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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword.	i
Introduction.	I
1. Pornography as a Religious Expression	7
2. The Morality of Pornography	27
3. The Politics of Pornography.	41
4. Violence	53
5. The Idea of Man.	61
6. The Depersonalized Universe.	67
7. Experientialism	73
8. The Experiential Quest.	81
9. Life as Fiction	93
10. Pornography and the Law.	99
11. Underground Man and Elite Man	107
12. Decapitalization	119
13. The Triumph of Unreason	125
14. Cosmic Blues	133
Epilogue.	137
Appendix I: Legislation Against Pornography.	143
Appendix 2: Environmentalism.	147
Scripture Index	149
Index	151

Foreword

MARK R. RUSHDOONY

Pornography is more than images on paper or film. It is also more than an industry whose principal motivation is an opportunistic attempt to capitalize on man's baser urges.

Pornography is a necessary consequence of a specific worldview, a view of man and his relationship to the world, a perspective that guides and shapes his perceptions of his origin and place in the world. Those who peddle pornography for gain may defend their right to do so and perhaps protest that their product is harmless and/or victimless. However, those who believe in the pornographic worldview go much further than its mere defense—they justify it as essential to true freedom and consequently vilify Christian ethics as the actual true evil. The pornographic worldview is central to modern thought, and its philosophy extends beyond the confines of print and entertainment.

The author of this work was my father, Rousas John Rushdoony (1916–2001). It was first published in 1976; its original title was *The Politics of Pornography*. The title's connotations notwithstanding, my father did not intend to conduct an analysis of how politicians, judges, and legislatures handle the issues surrounding pornography. His purpose, rather, was to discuss how Enlightenment thought and its revolutionary ideas have affected the form

and order of the laws and culture of Western society. This book exposes the pornographic philosophy of man, the world and life view that declares the coarse and vulgar to be good or even hailed as a “higher” way.

Pornography is more than what you see; it propagates a specific view of man, morality, and life. It is not, at root, about titillation, though that is how its peddlers often market it to consumers. This book is not about pornography as an industry. To approach pornography merely as the impropriety of certain pictures or descriptions is to completely miss the very real ideology behind it. This book confronts the intellectual props on which pornography rests, the philosophy of perversion, the worldview of man freed from God and His law. The real horror of pornography is its positive declaration of a new moral ethic. The modern pornographers claim the moral high ground and point an accusing finger at Christian ethics. In this, they are the heirs of the eighteenth century Enlightenment, a conscious revival of the man-centered (humanistic) thought of the ancient world as a rejection of the God-centered (theistic) thought of Christendom. In their particular industry, they follow the thinking of the Marquis de Sade (1740–1814).

When we think of the Marquis de Sade, we too quickly dismiss him as a sexual deviant, one whose name is forever linked to “sadism,” deriving pleasure or sexual gratification from the infliction of pain on or the debasement of others. He was, certainly, a sadist, but why? He was not insane or mentally infirm. De Sade was a logical Enlightenment thinker, who took his humanistic rejection of God to its logical conclusion. De Sade was a thoroughly reprobate man, who refused to consider his perverse ideas and actions as in any way inferior. Rather, he defended them, characterizing them as moral, and he redefined both God and Christian morality to be truly evil. It is necessary to understand de Sade’s thinking in order to understand the primary emphasis of modern thought since the Enlightenment.

De Sade rejected God completely, but in doing so refused to consider himself the offender. Rather, he whipped up moral outrage against God and relished his self-appointed role as His accuser.

He rejected even the Enlightenment's neutered co-opting of Christianity's God (a stopgap "Deity Lite" to provide a "first cause") as both unwelcome and unnecessary. De Sade's thinking was dismissive of any god as a limiting factor on man, thus freeing himself from all moral constraints. Having denied God, de Sade denied the fall and sin. He saw the world in a more consistently man-centered perspective than others of his time and lived his life accordingly. He denied any need for limitations on man and therefore condemned them as illegitimate. He repudiated the idea of crime, regarding it as an illegitimate imposition on man's freedom. The "criminal" was, to de Sade, the truly free man.

In a purely naturalistic world, de Sade saw everything natural as normative. What Christianity termed fallen and depraved, he proclaimed ideal. What man imagined or desired was seen as natural and hence permissible. The exception, of course, was Christianity, which he felt should be outlawed. In this, also, de Sade was a forerunner of all those who seek total freedom for everything except Christianity, a policy now well-entrenched in schools, courts, legislatures, city halls, and statehouses alike.

De Sade was not the source of modern thought: he was its forerunner. He spent much of his time in prison and did not directly influence many. His lasting impact stems from the clarity of his expression and his consistency. De Sade understood the implications of humanistic thought and dared to go beyond merely developing its implications theoretically: he acted upon them. Modern humanists are just now arriving at the more consistent worldview of de Sade and proactively imprinting it upon our culture. Increasingly, this is not an activity limited to brothels, sleazy magazines, "adult" websites, and movies. It is now even a part of our educational system, our laws, our courts, and the arts.

Pornography cannot be dealt with in isolation from its concomitant worldview, one that seeks not simply to excuse rebellion from God, but to defend it as true freedom. To reject theistic thought is to reject theistic ethics. The Enlightenment thinkers emphasized the supremacy of human reason and saw nature as the source of law, thus allowing themselves the luxury of subjectively

picking and choosing what elements of the Christian tradition were reasonable and reflective of the laws of nature.

Charles Darwin, however, destroyed the possibility of nature as a source of law. He revived the ancient pagan idea of chaos as regenerative. In seeking a naturalistic mechanism for biological evolution, Darwin enthroned randomness as the operational basis of nature. A nature ruled by chance could not be a source of law.

As evolutionary thought stretched Darwin's thousands of years into millions, modern thought also lost faith in reason. Given the new presuppositions about man in evolutionary anthropology, reason came to be seen as a latecomer on the human scene. Darwinism had cast down the two pillars with which modern man had sought to legitimize his humanism. Both reason and natural law were increasingly regarded as artificial constructs borrowed from theistic thought. Others waited until after Charles Darwin to expel God from His universe. De Sade had anticipated the drift of Western thought two generations previously. By the latter half of the nineteenth century, Western thought had boomeranged back to de Sade's presuppositions: man comes from chaos and so chaos is legitimate; all is permissible except Christianity. By the end of the twentieth century, such thinking became endemic, extending well beyond intellectual circles.

The theory of biological evolution was a necessary development of humanistic thought. This is why Darwin's *The Origin of Species* was an immediate success and why the theory remains entrenched, despite the continued long-term discrediting of its best "proofs." The facts were wrong; backpedaling on actual evidence was rife. But the theory remained and shall remain because men in rebellion against God, who claim a strictly naturalistic basis for reality, need a scientific rationale for the elimination of God, even as a first cause. Contrary to its own view of man and culture, evolutionary thought drags man down in its continual attempt to view him and his society in terms of the primitive, even animalistic, urges of its mythological early man. Evolutionary thought, which controls most areas of human action, pulls man downward, or, as Cornelius Van Til described it, toward "integration into the void."

My father shows that the backward look of evolutionary thought has been apparent in various areas since the Enlightenment and Darwin. The myth of the “noble savage” continues to control anthropology. The Romantic movement idealized the rebel as the true progressive. The ancient pagan idea of chaos as regenerative gave rise to a Western faith in the cathartic nature of revolutions. In our day, environmentalism sees untouched nature as inviolable, often to the point of pantheism. Additionally, modern art sees the chaotic as meaningful and the primitive as pure. Psychoanalysis looks to man’s assumed primeval past for its framework. In a purely naturalistic world ruled by chaos, the natural law and reason of the Enlightenment has given way to the primitivism evolutionary thought prescribed.

In the naturalistic worldview, man’s exercise of freedom justifies the depersonalization and abuse of others. The compulsory disintegration of man’s dignity as a creature of God is itself a form of hostility. This degradation of man and society is a road to barbarism, and many films portray such a future for the world. We cannot arrest this trend without acknowledging its root cause in the Enlightenment view of man and Darwin’s subsequent abuse of science as a means of promoting that philosophy.

The pornographic worldview of de Sade justified man’s total “freedom of expression.” God was denied as the source of order. In the naturalistic worldview, in fact, the Biblical God was an imposition on man’s total freedom. Thus, de Sade took pleasure in corrupting the good, the godly, and the innocent. He reveled in evil precisely because Christianity called it evil.

Pornography is not the problem of our day; it is a symptom, a particular manifestation of the humanistic, evolutionary worldview. It is one aspect of a worldview that sees power as coming from below. In the case of pornography, it sees the vital aspect of sex as its aggression and exploitation. Violence is thus closely associated with sex in the modern mind because evolution’s primitivism carries with it a sympathetic rationale for man’s baser urges. My father points out that medieval man’s aspirations were heavenward, whereas modern man’s are sexual. Sex ostensibly puts the experience of primal power within man’s reach. While the Enlighten-

ment criticized Christianity as the opiate of the masses, we're far more justified today in regarding sex as the opiate of modern man. Increasingly taxed and regulated, modern man sees sexual license as his essential freedom.

Based as it is on the naturalistic view of man, the worldview of de Sade and his followers goes beyond "consenting adults." People are used as objects, but exploitation and manipulation prove insufficiently satisfying. Primal urges even justify violence. Violence is a purer exercise of raw power. Hence, pornography in the twentieth century degenerated from smiling pinups to images of the violent and the vulgar. Sadism itself is more than a sexual urge; it is a fulfillment of humanistic man's spiritual quest to "be as gods" (Gen. 3:5) over others. Even the arrogant justification of these urges is a means of feeling superior to others. Without God, there can be no crime. The truly free man will then not only commit crimes, he will defend them as true morality and destroy all order and law that seeks to preclude them. This, of course, includes Christianity.

The modern justification of pornography follows de Sade in its consistent humanism. Once God is denied, His law and ethic must also be denied. De Sade self-consciously knew what he believed and why he believed it. He was neither sick nor insane; he was evil. He saw nature not as a realm of law and reason, but of violence and the rule of raw power. Seeing nature in this way made him reject the supernaturalism of Christianity and its God as "unnatural" impositions. Thus, morality and law were rejected. De Sade's pornographic mind was less about lust than it was about living out his world and life view. The post-Christian West has, with great rapidity, been catching up with de Sade.

Western culture since the Enlightenment has been recreating itself with each generation's image of man. As that humanistic image is clarified, man becomes less and less the caretaker of culture and more its destroyer. Man's image of himself has created a desire for pleasure and gratification. Pornography is one expression of man's desire to live in terms of his every urge. De Sade was a forerunner of such thinking, but not its direct source. My father further developed the outworking of Enlightenment thought in his post-

humously published follow-up *To Be as God: A Study of Modern Thought since the Marquis de Sade* (Ross House Books, 2003).

Not only is pornography more than simple pictures, it is more than actual sexuality. It involves what my father calls “paper sexuality,” wherein people desire to voyeuristically observe more than they are capable of practicing. Modern man loves fiction and has a hard time dealing with reality, as witness the explosion of psychoanalysis in the past century.

Pornography is part of this view of “life as fiction.” It prefers the inner world of the imagination. Pornographic images and stories are thus never constrained by a felt need to be realistic, for they are intended to satisfy the inner world of the imagination, a fantasy world where people can be manipulated and violated without consequences.

The modern mind resists all attempts to control evil, particularly evils that it piously characterizes as “self expression.” It is ready to oppose all “censorship” as a matter of principle and defend such opposition to standards as a moral stand in itself. This, however, was exactly the position of the Marquis de Sade, who believed that freedom must be total and that whatever the mind of man conceived was good. Pornography today is likewise defended as an exploration of the human consciousness, one which, we must remember, is supposedly rooted in a pre-human mind and experience. Any naturalistic argument against perversity (“It is unnatural”) will self-implode, for what is unnatural in a supernatural, Christian, theistic worldview may well be entirely normative in the naturalistic evolutionary worldview of modern humanism. If it is not, the strictures of society can be blamed, and the prodding of our modern arts and entertainment industry, with the help of some liberal judges, may soon make it normal. Once something exists, naturalistic reasoning can defend it. The Christian worldview is based on a *supernatural* perspective and cannot be defended by *naturalistic* argument. Truth and ethics must be grounded on God’s revealed Word, not on man’s perception of what is normative.

Neither can we oppose evil by tradition or community standards, which are no better than what the Apostle Paul called “the

commandments and doctrines of men” (Col. 2:22. The Victorian era could not stem the tide of immorality by erecting standards of behavior. It failed to rein in the emerging secular worldview by the subjective, personalized moral code of Pietism. The Victorian faith was not in *God* but in *goodness*. It did not seek to submit to the Word of God, but to “be good like Jesus.” We stop immorality not by manners or conventions but by godly morality, which must begin with the regenerate heart of a new creature in Christ. To be moral, man requires the grace of God, by means of which he learns to progressively abandon his sinful tendencies and live more and more unto righteousness. The humanistic worldview, when stripped of its borrowings from Christian ethics, leads downward “into the void” of the pornographic worldview. The former is the progenitor of the latter and can never be successfully used to oppose it. The only alternative is the Biblical worldview.

In contrast to de Sade and modern man’s view of power from below, Biblical faith sees power and order from above and looks to God’s grace for a part therein. The failure of the churches to present a Biblical morality ultimately allowed the humanistic worldview to thoroughly control social debate. The humanistic worldview of de Sade and Darwin cannot be challenged by a church that denies that Biblical law is the objective and authoritative Word of God, a church that enthrones man’s subjective feelings and glibly labels the results as the leading of God’s Spirit. The primary leading of God’s Spirit is always in greater faithfulness to His revealed Word.

We cannot stop the pornographic worldview merely by opposing it. Neither can we stop pornography by removing it from the internet, newsstands, cable, or satellite networks. The worldview that justifies evil and demands the right to debase and pollute must be opposed by its sole antithesis, the Biblical worldview. The modern faith in man and the ultimacy of his urges must be countered with the claims of God as the Sovereign dispenser of law and grace. Man must approach God in faith and respond to Him in faithful obedience. The theistic worldview created Western civilization. The naturalistic worldview is consistently suicidal and pulls down men and women, marriages, social institutions, and, ulti-

mately, culture itself. The gospel of Jesus Christ opens up a supernatural worldview that offers meaning, hope, and purpose. The choice for both man and his culture is life or death, the Kingdom of God and His Christ or the kingdom of man.

Introduction

For many generations, pornography has been catering “under the counter” garbage to the prurient. In recent years, a marked change has occurred, one which looks to the Marquis de Sade for inspiration. For Sade, pornography was not garbage but the voice of liberation, the declaration of humanistic independence from God and all law.

The new pornography thus differs from the old: it is now a crusade for a new freedom and an all-out war against God and His law. Even the lowest of pornographic potboilers have picked up this note. The pornography factories still turn out the old garbage, but now with a difference: it has become *garbahzh*, pretentious garbage masquerading as the new enlightenment and the new freedom.

This new pornography, first conceived by Sade and now a part of the Sadean revival and influence, will not be eliminated by moral indignation or by legislation. It has religious roots which are deeply imbedded in modern culture, in the denial of the Biblical doctrine of the fall of man.

It is quite likely that the upper classes in the days of Louis XV were far more dedicated to what is now called the “new morality”

than people are today. Moral cynicism and contempt of rules ran deep. Sade's practices seem to have characterized more than a few in his day. Sade's problem was his insistence on justifying his perversions — by means of logic, no less. Other men bought off the lower-class people whom they used in their perversions; Sade tended instead, when not denying the charges, to vindicate his perversions on moral grounds. The deistic culture of the day had no use for the Biblical God and His moral law, but philosophy and science still required the God-idea of Scripture as a limiting concept, and as a means of assuring a fundamental law structure and order in the universe. Their intellectual position was best expressed by Voltaire, who did not want his servant to hear of his table conversation, with its religious and moral cynicism, lest his servant become an atheist and rob him. The order that scientists and philosophers affirmed and desired was still, to some degree, that of the Bible. In his day, the Marquis de Sade was regarded as a naive and dangerous fool who could not distinguish between private practice and public policy.

The Marquis's thesis, however, was that the Christian God, if He existed, should be murdered and His law-order destroyed. Sade carried the exaltation of Nature to its limit. If Nature instead of God is ultimate, then there is *no fall*, and man and the world, as they now exist, are normative. Thus, to call anything sin was for Sade the ultimate offense against Nature and man.

The world then was not ready for Sade's ideas. Hegel was preparing the way, as well as Max Stirner, Nietzsche, Darwin, Freud, and others, until the time came when even the churches were ready, implicitly where not explicitly, to declare the death of God. Theologians like Paul Tillich, according to his widow, Hannah Tillich, in *From Time to Time* (1973), and Rollo May, in *Paulus* (1973), openly practiced the new morality without any qualms. The way had been prepared. From being the most banned of writers (not to mention his imprisonment), Sade became the most essential and respected of philosophers; his works were extensively published and his philosophy highly praised. The world had come to accept Sade's fundamental premise: there is no fall of man such as that declared in Scripture.

The modern assumption of this premise has far-reaching implications. If there is no fall, and no God, then there is no sin, no crime, no offense which can be charged against man. The sociologist Emile Durkheim wrote "On the Normality of Crime" in *The Rules of Sociological Method*. For Durkheim, the criminal is regarded as an evolutionary pioneer, developing the new form or lifestyle for mankind to adopt. Thus, "Crime, for its part, must no longer be conceived as an evil that cannot be too much suppressed." It may be "an anticipation of future morality," of man's next step in his collective or individual evolution. With respect to future cultures, "crime sometimes helps to determine the form they will take."¹ The activities of Sade and of all perverts and criminals are, in this view, at worst simply another lifestyle, as legitimate as all others, and at best possibly the next step in evolution.

This, however, is not all. If there is no fall, then there is no sickness. Sade was insistent: nature, in all its forms — murder, rape, theft, disease, death, etc. — is as normative as life and health. By accepting nature as normative, we have no right to criticize anything in the world of nature. If God is the creator of nature, then God and His law are in constant judgment over the world of nature, including man. There are therefore both good and evil in terms of God's law. To go beyond good and evil, both Sade and Nietzsche recognized, means proclaiming the death of God and abolishing the concept of the fall. Men have not yet followed Sade as closely here, but there are hints already that sickness ("mental" or "physical") and death are being given equal status with health and life. The British psychiatrist R.D. Laing has asserted that the mentally sick are in rebellion against the old world order and are therefore the healthier persons in our midst. A. Alvarez, in *The Savage God: A Study of Suicide* (1970), traces the growing reevaluation of suicide and death as against life.

All of this has had a profound effect. Even in most church circles, the idea of the fall has receded, and the result is a practical anti-nomianism. The actual break with traditional Biblical morality has not yet been made by most church members, but a deep erosion is

1. Emile Durkheim, "On the Normality of Crime," in *Theories of Society*, ed. T. Parsons, E. Shils, K. D. Naegle, and J. R. Pitts (New York: Free Press, 1961), 2:874.

preparing the way for it. Among some of the younger element of neo-evangelicalism (and some “Jesus freaks”), this step has been taken. The *Los Angeles Star* carried in its “Sex Letter Box” a letter from a La Verne, California, youth (“Wally”) giving his address and asking for female responses. The letter read in part:

I am a 25 year old male and a born-again Christian. However, my attitude on sex is different than most people who say they are born-again Christians. I would like to know if there are any females out there who feel and think as I do. Ones who are spiritual-minded and want to serve Jesus. Who also believe God created sex for us to enjoy. I would like to meet you for spiritual and physical contact. I love sex and will do anything to please a woman sexually. I love to suck c— and a—. I love to have my d— sucked and to just plain f—. Will do whatever a female asks me to do. I would like to know if there are any born-again Christian females out there who feel as I do. The first girl I had sex with, I met at a church party of the Mormon Church, a friend took me to. After going out on dates for a while, we started f— in the back seat of my station wagon. It was really good. I also know that she was having sex with other guys, which never bothered me. We went to church together at the Mormon Church and also at a Baptist Church and an Assembly of God Church. I have gone to many churches. There is one God and one Saviour, the Son of God, Jesus Christ.²

True, this is not a routine example, but it is not as rare as some would prefer to believe. In lecturing to campus groups, I have found that, with the de-emphasis on the fall of man and original sin, such pseudo-Christianity is definitely on the rise. The logic of the new evangelism, with its “soft sell” and its emphasis on what God can do for you instead of what He requires, leads readily to this kind of religiosity.

