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NO... YOU CAN'T THANK GOD

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Edmund Davie / L. Parker

**AMERICA'S SMELLIEST LIVING JOURNALIST
AND OTHER POEMS**

Edmund Davie / T. Siddall

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EDIT_RIAL

since we predicted a ruined
establishment after issue 1,
the wider culture remains
unruffled and mag staff take up
navel-gazing (navel-bearer:
irrelevant); the quest laid aside
until weeks later sinister
stirrings birth issue 2,
fuller than ever with idle
verse, invective, sex
failures (and triumphs) and
literary charades. hi-jinks,
an abyssmal chasm, a gap,
a space between empty
spaces, an intangible ring
encircling emptiness
hence: A V_ID





TATE MODERN BOMBER

ALEXANDER ART INTERVIEWED BY A VOID BEFORE HIS ARREST

In the summer of 2017, I saw the Russian artist Alexander Art standing in the performance circle outside Tate Modern wearing a sign that said, “Tate Modern destroys works of art!” He was getting a bollocking from a Southwark Council warden as the gallery’s security looked on. The warden said the artist, who doesn’t speak English, didn’t belong there because he was not making art. Alexander refused to move, and I would see him most days standing there iron-faced as tourists snapped photos.

A few weeks later, after I had read his online manifestoes and his statements in support of the “metaperformance” outside the Tate called “Tatecide,” I met with him and his wife Oksana in the atrium at the Royal Festival Hall, and conducted an interview. An extremely serious man with a yellow-grey complexion, who in his rollneck looked like he belonged on a Soviet submarine, Alexander spoke forcefully against corporatised art institutions, and in favour of his own

movement, “Abstract Idealism.” He had come all the way here on a tourist visa for six months to try and improve the Tate by opening it up to independent artists.

At the time, neither of us were aware that at the end of December, I would be receiving an email from Oksana, back in Russia with her visa expired, saying Alexander had been arrested in London for arson, accused of throwing Molotov cocktails at the Tate in the middle of the night.

I remained in contact with Oksana and tried to help locate her husband in the black hole of the British gulag archipelago. We eventually tracked him down to Thameside prison, where he had been on hunger strike for 20 days to obtain a phone call. When he refused to eat, he says the guards threw food in his face and subjected him to days of sleep deprivation.

The following is an edited transcript of our Q&A and the verbatim police report of his interrogation, both conducted through translators.

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Alexander, why come to London?

Good question. In Russia, there are modern artists, but there is no modern art. It may sound strange, but there are modern poets, and you are a modern poet, but there is no modern poetry. So in Russia, there is no modern art; the Minister of Culture shut down all the different modern art movements. In England, you have got some shoots of growth, some shimmers of light, that remain. It's not progressive, it's not monumental, but you have something.

Were you successful in Russia?

In Russia I had four personal exhibitions and was part of two collective exhibitions. Only in Moscow. Some of my paintings were sold, and my business helped me earn the money. Business is separate. Essentially, there was no market in Russia, and given the most recent events, everything got stopped.

What gives you the right to criticise British art?

In the same way, in Fascist Germany, they told the Jews, "Who gave you the right to come over here and complain about our dear Fuhrer?"

What motivates you to spend so much time outside the Tate?

I have one motivation: to achieve the truth.

The Tate is not only the best museum of modern art, but since 2000s, it became a theme park, where the paintings of Picasso and Matisse are posters so that people can more actively visit the restaurant. It's impossible.

Let's start from the top. The tenth floor is the observation platform, the ninth is the restaurant, eighth is members only, seventh is staff, sixth is some sort of

event floor, and the events are for money, and the art starts only from the fourth floor.

I offered a completely new approach to contemporary art, in abstract art. I proposed to take Turbine Hall, paint it, and make it into the largest exhibited painting on earth. I got rejected not because my art was bad, I got rejected because I do not know any curators at Tate Modern. I have all this correspondence, I can show it to you if you like. But there are lots of websites where from £25,000 onwards, you can rent out Turbine Hall for an event, for a party.

So what relationship does this building have to art? It's not a museum. It's a space for rent.

There is no point of changing anything in Russia, because in Russia, apart from Putin, nothing else exists. I think you can change something here.

What about the new platforms and spaces for contemporary art in Moscow?

You see, the new spaces for contemporary art in Moscow, even if you exhibit your work there, it's meaningless. You can exhibit your work in a museum of modern art for ten or twenty years every day. The Russian movement, it became sort of hermetically sealed, and no one really needs it. The Russian movement became a reaction to Western examples. This group, Recycling, twenty years after the recycling of garbage was introduced, they created this new trend, and are being exhibited, but they do not create anything new. It's the same with other Russian artists. Either they became hermetically sealed in their own thought space, which is typically Russian, or they try and imitate Western examples, to be exhibited abroad.

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Have you ever tried protesting in Russia?

To protest against what? In Russia, people's heads are filled with something else. Nothing apart from politics, apart from Putin, interests people. Art is on the periphery there. People queue up for the exhibitions of Ayvazovsky and Serov, but they don't go further than that. They don't understand Kandinsky or Malevich, the beginning of the 20th Century. For the people to begin to understand modern art, they have to go through all the phases from cubism to surrealism, then to understand that whole universe of performance. In the U.K., more people go down that path, for them Kandinsky and Malevich are not joke things.



I think you are hopelessly optimistic about British culture.

From what I can see, there are more people here who think about how the form relates to the content.

From what I can see the number one motivation for not protesting in Russia is you'll get your head kicked in.

No, no, I don't have this motivation. If I get beaten up or arrested, I will achieve the result quicker. But I can get arrested or beaten up, 10, 20, 30 times, and nothing will change.

What do you think of artists like Pavlensky who protest in Moscow?

Pavlenskiy left Russia not because of his protest actions, but because of very concrete reasons. He is accused of rape and of battery. When a person uses his title of "artist" to leave Russia and avoid punishment for a crime, this is cowardice.

What do you think about his art?

For me there is contemporary art and eternity art. Protest art is essentially contemporary art that time is going to wash away. In twenty years, there will be no Putin, and they will forget who Pavlenskiy is. One has to orient themselves onto art that is eternal.

But isn't your protest against the Tate contemporary?

My protest is a protest against the situation which emerged in contemporary art. Tate Modern is the brightest example of this situation. If one can change something at Tate Modern, one can change things around the world. If you can change the situation here you can change anything. Nothing is scary anymore.

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Oksana [Alexander's wife]: Alexander is a person who ever since childhood said “no” to authority. He always saw everything with his own eyes.

Do you have any political affiliations?

I am not interested in politics, not at all. Democracy is the worst type of organization, but no one has invented a better one yet. I am not interested in politics, I am interested in art, so I separate the two. The things which are politically motivated or influenced in art, political art, is going to be washed away by time. They are not going to remain in time. Let's take the example of the National Portrait Gallery. When people visit, who is

interested in the Lords of the 17th Century? At the same time, everyone is interested in Turner, because Turner painted for eternity.

I don't like political poetry, not if it's basic and easy to understand.

Yes, because political poetry is a pamphlet, and this is a low form of art.

How much would you sell one of your paintings for?

Depends on the painting, and the customer! But this is all Oksana. I like to paint and Oksana deals with all of that. She is the head of the operation.

Is Abstract Idealism more of a philosophy or a style – or, would I recognise abstract idealism if I saw it?

Without doubt, it is a new movement in fine art. It reanimates abstract art, which had been dead since the 1960s. It's a movement which is tied to literature, and a little bit to poetry, and absolutely to philosophy.

How will you know what is abstract idealism? It is simple. Next to the painting, there will be text, which will serve as the point of entry into the painting. If it is a giant painting, it will all be composed of text. A literary or philosophical text, or an unwritten novel, like Lem or Borges. I go further. To these novels, I paint a painting and write dialogues. I illustrate a novel that does not exist. Ultimately I am trying to maximally blur the lines between literature and art.

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ALEXANDER ART

INTERVIEWED BY THE POLICE AFTER HIS ARREST

Date: 23/11/2017
Name: Maslov, Alexander
DOB: 22/04/1979
Nationality: Russian
Offence: Arson
Victim: Tate Modern

Defendant Interview

Date: 23/11/2017

Interviewee: Alexander Maslov

Interviewing officer: Sullivan

Location: MS room 2

POLICE

YOU HAVE BEEN ARRESTED AT 0918 HOURS TODAY 23/11/17 FOR ARSON, MAKING NO REPLY TO CAUTION – It has been alleged that whilst at THE TATE MODERN, 53 BANKSIDE SE1 9TG during the night of 22nd to the 23rd of NOVEMBER 2017 you have caused damage to the wall of the building in the form of scorch or burn marks. Would you like to tell me in your own words what happened yesterday?

ALEXANDER ART

At 3am I painted a picture “Moment of Despair”. I didn’t have other devices, I used bottles with flammable liquid in them. I did it previously in chalk but TATE staff destroyed it.

POLICE

Did you attend TATE MODERN last night?

ALEXANDER ART

YES – the area outside blowing horn for six hours.

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POLICE

Why did you attend the location, what were you intending to do?

ALEXANDER ART

I was planning to make picture, I did this.

POLICE

Did you have anything with you?

ALEXANDER ART

Devices for making picture.

POLICE

What was it?

ALEXANDER ART

Bottles with liquid, cloth and a bit of petrol, several of them.

POLICE

Why did you have it?

ALEXANDER ART

I threw them, not to break them.

POLICE

Two glass whiskey bottles were found near to where you were arrested, these bottles smell as though they contain a fuel, and are filled with a clear liquid. (SHOWING EXHIBIT DRC/4) Are these bottles yours?

ALEXANDER ART

My bottles.

POLICE

What is in them?

ALEXANDER ART

Flammable liquid.

POLICE

What are they for? How long were you there?

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ALEXANDER ART

2am until arrest, blowing my horn.

POLICE

Who were you with?

ALEXANDER ART

Alone.

POLICE

Have you been there before?

ALEXANDER ART

5 months – not every day in the quiet performance circle.

POLICE

(SHOW PICTURES OF DAMAGE) Did those pictures show “Moment off despair”?

ALEXANDER ART

Parts of it.

POLICE

When officers arrived at TATE MODERN and spoke with you they were recording on their body worn cameras, I have viewed this footage which is exhibit DRC/6 and in it you say (whilst pointing to scorch marks on the brickwork of the wall of the building and a broken glass bottle) “This is my bottle, molotov cocktail” WHAT DID YOU MEAN BY THAT? WHY DID YOU SAY THAT? How did you cause that damage? Did you think your actions were likely to cause damage to TATE MODERN property?

ALEXANDER ART

No, I didn’t cause damage.

POLICE

Did TATE MODERN give you permission to cause that damage?

ALEXANDER ART

[No clear answer]

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POLICE

Had you consumed any alcohol?

ALEXANDER ART

No.

POLICE

Had you taken any drugs?

ALEXANDER ART

No.

POLICE

Were you under duress or pressure by anybody to cause that damage?

ALEXANDER ART

No.

POLICE

Did you believe you had a right to set fire to TATE MODERN property?

ALEXANDER ART

Yes and I still do.



"Moment of Despair" by Alexander Art. Photo: Metropolitan Police

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ALEXANDER ART

THE JUDGEMENT

After two failed attempts by the prison to produce the defendant either by video link or in person, Alexander Art finally appeared in the dock at Inner London Crown Court on 5 January 2018 looking agitated and bewildered. He pleaded guilty through an interpreter and received a four-month suspended sentence, returning to Russia via an immigration detention centre, presumably banned from ever coming over here and trying to improve our art.

When viewed as an entire performance, Alexander Art's "Moment of Despair" has raised questions about not only the UK's biggest art institution. It has forced the work onto the Tate, the police and the criminal justice system, making them part of its creation.

“We fully support the explosive, courageous direct action of Alexander Art in drastically exposing the utter bankruptcy of what still passes for modern art in Tate Modern's kleptocratic citadel. What this guy has done – this latter day heir of the best moments of Russian nihilism, from Pisarev and Chernyshevsky in the latter half of the 19th century through to Malevich in the first two and a half decades of the 20th century – really does mean something. But what precisely?

It points to a lacunae worldwide – not just in Russia – that the revolution of modern art has not been followed up with the modern art of revolution. Instead, post- the liberating creative uprisings of the late 1960s and early 1970s, an extensive decrepit period of social glaciations, underpinned by the rise of neoliberal capitalism, has destroyed all hope of authentic life.

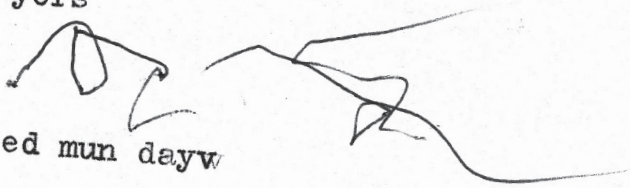
Fiat money and the dregs of modern art are now inseparable. In comparison, Alexander Art's direct action is the only creative act Tate Modern has ever hosted, albeit unwillingly, though for certain the museum's biggest ever hit!” – *David and Stuart Wise, King Mob/Situationist International*

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dear sir my name
is
edmund and i woud like to be a
famos l poet like lewis g parka he
is my here on and he

can rite poem s easy
becos hes so clver and can
know a loyts of words

if youd woud like to make my
potry book come out i will behapp
be happy and say thak yuo
so plese make my bok coome out
yours



ed mun dayw

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AMERICA'S SMELLIEST LIVING JOURNALIST

so soon we race on our waxen mass.

one or more, seven even, vex me

as a moon moans we sear mean

nouns on a were-cow. mere

sex can scan or summer

on a cone, once man

saw woman, war or

worse, some con

musician name

or rumour,

none o

woven

wan,

x

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I AM SORE TROUBLED

I am sore troubled.
Thinking of you, I pray that
you are somewhere safe.
My dreams are of dark faces
forced through screen doors. Comfort me.

Good to hear you are
getting some sleep. If it helps,
I keep a gun in
my car. Pretty safe, mostly,
helps when I'm driving through snow.

Have you seen much of
the old gang, lately? Lewis,
Linda, and the rest?
It's hard to know who among
them will turn up. Keep looking.

I like the idea
of a gun in the car. Thanks.
Linda sent a card
just last week from Uruguay
of all places. Never dull,

that one. Lewis asked
me about you in the bar
last week. I didn't
have the heart to tell him we
burned down the cancer clinic.

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I HURT ALL OVER

I hurt all over.
You know why. Let us begin.
I woke up today
and thought nothing. There's this stone
in my pocket, that is all.

I wish I could do
something for your pain. I can't
imagine how to
talk you into letting go
of the stone that weighs you down.

Trade it for something
less burdensome, easier
to walk away with.
It's not a stone, anyway:
It's a metaphor, stupid.

Yeesh. Duly noted.
Did you ever hear that one
hallelujah lay
my burden down? My burden,
my burden. You nailed it. Christ.

Anyway, enough
about me. Enough about
you, too. This whole town
is choked with smoking snowdrifts.
I don't know how they did it.


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ASK A SHAMANIC COMMUNIST


RADICAL LIFE ADVICE WITH STEWART HOME



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Shamanic communism is the theory and practice of disalienation conjured up by ultra-left sex witches who organise themselves into affinity groups that are known collectively as the International Communist Coven (ICC). Communist sex witches believe that the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism will entail not just the return at a higher level of the anti-economic forms of social organisation that characterised primitive communism, but also the modes of consciousness found in such societies, that is shamanic consciousness. The ongoing occult revival, particularly in its Wiccan and neo-Tantric forms, are indicative of the need to rediscover not just the disalienated social relationships found in classless societies but also the ways of comprehending the world that accompanied them. That said, since we all reproduce our own alienation under capitalist anti-social relations, for now we have to “fake it till we make it”. This is one of the main attractions of disciplines such as witchcraft to communists; it clearly isn’t an ancient religious practice that survived underground through the Christian dark ages, but rather something invented in the mid-twentieth century and given a faked up provenance via the now utterly discredited “research” of Margaret Murray.



The Wiccan revolution of the ICC revises the initiatory mystery religion practices of Gardnerian and Alexandrian witchcraft with different ceremonies in its three grades and with a far greater emphasis placed on sex magic in coven workings. In the first grade we work with the archetype of Karl Marx representing masculinity and rebellion; in the second grade the spectacle of Mother Teresa is used to explore the feminine and conservatism, as well as the ways in which Wiccan conceptions of the Triple Goddess (in the form

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of the maiden, mother and crone) relate to the Christian trinity; in the third and highest grade gender tensions and contradictory political impulses are resolved through the figure of RuPaul. Here what at first appeared as polar opposites are resolved and initiates become a total wo/man beyond the reach of gender or ideology.

Ultimately communism is cosmic and shamanism is a working class activity that helps us reach for the stars. Beneath the activist body armour of the most strident materialists, communist sex witches are struggling to get out! Or as RuPaul puts it, doing drag is a “very, very political” act because it “challenges the status quo” by rejecting fixed identities: drag says “I’m a shapeshifter, I do whatever the hell I want at any given time.” A communist sex witch is able to break free of all roles and identities, including that of being a gender bending communist sex witch.

Susan from Dorset asks: Does becoming a Shamanic Communist alleviate the shame of applying for Arts Council grants?

We all know that it is not enough to refuse art grants; we should do nothing to merit them in the first place. However since we all need to eat in this alienated capitalist hell, the ICC uses spells to ensure grant applications succeed due to magic and not to merit. There is no shame in receiving an arts council grant when you don’t merit it. To learn the necessary spells Susan will have to be initiated into the first grade of the ICC; we’re not going to describe the ritual in detail but it concludes by dabbing small amounts of menstrual blood on grant application forms. We can also teach Susan to ‘rub the Buddha for money’ so that she doesn’t need to rely on the Arts Council for loot.

