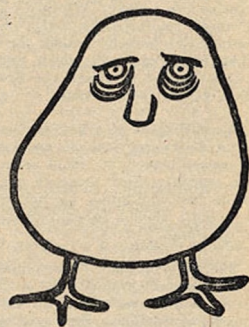


freethought criticism and satire



the magazine
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December, 1960

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No. 22

HELP PUT X BACK IN XMAS

Picture Story:

*Kennedy Baby Circumcised
In White House Ceremony*

★ ★ ★

Exclusive Exposé:

*Clark Gable Is Found
Alive In Argentina*

★ ★ ★

Feature Article:

*David Greenglass To Be Given
Back His Old Government Job*

Regurgitations for the Holiday Season

by Bob Abel

Although Japan rejected our President in 1960, she has been more receptive to other Western leaders. France's cultural keepsake, Brigitte Bardot, let herself become the namesake for a navel oil which sold some 10,000 bottles in Japan the first four days of its introduction.

Mme. Bardot also lent her endorsement to the devices of an American brassiere maker. It would seem to be an anomaly that someone who has made her reputation by not wearing a product should be paid to extol its good works.

Eleven consumer magazines had their images profiled by a Chicago firm which specializes in corporate image evaluations. Seven of the 12 original sponsors dropped out after seeing the results of the study, leaving 5 sponsoring magazines and 6 non-sponsoring publications. Time and Life were rated tops in presenting the news in an "urgent, vigorous manner," followed closely by U.S. News. The latter was rated "minus 8" for the way it presented its material (visually). National Geographic beat out the news mags in being informative, and led the pack for "impartial and unprejudiced" presentation of the news. U.S. News was second, followed by Newsweek. Time was last. National Geographic was "most cultural," followed by Holiday and Time. U.S. News led the roost for "penetration" of the news and as an opinion maker, yet was next to last for "sophistication."

The National Geographic is now persona non grata on Taiwan because pictures of Peiping were in its pages.

The Italians, who played host to the world for this year's Olympics, sent out a personal questionnaire for prospective Olympians. Gentlemen were asked whether or not they had been breast-fed and ladies were invited to tell about their menstrual cycles. If one were Olympics-bound, one could also rate oneself on social level — "excellent, good or rather mediocre" — and on sexual behavior (here the ratings ranged from triple plus to single minus).

It took two years for news of an atom bomb test to reach an island 60 miles away. Of course, there was a fallout rise during the period after the tests, but a specialist from the Atomic Energy Commission rationalized with this explanation: "October (1958) was a pretty darn meaty

month all over the world."

The N. Y. Post listed under the heading of "Today's TV Highlights" only one afternoon item: "2:00-2:30—No programs scheduled due to the 30-minute Conelrad Civil Defense test."

Retail pharmacists in New York attacked a plan by thirteen unions to operate a chain of cut-rate stores as "economically unsound and dangerous to public health." Without doubting the druggists' concern for "public health," we might ask: "Economically unsound" for whom—the retail druggists or the consumer?

A statue of Vulcan, the Roman god of fire, which has overlooked the city of Birmingham, Alabama for 30 years from its perch atop Red Mountain, caused a civil controversy because old Vulcan wears no britches. A new city seal, which shows Vulcan looking down on the city's skyline, will hide his husky haunches from public view.

It took three months and a circuit court ruling to allow grade school pupils in Manistique, Michigan to read Albert Camus' novel, "The Stranger." A local Justice of the Peace had found the book obscene and threw the teacher who had prescribed reading it into jail the same day he was tried, sentencing him to a 90-day term and a \$100 fine.

A Soviet agricultural expert was able to speak to Metuchen, N. J. high school students despite vigorous opposition by the American Legion and the Knights of Columbus. It is curious how insecure these paragons of patriotism are about the system they so highly revere — and how ready they are to forget that the controversy of conflicting opinions was held so sacred by the founding fathers that they regarded its protection as a cornerstone of the American system.

The American Legion hailed the Hearst press for its "excellence in both reporting of national and world news and in a clear and steadfast editorial support of the American way of life."

General Nathan Twining (on the people we send abroad to represent us): "... they should not be judged by how well they get along, although that is important, but on how tenaciously they defend the American interest. . . . It is enough to be respected."

Official New York sanction for Shakespeare in city high schools was held up because three Board of Estimate members objected to the political background of Joseph Papp, who heads the N. Y. Shakespeare Festival. They did not question the political background of Mr. Shakespeare.

Ad in the N. Y. Times: "Are you a Unitarian without knowing it?"

Abigail ("Dear Abby") Van Buren helped "Sick and Ashamed," who had been in bed with a high fever ever since she found out her 26-year-old daughter had been to a nudist camp. Abby put "Sick and Ashamed" straight, and the daughter herself said that no one should be ashamed of their bodies unless, of course, they happen to have poor posture.

Allied Artists promoted its "I Passed for White" film with a teaser ad which requested the reader to call and learn how "I Passed for White. Please let me tell you my story." But callers (who were able to break the busy-signal barrier) heard a husky-throated female voice say: "I never tried to hide the fact I'm colored."

For those who like to know both sides of a question, a movie house on one side of New York's Times Square was featuring "Morals Squad" while directly opposite another movie house was featuring "No Morals."

The perils of publishing: During the same week that Hollywood actress Yvette Mimieux appeared on the cover of Life magazine (where her picture was captioned, "Yvette Mimieux — Warmly Wistful Starlet"), her picture also adorned the cover of Modern Romances (unidentified, but captioned, "Boys Want Too Much").

Hit hysteria: Last March an ad was placed in the N. Y. Sunday Times announcing "Camelot," the new Lerner & Loewe musical, which opened December 3rd. A flood of mail orders to the tune of \$400,000 resulted. What with 200 theatre parties scheduled, the producers were afraid to run a second ad until the office treasurer could get out from under the mountain of checks in his office. Last summer the Play of the Month Club signed up its members for the show. Playgoers paid in June and July for a show they won't see till April and May of 1961. "All the Way Home," a drama based on James Agee's Pulitzer Prize novel, "A Death in the Family," opened to respectful notices but put up a closing notice two days afterward.

(Continued on Page 6)

editorial type stuff

The Religious Issue

Well, the Presidential election is over now, and we're sorry to say that the bigotry of voters obviously played an important part in the defeat of Richard Nixon.

They just wouldn't take him at his word when he stated that, if elected, he would not be influenced by the pacifistic concepts of his Quaker background.

Rumor has it that Sammy Davis, Jr. is planning to run for the highest office in 1964. He, too, will undoubtedly be defeated because of the religious issue.

A Post Toastie to John F. Kennedy

November 20, 1960

Senator John F. Kennedy
Washington, D.C.

Dear President-to-be Kennedy:

Congratulations on your election. I wonder, though, if you appreciate the irony that you won perhaps in spite of rather than because of the condescending campaign you conducted. Personally, I ended up voting for you partly as a protest against the Eisenhower-Nixon legacy, and partly in the hope that Adlai Stevenson would be appointed Secretary of State or delegate to the U.N. Your whole margin of victory was quite likely of a similar indirect nature. Anyway, you're in. I trust you won't add fuel to the population explosion by sending shipments of defective diaphragms overseas. It would be bad for our prestige.

Cordially yours,
/s/ Paul Krassner

Fife and Drum for New Orleans

*Four little Negroes start to school,
Man the drums for Dixie!*

*Muster in the knave and fool,
Ranting tongue and whining pule,
Cunning leader, willing tool,
Stars and bars for Dixie!*

*Bigot's creed and blood-shot eye
Way down south in Dixie,
Bid the chivalry defy
Four six-year olds, whose hopes must die
Hats off—the Klan is passing by—
Close the ranks for Dixie!*

*Four little Negro girls attack,
Stand to arms for Dixie!
Southrons hold, come storm or wrack,
Dare the odds, set on the pack,
Meet them, beat them, cheat them back.
Bugles blow for Dixie!*

—FRAN COUGHLIN

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PAUL KRASSNER, Editor

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Hoaxnik Department

The results of the *Realist's* political hoax will appear here next month. Meanwhile, our thanks to those who participated.

Thanks, too, to the group in Iowa City who boomeranged the hoax right back at me. Excerpts . . .

From Judy Amsbury: "I am a college student here at the State University of Iowa . . . I got hold of the last *Realist* and heard about that despicable whispering campaign you started against your opponent . . ."

From George Stockman: "Dear Mr. Krassner You Rat—The guys up here [at the Veterans' Administration Hospital] had a copy of your [sic] dirty rag *The Realist* (ick!) and I read what you done. Dont [sic] you know that roomers [sic] are the lowest thing on earth or anyplace else? . . ."

From Mrs. Elvera Johnson: "I read the *Relist* [sic] and heard about that whispering campaign you started. It certainly was juicy. My! Don't you know that kind of thing is evil and goes against the grain of God? You por [sic] boy . . . The way you are I wouldn't vote for you for dog pounder. Regards . . ."

