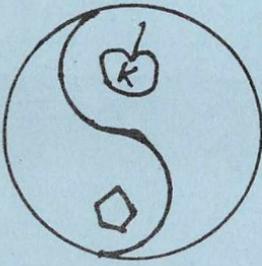
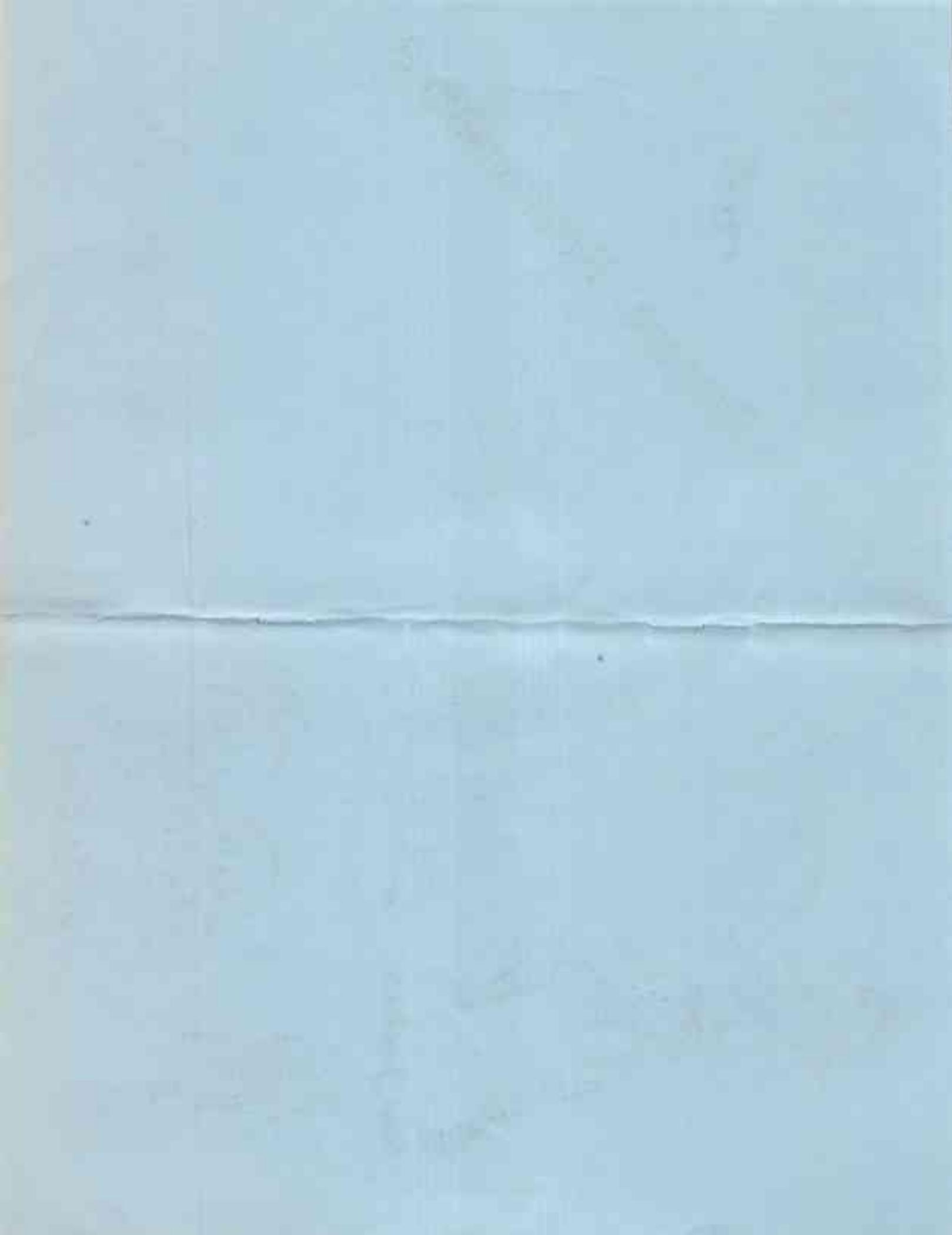


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The Diagonal Relationship 8



Arthur D. Blavaty

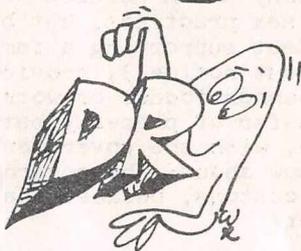


The Diagonal Relationship 8

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All material written by the editor, unless otherwise indicated. Copyright © by Arthur D. Hlavaty. All rights returned to contributors. This is Volume 2, Number 4; Whole Number 8; W.A.S.T.E. Paper # 33. This issue is dedicated to one of my role models, Gil Gaier.

THE DIAGONAL RELATIONSHIP is available for \$1, letter of comment, trade, artwork, or other plausible excuses. If there is an X after your name on the envelope, you will probably not get the next issue unless you send some indication of interest.

Hello there! Haven't seen you all year. Here's a preview of this issue. After letters from 2 very interesting people, we have I AM LARGE, a title some of you may recognize as a quote from Walt Whitman (in one of his rare lucid moments), which may give you an idea of what it's about. Thence to a review of a book which threatens to Tell All about the Discordian Movement. After that, I start talking dirty again, in another article about THOSE words, and after some more letters, a test that will perhaps tell what you are REALLY LIKE. Following that, a look at Professionalism & Other Conspiracies, to be followed by an article which I have called Flight from Politics. You may have noticed that a lot of my stuff could have that title, and I should point out that by "politics" I mean large, public, mass power plays. Individual one-to-one & small-group conniving & power we will probably always have with us. But I would like to get rid of as much mass politics as possible.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 24)

Adrienne Fein

"Society has a legitimate interest in the institution of marriage" may be translated as: The government and the patriarchy has an interest in the form of social organization which keeps most workers docile (how about the company which refused to hire a gay male, not because of his sex practices, but because he wasn't head-over-heels in debt supporting a family, and therefore might leave without notice?), provides many children to grow up to be cannon fodder or workers, and in which the orderly transfer of property between generations, through the male line, with the government getting a big cut, is assured. Or how about: The government has an interest in regulating sex customs, because that's a great way to have a lot of power?

Your paraphrase is probably what a lot of people, including many in power, have in mind. It is not a good way of persuading people to obey, though. I would like to see more imaginative pigs running things though--corporate executives (there are already some) who know that you get better work from people who are being challenged by interesting work than those you've hired on the assumption that no one would work for you except out of desperation; planners who know that there is no need for large numbers of dumb people, either as menial workers or as cannon fodder, etc.

You must know that *telling* law-enforcement officials that the Nut Cult is harmless is a sure way to make them believe the opposite. Instead, print an application blank for a member who would like to apply for the post of counterspy--i.e., such member would report all meetings & proceedings to FBI, CIA, etc., but would turn over all monies received to the Cult treasury.

But perhaps I have given this transparent disclaimer in order to attract law-enforcement people to the Nut Cult & keep them away from the Erisian Liberation Front and other truly dangerous servants of the Goddess....Actually, what I really want to do is make the Nut Cult seem so dangerous that thousands of FBI men will join us as dues-paying members--just like the Communist Party.

