement; my preference is for change rather than adjustment. Adjustment means living in a sad, frightened*

world of confusion. A potent teacher is an anti-confusion specialist. So as teachers, let's not sell kids another cute educational media gimmick with psychology classes—let's use our knowledge to give students their power for personal freedom and choices in becoming who they want to be.

There are many different types of psychology and each advocates its own way as the best. So, in teaching about therapy and psychology to my students, I presented a combination of different techniques and stressed the fact that therapy is not magic, available only to well-trained people who make lots of money. Because it makes ego states easy to understand and because of its theory of life scripts, I used Transactional Analysis theory in particular to explain how to objectify behavior. And because of my political beliefs I used Radical Psychiatry theory.

The point of the work was awareness. Awareness that we are each capable of looking into ourselves and each other and seeing what's going on; awareness that behavior is something we can control and consider, not something we are unknowingly controlled by; and awareness that each of us has a special individual life that can be happy or unhappy depending on how we decide we want to live it. With these goals in mind I began a year's work with students who generally hated "shrinks" and who never had looked into themselves or considered there was anything to even look at.

Biology—Everybody Needs Strokes

Physically, my students are products of the Coca-Cola and potato chips generation. Their bodies are individual tributes to the survival drive, having metabolized preservatives, cigarettes, various impure drugs, and TV dinners to grow into boys and girls. My students range in age from 13 to 19, come from welfare families or blue-collar working class families. They are used to sickness as part of daily living, and their bodies reflect their lives: stooped, cowed and defensive. They were, for the most part, completely unaware of their bodies as

anything other than something that didn't feel good sometimes, or as the thing you took your clothes off from, in order to have sex. (In the local vernacular, having sex is called "Gettin' naked.") And since the class was made up of students with long juvenile records who have rebelliously flunked every science course in the district, they had already decided that science was going to be a drag. Before teaching about the mind, which is invisible, particularly to those students, I felt it was necessary to start with what could be felt, touched, seen—the individual's own, special body. I approached biology from a health angle. This provided immediate self-recognition and self-stroking. Class attendance was close to 100% as we measured ourselves and compared each other. We dissected animals and saw how the heart pumped blood. We got to know our bodies not just by reading but by experimentally touching and examining. Naturally, this led to some natural curiosity about those parts we're not supposed to touch or discuss. So when we did comparative measuring of body parts I left two blanks on the paper where each student was to choose a part of his or her body and measure it. At least half a dozen young men grabbed rulers and ran off to the bathroom, returning to announce to the class, "Eight inches!! Would you believe it?"

The body and mind cannot be separated. They affect each other constantly. Talking about how good food provides the body with power to think and move, how drugs cause damage, and how genitals work, impresses students with the complexities and fragility of their bodies. From here you can show how the mind affects this body: psychosomatic illnesses, nervous gestures, yoga, and mind-over-matter examples prove how head and body are inseparable.

Permission: To look at one's body and others' bodies; to touch and give self and other strokes; to question about our bodies; to "play doctor"; to get in touch with body movements and what feelings they represent; explaining how we are kept from touching ourselves and

others and why this makes us feel bad; frankly discussing sexual ideas and demonstrating approval for this curiosity; insisting boys and girls dissect and explore equally—not permitting sexism in scientific tasks.

Protection: By not allowing fun to be made of anyone; by showing each person is unique; by stressing non-competitiveness.

Sexism—In a School of "Chicks" and "Cocks"

I taught a unit on sexism early in the year and then continued using it as a basic teaching attitude for the rest of the year in all my classes. This is not a subject students are eager to learn. They are from working class families and the revolutionary viewpoints of women's liberation just don't fit into their life philosophies. First of all, since many of them come from matriarchal families where the father is inoperative or non-existent, they do not fit the concept of weak passive women, which is the white middle and upper class women sex role stereotype. When questioned, the young men say women are smarter than men, and the young women agree. In many instances, the men believe the women really have it over the men, except in physical strength and ability to "cause trouble."

Secondly, the women do not agree at all with the idea that men are, in any way, the enemy. As far as they see, they are oppressed equally in this unfair world and if anything it is their duty to aid and comfort their men in these degrading circumstances. They are very patient with their demands on men. Some of my 16-year-old wives and mothers have eaten poorly for months while their husbands weren't able to find employment. "Stand by your man" is the working class women's slogan.

Status is gained by being in couples. Working class people believe in family, home, mom and dad—or the closest thing to it. The women need the power that comes with being in a couple. They will put up with some of the most ineffectual males just for that power. Because of this they are hesitant to attack men, fearing the loss of them and their

Thus the school became a place where young oppressed people were disciplined by older oppressed people and where all of this oppression was justified as "learning."

It was not surprising that no one learned very much. What did come as a surprise to some was that after a while no one was even being disciplined very well.

The oppressed children in this school came to see the oppressed

teachers as their oppressors. The teachers, on the other hand, came to see the children as their oppressors. The children, as they saw it, made their work hard. They came to feel that everything would be okay if only the children would behave. It was hard for them to accept that they had been hired as guards, and so they grew angry at the children who would not let them teach (discipline).

This was not surprising. The rulers of the school wanted this,



"man" power. Women are grateful for the men, the men for the women, and they are willing to overlook many oppressive parts of the relationship.

Thus, my approach to the subject of sexism was to make the point that men and women can do and feel the same things and help care for each other and be better friends this way. It would be a mistake to handle sexism from the angry attitude that men are chauvinists and women oppressed, weak and passive—so revolution now! This would scare everyone, the students would disagree and throw out the whole concept, and everyone would remain nice and "safe" in their sex roles.

This is one subject in which preaching does absolutely no good. Telling them that men and women are a lot alike only leads to endless, pointless arguments. So I had them work in groups making up lists of things men should do in life and things women should do. They followed this by making up lists of the personality traits of each sex. I took these lists, mixed them up, and then the students tried to guess which job or trait went with which sex. The conclusion was, to the class's consternation, that men and women have the same feelings and can do all the same things. The only differences they found were in the way in which they expressed the feelings and in the way society has programmed what they should and shouldn't do.

Then I had the students write about why they would or wouldn't like to be the opposite sex. No one wanted to switch. Women didn't want hairy legs, and boys didn't want to wear makeup; women didn't want to have to work all day; boys didn't want to give birth.

Then we took a look at popular songs and fairy tales and television and shows and discussed how they defined men and women's roles in society. We read story from *Ms.* magazine and other sources which spoke of children free of sexual role boundaries. We looked at salary scales and at mental hospital populations and talked about why they

Handle shutting door
I hold myself knee in elbow
Eating pie
My arms are full

My own body guard-
ing my perishables
Sold out of preservatives
Fear as common as flies.

Tired of the screen of freedom
Of this mesh of insects
Deciding my celibacy repellent
Autographing chastity belts

Talk about chastity belts
I refuse to whip you with mine anymore
Get off on your own liberty
No need to keep my ice box cold.

Osah Harmon

showed differences between men and women. There is an endless amount of material to make points clear about sexism.

I applied this knowledge to the school program as a whole. Boys and girls played football together. Boys cooked at school parties, and girls swept the yard. This pays off: One girl who persisted in playing "Poor Little Me" and getting all the boys to do her schoolwork was very angry and pouted for days when I asked her to stop pretending to be stupid and silly. I told her I knew she was a smart and capable young lady and she didn't need to get boys to do the hard parts of her work. Two months later and much of her own work later she gave me a birthday card saying, "to a nice teacher" and that day figured out a math problem, exclaiming, "Wow—I really am smart!"

Permission: Doing things only the other sex is supposed to do; calling sexism to the attention of students and faculty when you see it and gently explaining it; demonstrating how sexism keeps people oppressed—both men and women; insisting students share all duties and as teacher not showing favoritism because of sex; setting the example by performing tasks usually designated to the opposite sex.

Protection: By not allowing fun to be made of anyone; by giving compliments for risks taken in this direction; by being fair to both sexes.

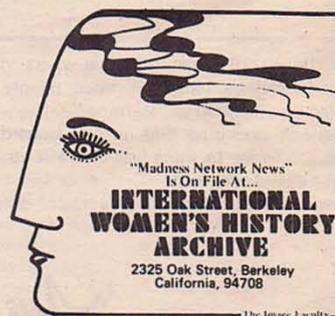
Gestalt—Be Quiet
Class and Listen
To Your Bodies

My students believe the world is out to get you, so they believe it is necessary to keep covered and lie and be on the defensive at all times. Mike, an over-institutionalized (juvenile halls) class rebel said he hated psychiatry. He said he and eight other guys had to go to meetings once a month with the probation officer. They all sat at desks in an empty room and squirmed uncomfortably waiting for the meeting to please be over. "You just sit there feeling itchy and there's no noise or nothin'

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and then this P.O. turns to you and—I was just kicking my foot in the air like this—and this guy says, 'Why are you kicking your foot?' 'I don't know, man,' I said. Then he says, 'What's your foot saying?' I said, 'Fuck you, man' and then he left me alone. What a jerk. Psychiatry is dumb."