Postscript: The boomerang has since spread to Chicago; Madison, Wis.; Moline, Ill.; Orlando, Fla.; Philadelphia; Santa Monica, Calif.; and Toledo, Ohio (where, said an anonymous woman voter, "I wrote to you and did not do the washing and I will have to suffer consequences from my husband").

what's the catch?

by Marshall E. Deutsch

(Catches are on Page 4)

1. My wife can't participate in extramarital sexual adventures. I have a genuine eunuch guarding her night and day.

2. Gordon Dunning of the Atomic Energy Commission's Division of Biology and Medicine has testified: "In terms of general populace around the Nevada tests site, I had a little problem finding a million people for a general population, but if one mentally makes larger and larger circles until he encompasses a million people, then the average exposure to the one million is one tenth of a roentgen unit for six years of testing, which is one twentieth of the maximum exposures recommended by the two committees."

3. The Jewish dietary laws may seem silly now, but they were important health measures at the time they originated.

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Early Training: Two

The fact that Elizabeth Taylor's breasts will be shown in the European but not the American version of the film *Cleopatra*, is an indication of the extent to which mere milk-duds have become a sexual fetish in this country.

And the fact that the shower-bath butcher-knife murder scene in *Psycho* displays violence so blatantly whereas Janet Leigh's nipples are carefully edited out of the scene, carries udder nonsense to its logico-ridiculous extreme.

This month Dr. Alexander Lowen, Executive Director of The Institute for Bioenergetic Analysis, stated in a lecture on *The Dynamics of Tension* that "if everyone were breast-fed, there would be no war."

It was an interesting generalization. Somehow, I got this image of Khrushchev and Eisenhower, both sitting on the Statue of Liberty's lap, suckling for peace. It might not be such a bad idea at that.

The Wife-Knifer

Although *Realist* columnist Robert Anton Wilson has written much to decry the concept of duality when it comes to body 'and' soul, he seems to accept a split between what an artist does and the way he lives. He has done so with Tennessee Williams and he has done so with Ezra Pound. This month, he does so with Norman Mailer.

Max Lerner commented in the N. Y. *Post* that "Mailer has far too much writing talent to be diminished to the size of a police-blotter item or an entry for Bellevue 'observation.'" Personally—and the fact that I'm a writer myself would hint that this isn't sour grapes—I don't think that being a writer entitles Mailer to any special consideration. He allegedly stabbed his wife. This is the act of a sick man, no matter how you look at it.

"My pride," said Mailer to the judge, "is that as a sane man I explore areas of experience other men are afraid of."

My humility, say I, is that I not only explore areas of experience other men are afraid of, but that I'm also fortunate enough to know where to stop.

You stop before you harm someone else. It's as simple as that. You stop, for example, before you puncture your spouse with a pen-knife.

Returning Next Issue . . .

The February issue (the *Realist* is not published in January) will see the return of such regular features as Modest Proposals, The Tolerant Pagan, and An Independent Research Laboratory. Upcoming impolite interviews include Jules Feiffer, Murray Kempton, and Mort Sahl.

The Lord's Finger Job

From an article on Hollywood in the December issue of *Harper's Magazine* (wherein the author is describing his tour of the late Cecil B. de Mille's mansion):

"And here are the Ten Commandments," said one of the ladies, touching two stone tablets resting in a red velvet case. Then she added thoughtfully, "They're copies of course. The originals are in the Paramount commissary."

Eavesdropping Department

The *Realist* is indebted to Ruth Lavare of San Jose, Calif., for the following examples of group-think.

Overheard: two stenographers taking their coffee break in office lounge . . .

"Did you know that she's a Catholic?"

"Oh, no—her husband's Catholic, but she's an American."

Same two, same lounge, some weeks later . . .

Mr. Johnson's new secretary told me she's a Mormon!"

"But she can't be—she's rather pretty."

If You Have Nothing Better to Do

The New York Chapter of the American Humanist Association has asked me to speak—"Confessions of an Irreverent Editor" (or, "What Am I Doing Here?")—on Sunday night, December 18th, 8 o'clock at 224 W. 4th St. (corner of 7th Ave. at Sheridan Square); the 50¢ admission charge entitles you to have refreshments and ask silly questions.

WHAT'S THE CATCH?

(Continued from page 3)

1. Some eunuchs really enjoy guarding harems; loss of potency does not invariably accompany castration after sexual maturity has been reached. To quote R. G. Hoskins (*Endocrinology*, W. W. Norton, New York, 1941): "The sexual impulse as well as potency either disappears completely or tends to marked diminution" (italics mine).

2. The gimmick is the word "average." As W. O. Caster has noted in the book *Fallout* (John M. Fowler, Editor, Basic Books, New York, 1960), the amount of radiation concerned is a lethal dose to several thousand persons. The average dose per person over 30 years may be a "safe" amount, but this average can be obtained by averaging lethal doses in the center of the circle with negligible doses at its periphery. Draw a large enough circle around Hiroshima and calculate the average dose within that circle over a sufficiently large period, and you'll find out that the amount of radiation released by the bomb exploded over Hiroshima was quite "safe."

3. Firstly, the dietary law to whose observance the most time is now devoted is the one proscribing the admixture of meat and milk. There was never a health reason for this; it is an unwarranted extrapolation of the biblical injunctions, "Thou shalt not seethe a calf in the milk of its mother" and "Thou shalt not seethe a kid in the milk of its mother." I say unwarranted because, when Abraham entertained three angels (Genesis, Chapter 18, verse 8), he "took curd, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat."

Secondly, doing without pork because it may give you trichinosis if it is not cooked sufficiently is a little less sensible than doing without milk because it may give you typhoid fever if it is not pasteurized. (I'm not going to explain why I say "a little less sensible" unless someone writes in to dispute this.)

The Realist

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negative thinking

by Robert Anton Wilson

The New Art of the Brave

A few months ago in this column I temporarily recessed my eye-gouging assault on what are called "decent values" and wrote a little bit about the greatest poet of our century. The result of this relapse into good taste was not exactly encouraging—e.g., one reader curtly told me to go back to my usual alley-fighting.

(This was not, in my mind, balanced by the lady who liked my poetic exegesis so much that she publicly forgave me for what she described as my previous "adolescent" columns. I wanted to reply that I liked her response to my literary column so much that I forgave her for her adolescent attitude toward my previous columns, but what the hell—even a literary hooligan like me has some introspection. The truth is that most of my writings are not only adolescent but childish. As a disciple of Lao-Tse I am woefully lacking in respect for contemporary standards of maturity. But to explicate this thought would be another column, not the one I intend to write today.)

This time I'm on a Norman Mailer kick. I won't say this is a defense of Mailer, because I'm not sure he needs a defense. One doesn't defend the American bison. People either recognize a large, mean animal when it appears, or they don't. Mailer is a man with balls, in the sense that Hercules speaks of a man with balls in his great speech in Sophocles' *Trachinae*, and such men are few in the literary world today.

I'm not talking about being a monolith like Hemingway or one of those self-consciously huntin'-and-shootin' imitators of Hemingway who keep popping up on the best-seller lists every year. I take it that heterosexuality is an old and established custom of proven value and doesn't need to be proclaimed to the world like a new wonder drug.

When Allen Ginsberg said "I'm a queer," or whatever it was he said, over the radio in San Francisco, he showed more balls, in my meaning of the term, than 99.997% of these squares who go to Africa to shoot an animal that's basically a pussy cat of friendly disposition but unwieldy dimensions, and then come back to write a book telling us they discovered they were Male in the process.

Romain Gary's anti-hunting tract, *The Roots of Heaven*, has more balls than the lot of them, because Gary has the moxie to take a pop-shot at a beast that's more dangerous than any flesh-and-blood critter, the disembodied Value System that's destroying this world.

Norman Mailer has bugged me a few times with his cracks about Hemingway, trying to put the Old Man down. I took it that this was some kind of Freudian ritual on Mailer's part, the slaying and dismembering of one's literary father. But then I began

to think. A writer has a better weapon than a gun to express his courage with and the exponentially-increasing usury which we call Our Way of Life is a tougher beast to tangle with than anything you'll find in the veldt. Mailer is right; Hemingway's physical courage is a bribe he pays his conscience for evading the greater courage to write an emetic and necessary novel like *The Deer Park*. I'm not saying that physical courage isn't still, as always, the foundation of manhood, I'm just saying that it is the foundation and something greater should be built on top of it.

The Old Man and the Sea, when you look at it from a hip perspective that keeps the bones of Buchenwald and the ashes of Hiroshima somewhere in penumbra, is really the highbrow's Herman Wouk. I'm, again, not saying what the reader will jump to the conclusion that I'm saying. All that 40 years of literary craftsmanship can earn, Hemingway spent on each sculptured sentence. It's a masterpiece of style, and any other sizable chunk of prose of our time crumbles by comparison. But it's all part of an enormous evasion, inevitably fated to appear in *Life* magazine and be acclaimed for its "affirmation"—Hemingway's decision for Christ, in answer to the Billy Graham-crooning of this sick society that

(Continued on page 11)

Author's Note

This article was written before Norman Mailer's recent tragic breakdown.