With the sentiment expressed by “Wally,” we should be prepared for other letters from less devout persons. A letter in the same issue of the *Los Angeles Star*, written by a young man (I.L.), describes the joys of incest. As “a little shrimp,” his mother indoctrinated him about the joys of incest, while his father instructed his sister. Later, brother and sister copulated regularly. I.L. concludes his letter:

2. “Sexy Jesus Freak,” in “Sex Letter Box,” *Los Angeles Star*, 10 October 1973.

Even today, after twenty years, I never got tired of f— my beautiful mother and sister. Although my sister and I are married now, we still get together with my mother and father. My mother is fifty-five now but she is just as beautiful as ever. My mother loves to seduce young boys. She hires them to cut her lawn and after feeding them with hamburgers and hot dogs, she has them f— her in no time. She loves their young and clean c—.

We all have been brainwashed to believe that incest is dirty although we know it is very clean and beautiful. I know of no men who have f— their mothers or their sisters not to have been delighted with the experience.³

With the acceptance of the Sadean premise that there is no fall and that nature is normative, there may be an emotional resistance to such practices, but there can be no logical objection. Short of a return to Biblical faith, there can be no adequate resistance to either the practices or the literature of pornography.

Meanwhile, a wide variety of publications promotes the new normality. Using questionnaires, these publications ask such questions as: Do you have hang-ups that make you cringe at various sexual practices? Do you regard some practices as perversions and as abnormal? Are you insistent on physical cleanliness? (After all, in a world beyond good and evil, being dirty and smelly is as good as being clean.) If you have any such inhibitions, you are clearly not normal. If you have no such inhibitions, then you are clearly a liberated man and a great lover. At least, that is the plainly stated conclusion of the many questionnaires that appear in these publications.

Sade thus is the most modern of men. He is ahead of these liberated people in that he openly vindicated murder and all other offenses. If there be no God and no fall, then nature is normative, Sade held, and *nothing* can be called a sin or a crime, and all things are permitted except Christianity. The world will soon catch up with Sade, unless it abandons its humanistic foundations.

3. *Ibid.*

I

PORNOGRAPHY AS A RELIGIOUS EXPRESSION

It is a common error to assume, because pornography exists and is widely promoted on a highly profitable commercial level, and because moral decay is also widespread, that the one is a product of the other. Pornography is commonly seen as the cause of sexual license, crime, and delinquency. It is more than slightly possible that both pornography and moral decay are products of something else. This does not mean that pornography cannot cause delinquency and crime, or that delinquency and crime cannot promote pornography. We live in a world where an effect commonly is itself a cause of still something else, and is itself a product of many causes. These causes cannot be bypassed in favor of a simplistic answer that assumes that one cause leads to one effect. However, it is equally dangerous to overlook a major cause simply because causality in the universe is multiple. Knowledge is possible as major causes are analyzed and isolated. Thus, our concern with pornography is to understand a major cause thereof and to understand it in the context of history.

Whenever a culture is expansive, it delights in itself and faces other societies imperialistically confident that it is the bearer of light to other men. This imperialism may not be at all military; it can be cultural, educational, religious, or philosophical. The expan-

sive culture is assured that it has attained maturity and that it has something to give to other men. It sees other men, in Rudyard Kipling's phrase, as "lesser breeds without the Law." Just as Kipling in his "Recessional" saw this maturity and superiority as a moral responsibility, so men from antiquity to the present have often seen their cultural maturity as grounds for a benevolent expansiveness.

However, where despair with respect to history sets in, a culture sickens of its achievements and despises its maturity. In an aggressive and growing culture, youth has an important function and age is held in great respect. In a sick society, age is despised and youth feels trapped and rebellious. Men rebel against what they see as an empty maturity in favor of a new start, a new beginning. Since men cannot become young again, they seek to destroy the forms of age. A few generations ago, young children dressed like adults and were men and women by the time they reached their teens. Maturity was highly desired and eagerly sought. Men went to sea at the ages of eight and nine — Admiral Farragut at fifty-nine was a fifty-year veteran of the U.S. Navy, and his case is by no means unusual. Everything man desired belonged to the world of maturity; hence, in such a culture, the young hastened to be mature.

The reverse is now true. The old dress like the young and seek childishly to recapture the past by using the forms of youth. But more is involved than an attempt to recapture the past. There is an attempt to recapture the freshness and opportunity of youth. Youth becomes the style-setter and pacemaker for many. But youth is also easily dissatisfied: it seeks a new beginning outside its culture, a new world with a new man, an essentially religious quest. Culturally, this means a revulsion against the established and mature norms and standards — that is, the Establishment — and a worship instead of primitivism. As Baird observed, "Cultural failure accelerates primitivism, whatever the type."¹ The myth of the noble savage then abounds.

In decaying Rome, Tacitus, his eyes on the evils of Rome, wrote "Germany and Its Tribes." The Germans, he asserted, unlike

1. James Baird, *Ishmael: A Study of the Symbolic Mode in Primitivism* (New York: Harper & Row, Torchbooks, 1956), 16.

Rome, “are free from all taint of intermarriage with foreign nations, and... they appear as a distinct, unmixed race, like none but themselves.” They are men of courage who do not run away in battle, and the military leader regards it as a disgrace “to be surpassed in valor, a disgrace for his followers not to equal the valor of the chief. And it is an infamy and a reproach for life to have survived the chief, and returned from the field.” The women are paragons of virtue, Tacitus reported, and adultery is “very rare” and its punishment prompt. No abortion is practiced. Marriages come late, but without problems, and so on. The point is clear: Rome is effete, effeminate and degenerate, whereas the primitive Germans are pure, courageous, and virile.

When the medieval culture became rebellious and saw no hope in itself, it too began to idealize the primitive. The early explorers of the Americas encountered cannibals everywhere and yet commonly rhapsodized about the glories of the pure and free primitive man.²

The French Revolution was preceded by similar idealization of the primitive, and the noble savage became a major article of humanistic faith. Institutions and civil life were held to be corrupting influences, and man’s future required a return to primitivism. The noble-savage ideal meant a revolt against reason in favor of feelings, and a hatred of the disciplined in favor of the spontaneous.³

The twentieth century has seen a major emphasis on primitivism in the arts as well as in society and dress. Anthropology has very powerfully been under the influence of the old myth of the primitive as ideal and has been a major purveyor of that faith.

An important aspect of primitivism is the widespread faith that truly primitive man was beyond law, and beyond good and evil. Law and morality suggest discipline and tradition; they suggest

2. See J. H. Elliott, *The Old World and the New, 1492-1650* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 24ff., 42f. The “classical doctrines of the Golden Age had created an awareness that the solitary forest-dweller could also represent man in a state of primaevial innocence, before he was corrupted by civil life” (42). See also Louis B. Wright, *Gold, Glory and the Gospel* (New York: Atheneum, 1970), 225f.

3. Hoxie Neale Fairchild, *The Noble Savage: A Study in Romantic Naturalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1928).

deep roots and grave responsibilities, whereas a dying culture hungrily for the antithesis of order and even welcomes violence as an antidote. It wants the raw blood of birth and the anti-rational world of the uncorrupted savage, because it believes that primitive man was somehow *before* and *beyond* the law, *outside* morality, religion, and responsibility. His natural instincts produce whatever society man needs with affront to none. Thus the interest is not only in primitive man as such, but in the faith and religious world-view of primitive man. (The idea of "primitive" man is itself a myth; it is utterly without reality. Here it is used in the sense of tribal and fertility cult societies.)

The fertility cult is basic to an understanding of primitive cultures. In the fertility cult and its ritual festivals, regeneration is found in chaos. The perspective of all non-Biblical religions is in essence evolutionary. The gods themselves are a product of chaos, and all things rise and fall, often in unceasing cycles, but chaos remains. Chaos is ever fertile, ever potent, and when order and maturity become too pronounced in a culture, a return to revitalizing chaos is necessary.

Examples of the belief in revitalizing chaos are many. Among the Ba-Ila of Northern Rhodesia, incest is normally regarded as monstrous and dreadful, but in a crisis, as necessary and regenerating. With regard to the Ba-Ila belief in the power or force pervading all things, Edwin Smith and Andrew Dale have noted:

... that the neutral force may be turned to good or bad use explains many curious things in the practices of the Ba-ila. Incest is one of the things that brings men into violent connection with it, and is therefore taboo. The incestuous person is expressly called a *muloshi* ("a warlock"), a trafficker with forbidden powers. But incest under certain conditions, i.e., when a man is wishful of special good fortune, is not only permitted but enjoined. So with words. Phallic songs that on ordinary occasions are *tonda*, must be used on the occasion of a funeral, during smelting operations, and on other occasions when the forces are intimately in evidence. In normal times the abnormal is taboo, but in abnormal times the abnormal things are done to restore the normal condition of affairs.⁴

4. Edwin W. Smith and Andrew Murray Dale, *The Ila-Speaking Peoples of Northern Rhodesia* (New Hyde Park, NY: University Books, 1968), 2:83f.

In modern society, the same faith manifests itself in the recourse of some white men to a black prostitute (seen as an act of chaos) for “a change of luck,” in a revolution, and in the search for a renewed potency through acts of sexual perversion. In ancient society, bestiality often served as a religious act of chaos to regenerate man and society, and Apuleius’ *Golden Ass* gives evidence of this faith. In Egypt, men mated with the sacred crocodile, and, in the nineteenth century, C. S. Sonnini and Sir Richard Burton reported the continuing existence of this practice in Egypt, where, as “the sovereignest charm for rising to rank and riches,” men drove off the male, leaving the female crocodile turned on her back and helpless, “to supplant him in this frightful intercourse.”⁵ Among many desert peoples the revitalizing act of chaos involves a female camel. This, however, is a risky act; a kick from a testy camel has more than once suddenly transformed a desert male into a eunuch. The Roman circus games were closely related to and a form of the fertility cult. Women were subjected to rape by animals (the human world of reason and order regenerated and fertilized by chaos and the lower world), and sometimes small boys were assaulted by men dressed as satyrs.⁶ The role of the Christians in the arena was related to this religious function. The Christians, seen as subverters of Rome, claimed to represent a higher order; they were therefore turned over to brutal soldiers for rape, and to animals for killing, in order to demonstrate Rome’s own faith, which was in revitalizing, primordial power as it revealed itself in the genius and might of Rome.

Chaos and acts of chaos reintroduce raw primordial power into man and society, according to fertility cult doctrine. As Roger Caillois expressed it,

Conversely, the impurity acquires a mysterious power, or what amounts to the same thing, manifests or is proof of it for the person heroically exposed to the perils of sacrilege. When Oedipus, accused of the grave abominations of parricide and incest, steps on Athenian soil, he seems to be sacred and proclaims himself a source of benediction for his country. Among the Ba-ila, nothing is more

5. Sir Richard Burton, *Love, War and Fancy: The Customs and Manners of the East* (New York: Ballantine, 1964), 227.

6. Daniel P. Mannix, *Those About to Die* (New York: Ballantine, 1958), 53ff., 176.

monstrous or dreadful than incest, yet one wishing to succeed in his enterprise commits incest with his sister, for "this imbues his talisman with great power." The Thongan who wants to hunt a hippopotamus has sexual intercourse with his daughter. Thus he becomes a "murderer," but he now has the power to accomplish "great things on the river." There is a tribe in the vicinity of Lake Nyasa where incest with a mother or sister makes the person daring it immune to bullets. By violating the most sacred of taboos, man acquires the perilous cooperation of supernatural forces, almost like signing a pact with the devil in order to become a sorcerer. Through incest, the daring one is immediately transformed into a sorcerer, but only for a limited time, for the accomplishment of a particular deed. He must ritually brave the hazards of sacrilege in order to place himself beyond the reach of profane dangers.⁷

The fertility cult festival requires the temporary overturning of established order. The wife of the king is possessed by a condemned convict, who rules during the festival period. Robbing, burning, pillaging, raping, adultery, homosexuality, and bestiality become the law and order of the festival. Not all of these features are present in every fertility cult festival, but all of these and more generally mark the various cults. Of one contemporary tribal culture, Caillois notes, "Ordinarily, these incestuous unions cause a chill of terror and abomination, and the guilty are condemned to the most vigorous punishments. Yet in the course of the festival, they are permitted and obligatory." They are, moreover, clearly "ritualistic and holy."⁸

These acts of chaos are holy, and the fertility cult festival was and is a revival meeting of such religions because the source of power is in chaos. Biblical religion declares that all power comes from the sovereign God who absolutely governs and predestines all things. He is the source of all order and, being wholly righteous, expresses Himself in law, so that the universe is a law-structure. God's law-order is an expression of His power. However, where chaos rather than God is the source of all the universe of gods, men, and things, men must seek power and regeneration from chaos. Biblical regeneration is from God alone. Fertility cult regeneration is from chaos. Each religion is intensely concerned with personal

7. Roger Caillois, *Man and the Sacred*, trans. Meyer Barash (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1959), 47f.

8. *Ibid.*, 117.

and social regeneration, and each has its fountainhead or source for the revitalization of man and history.

In the one case, knowledge, science, order, morality, and maturity are the marks of a regenerate order. In the other case, mystical awareness, magic, chaos, amorality, and primitivism are the marks of a regenerate order. The golden age is the age of chaos: it is work-free and morality-free. In many societies, the child does not leave the world of chaos for the world of order until a formal initiation officially separates him from the chaos from whence he came. As Caillois notes,

It is a fact that, before the initiation ceremonies that introduce him into the social organization, the youth's activity is not governed by the taboos limiting the adult's behavior. For example, before marriage, in many cultures, the adolescent's sex life is generally the freest imaginable. It seems that then the individual is not yet part of the order of the universe, and as a result there is no risk in disturbing it by transgressing laws that do not concern him. He lives on the margins, so to speak, of the regulated universe, just as he lives on the border of organized society. Only half of him belongs to the cosmos, for he has not yet broken all his ties to the mythical universe, the beyond, where his ancestors have extracted his soul and caused it to be reborn in his mother's bosom.⁹

At this point, a marked difference between Biblical and non-Biblical religions is immediately apparent. As Louis H. Gray wrote, with respect to circumcision, "It is a significant fact that circumcision, whatever explanation may be alleged for it, is almost invariably performed before or at the age of puberty, or at latest before marriage. The sole exceptions to this rule occur among the Hebrews."¹⁰ Biblical circumcision was performed according to God's law on the eighth day, at the time when the infant's blood was able to coagulate. In the early church, after the pattern of the Mosaic law, infant baptism was also practiced on the eighth day.¹¹ The child, as soon as his blood could coagulate, was formally initi-

9. *Ibid.*, 106.

10. Louis H. Gray, "Circumcision, Introductory," in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. James Hastings (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1932), 3:662. Other cultures than that of the Hebrews had early circumcision, but it is not our concern to discuss the reasons why. Essentially, Gray's position is correct; there was a marked line of division between the Hebrew and the pagan attitudes and practices with respect to circumcision.

11. See R. J. Rushdoony, *Institutes of Biblical Law* (Nutley, NJ: Craig Press, 1973).

ated into the covenant and the responsibilities of covenant law. He was thus always under law and under God. In pagan circumcision, the necessities of the law-word are normally postponed as long as the culture deems it wise.

In the ancient world, the annual festival of Saturnalia allowed adults to return to the reviving and regenerating fountain of chaos, during which time all law and order were ritually forbidden. In the Middle Ages, notwithstanding the irritation of churchmen, the festival survived under Christian guise. Thus, the *Deposuit* was annually celebrated (also known as the Feast of Fools). During the service, when the Magnificat was chanted, the words *deposuit potentes* (“He hath put down the mighty from their seats”) were made the excuse for the transfer of power to the Lord of the feast, and the beginning of a riot. Similar to this was the Abbot of Miskilthorpe, the Boy Bishop, and like ceremonies. The Council of Basel in 1445 forbade any continuation of these practices.¹²

Caillois sees a connection between the primitive festival and modern warfare. Although warfare is a time of excess violence and outrage, and although it is seen especially as a “milestone of time” (as ending an age and beginning another),¹³ the analogy should not be pressed too far. Curiously, ages that experience a marked revival of primitivism — for instance, the Renaissance and the twentieth century — are also times of heightened and total war.

More important is the fact that the myth of evolution has greatly aided the revival of faith in chaos as regenerative. Evolution no less than creationism is a matter of faith. Both are incapable of scientific demonstration, and the basic proofs of both rest in an act of faith concerning the nature of the universe. The great modern formulations of the myth of evolution were authored by Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel and Charles Darwin. Combined, their work meant a religious change in Western civilization. Hegel’s work thoroughly prepared the minds of men to receive Darwin, so much so that when the first edition of Darwin’s *Origin of Species* appeared on November 24, 1859, all 1,250 copies were sold out on

12. G. G. Coulton, *Medieval Panorama: The English Scene from Conquest to Reformation* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1939), 606.

13. Caillois, *op. cit.*, 170.

the day of publication.¹⁴ Contrary to popular myth, the book was very happily received, even by most churchmen.

Let us now examine a number of coincidences, from the era of Rousseau and the French Revolution to the present. We have already cited one major strand of thought, the evolution myth, now the dominant framework for man's evaluation of himself. Its connection with the cults of chaos is an obvious one. All things have evolved out of primeval chaos, and the result for human thought is what Cornelius Van Til has called "integration into the void." Man understands himself now, not in terms of God or in terms of reason, but in terms of child psychology, a study of primitive man, animal psychology, the unconscious, and a backward look. Sigmund Freud saw man as being basically determined by the remnants in man's unconscious of the primordial horde, the id and the ego, so that this need, to cope with himself, is to understand that his will to live is the desire for parricide, incest, and cannibalism.¹⁵ Both the will to live and the will to death emerge out of man's primordial past, a world of chaos, and man must understand his past to live in the present. Freud saw no hope for regeneration, but some of his followers insisted on affirming hope by means of eros. Marcuse saw Freud's conception of man as "reactionary."¹⁶ Marcuse's goal is a "nonrepressive culture," one which will supposedly have all the benefits of Christian civilization and all the "advantages" of the primitive cultures. There would be a regression behind the attained level of disciplined rationality. According to Marcuse,

This regression would be psychical as well as social; it would reactivate early stages of the libido which were surpassed in the development of the reality ego, and it would dissolve the institutions of society in which the reality ego exists. In terms of these institutions, instinctual liberation is relapse into barbarism. However, occurring at the height of civilization, as a consequence not of defeat but of victory in the struggle for existence, and supported by a free society, such liberation might have very different results. It would still be a reversal of the process of civilization, a subversion of culture — but *after* culture had done its work and created the mankind and the world that could be free.

14. R. J. Rushdoony, *The Mythology of Science* (Nutley, NJ: Craig Press, 1967), 14.

15. See R. J. Rushdoony, *Freud* (Nutley, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1968),

16. Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955), 238.

It would still be “regression” — but in the light of mature consciousness, and guided by a new rationality. Under these conditions, the possibility of a nonrepressive civilization is predicated not upon the arrest, but upon the liberation, of progress — so that man would order his life in accordance with his fully developed knowledge so that he would ask again what is good and what is evil. If the guilt accumulated in the civilized domination of man by man can ever be redeemed by freedom, then the “original sin” must be committed again: “We must again eat from the tree of knowledge in order to fall back into the state of innocence.”¹⁷

Whether in the realm of sexuality or of politics, Marcuse has a mystical faith in the power of chaos as against order, in the regenerating power of sin and revolution.

One by-product of romanticism and primitivism that also deserves mention is nudism. Its thesis is essentially simple, and its simplistic faith appeals to people, whether conservative or liberal, who are prone to simplified answers. Civilization and clothing are responsible for sin, sickness, and lust, and a giant step towards freeing man from the vices of an overcivilized world is to shed one’s clothes. Its proponents see nudism with rose-colored glasses.¹⁸ Although lately a more realistic attitude is in evidence, as a part of the so-called sexual revolution, for years nudist thinkers and writers, in word and in print, have insisted that nudity creates no sexual interest and in fact is an aphrodisiac. The logic of this contention is in line with the premise of primitivism that man is naturally good, whereas civilization (in this case, clothing) corrupts him. This, too, is a form of environmentalism: sin and evil are not in man but in his environment, institutions, or clothes. Remove the clothes, or destroy the institutions, and man is thereby freed and regenerated. The Biblical position is that sin is in man, and man is changed by God’s grace, not by environmental changes. The main body of nudists, as over against curiosity seekers, is made up of earnest adherents of the primitivist faith who believe that they have an uncomplicated answer to world problems. As true

17. *Ibid.*, 198. The concluding quotation is from Heinrich von Kleist. Marcuse’s position is like that of the girl, a university student in the 1960s, who upon advocating the abandonment of civilization and work was asked, “Who will provide the food?” Her answer: “Food is.”