Students were embarrassed by the fact that they showed so much of themselves in gesture. Each of us walked across the classroom, and we commented on what people were advertising about themselves by their walking. A quick game of Charades to act out feelings helped make the point about body messages. One boy acted out "I am wild" and practically tore his clothes off. One girl decided the reason she bit her fingernails was because she was angry and afraid to speak. And Mike, when he realized he could analyze body behavior himself and that it wasn't some grownup's trick, quit being so defensive and joined in.

Permission: Noticing our bodies and other's bodies and reading them. Explaining how we are taught to be ashamed and hide what our bodies say.

Protection: Not allowing fun to be made of anyone; making this exposure interesting proceeding despite students' fears.

Stroking

My students don't get too many strokes, and thus they don't have too many to give. When they first heard about strokes they said, "But if I give them out I won't get them back." In many cases, that's true.

Giving me strokes and giving strokes to each other in front of me was very uncomfortable to them. To give me strokes, they fear, would run the risk of me not returning them, or of obligating them to give me strokes every day for the rest of the year. They felt the same about giving strokes to others in the class. The stroke economy is very tight, and the stroke they always think of first is money.

Because of this fear of strokes, the most effective way to have a stroke-day at my school was to have a warm and

nurturing man come out as a guest speaker and stroke giver. I liked having a man present for role-modeling. He told the Fuzzy Tale, taught how to give and take strokes, and talked about how to recognize the Pig Parent. The students were enchanted and impressed, and the rest of the year they referred to Warm Fuzzies and Cold Pricklies. They remembered and applied the new ideas, too. When I was being grouchy in class a student would say: "Hey, you're really being a Cold Prickly today—how come?" And when I announced as a class rule, "No Snide Remarks In This Room" many of the students voluntarily explained why Warm Fuzzies are better than Cold Pricklies and why snide remarks are Cold Pricklies.

I work in the tightest of stroke economies and had to use a very elementary and safe approach to teach strokes. I feel my situation is extreme. Most classes are not as frightened or stroke hungry as mine and will take more risks to learn about Fuzzies and Pricklies.

Permission: To give and take good feelings; to learn that always feeling bad isn't necessary; to ask for strokes; to show feelings; for men to be warm and open. Demonstrate how strokes can be safe; explain how society limits strokes; support students to value their ego states and use them to figure out personal problems.

Protection: By honoring the riskiness of the situation and by making it as safe as possible; by knowing how the students' stroke economy operates and taking that into account; by giving out strokes and showing genuine pleasure when receiving them; by responding as honestly as possible when queried about your own stroke economy.

Scripts: The Land of Humpty Dumpty, Cat Woman and Frankenstein

After knowing my students all year and working with them as I had been, I knew I had a room full of unhappy scripts. Broken homes, drug habits, juvenile records, and early unwanted pregnancies create children and young adults who live short-sightedly day-to-day be-

cause the future is as bleak as yesterday. I decided to use script analysis to point out what makes people happy or unhappy and how people can decide to be happy if they want to. Also, scripts show students how their lives have already been influenced and planned and is an excellent way to demystify the confusion of adolescence.

I began with coloring. Each student was given a big piece of paper, a box of crayons and instructions to choose three colors: two they liked and one they sort of liked. They were to color just for fun. On the back of the paper they were to write a synopsis of their favorite fairy tale. The class loved the work, and the drawings were fascinating. When they finished I explained that the reason we all like to color is because we can express ourselves any way we want to this way. Then I held the pictures up to the classroom and asked the students what they saw about each person in them. Their analyses were right on, and so true that some students got a little scared about how obvious they had made themselves. They were worried about Mick, whose drawing they said, "Looks like the stars and stuff you see after you get punched" and whose favorite fairy tale was Frankenstein who, he pointed out in big purple letters, "Died by Burning to Death!" The class said they were afraid he might be planning to hurt himself so badly someday he would die violently. He defended himself saying, "I'm not crazy." I made the point he wasn't crazy, but he did have a lot of permission to be violent and he enjoyed it. Last year his brother killed a boy in cold blood, and Mick still had a cast on his hand from slamming it into a brick wall in a rage, doing damage to the nerves. I gently recommended he get some help from someone so he could control his temper. He resisted. Either he was too scared of being crazy, or he really enjoyed his violence because of its power, but he was not about to go talk to any counselor.

Each student learned a lot about him or herself from this work, and they were impressed by who they were.

By the way, it is important here to talk about how fairy tales are sexist and set different scripts for men and women. When the women like Goldilocks or Oz's Dorothy, and the men like Superman or Al Capone, you have something to talk about! A good way to point out this sexism is to have the students rewrite the fairy tales and reverse the sex roles. That means, "Red, the Riding Hood" and "The Prince and the Pea," "Sleeping Handsome" and so forth. The same work can be done with popular songs, with changing sex roles for such hits as "Brown Sugar" and "A Woman Was Born to Cry."

Later on, after other work to acquaint students with their mind and feelings, I did a brief script checklist with them. I asked them just a few, about twenty, questions and then gave them brief and protective analyses of what I saw their life plan being. They like this—it was like having their palm or stars read. This made me feel like a gypsy with her crystal ball who sees frightening things in it besides the good: the information is there, honesty demands I share it, yet I always wonder if the telling will hurt or help. I see students with loser scripts and death scripts. I tell them all I can, keeping in mind that there is no real support for replacing that script at this time. Sometimes I see change, and more often I don't.

When I asked students how they would meet their death some answered "somebody will kill my ass" or "I'll fall off a bridge." Others described long lives of unemployment and many babies and said, "I'll just die in my sleep." Unfortunately, I see nothing that I can really do about these tragic scripts in the limited classroom situation.

Games—Or How Come It Took You a Half Hour to Piss?

I suggest teachers be aware of games and the ones students are most adept at playing, but I don't teach about games as a distinct part of a psychology unit. This is because my students have been analyzed, categorized and labeled to the



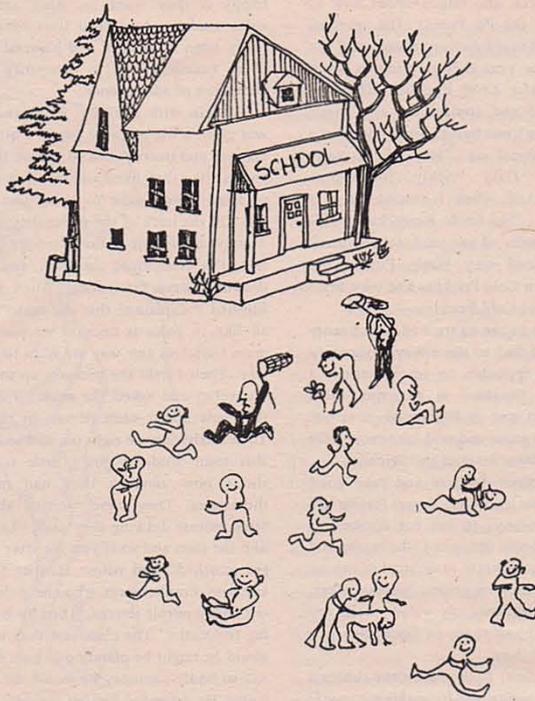
And so the school became a place where two groups of oppressed people—the children and the workers—fought with each other in a struggle not of their making.

The rulers of the school who work directly for the rulers of the society had designed the school as a model of the society. They justify this by saying that the child must learn about the "real world" at school.

The children learn at school what it is like to live in a competitive class society. Moreover, the children learn to function in an oppressive social structure which is not of their making. They learn to identify another oppressed group (the teachers and other workers) as the enemy and, therefore, not to see the *real* enemy.

This is what is really "learned" at the school.

point that they feel whatever move they make can be classified into a psychiatric mindfuck. They see their actions in probation records, neurological testing, court books, and in letters sent home from the school. I know what games they play and how I play with them, and I use that awareness to stop them and set new patterns of behavior. I also instruct other faculty members, and we work out counter-game plans. We have been successful with this approach, and many of our Uproar, Stupid and Poor Me players have given up these games in the classroom. *Contracts* can help here. I sometimes make individual behavioral contracts with students who are really having trouble controlling themselves. In this contract, teacher and student exchange behavior promises to insure they are both working equally on the problem. I have a contract with a heavy Uproar player that he will just leave the room when he gets out of control, and I will talk with him gently later. I have another contract with a young man named Lenny, well-liked but being persecuted by other students for his body odor which was absolutely overwhelming. The students tried to take care of it, nicely, for a long time, but Lenny got defensive, and the B.O. got more offensive. I called Lenny in and explained to him that having B.O. was not in his favor because it kept people away from him. I assured him all the kids really liked him and all they wanted was to be around him. He said he didn't know what to do about it. So we made a contract he would bathe every day and wash his shirts.



Summary

What I have outlined is a skeleton of an approach to teaching therapy. Teachers can discover their own ways to share this knowledge with their particular classes. However, one thing cannot be altered: the attitude that teaching is a political act with the purpose being awareness of oppression. And further, that this awareness is most valuable when constructed to cause changes.