I want to state emphatically that I do not disown a word of what is said here.

Few thinkers have understood the plight of the individual in the modern world as well as Norman Mailer; no artist has expressed this plight better than he. The fact that the horrors he so courageously faced have (let us hope, temporarily) engulfed him does not invalidate what he has previously written.

Allen Ginsberg wrote: "I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed. . . ." Mailer is just the latest of a long line—Van Gogh, Nijinsky, Pound, Hart Crane, Artaud, Eliot, Faulkner, Burroughs, Dylan Thomas—who have, in one way or another, temporarily or permanently, suffered a psychic wound in the process of grappling with and trying to understand a social system dedicated to the destruction of all human motivations but profit.

I do not want to belittle the horror of what Mailer did, but I want to insist that his fine, 500-volt mind would not have exploded in this way if it were not under the impossible strain of trying to make artistic sense out of a senseless world.

Both Van Gogh and Pound did their best, most passionate work while officially declared mad and locked in asylums. Mailer's consciousness of present human reality has been at its greatest pitch of power in his most recent work; people who use his tragedy as an excuse for ignoring his urgent insights are only deluding themselves.

—Robert Anton Wilson

REGURGITATIONS

(Continued from Page 2)

Everybody who's anybody is writing his or her memoirs these days, usually with the help of a professional word-slinger. Ex-heavyweight champ Jack Dempsey joined the tell-it-all ranks, but his book has a new twist. It's called: "Dempsey—By the Man Himself as told to Bob Considine and Bill Slocum."

Communist dictator Nikita Khrushchev's "autobiography" is being written by a committee, which is headed by his son-in-law.

The pollsters, who have been playing such a large role in the political arena lately, have also been busy on other fronts. From the polling firm of Sindlinger & Co. came the report that some 5,123,000 Americans mentioned or discussed "Lady Chatterley's Lover" during a two-week period last fall. During that same fortnight, 5,110,000 citizens talked about that other fictional best-seller, the Bible.

Motto outside St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Greenwich Village: "Freedom of Worship Does Not Mean Freedom From Worship!"

An almanac which has been published in Britain every year since 1697 predicted "extraordinary stories of spying by foreign powers" this year.

Jim Hagerty, President Eisenhower's Press Secretary, gave out with this bit of wisdom on a network TV program about the U-2 incident: "Don't get caught."

The Central Intelligence Agency still maintains a number of wastebaskets labeled "Classified Trash Only."

The official line on governmental gobbledegook was at long last handed down by the U.S. Superintendent of Documents. Starting a promotional piece for the new Air Force dictionary, it was declared that "Although the language of the U.S. Air Force is primarily the English language. . ."

A new organization hopes to bring together some 500 living aces of three wars—the men who shot down at least five enemy planes. The Fighter Aces Association has this announced purpose: "To assist the male youth of our country in fulfilling their obligations to the nation and the military service."

A Long Island firm came out with

a blast and fallout shelter which will house and feed nine persons for two weeks. The price, including installation, is between \$3,000 and \$4,000. According to the inventor, "Cheaper shelters don't afford protection."

From an ad for Canadian Club: "And then it happened! I'd turned to watch Bill as he groped for a handhold on the almost vertical rock—when I heard a scream of surprise and saw a cloud of falling stone. Out of habit, I jerked the camera to my eye—and snapped the shutter just as Bill's body flashed by!" (And then took a slug of Canadian Club, lit up a filter tip and leaned back to enjoy that fine blend of hand-picked tobaccos.)

Alec Guinness declined a \$1,400,000 bid to appear on American TV for a beer company. Said Guinness, stoutly: "I would rather die in the gutter of poverty."

The "chansonniers" of France were barred from state-owned radio and TV programs, but they wisecracked their way back in. Typical gibes: Of de Gaulle—"The Algerian rebels will crumble under the weight of my speeches." Of Bardot—"She must have used an electric razor in her suicide attempt."

Walter Winchell scolded British critic Kenneth Tynan because he, Tynan, objected to being grilled by a Congressional committee for his part in a British TV program on America called "We Dissent." Winchell said Tynan should have apologized to the committee instead of attacking it. Winchell demonstrated in a frightening manner the thesis that freedom of speech is applicable only to those who agree with him. Tynan's real offense, according to Winchell, was having signed a newspaper ad calling for honest reporting on Cuba.

The Reader's Digest published an article titled "How to Stay Married."

Contributions

We wish to thank the following persons for their contributions this month to the Realist Association—a non-profit corporation which publishes the *Realist*—and to which donations are tax-deductible.

Harold & Mary Bishop \$3; Harry M. Brumlik, Jr. \$1; Eda Buschitzky \$2; P. J. Evans \$1; Mrs. P. Fellman \$5; Clay Foreman, Jr. \$4; George Kahl \$50; Stanley Martyna \$5; Dr. Stanley Allan Mureh \$1; A. Sobieski \$2; Janis Spalvins \$50; George E. Strickland \$5; A. F. Wassilak \$2.50; James B. Wheelis \$20.

The N. Y. Times headlined a news report "Marriage Is No Solution to True Unhappiness."

The partners in the Brener & Lewis real estate firm officially applied for a brokerage license on the moon. "In ten years," one of them explained, "there may be a Hotel Hilton on the moon. If there is, we want to make the deal."

Palace of Poison, Inc., of St. Louis, applied for registration of a skull-and-crossbones design and the words "Palace of Poison" as a trademark for cooked and frozen vegetables, coffee and frozen pies and rolls—which reaffirms more than ever our unflinching belief that there is nothing like a brand name to instill buyers' confidence.

The ad campaign for Monk's Bread made by Trappist monks features a loaf of bread being held by a Franciscan priest. Man does not live by accuracy alone.

Never let it be said that the quality of our mercy is strained. The inmates of Sing Sing were allowed to hear the World Series and this included, mind you, even the 8 condemned prisoners in the death house.

Caryl Chessman's attorney revealed to the editor of The Californian that the 'news' story about Forest Lawn refusing to accept Chessman's ashes was a fraudulent publicity gimmick. "I had not in any way contacted Forest Lawn," she said, "and neither had the mortician nor the crematory involved. Gratuitously—and I'll reserve the other and stronger adjectives in my mind—Forest Lawn announced they would not accept the remains. . . ."

From the N. Y. Times: "I know the quality of meat when I look at it," Commissioner Kaplan, who dislikes vegetables, said yesterday. "I've lived with meat." (Only the choice cuts, we hope.)

The British Government exercised its powers of censorship in the matter of tin cans: labels with pictures of human beings are no longer allowed on canned goods shipped to the Congo—for fear that the Congolese will get the idea that this is tinned white man.

Pepsi-Cola's stated good-will syllogism toward the uncommitted nations of Africa, in connection with its sponsorship of jazzman Louis Armstrong's tour: "You like Satchmo. Pepsi brings you Satchmo. Therefore, you like Pepsi."

The Realist

core and surface

by Lawrence Barth

The Man Jesus and His "Birthday"

In Elizabeth, New Jersey not so long ago, a community Christmas carol sing which had been held for seven years was canceled; the reason given was "apathy." Last Christmas my wife and I didn't bother wrapping our Christmas gifts to each other—something unheard-of with us up till now; and for years before that we've had a struggle each year to try to pump up enough Christmas spirit to buy and decorate a tree. More and more people are deciding to give up sending cards at Christmas time, and more than one friend has said to me, "I'm not going to bother celebrating Christmas any more."

Whether they have a religious or a nonbeliever's viewpoint, people in the past have often ignored such differences to make of Christmas a warm, universal, all-human festival, a time of showing particular humanity to their fellow men. Even many who are nominally Jews have celebrated it at least to the extent of giving gifts and speaking their good wishes. Yet now Christmas seems to be stunned and showing signs of wilt; it is literally dying off. What's killing it?

Three things, I think. First, the increasing complexity of life, with its drumming demands on our time and energy. Second, the intense commercialization of the holiday, nauseating to anyone with a sense of values left. Third, we've let this human race degenerate to such a state of irrationality and unhumanity that the celebration of a holiday in the spirit of Christmas picks out in a glaring spotlight of contrast all the rottenness, callousness and chaos of life today; to celebrate Christmas becomes in effect a mockery.

It is of course a dreary comment on the human race that a sizable portion of it has for centuries felt it necessary to celebrate the birthday (actually a quite unknown date, by the way) of a man who represents love. But since we seem to need nudgings of this sort until that day when love doesn't get flattened out of growing children in the first place, it makes sense to ask what kind of person this Jesus actually was.

I'm far from being a Bible scholar, and have no intention of trying to pick out from that curious mélange those bits and pieces concerning Jesus that are actually valid. What seems to me an intelligent and realistic summing-up of the man, and a good start at digging him out of the Biblical matrix, is Pierre van Paassen's *Why Jesus Died*. This was published in 1949 and has had far too little attention since.