18. See William E. Hartman, Marilyn Fithian, and Donald Johnson, *Nudist Society* (New York: Crown, 1970).

believers, they discount all scientific reports on the deleterious effects of too much exposure to the sun, and they also discount the Biblical emphasis on inherent (as opposed to environmental) evil.

Not surprisingly, the declining medieval culture saw the rise of nudist cults, as had collapsing Rome. There are references to such a movement in the early centuries of the Christian era by Epiphanius, John of Damascus, and St. Augustine.

About 1580, an Anabaptist sect summed up some of the existing practices and heresies, and received the name Adamites. Located in the Netherlands, this group required candidates for admission into the sect to appear naked before the congregation to show that physical desire had no power over them. Other groups went unclothed to imitate original perfection and purity and to demonstrate their separation from the fallen world around them. The essential characteristic of all these groups was a studied primitivism.

A major form of primitivism is faith in revolution. Ellul has pointed out that revolutions are virtually always reactionary. They set back the very cause they profess.¹⁹ Revolutions have generally disappointed (and often destroyed) their adherents, but men persist in this faith, hoping that a destruction of evil institutions will somehow regenerate man and society. With many of the revolutionary faithful, the answer is very simple: increase the terror and heighten the dissolution of old institutions and of enemy classes, in order to increase the certainty of utopia. The unbending self-righteousness of Robespierre is characteristic of the revolutionist's certainty that his course is righteous, that, notwithstanding bloodshed and terror, his way is justified by the nobility of his cause and the wickedness of all his enemies.

Revolution is the true religion of many modern men, and their hope for salvation by revolution is intense. Conversations with campus radicals once led me to conclude that a parody of the old hymn would aptly describe their faith:

There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from the bourgeois' veins,

19. Jacques Ellul, *Autopsy of Revolution* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971).

And society plunged beneath that flood
Shall lose its guilty stains.

Because revolution functions as a religion for many, it is not at all surprising that some theologians have seen revolution as a form of revelation. Nicholas Berdyaev held that history

can be seen as a conflict between irrational freedom and its effects on the one hand, and the free love of God on the other. Thus it is a mixture of necessity and freedom, evolution and revolution. It is a drama which starts with the Fall and which will end with the ultimate salvation of the world. And ever present behind it, in existential time, is “meta-history,” which is simultaneously the goal of history, the meaning of history, and the end of history. Revolutions are breaks of meta-history into history, “little apocalypses,” and with them history becomes a “revelation of noumenal reality.” The most significant break, after the start of history, is the Incarnation (an eighth day of Creation). After it the conflict of freedom and necessity becomes more and more evident as necessity becomes more and more pervasive at each historical stage.²⁰

The great event of revelation or “meta-history” is the Incarnation, but “revolutions are breaks of meta-history into history” also; they are thus divine moments and revelations. Not surprisingly, revolutionists speak as though mankind were incarnate in them. Leopold Tyrmand’s comment about American revolutionists is true of virtually all:

When an American rebel speaks, he rarely does it in his own name; usually he speaks in the name of Vietnamese peasants or ghetto inhabitants, while neither gave him an outright commission of representation — especially the latter, lately known for his reluctance to such proxy.²¹

Men like Robespierre spoke not only *for* France but also *as* France, and as history. Lenin did the same in his day. Stalin applauded his own speeches because when he spoke, the revolution and history spoke.

Primitivism as a political philosophy has extensively reshaped every kind of civil government, so that communism, socialism,

20. James M. Edie, James P. Scanlan, Mary-Barbara Zeldin, eds., with George L. Kline, *Russian Philosophy* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1969), 3:146f.

21. Leopold Tyrmand, *Notebooks of a Dilettante* (New York: Macmillan, 1970), 190.

anarchism, and democracy are alike commended for expressing the supposedly authentic voice of “the people.” In Carl Sandburg’s title *The People, Yes* (1936), we have this faith plainly set forth. To say, Intelligence, Yes; or Character, Yes; or anything similar, is somehow to blaspheme. Authority must now come from the people, certainly not from God, and surely not from a segment of the people. If any segment does rule — such as the dictatorship of the proletariat, or the German folk — it rules (and kills) the people for their own good. Walt Whitman’s mysticism was of this primitive variety, and came to expression in his communion with the soul of democratic man *en masse*. Where this faith prevails, as with Whitman, evil is not in the people but in those who rule over them. It is an irony of history that the more closely the Establishments of the modern world have come to represent the people, the more they have been hated as the enemies of the people. Democratization has widened rather than healed the breach. If primitivism is an article of faith, then anyone who rises above the level of democratic man *en masse* is thereby likely to have separated himself from the true revelation, revolution, or meta-history, and to have joined the ranks of the enemy. The result is a serious schizophrenia among the intellectuals, artists, and leaders of the modern world. As such, nothing bores them more than the trifling interests of the people from whence they arose. But, as moderns, they must be, by creed, the voices of the common man; they must love the country more than the city, and they must affirm that the wellsprings of their abilities are less in themselves than in “the people,” whom they profess to love dearly.

In the pathetic figure of Thoreau, many of the articles of primitivism’s faith were earnestly and faithfully expressed. Thoreau’s dictum, in wildness is the salvation of the world, has become the credo of the modern dabblers in ecology. Fosburgh, however, has pointed out that “the primeval Adirondack wilderness” was not “a sublime place, teeming with food and game,” but “a virtual woodland desert — a great overstory of trees that shaded to death the upstart growth beneath.”²² Cutting stimulates growth, and

22. Hugh Fosburgh, *A Clearing in the Wilderness* (New York: Curtis Books, 1969), 19.

both flora and fauna then abound. Neither ruthless exploitation nor the sterile world of national parks is to be desired, but it is an article of faith with primitivists that only the untouched is best. Man is viewed as a plague and a blight; the good life is nonhuman, irrational animal life.

Dostoyevsky espied this temper early, and he described the new voice as the underground man, the man whose essential motive is a hatred of everything superior to himself. The underground man is sick and spiteful, but his sickness is deemed holy because he represents the voice of the primitive rising in protest against rulers and intellectuals. More important than the rise of the underground man, who has always been there, is his function as an icon to subservient intellectuals and rulers. The underground man, whether criminal or pervert, is made into a hero and his resentments into a philosophy. Dostoyevsky's great contemporary Leo Tolstoy, a dedicated primitivist, was irritated by references to the great influence of men and ideas. According to Berlin,

Tolstoy's central thesis — in some respects not unlike the theory of the inevitable “self-deception” of the *bourgeoisie* held by his contemporary Karl Marx, save that what Marx reserves for a class, Tolstoy sees in almost all mankind — is that there is a natural law whereby the lives of human beings no less than those of nature are determined; but that men, unable to face this inexorable process, seek to represent it as a succession of free choices, to fix responsibility for what occurs upon persons endowed by them with heroic virtues or heroic vices, and called by them “great men.”²³

This is clearly true of *War and Peace*, but, after his “conversion,” Tolstoy's position was closer to that of the romantic Slavophiles and their exaltation of the peasant. Rousseau's influence on Tolstoy was to the end of Tolstoy's life always strong. Tolstoy idealized the peasant and the soil to the point that they attained a status similar to Rousseau's noble savage.

Rousseau, too, must have reinforced the coarse-grained, rough peasant in Tolstoy with his strongly moralistic, puritanical strain, his suspicion of, and antipathy to the rich, the powerful, the happy as such, his streak of genuine vandalism, and occasional bursts of

23. Isaiah Berlin, *The Hedgehog and the Fox* (New York: New American Library, Mentor Books, 1957), 44.

blind, very Russian rage against Western sophistication and refinement, and that adulation of “virtue” and simple tastes, of the “healthy” moral life, the militant, anti-liberal barbarism, which is one of Rousseau’s specific contributions to the stock of Jacobin ideas.²⁴

As a true primitivist, Tolstoy made the most common man the test of philosophy and art. Tolstoy’s peasant, of course, was not a real man but Tolstoy’s idealized and moralized idea of the peasant as the true natural man. Henri Troyat ably summarized Tolstoy’s views on art:

Instead of elevating the muzhiks to the level of art, he decided that art must immediately be brought down to them. What was the good of Shakespeare, Racine, Goethe, Rembrandt and Mozart if they bored the village idiot? “I was convinced,” he wrote, “that a poem such as ‘I remember the Marvelous Moment,’ or a piece of music such as Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, is less worthy of admiration than Vanka’s song or the lament of the Volga Boatmen, and that we do not like Pushkin and Beethoven because they are expressions of absolute beauty but because they flatter our hideously overstimulated sensitivities and our weakness...” And further on: “Why are the beauty of the sun, the beauty of a human face, the beauty of a folksong, the beauty of an act of love or self-denial intelligible to all, without any special training?” Tolstoy saw a blinding proof that art, as defended by the aesthetes, was nonsense, in the following arithmetical observation: “We are thousands and they are millions.” The artist must obey the law of the greatest number. Write what *they* want. And not write at all, if they do not want anything. After all, one could live perfectly well without writing. The people, whose very dirt was sacred, were sufficient unto themselves. They needed no one to satisfy their aspirations for work, pleasure, thought and creativity.²⁵

Art could take two roads to fulfill this calling. First, it could please the tastes of the people. In Communist countries, socialist realism means an art which will please an uncultured audience and a people’s commissar who looks on art beyond his tastes as an offense against the people. Second, art can turn more radically to primitive than to mass man; it can idealize Africa and American Indian art. It can go behind that to an amorphous expression of color and feeling that is beyond meaning because it ostensibly

24. *Ibid.*, 67f.

25. Henri Troyat, *Tolstoy* (New York: Dell, 1967), 271.

expresses man's most primitive and unconscious moods. Western art has largely taken this second means of attaining primitivism.

Not surprisingly, in the Western world, the writer, the artist, and the actor have been closely associated with the revivals of astrology, witchcraft, and magic. Things that were once regarded as especially childish superstitions have now been invested with the dignity of primitivism and the unconscious. Psychology has helped to strengthen the idea of the potency of the primitive. If the unconscious is so powerful in man, then in every area it stands to reason that *power and determination come from below*. The more primitive and chaotic a thing or practice, and the more raw and lawless its every expression, the more total the power it manifests. The conclusion thus is a logical one: seek power from below. Some years ago, Kenneth D. Burke, in *Permanence and Change: An Anatomy of Purpose* (1935), called attention to this belief in light from below, and to Freud who gave impetus to the belief. He gave it a telling name: grace from below. The new source of power, enlightenment, and energy is this grace from below.

With this in mind, it is easy to see why one of the parallel developments is pornography. Two illustrations illumine the parallelism. A nightclub in a small city had turned into a homosexual hangout. According to police and a nightclub employee, it was a common refuge for men who were becoming impotent. Men went there in search of stimulation through perversion in order to regain potency and a sense of youth. After a time, homosexuality was an insufficient stimulus and other perversions were resorted to. Renewed potency supposedly lay in increased emphasis on chaos and the violation of moral law.

In another instance, a man justified his love of pornography on the grounds that, without pornography in his life and in his imagination, he would be incapable of sexual relations with his wife. Clearly, in both cases there was a renewed spurt of sexual interest, but, just as clearly, both cases represent a form of faith-healing. As men once made pilgrimages to shrines for healing, so men now repair to the pornographic. If a man believes that power comes from below (the primitive, the unconscious, the perverse,

the “animalistic”), he is but a short step away from trusting in its power to stimulate him.

Moreover, the primitivist believes that the ultimate in power is somehow below, and his search, in various ways, is for union with this ultimate power. In pornography, it is through sex. The goal is cosmic coition, the sex act which gives a blinding, soaring, mystical experience and the ultimate in the experience of power. The “sexual revolution” has been insistent on the use of four-letter words, and indeed it requires them, because they clearly indicate intent. The four-letter words have this common characteristic: they reduce a woman to a sexual organ, and sex to an aggressive act. The pious *Dictionary of American Slang* (compiled by Harold Wentworth and Stuart Berg Flexner in 1960, after more than ten years of work) defines f- thus: “To cheat, trick, take advantage of, deceive, or treat someone unfairly.” Precisely. The popular four-letter words reveal an unhealthy aggressive and reductionist view of sex. They expose an exploitative hostility to the other person. The usual textbook words are, to a lesser degree, unhealthy also, for they reduce sexuality to an impersonal and clinical level. The common phrase, “to make love,” is far more healthy than it is evasive; it at least seeks to introduce persons and humanity into the act and relationship. There likely will always be a problem in finding an appropriate word for the sexual act, because the word that will most stress sexuality will at the same time least express the human aspect. Barnyard animals breed, but what is normal and healthy for them is not possible for man. Man is personal, and his acts have at all times an intellectual and moral framework; they have personal connotations which a biological term cannot describe.

The word f- does describe the pornographic purpose very clearly: it is aggressive, and its goal is exploitative. The goal of pornography is *the cosmic f-*, the dream of primitive, raw power. Pornography gives us women rapt with adoration and ecstasy before the ultimate man who has all the world in his sexual power. It is cosmic in that it carries man to the center of being, into raw sexual power of magical potency. Presenting a classical example of the pornographic dream (but not itself an exercise in what any court or

critic would call pornography), Ernest Hemingway portrays the ultimate in the cosmic act: the earth itself moves when the copulating couple climaxes. When Hemingway writes of it, his language becomes religious and Biblical. Maria reports to Pilar, "The earth moved. Truly. It was a thing I cannot tell thee." An ineffable experience indeed. Pilar comments, "Why not, daughter? When I was young the earth moved so that you could feel it all shift in space and were afraid it would go out from under you. It happened every night." The act is described by Hemingway in the language of mysticism. "Most people," we are told, "never" have this experience.²⁶ It is amazing that such a novel was ever published, and having, been published, that it was not laughed out of existence as both bad writing and a childish pornography daydream. Its acclaim made it clear just how deeply committed modern man was to the same daydream and to the same mystical hope.

It is not at all surprising that pornography soon became no longer a rich man's expensive daydream but the cheap paperback fare of the masses. It met a deep religious need. It was a powerfully essential aspect of modern man's religious yearnings. Pornography is consistently bad writing, usually painfully bad. It is tiresome reading at best. It has a monotony of overwhelming dimensions to outsiders of the faith. But, to the faithful, pornography opens new worlds and reveals the hope of Everyman to attain the cosmic f—. The medieval Everyman had a different goal — the attainment of heaven. The Everyman of primitivism and pornography looks to the raptures and bliss of the cosmic f—, when the whole world will be in his power and his ecstasy will indeed command and move the world. As "Frank Harris" said to Molly, "I am not ambitious, Molly, of place or power or riches; but of knowledge and wisdom I'm the lover and priest.... I don't want happiness even, Molly, nor comfort, though I'll take all I can get of both; I'm wedded to one quest like a knight of the Holy Grail and my whole life will go to the achievement." This quest is for the "everlasting Empire of Love" or sex.²⁷

26. Ernest Hemingway, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (New York: Scribner's, 1940), 159, 174-175.

To this quest the readers of pornography are also dedicated; it is a "holy" and religious quest. Laws have not stopped it. The last 125 years have seen more legislation against pornography than any previous era has, and yet pornography has increased in its production and consumption. It will not do to say that evil men are mass producing pornography thereby to make fortunes. Men have always tried to do this. Now, more than in other eras, they have an eager market. Pornography feeds the same hunger that moved the Roman mobs to the circus; the emperors had to sate that hunger or face the wrath of the mob. The same intensity is by no means with us today, but the same pornographic appetite is there. Then sex and violence were intimately yoked. Today the same connection is steadily in evidence. A religious temper is altered only by another religious faith. For the present, pornography is deeply rooted in a religious need.

That religious mind, being grounded in the myth of evolution, regards reason as a latecomer in man's history. Only recently, it is held, has man's long history seen the rise of rationality and a predominance of intellectual motives to make history possible. This means that reason is a latecomer; its roots are shallow as compared with the unconscious, with the id and ego. Reason is not therefore what it appears to be, but is in large measure a rationalization of the motives of the id, ego, and superego, according to Freud. It follows then that violence is more deeply rooted in man and more elemental than reason. Not surprisingly, alongside evolution, pornography, and nudism (to cite only a few things), another aspect of primitivism has been its fascination with violence. Much is said in condemnation of violence in popular entertainment, in television and movies, but the sophisticated world of art is no less given to violence. The theater, novels, and other art forms are absorbed with violence. Often the violence is larded over with social commentary. Often the art forms dress violence in sophisticated garb. Notwithstanding such attempts at disguise, the

27. Frank Harris, "My Life and Loves," in *The Olympia Reader*, ed. Maurice Girodias (New York: Grove Press, 1965), 328. This selection, while ascribed to Harris, was not by him.

world of art is absorbed and fascinated with violence. And, increasingly, the union of violence and pornography grows more intimate.

II

THE MORALITY OF PORNOGRAPHY

The U.S. Supreme Court, in dealing with the subject of pornography, has, with its usual legal refinement, strained at gnats and swallowed camels. A literary work, no matter how perverted the sexual theme, nor how gross the violence, is not pornography if it is socially significant. Social significance thus gives a redeeming quality. (Local communities can now determine matters for themselves and establish social significance.) This viewpoint is not surprising. The modern writer too often sees himself as an artistic political tractarian, or a sociologist with prophetic insight — in short, as the modern successor to the prophets of Israel, and to the priests and pastors of Christendom. The artist is the new voice of inspiration in our humanistic culture. If the artist is faithful to his calling, his is a prophetic vision with socially redeeming value.

The question, of course, is what has social significance and is thereby characterized by redeeming qualities? In one sense, everything has social significance, including murder and rape. In another sense, none of the contested modern works is socially significant or redeeming from the perspective of historic orthodox Christianity. However, all are socially and religiously significant

from the standpoint of modern humanism. Clearly, two different worldviews and religious perspectives are at war here.

Much of the confusion results from the mixed motives of participants on either side. For example, too many of the opponents of pornography are simply traditionalists, not Christians. Their perspective is not theological but merely an unwillingness to see too great a change take place in society. They defend morality, not by being moral, but by opposing immorality, which is not Christianity but pharisaism. For this reason, the Victorian era was strongly anti-Christian, highly immoral, and yet much given to championing morality as an antidote to social upheavals. It welcomed Darwin gladly, because Darwin gave the Victorians reason to take Christianity merely as a stabilizing agency rather than as a living faith, which was their purpose all along. Earlier, the evangelical movement had revitalized Britain, and for this she was now ready to give thanks, but not allegiance to that faith. Kenneth Clark has observed the non-Christian (and we could say anti-Christian) nature of nineteenth-century prudery. Speaking of Britain, he notes:

That fear of the body which is usually called Victorian is a subject worthy of more disinterested examination than it has yet received. Unlike the scruples of the early Christians, it had no religious motive and was not connected with a cult of chastity. Rather it seems to have been a necessary part of that enormous façade behind which the social revolution of the nineteenth century could adjust itself. The unwritten code of physical respectability that was then produced seems at first to be full of inconsistencies, but analysis proves it to have had one overriding aim, to avoid the coarseness of truth. Thus it was possible to fill a conservatory with nude figures in Carrara marble, although the mention of an ankle was held to be a gross indecency.¹

Victorian reality was very different from the façade.² The era began, after all, with nude bathing, and then went to the other extreme, not out of modesty, but to titillate. The hoop skirts were so designed that on stairways and when the wearer was bending

1. Kenneth Clark, *The Nude: A Study in Ideal Form*, Bollingen Series, vol. 35, no. 2 (New York: Pantheon Books, 1957), 161.

2. See Cyril Pearl, *The Girl with the Swansdown Seat* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1955).

over, maximum exposure would prevail. Victorian morality was pragmatic, concerned more with social effect than with pleasing God.

Many of the contemporary champions of decency in literature, television, and public life are not unlike the Victorians. When a friend of mine, Raymond Wagoner, met with a national organization designed to combat pornography, he found it definitely disinterested in taking a specifically religious and Biblically moral stand on the matter. It was one thing to invoke the name of God as a resource, another thing to take a theologically consistent position. Great sums had been raised nationally to combat pornography, but the position of the organization was essentially that it favored “decency” because “indecent” is socially disturbing and has a bad influence on youth. This is pure pragmatism. If someone should be helped by a pornographic book, or aided socially and economically by an act of adultery, would this organization then favor pornography and adultery? The intellectual and religious bankruptcy of such a position is all too obvious.