Fran Lebowitz does not have much imagination. It's true that much discussion of one's sexual fantasies can get dull. It's not necessarily true that if several people were interested in the same fantasy, they'd all be acting it out instead of talking about it. What about the Fantasy that starts: "Take one spaceship...."

ROBERT SHEA

I don't like sending letters to magazines that don't have letter columns. It's a bit like dropping a stone down a bottomless well. Indeed, I don't even like magazines that don't have letter columns, except for THE NEW YORKER, which is the best magazine in the English-speaking world.

But rather than stop getting THE DIAGONAL RELATIONSHIP, which is the second-best magazine in the English-speaking world (and that by itself ought to get me dropped from your mailing list, I want to let you know that I am alive, reading DR, and otherwise well.

Re; who is responsible for ladies' babies. The question, it seems to me, is wrongly phrased. There are those who say society should be responsible for the support of children born to mothers who need financial help. There are those who say society should not be responsible for the children of such mothers. In both assertions, people are being defined by their relationship to their mothers. They are seen as appendages of their mothers, and the question of whether or not they should be supported is to be answered according to how you view their mothers--as women exercising a right to get pregnant, or as fecund and feckless welfare cases. It seems to me that the fact they are the children of certain mothers is secondary to the fact that they are people in their own right. They do not belong to their mothers. It is not like I'm saying, "The state should pay to put gas in my car when I can't afford to."

We may not consider fetuses to be persons (I don't), but I think we are generally agreed that, once born, a person is a person. I do have one friend who believes that human beings should not be granted full personhood until the age of 21. This would give us the right to kill obnoxious teenagers who drive too fast, play their portable radios too loud on buses, etc. This is a minority view, however, because by the time a person is a teenager, the parents have invested quite a bit of money in food, clothing, education, portable radios, records, cars, and dope.

Anyway, if we stop thinking of children as responsible for how they got into the world, or as the property of their mothers, then the question is, "Should society attempt to support those members who are not capable of supporting themselves?" I think this is a more fruitful way to ask the question.

{ I'm not terribly good at deciding what society should do, other than leave me alone. But I would want to live in a community which supports those members not capable of supporting themselves. }

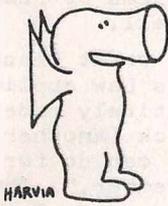
I AM LARGE

I've known some of you for quite a while now, and so perhaps it is time that I introduce you to some of the voices in my head. Now of course, I speak metaphorically (he said hastily, casting a quick look around for the men in the white coats). I do not literally hear Jesus or the International Communist Conspiracy whispering strange remarks or commands in my ear. Rather, I choose to see myself, as Robert Anton Wilson does in *Cosmic Trigger*, as a conglomerate of an undetermined number of selves held together by their common body. They have managed to coexist thus far, and letting them peek out into the light of day shouldn't do much harm.

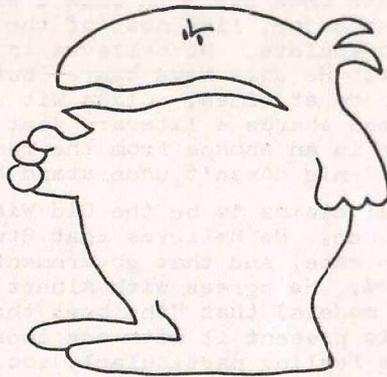
The first one to become noticeable was Class Wit. He goes back to elementary school, where I was soon known to be Weird. Specifically I had a not-uncommon pair of problems: I was smarter than everyone else (including the teachers) and I was little, weak, & cowardly. I am sometimes tempted to think of an elementary school class as a primitive tribe under colonial rule. Further thought, however, convinces me that this is unfair to real primitive tribes. In a real primitive tribe, the oddball usually becomes a shaman. His or her weirdness is respected & permitted to grow. In an elementary school class, both the savages & the colonial administrator tend to pick on the little weirdo. (Someday perhaps I'll do an autobiography & call it *I Was a Teenage Shaman*.) In any event, I tended to be both bored & scared. Class Wit grew out of this situation.

He's related to Class Clown, one of George Carlin's *personae*. Class Clown, though, does funny faces & funny noises, which I was never particularly good at. Class Wit is strictly verbal--a Trickster of words. He was useful; as many Class Clowns & Class Wits discovered, someone who is laughing hysterically cannot punch you in the mouth. Unless you have no sense of humor, you will probably find Class Wit a likeable sort of fellow. The catch is that nothing is sacred to him; he is ready to joke about death & castration & rape & cancer & other subjects that aren't supposed to be funny. This helps make him just a bit dangerous, since whether I want to Do Good or Be Polite or Get Laid, Class Wit is there, ready to take over & go for a laugh.

Then there's the DA, who in some respects is the opposite of Class Clown. He is a hyperactive Jewish conscience, combined with that little inner voice Albert Ellis says we all have, the one that says, "You're a no-good shit." The DA is tough. He has high standards for me, and expects me to live up to them. He tries to enforce upon me a moral code based on elements of the Protestant Ethic, ecology, The Gospel according to St. Sigmund (Class Wit said that), and the most idealistic beliefs of the Left.



Say something of
general interest, Ogre.



Sex and
violence!

At times he sounds like a sort of Radical Jewish Mother. As it happens, I do relatively few overt harmful acts, but the DA isn't satisfied. He says, "Why didn't you...?" He wants me to be mature, to take on responsibilities, to fight for equality, to do an honest day's work, to combat Evil wherever it may be. He & Class Wit do not get along at all. Class Wit is always interrupting his summations with wisecracks, whereupon he accuses Class Wit of being callous and/or defensive.

Val Hart (a truncated anagram) is my anima, which is to say that she is female. In a way, she is very hazy in my mind. Jung's animus/anima concept is quite useful in dealing with the bizarre idea that there might be people who are 100% MALE or 100% FEMALE, and even that these caricatures might be goals to which we should all aspire. Those of us who accept our androgyny may find it harder to isolate a part which is specifically of the opposite sex. So for the time being, I will say only that I like the idea that at least one of my selves is a woman.

Then there's Ernie. *STEREOTYPE ALERT* We all have images that we get from certain names. To me, "Ernie" signifies a guy who watches TV in his undershirt, with a can of beer in his hand. I don't think there are any Ernies on my mailing list, but if you are named Ernie & you do not live up to the stereotype, my apologies. (Many people have a thoroughly creepy image of the name "Arthur" if that's any consolation to you.) Anyway, I am not entirely unlike this person, and Ernie is the part of me who shares his tastes. Ernie likes pro football, doowop music, dirty & ethnic jokes, and bowling. (Incidentally, Class Wit wishes to know where a bunch of people who get their jollies hitting a little white ball with a variety of funny-looking sticks get off making ethnic jokes about bowling.) Ernie used to talk a lot about Tits & Ass, but the DA got on his case about that, and for once I agree with the DA.