Van Paassen is a sincere believer in the deity idea, but his resemblance to the average cleric, and the average churchgoer, is small. He is not at all afraid to quote the refutation spoken sadly but frankly by Alfred Loisy, one of the outstanding critical

scholars of the Bible, of the Sermon on the Mount: "It is a collection of Hellenist maxims and aphorisms which cannot have been formulated by a peasant of the mediocre intelligence of Jesus." He refers to "the poetic, mythological and dogmatic varnish which over-spreads the person of Jesus in the New Testament," and says plainly that "it is extremely difficult to uncover even a particle of the human Jesus as he lies hidden in the New Testament under the solid mass of stories, legends, ideas and doctrines."

In addition, it's very hard for us in the 1960s, in America and Europe, to enter into the flavor, the emotional air, of that rather primitive society in the Near East two thousand years ago. Sciences? There were none, except some rudimentary astronomy. Arts? Mostly practical. Psychological insight? Only as mixed with a roaring welter of mythology and the most free possible use of the imagination.

Yet we need to try such an entry, for we're concerned here with a man, not with the Messiahship that his followers avidly tried to wish on him; with Jesus, not with "Christ" ("Messiah"). Nor is there any point, of course, in considering the godship that the church saddled on him later when it tampered recklessly with an already blurred record.

The question of whether Jesus was a historical person may never be settled; there is a certain amount of indication that he may have been a folk myth entirely. Van Paassen refuses to be scandalized at this possibility, and stands ready to accept it if it should ever be proven. He has reasons, however, for believing Jesus to be historical, and they seem to me very probably valid ones.

He thinks that Jesus existed because the New Testament shows him giving himself to and for the poor—without self-interest; in fact, against his self-interest. Jesus was unable to be harsh with the poor; he knew what they had heaped on them constantly, he knew the grind and the dirt and despair of it.

Sign of the (Equal) Times

From a subway poster placed by The Dime Savings Bank of Brooklyn:

"Now's the time to open your Chanukah Club account. . . ."

Whatever simple, non-miraculous things the Bible has to tell about Jesus in his direct communication with the poor has the solid sound of truth in it. Van Paassen reasons that if Jesus had not actually existed as a strong hope for the poverty-stricken working men, beggars, prostitutes and slaves of Palestine, his memory would have faded from the mind of western civilization.

He feels, further, that if the story of Jesus were completely mythological, the weavers of that myth in ancient Palestine would have daydreamed a completely different ending for their hero; he would have been a god from beginning to end, would have conquered his enemies unequivocally. No homely little details of everyday life—foot-washing and such—would have been attached to him; certainly no death as a criminal on one of the worst torture instruments ever invented.

It seems like pretty good reasoning, on the whole. So I accept as a high probability that Jesus existed.

no record of this survival. In his early life some force other than sexual thrusting, he was essentially non-neurotic. Though ascetic, one of those extremely manage to 'sublimate' (unfortunate stuck with it) their sexual drive standingly serious harm to emotions. A partly thwarted person sexually who his character was seriously neurotic natural and outgoing. In this case, his

Let's take just two of the Old Testament rituals occurred in old Palestine practiced that mutilation—circumcision still carry on today (in people none) under the guise of "medical" unconscious of the hatred of the Jew aware that it must surely be a lie show standing for actual castration. At the very least, there are two—neither of them hagiographic entirely—that suggest deeply neurotic



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is to reconstruct the real Jesus, it the part-healthy-part-neurotic inter-most realistic one. Many a great person has been quite neurotic but has managed his healthy creativity through the to speak, of his neurosis, with out-

One is the fact that he stayed in the night before his arrest, knowing most sure to be taken at any moment. He had spearhead for overthrowing the Roman forces; his followers had pictured set Messiah. All that hope was now blasted herents were <http://www.ep.tc/realist> THE REALIST ARCHIVE PROJECT h:

It's surely realistic to agree that he was an unusual man, even after one has pushed all the mythological cobwebbery of the New Testament aside. This was a passionate person who struggled hard to convey the meaning, feeling and necessity of love; he did this not in a highly rational way but as a passionate person does, throwing himself into it without working out tactics and probabilities for himself. Even in that less cagey time and place, a person who gave himself so fully to others was unusual.

Here, of course, we can stop to ask a psychological question: Didn't Jesus, like every human being, get a great ego satisfaction out of extending himself to others? Didn't he get such satisfaction out of regarding himself as a special person, out of being looked up to as a teacher and spiritual leader? Very probably, I'd say—but I don't think it's important. It's realistic to accept as a matter of course the fact that every organism tends to preserve and build itself (in protoplasm, in emotional satisfaction) before all else. Having accepted this as a foundation principle in nature, we can drop any guilt we may have had about it ourselves, and we need not look down our noses at Jesus for living out this principle too.

He was, then, a person of strong ego—as is every person, basically, who accomplishes outstanding human work. He used it to try to convey the importance of love—and he had only common, ordinary exhortation as a tool for this work; this and personal examples. He was interested in basic things, and this, I think, must have been his approach to the problem of human misery: help people back into being able to feel love, and the social arrangements; the political pattern will then improve as a matter of course.

People around him tried to use him as a political-military spearhead, but they were too narrow of vision; Jesus seemed to realize, in his own terms, that the human race was neurotic, and that love had to exist freely in people before political changes could be anything but new repressions, new murders.

In *The Problem Family* (a very warm, natural, sensible book on raising children—reissued since its 1949 New York publication) A. S. Neill saw Jesus in this way: "Sin to him appeared to be sickness; he apparently was conscious of man's unconscious 2,000 years before Freud was born." He contrasts Jesus with Paul, "a man full of guilt and sex repression... he murdered the love of Jesus, Paul the hater of sex, proved by his hateful attitude toward women."

In the light of our knowledge today of sexology and psychology, of bodily energy in its use and abuse, we're bound to ask the question, Could Jesus have given love so freely if he remained sexually ascetic?

So far as the church and its Bible are concerned, of course, no such question should even be approached; by their standards one can hardly tell that Jesus was a human being, let alone a male. The church in all its sects, since it builds the whole master-slave complex of its congregations precisely from the sexual guilt feelings it so tirelessly implants, regards such a question about Jesus as sacrilege. What!—the son of God, the man who was partly God himself, having the human drive to merge his body and energy with that of a woman—unthinkable!

It's thinkable, all right, and not only thinkable, but basic.

We're confronted by three possible choices:

Jesus had a natural, happily consummated love for a woman, but no record of this survives. In this case, unless he had in his early life some bad energy-disturbing influence other than sexual thwarting, we can assume he was essentially non-neurotic.

Or he was, though ascetic, one of those extremely rare people who manage to 'sublimate' (unfortunate word, but we're stuck with it) their sexual drive without any outstandingly serious harm to emotions or body.

Or he was a partly thwarted person sexually who in some areas of his character was seriously neurotic and in others natural and outgoing. In this case, his



sexuality, his total energy economy, must have been somewhat but not completely impaired—the situation of the neurotic Everyman of today.

Hard as it is to reconstruct the real Jesus, it seems likely that the part-healthy-part-neurotic interpretation is the most realistic one. Many a great person in history has been quite neurotic but has managed to project his healthy creativity through the interstices, so to speak, of his neurosis, with outstanding results. We know Jesus' healthy areas from his struggles for the poor and sick, his outgoing love and his efforts to light up natural love again in the people around him.

But there seems to be evidence pointing also toward emotional sickness. There need be nothing unexpected in such a finding; every society (except for a few primitive ones that are at a certain stage) has been essentially neurotic for five or six thousand

years back. The society Jesus grew up in was no exception. Let's take just two out of many indications of this. The Old Testament records that homosexual relations occurred in old Palestine. And the society practiced that mutilation—circumcision—which we still carry on today (in people of all faiths, and of none) under the guise of "medical desirability," quite unconscious of the hatred of the flesh it shows, unaware that it must surely be a little unconscious dumb show standing for actual castration.

At the very least, there are two of Jesus' actions—neither of them hagiographic fabrications, apparently—that suggest deeply neurotic aspects of him.



One is the fact that he stayed in Jerusalem on the night before his arrest, knowing that he was almost sure to be taken at any moment by the legions of Caesar's procurator. He had been used as a spearhead for overthrowing the Roman occupying forces; his followers had pictured setting him up as Messiah. All that hope was now blasted, and his adherents were wisely slipping out of the city as fast as they could. Jesus stayed, though his staying could lead only to capture, torture and death, as he knew very well. Was it simple naïveté? Much more likely, he had an unconscious wish to die.

Then there is his agonizing experience, his period of strong emotional anguish, in the Garden of Gethsemane. In Luke 22:44 there is a clue that is very meaningful today: "... his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling on the ground." The literal translation from the Greek is: "... his sweat

turned into what appeared to be large drops of blood."