I want to stress again that good therapy and teaching lead to change, not adjustment or coping. Grown-ups too often usurp youth's power and rights. Therapy and psychology coupled with abused teacher power can become even more clever ways for abusive grownups to oppress the young. When therapy is used as a cute gimmick or as a more sophisticated means of controlling students, it constitutes abuse of power on the teacher's behalf; a good teacher will use her knowledge of therapy to give the power of self-direction and self-knowledge back to the students and prove that we are all basically good and fine.

The rightness of this viewpoint was brought home to me at the end of the year when a number of students wrote about their changes, "I really feel like I am my own best friend now," one said. And his witchy teacher loved it.



THE TRUTH ABOUT ELECTRO-SHOCK TREATMENTS

As to the horrible American War-Crime of Electroshock treatments against your will, here's what they're like in Montana:

The ex-con attendants come to your cell and tell you you don't get no breakfast that morning. Then they rush you and strap your hands to your sides before you can fight back. Then you're led downstairs to the shock table. A rubber toothguard is shoved in your mouth. Two cold steel plates are put to your temples and the foreign doctor, who went to the same school as Fidel Castro, turns on the juice.

A jolt of power jars you into the darkness of temporary death. It's a darkness you can't see or perceive. It's the equivalent of death, except you wake up again. You wake up upstairs in your cell and they feed you breakfast. It destroys some of the cells in your brain and erases your treasured memory. The war-criminal doctor gives you not one of these, but 15, and one guy got 100!

It completely shuts off the light in your brain to temporary darkness that feels like it lasts one day, but actually lasts about 20 minutes. It's horror!!

After my treatment, given to me because I punched an attendant, I couldn't even remember what my mother looked like and one patient couldn't even remember the names of his kids. One patient asked me if he "died" in the shocktreatment room. One patient said he got a "little glimpse of eternity and there's nothing out there." One girl after her treatment said, "Where's my brains at, where's my brains at??" Yes, girls get shock treatments, too. Once, in Montana a patient DIED on the table, and never got up.

I lost my treasured memory, and much of my mental ability. I used to be good at mathematics, now I am just mediocre. I used to be the best Bridge player at a hospital, now a retarded patient plays better. I used to be able to memorize all the cards in a Pinochle game, now I just coast through. I used to be good at Art, now I quit because I lost the Knack. Now I am always forgetting things and I used to have a good memory. I'm stopped at getting choice jobs and professions. (The treatments give you Epilepsy, too.)

And every doctor applying electricity to the flesh knows it harms. His sins are seen by the Skies, and by *himself*. He's worse than an Auschwitz fanatic.

AND NO MATTER WHAT HE TELLS YOU AND WHAT PROPAGANDA HE SPREADS, HE WON'T TAKE SHOCK TREATMENTS HIMSELF OR GIVE THEM TO ANY MEMBER OF HIS FAMILY.

These treatments happen today in every state in the Union. Can this be America???

written Nov. 1, 1972
by Cyril Athana Kolocotronis, inmate.

Home Address:
718 Cherry Street
Seattle, Washington 98104

OTB Placating Losers With an EGO Triple

By **STEVE CADY**

The OTB horseplayer's Aqueduct daily double has gone down the drain, and his exactas haven't been close. His confidence is falling apart.

He steps up to the window for one last try, and the ticket-seller says cheerfully: "You can't always win, you know. You'll be luckier next time."

The loser doesn't realize it, but his bruised ego has just been psychologically "stroked" by a ticket clerk trained in a role-playing technique known as T.A.C.T.

Instead of negative comments, losers receive nothing but respect and encouragement. Every clerk has read the best-seller "I'm O.K.—You're O.K." and he is telling the losing customer, in effect, "You're O.K."

Three Faces of Adam

The T. A. C. T. system (Transactional Analysis for Customer Treatment) was purchased by OTB from American Airlines, which developed it from the theories found in "I'm O.K.—You're O.K." According to the author, Dr. Thomas A. Harris, everyone's personality is divided into three ego states: parent, adult and child.

In the OTB training course, sellers and cashiers are taught to recognize which state a horseplayer may be in—and to react with the proper ego state of their own.

For example, a customer who yells and threatens to punch the employe or stick a hand through the window would be in a child ego state. A customer behaving like a "parent" would be authoritative and demanding, likely to make sweeping statements. In the adult ego state, the decision-making part of the triad, the person would be calm and rational.

"We try to swing the behavior onto an adult level," said Erika Van Acker, director of training at OTB. "But sometimes you have to play a different role. If an angry customer is coming from a heavy child ego state, the clerk might want to go into a heavy parent ego state."

"He might say something like, 'This kind of behavior isn't tolerated here.'"

The terms "stroke" and "stroking" are very big in T.A.C.T. "Usually," says Miss Van Acker, "all an irate customer needs is a stroke. Just be nice to them, and they calm down."

Courses Last 4 Hours

Training courses last four hours, during which situations are acted out, scripts are read and diagrams drawn up. Basic examples include the situation in which a horseplayer (in a parent ego state) demands to know why OTB "always" makes blunders that "never" happen at the racetrack.

"You people are always wrong," the customer says. "The wrong responses would be a parent ego state ('Then you ought to go to the track') and a child ego state ('Why pick on me?'). The proper adult response would be: 'We're trying to get the problem solved. I'll be with you in a minute.'"

OTB apparently hasn't discovered yet that large numbers of horseplayers thrive on despair, and might be uncomfortable being told they're "O.K." For these compulsives, the standard exchange has always been, "I'm sick—you're sick."

OTB might do well to add that role to its T.A.C.T. program.

Claude:

In view of your article about versions of TA, I thought you should see this.

Best

Larry Bensky

Mayors Should Be Childlike?

By **James A. Finebrock**

Mayors should act more like children and less like parents — at least in their relationships with their wives.

That was one conclusion which emerged from a seminar on transactional analysis (TA) yesterday at the Conference of Mayors.

The session was held by the National Training and Development Service, a Washington, D.C., based non-profit organization.

Interpersonal

"Those who showed up got a speedy introduction to TA as it applies to the life of a city's chief executive and his family."

Noting that each year 25 percent of this state's elected leaders voluntarily bow out of office, NTDS President Thomas Fletcher (former San Jose city manager) said that his organization was attempting "to find ways to make elected officials jobs better, more understandable and more joyful."

Yesterday they got a taste of one of the ways of doing that: Through the analysis of professional and personal goals vis-a-vis interpersonal relationships.

3 States

TA holds that a person is a combination of three ego states: Parent, Adult and Child, which bear a superficial resemblance to the Freudian Ego, Id, and Super Ego.

The child messages are stored up and played back, like a tape recorder, to the balance wheel, the rational part of our personalities which sorts out the inconsistencies presented by Parent and Child.

The purpose of TA is to strengthen the Adult ego by becoming more aware of Parent and Child tapes.

Mixed Reactions

That, theoretically at least, was what yesterday's seminar was all about. Some found it confusing; others found they had already worked things out in other ways before TA came along.

But still others found it challenging and useful. Mayor A. J. Cooper, Jr. of Pritchard, Ala., said the seminar was "one of the unique things" about the conference.

Much of the interaction between lecturer Thomas Clary and the audience evolved around the stereotyped roles of men and women, especially — as one might suspect — in a mayor's household.

Can't Relate

"People in public life can't relate to normal transactions at home," one mayor suggested, "because the adult and children in people are banging away at him all day long at the office."

Politics itself was viewed as a man's game. (There are only two women mayors out of a total of 800).

"We think women can't succeed in politics as well as a man because of their bleeding heart attitude," one mayor said. "They overrespond and lose objectivity because they are emotional."

Wilhelm Reich:

1897-1957

Wilhelm Reich lived a life filled with excitement, love, loyalty, passionate work, discovery, betrayal, persecution, defiance and paranoia. He was a genius; some say he was a quack. He believed that he discovered a cure for cancer and that he could control the weather. He died, at age sixty in a U.S. penitentiary. His work is sure to become central to the Radical Therapy movement.

The following quotes, selected from *Character Analysis, The Function of the Orgasm, and Sex Pol* struck us, at IRT, to be of interest. We publish them here to call attention to the fact that we are planning to have a Special Issue on W. Reich, bioenergetics, orgonomy, neo-Reichian therapy, and other related approaches dealing with the politics and oppression of the human body.

We are inviting you to submit articles, graphics, poetry, or whatever for the Winter Issue 1974 of IRT. The deadline for receipt of your contribution is December 1, 1973.

"For more than two decades I had experienced and understood the murderous rage against me on the part of people who became frightened to death by my scientific, factual description of the orgonotic streamings. I had met this terror in presidential candidates, communist liberators, fascist mystics, well-adjusted psychoanalysts, neurotic court psychiatrists, neurosurgeons, directors of mental institutions, hopeless cancer pathologists, schizophrenics, politicians of all kinds, scheming wives of co-workers, etc. So I knew that I was dealing with: She (Reich's patient) was blue with rage; she tried again and again to jump upon me, to get at my throat, and to kick me. . . . She did it openly and frankly, while the biopathic psychoanalyst who feels threatened by my teachings goes around sneaking and gossiping, telling people that I was in a mental institution or that I seduced all my female patients or that I have just been buried. I preferred the behavior of my patient by far."