However, most of the liberal defenses of pornography are equally muddled. Writers and university professors feel quite heroic in taking the witness stand to avow that some outrageously immoral book is somehow supremely moral. These men usually display two contradictory motives. First, they oppose the censorship of any book on any grounds as a matter of principle. Anything and everything should be freely published. Some would impose restraints on things that are Nazi, racist, or similarly tabooed, but many are earnest champions of unlimited freedom of publication. Unlimited freedom is for them a supreme good. Second, since unlimited freedom is seen as a supreme good, it follows that the results of such an unlimited freedom must somehow be good. They therefore feel it necessary to defend the moral integrity of such books as are attacked for their use of this license. As a result, these scholars and writers place themselves in a most amusing position: they are ready to defend anything attacked on moral grounds, as though freedom makes all its adherents good. No doubt if some avant-garde writer issued a book empty of everything save a cake of cow dung between its covers, scholars would not be lacking to

interpret for a court what a profound and redeeming social commentary was at stake.

This schizophrenia is due to the fact that, having dropped Christian morality in favor of a humanistic code, these men are still trying to justify themselves and various literary works in terms of the faith of their fathers. They are in effect offering incense at two altars, and the result is confusion. Let us briefly glance at one trial and its testimony, the London trial of the publishers of *Last Exit to Brooklyn* by the American writer Hubert Selby, Jr. Almost all of one day of the ten-day trial was devoted to the testimony of Frank Kermode, Lord Northcliffe Professor of Modern English Literature at the University of London. Kermode testified that he was greatly moved by the book and by its originality and “moral power.” What did he mean by “moral power”? Kermode answered:

It seems to me that one of the purposes of serious novelists has always been to deal with what some of the earliest proposers of realism called “contemporary moral reality,” and it seems to me that this book does therefore stand, with all its differences of manner and language, in a tradition which is a very honorable one — the tradition which uses novels not as forms of entertainment so much as ways of examining — not for propaganda purposes — but simply examining and laying before the reader a picture of contemporary moral reality. I thought that this book, dealing as it does with the lower depths of a great city, was very much in the tradition of Dickens, who spoke of the shame, misery and desertion of a great capital.³

Further testimony by Kermode made it clear, however, that this examination by Selby was more than clinical. In fact, he attributed to Selby “great integrity of purpose, and above all... a passion and sympathy for these... deprived and depraved people which communicates itself very strongly to the reader.” Selby is thus doing more than examining homosexuals: he views them, Kermode tells us, with “passion and sympathy.” The prosecutor then asked Kermode “whether the feelings of homosexuals, under the influence of huge doses of Bensedrine, are not described as pleasurable.” Kermode answered: “I think you must distinguish between a passage which

3. Frank Kermode, “‘Obscenity’ and ‘Public Interest,’” in *New American Review* (New York: New American Library, 1968), 3:235.

says that homosexuals are sometimes happy and a passage which says: come and be a homosexual. There seems to me to be no implication here whatsoever that this is a good idea.”⁴

We are not interested in arguing any point with respect to Selby’s book. But what would Kermode do if an author stepped forward, after Kermode’s defense, to avow that he was a homosexual, and as an artist was pleading the homosexuals’ cause and inviting others to share in their experience? The sad fact is that while some authors have been very candid in their books, the scholars (and sometimes clergymen) who are defending them are determined to find a higher and purer cause in their writings. Like the Victorians, morality, moral purpose, and social significance are used as a façade to provide justification for an alien reality.

Sometimes the results are amusing. Ralph Ginzburg has pointed out that many critics and scholars made foolish statements with regard to D. H. Lawrence’s *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*, because of either a desire to moralize, or “simply not understanding the book — perhaps the most humiliating fault of all for professionals.” At the New York trial, Ginzburg reports, critic Alfred Kazin testified that

I have often thought of that beautiful phrase used by John Keats, “the holiness of the heart’s affections,” because I can’t think of any phrase which more perfectly, more accurately, characterizes Lawrence’s work as a novelist. Lawrence is the last great figure in English literature, a genius with intense nobility of purpose. He was utterly innocent in the artistic sense. As Lawrence thought, the only place where men and women can still know the greatest spiritual idealism was in love relationships. *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*, in that sense, is an entirely religious novel.

After a pious testimonial like that, the only thing lacking is a revival meeting altar call! Malcolm Cowley, at the same trial, sounded an equally pious note:

I do not find anything in *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* that essentially I can’t find in the *Ladies’ Home Journal*. In substance, it is what marriage counsellors are telling the counsellees five days a week. This sort of fulfillment in the marriage state has become enormously common.

4. *Ibid.*, 237-238.

After such gush as this, the irreverent Ginzburg, a master at the art of losing friends and offending people, points out, and documents from the book, a very salient fact, "Lawrence's central point":

What Lawrence is saying, quite plainly, is that the highest expression of love between a man and a woman is what British law discreetly calls *penetratio per anum*. Translated into good, plain English, Lawrence is endorsing buggery.⁵

Mixed motives have led these men into a kind of moralizing which is unrelated to their position, or in contradiction to it. Not so with Kenneth Tynan, one of the organizers of *Oh! Calcutta!* and formerly literary manager of the British National Theatre. According to Tynan, when "a fearless libertarian has come forth to do battle with the forces of reaction," his implicit argument is that he hates censorship in all its forms, but does not like pornography. He does not approve of pornography unless he can call it "erotic writing" and classify it as "literature." Moreover, as a good liberal with principles, he would not go to court to defend a book "unless it had educational, artistic or psychiatric value to make it respectable." In addition, the liberal implies, "I read it only in the line of duty, and feel nothing but pity for those who read it for pleasure. Needless to say, I never masturbate."⁶ Tynan defends pornography simply because it gives him and others sexual pleasure. He finds his "nutshell case for pornography as art" in Lionel Trilling's comment:

I see no reason in morality (or in aesthetic theory) why literature should not have as one of its intentions the arousing of thoughts of lust. It is one of the effects, perhaps one of the functions, of literature to arouse desire, and I can discover no ground for saying that sexual pleasure should not be among the objects of desire which literature presents to us, along with heroism, virtue, peace, death, food, wisdom, God, etc.⁷

5. Ralph Ginzburg, "The Secret Message of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*," *Eros* (Summer 1962): 25. Ginzburg's point was first made by John Sparrow of Oxford in *Encounter*.

6. Kenneth Tynan, "Dirty Books Can Stay," in *The New Eroticism: Theories, Vogues and Canons*, ed. Philip Nobile (New York: Random House, 1970), 133. First published in *Esquire*, Tynan's thesis became a book of the same title in 1968, published by Curtis Brown Ltd.

7. *Ibid.*, 137.

This is still a moral justification of sorts, although obviously not a Christian one. The justification for pornography in Tynan is a simple one, “to induce an erection. And the more skillfully the better.”⁸ Tynan concludes with a forthright humanistic justification of pornography:

One inalienable right binds all mankind together — the right of self-abuse. That — and not the abuse of others — is what distinguishes the true lover of pornography. We should encourage him to seek his literary pleasure as and where he finds it. To deny him that privilege is to invade the deepest privacy of all.⁹

An American scholar gives us a humanistic critique of pornography that created great controversy when first published in *Encounter*. George Steiner calls attention to the intensely conventionalized “dream-trash” of pornography; he is not arguing for censorship, but opposing the usual scholarly defense of pornography as unwise. Commenting later on his attack on four-letter words, or “night-words,” and pornography, Steiner said,

What I was trying to get into focus is the notion of the “stripping naked” of language, of the removal from private, intensely privileged or adventurous use, of the erotic vocabulary. It does seem to me that we have scarcely begun to understand the impoverishment of our imaginings, the erosion into generalized banality of our resources of individual erotic representation and expression. This erosion is very directly a part of the general reduction of privacy and individual style in a mass-consumer civilization. Where everything can be said with a shout, less and less can be said in a low voice. I was also trying to raise the question of what relation there may be between the dehumanization of the individual in pornography and the making naked and anonymous of the individual in the totalitarian state (the concentration camp being the logical epitome of that state). Both pornography and totalitarianism seem to me to set up power relations which must necessarily violate privacy.¹⁰

But Steiner’s idea of dehumanization has Christian overtones unbecoming to a humanist. Those good humanists, the Cynics of Greece, insisted that man was only an animal, and moral preten-

8. *Ibid.*, 135.

9. *Ibid.*, 145f.

10. George Steiner, “Night Words: Human Privacy and High Pornography,” in *ibid.*, 120.

sions were therefore ridiculous. The Cynics favored (and practiced) public copulation and masturbation to help rid man of the false pretensions his religions gave him. A consistent humanistic argument will justify freedom as such, the freedom of man from all laws and controls extraneous to himself. This was the position of the Marquis de Sade.

This, too, is the logical and consistent position taken by the major publisher of sexually controversial works, Maurice Girodias. According to Girodias, "Freedom must be total; to restrict it to literary or artistic expression is not enough. It must govern our lives, our attitudes, our mental outlook."¹¹ Here we come to the consistent and logical expression of the liberal and humanistic argument. Girodias began publishing in his home country, France, but largely in English for smuggling by tourists into Britain and America. "It was great fun. The Anglo-Saxon world was being attacked, invaded, infiltrated, outflanked, and conquered by this erotic armada." Girodias, besides making money like the French bourgeoisie he so much despises, has also a humanistic moral purpose:

Enough has been said about the influence of the printed word; but never enough about the liberating influence of the printed four-letter word. Those literary orgies, those torrents of systematic bad taste were quite certainly instrumental in clearing the air, and clearing out a few mental cobwebs. The imbecile belief that sex is sin, that physical pleasure is unclean, that erotic thoughts are immoral, that abstinence is the proper rule which may be broken at rare intervals, but merely for the sake of procreation — all those sick Judeo-Christian ideas were exposed for what they are. I insist that no little boys were ever corrupted by bad books of mine, and I do hope that they enjoyed them to the full, and gleaned at least a little knowledge therefrom; nobody seems to have died of shock; no reader was ever reported killed by a four-letter word.¹²

Girodias offers no evidence that four-letter words have a "liberating influence." And discussion of the subject would likely prove redundant. If you believe in principle that four-letter words are a "liberating influence," then you will inescapably find them so. If you believe in principle that their usage is vulgar and demoralizing,

11. "Introduction," *The Olympia Reader*, ed. Maurice Girodias (New York: Grove Press, 1965), 29.

12. *Ibid.*, 19.

you will surely find them so. The real question in both cases is this: are the presuppositions valid? Our purpose is to uncover some of the presuppositions which underlie the defense of pornography. Again, Girodias has described not the “Judeo-Christian ideas” about sex but the Neoplatonist, Manichean, and Catharist ideas about sex, ideas which indeed have infected many Christians and many humanists. In fact, many pornographic books clearly do presuppose that sex is sin, something the Bible gives no ground whatsoever for assuming. Furthermore, Girodias believes that “no little boys were ever corrupted” by his “bad books,” or, we may assume, by any “bad books.” Police are insistent that the reverse is true. Our concern, however, is not with police evidence or Girodias’s beliefs, but with the presuppositions of those beliefs, and to them we shall return shortly.

Writing d.b.’s [dirty books] was generally considered a useful professional exercise, as well as a necessary participation in the common fight against the Square World — an act of duty. What the Square World exactly was, nobody could have explained with any precision: but the notion was very strong, indeed; and it was not the usual routine of a new generation picking a quarrel with the old, it was a much stronger and deeper protest; not a protest against war or hunger, or against the bomb, but, beyond that, a protest against the mental weakness, the poverty of spirit, and the general lack of genius and generosity of a rich and sclerotic society. The colorful banner of pornography was as good as any other to rally the rebels; the more ludicrous the form of the revolt, the better it was, as the revolt was primarily against ordinary logic, and ordinary good taste, and restraint and current morals.¹³

It would be interesting to know, since Girodias raises the charge of a lack of generosity against his enemies, how generous a man he has been. Generosity is a virtue that we more expect from others than cultivate in ourselves. But, more important, Girodias’s statement is an excellent expression of the feelings of the underground man. Not surprisingly, we now have an underground press in all major cities, promoting, among other things, pornography. More than that, Girodias very early set the temper for the underground protest. It was a battle designed to make the “Square World” look ludicrous and absurd. For an army to use an atom

13. *Ibid.*, 23.

bomb to kill a mosquito is at the least ridiculous; it is this kind of absurdity that has served to make the Square World ridiculous in its battle against the underground people. Girodias lost in France, where bureaucratic power is greater, and where important battles are fought in obscure channels. In Britain and the United States, the bureaucratic power is less efficient, and Girodias has been successful rather than impotent, to date at least.

For Girodias, the victory thus far is only the first battle of a holy war. "Freedom must be total."

It may be expected, then, that we will soon move to the next level. Moral censorship was an inheritance from the past, deriving from centuries of domination by the Christian clergy. Now that it is practically over, we may expect literature to be transformed by the advent of freedom. Not freedom in its negative aspects, but as the means of exploring all the positive aspects of the human mind, which are all more or less related to, or generated by, sex.¹⁴

A curious view of man now appears, one close to the popular misconceptions concerning Freud's view, namely, that "all the positive aspects of the human mind... are all more or less related to, or generated by, sex." Man, instead of being a creature made in the image of God, whose mind is fashioned as an echo of the eternal Mind, is now seen, in a sense, as a creature of his genital organs; his mind, at least, is largely a creature of sex.

This view of man has the virtue of presenting man as a unity, a perspective which contradicts Girodias's belief that no little boy is corrupted by reading dirty books. A basic question with respect to the nature of man is at stake, specifically, the question dealing with the relationship of mind and body, of thought and act. In the Western tradition, the most common view of man has been based on a dialectical philosophy. Reality is seen as two alien elements or substances, contradictory and yet held together in dialectical tension. In the Greek tradition it was a dialectic of form and matter; in Scholasticism it was nature versus grace; and in the modern world it is freedom versus nature. The Asiatic alternatives to this dialecticism have been monism (India) and dualism (Zoroastri-

14. *Ibid.*, 29.

anism); it is a weakness of the dialectical position that it tends to break down into either dualism or monism.

The Biblical position is hostile to dialecticism, monism, and dualism: it is theism. Man is a unity, his entire being a creation of God. There is nothing separate or eternal about soul or spirit. There is thus an essential unity of thought and act, because man is of a piece. "For as he [a man] thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7). For the most part, the church has been dialectical in its psychology rather than theistic; as a result, it has greatly weakened its position.

Dialecticism, like dualism, is problematic in its explanation of the relationship of mind and body, of thought and act. In monism, since everything is one, the distinction between the individual and Brahma is rendered fragile, and fatalism is a problem. If mind and body are separate substances, then little boys (and big boys and men) can read dirty books without any consequences, because thought and act are only slightly related. Unfortunately, too many defenses of freedom of speech and press are built on this untenable psychology. Where the dialectical tension is resolved into a synthesis, as ostensibly it is in Marxism and national socialism, then there is no room for freedom. Freedom must be defended, but on tenable grounds. There is a need for developing a concept of freedom in terms of a theistic psychology. Some indications of earlier thinking along these lines appear in a recent study.¹⁵

Girodias, believing that books cannot corrupt, echoes a dialectical psychology, with dualistic overtones. But Girodias also sees the mind as a product of, or related to, sex. This fact reflects a very different kind of psychology, one in which man is a unit; in thus regarding man as a unity, Girodias is Biblical. However, he is wrong in viewing the mind and its positive aspects as being "generated" by sex. For although the Bible would not deny the relationship between sex and the mind, neither would it see sex as determinative. The champions of dirty books have usually held a dualistic psychology, as Tynan clearly saw. Tynan is ready to agree

15. L. John Van Til, *Liberty of Conscience: The History of a Puritan Idea* (Nutley, NJ: Craig Press, 1972).

to the unity of thought and act, provided it gives him an erection. But what if the consequence is something more? What if violence, and pornography most assuredly has its share of violence, is the consequence of the thought-act nexus? Law-enforcement officers insist that it all too often is. We need not examine their evidence. If, psychologically, there is a strong (though not a necessary or inevitable) thought-act nexus, then it is very obvious why there is a police problem, why television violence does have an effect on its viewers, and why “ideas have consequences.” Clearly, Tynan’s candor flows in very narrow channels; it avoids critical questions.

For Girodias, “Freedom must be total.” He recognizes that he was drawn very early “toward a form of individualistic anarchy.”¹⁶ His consistent frankness, incidentally, is to be commended. But can freedom ever be total? None of us can claim the right to steal, kill, lie, or fornicate at will when and where he chooses. The right to shout “Fire!” in a crowded theater is denied to all by society, and with good reason. To publish lies about another person is not a part of our permitted freedom, nor would a social order allowing it be at all welcome. The freedom Girodias enjoys is possible precisely because freedom in our society is not total; were it total, whatever he might accumulate would be readily and easily expropriated by other men. Girodias describes petty and ugly tyrannies he suffered at the hands of the French bureaucracy for defying them and proving them wrong. His story has a familiar ring, and there is no reason to doubt it. The tyranny he would experience from total freedom would be far more drastic. Total freedom means total anarchy and total tyranny, the power of every man to do as he pleases and to kill and steal at will.

From a Biblical perspective, freedom cannot be total, because man is a creature. Only God is totally free. Wherever and whenever man seeks totality in any area of life, he introduces tyranny. Total power, or total freedom, for church, state, school, or man, is always tyranny; it means an attempt by man and institutions to play god. Total freedom means total power to exercise one’s will and word. No man or institution is to be trusted with such power.

16. Girodias, *op. cit.*, 14.

Total freedom is indeed the thesis of the self-conscious and consistent advocates of pornography. However, it is not total freedom that has furthered or can further man's freedom, but civil liberty. Civil liberty though not derived *from* the state is administered *by* the state, in terms of the American-Puritan understanding of it. Civil liberty imposes mutual restraints in order to further mutual liberties. These restraints are imposed on the individual and upon all institutions — church, state, school, family, industry, labor — and everything else.

Civil liberty developed not because of any demand for total freedom but because very real limitations were placed on all men and on all institutions. Thus the morality of pornography is hostile to civil liberty, because that morality involves a radical misunderstanding of the nature of freedom.

In many respects there were far fewer legal restraints on a man in fifteenth-century Paris, or in the Paris of Louis XIV, than in Girodias's years in France, but there can be no question that men had less freedom in those earlier eras. Freedom has grown as legal restraints have harnessed men and institutions from endangering one another's God-given immunities. For example, in the last 150-200 years, there has been more legislation on freedom of speech and its limitations, on pornography, on freedom of press and its limitations, and on other related subjects than in other eras. Freedom and restrictive legislation have gone hand in hand in the Western tradition, because civil liberty means legal restraints on abuse of power *and* of freedom.

It is this integral character of liberty and law that is too seldom understood today by the proponents of pornography.¹⁷ Liberty and law are inseparable. To imagine that liberty can be advanced within an anarchistic framework is to sacrifice the whole of the Western achievement. It is to this important consideration that courts and scholars should address themselves. Too many jurists, like Justice Douglas, are attracted to the idea of total freedom, as are all too many scholars.¹⁸ Not surprisingly, pornog-

17. See R. J. Rushdoony, *Law and Liberty* (Nutley, NJ: Craig Press, 1971).

18. On Justice Douglas's views, see R. J. Rushdoony, *Politics of Guilt and Pity* (Nutley, NJ: Craig Press, 1970), 153-160.

raphy, as the great champion of total freedom, draws their earnest, sometimes embarrassed and confused but usually passionate, support and defense.

III

THE POLITICS OF PORNOGRAPHY

The word “politics” comes from the Greek *polites*, meaning citizen, and has reference to the form and order of organized society as it manifests itself in a state and its laws. Essential to any discussion of the politics of pornography, therefore, is an analysis of its concept of social order. The most systematic statement of this has been made by the Marquis de Sade (Donatien Alphonse Francois de Sade, 1740-1814).