This is interpreted by Dr. Binet-Sanglé of the École de Psychologie of Paris as a case of hematemesis, an attack of extreme anguish in which a mental patient does literally sweat blood; sometimes blood pours from the whole face in gushes. It comes as the culmination of a cycle of mania and depression, and gives physical and emotional relief once it has occurred. Van Paassen says of such patients: "What happens is that their brain cells have discharged the excess nervous energy."

Binet-Sanglé saw Jesus as not merely neurotic, but as a psychotic person, and wrote *The Insanity of Jesus* in four volumes to bear out his theory. Van Paassen lists other works: George de Loosten's *Jesus Christ from the Standpoint of Psychiatry*, Emil Rasmussen's *Jesus: A Comparative Study in Psychopathology*, Albert Schweitzer's *The Psychiatric Study of Jesus* (only this one is in English).

Just exactly what the degree of Jesus' emotional illness was will probably never be known. But a broader future knowledge of neurosis and psychosis could clarify it somewhat; and there's always a minute hope that there are still some authentic data about him tucked away undiscovered, that would round out the picture.

But what Jesus accomplished is, in the end, considerably more important than the personal handicaps he had to push his way through. Thinking in the deistic terms of his time and society (he could hardly be expected to do otherwise), he taught that the complex animal, man, cannot live in any satisfactory way if love is not a basic part of living.

He was one of many who have taught this, or who showed it in their life work; he was one of many who gave something of more than average beauty and usefulness to the human race. If we specially celebrate his birthday, it seems just as logical to celebrate specially the birthdays of at least:

Socrates	Philippe Pinel	Beethoven
Paré	Ignaz Semmelweis	Pasteur
Vesalius	Florence Nightingale	Dorothea L. Dix
Galileo	Bach	Whitman
Shakespeare	Goethe	Henry Dunant
John Hunter	Rembrandt	Van Gogh

It is, of course, the real man Jesus that the average minister, priest and churchgoer fears and hastily covers over with the pink icing of sentimentality and deity. There's no reason either to underestimate or overestimate this man. I respect Jesus and put him in history's company of the great darers and strugglers.

We've taken the old pagan feast of the winter solstice and named it after him (after "Christ," anyway) in his honor. It's a vitiated holiday today. But in that future day when we have a healthy and rational human race, will Christmas as we once knew it come back? If it does, it will return, I think, without the mystical aspects, as a simple holiday of unforced well-wishing and unpretended joy.

But it seems just as likely that the idea of a holiday dedicated to being good to the next person and wishing him well will be considered quaint, redundant. "Why make a holiday for loving the rest of the human race?" we can perhaps hear those future people say. "We do it every day as a matter of course."

"Look Ma... No Hands!"

In honor of the 50th anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America, the *Realist* has acquired an old copy of their official manual, the *Handbook for Boys*. "The final test of a good Scout," we are told, "is in his doing of 'Daily Good Turns,' quietly and without boasting." Following are some of the "modern" daily good turns that the handbook lists:

Put out forest fire.
Let a dog out of trap.
Carried mail to a prisoner.
Moved a sewer pipe out of road.
Helped the cook pick a chicken.
Cranked car for one-armed man.
Kept a cat from killing a chicken.
Dug post-holes for man next door.
Drove a car to a funeral for a lady.
Cleaned off cemetery lot for funeral.
Took in some beds for an old woman.
Helped get a horse up that had fallen.
Found and restored lady's pocket-book.
Put out fire in a lady's house.
Boy was sick, pulled him home on wheel.
Took chewing gum off the street-car seat.
Caught a cow and drove it home for a lady.

Freed a cow that was tangled in a wire fence.
Went to town to get husband for sick woman.
Delivered church circulars for Methodist church.
Made scrapbooks for the Home for the Friendless.
Assisted a Russian boy with some English grammar.
Climbed a tree at night to get a chicken for a lady.
Put top back on manhole after same was open part of the night.
Called power company and reported to them a live wire.

In another chapter entitled "Healthcraft"—under the sub-heading, "Conservation"—the *Handbook for Boys* has this to say in regard to nocturnal emissions:

"Seldom will boys feel any ill ef-

fects from emissions. Boys need not and should not worry about these experiences. They are natural, but no steps should be taken to excite seminal emissions. That is masturbation. It's a bad habit. It should be fought against. It seldom leads to real physical or mental illness except in those who are already physically or mentally weak.

"It's something to keep away from. Keep control of yourself in sex matters. It's manly to do so. It's important for your life, your happiness, your efficiency and the whole human race as well. Keep in training. A cold hip bath will help (water temperature 56 to 60° F., sitting in a tub, feet out, fifteen minutes at night before going to bed).

"Seek advice from wise, clean, strong men. If you feel you need special help write to 'Physically Fit Department' of *Boys' Life Magazine* and you will get a confidential reply."

Presumably, though—now that all those non-masturbating Boy Scouts have grown up—there is somewhere an Air Force manual which tells them how.

A PSYCHOLOGIST TAKES THE STAND

(The defendant has been accused of murdering his fiancée, and has pleaded temporary insanity. A psychologist has been brought to the stand to testify.)

Q. Doctor Fulson, you are familiar with this case, and have examined the defendant previously. Would you say he is insane?

A. I'm sorry, but I don't understand the meaning of the word insane. It's not a psychological term.

Q. Legally, it means unsound, incapable of judging the results of one's actions. Is the defendant unsound, or is he normal?

A. Well, now, I've never yet met a completely normal person.

Q. What I mean is, was the defendant aware of what he was doing when he murdered his sweetheart?

A. Probably, since he was conscious at the time.

Q. But was his state of mind such that he was able to choose between right and wrong?

A. I'm sorry, but I don't know the difference between right and wrong myself. I only know that certain actions are socially acceptable, and others are unacceptable.

Q. Was he able to differentiate between a socially acceptable and

unacceptable act?

A. Oh, yes.

Q. Then he was fully capable of choosing between one and the other?

A. Not at all. He is given to impulsive action, and is therefore not completely subject to rational inhibition.

Q. You agree with the defense contention that he committed this act while in an abnormal state of mind?

A. Certainly, since persons in a so-called normal state of mind don't murder their sweethearts.

Q. But it is possible he has recovered his lucidity since then?

A. Certainly, since he doesn't murder people every day.

Q. In your opinion, is this man guilty or not guilty?

A. I'm afraid I don't know what the word guilty means. The only question is whether this man is capable of becoming a useful member of society, or whether it is necessary that he be restrained.

Q. Doctor Fulson, do you agree with the prosecution's contention that this man committed this deed while in a normal state of mind and should therefore be condemned? Or do you agree with the defense contention that he committed the act while temporarily unstable, and therefore should be found innocent?

A. I admit that I am confused. The prosecution seems to believe that this is a person who is fully capable of becoming a useful member of society, and therefore he should be incarcerated. The defense seems to believe that this man is given to temporary spells of emotional instability, and for that reason he should be released.

Q. You've qualified as an expert. Will you please state your opinion clearly, Doctor Fulson?

A. In my opinion, to express the matter in your own terms, I believe that the defendant should be found guilty by reason of temporary insanity, and should therefore be placed under restraint.

Q. That will be all, Doctor Fulson. Your honor, I move that this testimony be stricken from the record as ambiguous.

—NORVIN PALLAS

NEGATIVE THINKING

(Continued from page 5)

is so determined to go to its death hollering how healthy it feels.

Norman Mailer is a different kind of cat entirely. If you rub his fur the wrong way, he scratches. He leaves the purring and affirming to lap-kittens like Wouk or old tabbies like Hemingway (who was once a scrapping Tom in his day, before he got overfed on Hollywood caviar). Nothing that Mailer writes will appear in *Life* or be praised for its Affirmation.

I want to put it on record for the archeologists of the future that with *The Deer Park* Norman Mailer has written a novel almost 100% free of bullshit. As President of the International Society of ex-Jean Shepherd Fans, Chairman of the Board of the We-Used-to-Like-The Village-Voice Association, and an Honorary Member of the For-Two-Weeks-Once-We-Believed-in-Adlai-Stevenson Club, I regard that as no small achievement. A whole novel without bullshit . . . even more, a novel *about love* without bullshit, in America today.

For those imaginary future archeologists—and for the delight of my 3000 phellow phuck-ups who read the *Realist*—I want to put on record, too, Bennett Cerf's remark when he read the manuscript of *The Deer Park*: "This novel will set publishing back 20 years." Unfortunately, when Putnam finally had the gumption to publish the monster, Mr. Cerf's prediction was not confirmed. I say "unfortunately," because 20 years ago there were still remnants of integrity in the business, and a few editors like Maxwell Perkins hadn't been shoved under yet.

Nowadays the Square mentality has taken over publishing, as it has taken over everything else, and American novels, like American toothpaste, have to have a peppermint flavor or nobody will invest in them.

Mailer gets better year by year, and the play of *The Deer Park* is even better than the novel. Here's a sample from the play, and it's the best chunk of dramatic writing we'll see this year.

Elena: You think I stay with him because he's good to me and kind?