Effete Snob was born when I was in college. He is an English Major, like most of the people I was then trying to emulate. He believes in Great Literature & like that. He does have taste, but he can be a Godawful pompous bore at times. Class Wit sometimes laughs at him & sometimes shares a literary jest with him. The DA thinks he is an escape from the real problems of real people. Ernie doesn't understand him at all.

Jubal claims to be the Old Wise Man, or at least H.L. Mencken. He believes that Sturgeon's Law applies to the human race, and that government is entirely made up of the 90%. He agrees with Albert Jay Nock (another of his role models) that "the best thing one can do for society is present it with one improved member." The DA, when he's feeling particularly socialistic, says I made up Jubal as a defense. (He's big on defenses.) Jubal says that if he left, and I replaced him with a socialist self, the DA would soon be using Jubal's old arguments to prosecute him.

Chicken is the cowardly part of me. His favorite line is, "Don't do it. You'll bugger it up." I think he is one of the burdens of a great potential, of being told that success was to be expected (and thus not rejoiced in), but failure was shameful. He's always ready to point out the jokes Class Wit will make if I fail, and all the evidence the DA will have against me if I harm someone in the course of my endeavors.

The Bookkeeper is the orderly part of me. He arranges my books in alphabetical order, and has rejoiced in my mundane jobs when they involved things like copy editing or arranging files. He's useful but very limited.

Ezra is the Crank. (He's named after one of America's greatest cranks, though my Ezra does not sink to the viciousness of the original--nor rise to the poetry.) He is the one who believes in Diagonal Relationships, and he does manage to reach out & grab some interesting divers images to yoke together by violence.



Adam W may be the newest of my selves, having appeared since I read a certain trilogy. He's a mysterious sort, hinting darkly of "illumination" and claiming to belong to an ancient Order which may be traced back at least as far as a certain Old Man of the Mountain who excelled at applied political science & pharmacology. He's a strange one; you never know what he's thinking. He has a Gnostic dislike for the physical world & the entity he calls Mutha Nature. (NOT to be visualized as a woman, he insists, because he likes women.) He is a rank elitist, believing that the *mehums* (which is what mundanes are called in his Order) are to be utilized or ignored (though not pointlessly harmed). He dreams of being a disembodied self, or at least divorcing himself from as many of the necessities of what passes for reality as possible. He eschews violence (or at least, like his Old Man, believes it should be used very selectively). If he does not consider you a *mehum*, he can be a very good friend.

Nix is a little like Adam W, only without any of the good parts. (His name may remind you of a certain ex-president.) He too has an idea of what he wants. The difference is that he is willing, nay, eager, to destroy whatever crosses his path in order to reach it. He is the spirit of I WANT, I NEED, and, worst of all, I FEAR. He really is a nasty sumbitch, and the only good thing about him is that I know he's there.

And there you have it, friends--the denizens of my mind, or at least those who were willing to show themselves this time around. There may be some more of them next time. Or these may appear again. Adam wrote a nasty thing that I wouldn't want people to think I wrote. ("There's nothing wrong with normal people. Everybody should own one.") I may tone that down & publish it. Val is thinking of writing a column called *alas* ANIMA FREAK. Others are at work. I thought I'd better warn you.



*There is nothing so divisive
as the State's efforts
to bring us together.*

Nut Cult Notes

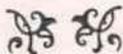
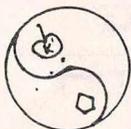
The big news for Nut Cultists is that there is finally a publically available above-ground edition of the *Principia Discordia*. Yes, this notorious book really does exist. As Robert Anton Wilson reports, it has been reprinted from time to time, and now Loompanics Unlimited has published it.

It is pretty much what you would expect from the references to it in the Trilogy and *Cosmic Trigger*. It consists of a series of stories, parables, one-liners, poems, and miscellaneous, all put together according to that Discordian principle of organization which closely resembles no organization at all, and pasted up carelessly with a lot of junk pictures that the authors must have found somewhere. (There is no truth to the ugly rumor that the Art Director for the *Principia* now holds the same position with DR.)

But what does it all mean? I'm glad you asked that question. There are in this book 5 explanations of the Discordian Movement, what it means, and precisely what it is up to. Now who could ask for more than that? Of course, the five explanations contradict each other in numerous places, but you can't have everything. You will also find all the Deep Dark Secrets of Discordianism, which means that those who are interested in infiltrating the Discordian Movement for their own nefarious purposes or those of the State should take notice. (Which reminds me: Those wishing to infiltrate the Nut Cult on behalf of law-enforcement organizations will find their task much easier if they have read *Deep Dark Dirty Secrets of the Illuminatus! Nut Cult*, available from the present writer for \$100.)

What can I say? If you liked the Trilogy, you will probably like this, and if not, not. There are those who will insist that the funny parts are nothing but a cover for the Serious Message, but they are no doubt the sort who believe that *The Song of Songs* is REALLY an allegory of Christ's love for the Church, and not what you think it is. There are those who may believe that it is just a joke, but remember, he who laughs last found a meaning the censors missed. In any event, I urge you to read this book in the spirit of practically the first words in it:

A Discordian is prohibited of believing what he reads.
Available for \$4, plus \$1 shipping charge, from
LOOMPANICS UNLIMITED, Box264, Mason, Mich. 48354.



NEW CULTISTS:

Eva Chalker Whitley: Princess
Mike Gunderloy: Pope Sicle I
Dennis Brown: Creator of Confusion
Ross Pavlac: Aalmighty Aardvark

Again, Dangerous Fuck

As the science-fiction readers among us may have guessed, this article is a sequel. Back in DR 2, I did an article called FUCK, in which I suggested, following Albert Ellis, that there is a definite inconsistency between enjoying certain acts and using the words for the same acts in a negative manner--e.g., "lousy no-good fucker." I went on to suggest that such usage indicates either a failure to think about the meaning of the words one uses, or a typically mammalian confusion between sex & dominance. I still think so, but I've had a few afterthoughts I 'd like to share with you.

FUCK. One objection to theory I presented was that some people felt that the word *fuck* refers, or should refer, to *bad* sex only--to impersonal sex, to dominance/submission sex, even to rape, but not to the kind of sex that could better be described as *making love*. Of course, words do not have meanings "out there"--REAL meanings which we discover, rather than invent. So if I argue this point, I am not trying to say that I am speaking for the REAL MEANINGS of the words, but merely that I find my use of these words practical in dealing with the world.

First of all, there are those who think that certain words are inherently dirty, like the child who supposedly said, "Pigs are called pigs because they are such swine." A more sophisticated version of this theory, supported by Ethel Strainchamps among others, says that dirty words are dirty because they sound dirty, that certain combinations of sounds will be used for bad words. This theory fails to explain why Allen Funt is permitted to say his name on television or the experimentally demonstrated fact that one who is utterly unfamiliar with a



language cannot distinguish between a pornographic tale & a grocery list in that language.