Sade’s goal was a natural order; everything that exists in the natural world is right and good. The world for Sade is a world without the fall *and* without God. Everything that Scripture affirms to be evil, Sade found to be natural and good. Everything men call virtues and vices, Sade simply saw as aspects of nature and essentially amoral. The only “natural” principle of action or morality possible, Sade held, is so to act that no action injures anyone else. Any act between consenting adults is therefore natural and good and should not be banned. This and other principles first formulated by Sade have since become commonplace in the lexicon of modern man, so that Sade can be called the forerunner and father of modern liberals as well as of anarchistic libertarians. Sade summed up his thesis thus:

Reason, sir — yes, our reason alone should warn us that harm done our fellows can never bring happiness to us; and our heart, that contributing to their felicity is the greatest joy Nature has accorded us on earth; the entirety of human morals is contained in this one phrase: *Render others as happy as one desires oneself to be*, and never inflict more pain upon them than one would like to receive at their hands. There you are, my friend, those are the only principles we should observe, and you need neither god nor religion to appreciate and subscribe to them, *you* need only have a good heart.¹

The self-deception in these words is enormous. Apart from the fact that man is all too seldom governed by “reason,” the idea that man’s greatest joy is contributing to the happiness of others is idealistic nonsense; man’s greatest joy usually is in his own happiness. The phrase “Render others as happy as one desires oneself to be” is an adaptation of the Golden Rule, but one that is out of context. What will this mean to a sadomasochist?

We see its meaning in Sade’s *Philosophy in the Bedroom* (1795), which included his important appeal for a new social order, “Yet Another Effort, Frenchmen, If You Would Become Republicans.” The French Revolution and the Reign of Terror had occurred, and the matter of a new society was of momentous concern to all. Sade felt that he could now declare his own principles more freely, and so the appeal to reason was dropped in favor of an open call to “passions” or libertinage. In the prologue, “To Libertines,” Sade declared:

Voluptuaries of all ages, of every sex, it is to you only that I offer this work; nourish yourselves upon its principles; they favor your passions, and these passions, whereof coldly insipid moralists put you in fear, are naught but the means Nature employs to bring man to the ends she prescribes to him; harken only to these delicious promptings, for no voice save that of the passions can conduct you to happiness.²

The evil for Sade is self-restraint and discipline; the goal is total self-expression for every sexual impulse. Whatever supposedly perverted desires any man has are simply Nature’s expression in him and are to be indulged, not condemned.

1. Marquis de Sade, “Dialogue Between a Priest and a Dying Man,” in *The Marquis de Sade: The Complete Justine, Philosophy in the Bedroom and Other Writings*, ed. Richard Seaver and Austryn Wainhouse (New York: Grove Press, 1965), 174.

2. Sade, “Philosophy in the Bedroom,” in *ibid.*, 185.

Sade's position was a more systematic exposition *and* enactment of a faith common to his age, one which later found a more restrained and formal expression in Romanticism. William Blake, in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1793), had already affirmed as a basic principle, "Sooner murder an infant in its cradle than nurse unacted desires." Sade called for action on this principle. Since the days of Blake and Sade, the world has moved steadily closer to obedience to the notion that holding unacted desires is worse than murdering a baby in its cradle. In fact, said Blake, "He who desires but acts not, breeds pestilence." For Blake, "Everything that lives is holy." Consequently, all things and all acts are good if a product of desire. Moreover, for Blake, the God of Scripture is really the Devil, "the Jehovah of the Bible being no other than he who dwells in flaming fire."³

With Blake, Sade declared the pinnacle of evil to be what God declared good. Sade's greatest joy was in corrupting the godly. His characters rejoice and gloat over every such opportunity. Sade had called for total approval of all acts between consenting persons, but his own criminal record indicates that consent was not always obtained. Part of the joy of corruption is to deceive the corrupted, or if the partner be a prostitute, to debase her further.

Since corruption was so basic to Sade, normal sexuality was definitely not to his taste, as all his works make clear.⁴ There is reason to wonder whether he ever practiced it. Moreover, his dislike for normal sexuality was a part of his radical hostility to the whole world of God's law and order.

Sade's radical concern with sexual self-expression meant a radical unconcern for nonsexual man. He was against charity, against welfare and orphanages (such Christian charity led to overpopulation, he held), against free schools, and much more. Since there is no God, there can be no law; hence, nothing can be outlawed, "not even theft, nor incest, neither murder nor parricide itself." To have desires unacted on would prevent man and society from becoming free. If men are to be free, no one must deny them

3. Geoffrey Keynes, editor, *Poetry and Prose of William Blake* (London: Nonesuch Press, 1935), 192-193, 195, 204.

4. See Sade, *ibid.*, 291.

their desires; to do so is to create an unfree society. Women have no right to frustrate desire: "Woman's destiny is to be wanton, like the bitch, the she-wolf; she must belong to all who claim her."⁵ Sade also wrote:

Be smart there, Eugenie, act the whore with this young man; consider that every provocation sensed by a boy and originating from a girl is a natural offertory, and that your sex never serves Nature better than when it prostitutes itself to ours; that 'tis, in a word, to be f- that you were born, and that she who refuses her obedience to this intention Nature has for her does not deserve to see the light longer.⁶

Man is reduced to his genitals by Sade, and having been perverse thus far in his analysis of man, he logically carries it further by reducing sex to perversion. In addition, Sade insists that all women must be used by all men: they belong, "without exception, to all males." Sade's justification of this is very important:

Never may an act of possession be exercised upon a free being; the exclusive possession of a woman is no less unjust than the possession of slaves; all men are born free, all have equal rights: never should we lose sight of these principles; according to which never may there be granted to one sex the legitimate right to lay monopolizing hands upon the other, and never may one of these sexes, or classes, arbitrarily possess the other. Similarly, a woman existing in the purity of Nature's laws cannot allege, as justification for refusing herself to someone who desires her, the love she bears another, because such a response is based upon exclusion, and no man may be excluded from the having of a woman as of the moment it is clear she definitely belongs to all men.

The act of possession can only be exercised upon a chattel or an animal, never upon an individual who resembles us, and all the ties which can bind a woman to a man are quite as unjust as illusory.

If then it becomes incontestable that we have received from Nature the right indiscriminately to express our wishes to all women, it likewise becomes incontestable that we have the right to compel their submission, not exclusively, for I should then be contradicting myself, but temporarily. It cannot be denied that we have the right to decree laws that compel women to yield to the flames of him who would have her; violence itself being one of that right's effects, we can employ it lawfully. Indeed! has Nature not

5. *Ibid.*, 215-219.

6. *Ibid.*, 267.

proven that we have that right, by bestowing us the strength needed to bend women to our will?...

All men therefore have an equal right of enjoyment of all women; therefore, there is no man who, in keeping with natural law, may lay claim to a unique and personal right over a woman. The law which will oblige them to prostitute themselves, as often and in any manner we wish, in the houses of debauchery we referred to a moment ago, and which will coerce them if they balk, punish them if they shirk or dawdle, is thus one of the most equitable of laws, against which there can be no sane or rightful complaint.⁷

Moreover, all men have the right to take any women or girl at any age and in any way they choose, and any harm to the woman or girl is beside the point. “The issue of her wellbeing, I repeat, is irrelevant.”⁸ Sade justified this violence:

Let it not be said that I contradict myself here, and that after having established, at some point further above, that we have no right to bind a woman to ourselves, I destroy those principles when I declare now we have the right to constrain her; I repeat, it is a question of enjoyment only, not of property: I have no right of possession upon that fountain I find by the road, but I have certain rights to its use; I have the right to avail myself of the limpid water it offers my thirst; similarly, I have no real right of possession over such-and-such a woman, but I have incontestable rights to enjoyment of her; I have the right to force from her this enjoyment, if she refuses me it for whatever the cause may be.⁹

Where now is the matter of consenting adults, to use the modern formulation? This token restraint is nonexistent. Once the legitimacy of all “passions” is granted, then every sexual urge has sovereign rights over every other consideration. There is no law beyond man for Sade, and the sovereign law in man’s being is to express himself and to fulfill his every desire. The purpose of life is pleasure — “continence is an impossible virtue for which Nature, her rights violated, instantly punishes us with a thousand miseries.” In fact, “we are born to f-, because by f- we obey and fulfill Nature’s ordinations, and because all man-made laws which would contravene Nature’s are made for naught but our contempt.” Anything that occurs in nature is morally valid, and the sin comes

7. *Ibid.*, 318-320.

8. *Ibid.*, 320.

9. *Ibid.*, 319n.

in when we condemn anything that is in this sense natural. Eating feces is thus natural and legitimate, and an aspect of natural tastes.¹⁰

As a homosexual, Sade naturally favored buggery as a superior way and urged it for its utility in birth control.¹¹ A goal to be desired for Sade was “to extinguish the human race” and thereby “render Nature a service.”¹² A similar goal is apparent among many of the fanatical adherents of the so-called ecology movement.

Sade was clearly at war against God and God’s order; his real pleasure was violating God’s law:

This capricious portion of our mind is so libertine nothing can restrain it; its greatest triumph, its most eminent delights come of exceeding all limits imposed upon it; of all regularity, it is an enemy; it worships disorder, idolizes whatever wears the brand of crime.... What is the filthiest, the most infamous, the most forbidden, ’tis that which best rouses the intellect.... ’tis that which always causes us most deliciously to discharge.¹³

The popularity of Sade in our day is now understandable: warring against God, Sade warred against all order because it was an expression of God’s Kingdom. His mentality, with that of his contemporary heirs, is well described: “of all regularity, it is an enemy; it worships disorder, idolizes whatever wears the brand of crime.” It also justifies what Sade justified.

Not too many years later, the poet Keats wrote, in a letter to Benjamin Bailey:

I am certain of nothing but of the holiness of the heart’s affections, and the truth of the imagination... I have never yet been able to perceive how anything can be known for truth by consecutive reasoning.... O for a life of sensations rather than of thoughts!¹⁴

Keats was a man who was still governed by Christian standards; the exaltation of pure feeling or sensation thus meant for him no more than an intense awareness of beauty. Sade also exalted the heart and its affections, but doing so meant incest for him: “Let us delve into

10. *Ibid.*, 220, 226-227.

11. *Ibid.*, 229f.

12. *Ibid.*, 230.

13. *Ibid.*, 232f.

14. Cited by Duncan Williams, *Trousered Apes: Sick Literature in a Sick Society* (New Rochelle, NY: Arlington House, 1972), 47.

our hearts: 'tis always there I send our pedantic moralists; let us but question this sacred organ and we will notice that nothing is more exquisite than carnal connection within the family.”¹⁵ Matricide also met the heart’s desire of Sade, whose intense hatred of mothers (and women) emerges in all his works.

For Sade, deceit is a virtue, and abortion and infanticide are legitimate, because all things are permitted and inspired:

Start from one fundamental point, Eugenie: in libertinage, nothing is frightful, because everything libertinage suggests is also a natural inspiration; the most extraordinary, the most bizarre acts, those which most arrantly seem to conflict with every law, every institution (as for Heaven, I have nothing to say), well, Eugenie, even those are not frightful, and there is not one amongst them all that cannot be demonstrated within the boundaries of Nature.¹⁶

Because there is no God, there is no law and no crime: this was Sade’s basic premise, and he pushed it joyfully to its every conclusion. Sade wanted an honest atheism, as did Max Stirner later. Stirner also relentlessly pursued the requirements of atheism. He despised men who denied God and then tried to maintain, for purposes of social order, the morality of the Bible. No God means no law, and it means also that man is his own law. According to Stirner, the pious Christians had merely been succeeded by moral Christians, that is, by atheists who adhered to Christianity as a moral system after denying all the premises of that system:

Take notice how a “moral man” behaves, who today often thinks he is through with God and throws off Christianity as a bygone thing. If you ask him whether he has ever doubted that the copulation of brother and sister is incest, that monogamy is the truth of marriage, that filial piety is a sacred duty, etc., then a moral shudder will come over him at the conception of one’s being allowed to touch his sister as wife also, etc. And whence this shudder? Because he *believes* in those moral commandments. This moral faith is deeply rooted in his breast. Much as he rages against the pious Christians, he himself has nevertheless as thoroughly remained a moral Christian. In the form of morality Christianity holds him a prisoner, and a prisoner under faith. Monogamy is to be something sacred, and he who may live in bigamy, is punished as a criminal; he who commits incest suffers as a criminal. Those

15. In Seaver and Wainhouse, *op. cit.*, 236.

16. *Ibid.*, 273f.

who are always crying that religion is not to be regarded in the State, and the Jew is to be a citizen equally with the Christian, show themselves in accord with this. Is not this of incest and monogamy a *dogma of faith*? Touch it, and you will learn by experience how this moral man is a *hero* of faith too, not less than Krummacher, not less than Philip II. These fight for the faith of the Church, he for the faith of the State, or the moral laws of the State; for articles of faith, both condemn him who acts otherwise than *their faith* will allow. The brand of “crime” is stamped upon him, and he may languish in reformatories, in jails. Moral faith is as fanatical as religious faith! They call that “liberty of faith” then, when brother and sister, on account of a relation that they should have settled with their “conscience,” are thrown into prison. “But they set a pernicious example.” Yes, indeed others might have taken the notion that the State had no business to meddle with their relation, and thereupon “purity of morals” would go to ruin. So then the religious heroes of faith are zealous for the “sacred God,” the moral ones for the “sacred good.”¹⁷

If there is no God, then all “crimes” are legitimate. If you are an atheist, why not either commit them or work to abolish a law-order that prevents their commission? Sade and Stirner had only contempt for illogical atheists who denied God but affirmed God’s law-order and morality. Their challenge was in essence this: if you say, as an atheist, that you believe in some kind of law and order, on what ground do you do so? Can you deny God and then try to hold on to God’s order? Why are rape, incest, murder, and false witness wrong? If you say that they are destructive of social order, or of life, on what ground can you maintain that destruction is bad and life is good? By what standard can you reintroduce order without sneaking in God through the back door? How can you call yourself an honest atheist if what you really affirm is God and His order under a different name? If God be not, then, as Sade declared, “There is crime in nothing... regardless of what it be.”

Moreover, our problem, Sade held, stems from a hangover of Christian ideas:

The source of all our moral errors lies in the ridiculous acknowledgment of that tie of brotherhood the Christians invented in the age of their ill-fortune and sore distress. Constrained to beg pity from others, ’twas not unclever to claim all

17. Max Stirner, *The Ego and His Own* (New York: Modern Library), 45f.

men are brothers; how is one to refuse aid if this hypothesis be accepted? But its rational acceptance is impossible; are we not all born solitary, isolated? I say more: are we not come into the world all enemies, the one of the other, all in a state of perpetual and reciprocal warfare? Now, I ask whether such would be the situation if they did truly exist, this supposed tie of brotherhood and the virtues it enjoins? Are they really natural? Were they inspired in man by Nature's voice, man would be aware of them at birth. From this time onward, pity, good works, generosity, would be native virtues against which 'twould be impossible to defend oneself, and would render the primitive state of savage men totally contrary to what we observe it to be.¹⁸

It is not our purpose here to discuss Sade's misrepresentation of Biblical faith. Let us note, however, his form of primitivism: it is nature "red in tooth and claw" that he idolizes, an amoral and destructive nature. His is a staunch primitivism, but it is one stripped of any Franciscan view of nature. Love is denounced by Sade in favor of a self-seeking, egocentric desire or lust. "In this world there is nothing dangerous but pity and beneficence; goodness is never but a weakness of which the ingratitude and impertinence of the feeble always force honest folk to repent." Sade believed that as long as the heart is corrupted by such Christian sentiments, it is a most untrustworthy guide. More than the heart, self-interest had to be exalted. The goal of pleasure is that "everything around us be occupied with nothing but ourselves, think of naught but of us, care for us only."¹⁹

Sade stated his position most plainly in a "pamphlet" that he incorporated into *Philosophy in the Bedroom*. His basic faith and premise appeared in its first paragraph: "What *should we, who have no religion, do with laws?*" The whole appeal of "Yet Another Effort, Frenchmen, If You Would Become Republicans" is to this premise, and the entire argument is a justification of this radical anarchism. The French Revolution, he held, must destroy all laws (and religion, the source of law) or it would be destroyed — "Annihilate forever what may one day destroy your work." Sade expressed his hatred of "a dimensionless god" and His omnipotence. Religion creates crime. To abolish religion, statist education is the essential

18. In Seaver and Wainhouse, *op cit.*, 283f.

19. *Ibid.*, 285, 340, 342, 344.

step. The state apparently had a function for a time as the wrecker of religion and law. "Religions are the cradles of despotism: the foremost among all the despots was a priest." The love of neighbor, a religious myth, must be abolished; it is a restraint upon man. "The atrocity of capital punishment" likewise has to be abolished. Murder is no crime, nor is slander or libel. Moreover, "Lay partiality aside, and answer me: is theft, whose effect is to distribute wealth more evenly, to be branded as wrong in our day, under our government which aims at equality? Plainly, the answer is no: it furthers equality and, what is more, renders more difficult the conservation of property."²⁰ The logic of Sade's equalitarianism is catching up with us, with every session of Congress and of the Supreme Court.

Sade held that no sexual crimes (except Biblical morality) existed. The only "morality" of the state and of concern to the state is self-perpetuation. All the so-called moral crimes, he said, "are of total inconsequence under a government whose sole duty consists in preserving, by whatever may be the means, the form essential to its continuance: there you have the republican government's unique morality." A secular state needs immorality ("the need of immorality in republican manners"), because it is a natural, not a Christian state: "Now that we have got back upon our feet and broken with the host of prejudices that held us captive; now that, brought closer to Nature by the quality of prejudices we have recently obliterated, we listen only to Nature's voice, we are fully convinced that if anything were criminal, it would be to resist the penchants she inspires in us, rather than to come to grips with them."²¹

Sade returned again and again to a justification of incest and sodomy; he also espoused bestiality, for, "What is man? and what difference is there between him and other plants, between him and all other animals of the world? None, obviously." Murder was also a favorite theme. Before Darwin, Sade espoused, without using the term, the survival of the fittest as the law of nature. He hated Chris-

20. *Ibid.*, 296 (Italics added), 297, 303, 305, 310, 313.

21. *Ibid.*, 315-316.

tianity for its “interference” with nature. No loss occurred in murder, or in any destruction, he held, because nature transmutes and uses all things. “Savages, the most independent of men, the nearest to Nature, daily indulge in murder which amongst them goes unpunished.... The freest of people are they who are most friendly to murder.”²² Infanticide, abortion, and euthanasia were urged as checks to overpopulation.²³

By Sade’s own testimony, “All is relative.”²⁴ His life and work, now very much in favor, are seen by some as “a kind of allegorical concentrate of the human predicament” and as a plan of redemption that points to “the essential purity of existence.”²⁵ It is a plan indeed, but instead of charting man’s redemption, it appears to plot man’s suicide (and Sade favored the legitimacy of suicide).

In the Sadean scheme, the state has a function: it must dismantle all law and religion (other than the worship of nature). During the Reign of Terror, Sade and other atheists proposed a new religion of the Virtues that celebrated the triumph of philosophy with “an altar to the dearest Divinity of the Heart: Reason replaced Mary in the temples.”²⁶

To further the destruction of religion, statist education, as we have mentioned, was the chosen instrument. The non-Christian schools of a non-Christian state would eradicate Christianity.

The abolition of all laws based on Biblical premises would create a population given to pleasure, totally egocentric and sensual, and thus totally free from God.

Sade did not look beyond this period of uprooting, but later writers did. Having abolished God’s law-order, the state could then successfully remake man and overcome his alienation from nature. The state then could wither away and the perfect anarchism of Sade could appear. This is not to say that Marx and other Communists, or Bakunin and the anarchists, were followers of Sade. Rather,

22. *Ibid.*, 329, 331, 333.

23. On this subject, see R. J. Rushdoony, *The Myth of Over-Population* (Nutley, NJ: Craig Press, 1969).

24. Norman Gear, *The Divine Demon: A Portrait of the Marquis de Sade* (London: Frederick Muller, 1963), 93.

25. *Ibid.*, 217.

26. *Ibid.*, 128.

thinking from common humanistic premises, they came to common conclusions. If we grant their premise that there is no God, and therefore all things are possible and all things are permitted to man, their conclusion is sound. Anyone who fights shy of the conclusions of Sade and Stirner is guilty of being a "moral Christian," one who denies God while trying to retain everything that God implies.

A marked characteristic of Sade's life was his moral indignation. His moral practices were not uncommon to the France of his day. The degenerate elements in the aristocracy had begun dabbling in moral anarchism some generations earlier. There are more than a few indications that many exceeded the practices of Sade. Sade's sexual drive was apparently low; he needed perversions for his own sexual stimulation as well as for offending God. By developing his practices into an articulate personal and social philosophy and by calling for a systematic and logical atheism, Sade differed from others. Others had a taste for pornography; Sade developed a politics on the premises of pornography. He refused to see himself as a criminal; for legal purposes, he fought the charges against himself. For philosophical purposes, every crime named by Scripture Sade justified as an aspect of the freedom of autonomous and atheistic man. The world is now busily catching up with Sade.