"I venture the statement that in our mental institutions many potentially great artists, musicians, scientists and philosophers are rotting away their lives. . . . These great souls, broken down and wrecked as "schizophrenics," know and perceive what no homo normalis dares to touch. . . . Let us listen to what these gifted and clear-visioned human beings have to say. We can learn a great deal from them; we can learn to become more modest, more serious, less gaudy and cocky.

I claim, after 30 years of thorough

study of schizophrenic minds, that they look through our hypocrisy, our cruelty and stupidity, our fake culture, our evasiveness and our fear of the truth. *They had the courage to approach what is commonly evaded, and they were wrecked because they went through the inferno without any help on the part of our neurotic parents, our conceited teachers, our cruel directors of educational institutions, our ignorant physicians."*

"Secret negotiations is the politics of reaction. The politics of revolution is to turn always to the masses, and to root out secret negotiations."

"There is only one possibility: to cut through the Gordian knot of bourgeois politics, not by aping it but by attacking it with the fundamental principle of revolutionary politics: the principle of addressing the masses, ceaselessly, tirelessly, simply and clearly, of expressing the ideas of the masses, whether these have been thought out or not, of destroying the awe of the masses in the face of high politics, of refusing to take the swindle of high politics seriously, of mercilessly and relentlessly exposing it, of speaking the language of the masses, of adapting politics to the masses instead of vice versa, thereby democratizing it, simplifying it, making it accessible to everyone."

The factor which changes the human structure from "sick" to "healthy" is the emotional, bioenergetic coordination of the organism. The orgasm reflex is merely the most prominent indication that the coordination has actually succeeded. Respiration, breaking of muscular blocks, resolution of rigid character armor are nothing but tools in this process of reintegration of the organism. They are, most unfortunately, often mistaken for a therapeutic end in itself, even by some close workers in our fields. To mistake mere tools of medical endeavors for the end itself is the result of bad thinking due to lack of coordinated knowledge of the organism, i.e., a narrow judgment which does not fit the breadth and the depth of human emotional diseases."

"The central task of orgone therapy is the destruction of the armor, in other words, the reestablishment of plasma mobility. In the armored individual, the function of pulsation is more or less restricted in all organs. The task of orgone therapy is that of reestablishing the full capacity of pulsation. This is done, biophysically, by dissolving the attitude of holding back."

Witches, Midwives and Nurses

Part II

Women and the Rise of the American Medical Profession

Barbara Ehrenreich
and Deirdre English

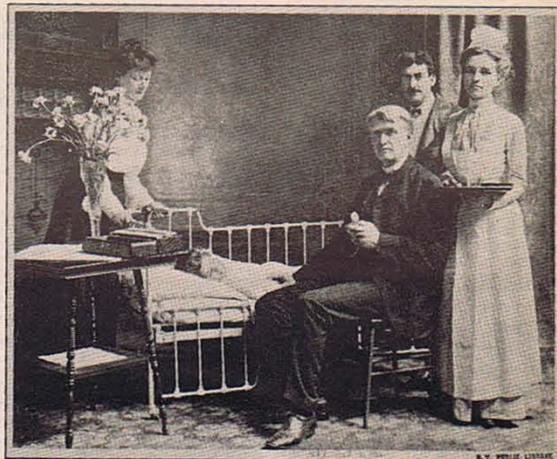
In the United States the male takeover of healing roles started later than in England or France, but ultimately went much further. Today there is probably no industrialized country with a lower percentage of women doctors than in the U.S.: England has 24 percent; Russia has 75 percent; the U.S. has only seven percent. And while midwifery—female midwifery—is still a thriving occupation in Scandinavia, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, etc., it has been virtually outlawed here since the early twentieth century.

The question is: How did one particular set of healers, who happened to be male, white and middle class, manage to oust all the competing folk healers, midwives and other practitioners who had dominated the American medical scene in the early 1800's?

The conventional answer given by medical historians is, of course, that

grew its earlier faith in quacks, and granted the true medical profession a lasting monopoly of the healing arts.

But the real answer is not in this made-up drama of science versus ignorance and superstition. It's part of the 19th century's long story of class and sex struggles for power in all areas of life. When women had a place in medicine, it was in a *people's* medicine. When that people's medicine was destroyed, there was no place for women—except in the subservient role of nurses. The set of healers who became *the* medical profession was distinguished not so much by its associations with modern science as by its associations with the emerging American business establishment. With all due respect to Pasteur, Koch and the other great European medical researchers of the 19th century, it was the Carnegies and Rockefellers who intervened to secure



monopoly over the right to heal. But in America, medical practice was traditionally open to anyone who could demonstrate healing skills—regardless of formal training, race or sex.

Women frequently went into joint practices with their husbands: the husband handling the surgery, the wife the midwifery and gynecology, and everything else shared. Or a woman might go into practice after developing skills through caring for family members or through an apprenticeship with a relative or other established healer. For example, Harriet Hunt, one of America's first trained female doctors, became interested in medicine during her sister's illness, worked for a while with a husband-wife "doctor" team, then simply hung out her own shingle. (Only later did she undertake formal training.)

Enter The Doctor

In the early 1800's there was also a growing number of formally trained doctors who took great pains to distinguish themselves from the host of lay practitioners. The most important real distinction was that the formally trained, or "regular" doctors as they called themselves, were male, usually middle class, and almost always more expensive than the lay competition.

In terms of medical skills and theory, the so-called "regulars" had nothing to recommend them over the lay practitioners. Their "formal training" meant little—even by European standards of the time. Medical programs varied in length from a few months to two years; many medical schools had no clinical facilities; high school diplomas were not required for admission to medical schools. Not that serious academic training would have helped much anyway—there was no body of medical science to be trained in. Instead, the "regulars" were taught to treat most ills by "heroic" measures: massive bleeding, huge doses of laxatives, calomel (a laxative containing mercury) and, later, opium. (The European medical profession had little better to offer at this time either.) There is no doubt that these "cures" were often either fatal or more injurious than the original disease.

The lay practitioners were undoubtedly safer and more effective than the "regulars." They preferred mild herbal medications, dietary changes and hand-holding to heroic interventions. Maybe they didn't know any more than the "regulars," but at least they were less likely to do the patient harm. Left alone, they might well have displaced the "regular" doctors with even middle class consumers in time. But they didn't know the right people. The "regulars," with their close ties to the upper class, had legislative clout. By 1830, 13 states had passed medical licensing laws outlawing "irregular" practice and establishing the "regulars" as the only legal healers.

It was a premature move. There was no popular support for the idea of medical professionalism, much less for the particular set of healers who claimed it. And there was no way to enforce the new laws: The trusted healers of the common people could not simply be legislated out of practice. Worse still—for the "regulars"—this early grab for medical monopoly inspired mass indignation in the form of a radical, popular health movement which came close to smashing medical elitism in American once and for all.

The Popular Health Movement

The Popular Health Movement of the 1830's and 40's is usually dismissed in conventional medical histories as the high-tide of quackery and medical elitism. In reality it was the medical front of a general social upheaval stirred up by feminist and working class movements. Women were the backbone of the Popular Health Movement. "Ladies Physiological Societies," the equivalent of the current women's know-your-body courses, sprang up everywhere, bringing rapt audiences simple instruction in anatomy and personal hygiene. The emphasis was on preventive care, as opposed to the murderous "cures" practiced by the "regular" doctors. The Movement ran up the banner for frequent bathing (regarded as a vice by many "regular" doctors of the time), loose-fitting female clothing, whole grain cereals, temperance, and a host of



"Regular" doctors try water treatment

there always was one true American medical profession—a small band of men whose scientific and moral authority flowed in an unbroken stream from Hippocrates, Galen and the great European medical scholars. In frontier America these doctors had to combat, not only the routine problems of sickness and death, but the abuses of a host of lay practitioners—usually depicted as women, es-slaves, Indians and drunken patent medicine salesmen. Fortunately for the medical profession, in the late 19th century the American public suddenly developed a healthy respect for the doctors' scientific knowledge, out-

the final victory of the American medical profession.

The U.S. in 1800 could hardly have been a more unpromising environment for the development of a medical profession, or any profession, for that matter. Few formally trained physicians had emigrated here from Europe. There were very few schools of medicine in America and very few institutions of higher learning altogether. The general public, fresh from a war of national liberation, was hostile to professionalism and "foreign" elitisms of any type.

In Western Europe, university-trained physicians already had a centuries-old

other issues women could relate to. And, at about the time that Margaret Sanger's mother was a little girl, some elements of the Movement were already pushing birth control.

The Movement was a radical assault on medical elitism, and an affirmation of the tradition of people's medicine. "Every man his own doctor," was the slogan of one wing of the Movement, and they made it very clear that they meant every woman too. The "regular," licensed, doctors were attacked as members of the "parasitic, non-producing classes."

The "regular" doctors quickly found themselves outnumbered and cornered. From the left-wing of the Popular Health Movement came a total rejection of "doctoring" as a paid occupation—much less as an overpaid "profession," and by the 1840's medical licensing laws had been repealed in almost all of the states.