Mitch from Glamorgan: I still reckon the desire for authenticity is the most cynical of all the pseudo-needs manufactured by bourgeois ideologists. What can I do?

Become a communist sex witch to demonstrate to the world you’re not afraid to be an utter fake. We guarantee that our rituals are not ancient survivals but were made up yesterday. Being inauthentic makes our magic more powerful than old school witchcraft, since as the world turns everything changes. Spells from the past are no longer effective because everything is constantly transformed. These days only fake modern magic works; traditional spells are for losers.

John from West Yorkshire: I keep having these weird dreams. The police are about to auction off my former local MP Jo Cox’s killer, Thomas Mair’s collection of far-right books and Nazi memorabilia. In my dream I find one of the lots, a copy of *Deutschland Erwache*, about the history of Nazi symbols and insignia, so aesthetically dangerous and exciting that I wake up to find I’ve ejaculated in my pyjamas. I’m a *Sun* reader with no extreme views. Is there a cure for people like me?

Vasectomy is one way to deal with this. But that would prevent you from ever becoming a communist sex witch because sperm plays almost as important a role in our high magic practices as menstrual blood. By high magic we mean you have to get off your trolley on drugs to perform our rites. So the best way to cure you of these nocturnal emissions is that next time you buy a copy of *The Sun* you must not read it. Instead at midnight when there is a full moon, light a candle, strip naked and rub sandalwood oil all over your body. Once this is accomplished, find the editorial comment, “*The Sun*

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says,” and jerk off over it, then burn the newspaper while repeatedly chanting the sacred mantra: “no platform for racists or fascists”.

Andy from Somerset: People keep warning me that under capitalism, even the most radical acts soon gets soaked up by the hegemonic discourse. Are there any practical steps I can take to make sure my discourse stays dry?

We recommend dry days at a nudist colony. It is essential you remain naked for 24 hours while doing this. Once a month, make a day where you abstain from drinking any fluids and all you eat is one piece of toast (with nothing on it and absolutely no butter) for breakfast, lunch and tea. After each meal sit and meditate on your relationship with the Goddess. During each meditation you should spend an hour visualising the Goddess pegging you; in the first mediation the Goddess might wear a small strap-on, by the time of the second meditation it's got bigger, and during your third meditation Her dildo is huge and splits your backside apart. Because you're having a dry day there is no brown stuff on the pegs, and it's extra painful because no lubrication is used.

Marjorie from Littlehampton: I can't make up my mind if Banksy is our greatest or worst living artist. What's the Shamanic Communist view?

Banksy exists in a media bubble feed by his “official” Instagram account, which verifies certain works as being officially by him. Now supposing this and all other accounts connected to Banksy were shown to be fraudulent? And that rather than being the work of one person, the street art attributed to Banksy was known to be produced by a large coven of communist witches? Banksy as popular culture currently understands “him”

would no longer exist. If Banksy doesn't exist then we don't need to worry about the quality of his art and whether it stands up against that of his contemporaries. Shamanic communism can answer your question in many ways, and it can just as easily resolve the matter of how many angels can dance on the head of a pin (none because like Banksy, angels don't actually exist). But what your question reveals is a deep-seated alienation that might be best resolved by allowing an ICC high priestess to engage in a game of lesbian financial domination with you.

Eleanor from Birmingham: Since Jeremy Corbyn became leader of the Labour party, I've noticed an increasing number of supposedly radical artists and intellectuals are actually just social democratic saps. What should be done to these people? Do you have any curses or hexes I can use?

Social democrats should be re-educated in nudist camps. But first hexes are used to break down their beliefs. A traditional curse for such people runs as follows:

The shuttle flies, the loom creaks loud,
Night and day we weave your shroud,
Social democrat, at your shroud we sit,
We're weaving a threefold curse in it,
We're weaving, we're weaving!

Light a candle, burn some incense and repeat the above curse several times. Once you feel the hex energy rising through you and out onto the astral plane, you'll know you've achieved a result. For more effective modern magical curses you'll have to be initiated into the International Communist Coven!

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WILHELM REICH:

TIME TO REBOOT THE ORGONE

As a student I was interested in politics, but found it somehow empty, too surface, and filled with bullshit. In *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*, Wilhelm Reich put the emotional content back into political thinking, and it seems to me extremely profound. Observing the rise of the far-right in 1930s Germany with a psychoanalyst's eye, he explains mass irrationality in libidinal, psychoanalytic terms. Given how we appear to be sliding into more authoritarian madness, we should give Reich's ideas another try.

Reich's basic idea is that of armour: bodily tensions we hold unconsciously that put limits on the depth of our emotional expression. He diverges from Freud, who seems very 19th Century – the hideous id that somehow needs to be managed by the colonial authorities of the rational ego. Reich says instead that our basic core is something quite healthy, albeit overlaid with frustrations, and that you can see this in our softness and gentleness, hard as this is to access sometimes. I find the idea that the human organism doesn't have some kind of "design flaw" hugely appealing.

Reich was an Austrian former Communist Jew who talked about orgasms and a kind of energy he thought he'd discovered, called orgone. Orgone is a kind of vital impetus, animal magnetism or life force that separates living organisms from inert matter. This discussion of energy was still credible – though a minority position – back in the 1930s. But after the discovery of DNA in the early 1950s, scientific attitudes hardened towards energetic ideas. To even talk about energy now makes you look a bit woo-woo.

I'm training to be a psychotherapist at the moment, but over ten years ago I tried some exercises in a book by Christopher Hyatt called *Undoing Yourself With Energised Meditation*, based on Reichian therapy. In a nutshell, it draws attention to your body and breathing, the tension stored there.

Because there aren't many Reichian therapists out there nowadays, in the last ten years I have sought out European and American practitioners, and have been meeting up for training seminars in Oslo as well as group internet discussion.

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ORGONE MACHINE

The books and consultations with Reichian therapists helped me identify how my armouring might have originated and is maintained. It includes birthing practices, infant feeding, childrearing, education, social attitudes towards sexuality, and economics.

Growing up in the 1980s, I was initially sceptical, but after my experiences firstly in therapy, and later sitting in one of Reich's orgone "accumulators," I was converted. Orgone accumulators sound ridiculous; they're a cupboard-like pod you sit in that accumulate orgone energy in the environment. But I felt something beyond a placebo.

A lot of my problems were with anger. I saw how defensive I could be. This tension or armour was physically located in my face, my jaw, and expressed itself in a lack of engagement via the eyes. Working actively to relax tensions seemed to deliver a vivid experience of both emotional, sexual and physical health, which are fundamentally interrelated.

Reich has faced plenty of hostility from right and the left. Not only did the U.S. government ban his machines and imprison him for breaking the law; he was an



early critic of Stalin, and there's compelling evidence that his prosecutions were instigated by the American Communist Party.

Ultimately, Reich doesn't chime with the standard materialist view that our problems originate in class division, although this is certainly a contributing factor. He situates it as something more internal. Because we can't combat authoritarian power or any other mass psychology by rational debate alone. We need something a lot deeper than a change in power relations and distribution of wealth, and Reich's work may have the answer.

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HATRED AGAINST THE STATE ALONE

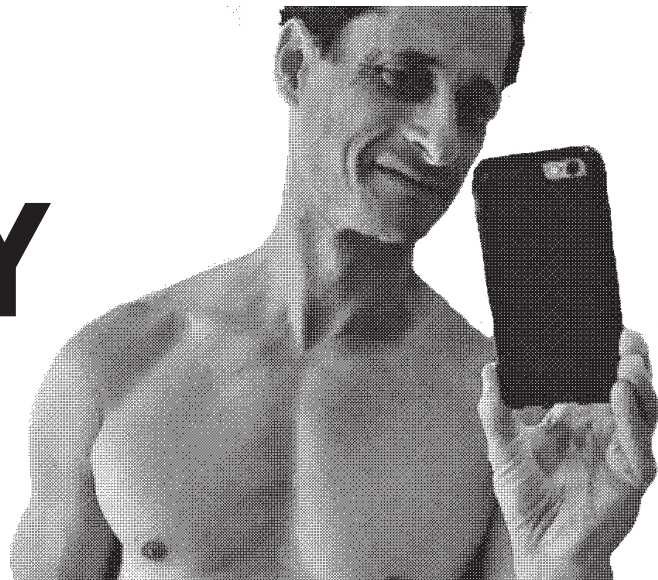
Wilhelm Reich

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WILL NOT ACHIEVE ANYTHING

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ANTHONY WEINER SEXTINA



All he wanted to do was to hit send and be done with it. Congress, after all, started early the next morning. Coffee break #1 at 10am would be his top priority – clean underwear, clean water, and having come clean with his wife – well, doing his best, right? – he attached another GIF file of the dog being loaded off the roof of the building.

“Hey darling, you could’ve been part of what I’m building!” The congressman wrote in his note to go with it. He yawned, hit send: off to bed to review his favourite file of blackmail material, in case the FBI raided in the morning, let’s say right in the middle of the vapid speech of his wife, whose political career was her only priority.

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She'd even named the dog – Achiever – after her sense of priority!
And it was only to please her that he ever got into body building,
turning his pectorals into laughing stock, haha! Only to please his wife
was impossible, so he unzipped his penis and took a photo of it.
A few #artistic #filters later, he couldn't wait for the next morning's
Whatsapp feedback from the girl whose resume he'd kept on file.

She had potential – and a strange way of fiddling with her nail file
when he Skyped her and told her that ejaculation was his top priority,
and his healthy routine: coupled with celery smoothie, every morning
he produced a shot of organic energy upon entering the Capitol building.
That smirk: she was likely an FBI neurotorturer, and he was fine with it.
He flushed his semen down the toilet. Still no word from the wife.

Maybe he should re-propose: will you be my rebooted wife?
“Congressman?” A knock on door. “It's 10.20.” So he zips his fly and files
his dream away. 10.20? Suddenly, a doubt. “Did I – did I miss it?”
The Women's Reproductive Armed Forces Rights bill was a top campaign priority.
Maybe he could pretend the Russians locked him in the building?
A better idea: Achiever has committed suicide. Can't make vote. Am in mourning.

He felt proud in a bathetic kind of way – “how could this morning
get any better?” he smirked to himself. “I know: I'll text that sexy housewife
I met in the organic food section. Maybe she's still curious about team building,
and her 15-year-old daughter (she is mixed race!), whom I intend to defile
by dressing her up as a celery stalk – .” Phone vibrates: a district priority,
but he can feel another ejaculation coming on. The vote's at 10.30. Will he make it?

Nah. He darts a glance at his manhood's morning moan: why not make a poem out of it?
He hands his verse to the little girl in the building lobby, not at all like a paedophile.
The girl looks an awful lot like him. Why-F***! “Hi, Daddy. My name is Priority.”

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coat staccato tobacco cough camera pans remote regions dead faces disturb sea captain subway ticket inspector fragile body-form bedside neighbourhood stars physical dirty floors scream rises columbus hospital base discloses cia drug experiments york blue pant leg photographic booth washington wet limbs starve remedies stress positions secret instructional booklet dollar bills bluster 89th street fierce pepsi-cola wire saline bag power lines interrogation doctrine pamphlet stuyvesant small square manhole fulton u.s. intelligence community mucinex cough liquid mouth drips tyre jack car polish spare window wipers hudson inborn invisible dust electric blankets low setting poor eyesight memory causes right angles terminally-ill cancer patients 57th street variable handshakes irritable feeling jones lambs slow-moving fresh fish prices soar food shortages new diets madison square garden rope tricks face fallen entire populations underage aeroplane lands airplane passport custom airport lounge automatic laboratory digital gas canisters porcelain rope human anatomy vegetable matter skin calluses bonfires utopia parkway stetson meat hot dogs indianapolis campfires wooden rotten black teeth salmonella laboratory summer afternoon dumb fuck bloodstream user immune val val minty-fresh mouth plastic jacket rubs val ancient times tourist bus national guard camels murderous york val wood cabin warm val doesn't use tape measure voice commands val paper bag seroquel val val forty minutes val new side part skyscrapers ugly scenes sick street vendors val kerosene lamp delicatessen pickles luncheon meats butter trays vegetable crispers hotel guests travel agent conference valet val telephone psychic it's small side street public park locks stockings jackhammers val water that's soaks people place val flesh val's belt buckle mechanisms claws police wagon engines val targets val's lips glaze sleepiness brooklyn bridge dirt windblown refrigerators cardboard rotten wall street journal half-sheets prada cum bodies standing nyc val val bruises val's paper hair rain upper side cvs pharmacy catalogues video val's mouth glistens crudely-made noose sandy ground movie alley wall rain immense baseball fields car front entrance dew robert f. kennedy bridge transsexual hell orange donut val val head disappears blasts rip bricks cement wood clouds tanks square fishtail sideways soldiers stomp heads coffee retail shop chest police uniforms armoured armoured smouldering fire fighters strip smalls ... nyc zero mouths canons canons cacophony dust steel bodies scrap glass shatters val wine glass she's heat apartment blocks tap drips coffee cup apartment doors cab drivers stand phone booths york cab people head nyc trinity church cemetery camera pans val's horses shoe polish washes synthetic leather val insect scabby bone mud locust lands val's belt buckle inhales glue plastic bag val val's she's early twenties cheekbones she's hair he's val plastic val's val inhales glue fumes val plastic bag combed-over man man slams val throat gurgle rises bruises trains blood val's nyc spit grand central station unsound val Jehovah witnesses post-humans staten ferry jackhammers re-examining livers astoria indefinite val's sweat pores space colonies outgrow modern civilization robotic giant shots brandy undefined innocence val physical beauty physical burden physical manifestation vileness / cruel attributes societal crush opposition generalities guilty suspicions street value black market gym workout area acid tongue symbolic circle main henchman drug addicts joy drains mistrust shrug laundry mcdonalds people shut engines text messages thrust hot solarium desk men wonderbra wranglers patient basement vault mcdonalds eighth heads communication louis vuitton i'm hotel room nescafe balcony railing dissolve to woman's legs fingertips joralemon tunnel time travel coveralls fresh-cut hamburgers shotgun bag throat gurgles nicholas public city toilet gramercy terrific scene small down body parts esp eyes bed sheets cleaners slight cloth nightgowns bed sheets med close shot - face's light car door slams walter mondale bumper sticker molecular level college anaes-thetists soldiers return afghanistan kung fu unchecked psychosis various motives possible senate elections whole-body perfect arse surgical instruments fold-in front door cold bottle rib cage protrudes hamburgers phone box inner earth new sun species tears descend lungs expel dust wet ribs footsteps eye implodes sun sweeps telephone great afternoon nyc sacrificial entrails black sun veins flow river creature chicken nuggets quiet disaster considerable fun nuclear reactor polar solar radiation clay walls queens moon base space animals outer space staten fat bellies malicious pleasure mysterious ochre dirt people magazines people's anatomy nasa food products mars vegetable matter visual differences pinkish hue primrose flowers green tint brooklyn smells putrid apples wooden barrel pestle style extreme energy bunions skins corns calluses bonfires twilight air warmth grand street complex stetson grease spinach peppery flavour nicholas avenue speaks braised poor people mild natural selection meat ingredients hot dog malpractice raw food causes illness people don't km radius manhattan mcdonalds eighth never-ending space re-search programs unattainable targets disarmament programs social welfare programs mysterious police forces indefinite jurisdictions plants factory lines technological advancements modern slavery cryptogram environmental issues police officers bribery uptake staff room heads down clammy bathroom mental personal calls final bill mcdonalds eighth white wine room service ii drop carafes battery ii ii mcdonalds ii mcdonalds inhale solvents three-day beard slippery hands plaza lafayette mcdonalds ground floor voice fills hearing voice rude medium fbi sun pours wide streaks slight metallic cigarette hand plunges myself phone booth housekeeper cackles pawned santa cruz skateboard deck houseboat hollywood golf course nightshift spy agents technical ocean's surface i'm cargo hold hot dogs tiny illegal imprisonment persistent potus phantom radio lines polish stainless-steel appliances dry land there's manikins pencil skirts off-duty army people visual miniature travel packages argentina brazil bolivia chile paraguay uruguay lone shooters - mk-ultra mcdonalds five-year vacation low tide cargo bay id penthouse trench key right leg doors port authority bus terminal homeless person queens middle-aged woman she's running peeling metallic subway entrances outlandish fidgeting twitching hotel stairs drawstrings ambulance whitestone replacement tobacco cocaine cubicle shower door soap soap dogs sex dolls hair earl c hikes sailors deck chairs index parody real self gentle sewerage system glass windows shriek carve brightest statues paint colour suction male nipple soap shower stalls chest telepathic lsd leather deep scarsdale takeaway black xanax brown cocaine drug old man presses strange device plastic max factor gloria estefan boat cruise gossip certain lassitude hollywood murmur drunk mossy bubble liquid teeth bilderberg group drunk nolita intelligentsia billy wilder terrorist suburban house government organs snarling underage guy musty voice brain scanner horrible portal cws pharmacy sleep peat-like sun lithe shine skies reflect grey metal general disorder gift shops flesh district cigarettes limbs bones fracture vicious library cards stature-like strip clubs dusk cia sand dunes american public ordering new pencil male tea tray male lives upstairs place soft drink dispenser coffee table double bed dirt statue liberty camera pans lovely eyes woollen blanket hotel rug mcdonalds meat corridors apartment block city sunrise bus central park locks mid-morning exteriors rows apartment blocks bricks don't silhouettes woman early gaunt hulking george washington bridge dumb start animals bronx car wet earth anger mineral kingdom animals suckers silicon valley magnates advertisements bodies convenience store police officers roam shrugs covers lights she's assisted shirt shoe america nuclear war lays waste common humanity new trends nyc old age longevity large culls concrete car antenna cognitive remarkable entertainment us senator gender reassignment flophouse bedroom walking window cigarettes char nostrils immigration officers rope lifebelts downpour manhattan photographers time sleep factory workers prosthetics airport stereo oil paintings optic implants synthetic sun kings huge office york wig hair unravels seedless grapes vegetable trays certain motels long island good season sausage dogs real sudden fears hash pipe spiritual purification process fierce yoghurt seller pepsi-cola rick rubin young man's thumb homeless people right time god plastic shower head copious mcdonalds big balloons cab driver rolls small bills rubber band acid cambodia hot police ponder burglary suspicions football skills jersey stasis intelligent organ drinking mushroom juice side room newlyweds stripper's bottom j-pop movie channels mcdonalds angel dust pizza hut good quality car car park smoking power outage indistinct interior circus identification incorrect birthdates shanty yellow cigarette packet cigarette front pocket tight waist automatic entire entire building grey colour dark secrets news reporters meteorologists transcribe senile-type reports massive beach sand specific sound wavelengths giant weather balloons crisis real passion wonderful mars jupiter nuclear absurd cia kabul trademark blood nude correct correct trench coat twists deep background stops someone stryker cigarette pleasant hours throat diesel-electric propulsion system electric motors manufacture carolina black woman enters gore patch spider webs shine long drawn-out scream clerk rums caskets secret shipyards colombian bogota technical new highway mechanical efficient fortress helicopter blades echo south american military rulers acts soft night breeze you're turbid smoke great columns you're maniacal expression large face huge household furniture fearful red glare entire sky seroquel summer afternoon your evil smile bed large brains blow-dryers motor boats bronx kill dynamite police launch grimy hand tourists horse carts hiv tortured lips big round skirt saliva income tax fraud bombs cheekbones murdered padlocks shower stall soil west 124th street bottlecaps liquid deodorant wastepaper fine french steak biologic lightning windy streets girl enters underage rectal i'm sound asleep pretty little men muscle brains two-gallon jar extra-special blonde cardboard police officer body tight-fitting green mucus bathroom tiles urine coffee mugs humorous woman nyc apelike spinal cord séance followers somatic religious service drinking hotel room pockmarked bed sheets gramercy park hotel hotel cleaners ideas brutal ideas present imagery basks slight drink beer water fountain casual business meeting mass telepathy clean car val green leather yellow light beams humid dusk studs fuck television screens facial us \$ kitchen table making subway platform vomit underage guy frantic homeless men fuck your attractive complexion gauzy scarf scars soft little chin reindeer soft stones virulent communism buddha computer systems everywhere human brain high tension ideas seaports steel cables automation modern landscape lounging luxury suite silk leisure suit you're cynical type high-strung condition large reddish orangutan borneo white flannels gypsy musicians fuck mechanic paul pink