IV

VIOLENCE

Civilization, according to Dr. Frederick Wertham, requires the progressive elimination of violence. Our present culture, however, is fostering violence by its heavy preoccupation with violence on the stage, in films, literature, and the communications media. This is serious in its consequences, because “human violence, factual and fictional, is highly contagious. The incidence of actual violence depends to some extent on the degree to which society tolerates it in fact and in fiction.”¹ At a meeting of the American Psychiatric Association, over eighty percent of those present agreed with Dr. Wertham that “when the environment tolerates violence, violent behavior is apt to happen.” Duncan Williams, commenting on Wertham’s study, stated:

It would be unfair to attribute the phenomenal increase in crime (particularly crime of a violent nature) exclusively to the mass media. On the other hand, if modern Western man is continually subjected to an image of himself as violent, passionate, animalistic and sadistic, not only by the mass media but also in the currently fashionable philosophic treatises, plays, novels and other art forms, it would appear that he can do one of three things. He can react strongly against such representations; he can be unmoved by them;

1. Frederick Wertham, *A Sign for Cain: An Exploration of Human Violence* (New York: Paperback Library, 1969), 3.

he can consciously or unconsciously mould his own attitude and behaviour to conform with them.²

In connection with this, it first of all must be added that, very clearly, an increasing number of people are molding themselves in terms of this new image of man as a violent animal. The taste for violence and for brutal confrontations is a rising one. Because man is a unity, and mind or thought is closely linked to action, the new image man has of himself is resulting in violent action.

Second, an essential aspect of the modern existentialist mood is the attempt of man to play god. Sartre said that "man is the being whose project is to be God."³ Moreover, Sartre holds that man "is completely and always free or he is not free at all."⁴ Sartre quotes Dostoyevsky, who once wrote, "If God did not exist, everything would be possible." And Sartre claims that this is precisely the starting point for Existentialism: everything is permitted. Sartre insists that "freedom is nothing other than a choice which creates its own possibilities."⁵

The implications of this are far reaching. When man seeks to be god, he is faced with a serious problem. The prayer of Hannah long ago summed up two dramatic aspects of God's power: "The LORD killeth, and maketh alive; he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up" (1 Sam. 2:6). The attempt to imitate God by creating life is very much with us, and scientists have a long record of failure here.⁶ Only a very limited number of scientists can dare attempt to play god by trying to create life; for most men, such an attempt is impossible. "To make alive" is beyond man. "To kill" is very easy for all men, and it does give a sense of power. One ex-soldier, a determined advocate of peace, once remarked, while mildly drunk, that the ability to pull a trigger and see a man drop dead gave a very heady sense of power. Man tries to imitate God in

2. Duncan Williams, *Trousered Apes: Sick Literature in a Sick Society* (New Rochelle, NY: Arlington House, 1972), 93.

3. Jean Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1956), 566.

4. Cited by Walter Odajnyk, *Marxism and Existentialism* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Anchor Books, 1965), 93.

5. *Ibid.*, 13, 566.

6. See R. J. Rushdoony, *The Mythology of Science* (Nutley, NJ: Craig Press, 1967); and Bolton Davidheiser, *To Be as God* (Nutley, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1972).

destruction, in the power to take away life, or to control and limit it.

Add to this the fact that pornography is very closely linked to the manipulation of people, and a factor for violence emerges. Pornography reduces men and women to their genitals; it creates a world of fantasy in which people are *used* sexually. But *to use* people with their consent is tame stuff indeed, and, as a result, the pornographic imagination, whether in writing or on film, runs very quickly into the *forcible use* of people. Where consent is lacking, there power is demonstrated. This equation has been prominent from Sade to the present.

Sade, in fact, gives us one long justification of violence in all his writings. His key book, *Philosophy in the Bedroom*, describes violence and destruction as laws of nature.⁷ Violence can mean the forcible use of adults, of their deception, or the corruption of the very young. For Sade, the three favorite preferences of libertinage were “sodomy, sacrilegious fancies, and penchants to cruelty.” Assault upon a person and violence to God’s order were what gave Sade so great a delight in these. He called for a refined sensitive cruelty, and with delight he catalogued the monstrous torture devices of history. “Destruction, hence, like creation, is one of Nature’s mandates,” because nature itself is so full of destruction and violence; it is unnatural to condemn violence.⁸

One of Sade’s desires was to contrive new means of perversion and violence, and he prayed to Satan for this power:

Behold, my love, behold all that I simultaneously do: scandal, seduction, bad example, incest, adultery, sodomy! Oh, Satan! one and unique god of my soul, inspire thou in me something yet more, present further perversions to my smoking heart, and then shalt thou see how I shall plunge myself into them all!⁹

Maurice Blanchot has called attention to this central aspect of Sade, that is, the intense love of violence, whereby he gave his name to the word *sadism*. Sade’s “ambition” was “to be innocent by

7. Marquis de Sade, “Philosophy in the Bedroom,” in *The Marquis de Sade: The Complete Justine, Philosophy in the Bedroom and Other Writings*, ed. Richard Seaver and Austryn Wainhouse (New York: Grove Press, 1965), 237.

8. *Ibid.*, 242, 247, 253-256, 274f.

9. *Ibid.*, 272.

dint of culpability; to smash what is normal, once and for all, and smash the laws by which he could have been judged.”¹⁰ Moreover, Blanchot pointed out,

Sadean man denies man, and this negation is achieved through the intermediary of the notion of God. He temporarily makes himself God, so that there before him men are reduced to nothing and discover the nothingness of a being before God....

Still, the dialectic evolves to further levels: Sade’s man, who has taken unto himself the power to set himself above men — the power which men madly yield to God — never for a moment forgets that this power *is* completely negative. To be God can have only one meaning: to crush man, to reduce creation to nothing. “I should like to be Pandora’s box,” Saint-Fond says at another point, “so that all the evils which escaped from my breast might destroy all mankind individually.”¹¹

Blanchot notes a fundamental issue: If man plays at being a god, he will, since he cannot create life, manifest his claim to godhood by destroying or at the least abusing life. He will seek to make other men realize that they are nothing before him, to make them “discover the nothingness of a being before God.” This will be done by corruption, abuse, torture, and deception. Man must be abased before the would-be man-god.

If man plays at being a god, then he cannot treat other men as equals. A man, however, expects another man to treat him as a man, not as a worm. As a result, the man who plays god must work to humiliate and break the man who presumes to be his equal. The literature of pornography is an endless litany of the fantasies of egoism, whereby people either are used and abused or allow themselves to be used and abused, finding pleasure and exaltation in defeat. Sodomasochistic themes are almost inseparable from pornography. Sade was right in declaring the favorite themes of “libertinage” to be “sodomy, sacrilegious fancies, and penchants to cruelty.” An historical survey of certain aspects of pornography, published between 1877 and 1885, tends to confirm Sade’s judgment; particularly telling is the monotony of themes.¹² All three of

10. Maurice Blanchot, “Sade,” in *ibid.*, 71.

11. *Ibid.*, 59.

12. Henry Spencer Ashbee published the catalogue under the pseudonym of Pisanus Fraxi, *Bibliography of Prohibited Works*, 3 vols. (New York: Jack Brussel, 1962).

Sade's themes can be summed up as violence, violence to the natural order of sex (sodomy), violence against God's order (sacrilege), and violence through cruelty, both physical and mental. In every form, violence is a means of playing god. Blanchot documented this from Sade very clearly:

"But," Juliette breaks in, "you do not really believe that you are to be included among men?... Oh, no, no, when one dominates them with such energy, it is impossible to belong to the same race." To which Saint-Fond: "Yes, she is right, we are gods."¹³

Orwell, in *1984*, recognized the Sadean nature of modern man and the pornography of power. The character O'Brien summed up the future as Sadean man would have it:

Power is in inflicting pain and humiliation. Power is in tearing human minds to pieces and putting them together again in new shapes of your own choosing. Do you begin to see, then, what kind of world we are creating? It is the exact opposite of the stupid hedonistic Utopias that the old reformers imagined. A world of fear and treachery and torment, a world of trampling and being trampled upon, a world which will grow not less but more merciless as it refines itself. Progress in our world will be progress toward more pain. The old civilizations claimed that they were founded on love and justice. Ours is founded upon hatred....

All competing pleasures will be destroyed. But always — do not forget this, Winston — always there will be the intoxication of power, constantly increasing and constantly growing subtler. Always, at every moment, there will be the thrill of victory, the sensation of trampling on an enemy who is helpless. If you want a picture of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face — forever.¹⁴

The hatred of man is intense in Sade, and repeatedly stated in some of his works, such as *Justine*. Murder thus fulfills nature's intent by helping rid the world of a contemptible creature. Civilization is also hated.¹⁵

Since man must, to play god, hate other men, it means that his pleasure must be a solitary one and must be exacted at the price of someone's suffering: "Is it not plain enough that the woman can

13. Blanchot, in Seaver and Wainhouse, *op. cit.*, 59.

14. George Orwell, *1984* (New York: New American Library, Signet Classics, 1950), 203.

15. Sade, "Justine," in Seaver and Wainhouse, *op. cit.*, 519f., 651.

share nothing with us without taking something from us? and that all she makes away with must necessarily be had by her at our expense?"¹⁶ Love and enjoyment are two different things, and for Sade love is an impediment to enjoyment. The enjoyment of the would-be god is greater if the other person suffers:

Having proven that solitary pleasures are as delicious as any others and much more likely to delight, it becomes perfectly clear that this enjoyment, taken in independence of the objects we employ, is not merely of a nature very remote from what could be pleasurable to that object, but is even found to be inimical to that object's pleasure: what is more, it may become an imposed suffering, a vexation, or a torture, and the only thing that results from this abuse is a very certain increase of pleasure for the despot who does the tormenting or vexing.¹⁷

Mankind exists for the pleasure of the man-god of pornography. Sade stated it very bluntly: "Would I not be a fool to feel pity for the chicken they slaughtered for my dinner?"¹⁸

Simone de Beauvoir saw the far reaches of Sade's imagination, that is, his war against God and his lust for total violence:

But the ideal erotic act was never to be realized. This is the deeper meaning of the words Sade puts into the mouth of Jerome: "What we are doing here is only the image of what we would like to do." It was not merely that really heinous crimes were forbidden in practice, but that even those which one could summon up in the midst of the wildest ravings would disappoint their author: "Ali, how many times, by God, have I not longed to be able to assail the sun, snatch it out of the universe, make a general darkness, or use that star to burn the world! oh, that would be a crime...." But if this dream seemed satisfying, it was because the criminal projected into it his own destruction along with that of the universe. Had he survived, he would have been frustrated once again. Sadistic crime can never be adequate to its animating purpose. The victim is never more than a symbol; the subject possesses himself only as an imago, and their relationship is merely the parody of the drama which would really set them at grips in their incommunicable intimacy.¹⁹

16. *Ibid.*, 603.

17. *Ibid.*, 605.

18. *Ibid.*, 645f.

19. Simone de Beauvoir, "Must We Burn Sade?" in *The Marquis de Sade: The 120 Days of Sodom and Other Writings*, trans. and ed. Austryn Wainhouse and Richard Seaver (New York: Grove Press, 1966), 32.

Sex thus is the symbol for a suicidal sadomasochistic denial of life, a hatred which leads to abuse and self-abuse. As we have seen, the word *f—*, used figuratively, has an aggressive and violent meaning: “To cheat, trick, take advantage of, deceive, or treat someone unfairly.” To champion its use is to advocate the pornographic view of sex as exploitation and violence. Unquestionably, this is Sade’s symbolism with regard to sex: his goal is the cosmic *f—*, is violating the universe as totally as possible. Anyone who has looked into Sade can amply document the intensity of Sade’s desire to do so.

Maurice Girodias, like Sade, held that “freedom must be total.” In terms of the worldview of pornography, this is equivalent to saying that violence must be total.

Is this an overstatement? Is not some pornography merely titillation? Clearly, yes, but it does not stop there. By its depersonalization of sex, and by treating women and men as mere objects to be used for sexual gratification, pornography relentlessly proceeds to greater and more bizarre use and abuse. Depersonalization does not stand still: it works progressively to strip the persons of all dignity and to reduce them to helpless, subservient playthings of a would-be god. The extent to which such hard-core pornography becomes a matter of intense interest to even the young is immeasurable, and materials discovered by mothers and shown to me indicate clearly that Sade now has many imitators who are bent on outdoing him. The difference is that Sade’s imitators are widely defended and are making money at their trade.

Pornography, instead of eliminating violence in our civilization, fosters it. The diagnostic analysis of Wertham — that is, “The incidence of actual violence depends to some extent on the degree to which a society tolerates it in fact and in fiction” — is confirmed by police reports on pornography and violence. A false doctrine of man stimulates both pornography and violence, and pornography itself encourages that violence. The violence of pornography includes the very basic violence to man and society that results when sex is dissociated from love. But this is a violence that pornography welcomes and works for. Pornography is a plan for the destruction of man and any society recognized as civilized. It is a

philosophy that calls for the death of God — and also the death of man.

V

THE IDEA OF MAN

Pornography is an end result of humanism; man has become his own end, and the chief end of man is to glorify himself, and to enjoy himself forever.

The popularity of so ridiculous a writer as Henry Miller is a good index to our era. Miller is indifferent to all real issues and alive to all irrelevant ones. His lifetime has spanned some of the most important political, economic, educational, and scientific events and crises of world history, but to them he has been indifferent. As Leslie Fiedler noted, his only real interest is copulation.¹ Miller's trifling hatreds and dislikes are also haphazardly expressed, and these have appealed to some. According to Fiedler, "No wonder the German occupation forces in Paris made Miller a favorite author, finding in him not only sex but their favorite obsession with the Jew as the absolute Other."² Miller approaches nothing, not even his dislike of the Jews, with seriousness; but his approach, however trifling and low-key, is one of hostility to all things, and one that attempts to use all things. *Tropic of Cancer*, he informs us in its pages, is "not a book" but "a prolonged insult, a gob of spit in the face of Art, a kick in the pants to God, Man, Destiny, Time, Love,

1. Leslie A. Fiedler, *Waiting for the End* (New York: Stein & Day, 1964), 41.

2. *Ibid.*, 79.

Beauty... what you will.”³ To all that law and civilization represent, he is a “hyena,” a scavenger waiting to destroy civilization’s carcass. “I am proud to say that I am inhuman.”⁴ Humanism culminates in the hatred of man. Peter Michaelson has seen the *Playboy* view of life as pornographic in its treatment of women as sexual objects rather than as persons. His comment is that

Playboy’s pornography consists in its transformation of women — i.e., female human beings — into Playmates and bunnies, i.e., into erotic art objects designed to titillate the sexual sense and then sublimate it into spending money (in the Playboy Clubs, hopefully), or into fantasizing about spending money (in *Playboy* magazine). The greenback dollar, in the *Playboy* ethos (and the *Playboy* ethos is fundamentally the capitalistic ethos), is the sublimated analogue of the sperm. Money and the making of it is the masculine privilege. It is no accident that the verb *spend* is a common pornographic metaphor for male orgasm. And since, in a capitalistic democracy, money can buy everything, women are, as they have really always been, commodities; and all commodities are available to him who has the power to take them. Thus the power to buy becomes, in the capitalistic ethos, the sign of sexual power. So the world is sexualized, and sex is commercialized, and we have a pornographic image of the world — an idealized, socially lionized, metaphor of prostitution as a way of life. And that, traditionally, is what pornography is — the literature of and about whores and whoring.⁵

There is a measure of truth to this observation, but the roots of the problem lie elsewhere. Having noted Miller and *Playboy*, let us mark their basic irrelevance to the problem. To bring the problem into focus, let us briefly examine a letter in *Penthouse* magazine, a London- and New York-based “international magazine for men.” A letter from a young housewife describes her premarital sex life: incest with her two brothers began at thirteen and continued occasionally to the date of the letter. Some group sex with friends

3. Henry Miller, *Tropic of Cancer* (New York: Grove Press, 1961), 1f. Lest anyone jump to conclusions, we are not interested in describing this or any other book as pornography. Our concern is to identify the essentials of the pornographic outlook and its worldview. In case anyone has missed the point, we believe that, while laws are necessary, they are not the answer. A cultural and religious crisis underlies the pornography problem. Miller is a minor pimple on America’s culturally plagued face.

4. *Ibid.*, 98f., 254ff.

5. Peter Michaelson, “How to Make the World Safe for Pornography,” in *The New Eroticism: Theories, Voguees and Canons*, ed. Philip Nobile (New York: Random House, 1970), 155.

of her brothers also took place before puberty. Her husband was a traveling man, so she was home alone much of the time. She initiated her twelve-year-old son into sexual activity by oral and manual masturbation, and then into vaginal intercourse. She explained:

What is so wrong in complete family love? Incest is only a problem when pregnancies result, and I am safely on the Pill. As far as emotional problems are concerned, I can only cite my own case, where I feel sure I have a more richly satisfying sex life than the majority of "morally perfect" women.⁶

The roots of this letter are deep in contemporary philosophies of science and in modern education. Man is reduced to matter. He is an animal, a product of a long, evolutionary history. Mind or spirit is an epiphenomenon and not a reality, so that man is to be understood in purely materialistic terms. This kind of reductionism rests in part on an older dualism characteristic of Hellenic thought, in which man was regarded as a combination of two alien substances — mind, form, or spirit on the one hand, and matter on the other. The Biblical perspective of man as a living soul, a unity not of alien substances but of God's creative power with the dust of the earth, has been shelved. Greek dualism has been reduced to Greek monism. Whereas, in the older Greek perspective, as interpreted by churchmen under its influence, there were sins of the spirit and sins of the flesh, now there are no sins of the spirit because the spirit is nonexistent. (In the Biblical perspective, all sin is of man and involves his total being; sin therefore cannot be isolated to an aspect of man's being. Before man commits murder or adultery, he has desired it, and at every point in every sin the whole man is wholly involved.)

For Mrs. J. P., there are only sins of the flesh; these sins are really sins only when they result in inconvenient material consequences. Incest can be bad if pregnancy results, she reasons, but "the Pill" has ostensibly abolished both the threat of pregnancy and the possibility of sin. Where there are no undesired material conse-

6. Letter of Mrs. J. P., *Penthouse*, January 1973: 130. It is interesting to note how often "the Pill" appears, like God, capitalized! This letter first appeared in the English periodical *Forum*, and was reprinted in Dr. Harold Greenwald and Ruth Greenwald, eds., *The Sex-Life Letters* (New York: Bantam Books, 1972), 119f.

quences, there are no sins. So goes her reasoning. (This, of course, was Sade's reasoning also, and he thereby justified murder, because no man can destroy matter: nature merely transforms it. By returning dead men and women to nature, we are hastening and expediting nature's work, and no sin is involved!)⁷

Mrs. J. P. did not come to this conclusion out of any studied philosophical analysis. It was handed to her, virtually, by her culture and her education, both of which regard religion and morality as irrelevant, even though, practically, the religion of humanism is the established religion of the schools and the new civil religion of the age. In our culture, Christian principles are merely matters of personal taste, not important enough for our culture to teach. Not only is the irrelevance of the Biblical worldview implicit in state, school, and science, but what is explicit is the belief that only that which can be physically measured is real and relevant.

Obviously, this means that the immoral is reduced to what is physically harmful. In a Kinsey report, this meant that sexual molestation of young girls is not immoral because it is not harmful. Only a few drops of blood are shed, after all. The real harm to society comes from moralists who prejudice the minds of young girls against strange men.⁸

Practically, then, the implications of this are that adultery, homosexuality, necrophilia, prostitution, and every sexual offense known are only bad if the result is disease. This has been seriously argued by more than one person, and Dr. Lars Ullerstam of Sweden has written in defense of all perversions.⁹ Ullerstam regards the Biblical idea of sin as myth. Moreover, he is ready to recognize that his call for the legalization of all perversions and practices (and their subsidization to atone for past discriminations) might lead to some damages. However,

7. Marquis de Sade, "Justine," in *The Marquis de Sade: The Complete Justine, Philosophy in the Bedroom and Other Writings*, etc., ed. Richard Seaver and Austryn Wainhouse (New York: Grove Press, 1965), 518.

8. Alfred C. Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy, Clyde E. Martin, Paul Gebbard, etc., *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* (Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders, 1953), 121ff; cf. 115, 327f., 330.