The peak of the Popular Health Movement coincided with the beginnings of an organized feminist movement, and the two were so closely linked that it's hard to tell where one began and the other left off. "This crusade for women's health (the Popular Health Movement) was related both in cause and effect to the demand for women's rights in general, and the health and feminist movements became indistinguishable at this point," according to Richard Shryock, the well-known medical historian. The health movement was concerned with women's rights in general, and the women's movement was particularly concerned with health and with women's access to medical training.



THE COMING RACE
 Doctor Evangelist: "BY THE BYE, MR SAWYER, ARE YOU ENGAGED TOMORROW AFTERNOON? I HAVE RATHER A TICKLISH OPERATION TO PERFORM—AN AMERICAN TATTOO, YOU KNOW."
 Mr Sawyer: "I SHALL BE VERY HAPPY TO DO IT FOR YOU."
 Dr. Evangelist: "O, NO, NOT THAT! BUT WILL YOU KINDLY COME AND ADMINISTER THE CHLOROFORM FOR ME?"
 14-9-1877

Doctors on the Offensive

At its height in the 1830's and 1840's, the Popular Health Movement had the "regular" doctors—the professional ancestors of today's physicians—running scared. Later in the 19th century, as the grassroots energy ebbed and the Movement degenerated into a set of competing sects, the "regulars" went back on the offensive. In 1848, they pulled together their first national organization, pretentiously named the American Medical Association (AMA).

Throughout the latter part of the 19th century, the "regulars" relentlessly

attacked lay practitioners, sectarian doctors and women practitioners in general. The attacks were linked: Women practitioners could be attacked because of their sectarian leanings; sects could be attacked because of their openness to women. The arguments against women doctors ranged from the paternalistic (how could a respectable woman travel at night to a medical emergency?) to the hardcore sexist. In his presidential address to the AMA in 1871, Dr. Alfred Stille, said:

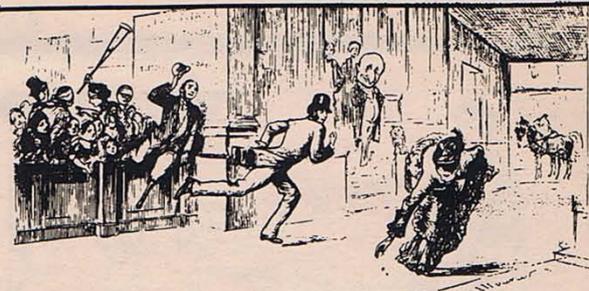
"Certain women seek to rival men in manly sports . . . and the strong-minded ape them in all things, even in dress. In doing so they may command a sort of admiration such as all monstrous productions inspire, especially when they aim towards a higher type than their own."

The rare woman who did make it into a "regular" medical school faced one sexist hurdle after another. First there was the continuous harassment—often lewd—by the male students. There were professors who wouldn't discuss anatomy with a lady present. There were textbooks like a well-known 1848 obstetrical text which stated, "She [woman] had a head almost too small for intellect but just big enough for love." There were respectable gynecological theories of the injurious effects of intellectual activity on the female reproductive organs.

And so it is all the stranger to us, and all the sadder, that what we might call the "women's health movement" began, in the late 19th century, to dissociate itself from its Popular Health Movement past and to strive for respectability. Members of irregular sects were purged from the faculties of the women's medical colleges. Female medical leaders such as Elizabeth Blackwell joined male "regulars" in demanding an end to lay midwifery and "a complete medical education" for all who practiced obstetrics. All this at a time when the "regulars" still had little or no "scientific" advantages over the sect doctors or lay healers. The result was that middle class women gave up the substantive attack on male medicine, and accepted the terms set by the emerging male medical profession.

Professional Victory

The "regulars" were still in no condition to make another bid for medical monopoly. For one thing, they still couldn't claim to have any uniquely effective methods or special body of knowledge. Besides, an occupational group doesn't gain a professional monopoly on the basis of technical superiority alone. A recognized profession is not just a group of self-proclaimed experts; it is a group which has authority in the law to select its own members and regulate their practice, i.e., to monopolize a certain field without outside interference. How does a particular group gain full professional status? In the words of sociologist Elliot



32. Dr. Meilanion Jones, finding himself outstripped in the race for patients by the fair Doctor-ess Atalanta Robinson, gallantly throws her a wedding ring and wins the day.
 Punch Almanack 1877

Freidson:

"A profession attains and maintains its position by virtue of the protection and patronage of some elite segment of society which has been persuaded that there is some special value in its work."

In other words, professions are the creation of a ruling class. To become the medical profession, the "regular" doctors needed, above all, ruling class patronage.

By a lucky coincidence for the "regulars," both the science and the patronage became available around the same time, at the turn of the century. French and especially German scientists brought forth the germ theory of disease which provided, for the first time in human history, a rational basis for disease prevention and therapy. While the run-of-the-mill American doctor was still mulling about "humors" and dosing people with calomel, a tiny medical elite was travelling to German universities to learn the new science. They returned to the U.S. filled with reformist zeal. In 1893 German-trained doctors (funded by local philanthropists) set up the first American German-style medical school, Johns Hopkins.

As far as curriculum was concerned, the big innovation at Hopkins was integrating lab work in basic science with expanded clinical training. Other reforms included hiring full time faculty, emphasizing research, and closely associating the medical school with a full university. Johns Hopkins also introduced the modern pattern of medical education—four years of medical school following four years of college—which of course barred most working class and poor people from the possibility of a medical education.

Meanwhile, for the first time in American history, there were sufficient concentrations of corporate wealth to allow for massive, organized philanthropy, i.e., organized ruling class intervention in the social, cultural and political life of the nation. Foundations were created as the lasting instruments of this intervention—the Rockefeller and Carnegie foundations appeared in the first decade of the 20th century. One of the earliest and highest items on their agenda was medical "reform," the creation of a respectable, scientific American medical profession.

The group of American medical practitioners that the foundations chose to put their money behind was, naturally enough, the scientific elite of the "regular" doctors. (Many of these men were themselves ruling class, and all were urbane, university-trained gentlemen.) Starting in 1903, foundation money began to pour into medical schools by the millions. The conditions were clear: Conform to the Johns Hopkins model or close.

Medical schools closed by the score, including six of America's eight black medical schools and the majority of the "irregular" schools which had been a haven for female students. Medicine was established once and for all as a branch of "higher" learning, accessible only through lengthy and expensive university training. It's certainly true that as medical knowledge grew, lengthier training did become necessary. But the foundations had no intention of making such training available to the great mass of lay healers and "irregular" doctors. Instead, doors were slammed shut to blacks, to the majority of women and to poor white men. Medicine had become a white, male, middle class occupation.

But it was more than an occupation. It had become, at last, a profession. The doctor had become—thanks to some foreign scientists and eastern foundations—the "man of science": beyond criticism, beyond regulation, very nearly beyond competition.

Outlawing the Midwives



In state after state, new, tough licensing laws sealed the doctors' monopoly on medical practice. All that was left was to drive out the last holdouts of the old people's medicine—the midwives. In 1910, about 50 percent of all babies were delivered by midwives—most were blacks or working class immigrants. It was an intolerable situation to the newly emerging obstetrical specialty.

Obstetricians launched their attacks on midwives in the name of science and reform. Midwives were ridiculed as "hopelessly dirty, ignorant and incompetent." Specifically, they were held responsible for the prevalence of puerperal sepsis (uterine infections) and neonatal ophthalmia (blindness due to parental infection with gonorrhea). Both conditions were easily preventable by techniques well within the grasp of the least literate midwife (hand-washing for puerperal sepsis, and eye drops for

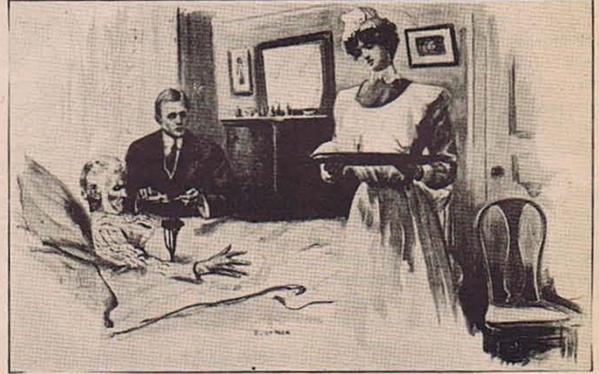
GLASS MOUNTAIN PAMPHLETS

This article is a shortened version of the second half of the pamphlet, *Witches, Midwives and Nurses: A History of Women Healers*. A condensation of the first half appeared in IRT #2. The complete pamphlet is 45 pages long and fully illustrated with period graphics.

Glass Mountain Pamphlets are published and distributed by *The Feminist Press*, a non-profit, tax-exempt educational and publishing group organized to challenge sexual stereotypes in books and schools and libraries. *Witches, Midwives and Nurses* is available for \$1.25 for single copies; Movement groups can order in bulk at a 40% discount. Write: The Feminist Press, Box 334, Old Westbury, New York, 11568. A free catalogue will be sent on request.

A second pamphlet by Barbara Ehrenreich and Deirdre English will be available in the Fall. Titled *Complaints and Disorders: The Sexual Politics of Sickness*, it is a history of medicine's contribution to sexist ideology and practice in America.





the ophthalmia).