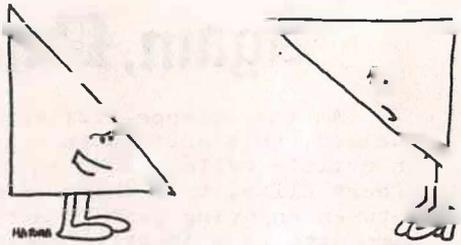
Even people who are not under these particular superstitions tend to use the word *fuck* for bad sex. As I said before, the use of *fuck* as a transitive verb leads to problems because most of us grew up thinking of it as something a man does to a woman, and thus "She fucked him" sounds a bit odd. In the ideal language of

Ursula Le Guin's *The Dispossessed*, there is no transitive verb for the sex act, except one which means *rape*, which is one way of dealing with the question. Another, as I suggested last time, is to use a symmetrical term like *ball*.

MAKE LOVE. The problem is, if one insists on a restricted negative use of the word *fuck*, how does one tell whether people are *making love* or *fucking*? In his autobiography, St. Lenny describes the experience of witnessing a sexual act when he was 8, and says, "Without someone telling me what they were doing, I could never tell you whether that was a clean act, a dirty act, a self-indulgent act, or an ecstatic act....With all the exposure I've had, I still can't tell you. You must interpret what went on in your own way--and, of course, you will."

In other words, he couldn't tell whether they were making love or fucking. In fact, it's kind of hard to tell at any time, which is one reason why it is useful to have a nonevaluative verb for the sexual act. (I told you this is tricky. Fucking is not *the* sexual act; it is *a* sexual act. Where was I?) Furthermore, it seems reasonable that this should be a simple one-syllable word, and *fuck* has history on its side.

Besides, one of my own prejudices is that *make love* is one of those nasty wishy-washy words. It is often used by those who wish to ignore the fact that what they are doing is also an animal act. Or it is used invidiously by those who believe that WE make love, whilst THEY (the common people, nonwhites, those whose relationship is not sufficiently SERIOUS, or any other group we wish to distance ourselves from) merely FUCK. The word LOVE itself is one I am suspicious of, as it is used so often as a promise or a threat, as a way of selling products, as an excuse for fucking, etc. etc. I envy those who have learned to demystify this word to the extent of using it "promiscuously" --i.e., for large numbers of people, but only for those one really has positive feelings for.



Well, if you won't go for a diagonal relationship, baby, how about letting me fondle your hypotenuse (lust, lust)?

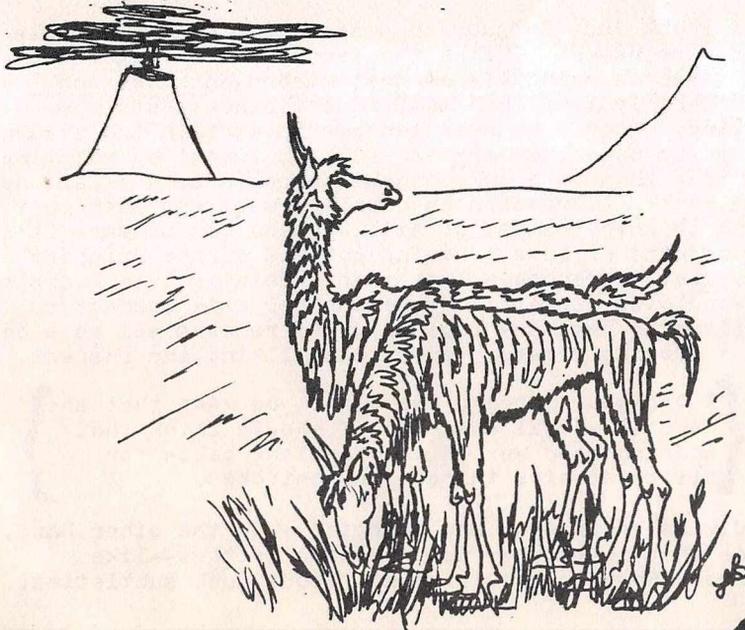
YOU SUCK
OUT LOUD
ON SUNDAY.



I myself am too squeamish to use the word LOVE very much, that way or any other. I would make one suggestion to those who wish to use the term MAKING LOVE, and that is to use it only when it actually applies--i.e., when there is more love when you finish than when you started out.

CUNT. Why is it insulting to call a woman a cunt? Because the word itself is unclean? Because it refers to a nasty part of the body? Because no nice person would have a thing like that? Actually, I suspect the reason this particular term is bad is simply its reductionist nature--the implication that the woman in question is NOTHING BUT a vagina, and has no other redeeming social importance. There is a certain symmetry here, since it is insulting (as insulting?) to call a man a prick.

(CONTINUED ON P. 22)



TRUE CRIME TALES 1

I spent two years interviewing prisoners in the San Francisco City Prison to determine their eligibility for pretrial release without bail. As I generally spoke to these men the morning after their arrest, I found that they often had but a vague understanding of the circumstances which had brought them there. Since I had records indicating what the men were charged with, I got into the habit of asking them if they knew the charges, and informing them if they did not. One morning I asked that question of a middle-aged wino.

"I don't know, man. Being drunk?"

I looked up his record and informed thim that he had been arrested on suspicion of oral copulation.

"What's that?"

I explained it in the vernacular.

"I wasn't *that* drunk."

IAN COVELL

I'll thank Judy Gerjuoy to desist from calling Kathleen Woodiwiss names. I like the lady; her characters have ten times as much life as most modern authors, and considerably more than most romantic novelists now writing. Woodiwiss even manages to explain the sequence of "go to bed, get married, fall in love" by pointing out that this is a more honest approach to a relationship than most. Attraction is usually lust, and when lust turns to love instead of dislike, you can be sure it's a good kind of love. Having got rid of the frippery of sex...let me rephrase that into something like I explained to Woodiwiss herself: By having her main characters continually have sex together, she removes sex as a basis for a growing regard, tenderness, liking, and respect.

{ I beg your pardon, but don't you mean that she removes sexual *longing*? I should think that sharing good sex is an excellent basis for all those nice things you mentioned. }

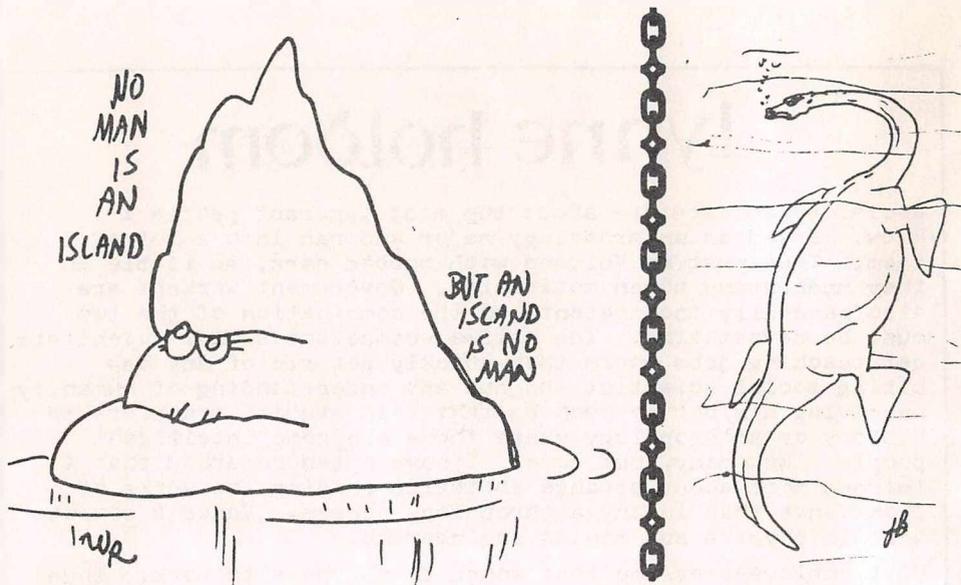
Woodiwiss knows what she is doing. On the other hand, I agree that most other new romantic writers--like Rosemary Rogers--know piss all about such subtleties.