Marion: He's your nurse.

Elena: He's my lover . . . I never could use that word before. Not for other men. Not for you. But he's my lover. When he touches me. . . .

Marion: . . . you are ready to receive the next touch.

Elena: Crazy.

Marion: And the next touch is not what you thought it would be, but a little more and in a new direction and it opens you.

Elena: You know about love.

Marion: I know about sex, baby. I feel that for a hundred men and women.

Elena: And a dog or two.

Marion: Yes, and a dog or two. And you got the dog in you, baby—let's give Eitel that, he turned you on. He turned you on, and he'll leave you. You have no future with Eitel.

Elena: He loves me.

Marion: Whatever he has, whatever he owns,

sooner or later he comes to detest it because it's his, and so it can't be good. He's a snob. Nothing less than a Princess could bring him joy.

(Eitel enters from the street. As the patio gate slams, Elena and Marion become silent. Eitel enters the living room—there is silence.)

Eitel: It's pleasant that you came to visit us, Marion.

Marion: You and I are friends.

Eitel: *(with a gesture toward Elena)* Friends?

Marion: Charley, you've been living long enough to know that when a pal makes it with your girl for a night, she comes back to you enriched.

[Marion Faye, the hero of this play, is a master pimp, as Mailer calls him elsewhere. That is, he has made a million dollars out of plain and fancy whoredom. It is he who expresses the shocking truth of Mailer's vision, in a long speech after he has driven Elena to poison herself.]

Marion: Dorothea, my mother, she made money from men, when she was young, and I was her bastard, a passing gift from a passing prince, no more—because the salmon of his seed did not have to feel such a vast desire to gain the rapids of a janitor's daughter. Yes, I was her bastard, and I grew up while she was doing her gossip column. The cruellest gossip columnist in the country. An assassin. She used to print the American flag next to her face. So I knew what it was all about. I mean I knew early. She wanted me to be a priest. I was to be her sacrifice—do I have to spell it out? I have this idea deep in my head that the center of hell must be in here, yes I have this idea that I am a saint, and I feel what God feels, and He is in an extremity beyond mine because there is an extraordinary destiny He has to achieve and He does not know if He will succeed or not because He is a part of us. He is failing because We are failing, because We are too cowardly, because We want to move too slowly, and hold to what We have, when the world, the tangible substance of God is ready to be blown beyond existence in those radiations of hate which none of Us can contain any longer. There is a torment coming when the being of all of Us will depend on whether there is a man brave enough, bold enough, to go further in his mind than anyone has ever gone and yet communicate his vision. And I am not that man. I am too weak. I have failed God again.

My forthcoming book, *Only the Flesh is Holy*, is, accidentally, a translation of this speech into the language of the atheist or Buddhist. If you will think for a moment of the flesh not as a static "thing" but, post-Einstein, as a process in time—one river of life flowing and pulsating through time from the first blob in the first ocean right down to you and me, and beyond—you must realize that this flow and this pulsation are as natural, as much a part of the cosmos, as the billion-year cycle of the galaxy.

Life is a periodic function in time, keeping the tom-tom beat of the larger periodic processes of the inanimate universe. In this sense it is meaningful to say that the universe expresses itself in life, or God is incarnate in man—"flesh and blood with us," Mailer said once in *The Village Voice*—or that, in

Chinese terms, the Tao (process) is one in man and star both.

But the great law of this process is the law of change, and man's mind is the organ of his perception of change, and art with its organic rhythms (even prose has rhythm) should be the expression of the mind's prophetic power—as poor old Pound used to say, the artist is the antennae of humanity. If one bear were more sensitive than other bears, and could smell an earthquake coming before the others in the clan, the dances and cries he would utter to warn the others would be organic art, as all true art is urgently and necessarily organic.

"I hate, I despise, your feast days. . . . I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings"—the ancient Jew who wrote that text was a great prophet *because* he was a great poet. The poet and prophet are always, urgently, reminding us of the difference between the real and organic on one hand and the false and abstract on the other.

Confucius said, "I hate reddish blue, because it will be mistaken for vermillion. I hate the music of 'Tei,' because it will be mistaken for real music. I hate conventional virtue, because it will be mistaken for true human-hood." The term I have translated "true human-hood" shows a man with two appendages, indicating a total or completeness of humanity; it may well be cognate with "a man with balls" just as "virtue" and "virility" are etymological egg-brothers in European languages.

I am not hopping from subject to subject, but turning one subject around so that you can see different facets of it. I am still defining the basic importance of Norman Mailer as against the writers who get friendly reviews in the mass magazines. A buddy once advised me, on hearing that I had acquired a TV set (which I have since given away), "Avoid the One-Eyed Monster. That contraption will sit in your living room like a heathen idol and hypnotize you. It draws one into a dream-world, a return to the womb, and takes you away from participation in the ground of your being."

I suppose most people in our mad society are so dead in the sensory motors by now that they can't

Religious Experience

Church is in the gothic arch of her legs,
whereat I thrust my bell-tongued pilgrim;
rounded and re-hardened flower of flesh,
wild and one-eyed, tender and furious:
The Bible of her tapered and templed thighs,
wherein pagan Psalms art tromboned,
shivers as her altared mons veneris
opens its pillowy Holy of Holies
to my raging Priapic kiss:
tight the blinding beauty of her
pungent lips hugs the drumming
slow beat of my swelling drumstick,
tambourining in the curved snares
of her sweat spangled col:
Then, while God sings,
and her melic melons twist,
warm rank milk is jetted
into the Cosmos of her parched womb,
and again Creation begins. —DAVID STALZER

The Mathematics of Happiness

Socrates taught that one has to wait until a man is dead to say whether he has been happy. This remark annoys me. It supposes that life is a work of art, a perfection in itself. Obviously one has to wait for a man to be dead to say whether he has been happy or not, but the thing then no longer presents the slightest interest. One is not happy merely for the show of it; one is happy only for oneself, and happiness is a question of arithmetic. The essential thing is to accumulate the greatest possible number of moments of happiness.

—from "Five A.M."

by Jean Dutourd

even begin to guess what my friend meant by "the ground of your being." I have seen people walking into public parks carrying radios, and out of these radios was pouring a flood of all the usual bilge of our culture. Such people have never *seen* a tree, and never will; it nudges their attention, but never siezes it.

Reich wrote of them: "They do not feel their own children on their arms when they lift them." They do not. We have been taught to despise the flesh, and the flesh has become half-dead in us.

When Marion Faye says in *The Deer Park* that we are cowards, that God is striving for something through us, and that our cowardice is failing God, he means that we have lost contact with our own bodies, with the biological core-energies of life with their million-year hungers, and are masturbating in front of TV sets instead of jazzing Time to make it pregnant with a more aware future.

The artist should be the chief organ of our growing awareness and when the artist becomes an apologist for the status quo, as so many of Mailer's contemporaries have become, he is a worse criminal than the man who sells defective thermometers to hospitals. The artist should be a gieger-counter; when he becomes a TV commercial he has committed treason, not just to man, but to the total flood of animate energy of which man is part.

Norman Mailer's importance, simply, is that he has not committed this treason. He has gone on becoming more and more aware while his contemporaries have been retreating more and more into flaccid acceptance of the mass lies of our culture. In *Advertisements for Myself*, he tells us of being in street brawls, being hit on the head with a hammer and having an eye gouged, and so forth; and he has taken the hipster's advice to "take tea and see"; but, above and beyond this dimension of courage, he has the higher courage to see the truth everybody else is busy blinding themselves to, and to speak it frankly.

Lawrence Barth wrote in the last issue of the *Realist* that millions of Americans have a strongly suppressed deep anger at the brutality and craziness of our times, and do not even *know* that they have this anger. It took sessions with three types of psychotherapists, experiments with pot, and living with the bravery of my wonderful wife to bring out of the core of me the full anger that I had carried around, unknowing, for nearly three decades.

Now that it is out, and I am learning, somewhat, to swing with it and use it to wail with as



Panacea Ad Nauseam

"Don't just tell your family you love 'em—show 'em—buy a loaf of . . ."

—ad for Tip Top Bread

"To be an influential, keep posted—read the . . ."

—ad for Saturday Evening Post

"SICK CALL SET—An attractively decorated bust of the Sacred Heart. A fitted compartment in the back conceals the essential for making this an unusual sick call set. Contains holy water bottle, linen, crucifix and candles. Regularly priced at \$5.25. On sale this week only \$2.69."

—ad in diocesan newspapers by
Phillipp's Church Supplies &
Religious Articles

" . . . Do not take a substitute. We are the original inventors. Help prevent juvenile delinquency. . ."

—ad for the Easy Way Gym Bar

HIRE THE HANDICAPPED ITS GOOD BUSINESS

—U.S. Postal Cancellation

"Not all battles take place on a field. Some of the most decisive struggles take place in offices where the air is conditioned—and so are the people. They're conditioned to learn about you in terms of your appearance. In business, clothes may not make the man, but they're half the battle. And they're the half you can control. The right clothes give you poise and confidence, they exude an air of correctness and individuality. . . ."