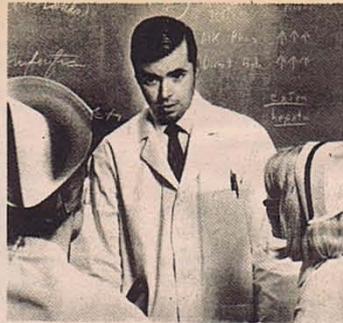
But the American obstetricians had no real commitment to improved obstetrical care. In fact, a study by a Johns Hopkins professor in 1912 indicated that most American doctors were *less* competent than the midwives. Not only were the doctors themselves unreliable about preventing sepsis and ophthalmia but they also tended to be too ready to use surgical techniques which endangered mother or child. If anyone, then, deserved a legal monopoly on obstetrical care, it was the midwives, not the MD's. But the doctors had power, the midwives didn't. Under intense pressure from the medical profession, state after state passed laws outlawing midwifery and restricting the practice of obstetrics to doctors. Women had been routed from their last foothold as independent practitioners.

The Lady with the Lamp

The only remaining occupation for women in health was nursing. Nursing had not always existed as a paid occupation—it had to be invented. In the early 19th century, a “nurse” was simply a woman who happened to be nursing someone—a sick child or an aging relative. There were hospitals, and they did employ nurses. But the hospitals of the time served largely as refuges for the dying poor, with only token care provided. Hospital nurses, history has it, were a disreputable lot, prone to drunkenness, prostitution and thievery. And conditions in the hospitals were often scandalous.

If nursing was not exactly an attractive field to women workers, it was a wide open arena for women reformers. To reform hospital care, you had to reform nursing, and to make nursing acceptable to doctors and to women of “good character,” it had to be given a completely new image. Florence Nightingale got her chance in the battle-front hospitals of the Crimean War, where she replaced the old camp-follower “nurses” with a bevy of disciplined, sober, middle-aged ladies. Dorothea Dix, an American hospital reformer, introduced the new breed of nurses in the Union hospitals of the Civil War.

The new nurse—“the lady with the lamp,” selflessly tending the wounded caught the popular imagination. Real nursing schools began to appear in



England right after the Crimean War, and in the U.S. right after the Civil War. At the same time, the number of hospitals began to increase to keep pace with the needs of medical education. Medical students needed hospitals to train in; good hospitals, as the doctors were learning, needed good nurses. In fact, the first American nursing schools did their best to recruit actual upper class women as students; Miss Euphemia Van Rensselaer, of an old aristocratic New York family, graced Bellevue's first class.

Let us look a little more closely at the women who invented nursing because, in a very real sense, nursing as we know it today is the product of their oppression as upper class Victorian women. Dorothea Dix was an heiress of

substantial means. Florence Nightingale and Louisa Schuyler (the moving force behind the creation of America's first Nightingale-style nursing school) were genuine aristocrats. They were refugees from the enforced leisure of Victorian ladyhood. Dix and Nightingale did not begin to carve out their reform careers until they were in their thirties, and faced with the prospect of a long, useless spinsterhood. They focused their energies on the care of the sick because this was a “natural” and acceptable interest for ladies of their class.

Nightingale and her immediate disciples left nursing with the indelible stamp of their own class biases. Training emphasized character, not skills. The finished product, the Nightingale nurse, was simply the ideal Lady, transplanted

from home to the hospital, and absolved of reproductive responsibilities. To the doctor, she brought the wifely virtue of absolute obedience. To the patient, she brought the selfless devotion of a mother. To the lower level hospital employees, she brought the firm but kindly discipline of a household manager accustomed to dealing with servants. Or, as one historian of nursing put it, nearly a century later, “Woman is an instinctive nurse, taught by Mother Nature.” If women were instinctive nurses, they were not, in the Nightingale view, instinctive doctors. She wrote of the few female physicians of her time: “They have only tried to be men, and they have succeeded only in being third-rate men.”

Just as the feminist movement had not opposed the rise of medical professionalism, it did not challenge nursing as an oppressive female role. In fact, feminists of the late 19th century were themselves beginning to celebrate the nurse/mother image of femininity. The American women's movement had given up the struggle for full sexual equality to focus exclusively on the vote, and to get it, they were ready to adopt the most sexist tenets of Victorian ideology: Women need the vote, they argued, not because they are human, but because they are Mothers. “Woman is the mother of the race,” gushed Boston feminist Julia Ward Howe, “the guardian of its helpless infancy, its earliest teacher, its most zealous champion. Woman is also the homemaker, upon her devolve the details which bless and beautify family life.” And so on in paeans too painful to quote.

The Doctor Needs a Nurse

Of course, the women's movement was not in a position to decide on the future of nursing anyway. Only the medical profession was. At first, male doctors were a little skeptical about the new Nightingale nurses—perhaps suspecting that this was just one more feminine attempt to infiltrate medicine. But they were soon won over by the nurses' unflagging obedience. To the beleaguered doctors of the 19th century, nursing was a godsend: Here at last was a kind of health worker who did not want to compete with the “regulars,” did not have a medical doctrine to push, and who seemed to have no other mission in life but to serve.

Overcoming Fear and Pain

Susan Tatum

Now that women are tired of being considered the "weaker sex" with its concomitant implications of soft, flabby, passive bodies and soft, flabby, passive minds, we want to become active, fully functioning human beings. We are learning to take responsibility for our own lives, to reclaim our strength and power and take care of ourselves.

While there has been a lot of talk about women getting to know their bodies, most of it has been sexually oriented. Not that this isn't an important area of liberation. But I believe that we deserve to know our muscles and our strength as well. Women have been brainwashed or indoctrinated to believe that they cannot do things which require physical power. Very few women even have a reasonable concept of what their physical limits might be, or how to cope with sudden fear or pain.

The fact is, we don't know how to read our body's signals. Because we don't give it credit for its power, we have, in effect, given up our body's strength.

In a stressful situation an untrained person is rarely cool, calm and collected. When the time comes that you want to use either a fighting or defense technique or the self healing and control techniques I will discuss, you will be either scared or angry or in pain, or a combination of these things. The usual reactions from women who are either scared and/or angry are:

1. physical hysteria—ineffectual flailing when in danger, hurt or being attacked.

2. catatonia—being "frozen-with-fear," which is obviously even less effective.

I know of only two ways to avoid these reactions, and I recommend that you aim for both:

1. Practice so that the moves or techniques are totally automatic—instinctive—so that your mind and conscious control are unnecessary. This is a must because you may need to react faster than you can consciously direct. I must caution you here, though—If you are going to practice a defense or attack until it is in your automatic memory, you had better practice it correctly! If you do it wrong when you practice, you are sure to do it wrong under stress. This means that you cannot practice haphazardly or sloppily and that for self defense techniques you should have instruction or supervision. Bad habits are just as easily learned as good ones, and very difficult to unlearn.

2. The second requirement is to keep calm and relaxed; i.e., don't get scared or angry in the first place. I'm not suggesting that you really learn how to be totally indifferent to a mad necrophile wielding a bloody hatchet. But increased self-confidence will prevent rabbit tremors and will, in fact, produce vibes which in and of themselves will keep you from getting hassled. And you can learn to control your body's chemical secretions, especially adrenalin, such that you stay in control even when you are alarmed. Most women (at least women in the social class that I'm from) are so unaccustomed to the surge of adrenalin that comes when they are in physical danger or have been injured that instead of having a useful burst of energy and power (which is the physiological intent) they generally become even more upset and cry a lot. It's as though their circuits were suddenly overloaded, and that's actually a pretty fair analogy. But you can become acquainted with all

your power, including that emergency buzz, so that you can use it rather than being at its mercy.

I can't mock up a frightening situation for you, but you will probably injure yourself soon enough in the course of daily life. The next time you get a bad knock or a burn, or cut yourself, or slam your finger in a door, I suggest you try the following: Instead of jumping up and down, swearing and crying, stay perfectly still (sit or kneel if you are really hurt) and focus your mind on breathing deeply and regularly. A surprising amount of our reaction to pain is actually slightly delayed fright, like the weak knees and shaking hands that come after an almost car wreck. It's your body reacting to what your mind knows might have happened.

Once, when I was taking a class on the use of a bo (an oak staff about six feet long and an inch or an inch and a half in diameter), my opponent brought his stick down on mine with an overhead stroke that was much stronger than I expected. I had my bo above my head in a horizontal block which took the full force of his blow. I didn't drop my guard, but my grip slipped just enough to allow my staff to roll forward a bit, and that motion rolled the end of his staff off my block. All this happened very fast, and before I knew it I'd been struck on the forehead and cheek with the end of an only slightly deflected bo. It was a very hard knock, and I instantly sank to my knees and concentrated on breathing. But, believe it or not, I was less upset by the actual pain than by the fact that the blow had barely missed my eye. My body was trying to panic over something that hadn't happened.