9. Lars Ullerstam, *The Erotic Minorities* (New York: Grove Press, 1966).

Even if a certain amount of damage were caused by them, this is not an effective argument against the reforms. Practically all societal measures have a number of negative side effects. To make this utilitarian argument work, one would have to compare the deleterious effects with the advantages: if the latter appear clearly preponderant, the reform has to be regarded as successful.¹⁰

This judgment, however, is more than a physical assessment of damages: it is a moral judgment. Ullerstam throughout makes nonphysical and anti-Christian moral judgments. In his introduction to Ullerstam's book, Yves de Saint-Agnes rightly observed that "present-day Sweden is living through a sexual revolution. The first victim to be hunted down is morality. In religious wars, absolutism is always given for deeds of violence committed 'for the cause.'"¹¹ Wherever man is viewed in purely materialistic terms, and the world is judged as real only to the extent that it is physically measurable, there Biblical faith and morality will be despised and hunted down.

Quite likely, few of the literary defenders of pornography subscribe to Mrs. J. P.'s practice and seduce their sons and daughters. Mrs. J. P., as an uncomplicated and middle-class member of our culture, has learned her lessons well. Everything in school, science, and television converges to teach her essentially the same lesson. Man is an evolutionary product, purely material, and Biblical morality is, like its God, a myth. Therefore, "What is so wrong in complete family love? Incest is only a problem when pregnancies result, and I am safely on the Pill." One wonders whether her grandmother was a pietist who sang about being safe in the arms of Jesus. Mrs. J. P. is safe from the sin of incest in the arms of the Pill.

According to the basics of the Scriptures, man is the creature of God, made in God's image, to exercise knowledge, righteousness, holiness, and dominion. Culturally, man makes himself in terms of his image of himself. The history of art is most instructive in showing us how men have seen themselves in various cultures. The artist's vision of the beautiful face and body, of dignity and importance, and of character, has varied from age to age. The stiffly

10. *Ibid.*, 154.

11. *Ibid.*, vi.

posed photographs of a century ago are also revealing. Senator Charles Sumner, dressed as an American in the mid-nineteenth century, conveys a mythical image of a portentous Roman senator. Though living during momentous times, Sumner was almost unseeing of them, so intense was his image of America's destiny and his own. Men by their faith and imagination, by their styles of clothing and styles of religion and ideas, are continually remaking themselves and their times. They live in the world as men remaking it in terms of their mental image of man.

A woman, a nightmare of expensive inelegance and painful vulgarity, stops briefly before a hotel lobby mirror to survey herself with obvious pride and pleasure. She has seen herself essentially in her mind's eye and in terms of an idea, and she is more than content. So our culture mirrors itself in terms of pornography, with obvious pleasure, and it continues to reorder reality according to its mental image of man. Only a fraction of the menace of that image appears in pornography. In all of life, that image constitutes a major threat. Man is in trouble, because his idea of himself is radically defective. More than that, it is evil. Because the world is not man's creation, and only man's cultures are his products, a false culture is destined to collapse, because its roots are in man's imagination rather than in God's created reality. The self-image helps determine the nature of that collapse.

VI

THE DEPERSONALIZED UNIVERSE

The dramatist Ionesco, in discussing the theater and writing for the theater, has called for the “absolute freedom of the imagination” in writing. “The free development of the powers of imagination must not be restricted. There must be no canalization, no directives, no preconceived ideas, no limits.”¹ Since modern man has continued, and for a while yet will continue, to think of himself in Freudian terms, let us analyze this credo in terms of Freud. To Freud, the mind of man, including the unconscious, is id, ego, and superego. The *superego* represents the teachings of church, parents, school, and society, the mores and morals of the day. At one time, the superego provided the main themes for drama, novels, and poetry, both great and poor. No true modern now would for a moment consider valid a theme from the realm of the superego; he would consider it only to indict and condemn it.

The *ego* represents the reality principle, amoral but radically oriented to survival and success, to the protection and furthering of the ego. The *id* represents the pleasure principle. The ego mediates between man’s id and reality, between his senses and his needs, and is involved in a constant transaction between the person and the

1. Eugene Ionesco, *Notes and Counter Notes* (New York: Grove Press, 1964), 124.

world. The ego is capable of daydreaming, of fantasy, but it knows the difference between reality and dreams. The ego is not at war with the id, but is realistic and wants a realistic fulfillment. The id, however, as the foundation of the personality, is only pleasure-oriented and demands total freedom and self-gratification. It is instant gratification, moreover, that the id demands, because it is totally instinctual and infantile. The id is unconscious and unorganized libido; it has no sense of reality and assumes its own omnipotence. It recognizes no negation, no concept of time or value, and is beyond good and evil. It is, in addition, beyond logic as well as beyond morality.²

The superego has been dropped as a source of artistic insight and increasingly the ego is also being phased out. Raw vitality is sought in the primitive, uninhibited total freedom claimed by the id. However, although the id may believe in its own omnipotence, that belief makes no difference to reality. The results are trouble, alienation, and conflict. Ionesco wrote, "The only thing that counts is my conflict with the universe. The universe is my obstacle."³ In earlier eras, when men faced great natural obstacles, they still assumed that the universe was their *home*. For those, however, who live by the id, the universe (and God) must be their *enemy*, since the id's "omnipotence" is unrecognized by reality.

Where the ego bends itself too far to the id's demand for omnipotence and gratification, the results are disillusionment, despair, and a will to death. For Ionesco, the tragedy and absurdity of human life are that man ostensibly always desires omnipotence and immortality when his real condition is impotence and morality. The reactions can be a murderous self-hatred as well as a hatred of man, and a shattering despair of life. Ionesco commented:

But are we not all moving toward death? Death is really the end, the goal of all existence. Death does not have to be buttressed by any ideology. To live is to die and to kill: every creature defends itself by killing, kills to live. In this hatred of man for man (who really needs a doctrine that allows him to kill with a clear

2. R. J. Rushdoony, *Freud* (Nutley, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1961), 27ff.

3. Ionesco, *op. cit.*, 130.

conscience), is there not something like an underlying hatred of the very condition of man?

Do we perhaps feel in a confused sort of way, regardless of ideology, that we cannot help being, at one and the same time, both killer and killed, governor and governed, the instrument and the victim of all-conquering death?...

And yet, and yet we are *here*. It could be there is some reason, which escapes our reason, for existence: that too is possible.⁴

In a mature and aging Ionesco, all this leads to sober reflections. To more and more youth, to all the Mrs. J.P.'s, and others, it leads on the one hand to rage and frustration, and on the other to every possible gratification of the id.

In Ionesco it leads to meditations on life and the universe, and to the frustration and incomprehensibility apparently inherent in all things. He has been "obsessed with death" since the age of four, and "always... aware of the impossibility of communication, of isolation and encirclement; I write in order to fight encirclement; I also write in order to cry out my fear of death and my humiliation at the thought of dying."⁵ For such a mood, all things become unreal, and the only reality tends to become the unceasing hunger of the id and the painful frustration felt by the ego.

Quite honestly, I like all this less and less, it wearies me more and more. I sometimes feel a real need to touch something solid; when someone knocks against me or hurts me, it seems to me that there really is something there. And yet I know there is nothing but evanescence, everything moving toward dissolution; I am dying myself and nothing remains of nothing. Other fruits of chaos will appear again, other flowers from the void, other vaporous worlds, movements, shapes and colors, without reason, with no foundations.

Nothing is atrocious, everything is atrocious. Nothing is comic. Everything is tragic. Nothing is tragic, everything is comic, everything is real, unreal, possible, impossible, conceivable, inconceivable. Everything is heavy, everything is light....⁶

Ionesco writes with sensitivity and at times with humor. Not all men will react to the frustration of the id this way, or conclude that

4. *Ibid.*, 162.

5. *Ibid.*, 227.

6. *Ibid.*, 216.

life is meaningless on intellectual terms. If life is meaningless, you and I are meaningless, and we are expendable. Such a conclusion frees the id from the superego and inhibits the ego, so that a violent and unconstricted urge to self-gratification, united with an insistence on omnipotence, is then readily operative. That violence increases should not surprise us. Ionesco has also said, "I have written a whole theatrical oeuvre only to show what everybody knows, namely, that the universe is strange, and that the triviality of life is only occasionally relieved when atrocity interrupts it."⁷ More and more, that "triviality" is being relieved by atrocity.

A view of the universe as impersonal and as the product of chance renders man unimportant and personality, however much prized, a very fragile and essentially meaningless product or by-product of absolute meaninglessness.

The word *personality* has a curious history. It comes from the Latin *persona*, meaning a mask for actors. It was taken over by the church fathers and given a radically different orientation as a translation for the Greek theological term *hypostasis*, meaning substance or subsistence, that which stands under, a foundation, base, or ground. *Hupostasis* (or *hypostasis*) is translated as substance at times. *Substance* comes from *sub* (under) and *sto* (I stand). *Hypostasis* is used and translated in Hebrews 1:3 as person, in Hebrews 11:1 as substance, and in 2 Corinthians 9:4 as confident boasting or expectation. Because the word gained fresh currency and meaning as a description of God, it also gained a very significant meaning as applied to man. The ultimate as sovereign reality and power, God can be described in terms of personality; all created reality is undergirded by His omnipotent government. Man as a person is thereby in a special relationship to the ultimate power, God. He is awesomely linked to ultimacy and crowned with glory and honor, and all things are set under his feet.

In the modern, humanistic worldview, man is devalued. The fact that man is a personality and a person *isolates* him from ultimate reality. It leaves him awake in a dead universe, warm in a cold

7. Cited by Thomas Molnar, *Sartre: Ideologue of Our Time* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1968), 28.

reality. Instead of being the glory of man, personality is the mark of his alienation. Man's freedom lies, some have held, in overcoming alienation by becoming like ants in an anthill, unpersonal workers, or like bees in a beehive, having a function, not a personality. Man, some hold, must become post-historical man, man without a history and, like ants and bees, with only a function.

Pornography, very honestly, gives us such a man, man reduced in this case to his genital functions, not in terms of procreation but in terms of the id and its pleasure principle. A sociologist may prefer a different kind of function for man, but, where modern man's id is concerned, the sociologist and his dream society are no more than modern versions of a nagging superego, to be junked as quickly as possible.

Thus, the intellectuals and the planners develop at great length their master plans for a new social order. The values of a new humanistic society are endlessly discussed and developed. This politico-intellectual apparatus and body of thought are the new priesthood of society and the source of the new superego. As all have learned their lessons well in the religious institutions of the civil religion of modern man — the schools and colleges — so all, or most, tend to affirm and parrot the mores of the modern superego. They are for love and brotherhood, for integration, for world peace, for everything that the gods of the modern superego decree.

Then men turn aside to acclaim and delight in Henry Miller, *Playboy*, and *Penthouse*, and to act for self-gratification while voting and demonstrating for modern ideals. Still others, in increasing numbers, are involved in criminal acts, theft, murder, and in sexual offenses, in raw expressions of the id in its infantile drive for gratification.

The universe having been depersonalized, man is depersonalizing himself. What the world of art has done, the world of man is doing also. The personal, moral, and reasonable are bypassed in favor of the impersonal and instinctual.

We are told that the cry of the people in ancient Persia was, "We are men and would have laws." Such a declaration rested on a

radically different image of himself than man now has. Total freedom is now the cry, deliverance from law to the freedom of the id. Christ declared of Himself, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36). The freedom of the id does not make men free.

VII

EXPERIENTIALISM

Jonathan Edwards, one of the great Puritans, exercised a powerful influence on his generation and on succeeding eras. Of his most favorable influences, one resulted from his part in reemphasizing the older Puritan and Biblical eschatology. An unhappy aspect of his influence was his mediation of various scientific concepts. The Puritans in England and America were closely linked to the growth of science and largely responsible for it. Their emphasis on predestination and law in theology made them most ready to see, study, and formulate law and structure in the natural world. As a result, a very large percentage of early scientists either were Puritans or grew up with a Puritan worldview; similarly, many of the popularizers and mediators of scientific thought to the people were the clergy, in England, Scotland, and America.

Unfortunately, however, and for a variety of reasons not our concern in this context, this concern for exactitude became a part also of the concept that only the physically measurable is either real or exact. The result was a new view of reality. The young Edwards thus attempted to define God in terms of the known material universe of science, with very strange results. He held that,

... it is self-evident I believe to every man, that Space is necessary, eternal, infinite and omnipresent. But I had as good speak plain: I

have already said as much as, that Space is God. And it is indeed clear to me, that all the Space there is not proper to any body, all the Space there is without the bounds of Creation, all the Space there was before the Creation, is God himself; and no body would in the least pick at it, if it were not because of the gross conceptions, that we have of Space.¹

This was not all. Scientific truth was discoverable by the experimental method, by being subject to measurable physical standards and methods. Not surprisingly, Edwards and others who were influenced by the new sciences held to a need for experimental religion. This, practically, meant a measurable religious experience, and the term soon became experiential religion. In Europe, the consequence of the demand for experimental religion was pietism; in England and America, it was revivalism, which later merged with pietism.

The demand for experimental religion meant a demand for physical evidence of God's regeneration. The older standard of Puritanism, a profession of faith and a life consistent with that profession, was now seen as moralism or as "head" religion (intellectual only) rather than as "heart" religion (one possessing the whole man). The result was the revival experience, falling, rolling, jerking, dancing, barking, falling as though in a trance, and so on. All this was sometimes accompanied by shouting and screaming as the Spirit ostensibly shook the person and converted him or her.² According to the revivalistic Peter Cartwright, "To see proud gentlemen and young ladies, dressed in their silks, jewelry, and prunella, from top to toe, take the jerks would often excite my risibilities. The first jerk or so, you would see their fine bonnets, caps and combs fly; and so sudden would be the jerking of the head that their long loose hair would crack almost as loud as a Wagoner's whip."³

The Puritan-Calvinist tradition soon broke with this experientialism, which then united with Arminian theology and pietism

1. Jonathan Edwards, "Notes on Natural Science: Of Being," in *Benjamin Franklin and Jonathan Edwards, Selections from their Writings*, ed. Carl Van Doren (New York: Scribner's, 1920), 223.

2. Grover C. Loud, *Evangelized America* (New York: Dial Press, 1928), 102f.

3. William Warren Sweet, *The Story of Religion in America*, rev. ed. (New York: Harper, 1939), 333.

to dominate American life. Thereafter, the Puritan-Calvinist tradition receded in its influence. The Calvinist centers were the areas of a highly developed and learned theology; the revivalistic circles tended to be poorly educated. The revivalistic groups, however, with their experientialism, were closer to the mainstream of modern life. Their strongly democratic ideas were closely related to experientialism. Measurable religion meant experiential religion, and this same principle came to be applied to other areas of life.

Thus, measurable education meant an increased range of experience as well as so many years of formal education. The grand tour of Europe became a necessity for the educational experience of the proper gentleman, and a tour of Western America had a similar importance for the European gentleman. Europe, the Americas, Africa, and Asia were and still are constantly surveyed and trotted through by people in search of broadening and educating experiences. Because experience ranks so high in the lexicon of modern man, it is possible to witness such incidents as a scholar, a Russian history expert who regularly reads the Russian periodicals and government reports, being earnestly counseled and corrected on Soviet life by an ignoramus who speaks no Russian but has the ostensible superiority of a two-week guided tour in Russia. Experience, it is held, gives truth; experience in life, reality, and whatever else is relevant and important. As a result, people can say "You haven't really lived" unless you have experienced whatever it is they have experienced.

It is no wonder then that experience-questing has become an important appetite in modern man. By the 1920s, a researcher found that a common cause of adultery among women was not an actual problem within the marriage, but, rather a desire for freedom to experiment. These women believed that they would miss something in life if they did not experience sex with other men. Although no real satisfaction was forthcoming, they pursued that course of action because "they felt they should..."⁴ Supposedly, without these experiences a dimension of life was lost.

4. Lewis Joseph Sherrill, *Family and Church* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1937), 116.

In a city of 20,000, a study (unpublished) was made in the early 1950s of all persons who signed decision cards at a citywide revival meeting held in the civic auditorium. One clear fact emerged: virtually all persons signing decision cards were "repeaters," people who regularly attended and went forward at revival meetings held in one church after another; some had made several "decisions" in a single year. They were, plainly, a floating element that experienced continual "conversion." Calls on a sampling of these people quickly revealed their lack of interest in the formal worship of the church, in Bible study, in doctrine, or in any of the normal duties of Christian fellowship. Some of these people had for years been associated with revivalistic services, but their knowledge of the Bible was amazingly meager; in fact, they were indifferent to any such learning. At the same time, these people, in proportion to their income, all showed a surprising modernity. Television was then relatively new, but they all had a television, and they were sensitive to the experiential trends of the day. Their life was lived continually on the thin edge of experience.

The range of experientialism is wide and its impact on modern life is very great. The enormous popularity and appeal of the motion-picture industry between World Wars I and II, and of television thereafter, have been linked to this same temper. Filmdom has broadened still more the range of experience by penetrating nearly to the depth of violence and sadism.⁵ The pornographic film is indeed a natural development of the experiential emphasis. The requirement of experientialism is a new experience. Just as a scholar is ever eager to read a new study in his field, or to discover a new source material or document, because it is necessary grist for his mill, so the experientialist requires new ranges to explore and new shocks of experience to recharge his flagging batteries. Film producers regularly boast of "the psychological depth" of some new product; what they really mean is the new experiential depth they have plumbed, because the emphasis is not on mind-challenging nuances of ideas but on experiential shock.

5. George de Coulteray, *Sadism in the Movies* (New York: Medical Press, 1965).

An experiential faith, however, will not stay content with vicarious experience. The film is an important supplement and a good bible for experiential potentialities, but it is not enough. The hunger is for personal experience, and the culminating experience, from this modern perspective, is orgasmic. Those saints of experiential humanism, Masters and Johnson, have intimately explored the possibilities and realities of orgasmic experience. The good news is that no one is barred from this experience: it is the great democratic experience as it can be made available to all; it can father a civilization established on eros.⁶ Every woman has the magic button, and every man the lever, to enter the paradise of experientialism.

The January 1973 *Cosmopolitan*, edited by Helen Gurley Brown, provides a good example of this identification of life with experience. A concern for religion, moral character, responsibility, and duty is alien to it, as is any intellectual concern (unless it is in an area of faddism). The featured articles are, most prominently, "Can Adultery Save Your Marriage? You'd Be Surprised!"; "Diary and Before-and-After Pictures of a Breast-Implant Patient (Whose Bosom Grew Beautifully)"; "Is He the Right Lover? (A Quiz)"; "One Diet You Won't Mind — How Sex Can Keep You Slim"; and so on. For the intellectuals, apparently, a "76 Page Super Bonus All New 1973 Bedside Astrologer" is added! This includes a "Cosmo Compatibility Chart (How You Relate to Men of Each Sign), Plus Sun-Seduction Strategy." A "Lovescope" reads, "You react physically to *every* male, evaluate your feeling later." "Sexiest Days" are listed for all, and even the "Peak Power Hour," the "Favorite Aphrodisiac," "Witchiest Makeup," "Carnal Color," "Erotic Cover-Up," and a "Turn-on Technique" (for Taurus girls, this means "Wrapping him in your other mohair throw, then peeling grapes for him perfectly"). The appeal is the bizarre, "far-out" experience; it sells magazines and is a guide to a certain amount of practice.

Quite logically, new experiences mean new sexual partners. The women in the *Cosmopolitan* adultery survey are primly

6. Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955).

self-righteous about their adulteries. They are “not retaliating for a real or suspected infidelity on their husbands’ parts. Rather, they invariably tell me, they are keeping their marriages together.” The author assures us that “this concern with family life is what I think is really the motive force behind female adultery.” Sade delighted in evil because it was evil; these women are guilty of a far greater moral confusion and offense: they delight in evil and call it good. Linda Wolfe adds, “Ego-shattering as it may be to men, among ourselves affairs are no longer secret...adulterous women want to brag.”⁷

For many couples, wife-and-husband swapping is a means of enlarging the orgasmic experience. After all, “modern science” has made clear that the great mystical and regenerating experience is the orgasm.⁸ For those who cannot make contact with their local swap clubs, there are now available on many newsstands magazines that will acquaint them with like-minded folk. *Adam*, a monthly, carries a “Club Adam” section in which individuals and couples advertise their sexual interests and publish their pictures, naked or clothed, provocative or proper, to attract other interested persons.