Lynne holdom

Social scientists are about the most ignorant people I know. I was an anthropology major and ran into a lot of them. They must be Vulcans with bobbed ears, so little do they understand human motivation. Government workers are also generally incompetent, so the combination of the two must be devastating. The halfway-competent social scientists get teaching jobs where they quickly get rid of any aspiring social scientist who has any understanding of humanity by giving him/her so much bs that said student transfers to history or anthropology where there are some intelligent people. Not many, but some. I have often remarked that I learned more about strange societies reading the works of Jack Vance than in any anthropology course. Vance's degrees were in physics and mining engineering.

Most employees assume that women do not have to work. Thus they will state that women are more likely to take time off, to change jobs (because husband has been transferred), etc. Statistics show this to be false. Men change jobs more and are more likely to take time off. Everyone thought that women would take time off because of "monthlies," but men took more time off because of hangovers. A tv program interviewed workers and foremen at the Ford plant in Mahwah, NJ, after women were allowed to join. The foremen stated that the women did better work, were more efficient, and were less likely to call in sick. Then they were asked if they would hire more women. They said no, as women were less reliable, etc.





ED ZDROJEWSKI

I'm sitting here all by my lonesome in the newsroom while my colleagues are out ~~getting drunk with the politicians~~ waiting for election returns at the county clerk's office. It's 1 AM, and I'm not even staying up all night for a con. My responsibility is to call county clerk's offices in a gaggle of other counties to get their results in various state and congressional races. I don't expect much before 5. You see, what they do is load all them paper ballots onto ox carts for purposes of hauling them from far-distant townships to the county seat where they are then hand-counted by a 78-year-old courthouse cleaning lady with arthritis. It's a bit of a trip, since every time the wind picks up, it scatters the ballots hither and yon, and the driver must stop and chase them over the countryside. I shouldn't say that about all the counties. Macomb County is computerized. Of course, no one explained to those dummfukks that if you attempt to force an answer out of the computer before the program is through running, you will likely crash the system.

Re your suggestion about an expanded Hatch Act: At the rate of present growth in Washington, it wouldn't be too long until we had a minority franchise like South Africa's. In which case we might consider resettling government employees in tiny "autonomous nations." Would you believe Transkei, Nebraska?

I thoroughly enjoyed your story on institutionalized altruism. The local agency dedicating itself to using money extorted from us to fukk over people's lives is known as the Michigan Dept of Social Services. I don't do stories involving the DSS all that often. The editor knows better than to turn me loose on those people unless they do something that really pisses him off. I have this nasty little tendency to ask highly embarrassing questions of people I don't like. ("Do your social workers in Dept C still specialize in child abuse?") Actually, my experiences with the DSS do not make me particularly fond of social workers. Every interview begins with them asking me if they can read my story before it sees print. (Fukk no! Prior restraint has been taboo under the Anglo-American legal system since 1688 or so.) They never give me a straight answer, preferring to use euphemisms for even the simplest concepts and then getting pissed off when I refuse to refer to the public dole as "positive economic stabilization mechanism." Such is life when you insist on being a selfish, egotistical, anarchistic bastard. Ain't it fun?

You may talk of Laetrile madness, but there's nothing so wildly irresponsible as a man in the utter depths of a B-15 binge.

2:30 AM. Word arrives via the publisher's ingenious system of trained pigeons. Ollie the Ox, that strong and brave bringer-of-the-ballots in Flynn Township, has come down with a sudden case of psoriasis. Add a couple of hours to the estimated time of final returns in scenic Sahiflush County. It's going to be a long morning.

NEW HORIZONS IN BIGOTRY

One of the more popular pastimes of our day is labeling people. Along with such old favorite classifications as race, creed, national origin, sexual & affectional preference, and prior condition of servitude, we have newer forms of label. There are the psychological labels, frequently called "diagnoses," as that sounds more persuasive. There are those who believe that the most important thing about a person may be summarized in a single word like "proletarian." There are those who believe that the most important thing about a person may be summarized in a single word like "Scorpio." And so on. It would appear that we can say 2 things about labeling:

1. It is a harmful, misleading practice--a source of hatred & division--a form of folly harmful to both labeler & labelee.

2. It is fun.

And so rather than join the chorus of those who insist that we must never label any person, place, or thing, I propose a more Eristic approach. Let us rather invent more & better (or at least more amusing) labels. Let us pile label upon label, until we find it impossible to believe that a single label could ever accurately describe an actual living human being. With that goal in mind, I present

A Projective Test

Genesis 3--the tale of how the serpent tempted Eve, and how she & Adam ate the apple, and how God caught them & punished them--is one of the best-known tales in the Bible; it is also one of the most interesting. Perhaps it is also a projective test. Consider the characters, and ask which you identify with.

God: What do you expect? I've given them good working conditions, I've tried to reason with them, and I can't even get a simple order obeyed. Well, I've learned my lesson. Enough permissiveness. From now on, they labor in the sweat of their brows, and they obey--or else.

Adam: You can't win. I don't know why God said we couldn't eat that tree, but He must know things that we don't. But with that nagging wife of mine, and bad role models like the serpent...anybody would have done the same.

Eve: All I did was think for myself once, and look at all the trouble it got me into. Well, I've learned my lesson.

Lilith: Who am I? O, you must have read the expurgated version. The old rabbis in the Talmud knew about me. I was Adam's first wife. He explained the male-superior approach to me, and I told him I didn't like it, so he went crying to the Authorities to have me replaced. I think I could have handled the whole mess better than that poor unliberated Eve.

The Serpent: That's what happens when you get caught encouraging people to think for themselves. But there will be more like me. Someday there will be another who'll encourage people to ignore Authority's Laws and look to their own hearts for the Way. I imagine they'll crucify Him.

Which side are you on?