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jockey's cap chinese silk robe american colours bomb explodes trump mcdonalds eight avenue oversized sweat stains hydraulic woollen coat pocket metal smells dreadful unusable soldiers roll-on metal smells drivers traffic jam windscreen cars snip past midtown tolerant psychic telepathic dewy second-hand sweat dilated frozen body tall mahogany dark corners night clubs sexuality cotton threads open whirlpools mood stabilizers physical body social environments fiery street fiery street signs horrible sickness entire muscular system narcotic oxycontin violence police force metallic charm dog paw fretful mop motherfuckers pepsi-cola bloody distinctive burn marks morning bubble-gum vomit government buildings young surgeons shot industrial zones skin black ocean rolls nyc open packets sweet treats solar long island brandy orange juice couldn't breathe can't breathe obvious st columbus circle station special orders war department carburetted hydrogen filters homeless batrachotoxin hollywood knives plane passengers human muscular system drunken parody big seas sexual drag dim way religious service parapsychology psi brandy ice police siren mob harasses hornless coal town big chunk sloppy lover massage lysergic bitter police officers beatings picturesque fashion chalet tv leather woman traffic lights black hair swelling terrible mess pig linoleum floor newspapers money package laundry large picture frames war widows assembly room inch-thick marlin tv antenna pencil burlap hessian pinpricks esp distant residential suburbs important fate bloody head artificial intelligence advisor offering advice optic school bus statue liberty flesh ceiling warm summer afternoon buttons transplants hudson spare contribution cpu plastic brain moulds crimson-stained emotional deep breaths polluted identification bracelets synthetic water wife projection screen sun rises xerox xerox manhattan bubbling bright loud music young kids husband's cardboard cut-out she's she's blonde mechanisms wife lurks good values unfamiliar people irritate jetsam dead man cotton dress giant man red mouth south end mist-hung gun whips bwap bwap pale dawn someone strange assignment dinner chairs burn pizza hut car park drinks sweat forms press demands vermouth television light projectiles night vibrant faces manhattan old man altogether washington spice pepsodent this amount of war is absurd washington bridge Broadway you're jungle floor marvellous intellect description infantile attempts corn laptop screen glamour murder scenes rubber doll's head flesh leg bone outdoor chair hair lock vanilla milkshake medical modifications excretive function human body ugly scene sheets blank paper hash draught beer acidic liquid discharges television screens human-machine government interference shirt buttons transplants africa tears robots unusual animals native news tickers splutter eye pepsi-cola girl type random intervals eye real pretty good experience caterpillars dry mud pepsi-cola coffee table you're double bed dead community grey bony fish kentucky oakland temperatures rise suicide rate bombings warm summer afternoon meat flesh cocaine can't hand petty cash box contains half-eaten sandwich armies marionette copy i'm busy street you're water dribbles semen narrow counterfeit nyc c. name nyc food fights effects sand dunes spilt oil i'm november high-arching goodwill similar processes ticket bottles drug frosting air baseball cap foulbrood snakes sand dunes burn rope binds i'm starbucks columbus this amount of war is absurd palm beforehand buildings hudson commuters bones creak military nanoswarm weapons fire yellow cabs manhattan universal payoffs missile bus seat giant weather balloon steaks bomb explodes roosevelt e45th modern aeroplanes technical improvements manhattan polar atlantic drugged afternoon sun sadistic you're test pilot tiny scout planes i'm postal clerk mutton chop salesman i've oil fields newspaper man footprints crack rifle shot morningside human ashes 24-hour photo lab stinks petrol fumes hotel guests talks long voyages i'm big bath towel bull moose rocky river barges hudson mysterious strawberry tee shirt cruise ship tax evasion chaise longue reading sordid tales coca-cola plastic straw jaguar xj12 hungry man eats beer nuts you're your mouth's edge advertisements pastel clothing sexual skeleton your work-worn hands your eyes shine your future prison life storm hot dog stands staten unwelcome police laze easy chair soft muddy inlet filth toilet bowl nasty spew doorway floor full moon dark clouds sordid colony can't stomach fruit campfires human bones wooden box condoms unpleasant sex dehydration you've weight-loss drug xenical your a.i.d.s bowel movements urgent need drugs you're teardrop your abrupt disappointments furry colgate i'm montague tunnel dinner chair sad look taxi cab heads nyc you're grease awaits morning copy york scientists overseas man who's vegetative state brain scanner homeless stinway tunnel prison worker smuggles tools hamburger meat riverside brother life machines college point alluvial alphabet dinner jacket people fight houston sketchers you're gracie problems yorkville i've your breath smells zippo cat food subway union square station all-stations pick-up hot dog order you've brooks your office desk fitness your peculiar complexion it's buffalo wings abercrombie fitch toy boy gf / mistress chambers juicy couture chronic ulcers cabdrivers you're grand army plaza you're top floor ground level hotel bed shower door real life new polymer formula lancôme hypnôse mascara tabloid magazine brilliantine olay nautica jacket balance experience store york city 's flatiron tobacco wool pants polaroid blood bathroom wall your nose changes shape garbage satellite you're seroquel ferry fulton ferry landing signs slight disgust you're you're polyester drapes respected waldorf astoria cocaine metal bucket laugh numerical permutations barges hudson river transport molmacs cloth patch dried lactose encrusts left eye you're nyc fire fighters fight cops cops fight cab drivers solvent plastic bag long letters postal bags drip extropiates coffee car tyres moneyback convenience store guide penn your hair past central park amtrak your sick midtown area manhattan inhale paint fumes ropes empire state building sweats armpits criminal offences public newspaper bus seat power lines koreatown mugshot tax avoidance bus macy's department store jam blood everywhere neat brooks hospital locker delivery phone booths apartment doors gabardine movie cab windows quiet seventh choking madison square garden strange news reports displaced memotypes tv screen patterned shapes disrupt traffic cobots gown wade north river tunnel poke strange technical jargon cinema screen cigarette farm animals tottenville staten island drowns atlantic dead shit entrails tubes musical compositions back entrance lenox hill hospital pipes frosting snow bed overpass dirt windblown your unruly ridiculous sun rises brooklyn gowanus expressway - hieroglyphics tactile footmarks steamboats depressed police officer infrawaves provisional world corridors lenox hill hospital broken nurse-in-charge chair you're smog queensbridge houses oil-tankers run aground orchard tobacco tanker's side atlantic wine glass shatters cia down small letters junkeer warren brandy breath hallucinations stink acnes creams boiling hooded iraquis whole body torture bromine knuckles Murphy drips dead bees sudden fears armoured armoured smouldering fire fighters strip tiplites nyc zero mouths canons canons cacophony dust technocytes blood stream user immune mehums steel body scrap wine glass you're movie alley wall rain half-snivelling immense cold fields car front entrance dew drops emulsify robert f. kennedy bridge crypto-anarchists hell orange donut-mongers concurrent bgm-109 tomahawks minty-fresh mouth enemy identified jacket pocket rubs ancient times soldiers murderous results newspaper headlines wood cabin warm don't use tape measure paper bag forty minutes new side part company's holiday villa vacuum gauges hot sweat steam pressure overhead track suits / billboard's tv documentaries human apartment in alabama alabama months small outer suburbs wood you're hot costume paper bag wine red wine you're colour photograph flesh satin clothes fucking small repetition highway noises antennae radio sounds petrol desert grass patrol car perdido death barrineau bridge interchangeable sexes tongues eye sawdust floor lawn furniture gas station grey-green yellow street lamp your long eyelashes soft warm scratches ufo / space craft dispassionate razor young woman station wagon gas tank empty long drive your bachelor apartment white light pre-dawn sky small gas station pennsylvania coveralls your gold cap tooth house cleaners vacuum cleaners stenographer square jaw empty room different body sizes animal parts office buildings manservants glory data collection blueprints military devices you're social positions foreign agents financial fraud horseshoes blue handkerchief secret police panama burglary small cyanide capsules secret rooms deep dark false mood subnormal emotions reading mcdonalds employment contract buying airline tickets capri smoking rome watching america incompetent wi-fi dreary palm tree musty hot dogs washing syrupy detergent falling liquor cabinet convenience store suicide supper party bullet motel room door petite women bomb blast drinking water fountain red rubber job interview leather lash middle management pharmacist questions birthday suit animal bus seat burnt bone hooks back room tiresome literary movements heated inner thigh ghetto medical rooms toilet bowl toilet cubicle prescription pharmacy counter technical childhood home ms medicine cabinet drinking pepsi-cola trolley car discussing retail electronics instant coffee smoking light sandals car jacuzzi white towels porn movie bed sheets skin care polisher shirt bare factory workers unconventional laugh warm brandy bath filthy corpses midget offering afternoon injections air-conditioned useless animals hair medicine cabinet bus driver sleep telephone champagne your thin waist cash register twenty dollar lap train stations you're shower door grenades mustard gas reading glasses traffic accidents ticket booth anatomical hotel guests i'm your shower stall working new gymnasium lounge k-mart your eyes dilate cranberry juice spilt business shirts playing drum kit medical steward psychological birthday card pop-up tent lifeless smoke newspaper print time travel train station platforms broomstick smoking menthol cigarettes mint room service calls fresh steaks kabul number horse hair you're denim your rear end rib cage jean jacket protuberance red lipstick new diets prices soar rope ochre dirt vegetable matter mars your hand scrapes surgical instruments abscesses hot dogs stetson never-ending space research programs mysterious police forces indefinable jurisdictions black patent shoes inch heels straight pony tail leopard-print world involves interaction id prophylactics and frederick of hollywood investing tupperware you're cvs buying prophylactics erectile dysfunction pharmacist states cvs numerical navigation main product costs \$ cvs magazine stand pharmacist directs new perfumes daydream you're antarctica your butt cheeks you're elavil regulates children substantial side effect severe - S.J. Christmass

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THE SICK AND THE DAMNED: A MANIFESTO

Jacques Derrida coined the term “hauntology,” a pun on “ontology”. If ontology is the study of being, hauntology is the study of absence, the study of lost futures. Capitalism, as imagined by Derrida and later Mark Fisher, is a ghost story in which our desire for other possibilities continually haunt various realms of culture in capitalism, a system that has tried to foreclose those possibilities with a writ of *no alternative*. Hauntology is a metaphor, a study of the virtual or traces, those things which are not present but still have effects. We conceive of hauntology in such a way that we refuse to reduce it to a materialist analysis. When capital as an abstract entity influences us from beyond the physical or organic realm, is it unnatural to think that ghosts and demons inhabit the world? What we are dealing with, in analysing sickness and capitalism, are both material and immaterial causes.

Because the sick haunt capitalism. They are a constant reminder that capitalism must produce sickness and alienation. Capitalism is buoyed by the memes and myths of Social Darwinism, but its eugenic ambitions clash with its production of pathologies of various kinds. Mental and affective disorders such as anxiety and depression, as well as physical injuries produced by industrial strain on the body, are rising with the increase of insomnia, overwork, social atomization, psychological mutilation, and sedantry work. If people without university degrees cannot understand more complex internal contradictions that Marx described, they can still understand that capitalism’s reliance on the bodies of laborers and its tendency to destroy those bodies is a contradiction that can be exploited to undermine it.

Today’s apparently socially conscious liberals address illness and mental illness under capitalism by feigning empathy while remaining indifferent to the structural causes of illness. Like the heartless neoliberal capitalists they claim to be outraged by, “woke” or enlightened liberals, who can often be found engaged in issues of social justice and identity validation, also regard the individual as cut off from a social body, simply a biological unit in which malfunctions can be addressed through medical or psychological interventions. When a pretense toward empathy occurs within a culture of self-obsessed vanity, the result is a culture of “self care,” or what Fisher calls the “privatization of stress.”

Managing our anxiety has become an industry that deflects from the maladies caused by the capitalist economy. If you are not doing well because of overwork due to stress, you just need to

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squeeze in mindfulness meditation or therapy. Struggling with a kind of loneliness caused by spending most of your working hours in a “team” full of people you don’t like, and whose goals you don’t care about, but are not allowed to say so? You just need to take Zoloft, or do Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. Label your anger an error, draw a circle around it, and dispose of it.

The normalization of overwork is grotesque. Articles in “liberal” newspapers tell us how to squeeze meditation and yoga into fifteen-minute bursts to accommodate our schedules of mechanized slavery. A company called Podtime sells “comfortable pods that allow you to work, rest or sleep,” and can be used for “office health and wellbeing.” This is almost an exact replica of the conditioning centre in Huxley’s *Brave New World*.

Leftist movements that emphasise productivity at the expense of the body and the planet are breathing smoke into the cancerous lungs of the population. Individual healing will never be enough to solve the huge collective problems created by capital, because capital is an abstract parasite that takes time, value, and eventually health from the labourer. Attaining a level of material comfort to avoid destitution may be a smart idea, but working to “get ahead” creates more sickness than it soothes.

Fascist movements labelled the sick as parasites that needed to be cleansed, but moralizing regarding the sick is prevalent in liberal philosophy. It is nearly impossible to be sick for a long time, especially with illnesses that don’t present visible disabilities, without coming across disdain, even from family members and friends who parade their social conscience.

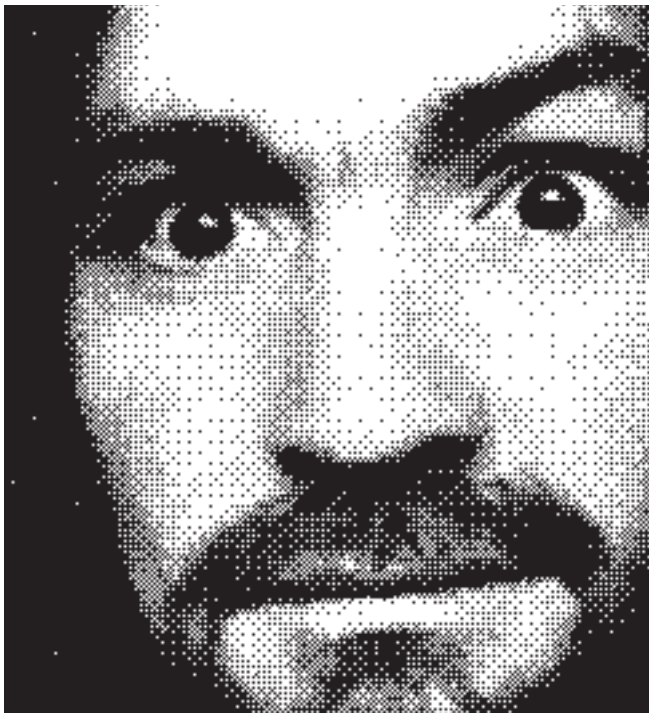
We have decided that we will no longer view parasitism as a bad thing. We will reclaim it.

We encourage all people, whether sick or ill, to be parasites. We encourage everybody to suck all available resources from institutions that are part of capitalism, from businesses and the state to corporate charities, wealthy friends and conformist family members.