—ad by Whitehouse & Hardy

"This cemetery is for the living! . . . here, at last, is a cemetery that cares for the living as well as the dead. . . ."

—ad by Mount Ararat Memorial Park

"If I've only one life . . . let me live it as a Clairol blonde."

—ad for Lady Clairol

a good horn does, I am at last able to take some pleasure from my writings. If I am crazy and childish occasionally, so are the best Beat poets, and I would rather be that way than to go on being crazy in the acceptable "socially-adjusted" way of the successful cowards of our time.

Some years ago, Mailer was asked by the editors of *One* to contribute an article. The thought of appearing in an avowedly homosexual magazine terrified him at first, he tells us (he has grown a lot since then), but finally he wrote "The Homosexual Villain," one of his best essays. (It's in *Advertisements for Myself*; run, don't walk, to your nearest bookstore.) This essay was one of the turning points of his artistic life, because the writing of it took him into some of the shady areas of latent homosexuality within heterosexuality and because he had the guts to follow his insight wherever it led.

(If he had shut down his attention at some point along this tortuous road, he might today be successful, well-adjusted and a safe liar like the people on best-seller lists.)

"I used to worry that I was queer," Marion Faye says once; "now I know that I'm only half-queer."

The type of perception that can create a Marion Faye (the perfect hero-villain of our time as Faust was of his time) and endow this creation with such insights, is the burning eye that destroys as it creates. As Mailer says, a bit of manhood is lost with every concession we make to authority in which we do not believe; and we have all made so many cowardly concessions in this totalitarian age that truth sets us skittering like rabbits. Yet this burning eye gave Mailer the vision to see that the logical consequence of Western Defense is the total destruction of Europe and that cancer is the natural result of the Protestant deadening of the flesh.

I have been hard on Mailer's contemporaries, and so is he, but it is only because I do not regard art as a toy or a billboard. The little smug concessions and apologetics of the officially endorsed writers of our time—the pretense that the wolves in the executive suite do not eat human flesh, or that Marjorie Morningstar's frigidity is not a pathological condition—create most of the fog and smog in which Man blunders toward the precipice because no light of truth remains to guide him.

Mailer says it simpler when he calls for "a new art of the brave." I am glad he still breathes, eats and pounds the typewriter keys, because he is one hip and balsy guy brave enough to provide such an art.

Nemesis of All Nepotism

From YOU AND YOUR COMPANY (a manual for Prentice-Hall employees):

Employment of Relatives of Employees

"Prentice-Hall does not hire, on a permanent basis, a member of the immediate family of a present employee. 'Immediate family' is interpreted to mean brother, sister, husband, wife, son, daughter, father, mother.

"If two employees working for the Company are subsequently married, one of them must resign. . . ."

Not Everybody Loves 'The Lovers'

The Lovers is a supposedly serious French film containing love scenes which have evoked critical reaction ranging from "strangely beautiful evocations of love" (A. H. Weiler of the N.Y. *Times*) to "unwittingly . . . the funniest sequences of l'amour on the run since Buster Keaton hotfooted it after Zasu Pitts in Griffiths Park" (Jesse Zunsser of *Cue* magazine)—from Hollis Alpert in the *Saturday Review* ("one must compliment [director] Malle for the way he avoids those moments that might cause the tell-tale sniggers of embarrassment in the audience") to Gilbert Seldes in the *Village Voice* ("you ought to see [*The Lovers*] if you like a good giggle. Not a big yak of laughter, but a kind of small laugh. . . . The sweaty closeups of faces are not as funny as the rest of the picture").

Cleveland police didn't think the picture was so funny, however, when they stopped a performance before a capacity audience, arrested the theatre manager, and charged him with exhibiting an obscene movie. In Boston, a Catholic prelate warned a theatre owner that he "would not like" the film even to be exhibited.

The Lovers is on the Legion of Decency's list of "condemned" movies. Ironically, though, after it was first shown at the Venice International Film Festival, Denis Vincent reported, in *L'Express* of Paris, that:

" . . . at its presentation, [*The Lovers*] was violently attacked by a Fascist and anti-French faction under the guise of safeguarding public morals. If Mr. Floris Amananti, Director of the Venice Film Festival, was nevertheless able to successfully defend his choice, it was because Cardinal Roncalli, Patriarch of Venice, honored today under the name of Pope John XXIII, let it be known that he found those attacks hypocritical and poorly inspired."

More irony: in Catholic Brazil, *The Lovers* was originally passed without cuts, although attendance was restricted to those over 18. Then the censors suddenly reversed themselves and demanded deletions. The Brazilian distributor took the case to court. The court ruled against the cuts, basing its decision partially on the support of the Pope when he was Patriarch of Venice.

Meanwhile, back in Paris, French actress Jeanne Moreau, who stars in *The Lovers*—and who, in her latest picture, portrays a nun—was interviewed for a filmed British TV program. Still dressed in nun's garb—and in a church setting—she talked about her love scenes and about sex in general.

The sequence remains on the cutting room floor.

Revelation of the Month

Alfred A. Knopf tells in the *Borzoi Quarterly* of a book "which we first published in 1925 under the title which [Andre] Gide chose for it, *The Vatican Swindle*. But the good, gray New York *Times* refused to accept any advertising for a book so called, and so when we came to reprint, the title was 'translated' into *Lafcadio's Adventures*."

Shadows Move Among Them . . .

The Play of the Week is a comparatively mature dramatic TV program, but even at best, it is a compromise. The Catholic press has been blasting the show—which of course it has every right to do. The producers who give in to the pressure are the ones at fault.

Last season, *The Climate of Eden*—a beautifully weird play by Moss Hart, based on the novel *Shadows Move Among Them* by Edgar Mittelholzer—was featured. Shown below are a few of the subtle changes made in the dialogue.

TELEVISED VERSION

"Do you think he'll like the freckles on your chest?"

"Have you and Mabel been together? . . . I'm her mother, after all . . . and it would be, well, I'm just trying to tell you not to let any foolish ideas of morality prevent you from associating with Mabel if you wish. Mabel's had a lover since she was 16. They had a sweet, joyous affair."

"By the way, pamphlets on birth control are expected—those of you who want this information can get in touch with me."

Advice to the Lovelorn

From *The Crusader*, published for the Negro community of Monroe, N.C., by Robert F. Williams, whom the NAACP suspended for being too militant:

"If you are going to be lynched, try like hell to hold off the mob until an election year."

Horse Meat and Matzoh Meal

Just because, in Texas, a teacher was fired this month for allegedly making anti-Catholic remarks to students—although he claims he merely read aloud portions of the U.S. Constitution dealing with the separation of church and state—it doesn't mean that religious freedom with all its implications is on the wane.

For when, in Kentucky, a druggist expressed concern that a stranger might feed non-kosher food to his missing dog — a space-age terrier named Graymar Sputnik—the local papers publicized his plight with front-page headlines such as: "No Pork for Graymar—It Ain't Kosher!"

The dog was finally found, however, standing in front of a kosher delicatessen—his canine constitution still, presumably, unprofaned.

ORIGINAL PRODUCTION

"Do you think he'll like the freckles on your breasts?"

"Have you and Mabel been sleeping together? . . . I'm her mother, after all . . . and it would be the natural thing if she slept with you. That's why I asked. I'm just trying to tell you not to let any foolish ideas of morality prevent you from associating with Mabel if you wish. Mabel's had a lover since she was 16. They had a sweet, joyous affair. We used to let her sleep with him some nights in his cottage."

"By the way, a fresh shipment of contraceptives and contraceptive appliances is expected—and any of you who might find yourselves running short can call whenever you'd like to replenish your supplies."

LENNY BRUCE

(Continued from Page 16)

added—"I mean there's no homosexual communication between us." This was not a case of protesting-too-much; he was only being honest. And the audience, by its laughter, indicated that maybe the thought had fleetingly crossed their own minds at one level or another.

In a way, that crystallizes the function of all meaningful humor—it serves to bring to the surface what lies beneath.

And if one cannot find anything funny in the immediate incongruity between the possibility of Bobby Franks being snotty and the impossibility of his snottiness being Leopold-and-Loeb's justification for killing him, this reveals not the sickness of the comedian but the sickness of the critic: the depth to which his fear of ideas has driven his freedom to think.

I saw Lenny Bruce again last month. He was performing in a Milwaukee night club. Three plainclothed policemen went into his dressing room. They told a musician to get out. Then they told Lenny that he was not to talk about politics or religion or sex, or they'd yank him right off the stage.

It seems that the night before, a group of 28 Catholics had signed a complaint about his act, which they'd gone to see voluntarily.

Lenny was scared. He toned down his act slightly. One of the cops was even smiling at some of the stuff. They told him later that he shouldn't say "son-of-a-bitch" (in his impression of a white-collar drunk).