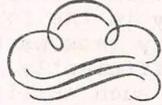


I USED TO GET
DEPRESSED, BUT
IT DIDN'T
FEEL GOOD

SO I QUIT



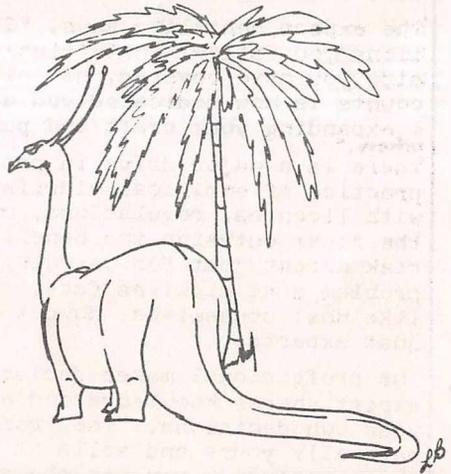
REALITY



IS THE OPIATE OF THE UNIMAGINATIVE



WR



RB

Robin Maynard

It is curious that persons who would never dream of accepting at face value the pronouncements of government officials and/or bureaucrats and/or corporate spokespersons concerning the actual nature of a given situation and/or the best course to follow for one's well-being will accept without question the pronouncements of MDs and PhDs. Praise be to God that the late unpleasantness of the reign of Richard the First (and, pray God, the Last) has broken most of the pernicious habit of believing attorneys automatically.

Hopefully more persons will soon be cognizant of the vital difference between professionalism (a negative) and expertise (a positive). Thanks to professionalism, we now have a group of occupations which are harder to crack than a medieval guild. PROFESSIONALISM IS THE HIDING PLACE OF THE INCOMPETENT. Expertise does not require the bastion of professionalism to protect it; it is its own defense. I am automatically suspicious of any occupation which exists today in the form of a "profession." The professional mentality reasons thus: "It does not matter that you are insufficiently skilled in your chosen craft; that you have lost such skills as you once had; that you practice your craft at the expense of, rather than for the benefit of, others. What counts is that you have followed the required conventions; that you have joined the club; that above all you have held fast to the Three Sacred Laws:

- I. *Thou shalt not speak ill of a fellow professional.*
- II. *Thou shalt not speak intelligibly.*
- III. *Thou shalt not trust a layperson.*

The expert mentality says, "It does not matter what conventions you follow, what 'club' you have joined, whose backside you have covered, how nice a person you are. What counts is how dedicated you are to acquiring, preserving, & expanding your craft and pursuing it in the service of others."

There is a major drive in progress here to "legalize" the practice of empirical midwifery, by making it a profession with licences, regulations, meddling by MDs, etc. I suspect the risks outweigh the benefits. It would be nice not to risk arrest just for catching a baby, but that is the only problem most midwives face. Most of the midwives I know, like most housewives, do not want to be professionals, just experts.

The professional makes decisions that affect your life; the expert shares knowledge and experience and lets you make your own decisions. The professional robs you of what is naturally yours and sells it abck to you at a dear price; the expert aids you in the recapture of what you have lost for free or at no monetary profit. The rewards of the professional are in money, ego, and power; the rewards of the expert are in love, sacrifice, and sharing. It is my fondest wish that more people will be experts, and not professionals. I pray that I never fall into the trap of professionalism.

DEAR ROBIN:

I was a bit puzzled at first by your letter because I found your use of the word "professional" a bit different from mine. You see, about 10 years ago, there was a popular radical concept known as MYSTIFICATION.

As you may recall, the idea of mystification is that much supposed "expert" or "professional" knowledge is really things that everyone knows, but expressed in a secret code taught in the schools of the Ruling Class.

The mystification theory is by no means entirely mistaken. It is unsurprising, for instance, that it should have arisen among students of the social "sciences," since much of what passes for knowledge in these fields is in fact statements that are obvious to the meanest intellect, but expressed in a jargon which must be learned. (Note that I said "much," not "all.")

Another place where this theory may have some validity is in what is known as executive skills. In general, there is no way of judging with any degree of accuracy how well an executive is doing his job. Basically, the principle which appears to be used is one derived from the military (like the hierarchical structure of most businesses.)

You may remember that when the My Lai massacre became known, there was a series of courts martial. It was determined that Lieut. Calley was criminally culpable for the killings, but that his superior, Capt. Medina was not. One cannot help suspecting that the decisive factor was not the level of involvement of each man but rather that the Army decided that this was a severe enough mess to punish a lieutenant for--not bad enough to convict a captain (and not, Mars forbid, a general), but too serious to blame on a mere sergeant. So it is in business. It is usually impossible to trace the precise responsibility for a given failure, so the company merely decides how many people at what levels could be assumed to be responsible & fires those closest to the disaster.

WITH MODERN TECHNOLOGY
YOU CAN FINALLY SIT ON
YOUR BAYONETS.

THE BULLET-
PROOF PANTS
WERE WHAT DID
IT.



(To be fair, I should point out that there are some executives who get their positions by real intelligence-- e.g., Edwin Land, who gained wealth & position by his inventive skills--and occasionally a few other verifiable traits. Fred Silverman has gotten his high positions with networks because it is believed that he has precisely the taste of the average American TV viewer, & yet is able to utter entire sentences.)

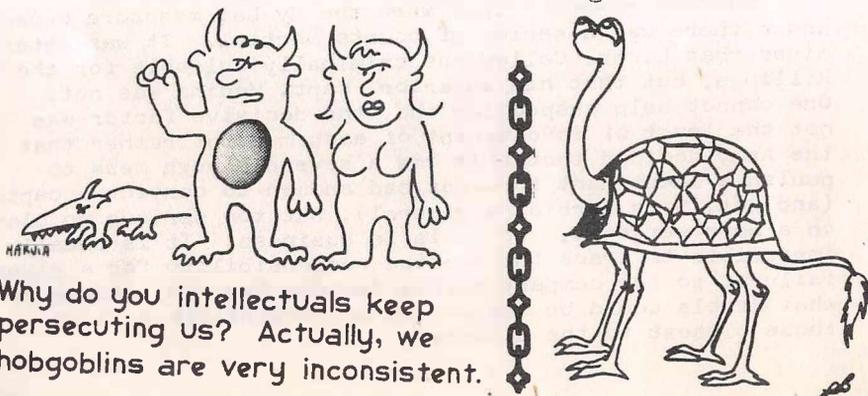
So there is an element of truth in the idea of mystification. The trouble is that fell into the hands of those radicals who believe that if it weren't for nasty old capitalism, nobody'd be any different from anyone else. Thus the idea arose that all knowledge is nothing but mystification, and that the OPPRESSED PEOPLES OF THE THIRD WORLD could all be physicists if it weren't for the way that THE WHITE MALE PIG ESTABLISHMENT mystified Physics.

Paul Goodman, among others, saw through that sort of thing with no difficulty, & proposed the alternative idea of professionalism (as a good thing).

Robin, you say that people accept without question the pronouncements of PhDs. I'm guilty as charged. If I wish to know what the result of a complex chemical reaction is, I will ask someone with a PhD in chemistry & will accept her word, rather than performing the experiment myself & then trying to figure out what I've done.

For the problem with the mystification theory is precisely that there is such a thing as expertise. To Paul Goodman (and to me, until I read your letter) professionalism is simply institutionalized expertise. The idea of professionalism, to Goodman, is that one's peers are the best suited to judge one's competence., and that a commitment to one's field of work, combined with the principle of giving value recieved to those who pay for one's services, encourages good work.