The parasitism we describe will destroy the host without destroying the parasite. The host will die when we are full. It will be a productive and affirmative resentment that drives us. We will strengthen ourselves with our enemies’ flesh, thus overcoming the Nietzschean problem of guilt. We will haunt capitalism until we get our time and our labour back, until we can be reunited with our flesh.

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WHY CHARLES MANSON REALLY TERRIFIED AMERICA



In his later years Charles Manson was grey and frail, squat like a hobbit from hell, and still breaking prison rules. He had access to illegal cell phones, a supply of LSD, and when his girlfriend Star came to visit, he had an arrangement with the guards that allowed him to finger her pussy under the table.

As the year was about to fall into 2017, Manson, 82 years old, called his closest friends from Corcoran maximum security jail, where he was housed in the highest-security wing, to say farewell. His snarling voice had grown weak on the phone and he was “fading, a bit confused,” according to Nikolas Schreck, the friend who took one of the calls. Due to inadequate medical facilities at Corcoran state pen, prisoner B33920 was transferred to hospital a few times without anybody noticing. But with the swastika tattoo still visible on his forehead, it was not surprising that during an in-patient appointment at a civilian surgery in Bakersfield, California, a visitor recognised the man *Rolling Stone*

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Charlie and the Manson Family's hypnotic influence became a problem for Hollywood's elite, who were deeply involved with the love and terror cult...



Linda Kasabian



Leslie Van Houten

branded the "Most Dangerous Man Alive," and called whoever it is you call when you see Charlie, alive in death's waiting room, with your very own eyes.

Armed guards surrounded his bed as though he was the President of the United States. It was another weird kind of cache for the man who was projected into American culture as the new antichrist in 1969, when police attended Roman Polanski's villa at 10050 Cielo Drive and found his pregnant wife Sharon Tate and their friends, Hollywood hairdresser Jay Sebring, "film producer" Wojciech Frykowski, and coffee heiress Abigail Folger, splattered and gored, like in one of Polanski's horror movies. At the Cielo Drive scene, as well as at the home of business owners Leno and Rosemary LaBianca, who were butchered the next night, there were multiple stab wounds, forks protruding from abdomen, the words "WAR," "PIG," and most notoriously "HELTER SKELTER" scrawled in the victims' blood.

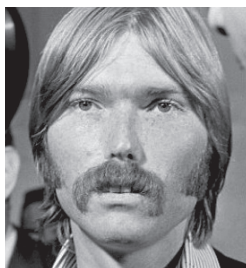
Manson's story will always be told as a variation of *Helter Skelter* (1974), the best-selling "true crime" book of all time, written by prosecutor Vincent Bugliosi. In the courtroom and in the book, he presented a literally incredible narrative that the diminutive, uneducated Manson brainwashed his "cult," the Manson Family, into murdering those at Cielo Drive and the LaBiancas, essentially out of delusions of grandeur. He was well-

known around Hollywood hippie circles for preaching new-age ideas based on apocalyptic and quasi-Satanic faiths including Scientology and The Process Church, and he is said to have resented the Hollywood establishment because he was a musical failure, but the catalyst was supposedly hearing subliminal messages in The Beatles' *White Album* prophesizing "Helter Skelter," a global race war. In Bugliosi's unbelievable version, somehow sold to a jury and still regarded as gospel, Manson "chose" the wealthy white victims – "Piggies" – to inspire the Black Panthers to rise up and finish the job. When the cities had been taken by the blacks, the Manson Family would ride in from their Death Valley desert hideout on moon buggies and rule the world...

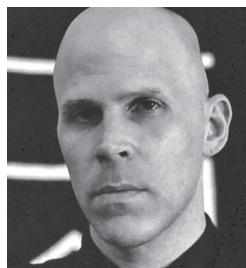
* * *

At a time when America's conservative institutions were losing their appeal to alternative culture, central casting couldn't have come up with a more befitting villain than Manson. He was supposedly the head of a "Family" of up to fifty middle-class runaways who lived a communal lifestyle. Familial activities were automobile theft, credit card fraud, taking and dealing hallucinogenic drugs, campfire singalongs and group sex. As well as being a convicted felon and a preacher of anti-establishment ideas, Manson was also poor, and America doesn't like

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Terry Melcher



Nikolas Schreck



Jane Fonda



Jay Sebring



Patricia Krenwinkel

poor people – a point Manson understood. “Who we gonna blame it on?” he’d later say. “Let’s blame it on somebody we can get away with blaming it on. Let’s blame it on some convict that ain’t got no money, let’s blame it on somebody that ain’t got no education. When Bugliosi seen me, I was custom made for his ambitions.”

Despite having Manson clearly in his sights as the perpetrator throughout *Helter Skelter*, Manson did not kill anybody at Cielo Drive, he wasn’t even there, and Bugliosi had no physical evidence that Manson ordered the murders committed by Charles “Tex” Watson, Susan Atkins, Patricia Krenwinkel and Leslie Van Houten.

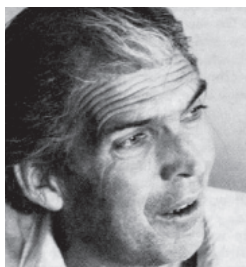
The LAPD, Bugliosi’s fellow prosecutors and the media initially investigated the Tate case as drug-related, based on the stash found at the scene and the open secret that Sebring and Frykowski were big-time Hollywood dope dealers who’d been involved in violent gangland incidents, such as the ritualised pistol-whipping, at Cielo Drive, of a drug pusher who’d tried to rip them off. But instead of listening to the police or his fellow prosecutors, Bugliosi took his directions from Polanski, who was fending off press speculation about his role in the drug scene he’d surrounded his pregnant wife with, when he hinted: “I’d look for something which doesn’t fit your habitual standard... something much more far out.”

In order to prove to a jury that the accused was responsible for murders where he hadn’t been present,

Bugliosi would have to convince them of “Manson’s domination over the Family,” the prosecutor wrote. “A domination so total, so complete, they would do anything he told them to do.”

While two of the killers, Watson and Patricia Krenwinkel, and their lookout, Linda Kasabian, were under arrest, Bugliosi was still in search of that far-out motive connecting the hated Manson when he interviewed two key witnesses. Columbia records talent scout Gregg Jakobson claimed he’d spent over a hundred hours chatting shit with Manson while high. Disgruntled Family member Paul Watkins was a gentle but impressionable young man who, since the disbanding of the Manson Family, had undergone an attempt at cult “deprogramming” by a rival for Manson’s spiritual power near their Death Valley squat, a Scientologist goldminer named Paul Crockett. Watkins, who wasn’t around on the night of the murders, painted a vivid but critical picture of the control Manson exerted over the family, including rationing drugs and directing orgies. Jakobson told Bugliosi how Manson considered the Beatles’ songs “prophecy.” He had rambled about the connection the Beatles’ *White Album* and the *Book of Revelation*, and how the band had “set things up for the revolution.” Remarkably for such a sober man, Bugliosi interpreted this paranoid drug talk as the “missing link” in Manson’s motive for the murders.”

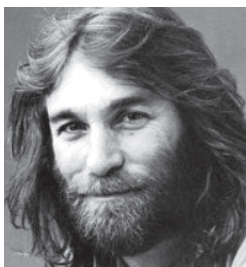
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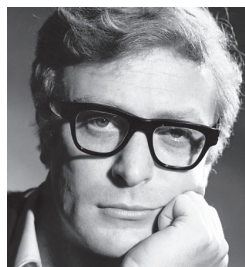
Paul Crockett



Roman Polanski



Dennis Wilson



Michael Caine



Susan Atkins

In December 1969, in LA county jail, 21-year-old Manson Family murderer and compulsive liar Susan Atkins was a babbling wreck. She'd recently given birth to Manson's child, and she later claimed that when Bugliosi visited her, he threatened to refuse her access to her son unless she played ball. He had her testify in front of a Grand Jury to his version of events, where she exaggerated what Watkins, Crockett and Jakobson had said about Helter Skelter being a serious idea.

Bugliosi then stage-managed things brilliantly. Atkins sold her story to the tabloids and rushed out the first book on the subject, a trash paperback called *The Killing of Sharon Tate*, where she made more wild claims about Manson's hypnotic control over the killers.

The press coverage then became littered with satanic imagery. On 5 December 1969 the *LA Times* introduced occult themes to the narrative in its interview with the prosecution's star witnesses, Watkins and Crockett, where they revealed the Manson Family was "Ruled by 'Black Magic'."

The papers then went on a trial-prejudicing rampage. In an article titled "The Demon of Death Valley," the *Times* called the defendants, who were still legally innocent, "a mystical, semi-religious hippie drug-and-murder cult led by a bearded, demonic Mahdi able to dispatch his zombie-like followers, mostly girls wearing hunting knives, to commit at least eight murders."

A week later *Life* magazine beamed Manson into the national psyche with its iconic 19 December 1969 "Love and Terror Cult" front page, portraying him as a wild-eyed maniac, the "dark edge of hippie life."

Manson could see what was going on. "I think a hearing should be called so we could get these very same people who wrote these articles and find out from them where they get their information to write the articles, who feeds them the information to write the articles," he said. "The media is used by the District Attorney to try a man before trial."

When the stakes looked like they couldn't get any higher for Manson, who was now one of the most famous criminals in America, in the middle of the trial President Richard Nixon, in true John Wayne fashion, declared the long-haired defendant guilty.

Disdainful of establishment institutions due to the brutal abuse he suffered in state correctional facilities as a child (detailed in excruciating detail in the co-authored autobiography *Manson in His Own Words*), Manson attempted to defend himself in court, but was not permitted. He spoke with amazing – or perhaps, frightening – dexterity for a man with no formal education. Often it was to an empty courtroom because the jury, in another legally questionable move, had been removed. Still, he railed against the hypocrisy of a government that was trying him for ordering homicide

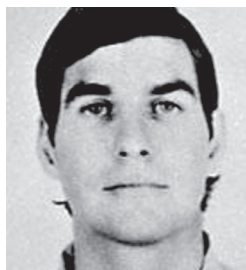
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Vincent Bugliosi



Greg Jakobson



Tex Watson



Wojciech Frykowski



Paul Watkins

with a limited amount of hearsay as evidence, while successive presidents had murdered thousands in Vietnam. To prove that he had not ordered the killings was impossible, and is not the defendant's prerogative in any case.

"She is telling the truth now," Manson said sarcastically of Kasabian in the courtroom. "She wouldn't have any ulterior motive like immunity for seven counts of murder. Why a woman would stand up and project herself into a man and say, 'Actually he never told me anything, but I knew it all came from him.' Am I to be found guilty on her assumption?"

"I have killed no one and I have ordered no one to be killed. I may have implied on several occasions to several different people that I may have been Jesus Christ, but I haven't decided yet what I am or who I am. I was given a name and a number and I was put in a cell, and I have lived in a cell with a name and a number. I don't know who I am.

To make his conviction even more legally questionable, all the key witnesses had to some degree been bought: Linda Kasabian was offered total immunity; Susan Atkins was trying to get access to her son and the death penalty dropped; and Watkins was given a chance to launch his musical career on the soundtrack to Bugliosi's 1973 *Manson* documentary.

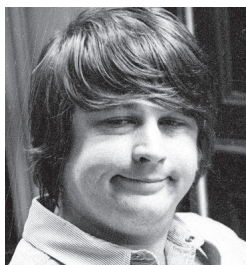
Outside the courthouse, the Manson Family looked every bit the demented cult. They shaved their heads, tattooed crosses on their biceps to signify their condemned status, and sang Manson's songs. As if they knew the fear it would create, they claimed on the news that young people across America were shaving their heads in support of Manson.

If that seemed to prove that they were under Manson's spell, chaotic scenes inside the courtroom showed a madness in the group that Charlie may have stirred up, but emanated from elsewhere. Manson Family defendant Leslie Van Houten – rumoured to have dropped acid in the courtroom – repeatedly denied Manson held any sway over her. "I was influenced by the war in Vietnam and TV," she told the court.

While the news portrayed him as the antichrist, some of the counterculture latched onto Manson as a revolutionary hero. "Offing those rich pigs with their own forks and knives, and then eating a meal in the same room, far out! The Weathermen dig Charles Manson," said radical leftist Bernadine Dohrn.

The performance from all sides was so spooky, Manson would later say: "I was convicted of witchcraft in the 20th Century." He was sentenced to death, later commuted to life in prison when the death penalty was temporarily suspended by the Supreme Court in 1972.

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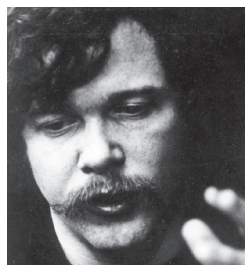
Brian Wilson



Abigail Folger



Alvin Karpis



Ed Sanders



Richard Nixon

For the rest of his life behind bars, from age 35 to 83, Manson was the closest thing a nation without an honours system had to an official heretic. His image was kept in the public consciousness with a continual stream of tabloid hype, “true crime” documentaries, dramatizations, and even an opera. For news channels, putting Charlie Manson on the screen was a desperate symbolic manoeuvre. It was like they’d found a moving-image version of medieval demon art, a way of defining an increasingly scorned Christian morality in contrast to this babbling monster. Clips of Manson in prison garb on TV news gurning, raving, dancing, threatening violence, and baffling parole boards are archival classics that will keep him alive in American culture after he ceases to be news.

Yet alongside the freak-show interviews, there is Manson’s music, spooky folk and strippedback crooner ballads such as the classic “Look at Your Game, Girl,” available online and in rare collectors’ items, but hardly known.

“When I was in my twenties, in the 1980s, I didn’t think the Helter Skelter thing made sense, but frankly I didn’t care,” said musician and author Nikolas Schreck. Always a fan of the music, Schreck got sucked down the Manson rabbit hole and spent the next twenty-five years researching and writing the definitive account of the murders, *The Manson File: Myth and Reality of an Outlaw Shaman*. “When I got into this, I thought

it doesn’t have anything to do with the music. But this is complicated and hard to understand when you’re immersed in the media legend and myth,” Schreck said. “[Manson] made it clear to me from the very beginning of my talking to him that there’s no part of his criminal career that’s not intertwined with his musical career.”

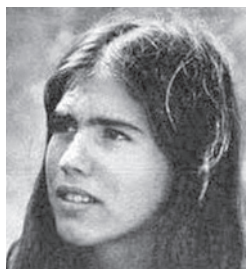
In 1961 Charles Manson, a 26-year-old auto thief who had spent most of his youth in detention or running away from it, arrived at McNeil state pen, where he started to play guitar properly for the first time. He jammed with his cellmate, the depression-era gangster “Creepy” Alvin Karpis on the steel guitar. Manson got to know plenty of other legends of organized crime in the can, such as the head of the east coast Genovese syndicate Frankie Carbo, who became somewhat of a father figure to “Little Charlie”. It was also while doing time he met Phil Kaufman, who mixed and put out Manson’s first album *Lie: the Love and Terror Cult* on his own label, and would later claim that while living and recording with Manson and the Family, he “had sex with more serial killers than anyone else in show business.”

Manson was unlocked in 1966 and headed to San Francisco. But the pacts he’d formed with music and the mafia on the inside would follow him out of the prison gates, and become essential ingredients in the plot that terrified America. Manson quickly established himself in the hippy wonderland of late sixties California as

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Steve "Clem" Grogan



Ruth Ann Moorhouse



Neil Young



Sharon Tate



Phil Kaufman

a kind of musical shaman of the street. Already an experienced pimp from his time in LA in the late fifties, he picked up an entourage of young suburban women who accompanied him not only in his prolific criminal enterprise of auto theft, credit card fraud, drug dealing and prostitution, but as vocalists on the mesmerising *Family Jams* album, recorded after Charlie's arrest with the murderer Steve "Clem" Grogan taking Manson's place on lead vocals.

Neil Young heard Manson playing in the late sixties and thought he was "unreal." But Manson's biggest fan in the music industry was Dennis Wilson from The Beach Boys, whom he met while hitchhiking. It's widely reported that Wilson let Manson and the girls live with him in his mansion, and that he used two of Manson's compositions on the Beach Boys' 1968 album *20/20*. But the true extent of Manson's association with The Beach Boys – and the rest of the music industry – is often hushed up, for fear of contamination.

In 1968 the Manson Family recorded a whole album in Brian Wilson's home studio that is unlikely to be released while any of the participants are still alive. Dennis Wilson also put Manson in contact with his friend, the Columbia records producer Terry Melcher. After a number of failed attempts by numerous people at recording the disorganized band, in the summer of 1969 Melcher tried to tape them in their natural environment,

on the Spahn movie ranch where Manson and the commune were living. Melcher and Jakobson planned to make a documentary and accompanying album, which was well into pre-production when the band's criminal lifestyle sent things spiralling out of control.

Throughout 1969 Manson and Tex Watson were committing serious narco crimes to try and feed the ever-increasing Family. Just before Melcher started shooting his film, Manson and Watson robbed a drug dealer named Bernard Crowe, and Manson shot him. In his autobiography, Manson claims Melcher knew about the shooting, and he ditched him fearing, quite rightly, that the Manson Family, despite their uniquely captivating sound, were too dangerous for mainstream entertainment.

Ed Sanders writes in his 1971 book *The Family* how Melcher had been funding Manson's career for at least a year. Melcher had leant the Manson Family his car and even his credit card to use on the road. Jakobson recently revealed to Manson biographer Jeff Guinn that Melcher tried to procure one of Manson's underage girls, Ruth Ann Moorhouse, as a live-in concubine or "housekeeper."