While I did my breathing exercise, my karate instructor rubbed the back of my neck so that I wouldn't tense up and cut off the natural flow of blood. Because of his action and because of my own control and calm which prevented my heart from wildly pumping blood to the injured area, there was much less congestion than would be expected

from such a blow. As soon as I was sure I would not break down in tears of delayed fright and that my breathing was normal and effortless, I was given some ice to hold on my forehead. This, too, discourages the flow of blood by shrinking the capillaries and veins so that they do not become engorged. It is a very useful technique immediately after a blow or a sprain. Another technique that I use to keep the blood moving freely through an injured area is to rub firmly toward my heart, as you would in a massage. This should be done immediately after the injury. I find that the bruise then develops with a reddish tinge rather than black or blue, and fades more quickly than an ordinary bruise.

Of course, three or four hours later, after excess blood has congealed around the injury to create swelling and bruising, you want heat to break up the

congestion and restore the natural circulation. Hot baths, hot towels, heat lamps, heating pads, etc. are very useful. With practice you can learn to increase the blood flow in an area by mental exercise. By concentrating on the injured area and using your creative imagination to see the congestion dispersing, the blood flowing smoothly, and to feel a warmth around the area, you can actually create that effect. This notion may sound a bit witchy and weird, but I assure you that your thoughts are very powerful. If you contemplate this power of thought, I'm sure you will come up with some very practical and important possibilities.

In summary, get to know your body and its power. Learn to use your strength and training; remember the power of directing your thoughts and consciousness and the importance of being relaxed and alert.



Letters and Other Important Information

Issues in Radical Therapy is a practical political journal which serves as a forum for dialogue and exchange of information among people who are involved in the radical therapy movement.

IRT addresses anyone interested or involved in the radical therapy movement: people who were or are "in therapy," therapists and professionals who align themselves and support the interests of "patients" and workers, inmates of mental hospitals and prisons of any kind, orderlies, etc. We want articles about political oppression and its relation to psychiatric distress, articles which grow out of involvement in radical therapy, "how to do it and why" articles, articles from people who are organizing to reclaim power over their own lives, etc.

We believe that IRT must continue to grow. We want to learn. We want to expose contradictions in our theory and practice. We welcome change so that we can continue to work toward our revolutionary goals. We ask for feedback from all of you.

In loving struggle,
IRT collective



Manuscripts for the next IRT issue should be submitted by Sept. 15, 1973. Send them to P.O. Box 23544, Oakland, Calif. 94623. Manuscripts should be double-spaced throughout and in triplicate. If you want your manuscript back, please send us a stamped, self-addressed envelope. We want feedback from all of you so that we can know and respond to what you want. We invite guest editorials and letters to IRT. If you want to publish your ideas and/or experiences but your writings are not in final, publishable form, send them anyway. If we like it, we'll help you finish it. We'll read what you've written, write comments and send it back to you. Please send a stamped, self-addressed envelope. If you don't have access to a typewriter and can't type your paper, send it anyway. Just write clearly and double space so we can read it easily.

Changes

Readers who notice such items will see that with IRT #3 staff positions have changed. The following notes explain why.

Given: that communication is power and a crucial component of healthy survival: one vision we had when we started IRT was that we would share with each other everything we know about publishing which, collectively, turned out to be considerable.

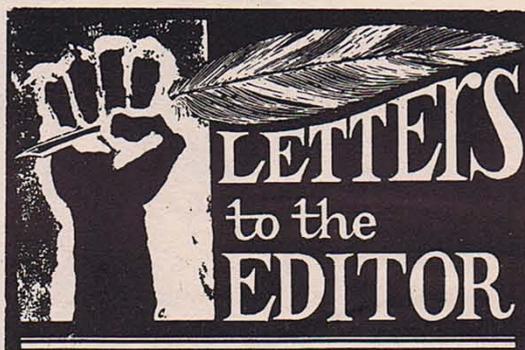
What I and the rest of the group didn't know very much about, except perhaps in the crudest form, was how to publish a periodical without relying on the usual specializing (i.e., editor, production manager, etc.) and hierarchy of function. Thus, another of our visions in starting IRT was to be engaged in a process which would lead eventually to the obsolescence of *The Editor*: everyone would be an editor, everyone would be equally responsible. Indeed the essence of that vision is that anyone in IRT collective will be able, if necessary, to put out the paper completely alone. (Of course, we hope that never has to happen but our paranoia leads us to be prepared for the possibility, given the vulnerability of the Left, caused by its own in-fighting (Lefter-Than-Thou) as well as the more obvious kinds of repression that might be expected from the Fascist Right.)

So: with IRT #1 I bore most of the editing/publishing burden. The collective asked me to be *Editor* and I wanted to be, too. By the time IRT #2 was in the works people in the collective had enough information and had acquired enough skills so that my input could be reduced and I became *Coordinating Editor*; I was still "where the buck stopped," I still had the psychological burden of "being the leader," but my actual work and worry load had been lessened considerably.

Now, with IRT #3, Rick DeGolia and Hogie Wyckoff are sharing the Coordinating Editor function and I get to relax and make mudpies with the rest of the kids. (Well, just about: I still have this advisory trip going but my shoulders just don't look or feel hunched over as they did when I was "it.") Whew!

I'd like to point out that I think the relative speed with which we are going through this process—that of equalizing power—has been the effect of our commitments to cooperation and a long, long life for IRT.

—Joy Marcus



March 23, 1973

Gentlepeople,

I was given your address by VSC; I wrote to them after reading their issue of *Work Force* on mental health. I'm sure that nothing I could tell you about my experiences would be new or surprising.

I'm on the board of a halfway house in Cleveland that I lived in for 4½ months. The name of the house is W.I.S.H., Inc. (Women in Search of Help). I've been having somewhat of a hard time as I'm the only non-professional on the board, and the only former resident. The house had to temporarily close down last September because of financial and staffing hassles. We've been promised state funds but have yet to see any money.

According to the Code of Regulations, the objectives of Wish are:

1. The Corporation is dedicated to meeting the needs of women 18 years of age and over, for whom normal social living has become a primary problem. [No one bothers to define "normal social living" nor to consider the hypocrisy of it.]
2. Excluded are women who are users of opium, heroin, marijuana, LSD, or any opiate derivative or hallucinatory drug which is currently illegal or will be illegal in the future.
3. Pregnant women can be provided an emergency shelter not to exceed a week's duration.

I had a hard time being accepted to Wish; I was told that I was accepted under special circumstances (I never was told just what those circumstances were) and was frequently reminded of that by the person in charge.

Most of the residents were passive, submissive people; however, there were a few of us who were activists—organizers—outspoken—trouble makers—we were termed "rebellious," "defiant," "resentful of accepted authority" (the latter of which was true) because we stood up for our rights as human beings. When I challenged the manner in which a certain situation was handled, I was told that I was "regressing" and that I should consider "more intensive treatment and hospitalization"; I was also

told to think of the house as a "little hospital." (At that time I had been working for 2½ months and was totally self-supporting.) This is a sample of the kinds of verbal abuse those of us who didn't submit to the whims of the person in charge (a live-in social worker) were subject to.

I see being on the board as an incredible responsibility; there are so many people who are desperately in need of a home—a place that is more than a place to sleep—and I can't let them down—I can't let myself down. If I can't learn by my mistakes and the injustices we suffered—what use was it all? Just because we got shit doesn't mean it HAS to happen. These are things I've tried to convey to the rest of the board. Unfortunately, I'm dealing with many traditional professionals. In a way, I can understand what they're saying—if I say to them "Look, we don't necessarily need professionals to run the house," I'm saying, "Look, we don't necessarily need you."—I'm threatening them. Keeping their position, their stiffness, concern with professionalism and with professional image in mind, I submitted the enclosed recommendations to the board at the last meeting. They accepted what I said.

I'm exhausted and frustrated from fighting—the struggle is endless. Any suggestions you might have would be welcome with open arms (eyes?)—your experiences, and/or any other similar endeavors you might know of; specifically, if you can't help me, names and addresses of other people who are doing or are trying to do similar kinds of things.

I'm also involved in trying to set up a crash house which, we hope, will be a place people can go to hash out what they've got to deal with (that sounds awful!)—an alternative to incarceration in mental institutions and the oppression that accompanies it.

Thank you.

In struggle—and hope,

In struggle—and hope,
Debbie Heller
2030 E. 115th St.
Apt. 21
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

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April 29, 1973

IRT:

There is a need for an international meeting to stimulate and communicate about radical therapy, radical psychiatry, radical psychology, Marxism, mental patient's liberation and the full range of issues. There is the possibility of holding such a meeting in 1974 at Erasmus University in Rotterdam. What is your reaction to this? What topics should the meeting cover? Who should attend the meeting? Where should the meeting be held? When would be a good time to hold such an assembly? How can we find such a meeting? Would one of your group be willing to serve on a planning committee which would involve further communication about the meeting?

The agenda could include the new attempts at integration of Marx with Freud and other mental health systems, anti-psychiatry, politics of mental health and mental oppression, drugs, racism, sexism, gay liberation, class oppression, militarism, elitism and the national liberation struggles. We want to hear about new and liberating therapies and we want to know of the dangers from the new social controls.

Send me your ideas and the names of interested people and there will be a further report.