He's got a point there. The idea of being operated on by the peasant whose comrades thought he showed the best understanding of Chairman Mao's thought is not a



cheering one. (Actually, this was probably always something of a caricature, and by now the People's Republic of China has "sold_out"--i.e., like all other revolutionary states, they have finally admitted that people are not created equal, and that one highly effective way of getting good work out of people is to pay them for it.) In the same way, Thomas Szasz has pointed out that psychiatrists are always working FOR someone, and that those who claim to be working for pure truth and/or "the interests of society" are actually working for the State. Perhaps it is best to admit that some things are best handled by professionals, that people who are not professionals often lack the knowledge to judge the competence of professionals, and that professional organizations are therefore necessary.

But, you may reply, if this is so, how come there are so many professionals who obviously can't find their ass with both hands?. Good question. I know a woman who is now in law school. She decided to go after serving jury duty, & realizing that she could do as well as either of the lawyers in the case, and so, she suspected, could anyone who was not certifiably imbecilic. Another friend had a similar experience, except that she served on a malpractice case, and thus could not decide whether to become a lawyer or a doctor.

There is an interesting, though nasty, paradox at work here. We constantly hear that medical & law school are getting more & more competitive, harder to get into and harder to stay in. Yet at the same time there seem to be more incompetent doctors & lawyers all the time. One explanation may be that they are competing in the wrong fields. (I suggested last time that cutthroat competition would appear to be a singularly inappropriate way of selecting healers.) But perhaps there is more to it than that.

As John Holt has pointed out, every conservative worships a dead radical. I find that a very useful image, and the harder I look, the more examples I find. In religion, it is fairly obvious; compare the messages of liberation given by enlightened ones such as Jesus & Buddha with the monolithic & priest-ridden empires built up in their name. In science, it can be seen in Kuhn's view of scientific progress, in which there is a revolution in thought by someone like Newton, which becomes first accepted, then solidified, and finally fossilized so that the next revolutionary thinker (Einstein) can break through with a new theory. In politics...look at those who now pledge allegiance to violent revolutionaries like Jefferson & Washington.

Perhaps then the professions go through similar stages. Organized Professional Medicine & Law may be well into the later stages, though by no means ready for the scrap heap.

If this in fact is the case, then what can be done about it? Perhaps a partial answer is to keep the professional organizations, but not to let the State enforce their rules. By that I mean that we might let the AMA, for instance, have a monopoly on the word "doctor" (i.e., the use of the term by someone the AMA did not approve of would constitute criminal fraud), but let others calling themselves "midwives," "healers," "Curanderos," or "witches" practice their craft without fear of being accused of "practicing medicine without a license." Thus, those who wanted the security of official practitioners would be protected, but the AMA would not be protected if it turned out that other ways worked too.



(continued from p. 11)

PUSSY. A more pleasant word than *cunt*. It sounds nicer, warmer. While it seems unobjectionable as a specific there are those who say it should not be used generically, as in "I like pussy."

And yet, suppose one enjoys sex with women, feels that the external (or, more precisely, reachable) female genitalia are one of the Lord's better inventions and a source of great pleasure. Now it seems perfectly obvious to me that such an attitude is perfectly consistent with liking women (or, for that matter, with being a woman), and could perfectly well be described in the phrase, "I like pussy." As Jules Feiffer said, there is a great difference between liking women & liking pussy. Nonetheless, I insist that it is possible to do both. By the same token, one can speak of women "liking cock." But of course women would never think of it in such a dehumanized manner. Or at least they shouldn't.... Which brings us to....

SEXISM. There are essentially two definitions of this word: "discrimination on the basis of sex" and "oppression of women." I believe that the second definition is a dangerous one. Of course I am aware that there exists a great deal of institutional sexism directed against women. That is not the point at issue. The point is that it is at the very least possible in principle that there is also sexism directed against men. To adjust the language so that "female sexism" (which may in fact not exist) is unutterable & supposedly unthinkable is not a great deal different from adjusting the language so that one cannot (as opposed to may not) say, "Big Brother is wrong." In either case, our ability to use language to deal with the world is taken from us. We may not want there to be female sexism or impersonal lust, but to make them unspeakable is to replace problems with nameless horrors.

Probe Death Cult

A bizarre and fanatical suicide cult whose members gave up their lives willingly, perhaps eagerly, has been discovered. Large numbers of cultists left America & traveled overseas to die. Psychologist Adam Weishaupt, who has studied this cult in depth, says, "When you see the pseudo-religious mumbo-jumbo the cult leaders fed their followers, you have to conclude that these people must have had fantastic brainwashing techniques to get people to die for that sort of thing. Still, it will be a long time before we understand what made these people go to Vietnam."

Flight from Politics

Everyone knows that WE are a religion (especially if we are numerous), while THEY are a cult. Others have already remarked that parents who want to have their son deprogrammed because he has turned his back on family & friends to live with a bunch of weirdos, has shaved his head, spends most of his time mumbling in a foreign language, & doesn't even have a normal sex life are more likely to get their way in the courts if he is in a Hare Krishna commune than if he is in a Catholic monastery. But that's not what I want to talk about right now. Rather, I want to ask:

WOULD YOU LET ANITA BRYANT TEACH YOUR CHILDREN?

Now I want to be fair about this. I know of no evidence that her kind is more likely to physically molest children than anyone else, but they do recruit, and would you want her to serve as a role model?

But seriously, folks. Born-again Christians recruit a lot more than gays do. (What do you think Billy Graham spends most of his time doing?) And there is a tendency among Fundamentalists (at least here in America where there are many of them and they have power) to be intolerant, to teach only their side of the question, etc. In fact, in parts of the country where there are a lot of Fundamentalists, they are trying to change the school programs, to get rid of "situation ethics" and "atheistic evolution." I don't have children, but if I did, I'd want them to go to a school where teachers could not go around proclaiming doctrines so repugnant to me.

Which is precisely the way Anita Bryant feels. What is offensive to me about her crusade is not her desire to protect her children (which I consider merely misguided), but her attempt to cleanse the entire public school system of those she finds offensive, thus depriving gay people of their rights to equal consideration by the government, and also imposing her will upon those who would rather their children went to a school where Socrates would be permitted to teach.

Let's look at a similar point. As I said before, there are efforts by religious groups to have the religious point of view, from Christian morality to the theory of divine creation, taught in the public schools. That scares me.

But THE HUMANIST runs articles about their program for teaching Values Education in the schools. They insist that this is a nonreligious approach. Now I like Humanist values; they preach tolerance, compassion, sharing, and sexual freedom & equality. Nonetheless, their idea that they can teach Values without teaching religion is self-contradictory. Values are religious, whether they are based on the existence of God, the nonexistence of God, or the irrelevance of God, and the fundamentalists who say that secular humanists are trying to get their own form of religious teaching into the schools have a point.

This problem seems insoluble, at least in the present situation. A public school system must, it appears, violate the rights of some in the interests of others.

Last year, there was a bill in congress known as Packwood-Moynihan. It would have allowed parents to deduct from their taxes some of the money they spend to educate their children, even at a ~~fnord~~ religious school. This was frequently referred to as GIVING people something. (Don't you understand? The money that the State does not take out of our income is being GIVEN to us. O, generous State, to give people as much as 80% of their money!) The well-known leader of a bureaucrats' union, Albert Shanker, announced that the Packwood-Moynihan bill, if passed, could mean the end of public education in America today. I think it was cruel of him to get people's hopes up like that.