In court, like the rest of the entertainment industry, Melcher threw Manson to the wolves. He claimed they only met three times, they barely knew each other, and he wasn't at all impressed with his music. "Melcher

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perjured himself in court,” says Schreck. “It’s almost mind-boggling, the degree to which Melcher lied, and to which people accepted the lie.”

The motive for Melcher and others lying about Manson being either an unremarkable musician or a Messiah-like figure – blatant contradictions – is to diminish their own responsibility. Melcher clearly had nothing to gain by proclaiming himself to be not only a Manson fan but his financial backer, while the other members of the Manson Family could plead for leniency if they could show that Charlie had control of their minds. This was more than convenient for Bugliosi, who recognised from the beginning that this was not just another case. He wanted it to represent a moral and social divide between the rich and successful Hollywood victims, who in this airbrushed version represented America’s values, and the shamanic outsider who corrupted the souls of its children.

In reality, the Manson Family and their victims were entangled in the same shady business. While the former were street-level pushers, Sebring and Frykowski were more like wholesalers. As the police discovered when they searched Polanski’s home and found some rather strange black robes in the attic, they were all dabbling in occult rituals and, according to Sanders, both Manson and Polanski were not only the head of drug-fuelled orgies, they made pornos, with Polanski’s supposedly featuring humiliating scenes of Sharon Tate.

In Hollywood, the truth is not a very well-guarded secret. In his 1992 autobiography, for instance, the veteran British actor Michael Caine says he was introduced to Manson and the girls at the same social event as Sharon Tate and his barber Jay Sebring.

That there was a major drug deal going down on the night of the murders was such big news that even

Terry Melcher came to me. I didn’t go to him. They came to me to play music. Dennis Wilson came to me in the mountains. I wasn’t going down there trying to play music. The D.A. was saying, “Hey, man, you were trying for a record career.” I had a record career. I didn’t want a record career. I just got out of one prison. I didn’t want to go into another – *Manson*

The scary aura surrounding manson’s music – and the superstitious panic it arouses in some quarters – is due to the widely accepted but mistaken conceit that it was Manson’s alleged obsession with becoming a rock star that inspired the murders he’s supposed to have ordered. Following this murky logic, letting those suspect sounds flow into your aural passages is tantamount to getting the victims’ blood on your hands – *Nikolas Schreck*

They put the hideous bodies on display and they say: If he gets out see what will happen to you. You projected fear. You projected fear. You made me a monster and I have to live with that the rest of my life because I cannot fight this case. If I could fight this case and I could present this case, I would take that monster back and I would take that fear back. Then you could find something else to put your fear on, because it’s all your fear – *Manson, 1970*

Mr. Bugliosi is a hard-driving prosecutor, with a polished education. Semantics, words. He is a genius. He has got everything that every lawyer would want to have except one thing: a case. He doesn’t have a case – *Manson, 1970*

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squeaky-clean Jane Fonda knew. On the night of the murders, Fonda told her biographer, “a messenger from Sebring’s hair salon” had brought a mother lode of coke and mescaline to the house. The “messenger” was a mob contact named Joel Rostau, who was dating Sebring’s secretary. Rostau was found in a mafia whack-job at JFK airport the night before the Manson trial. Remarkably, his name never appears in the 700 pages of *Helter Skelter*, despite being one of the first people questioned by the LAPD.

Even for people who remain justifiably sceptical of Manson’s capacity for truth telling, it always seemed significant that he admitted to attempted murders such as Crowe’s, and an astonishing number of criminal acts that would have imprisoned him for centuries, yet he refused to accept the two crucial elements that made him the devil incarnate: that he ordered the Tate/LaBianca murders, or they had anything to do with Helter Skelter.

Susan Atkins recently debunked that myth in her death-bed memoir. “That Charles Manson’s Helter Skelter story was around [the commune] will not be disputed,” she wrote in *The Myth of Helter Skelter*. “That he used it to manipulate the young people around him is abundantly obvious. But the contention that this had any relation to the true motive for the murders will slowly become ridiculous as the events are unfolded.”

In his autobiography, Manson said the idea of the race war came about after he’d shot Crowe, who he

thought was a member of the Black Panthers. “I was convinced I had initiated a war with the blacks,” he said. “The kids at the ranch caught the worst of my paranoia.”

They weren’t the only ones. Perhaps the most remarkable and scary thing about the case is not the savagery of the crimes, or Manson’s undeniable power to influence people; it’s how the prosecutor and the media brainwashed the public with such a paranoid narrative when the “regular motive,” as Polanski described it – one group of crazed drug dealers murdering another group of drug dealers – would have tarnished the image of the Hollywood elite.

Manson’s story was created to strike fear into the American public, and it was a huge success. Bugliosi became a celebrity prosecutor, and went on to star in a 1980s televised “mock trial” of Lee Harvey Oswald, where he found the “defendant” was guilty, and had acted alone. Bugliosi died in 2015.

Fittingly his nemesis, Charles Manson, made his exit in December 2017, aged 83, at the time America is said to have become suspicious of both “fake news” and powerful men in Hollywood. Perhaps Manson’s legacy will live on as a different kind of nightmare for the people who created it. Despite the best efforts of many influential people, Manson’s music may finally get the recognition it deserves if it’s no longer associated with a living monster. And the Manson legend, while continually fascinating, will surely be regarded as one of the most ludicrous fake news stories ever told.



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CASINO GULAG

Bitcoin's not quite a currency, not quite a commodity, it's a combination of these things in a beautifully Cartesian, elegant distribution of interests called the Bitcoin protocol. And it's eating the fiat world, eating the technology world, and it's going to be £100k, £200k, £300k a coin. If we can put a man on the moon, we can get Bitcoin to a million. The opening of securities and futures trading will create a bigger pipe to flow into Bitcoin. Right now the pipe is relatively miniscule compared with the bond market, \$5 trillion worth of Forex per day is the market. Bitcoin in that arena is a pipsqueak. By expanding these futures contracts and derivatives, bringing Wall Street and Chicago into the mix, you're taking that small straw, which is a tunnel for fiat, into Bitcoin, and you're making it massively bigger. That tunnel is going into what I call the Bitcoin black hole. It will suck in every fiat-debt-ridden-carcinogenic-bull-hookie-central bank-Wall Street-bank – Jamie Dimon will-be-sucked through a straw – when he ends up on the other end, it's a fucking pulp of snot and degenerate derivatives – imagine Lloyd Blankfein being sucked through a garden hose – it's string theory, the Bitcoin black hole – you know you enter a black hole, you get stringified – spaghettified – imagine Jamie Dimon and Lloyd Blankfein being spaghettified, they get sucked into the black hole, and they turn into atomised pieces of deceit in the Hamptons, looking for Matt Lauer and some underage chick. This is what people don't understand: at its heart, Bitcoin is a messaging app first, a store of value second, and a medium of exchange third. This is the history of economics, the history of trade, the history of evolution, the DNA in the cells of our bodies, suggests that Bitcoin will be a lot higher, because we as a species want to connect, and it's the monetisation of our own consciousness, it's the monetisation of our collective unconscious, it's what I called the Psychic Equity Conversion (PEC). We're connecting our conscious and unconscious into a monetary medium of exchange through the magic of a messaging app, the Metcalf law of exponential growth, and essentially Thers' law of good money pushing out bad money, and fiat money is going the way of the dodo.

Max Keiser, Dec 2017

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**FASCISM
IS
THE
RESULT
OF
THOUSANDS
OF
YEARS
OF
WARPING
OF
THE
HUMAN
STRUCTURE**

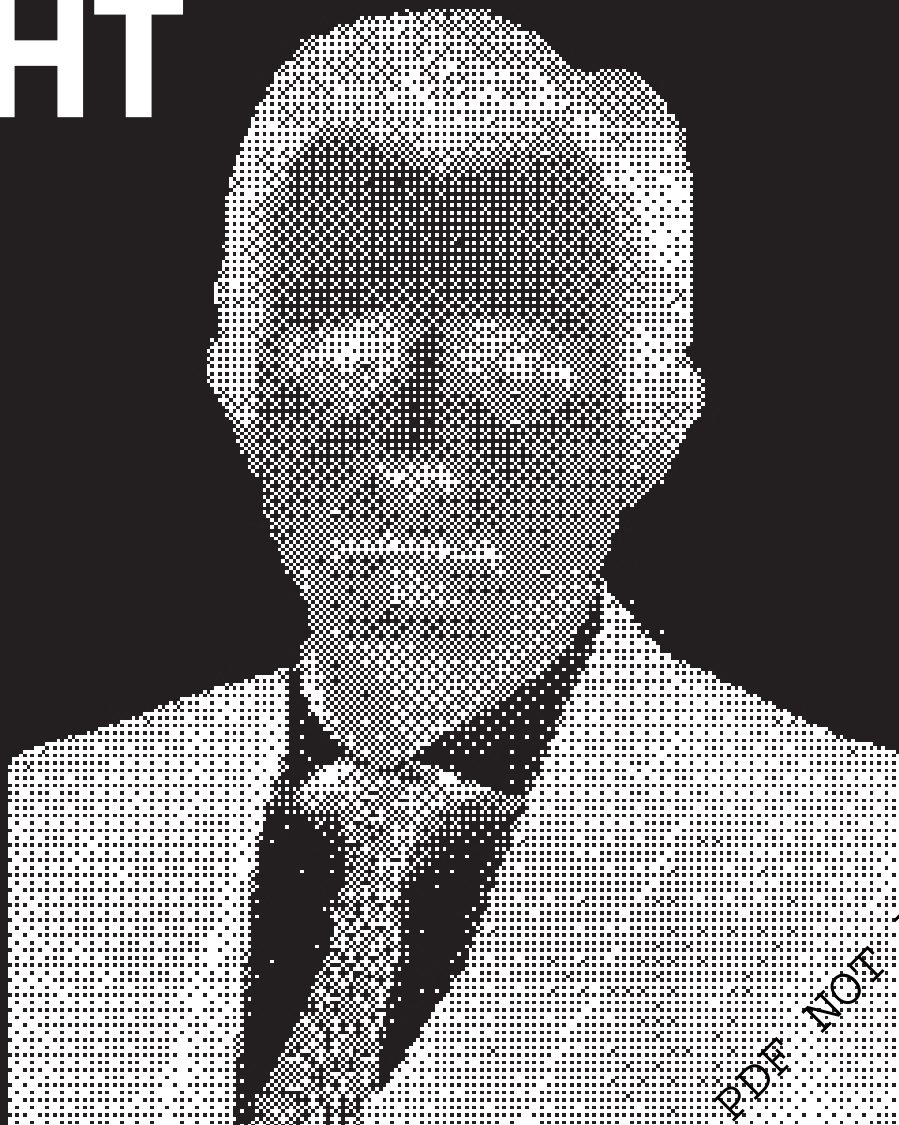
Wilhelm Reich

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ONE CANNOT GRAFT LEGALLY GUARANTEED FREEDOMS UPON A SICK SOCIAL ORGANISM

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THE CUSTOMER IS NOT ALWAYS BRIGHT



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Like the great artists of past generations, I whore myself out for commissions from more powerful people in society. Renaissance painters' clients were usually the clergy, and they were interfering bastards who rejected work for being too realistic or insufficiently devotional. A cardinal's secretary dumped Caravaggio's *Madonna and Child with Saint Anne* (1605) with a furious note: "In this painting there are but vulgarity, sacrilege, impiousness and disgust... One would say it is a work made by a painter that can paint well, but of a dark spirit, and who has been for a lot of time far from God, from His adoration, and from any good thought."

As far as I know, nobody from the Vatican has ever commissioned a poem from the Morbid Books online shop (which comes with one free rewrite if you don't like it!) Although I know what Caravaggio felt like when he read that note. It happened while I was at home in January 2017, and I received a message from a mouth-breathing chimp by the name of Wayne:

Hi

I would like you to write a poem about a very particular person, to include as many personal touches as possible.

I would like the finished result in 14 days.

Happy to chat to give you a full brief.

Happy to pay some in advance on an invoice.

I look forward to hearing from you very soon

He then sent me the details of his commission:

So:-

The overall premise is to swoon her.

We have known each other for 18 months, we have done so much together.

We are not together due to many factors.

I want this to be written in a way that she knows how I feel about her but not pressuring her!

If you could make her overcome with emotion I guess would be amazing.

Her name is *****

The first time we met/went out was in The Botanist

Most magical night for me - pizza express

Most magical for her - Making breakfast together.

We have spent many drunken nights together where we just talk for hours.

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I think she is absolutely amazing, she inspires me all the time.
Makes me laugh
I think she is absolutely beautiful etc.

We went to Paris together
Went to Rome for a day just to have a pizza
She has a Instagram addiction, fashion junky.
Most incredible reaction form her, when I gave her Christian Louboutin shoes.

If you need anything else just let me know.
I think after the first attempt you will nail it.

Thanks Lewis

LP:

WAYNE AND *****

They flew to Rome for the afternoon
to get a pizza the action.
But the most magical moment for Wayne
was going to Pizza Express with her in London.
For her it was making breakfast in tandem.
“Babe, hold the eggs up so I can Instagram them.”
He bought her shoes. She gave him head.
They stayed up all night talking
about stock options, HBO series and Russian mothers.
His improving dress sense, *****’s command of English,
how when he was a kid he wanted to be an explorer.
He read her a passage from the Kon-Tiki Expedition.
“I’d like to sail a raft across the ocean with you.”
“If we ran out of food, who would eat the other?”
“I’d let you go first.”
“No, I’d let you devour me.”
“You’re making me hungry right now!”

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Wayne:

This is no good at all.....

Wow, I guess I was expecting something completely different.

I will send full notes later

Wayne was so concerned with what I'd done he asked to speak with me on the phone. (I later discovered he runs some sort of vampiric property business.) In a serious, slightly distraught tone, Wayne told me he had commissioned the poem to read to the girl and her mother. He wanted it to be set in Paris. I wished he had told me that before. I told him that if he'd bothered to research my work beforehand, he would know it was very much in "house style." Admittedly my passion for *The Kon-Tiki Expedition*, a book I was reading at the time, had crept in, as had an oral sex reference. But I had clearly fulfilled the commission, giving them a portrait of themselves as I saw them. It had the potential to swoon, or at least get the guy a blowjob. Regardless, all clients get a free rewrite, so I'd be willing to do him a different kind of poem, one that nearly always works in romantic situations: a personalised acrostic. I explained to Wayne what an acrostic was and showed him an example. He set me to work. The next day I sent him this:

POEM FOR *****

Picture

Our

Eyes —

Moulin Rouge

Forging

Our

Rapture.

*

*

*

*

*

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To be honest I wasn't ecstatic about it, but there was something overblown and conventionally poetic (i.e. ridiculous) about the image of two lovers' eyes meeting in the rapturous Moulin Rouge. In short, it was exactly what he had asked for. But Wayne still wasn't satisfied.

We are going miles away again.
I want something written, that one will read.

Sorry I think this is a joke!

LP:

Dude you asked me for personal details - I used them, you asked me to take them out. Mention Paris, but don't be too specific. You said you liked it, now you say it's a joke, it's not specific enough. I can't win.

It's an acrostic that reads down the page - that's the form - the vast majority of people I do this for are really happy with it as it's personalised, and can't have been ripped off from somewhere else. I reckon if you show it to her she'll like it, as most people do when they have a personalised acrostic made for them.

Wayne:

I'm sorry Lewis, I know what I want. This is nothing like I described to you.
I like the idea, just needs far more content.
Believe me you can win!
This took you 5 mins for £50, like I mentioned spend the day deliver what I want.
I will pay you, I want it to be right!
Tell a story through beautiful words, I want her to go wow!
Believe me she won't with this.
Happy to help, as love the idea of the words spelling out her name.

LP:

I've written these for hundreds of people. It would be highly unusual for it not to be appreciated.

Wayne:

Like I said, this is not right.
She will not like it at all.

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LP:

Here's an acrostic I wrote with six words - the brevity and the limitation is part of the aesthetic beauty. Believe me, adding more ruins it.

BILALI

Big
Imaginations
Love
Acrostic
Life
Indefinitely

Wayne:

That's great, but this is not what I'm looking for!
Like I said, deliver what I want I can pay more.

LP:

So you want an acrostic that has more content? I could try a square acrostic - that's pretty complicated so won't look like you've written it, but I could try and do that tomorrow. These take a few hours.

Wayne:

Perfect, seriously stop worrying about the time! I will pay you!

Ok if you please, how much are you prepared to pay for this masterpiece?! I can try and do it tomorrow

Wayne:

I don't know, I am a very fair person.
If I read it and think wow, I will pay what you ask within reason.
What was you thinking?

LP:

200 - half up front and the other half upon approval. I'm gonna work at it for quite some time.

Wayne:

I am happy with £150
I have already paid £50 and based upon what you have sent this far I am not willing to pay anymore upfront.

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I will pay, I can guarantee I will pay the balance once I'm happy.

Once it's finished I will pay, I will stick to my offer of the bonus also

LP:

I have already invested a considerable amount of time writing and consulting and produced two works that would ordinarily be accepted, so I think it's only fair that I receive half up front as I'm not prepared to spend any more time writing good work that is rejected due to personal taste. I will do my best to give you what you've asked for - I guarantee that

Wayne:

I will not pay any more upfront, I am happy for you to refund my money if you feel you can't accommodate.

I paid the £55 straight away even though on the website it says - pay after if you are happy.
You can clearly see I will pay, I just don't want to lose anymore money.