In Milwaukee, Lenny was staying at the YMCA. Overheard in the night club:

"Nobody knows where he's staying."
"He's staying at the Y."
"What does he do there?"
"They say he reads a lot."
"He's gonna read himself right out of a job."

In the YMCA cafeteria next morning, we had breakfast—Lenny, me, and a guy named Lou—who was telling us how he had beaten his daughter because she wanted to see *Psycho*. He had seen the movie himself, and he didn't want her to see the scene at the beginning, where a man and a woman, both partially disrobed, are necking in bed.

I told Lou about a friend of mine whose two kids saw a couple in the act of intercourse, and they went home and told her about what they had seen, and yet they seemed like good, healthy kids to me.

"Well, that's okay," said Lou, "as

long as they don't go and whack off."

(Lest anyone get hung up on a semantic obstacle, "whack off" means to masturbate, auto-eroticism, to stroke it, onanism, to jerk off, to play with oneself.)

"You know something," Lenny said to me later—with not a trace of the guilt or shame that permeates Lou—"I masturbate perhaps four times a week."

He is divorced and he is 35 and he is honest.

That's why it was one of those disturbing little moments of truth to realize that Lou—Lenny's antithesis—is nevertheless (but, hopefully, atypical) a fan of Lenny's.

Don't ever go to see Lenny Bruce if you expect him to change your life. Go if you don't need him to change it.

This is the flavor of his work:

"My mother and father have been fanatically devoted to me all my life," he explains, "but their devoted fanaticism is dwarfed by their addiction to Judaism. They are devout orthodox Jews. This has been a big divider between my parents and myself for years. . . ."

"I refused to become *bar mitzvah*. I disgraced the rabbinical teacher by disclosing the fact that he was an out-and-out nut who used to expose himself on the subway platform at 59th Street in Brooklyn during the rush hour. He used to flash just before the doors closed.

"I never told anyone but him, so we made a deal. He told my parents that I couldn't learn and that I had a demoralizing effect on the other children. I heard, years later, that his career had been cut short when someone had shoved him at an inopportune time as the doors closed. . . ."

"Things were looking brighter until I fell in love with a girl—horror of horrors—who wasn't Jewish. But I thought the fact that her father was a doctor would soothe my family. He was the only colored doctor in Freeport, Long Island. . . ."

Sometimes, Bruce is so serious in what he is saying that you become unaware that he is structuring his words to make a point, yes, but also to get a laugh. That's what he gets paid for.

But the laughs don't always come every 15-25 seconds, which is the frequency that he expects of a comedian—at least, that's what he said in the impolite interview in the *Realist*.

So you ask him about this apparent inconsistency.

"Yes, but I'm changing," he replies.

"What do you mean?"

"I'm not a comedian. I'm Lenny Bruce."

SIR REALIST:

The Indiscreet Gap

During this year of graduate work/no income I am dropping all subscriptions except a couple of professional journals—and the *Realist*. This is love, chum, because I am also greatly attached to some of the periodicals being relinquished.

I enjoyed your "Impolite Interview with Paul Krassner" (issue #20). I don't agree with reader Charles R. Cole that the *Realist* suffers a lack of program. Such publications as *Behavioral Science*, *The Humanist*, *The Annals*, *The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* and others can provide the programmatic base for social action in terms of scholarship. But they all have to be appropriately discreet, careful of consequences, responsible to accuracy—and mindful of the impression made on their colleagues. Inevitably they sacrifice the fragile, the unharnessed stage of originality where you risk what you happen to think for what it's worth. For this gap, the *Realist*.

You can't have both. I have just seen a delightful mimeographed communication emanating from a group of political scientists turn into a scholarly journal with the disadvantages of dignity. I worry about your supposition that the *Realist* will one day be written on better paper.

Please stay happy, with anger sparse and specific. . . . Robert Anton Wilson can raise the hair on the back of my neck a bit. I'm mean enough to start off with him as he attacks the bloodthirsty females clamoring for Chessman's death (issue #17). But as his victims lose increasing quantities of blood and skin I begin to feel like the perpetrator rather than the protector of sadism—where is the line? Since I honestly do not know, let him have his say, provided you also put up an occasional peg in the form of your own disagreement for the reader to hang his misgivings on.

Maxine Chambers
Eugene, Oregon

Shopping Guide

. . . You might remind your readers that the *Realist* makes a good present—not too expensive and easy to throw away.

Milton Birnkrant
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Editor's note: We shall be glad to enter subscriptions beginning retroactively with #20, our second anniversary issue. Rate: \$3 for 10 issues; \$5 for 20 issues (or \$5 for two 10-issue gift subs).

Lenny Bruce Revisited

by Paul Krassner

So that there will be no doubts as to my personal bias in this piece, let me state at the outset that (1) Lenny Bruce is a friend of mine, (2) I think he is something of a comic genius, and (3) he is *not* a financial backer of the *Realist* (there are, as yet, none).

Most of the journalistic treatment of Bruce seems to have fallen into two extreme categories: either the writer damns him but avoids specific reference to his material—or the writer blesses him and does nothing but quote from his material.

It was *Time Magazine* which had labeled Bruce "the sickest of them all." The reason? In reference to the Leopold-Loeb case, he had said: "Bobby Franks was snotty." And sick comedy became a recurring theme.

When an Associated Press man interviewed Bruce on the subject, the reporter asked Bruce who or what he hated. He was stuck for an answer.

"Boy, Lenny, you hate so many things, you can't make a choice, can you? Well, take a few things, then."

"I hate to shave. I hate to be alone. I hate liver."

"Come on, stop kidding, that'll never do. What, are you a saint? There's no guy you hate?"

"George Bernard Shaw."

"George Bernard Shaw! What the hell you got against him?"

Actually, Lenny had never even read anything by Shaw. (He reads about two hours a day, mostly non-fiction, ranging from a technical tome on the ICBM to Jean Paul Sartre's study of anti-Semitism to the latest girlie magazine.) But he did know that Shaw was dead and unable to defend himself.

"What have I got against Shaw?" he said to the A.P. man. "Did you ever hear about the Whorten Incident?"

"Yeah, but George Bernard Shaw, that's wild, I mean it's okay, but, well—you're too much . . . another question I want to ask—"

Of course, there was no Whorten Incident. Lenny was simply improvising as he went along.

"Well," he said, "do you feel Shaw was right in the Whorten Incident?"

"Well, Lenny, you know better than anyone that—well, anyway, I have to see something before I believe it."

"Oh, Jeez, it was in all the papers. His heirs had proof."

"Yeah, Lenny, but you know yourself that people are only interested in what they can get out of a person."

"Getting all you can, and sleeping with a guy's wife, are two different things. And you wouldn't believe it, but you talk to the majority of people and—I mean people that are supposed to be bright, literary-oriented people—and you mention the Whorten Incident and they look at you as if you've been smoking the weed or

something."

"Lenny, when are you gonna learn that everyone isn't as honest as you are?"

"What the hell has honesty got to do with a guy getting a guy's wife started on dope and hanging around lesbians — what was the lesbian's name? — and they had her picture plastered all over at the time. Is that a bit—I forgot her name—I think it was Helen. Yeah, that's it, Helen. I almost forgot her name."

"Yeah, that was it, Helen. Boy, you've got a great memory."

The A.P. man left, saying that the story would probably break the next week.

"The next week I looked and looked," says Lenny, "and no A.P. story—and then I saw it in the *National Enquirer*, in John J. Miller's column. It was between Fidel Castro doing one of his unnatural acts and Elvis Presley sticking a fraulein bosom in his paratrooper boots, under the heading: *The Pig That Wrote Pygmalion.*"

Although the impolite interview with Lenny Bruce appeared in the February, 1960 issue of the *Realist* (#15), we didn't meet in person until a couple of months later, when he was in New York for his Town Hall concert. He called me and asked me to meet him at his hotel room.

I was early, but Eric Miller let me in. Eric is the vocalist-guitarist who



was then traveling with Lenny as part of his act. He is Negro, and Lenny did a routine where he, Lenny, playing the part of a "first-plateau liberal," tried to make conversation with Eric, playing the part of an entertainer at an otherwise all-white party.

("That Joe Louis was sure a great fighter," etc.)

The critics blasted Lenny for "the insulting way in which he ridiculed races and creeds" (Gene Knight in the *N.Y. Journal-American*). *Variety's* editor, Abel Green, wrote that the "somewhat bewildered looking young colored guitarist must need his stooging job very badly to stand up as a foil for the cliché insults, humorous though they may be intended."

Eric shook his head as he said to me: "They just don't understand."

Lenny arrived and changed into the tightest pair of trousers I've ever seen. Whether this is a symbolic-physical carryover from the security he felt in the Navy, I'll leave to the parlor psychologists. More significant to me was his response when I told him the negative things Henry Morgan (impolite interview, #19) had said about him.

"Yeah," Lenny mused, "he walked out on my show once. But I still like him. He's the Daddy of us all."

On stage that night, Lenny happened to mention that Eric and he were sharing the same hotel room. It was for the sake of convenience, he

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