I am opposed to public schooling. (I might not be opposed to public education, if there were such a thing.) I favor a voucher system, whereby the state would give parents a certain amount of money per child to buy the child an education. I would like to see as few controls as possible--just enough to make sure the kids were not put in sweatshops. I don't favor requiring schools to take all applicants, or forbidding them from charging more than the state voucher, or any other efforts to make sure that the schools are no different from one another.

There are many arguments against it. Some say that the parents would be unable to choose good schools, and of course, some would. Others say that the (euphemism for stupid) and (euphemism for violent) might have trouble finding schools. Awww. But the worst argument is that the ideal public school would be better than private schools. Of course it would. If Jesus Christ were the superintendent and all the teachers were archangels, the public school system would work just fine. Now try comparing a voucher program with the real schools in New York City. Most NYC parents define a good school as one where their child is relatively unlikely to be mugged.

So, say the proponents of public education, if you don't like the public schools, work to change them. That is the old political trap. If WE (however you define that word) worked for better schools, they would get better, if all else remained the same. But of course THEY (however you define that word) will get scared & work harder too. The more we try to make the schools Humanistic, the more the Fundamentalists will try to work their will. Like all political action, the main thing that it does is to require still more political action.

Let's go back to Cults. Some people like a situation where they are free to think for themselves. Some hate & fear this prospect. Many of the freethinkers wish to drag the nonthinkers, kicking & screaming if necessary, into thinking for themselves, which may mean that they are in their own way as intolerant as their opponents. Cults--small living arrangements that separate themselves as much as possible from "society"--can deal with a wider range of human needs than a rigid One Right Way approach. Some wish to try alternatives to the GoodOle Nuclear Family, preferably in a supportive environment. Others wish to live in an environment where they are not menaced by Unnatural Sex Practices, Godless Round Earthism and/or Evolution, Sci-Fi, etc., and where a Leader gives them Commandments. The state has tried to prevent both of these, and thus only the strong have survived. Unfortunately, fanaticism is a great source of strength, and the Mansons & Joneses do better than those who might have set up better arrangements. And finally, the defense of cults may be in our own interest because it takes those who wish to live under totalitarianism out of the public consensus, where they can lay their trip on others. If we forbid others to set up cults, we encourage them to try to make America a totalitarian nut cult.



Guest Star: Mark Twain

(from an open letter to Commodore Vanderbilt)

"You have got seventy million dollars, and you need five hundred million dollars, and are really suffering for it. Your poverty is something appalling."

"Ain't we got all the fools in town on our side? And ain't that a big enough majority in any town?"

"It is by the goodness of God that we have in this country those three unspeakably precious things: freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, and the prudence never to practice either of them."

"Few things are harder to put up with than the annoyance of a good example."

"The efficiency of our criminal jury system is only marred by the difficulty of finding twelve men every day who don't know anything and can't read."

"I think I can say--and say with pride--that our legislators bring a higher price than any others."

"Good breeding consists in concealing how much we think of ourselves and how little we think of the other person."

"In the first place God made idiots; this was for practice; then He made school boards."

"the only way to keep your health is to eat what you don't want, drink what you don't like, and do what you'd rather not."

"Reader, suppose you were an idiot; and suppose you were a member of Congress; but I repeat myself."

"There are several good protections against temptation, but the surest is cowardice."

"To be good is noble, but to teach others how to be good is nobler--and less trouble."

"A wise man does not waste so good a commodity as lying for naught."

"One of the striking differences between a cat and a lie is that a cat has only nine lives."

Alexis Gilliland

The lady who was not a woman probably has a set of personal definitions and aspirations that have guided her choices. If she was born before the 1950s, "being a lady" has become part of her psychic makeup. She may be obsolete by today's standards, but so, I think, was your father, and it is today's loss, not hers. Being a lady (or a gentleman) used to be a class act.

Your remembrance of your father makes me regret not having known him.

{ I do accept the concept of "lady" as an honorific, but not if it implies denying that one is a woman. My father was the sort of gentleman who never called himself one. }

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continued from page 1.

What you do not see here is the discussion of names. My chronic laziness became acute, as it frequently does, and so I did not transcribe the comments on names. But one I do wish to share is from ED ZDROJEWSKI, who writes:

"How do I feel about my name? After spelling it for the third time to some bureaucrat's secretary hired under an affirmative action program (equal rights for Mongoloids) who still doesn't believe me, I feel damned powerful at being able to confound the enemy so easily."

2 CLARIFICATIONS

1. Adrienne Fein wrote me a letter commenting on the Bill Bridget letter I published in DR 6. In it, she pointed out that a man who presents himself as an example of dire sexual need tends thereby to cover up his more interesting qualities and to frighten women away. That's an important point, and it took me a long time to learn it. Unfortunately, when I finished editing her letter, it may have given the impression that she was commenting on Bill's entire lifestyle & mental condition, rather than merely on his letter. My apologies to both of them for this carelessness on my part.

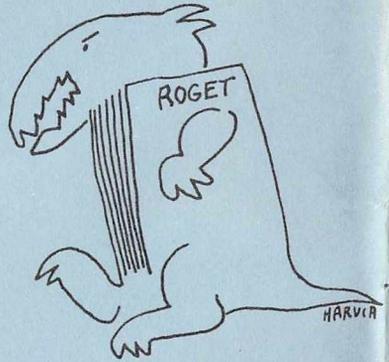
2. R Laurraine Tutihasi writes, "I would like to clarify something I said in a letter in DR 6 about Jessica Amanda Salmonson. I said that I had sent her money for WINDHAVEN but had not heard anything....I did not mean to imply that she would stop sending zines to a mere "subscriber" out of meanness. In Jessica's case, the cause was poor bookkeeping. I just meant to say that sometimes it seems easier to get something for "free" than by paying for it. I apologize to Jessica for not making myself clear."

Some notes for the future: This may be the last issue in this format. Next time, I will probably go back to full-size pages, but this time double-column, at the same 77% reduction I'm using for this issue. The reasons for that are printing problems, of such a tiresome and mundane nature that you don't want to hear about them. (Reproduction is the main drawback to two of my favorite activities.)

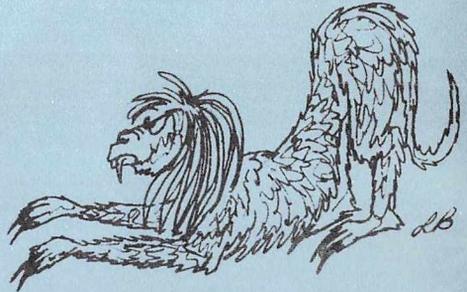
The other is that I hope to be at Boskone, Lunacon, Balticon, Disclave, Darkovercon, Empiricon, Novacon, Pghlange, and Philcon, and I always enjoy meeting my readers. *Phil Dix, Author*



Star Junkie



Thesaurus Rex



Saber-Toothed Poodle



Hubert
Horatio
Humpty



Dirty Bird