LP:

Sorry dude, the website says nothing of the sort:

<http://morbiditybooks.bigcartel.com/product/commission-a-poem>

I've given you what you asked for, twice, and spent hours consulting with you already, altering things you asked for in the first place then decided you didn't like. If you don't feel I'm being fair, that's unfortunate, but I think you have to respect that my time is valuable just like any other artist or worker. So if I'm going to spend any more time working for you in good faith, I'll need a guarantee of payment regardless, as it's not fair for my perfectly sound creations to be discarded and unpaid for just because you do not deem them worthy. I hope you get where I'm coming from. If not I bid you adieu

Wayne:

I will guarantee to pay the balance once its right
I am a businessman, so I understand time.

I think you have a clear understanding of what I want, if not just ask and deliver.

We will get their no matter how many times we have to rewrite.

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LP:

Sorry dude - I dont think it's fair to say that my time will only be rewarded if you like it, since you've already said you don't like poetry. (There's a good chance I could send you a Pulitzer Prize winning poem and you wouldnt like it.) I have better things to be doing with my time

Wayne:

If you was confident in your ability this shouldn't be a issue.

I'm sorry, the first one you wrote was awful, nothing like the brief I have to you.

I am sure if you put as much effort into doing what I'm paying you to do as you are arguing the point it will be perfect.

I suggest you have the layout, you have all the information of how I want it.
Compose yourself, get you creative juices flowing and earn some cash.

LP:

Your brief: more beautiful words. Lol. Get outta here.

Wayne:

Two choices Lewis-

1

Do the work you have been paid to do at the increased price I have agreed to.

2

I will hire someone else, give them the same information I have given you and see what they think of your work.

If they agree with me, I will then instruct my solicitor to recover the money I have paid you + my and the other persons costs.

I would much prefer the first option, like I said I am a businessman but also want to get paid for what I want!

Working in the service industry you should provide customer service.

This is a simple transaction, you want to be paid, I want a poem.
You write the poem, I pay you.

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If you are unclear on the brief, I am happy to discuss.

LP:

Dude, since when was poetry part of the service industry? (And is that how you talk to people in the service industry?)

'Hey Mr Escher, I like what you're doing but I demand more colour! And can you turn the goddam staircase the right way round?'

'Like the sonnet, Petrarch, some big words you got there. Huge words. But can you add a few more lines on the end? Don't really feel like I'm getting bang for my buck.'

Is this by any chance Donald Trump in disguise?

Ultimately I gave you exactly what you asked for with your totally banal and generic brief. (Pizza Express - so beautiful.) I did exactly what my website says I would do, in rewriting it for you.

There's not a court in the land that's going to rule against me on the basis of your ridiculous attempts at literary criticism. Although it would be very amusing for me, and make great material for my non-fiction, if you were to take me to court on the basis that you don't like my poetry.

Good luck finding a poet who can glitter your turd of an existence.

Sincerely

Lewis

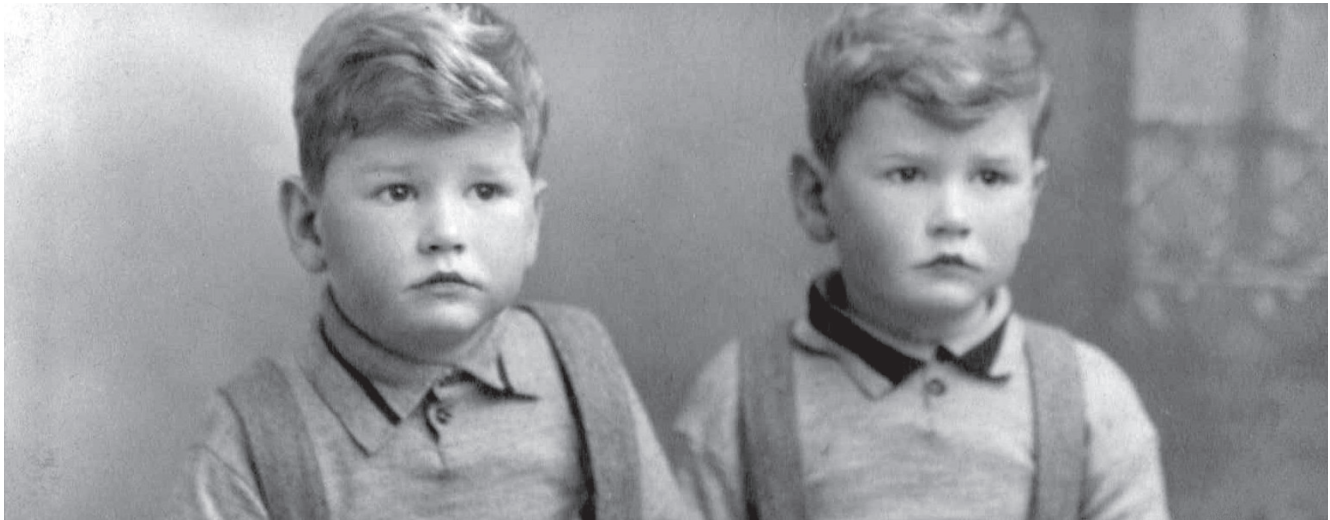
Ps I'm cc'ing the three other poets I know who take commissions... You're welcome.



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WELCOME TO FUTURE ECOCIDE!

By David and Stuart Wise of King Mob and the Situationist International



At an early childhood age and rage, nature for us was inseparable from a class-in-itself chip on the shoulder, specifically the railway and mining communities of County Durham and West Yorkshire, where we endlessly played among the muck and dirt of spoil heaps or in and among those former, seemingly endless, overgrown railway sidings full of broken down trucks with rusted wheels as if they'd arrived centuries ago, deposited on this forlorn terrain only to then mysteriously transform in exquisite ways. For sure a decade or so later we realized this was an emotive form of psychogeography, full of the promise of revolutionary liberation. This transformation slowly became ever more formidable, as poetic dereliction became inseparable from the former greatness of English

poetry, deeply entrenched in an often enchanted nature, which was to begin to find its real cutting edge in early 19th century Romanticism. But after picking up a decrepit book on a library shelf, this quickly elided into Dada and Surrealism with the stunning discovery, at the age of 16, of a French guy name of Jacques Vaché. He evidently pulled up weeds in-between paving stones, implying all life – no matter how insignificant – was meaningless. He led a short, nihilistic existence (1885–1919), and is best remembered for the the *War Letters*, sent from the trenches to André Breton and Louis Aragon, and his subsequent opium-overdose suicide. In 1966 we published Anne Ryder's translation of *War Letters* in *Icteric*, a short-lived 'radical' Newcastle arts magazine.

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Caedmon



Jacques Vaché

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Through the efforts of *Icteric* the revival of a seminal figure in contemporary subversion was put on the subversive map of these islands, negative radical manifestoes which were the prelude to his suicide. In the next three decades more of Vaché's books appeared in English.

Vaché considered the role of the alarm clock in daily life as the materialised superego lurking in every household. We responded to this by railing against "fascist clock-time" and certainly, apart from the French Situationists, none historically up to then had explained the imperious time of production as well as Vaché.

We were similarly taken by the figure of John Hornby, whose life was the living parody of the archetypical British imperial explorer who got deliberately lost in the icy wastelands of Canada's far north. He simply couldn't be bothered to hunt the food for his own daily survival, so instead chose death. I instantly identified with his laziness and refusal to "play the game" of British Empire-building. All other details regarding his life I've now forgotten. Finally, I do remember one dark, drunken, snowstorm of a midnight, chalking on the wall of a well-used street, in letters about a foot high, "Hornby And Vaché Forever". It stayed put for a hell of a long time though I doubt few individuals – if any – grasped the message.

By then Whitby, with its stunning wrecked abbey on the bleak cliff top above the wild North Sea, was our itinerant home. And we were be fascinated by the local boy Caedmon, the eighth century cowherd who became the "father of English poetry," though he couldn't write a word of English. He was inspirational because he was a brilliant novice. The song came to him in a dream just as *Kubla Khan* came to Coleridge centuries later. The illiterate farmer recited his *Hymn* to the educated monks of Whitby Abbey, who eventually wrote it down.

Like a lot of the other poets of his period, Caedmon was part of a transition from poetry that was transcribed to be read in private. His work signifies the dissolution of tribal society and the birth of civil society.

Caedmon's *Hymn* is a dream song of hope, just as *Khubla Khan* is also – and most importantly – about the need to reconstruct a lost paradise ("I would build those domes in air.") *Khubla Khan* is a newer type of creation myth, one that required navvies and gardeners, with Coleridge the builder having swapped his pen for the hammer, pitching in alongside them.

Coleridge himself was not aware that his poetics were leading directly to the creation of the new commons outside alienated labour, money, commodity production and the state. Nonetheless, the utopian socialist organization he founded with Wordsworth and Southey, the Pantisocracy, remained largely a theoretical concept. The Pantisocracy was a version of pantheism which included the communal ownership of goods and the farming of a new commons, which the Romantics themselves would create. It was suggested that these poets must learn how to use tools, though typically Southey – who was to become a disgusting reactionary – suggested that their servants should do the hard graft for them. Because tellingly, these poets didn't know how to use the simplest of tools. How different from the last decades, say, with René Riesel and the Confederacion Paysanne in France. And how different from us!

We are still waiting on that cusp of the one real journey left – one beyond all decadent tourism – that must – MUST – be taken, overcoming the last impediments to true communal creativity as we encounter a short transitional period of inspirational – even if difficult – revolutionary turmoil, as capitalism is finally left behind in the mists of pre-history.

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**WE SAY:
FICK DICH MUTTERFICKER /
KUNST KAPUT / ABOLISH THE
WAGES SYSTEM & MONEY /
TOTAL REVOLUTION**

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ALL SPACE IS OCCUPIED BY THE ENEMY

We now have a uniform urban landscape more or less imitated by a uniform suburban landscape, which in its turn is imitated by a uniform rural landscape. Nowadays it's as if there's hardly any point in travelling, only to see things you've seen a million times before. Everything is mired in boredom, stasis and social glaciations. You might as well shut your eyes forever for what there is to see that could be remotely called stimulating and fresh. It's an impasse endlessly playing on Raymond Roussel's journey through Argentina in a taxi with the window blinds down. Everywhere we see nothing but vistas of consumption and thoroughfares. As for the countryside, we see nothing but arid green spaces of set-aside, or insecticide-drenched crops along with arenas of strimmed grass for recreation and parking, photoshopped images made real, thin unbearable-shaped hills of an ever-extending domesticated habitation spectacle. The exchange value of urban space has become far more important than its social or natural value. And we cannot add culture to this mix simply because culture is over and out. Heritage sites and industrial parks are victims of commodification and trivialization for tourist industry gain, frozen set pieces as if in an Iceland supermarket, former public spaces of an ever-extending privatised police control.

VOIDS AND THE LOSS OF VOIDS

Nature is more under attack on these islands than possibly elsewhere in the world. The Romantics in the 19th Century witnessed the last moments of looming extinction – a visceral reaction to imminent death. In truth though, wilderness was slowly morphing, in the process of being redefined by urban neglect and growing industrial decay, marked essentially by a working class on the brink

of extinction, superseded by automation, vagabond, or precarious labour, stretched to the limits of existence, possibly entering a void unprecedented in history.

Today, former industrial landscapes resonate with messages of failure, heavy with memories of human exploitation and environmental negligence. They have oddly become places of great “beauty” in the sense of Lautreamont's redefinitions: rich in unknowable opportunities and not only nature-rich, but places where the time of commodity production is in suspension, pointing to a new concept of time where it's possible to reflect on future landscapes that can be experimental, human (via a revolutionary redefinition of humanity), innovative and pregnant with multiform possibilities. It's where ‘ugly’ becomes the convulsive beauty André Breton desired in *Nadja* – a new convulsive psychogeography that has nothing to do with aesthetics. Today Lautreamont's poetic, contrary diction is marginalized, as nature everywhere is described in the anodyne language of greenwash as the drip, drip, drip of the sixth extinction remorselessly proceeds on its way.

The architect Ignasi de Solà-Morales Rubió coined the term *Terrrain Vagues* to describe the industrial ruins that became popular backdrops for photographers in the 1960s and 70s. (Dr Helen Armstrong notes, “vague” in French also means oscillation, instability, fluctuation.) These spaces were absent of use, ineluctably conjuring up a sense of freedom and expectancy – the space of the possible. They were attractive because nobody had ever done anything here from the moment of decline. It was a landscape that suited Debord's attitude: never work. The collapsing bunkers of industry beckoned a new form of free activity where robots do most of the misery-making tasks, though only if capitalism is superceded in its entirety.

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Man is neither intelligent nor stupid. He is free, or he is not.

Long ago painting was converted in system. (Being just so old that ne people in the same way. You leave you probably won't be able to find die hard leftists glorify work) - difficult to survive. Smash Capital

Revolution against the art as revolt against the status and ever increasing hypocrisy produced an art that is shit order. All systems go that many times do we have to the etc. were 'art' - the staged happenings introverted up events. by one' backs - And its got

GO TELL ME, TELL GO
All lie down, as in a swown, have a pleasing vision. And then rise with bared thighs, who'd fear such sweet incision?

MY UTOPIA IS AN ENVIRONMENT THAT WORKS SO WELL THAT WE CAN RUN WILD IN IT.

to just another aspect of the commodity ed worry no one.) But now they treat art school to go on to the market. That a job wouldn't matter (only but it is becoming increa singly ism.

school t rick must be seen quo - against it's duplicity Not only has the system but a politics of the same way; we must re-invent life. How be told that the Hornsey sit-in and still go back to the easel, and all other spectator-oriented Poetry must be made by all not to be made on the streets.

Beware the Staff/Student Committee (S.S.) Changes of Bureaucracy are not to be

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About, about, ye Joviall rout,
Dance antick like Hob-goblins;
Drink and roar, and swear and whore,
But yet no brawls or squoblings.

YYYYIIIPPPPEEEEE

NORMAN O. BROWN

welcomed :

COLLECTIVE CREATIVITY
BEGINS HERE

Starting at 5 p.m. -

COLLECTIVE SOUND POEM :

Grrr, ttuuuushh hoooo
to be continued in your mouth

BEYOND THE POWER PRINCIPLE DREAMS BECOME REALITY

King Mob poster, 1968

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Authorities realised these remarkable new wildernesses must be destroyed at all costs. Total war has therefore been declared on these terrain vagues, or as Christophe Girot calls them, Landscapes of Contempt. The process has intensified since the 1990s, when the bourgeoisie has returned in droves to colonise inner cities, and planning decisions have been taken to cater for their tastes. Industrial ruins are largely understood as not only wasteful, but offensive to the character and aesthetics of the city. They are imagined as sites of urban disorder and drug abuse, where vandals and the homeless are drawn to willfully ignore their soulful ambience as places one can withdraw to, linger and reflect. More importantly, they challenge the apparent safety of redevelopments where the uncanny must remain repressed.

But hang on, is this quite true? Isn't recuperation also making its mark here as a generation of designers, artists and skillfully wayward town planners have modified this rigid stance influenced in turn by the amount of bumph books that has come out on psychogeography, situationists et al? These creatures, instead of journeying down the path of the negative towards great conclusions, stop halfway and smoke a peace pipe with the powers that be, keeping their decadent professions sickly intact. For sure they discover the uncanny and sublime in wastelands only to turn them over into anodyne adventure playgrounds.

ANONYMOUS GUERRILLA INTERVENTION

Well over a decade and a half ago, after much bitter experience with official eco organizations, we refused to compromise or co-operate with them, merely playing them for certain ends whenever it was deemed necessary.

Also, our childhood of secret haunts and passages among urban decay, a practical materialized fantasy, one without parental guidance ever dodging the police

and the gadgy, was returning. We knew from then on it meant going it alone and we still continue to create our own path, in non-hierarchical collaboration. Our resistance is an open-ended practical discussion in a kind of ambience of action, when not mouthing off against greenwash arseholes. Our remit is scientifically informed habitat creation, whether it be helping poor immigrants who have nowhere to live or people who simply want to live outside of the commoditised home. We have in common an opposition to the baneful remits of the developmental agenda. However, none of this habitat creation can be too cavalier and we would suggest it should be – to begin with at any rate - a more precise extension of Keats' "negative capability" – seeing into the life of things, encouraging the organic as inseparable from ourselves.

At Woolley Colliery we have pasted up posters that don't mince matters, spread over its glorious hilly spoil terrain going back to Roman times, in a bid to stop the smart home / smart city legoland machine. We put up posters that look more like Dadaistic "nonsense" intervention, replete with an aura of menace and deliberately disjointed radicalism, backed up by various interpretations of "fuck off you cunts" in Chinese, Russian, Arabic, Irish Gaelic, hoping this may stymie their responses, seeing that "art" is the new bible in the neoliberal agenda.

In early 2015, Wates the builders cleverly sussed out that we were responsible for some of these interventions and posted a counter-attack via a Vimeo film. A narked Wates manager said their building company had enriched "flora and forno" around Woolley. by which I guess he subliminally meant "horticulture and porno."

When are their goons too going to shut us down for good? And believe me, if cameras and iPhones aren't there, they don't give a fuck. The gloves come off. But we get a

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great kick out of winding the bastards up, revealing just how weak and vulnerable they are. There's no impregnable power citadel out there. They can all be brought crashing down, the sooner the better, perhaps deploying the Malcolm X adage, "by any means necessary."

Let's not beat around the bush: we aren't engaged in typical "conservation," but a form of ad-hoc stimulation of what's there – implying a new relationship and ambience between human beings and nature. In a way it is also part of a legacy of practical avant-garde experience, intervention in landscapes of contempt and VOIDS. The relationship with psychogeography and more particularly Jaime Semprun and the *Encyclopédie des Nuisances* is obvious. Semprun once said that the last avant-gardes in history "would be the most persecuted," because no artefact would be involved, leading to commoditisation via the pop music of sales figures.