Paul Lowinger



January 21, 1973

Dear People:

I have just completed the reading of my first issue of IRT. For the most part it was really right on. I'll tell you where I am hung up and I hope it will be received as I as writing it. First of all I feel a bit deceived. When I sent in my money for this new publication IRT, I along with a lot of other people I know were under the impression that the former Radical Therapist and your collective were one and the same, just happened to be on different sides of the country. Then I started writing to Phil Brown on sort of a regular basis and in one inspired moment I even sent in a \$5.00 gift to RT, thinking you were all one and the same. Then Phil Brown came out to San Francisco a couple of months ago and came to my house with a friend (I forgot her name, sorry) and spent the better half of the afternoon. I in turn brought a woman friend of mine over, as we are both struggling feminists and into Radical Therapy etc. When Phil Brown left my house, my friend and I just stared at each other. We had both been totally turned off and 'alienated' if you will. I felt a moment of disorientation, for I looked forward each month to my RT with much enthusiasm, and greatly disapproved of their name change and told them so. What we felt was, if this RT and if this was where the people in the collective were at, I wanted no part of it. Phil Brown felt lousy. The better part of our time together was spent in putting your group down, quite vigorously. It was then and only then that I learned you were not all of the same collective, and he made the point of telling us, you people are trying to deceive us. This all stinks! It really does.

I have already made up my mind not to resubscribe to ROUGH TIMES when my current subscription runs out, because as a woman involved in the struggle and also as a Graduate student in Psychology I have been totally alienated. Not that I don't agree with a hell of a lot of what they say and what they are doing. I guess I simply feel 'discounted' by their approach, and even more so after meeting with Phil Brown.

Now I am still concerned about how your collective is dealing with Anger, and I hope you will address yourselves more to that in coming issues. I enjoyed the article by Alan Jacobs, but I need much more information and clarification than that. I felt 'unfinished' by that article. I still remember The Conference this past summer, and how unsatisfactorily anger was dealt with then. A lot of us who got together from that conference here in the city have discussed that issue many, many times. So I hope in future issues you will deal more with Anger, and how it can be felt and expressed without others feeling 'pigged' and 'ripped off.'

I hope both collectives will not continue this petty bickering back and forth in future issues, because it is really a bummer.

At the same time, I hope you will rationally and logically inform us of where you are really at, because you had a hell of a lot of us thinking you were all one and the same. There is a huge lack of communication in that area somewhere, and I would really like to see if clarified.

I hope you will take this letter as constructive. For that is the way I wrote it. I really dug the first issue, am looking forward to the next. I wish you would publish monthly, perhaps you will be able to eventually.

I wish you joy and love in the struggle.

Peace,

Marilyn Christensen
San Francisco

Dear Marilyn:

I've also heard from people on the East Coast that the difference between the two collectives, and the name "issues in Radical Therapy," is confusing. The reasons for choosing to put out a new publication were spelled out by Joy Marcus in IRT #1. The plain fact that there is a difference will probably need to be repeated a lot, though. Here goes: IRT is in no way connected to *Rough Times*, formerly *The Radical Therapist*; except to the extent that we see ourselves as allies in the radical health movement.

Thanks for writing.

Deirdre English

Marilyn,

I agree with your criticism that we have a lot to learn about anger and we plan to put together an article on it in IRT #4 or 5.

Rick DeGolia

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May 27, 1973

Dear Rick,

I live with a woman who subscribes to *Issues in Radical Therapy*. Both issues have been excellent, and we've used several articles in some groups which are working on developing alternatives to counselling here in K.C. Hogie Wycokoff's articles concerning women have been excellent and also the articles about men struggling have been very helpful. The radical bookstore in K.C. should be writing for IRT in quantity. Also, some people in the more "straight" T-A training group here are getting it and several have said good things. Keep up the good work!

Sincerely,

Susan Thornton

Susan,

Thanks for your letter. The radical bookstore in Kansas City hasn't written yet, hope they will. We all like the strokes.

In struggle,

Rick

Dear Folks, especially Ossa & Joy:

I picked up your paper at a friend's house and immediately began reading the article on masturbation. The first paragraph made me laugh and nod and read on.

The article came at a very important time for me. I've never got into masturbating. I've not been particularly turned off to my body, but I just was not

Answer: The real oppressor is
never in the picture.



actively interested in exploring it sexually. For a combination of reasons I began to explore my body one night. It felt really good and exciting. It was a few days after this that I ran across your paper. That night I once again got into my body and discovered that I could have a special deep orgasm by myself. This blew my mind. Thoughts went racing through my mind—"I can have this anytime I want"—"How does this change my relationships with men"—"How could I have gone all this time without knowing this—and I could feel my energy flowing and I was very excited.

One of my housemates read the article and really thought it was good too. So I'm hoping to share it with some other people and talk about it with them.

From there I read "Radical Therapy & Revolution" and "I Did It & I'm Glad."

The first article really picked me up because it's the first article I've ever read which looked at therapy with a m-l-m outlook. I'm not sure if I agree with everything he said but it at least started me thinking once again about therapy—something which I trashed long ago when my political consciousness developed and I saw no viable way of integrating "therapy." I had wanted to be a therapist when I was in high school. Now, after a few years I see how important it is for revolutionaries to care for and about each other and other friends we are working with. I've seen too many people leave the movement because there wasn't enough caring or because the pressures as they are were too great and the support not enough to withstand that pressure. It is a great monster we are fighting and we must develop forms of emotional support.

I'm not clear, in practice, of the difference between Issues in Radical Therapy and Rough Times.

I think it was really good and important for IRT to talk about how it grew out of the Radical Therapist. It was very honestly written.

I don't know if you want to carry on any further talks about your differences with Rough Times but like I say—I don't see from the articles how those differences reflect themselves in practice.

The open letter by Judy Freespirit really moved me. Marshall sounded like an incredible person. A very freeing letter. And the graphics throughout "Problem-solving Groups for Women" are great. I might even cut them out and put them up.

I hope you can lower the price of your paper—it would reach more people that way.

I get a two week vacation from work in July. I am coming up to San Francisco to make plans for moving there in August or September. I hope to spend a few days in Berkeley and Oakland. Would like to talk with some of you then.

Much luck and support to you. Love,
Judy

Dear Judy,

Thanks much for your sunshiny letter. It means a lot to me to hear the effect we're having on our readers. I especially enjoy letters such as yours which combine questions and criticisms with appreciation.

Joy Marcus

Dear IRT Collective:

First, congratulations on the latest issue! It was excellent. I really learned a lot from it, and enjoyed reading it. And it looks beautiful, except I agree with that weird guy who wrote snobbily to complain about imitating the N.Y. Review of Books. Why imitate people like that? Anita's Mediations article sounded fantastic, and I signed up with a friend to go to her workshop in New York. And I thought Claude's article on TA was really clear and fair. My class of Women and Psychology talked about some of the content of Hogie's article, about relations between men and women. The journal gets well-used by me! Also Barbara and I thought you did an excellent job of condensing our pamphlet, and we were really pleased to see it there, except, dummies, it's Glass, not Glenn, Mountain Series. The Glass Mountain is like sexism: you can see through it, but it's hard to get over it.

Here's a little something from the New York Times I thought you'd like to see—maybe even run, as an example of what Claude predicted in the TA article... the increasing manipulative use of TA for consumer rip-offs, because of its "cute" jargon. [See page 35]. I've seen whole T.A.C.T. slide show referred to here, shown by Harris at the I.T.A.A. conference at Christmas. It was disgusting. The rumor at the time was that it rents for \$1000 for the four-hour training program, and has been bought, for example, for training croUPIERS at Las Vegas. Harris' lawyers are supposedly tied up in litigation so that Harris can get in on all the bread being turned over by this lucrative little biz. It's interesting to note that it's first use seems to be to encourage gambling, and my guess is that it means really sending nurturing witch-messages that seduce the not-okay child into taking unwise risks. Of course, it's just a pseudo-scientific way for the company to convince employers to act in the company's best interest, even just by being polite to customers, rather than expressing their own real feelings, like "what a shitty job," or "gee, why doesn't this guy quit losing money and go home?" So it's getting the employees into their adapted child, meekly obedient to the co. And all this is disguised—in the slide show itself—as having "adult-adult" transactions. Fortunately, people aren't as easily manipulated as all that, and as the writer implies, the net effect of the whole thing is probably zero. But the intentions of the T.A.C.T. program make me shudder, anyway.

Well, none of this is why I'm writing. The reason I'm writing is to propose myself as a visitor for the summer to the IRT. What I would like to do is come to Berkeley for July and August, hang around, and learn as much as possible in that time. I'd also like to contribute what I can. I'd do whatever would be helpful—helping to edit, or lay-out, or writing an article, or something. I'd want to come to meetings and generally be as thoroughly involved in things as others, given only the fact that my stay there would be limited. What do you think?

Speak to you soon. In loving struggle,

Deirdre

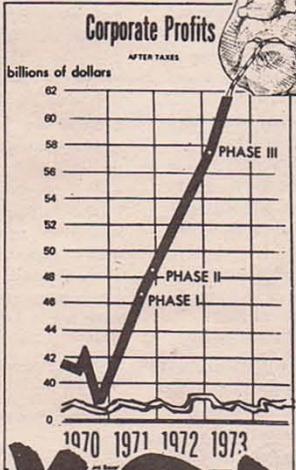
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