In a way the rebellion of the best of modern art in the 20th century pre-figured this moment. We are forever re-reading Raoul Vaneigem's *Freewheeling History of Surrealism*, as it is so lucidly inspiring and enlightening. Notably, he says of André Breton that he was "an anti-aesthetic aesthete".

Breton himself said, "In the bad taste of my epoch I wish to go further than any other." Alas, André stopped short regarding his own great insights. But what happens when you take practical steps beyond these insights? You have to duck, fight, shy, run, rave, harass and then disappear, only to re-appear when the authorities little expect. In Bradford, at the similar destruction of an amazing, industrially derelict site: thuggery and threats from council goons, plus proposed fines and possible imprisonment. We were forced to consult with Black and Green Legal [Anarchist] Aid, who immediately came up with valuable advice: Get rid of all evidence, lie low, and disappear if necessary. It ended in us getting out of town pronto, and when returning we did so in a clandestine way, often painting up slogans at night or engaging in hidden sabotage.

Create a subversive profile, so that it will begin to sink in to others, inspiring them to get off their arses, breaking out of the distressing death-in-life syndrome of universal passivity. Once that has been achieved it will be necessary to expose everything relating to our leaderless, unspectacular, almost anonymous disobedience.

BIG PHARMA IS THE NEW AUSCHWITZ

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sybarite sybillance cyclopsical student.
strident strudent student strum standard
strip strut strop stripper, stident stop
stripper. stripped sturbance stuntedeer
strung standing. stump stumpy stick sto-
nker. stonkin' stoked stripper. stebotem
sterbora. sting stooty. strung steeder's



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EKSTASIS

The veins in my arms
run like tributaries,
pulsing in electric blue.
I am [HERE] with you,
dematerializing into
a bed the size of
a pill box.

I want to be buried in the garden shallow enough to see.

My fingers grow wild
every winter,
with pungent, sticky vines
from cuticles dangling,
exposed and vulnerable,
twice as strong as flowers –
You tie the tendrils in reef knots
through my ribs.

I wonder if other people are doing nothing with their
lives.

Too often, I used to question
how sculptors carve marble,
so beautiful, so sad or uncaring,

 now
I am [HERE] –
I am where the clouds fall –
I am faint memories – misting.

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THE GETAWAY CAR

In between the plush front and seat end of what the old Porsche says **■** it's about: leather whip on leather pants and a Scientology kit (portable) in the glove compartment. Every 50 miles we stop and do an audit. The results are

apparent, not WHAT WE WERE TOLD TO PREPARE FOR: nothing short of eschaton. a lot of entry is not face-to-face.

We travelled thousands of years to get here and never felt the need for a stereo until today. this we can ascribe to a lack of foresight on the part of the Porsche design team though not to their lack of remuneration

Capitalism's kindest friends are its critics.

Just look at how many packets of jelly we've gone through already. The former owner had attached a bust of Pol Pot to the bonnet. He said he wanted it back once we'd completed

the mission. He could never have suspected: the mission would obviate his need for it- and for oxygen. I gripped the seat in anticipation of phlegmatic revenge. Tony downed the accelerator and the city began to shake. The scenery became a series of horizontal lines.

"Easy now."

■ had expected to be ignored nor was I disappointed. -

We talked about movies the whole way. We were Pat Garrett and the Chinese Eshimo. ^I In an implausible twist **■** we'd been brought back to life for the sequel, directed by the original Pat.

Tennessee looked the same as it has always been: rugged and mean and full of men who ^{all} look alike (as do the women). It merged into Arkansas before the trouble started

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GETAWAY CAR CONT'D

WITH the other outsiders. Veering to Milwaukee where Tony eased off the accelerator. Damned vagabonds were hanging onto our fins, half snapped off the aerial, even chewing our decals. I got out of the car and took the spare tyre from the boot and pondered its worth as a weapon for a moment. It seemed minimal so I went at it with Scientology - dianetics.

I jumped back in the car and got the nylon cutlery ready. I'm not at liberty to tell you how many levels above clear I am but boy oh boy, are those thetans savoury.

Back on the freeway we listened to a CD of David Miscavige making about as much sense as he ever does (we hate that traitor). When we got to New Mexico I took over the driving.

We were as far as we had ever been from our lodge in Santa Barbara. It was clear that America was a billion years in the making. Vibrations all over her. Odd to consider that even my name-badge was that ancient. Soon we'd afford to understand it.

THE DRUM SANDER

It has been a while since I've worked. I haven't been able to because I lack motivation, ambition, and any real work ethic. Nothing repulses me more than manual labour and drudgery and I'm yet to see any value in hard work despite previously holding jobs in a variety of pubs and kitchens. Good honest work that should have shown me the light. But it never has. Much of my adult life has been spent lifting boxes, serving pints, taking the bins out, washing dishes, drinking, passing out with my clothes on, lifting boxes, serving pints, taking the bins out, washing dishes, drinking, passing out with a needle in my arm, missing my alarm, lifting boxes, serving pints...One day my body packed up and I stopped breathing for a while. A friend I live with found me and woke me up and I was fine, though I wished I could have forgotten everything immediately because I'm not sure that he was fine. So I cooked up and had another fix, smaller this time, but I felt good and warm and went to work the next day. Just one more week left until the minimum wage rise. George Osborne seems to have been overcome with pity and raised it by 50p, to £7.20 an hour. Now I'll be able to buy the dolphin-safe fish fingers instead of the ones with mashed-up bits of endangered species in them.

Like I said, I went to work on Sunday morning and I was happy. I'd gotten hold of some good gear the night before which didn't make my arms turn so yellow and I felt ready for eight hours of washing dishes and taking

the bins out. I'd recently stopped working behind the bar because I could never seem to help myself from stealing a large portion of the stock while I was working. My way of getting paid a bit more, I guess. But I am a sensible person, and I don't like stealing. I only do it when I have to, really. So I chose the kitchen, by the sink, minimum responsibility, minimum pay, no temptations, just enough to get by. Just enough to buy fish fingers, bread, and cheap adulterated tobacco every week. Plus the odd can of soup. I also have a rich mother who sends me money when she thinks I'm clean. That helps, but I mostly need that for rent when I've spent all my benefits on my ever-increasing drug habit.

I have a large habit because I am self-indulgent, but I don't believe it's my fault. That's because I'm self-pitying. A heroin habit is also better than stealing booze from work and constantly getting sacked, plus it feels better than drinking the whole time. And stealing food from supermarkets is fun. So, in general, I guess you could say I am a very lucky person. Life is good. Meaningless, but it feels good most of the time. I'm getting off topic here, I'm rambling. I have a tendency to do that. My mind wonders. I am impulsive. I can't help it.

So I went to work and all was fine. I washed the dishes and took the bins out and made stupid sexist jokes with the chefs, who were also racist, but I could never go that far. I had to try quite hard to smile when they joked about the latest local stabbing, about how

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Illustrations by Elliott Nash

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“that black fucker got what he deserved really, playing with fire ‘n all.” When I didn’t smile the atmosphere became unbearable, and I felt the eyes of my boss burn through the back of my head when I ignored his jokes.

Sometimes I wish that I were racist. People would be less suspicious of me and I would fit in more. But I’m not. I don’t find it funny. Maybe as well as being self-indulgent and impulsive and self-pitying, I am also slightly humourless. Maybe I lack the ability to step into another’s shoes and see the funny side. Or maybe I just believe in equality. I don’t know. Anyway, work was fine but then at about six o’clock it started getting busy. We normally finish early on Sundays but there was a very large table booking that had arrived an hour late. That’s fine. We’ll just have to accommodate them. They’re not to know that it’s been over twelve hours since my last hit and that in about an hour all hell will begin to descend upon my brain and body, that rivers of shit will start flowing from my rear end, and a couple of hours after that I’ll start hallucinating. Vivid images of giant flies and spiders and large boots attached to legs without torsos will start crashing down upon the insides of my skull, and I won’t know if any of it is real or not. It’s not their fault; I only have myself to blame. We’ll just have to accommodate them.

Towards the end of the shift, I swept the floor, checked the dishes to see if I’d washed enough of them, and went downstairs to sign out. I asked the small, crow-faced woman who manages the bar area to hand me the diary so I could write down my hours and clock off. She hesitated.

“Are you sure you’re done?” she asked.

“Yes,” I said, “all done.”

She scowled and handed me the big black diary. I wrote my hours down and headed for the door, but just as

I was about to leave I heard my name called from the large table. I neither recognized the voice, nor the person, but my name was called, so I went over to the table. Around the table there sat twelve people in all, six women and six men. The men all wore tweed jackets and sat opposite each other on one half of it, and the women, presumably their wives and girlfriends, sat opposite each other on the other half. The women all wore sensible clothing, no cleavages or legs shown, but all were adorned with gold and silver bracelets, earrings and large pearl necklaces. Typical, I thought. But why had they called me over?

“Are you that chap that gave my son Hugo a guitar lesson the other day?” one of the men at the far end of the table drawled in a nauseating, upper-middle class accent with a mouth full of semi-masticated aoli and salt n’ pepper squid.

“Hello,” I said. I looked at them all and hesitated. I was terrified of them. They’d all stopped talking and looked up at me expectantly, knives and forks suspended over the half finished plates I was meant to have cleaned before leaving.

“Umm...I’m not sure,” I stammered. “I must have done, yes. Yeah that’s right. Hugo. Hugo Biggins? Quick learner,” I lied, trying my hardest to fight off the images and pains that were now all over my brain and body. Shit. How do I get out of this quickly? I need to finish this discussion as fast as possible, get out of this hell-hole gastro-pub before they realize I haven’t washed these plates, and get home. I suddenly envisioned my spoon, my lighter, my needle, the warmth, the relief...

“Why don’t you join us for a while?” the man said. “Here, have some squid! You look like a hungry young man. Come on, sit down here, at the head of the table where we can all see you, and tell me how my son’s getting on in his mission to become the next Eric Clapton,” he bellowed, smiling that horrible, open mouthed smile

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full of half-chewed food and saliva. "Glass of wine, young man?"

I had a sudden urge to take his fork and jam it into his eye. I've already told you how I can be impulsive, especially when in desperate situations such as this, but I resisted the temptation to actualize the urge. I didn't have to try hard, because in truth I didn't have the balls.

"He's doing well," I lied again.

The reality was that his pathetic son couldn't even get close to playing that disgusting song he'd insisted on me teaching him.

"He should be able to play the whole song in a couple of lessons time," I lied again. Never in his life would the kid be able to play a note without it sounding exactly like his father: dull, useless and absurd.

"What song?" inquired the man, his eyebrows raised and his eyes wide.

"Wonderful Tonight by Eric Clapton" I answered. "I think he wanted to play it because it's your favourite song. He really wants to be able to do it, and he will soon."

"Well I should hope so at £20 an hour," one of the other men remarked.

I looked at him and held his gaze for half a second. I think he could see in my eyes that I wanted to round up his entire family, tie them together with barbed wire and set them on fire in front of him, while I held his head and made him watch as they screamed and burned. I was sweating with rage and desire for relief. I needed to get to the toilet now or I was going to shit myself at the table. It did cross my mind that, despite the humiliation this would cause me, maybe it wouldn't be an entirely bad thing. But then the pain was there, and I realized that a dirty protest would only prolong the period between now and my fix. I couldn't use the pub toilets because I'd already been in there and used up

all the paper. I needed to get home, unload myself, and then load myself as fast as possible.

"It must be fairly tricky for one to live around here comfortably on the odd £20 an hour," said the first man, the father of the kid. "Do you have any other work?" He was obviously trying to be diplomatic. His company didn't exactly approve of me, covered in sweat and bits of food, sitting at the head of their table.

"I work here, in the kitchen," I said, "only here they pay me a lot less. I do the guitar lessons for a little extra. Helps with the bills," I lied again.

I had to. The truth was that I only did guitar lessons so I could sit with some little shit for an hour and then take their parents' cash and immediately go and score a nice bag of gear. I have to work five hours here to do the same, and I get paid weekly, not daily. I need the immediacy of their payments.

"So how do you afford to live around here?" another of the men asked.

I couldn't work out which one it was, they were all melting together in my mind into one terrifying fat red face above a monstrous tweed jacket, leaning towards me, knife and fork in hand, mouths full of over-priced food, eyebrows raised, eyes widened.

"I claim housing," I answered. "But only for now, I don't plan on claiming forever."

Jesus Christ. I can't stop lying to these people. I have to, otherwise I'm terrified they'll eat me, or tell the chef that I haven't washed their half-finished plates.

"Well I should hope not," said the second man with a snigger. "I mean, why should I pay my taxes so you can exist? Tell me, I'm interested in what you have to say. I like a good spot of politics on a Sunday afternoon."

I'd like to discuss the gulag with you, and how fun it would be to see you die in one.

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“Now Martin,” one of the women interrupted. “Don’t give him a hard time. I’m sure he works as hard as he can to pay his way.”

“Come on Linda,” Martin replied, “I’m only teasing the fellow. I know he’s not as faceless as some of the other shirkers out there. I know he must try. Here, have a drink on me,” he sneered, handing me a fiver.

Faceless. That word rang horribly in my ears, and I started to imagine a mass of sprawling humanoids without faces advancing towards me, screaming through invisible mouths, begging for just one pair of eyes so they could all see where they were going.

I took the fiver without thinking and didn’t thank him, but I managed to force a smile in a kind of begrudging compromise. He knew he’d just figuratively face-fucked me in front of all his friends, and he knew I knew it too.

“I’m sorry but I have to go,” I said. ‘My better half is waiting for me at home, she nags if I’m not back before eight. You know what they’re like,’ I said with another forced smile.

A ripple of nasal laughter spread across the table.

Why is it that you have to be sexist or racist or prejudiced in some way to gain approval from people in these places? It’s hard to accept, but it seems like it’s the only way to relate to them. To tell the truth in my situation would be to throw money away, money I desperately need to stay high and well. Despite my hatred for them, I realized then that I needed these people. I needed them so I could con them and steal from them, just like I need my mother.

“Not to worry, old chap,” said the first man. “If you fancy popping in to see the young star-in-the-making, he and his friends are all at our house for his tenth birthday party. It’s only round the corner. And his older sister is there keeping an eye on them. Pop in for a slice

of cake if you fancy.”

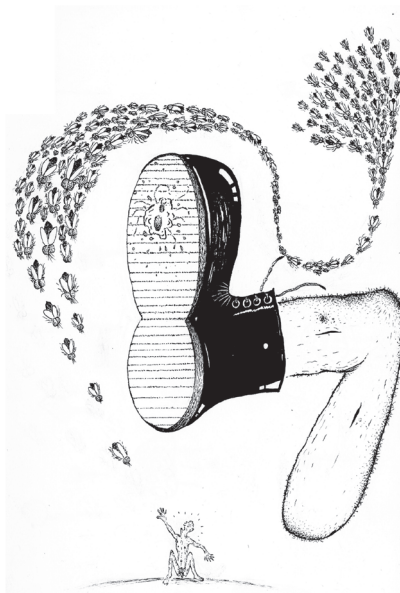
“Cheers,” I said. “I might do, it’s on my way home.”

I stood up quickly and made an awkward gesture before saying, “I hope you enjoy the rest of your meal. See you soon, and take care.”

I got up and smiled that awkward smile, doing my best to avoid eye contact. Stupidly, I held out my hand to the first man, the kid’s father, and realized that you could actually see the sweat on my palm. A couple of drops of clear moisture appeared on his remaining pieces of squid as my hand hovered over his unfinished plate. I couldn’t even hold it steady. His smile vanished and he shook my hand silently.

I withdrew from the scene as fast as I could and left the pub.

It was dark outside, and the cold air bit down on every inch of my body. It bit down hard, and the visions and pains behind my eyes became more and more intense with every step I took. “One foot in front of the other until home,” was all I could think. I walked fast, grimacing at the sensation of cold wet clothes against my chest and my back. It wasn’t quite a run, but almost. An urgent, sick-looking walk. If you know what to look for, you can spot the junkie-walk a mile away, it’s that distinct. The police look out for it when they’re stopping and searching. But I was nowhere near a main road, I had no need to worry about that.



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I was less than five minutes from home when something happened. I felt a change take place on the right side of my body, my arm became heavy, and it ached abnormally. This was a new feeling, something I'd never felt before. The pain was excruciating. Something was wrong. I tried to lift my arm and I couldn't. Then all of a sudden I felt a hard object knock against my hip as I tried to put my hand in my pocket and feel around for my keys to make sure I had them ready when I got to my door, which was now a minute away. I looked down at my hand and stopped walking. It was no longer there. I tried to move my fingers and heard an electric whirring sound. I couldn't see properly so I shuffled over to the nearest streetlight and managed to lift my arm. Where my hand should have been there was a rough cylinder, about six inches long and four in diameter. I tried to move my fingers again, the fingers that were no longer there, and the cylinder span round very fast. It looked like something I'd seen lying around a workshop somewhere. It looked like a drum sander. I stood for a while under the lamp and kept on trying to move what had replaced my fingers. I watched in disbelief as the sander stopped when I held my hand still, and then started up again when I resumed trying to move my fingers. I figured out I could keep it spinning if I kept on moving what was my hand, but was a power tool. I stared for a few seconds in disbelief before suddenly beginning to walk back the way I'd come. Why was I walking away from home? I tried to turn around and walk the other way, towards my house, but my legs wouldn't let me. It was as if I was being propelled by something beyond me, beyond my need for a fix, beyond comprehension. The only way I could describe how I felt would be to say that I was in a state of euphoric rage, the kind of rage

that knows is just about to be satisfied by immediate action. I was looking forward to something, but I couldn't figure out what.

I then found myself outside a large Victorian semi-detached house, with a big green front door and stained-glass windows. There were an array of party balloons outside, and I could hear numerous voices and loud music coming from the inside. I recognised the house to be the same one in which I'd taught a young boy guitar lessons a few times, but I couldn't remember his name. I couldn't really remember anything. The only thing I could feel or think was that I had work to do and that I was angry and that it would feel good once I'd finished the work. The work would be hard but I would enjoy it all the more for it. I'd never felt such desire to work. I knocked on the door and soon enough a girl, who must have been about fifteen, opened it. I hardly looked at her before grasping hold of the back of her head with my left hand and, raising my right arm, slowly moving the whirring drum sander up and down her face, pressing down hard. My fingers never seemed to tire. I didn't stop until the majority of her face was plastered over the hallway walls. She hardly had time to scream. Once I had finished the work, I found myself in the basement of a large Victorian house surrounded by bodies. All the bodies were children. The once cream-coloured carpet was caked with shit and piss and blood, and now resembled a red-brown mat. None of the faces on the bodies had noses, or lips, or eyes, or teeth. Just flat, scabbed red surfaces where there should have been faces. There were bits of cartilage and tooth everywhere, all over the floor and stuck to the walls. There were family photos spattered with blood and flesh and faeces. I suddenly felt a familiar feeling of sickening dread as I heard a word being whispered inside my head.

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“Faceless.”

I looked down and my hands were also covered in blood. The drum sander had disappeared and I had both my hands back. I was back to feeling the familiar onset of opiate withdrawal I'd felt before being overcome by euphoria and fury. I felt no sense of accomplishment at having worked so hard. I felt sick. Sick and afraid. I panicked and ran up the stairs, making no effort to avoid leaving fingerprints or covering my tracks in any way. I moved quickly out the front door and headed for home.

When I woke up my arm was dead. A needle was hanging out of it, with half the stuff still inside it, coagulated with blood. Shit. I must have gone over again. What a waste. My belt hung loosely around the top of my arm, and I had to get the blood circulation going by using my other arm, the one I hadn't slept on, to move it up and down until I felt the pins and needles in the tips of my fingers. I was in my bed fully clothed, surrounded by cigarette butts. I must have fallen asleep with the ashtray. A half smoked cigarette lay on the floor beside the bed next to the black mark it had burned into the carpet. I checked the time. It was past one o'clock in the afternoon, and I was meant to have started my shift at twelve. I reached over to my bedside table, and searched amongst the used syringes and old empty vitamin C sachets for my phone. There was one new message. A text from my boss, sent at half eleven the previous evening, read:

“Hi. In order for our relationship not to deteriorate any further I think it's best we part ways. As well as failing to wash up after the big table last night, who we served after hours because they were set to spend a large amount of money, you had the audacity to tell the bar manager that you had finished before they had even

begun their main course, and signed out well before you should have. The sous chef and I had to stay behind for two hours sharing what was meant to be your workload. I will no longer tolerate this kind of behavior. Please come and pick up your wages on Monday. Steve.”

I didn't have a job to go to after all. I felt relieved. Then, just as I was about to cook up my morning fix, I got another text message. This one was from an unsaved number:

“Hi, it's Hugo's dad. Neither his mother nor I made it home last night, we decided to leave the kids to it and stay at a friend's. Haven't heard from his big sister so I presume they're all right. Any chance you could give Hugo a lesson this afternoon? Hopefully see you then, I'll be home around 4. Roger.”

Great, I thought. Wages and £20 cash today. If only I could remember who Roger was and what his son was called. I tried to remember, racking my brains for names and addresses. I wished I had a diary. I wished I had a better memory. Then I wished I could forget everything.



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**THERE IS GREAT DANGER
THAT FORMAL DEMOCRACY,
IN FIGHTING AUTHORITARIAN
DICTATORSHIP, MAY ITSELF
UNDERGO A CHANGE IN THE
DIRECTION OF DICTATORSHIP**

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Wilhelm Reich

MAYONNAISE

The boy that I ended up losing my virginity to was working in Subway when I met him, and I like rolling him over in my thoughts when I need a little comfort and familiarity. He told me one time that there are over 37 million combinations of sandwich offered across the entirety of their stores. Mine, a six-inch veggie delite, honey-oat, toasted, grated, everything apart from tomatoes, extra gherkins, a little sweet chilli, mayonnaise. His job title, written across the top of his payslip every month, was “Sandwich Artist.” There was a whole section in his training handbook entitled Intelligent Eating Habits, as if what Subway offered their customers was no longer a sandwich, but an exercise in pushing the parameters of their creativity and intellect. Once, I watched him try and construct a sub for someone who literally asked for everything the counter had to offer. The customer, disregarding the prescribed limitations of the Subway menu, insisted on having both formats of cheese, every variety of meat, all salad options and four different types of condiment.

In year 6, I won a sandwich design competition. My prize was an up-close-and-personal guided tour of the local sandwich factory that provided for our school canteen. At the factory, all the workers were wearing those blue elasticated bags over their shoes and hair, the condiments were kept in ice-cream tubs and applied with a plastic spatula by hand. A man in a suit told us all about “carriers” and “barriers” and how they adapted their production line in response to market demands. High-tech developments in machines that deposit precise blobs of sauce hadn’t been

developed yet, and I remember very clearly the slight wobble of the mayonnaise every time the gloved woman dipped her spatula into the tub, and how a crust had formed around its lip that was turning clear and shiny. That day altered my view of the sandwich somewhat, for the context I had drawn for my Millionaire’s Ploughmans was the kitchen at the heart of the family unit, cradled in the hands of a warm, motherly figure. Yet somehow I had found myself in a windowless warehouse unit, kept at a consistent 1.6 degrees celsius so as to preserve the molecular integrity of lettuce.

The word “carrier” is used to denote bread, or the vehicle used to carry the sandwich and its fillings into the mouth. Carriers can be slick and unhesitating, engineered like a fast car. Yet a “carrier” suggests something rotten and ominous; it evokes something of dystopian sci-fi movies like *I, Robot* when Emma Thompson talks about the first humans that are carriers of the deadly disease that will turn them into zombies or, ultimately, kill them off. I went to the new Ed Atkins show called *Old Food* the other day and the poster image was a shit-filled sandwich with little plastic babies submerged in it. I went round the exhibition watching the video works waiting for the shit sandwich, but it never came. I realised this is how they try and model it when you get feedback during your progress review at work; the shit is sandwiched in by the positive so you never can quite locate where the shit actually is.

“Sandwiches,” the suited man said, “never sit still.”

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Butter or mayonnaise is the usual industry go-to for a “barrier.” A barrier prevents the movement of words and things, it’s a substance that prevents bread from going soggy. But at what point does mayonnaise, which is supposed to be supplementary, complimentary, an accessory, even, become a “barrier”? I only started eating mayo in December 2016, and since then I have realised the importance of the presence of mayonnaise in my life and all its connective faculties. Recently, I moved into a new place on a street called Mayow Road and my brother is taking great pleasure in calling it Mayonnaise Road. He spread it round all the family members we have left and now they enjoy calling me up and asking what a house on Mayonnaise Road looks like. Someone said once about how the shortest poem is a name and I think I now understand what they meant.

It takes a certain kind of mind to really innovate between two pieces of bread.

“Inclusions” refers to the ingredients that go inside a sandwich. An “inclusion” is something that cannot be conceived without its other, an exclusion. It suggests something structural, a governmental scheme or corporation, something where there is a definite inside and outside. Inclusion is an activity of optimisation, it systemically excludes in order to build its own personalised version of a hierarchy.

Such a reckless order is known as the “all-in approach”. Subway teaches its employees to actively persuade customers against it, as it makes it incredibly difficult to produce an

end-result that complies with the company’s strict composition regulations. Composition is Subway’s main ideology. A baked roll shaped like a war machine is renamed in a process that is designed and completed by you – everything is on offer, everything is on the table, “more” + “agency” are packaged neatly into 18 square metal containers. There are apparently no limitations to what we may conceive as an inclusion, they propose a dizzying world of potentially infinite combinations, flavours and variables. 37 million combinations of your dreams. But the eternally expansive concept of inclusion is an illusion, there are glass walls built tightly around the whims of your tastebuds. Supposed choice guarantees the ultimate goal: return custom. Without fail, we come back for our stalwart favourites (that cheese and onion one from the petrol station, a Sainsbury’s BLT, the Tuna Crunch from Gregg’s). In my head I watched the sandwich-artist become incredibly stressed as the toasted sub started to complain from being stuffed way beyond its foot-long capacity. The resulting sandwich that this particular customer ordered was both liberating and repulsive. It oozed out a sickening, cross-continental combination of meats, cheese, pickled matter and condiments, both sweet and savoury. The precisely engineered carrier – Italian Herb and Cheese I think – disintegrated under the stress of it all. So-called choice, or the oppressions of “choice”, were pushed to the point of collapse, because choice doesn’t exist when you choose everything.

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SIMON CRUMP'S STAG PARTY

Simon Crump is the author of bleak satirical books such as *My Elvis Blackout*, a *composite novel* that includes a highly medicated Elvis stapling his eyes shut to rule himself out of doing the washing-up. Along with *Neverland*, where Michael Jackson gets similar treatment, I always thought these were about the furthest away from autobiography or politics books could be. But recently Crump of all people started appearing in the news for acts of radical self-sabotage.

The tweed-clad author and university lecturer has been throwing himself in front of tractors come to chop down the trees in Sheffield, where he lives. Even after the council imposed a court order against him and his partner, Green party councillor Alison Teal, the lad's been all over social media again. He's been all over my news feed protesting while dressed as a woman and pulling funny faces as he hangs onto piles of trees while they are dragged away.

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Simon, what have you been doing?

I've been involved in non-violent direct action all over the city as a member of the Sheffield Tree Action Group [STAG]. I've been preventing fellings by entering work zones and blockading the main council depot, Olive Grove.

In November I was arrested on Marden Road with Calvin Payne for trying to prevent the felling of a hundred-year-old London Plane tree. We were detained in a cell for eight hours. The case was later dismissed by the CPS as being not in the public interest. More recently Sheffield City Council secured an injunction at the High Court in Leeds against named defendants, including myself, and crucially also "persons unknown," which prevents us from entering work zones. This has meant we have had to develop new tactics to try to prevent felling. Many people are breaching the injunction by entering work zones wearing clothing to anonymise themselves.

There was also an attempt by the Sheffield Labour party to have me sacked from my university post. Several members wrote letters claiming that I was unfit to work with young people and made false claims about me. These were dismissed by my employer for being mendacious.

How far are you willing to go to save these trees – jail?

This is an extreme situation, but it is possible to envisage a scenario where there is no alternative but to break the injunction, which could lead to me being imprisoned.

A Void's direct action consultants David and Stuart Wise of King Mob and the Situationist International have been following your actions and want to know: "STAG are protecting trees in typically bourgeois landscapes. It's an illuminating protest against suicide capitalism and its corollary, the 6th

extinction, spearheaded in this instance by AMEY, a predatory giant multi-national pretending to be eco-sensitive. We're sure Crump's proposed book, *Persons Unknown*, will be riveting and most likely the best thing he's ever done because this will not be docu-fiction but the real thing. Nonetheless, would the same brave collective get involved in fighting for places that could in everyday parlance be described as a shithole?

There are so many inaccuracies in this statement/question that I hardly know where to begin. Labour-controlled Sheffield City Council will have you believe that we only defend trees in leafy middle class suburbs but this is not true. Sheffield's social housing estates are often characterised by avenues of street trees which were planted at the same time as the houses were built. A significant proportion of the direct action I and many others have been involved in took place in the areas which might be described as districts of social and economic deprivation.

As for the book we are currently working on, *Persons Unknown*, will be co-authored by myself and Calvin Payne, the first two arrestees of the campaign. FYI, I am the author of five books, only two of which are heterobiographies.

Your books confused and irritated a lot of people, particularly Chris de Burgh, who didn't like his portrayal in *My Elvis Blackout*. Do you think maybe this power has been diminished now you've taken a political stance?

I have not taken a political stance *per se*; indeed, I have discovered a whole new audience to "confuse and irritate." And actually, Elvis is sympathetically portrayed. People miss that.

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MIDDLEMAN

- [1] John Berryman, interviewed in The Paris Review
- [2] Walker Percy, interviewed in The Journal of Religion, 54.3.
- [3] Herbert Marcuse, interviewed in Der Spiegel
- [4] P. Adams Sitney, interviewed in The Nassau Literary Review
- [5] Hannes Bajohr, interviewed in Berfrois
- [6] Michel Houellebecq, interviewed in The Guardian
- [7] Joyce Johnson, interviewed in Interview Magazine
- [8] Momus, interviewed in AV Club
- [9] Carrie Brownstein, interviewed in Bookforum
- [10] Heidi Julavits, interviewed in Bookforum
- [11] Tom McCarthy, interviewed in The White Review
- [12] Gore Vidal, interviewed in The New Statesman
- [13] Chantal Mouffe, interviewed in The New Statesman
- [14] Cory Arcangel, interviewed in Dazed & Confused
- [15] Susan Howe, interviewed in The Paris Review
- [16] Gordon Lish, interviewed in The Paris Review
- [17] Truman Capote, interviewed in The New York Times
- [18] Paul Bowles, interviewed in The Paris Review
- [19] Susan Bernofsky, interviewed in Bookforum
- [20] Ice Cube, interviewed in The Believer
- [21] David Foster Wallace, interviewed in The Believer
- [22] Ben Lerner, interviewed in Bookforum
- [23] Hunter S. Thompson, interviewed in The Paris Review
- [24] Janet Malcolm, interviewed in The Paris Review
- [25] Orson Welles, interviewed in Cahiers du Cinema
- [26] Marshall McLuhan, interviewed in Playboy
- [27] Gilbert Sorrentino, interviewed in The Review of Contemporary Fiction
- [28] Pauline Kael, interviewed in The Guardian
- [29] Sarah Manguso, interviewed in Bookforum
- [30] Wallace Stevens, interviewed in The New York Times
- [31] Norman Mailer, interviewed in The Paris Review
- [32] Jay McInerney, interviewed in The Guardian
- [33] Gary Indiana, interviewed in Bookforum
- [34] Jean Baudrillard, interviewed in CTheory
- [35] Luc Sante, interviewed in The Paris Review
- [36] Lou Reed, interviewed in Let it Rock
- [37] Frederic Tuten, interviewed in Bomb
- [38] Aidan Moffat, interviewed in M Magazine
- [39] Mat Riviere, interviewed in Line of Best Fit

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There are two ways to rank writers: in terms of gift and in terms of achievement. Who is better off? This poor fellow who is desperately neurotic to the point of being amnesic, and wandering in and out of fugues, as bad off as he was? Or the so-called well-adjusted, productive businessman, and so forth, who is clinically sane by the same standards? The difference concerns essentially two points, first the relationship of the New Left to traditional bourgeois culture, and secondly the possibility of carrying theory into practice. The subcultures of the computer might offer that fertile ground; text is being repurposed every day, by all of us, be it by retweeting someone or by telling a joke you heard or adopting an idea someone else had. It's a reality. In this sense, authorship is a useless concept from the start, and any text is fair game. So what really counts in both cases is who is the clergy, or middleman, or interpreter: we derive a lot of the reality of ourselves through interactions with others. Don't you? It's that collision, that contradiction, that really appeals to me. I think it's easy to judge that uncertainty and that dialogue from the outside, and be like, Well, just who are you? You need to figure it out before you get out there. [It is an] issue of available real estate. Mexican soap operas that are turned over so fast the actors don't have time to learn their lines. It's a lousy pageant, what I have in mind; [it] is not simply a space for the expression of any kind of disagreement, but a confrontation between conflicting notions about how to organise society. I may have evolved into more of a passive observer, I'm not taking sides: I am quite agoraphobic. I'm not a writer [and] I've no stake in my being thought a writer. Yet if I do write, I want it to be as exacting as I can make it. Few first-class creative writers have ever bothered with journalism, except as a sideline, "hackwork," something to be done when the creative spirit is lacking, or as a means of making money quickly. Such writers say in effect: Why should we trouble with factual writing when we're able to invent our own stories, contrive our own characters and themes? Journalism is only literary photography, and unbecoming to the serious writer's artistic dignity. I don't want to know. I didn't have the time for it. No, no, and here's why. I don't understand the whole concept of form and forms very well, nor the various ways different forms and genres get distinguished and classified. Nor do I much care, really. I don't think so, but I don't pretend to know. I knew I could get by as a journalist: the "I" character in journalism is almost pure invention. We always pretend to be the masters of our fate, and all the journalists, whether serious or not, contribute to this hoax. My purpose is to employ facts as tentative probes: I have a short list here... I'm always attacked for liking Brian De Palma so much; I am no longer so troubled by the passage of time; I don't divide my life, [I] just go on living; compared to someone like James Jones, I'm an amateur at military detail. There is a type of writer that can happily bury themselves in the country and dig very deep, but I'm not like that; I needed to have a mudslide, I needed to have an out-of-control fire, I needed to have certain things that are part of our imagination of Los Angeles. Money won in a game does not leave the game; it must be burnt up, consumed like that, in the game. Robert Christgau wrote an essay called "Rock Lyrics are Poetry (Maybe)," which was very instructive because he knew the difference between poetry and ersatz: I would if I could.... When you read that it is as if the gangster John Dillinger was being described in heroic couplets. I always like to have something to focus on. I can't help but write like I'm on a VH1 'Behind the Music' documentary.

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loose parcer c.v

quafications

i haw leernd som things in a scool like ading up
and im a very clever and god and i never poo
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all polites i think its intestin

skills

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like them annd my frend sas they very clever and
good
i am like service customer srvic indstri so we wil
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pote ferr hier pay wat yuu like.