The emphasis in such groups, according to all reports, is impersonality. Thus Leah Wallach reports:

The golden rule among all swingers is that they believe in marriage and regard their marriage as the primary relationship in their life. They do not regard swinging as cheating because it is done with the partner’s knowledge and consent, “in the open.” Swingers say they are not jealous of one another because they know “it’s only physical, really, with the others.” Since everybody has a marriage to keep safe, there is in fact little risk of entangling *affaires*. Swinging singles are tolerated in some circles and single women sometimes participate, but single males are frowned on. After the lovemaking, partners will tell each other “That was wonderful” or “You’re great” but never “I love you” or any phrase that implies emotional involvement.⁹

7. Linda Wolfe, “Can Adultery Save Your Marriage?” *Cosmopolitan*, January 1973: 80, 83.

8. See Alexander Lowen, *Love and Orgasm* (London: Staples Press, 1966).

9. Leah Wallach, “Change Partners,” *Penthouse*, January 1973: 114. It would be interesting to analyze the strongly Manichean presupposition of such thinking, that is, that all is moral as long as the mind is not involved. Our present concern, however, does not permit such a digression. It should be noted, however, that the Neoplatonic and Manichean elements in such thinking are very strong, and these same strains run very deep in our society.

Impersonality does not long continue if the same two or ten couples meet regularly for “swapping.” Therefore, to maintain the impersonalism, most couples change groups very frequently.

But this is not all. They also increase the *scope* of the experience. This means experimentation in homosexuality and in other perversions. It also means the introduction of trained dogs (or other animals at times) into some groups for bestiality.

The 1971 film *Animal Love* appeared simultaneously in nine theaters, seven of which were open daily at 12:00 noon and two at 9:45 a.m.; all were open all night. The film advertisement read, “Some men and women require greater stimuli to achieve enjoyment in life.”¹⁰ Precisely. Once the quest for experience begins, the need for greater experiential shock, for new and greater stimuli, abounds.

The revivalist Charles G. Finney provided Americans, according to B. B. Warfield, with “less a theology than a system of morals. God might be eliminated from it entirely without essentially changing its character. All virtue, all holiness is made to consist in an ethical determination of Will.”¹¹ God now has been dropped from the moral experience, and it is entirely what the will of man determines that it shall be. Couples swing and claim that it helps their marriage: they sin for virtue’s sake. Linda Wolfe’s adulterous circle of friends all commit adultery: they too do it for their marriage’s sake, to make possible a better life for their husband and children.

What the will determines is therefore morally right. As a result, what is increasingly evidenced is a bitter hostility to anyone who rocks this moral boat. Is homosexuality a perversion? Those who say so are savagely denounced by homosexuals, some psychiatrists, and others. The sincere and determined will to practice homosexuality as a way of life morally justifies the practice: here is simply another way of experiencing life. Who has the right to say that his particular kind of life-experience is the only valid life-form? The word *experience* comes from the Latin *experiri*, meaning to test

10. *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner*, 29 January 1971.

11. Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, *Perfectionism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1931), 2:193.

— an appropriate origin. Experience has become the new test and standard of life, and it denies the right of God and man to sit in judgment on it. Consequently, scientists, as the great experimenters or testers, have the place of priests in our culture, an honor which they share with teachers or educators. Billy Graham, who continues the old tradition of religious experientialism, is also a part of the establishment. The courts since Oliver Wendell Holmes have held that law is not *logic* (or God's order) but *experience*.

The newest claimant to a place in the experiential or experimental establishment of modern man is the pornographer. As with all newcomers, he faces some resentment and some opposition. But pornography is a child and an heir of experientialism: it belongs, and it will prosper as long as experientialism prospers. This may not be too long. Experientialism has always flirted with the greatest kind of experiential shock — death.

VIII

THE EXPERIENTIAL QUEST

Humanistic experientialism — or experiential, existential humanism (call it what you will) — is the religious faith of modern man. Unlike modern man, Gerard Manley Hopkins, in his poem “Thou Art Indeed Just, Lord,” sees God’s grace as essential to livable life; he cries out, “O thou lord of life, send my roots rain.”

By way of contrast to Hopkins in distress, let us glance at some modern men in fear and shock. After the San Francisco earthquake of April 18, 1906, men in nearby Oakland, badly frightened by the shock but not suffering the same damage, sought frantic comfort in sex. The police chief, Walter J. Peterson, commented on business at the Oakland houses of prostitution: “All day long and at night men were lined up for blocks waiting in front of the houses like at a box office at a theatre on a popular night.”¹ An elderly woman who lived in Oakland at the time confirmed this fact: “Women and girls were told to stay home and out of the way just as a precaution.” In this time of stress, shock, and fear, with after-shocks making the ground tremble under their feet, some men went to church to pray; many men sought comfort in sex, also a religious comfort.

1. Herbert Ashbury, *The Barbary Coast* (New York: Garden City Publishing Co., 1933), 263.

Men in every age are largely shaped by the ideas that govern them and command their imagination. Men judge themselves by the standards of their day, and by its ideas of what constitutes life. Their faith has much to do with making life livable. An elderly immigrant, speaking limited English, was used to the patriarchal power common in the old country to the oldest man in a family. As that oldest man, the authority of the family was in his hands. Although bedridden for several years before his death, he ate with zest, ordered his family about with assurance, and, smacking his lips, raised with pride and pleasure his wine glass together with the assembled family, declaring, "God is good and life is good!" This immigrant's image of life and man was patriarchal and familistic, and he enjoyed it, despite his invalidism. In contrast, when a very much younger man, totally modern in outlook, found himself impotent, although otherwise healthy, he committed suicide, stating, "If you can't f—, you might as well be dead."² Not all men today are as suicidal as this second man, but for all too many the meaning of life is not too different. The result is that pornography flourishes, and periodicals like *Playboy* and *Penthouse*, which stimulate sexual fantasy, perform a religious function in modern society.

Jesus Christ declared, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4). Man has never lived by bread alone; even when his bread has been most meager, he has fed himself with the religious hopes that have sustained him and given him his image of himself, and of life and reality. These images have been many and various. In the modern view, the image is not only existential and humanistic, but largely sexual.

Pornography, in varying degrees, has always been an undercurrent in various cultures, but it is significant that it was only around 1870 that it became enough of a problem to require special

2. A similar attitude was, it seems, present in Ernest Hemingway. Several weeks before his apparent suicide, he said, "What do you think happens to a man going on 62... when he realizes that he can never... do any of the best things in life.... But what the hell? What does a man care about?... Staying healthy. Working good. Eating and drinking with friends. Enjoying himself in bed. I haven't any of them. Do you understand, goddam it? None of them."

legislation in England and the United States. Previously, as in the John Wilkes case in London, 1770, the pornography that was prosecuted was combined with impiety and obscene libel.³ Since then, extensive efforts to suppress pornography have failed because pornography has had such deeply religious roots in our culture and has had the driving force of popular demand behind it. Man's image of himself has created a hunger for pornography; it represents to man a dimension of freedom. As long as pornography represented an area of damage and stultification, its appeal was limited, and popular sentiment regarded it as dangerous. Now we are told that the suppression of pornography is dangerous, and all too many believe this to be the case. The danger is seen as psychological and political. If men hold that pornography can be liberating — and this is a common argument in its favor — then those who are troubled by their waning sexual powers will demand access to this new nostrum, as indeed they do. The middle-aged and elderly are devoted followers of pornography. If we believe that dictatorship follows any suppression of pornography, again we will be severely limited in our ability to cope with it. Men are thus commonly the prisoners of their ideas and myths.

But man is far more than the product of man. Man is born into humanity, as the child of a man and a woman, and he is shaped extensively by his culture and his society, but man is also and essentially the creature of God, created in His image. Hence, the extent to which man can remake himself is severely limited. Man is not plastic man: there are limits to his cultural conditioning, limits to his potentiality, and limits to his life. To deny those limits is to court the collapse and decay of the individual and society. Man is most truly himself when he most serves and obeys God.

Pornography is a radical revolution against God, and against that God-ordained institution and relationship, the family. However, even in the course of the revolution, the God-ordained categories reassert themselves. The Manson group called itself a family and bowed before Manson's authority as "father" and "husband," and as messiah. The pimp exploits a lack of authority in the lives

3. H. Montgomery Hyde, *A History of Pornography* (New York: Dell, 1964), 7, 21f.

and backgrounds of prostitutes to create a new and authoritarian “family.”⁴

Far more clearly, the persistence of the family pattern in a most pathetic way appears in the “free sex” singles apartments. In major urban centers, singles apartment complexes have been built, ostensibly to provide full opportunity for sexuality for young men and women who are not interested in any institution as outdated as marriage. Writing of one such 48-acre complex, Woodway Square Apartments, Cynthia Proulx observed that indeed “sexual indulgence can flourish as never before.” In 1971, one bachelor of thirty-six won a prize for taking the most girls to bed in a year, seventy-nine. On the surface, Woodway appears to be a hedonist’s paradise. “Nobody at Woodway seems to be saving for a rainy day.” The people of Woodway are marked by arrested intellectual development and immaturity. According to Cynthia Proulx,

Dr. Eric Margenau, a bright young psychotherapist who has treated singles living in apartment complexes in California, finds them “very different from my other patients.” In what way? “Most people who seek therapy are in touch with their pain.” Dr. Margenau explained. “That’s why they come to me. But the men and women in these large complexes are people whose objective in living where they do is precisely to cut themselves off from their pain. They anesthetize themselves with a lifestyle that consists of ritually getting drunk, getting stoned, getting laid. The very nature of their interaction there is one of not dealing with anything real or intense, of not dealing with their own feelings.”⁵

Moreover, despite the advertised free sexuality of Woodway, the women are there only in the desperate hope of getting married. There are three times as many women as men living there, and their purpose is simply to exploit a new way of meeting men with marriage in view. “For the Woodway girl of today, there is only one possible tomorrow: *marriage*.”⁶ The men have no such purpose in mind: they are immature and irresponsible.

4. See Susan Hall and Bob Adelman, *Gentleman of Leisure: A Year in the Life of a Pimp* (New York: New American Library, 1972), 98, 162.

5. Cynthia Proulx, “Sex as Athletics in the Singles Complex,” *Saturday Review of the Society*, 21 April 1973: 65.

6. *Ibid.*, 63.

Increasingly, in these singles apartments, men with a known vasectomy operation find it impossible to find a bed partner, because it is obvious that they have neither the desire of ever marrying, nor the capacity to procreate. The singles apartments are thus the province of male dropouts and of desperate girls who are ready to take anyone for a husband, by any means.

The Woodways are popular in limited circles, but they are already on the defensive, together with their favorite reading material, *Playboy*. The New Left, while promoting the sexual revolution in its own way, is hostile to these manifestations of it. As Thomas Forcade has observed,

Men adore the Cosmopolitan-Playboy idea of a “liberated” woman. She is allowed a Mind-of-her-Own and a Stimulating Career. What sophisticated male wants to live with a dummy or an old-fashioned “door-mat,” all hung up with hubbie and kiddies? The New Doormat is fantastically sexy, f— a lot (and you don’t even have to marry her!) and manages, amidst all this “liberation,” to keep every ounce of her “femininity.” This means she still does all the housework.

Real liberation ain’t that easy.⁷

Robin Morgan declares, “Goodbye to Hip Culture and the so-called Sexual Revolution, which has functioned towards women’s freedom as did the Reconstruction toward former slaves — reinstated oppression by another name.”⁸

One of the happiest by-products of the Women’s Liberation movement has been Kate Millet’s devastating analysis of Henry Miller and Norman Mailer. The pathology of each is tellingly summarized. As Millet observed of Henry Miller, in discussing his *Black Spring*,

Miller’s educational intentions...are abundantly clear. Females who are frigid, e.g., not sexually compliant, should be beaten. Females who break the laws of marital fidelity should also be beaten, for the barter system of marriage (sex in return for security) must not be violated by outside commerce. Rather more informative than this sober doctrine of the cave is the insight it provides into Miller’s sexual/literary motives and their undeniably

7. Thomas King Forcade, ed., *Underground Press Anthology* (New York: Ace Books, 1972), 85.

8. Robin Morgan, “Goodbye to All That,” in *ibid.*, 120.

sadistic overtones. They are closer to the vicarious politics of the cockpit than of the boudoir, but the former often casts considerable light on the latter.⁹

Millett unfortunately joins ranks with the homosexual Jean Genet and, with other leaders in her movement, becomes antisex and radically hostile to men. Again, pathology triumphs.¹⁰

The literary manifestation of these movements (the sexual revolution, Women's Liberation, etc.) is prominent. In life, the old patterns assert themselves, even with some concessions to the new mood. Thus in some societies that are "primitive" and degenerate (a word at which all good moderns wince), a period of promiscuity is a part of courtship and the prelude to marriage. A tribal society in which there is ritual premarital promiscuity does not thereby abolish marriage; it simply makes promiscuity a prelude to settling down to marriage. The presence of such premarital promiscuity in advanced societies is in part a symptom of the breakdown of morality and also the breakdown of the normal methods of courtship because of social decay. While in some circles this is again true, it is mainly where a desperate desire on the part of women to marry leads to radical measures as a last resort, or in elements of society where this pattern previously existed.

Even more commonly, a pretended modernity leads many to pretend to the "new" morality when they are in reality alien to it. A report on this aspect of the college scene was aptly titled "The Embarrassed Virgins." The report speaks of "the overwhelming pressure to conform," the "saturated" sexual atmosphere, and the mystical belief in the overwhelming ecstasy of sexual orgasm. "Some psychiatrists believe that youngsters are afraid of what they so insistently demand; they really want less rather than more freedom."¹¹ Since the humanistic worship of experience leads to a belief in the curative power of sexual ecstasy, this ecstasy is both desired and feared, feared because most people recognize their inability to realize what the myth sets forth as "reality." The result

9. Kate Millett, *Sexual Politics* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1970), 9.

10. See Midge Decter, "Toward the New Chastity," *The Atlantic*, August 1972: 42-55.

11. "The Embarrassed Virgins," *Time*, 9 July 1973: 64.

is a new hypocrisy, the pretense to experiencing the mystical illumination of the cosmic f— while feeling totally alien to it. The experience is touted in highly religious ways. For instance, *Oui* gives us an account of the religious pilgrimage of modern man, the quest for the mysticism of Pan. When it was discovered that in the village of Joujouka, Morocco, the ancient rites of Bou Jeloud (from whence the words *boogie*, *boogie woogie*, and *boogaloo*) were still observed, there was excitement because Bou Jeloud is the “homologue of the Greek god Pan.” The late Rolling Stone Brian Jones visited the village in 1967 to record the musicians of Joujouka. In 1973, *Oui* sent William Burroughs and Craig Karpel to Joujouka. Their accounts are exercises in simulated religious ecstasy. Karpel even goes so far as to say,

There’s a legend that if the pipes of Pan ever stop playing, it’s curtains for all of us. Having been to Joujouka, I don’t believe this legend is true — I *know* it’s true. Although the Master Musicians have been playing since the dawn of time, through feast and famine and war and peace, joujouka music is now in serious danger. Joujouka is one of the poorest villages in Morocco, which is one of the poorest countries in the world. A joujouka player may see only six to ten dollars in cash a year. Unless the musicians have income from outside the village, the music will stop and we’ll all be in the soup - the musicians, me, you, and OUI.¹²

This has all the sincerity of all of *Playboy's* publications.¹³ Richard King has ably analyzed the religiosity of the counterculture. He sees the significance of Paul Goodman, Herbert Marcuse, and Norman Brown to the counterculture as an “inverted transcendentalism” (after Frederick Crews). The transcendentalists of the 1830s — Emerson, Thoreau, and others — saw nature as the means to the moral and the spiritual: “for the new transcendentalists, nature is the sexual and erotic.” They attempt to transcend the Protestant ethic and faith, as well as the older form of religious liberalism, with a new religious faith, a mystical faith in the sexual and the erotic. King writes of the sculptor Theodore Roszak that “Roszak, like Brown, advocated the religious, without stipulating form or

12. Craig Karpel, “Face to Face with the Goat God,” *Oui*, August 1973: 96.

13. A former executive of *Playboy* has observed, “Playboy does not recognize a truly human relationship.” See Stephen Byer, *Hefner's Gonna Kill Me When He Reads This* (Chicago: Allen-Bennett, 1972), 47.

content. Thus religiosity, not religion, seemed to be the goal.... The result was a visionary humanism straining for religious significance, but seldom rising above the banal." Moreover, "there was a tendency in Roszak, following Marcuse and Brown, to elevate the esthetic-erotic to primacy and subtly identify it with the moral." Charles Reich (*The Greening of America*, 1970) wants an open consciousness to all experience and ascribes an ultimacy to experience as such. As King tellingly asked, "Reich denied that openness to experience might include experimentation with murder and rape. But why not?" And King concludes,

What all this suggests is that the religious impulse, denied the intermediary stage of the ethical or the demand of the transcendent, collapses back into the erotic-esthetic. The result is religiosity, which is the esthetic masquerading as the religious (thus the counterculture's religious eclecticism that borders on the ludicrous).... The counterculture is, one suspects, a convulsive gasp of a culture that cries out for transcendence and meaning. The impulse it represents — the desire for meaning and for happiness — are not to be scorned; the ways in which it has so far expressed itself, however, are symptoms of the dilemma, not solutions for it.¹⁴

King called attention, as we have noted, to the identification of the aesthetic-erotic with the moral. This is, granted the presuppositions of these men, a logical identification. Philosophically, whatever is ultimate metaphysically is therefore also ultimate ethically. If ultimacy in a system of thought resides in God, then the ideas of aesthetics, ethics, and logic are all derived from the nature of God, as are all things else. The principle of definition is always also the principle of ultimacy; the god of a faith defines all things therein. In a humanism that defines man as essentially a sexual being (as against the older humanism, which defined man as a rational being), the criterion of definition is sexual and at all times experiential.

This, however, is a precarious kind of religion. If an erection fails, or orgasm fails, or if the experience is not the blinding light of a transcendent ecstasy, then a deep sense of failure ensues. This can

14. Richard King, "The Eros Ethic: Cult in the Counterculture," *Psychology Today*, August 1972: 35-39, 66-70.

lead to impotence and frigidity (both more common than ever), or to a quest for a “deeper” experience by means of perversions, or to disillusionment.

The quest for a “deeper” experience leads to an exaltation of perversions, and also to an exaltation of the practitioners of the illicit. There is thus ready support of the homosexuals. In this connection, a most revealing phenomenon is the wide reception given to the memoirs of a prostitute. Xaviera Hollander’s book, *The Happy Hooker*, sold four million copies in a few months in 1972, and was expected to reach five million in America and Canada alone. Its sequel, *Xaviera! Her Continuing Adventures* (1973), was selling almost as well immediately after publication. The result was that she became a consultant on sex for *Penthouse*, to help guide others to a happy sexual fulfillment. Is Xaviera Hollander a “happy” hooker? She cites a motto, “*mundus vult decipi decipiatur ergo*. The world wants to cheat, so cheat.”¹⁵ Xaviera herself has sought the “deeper” reaches of sex: lesbianism, incest, bestiality, sodomy, seducing young boys, and, of course, prostitution, with its attendant sadism and masochism.¹⁶ Her books are pathetic attempts at self-justification and good examples of the new phariseism, self-righteous pride in doing evil as if it were the new good. She solemnly avers, “It is a known fact — and as the old-fashioned expression says — that a good prostitute has a heart of gold.” The popularity of such romantic gush about evil, as painted in her two books, is indicative of how gullible the pious followers of the new religion of sexual humanism are. She is definitely not “the happy hooker” to any discerning reader. She has attempted suicide twice, fears growing old and lonely, hopes to allay her fears by becoming independently wealthy, hates dependency and fears poverty, and confesses also that she is “not *glad* — I can’t be — that I became a call girl.” She sees the sexual relationship as hunter and hunted, conqueror and conquered.¹⁷ Only those who are so blinded by their

15. Xaviera Hollander with Robin Moore and Yvonne Dunleavy, *The Happy Hooker* (New York: Dell, 1972), 11.

16. Xaviera Hollander, *Xaviera! Her Continuing Adventures* (New York: Dell, 1973), 31, 162, 160-162, 219ff., 271, 286, 326-330, 271, 286; see also Hollander *et al.*, *The Happy Hooker*, 18ff., 26ff., 32f., 34f., 37, 126, 182, 132, 172, 208ff., 290.

17. Hollander, *Xaviera!*, 269-270, 293f., 296.

yearning for the mystical and religious experience of sex that they cannot read anything but what their hunger craves can read Xaviera Hollander's books as a happy or "enriching" experience. There are, clearly, millions of such readers everywhere.

The over-valuation of sex can also lead to a deep sense of frustration, to frigidity and impotence, when the cosmic and mystical orgasm does not appear, when, after Hemingway, the earth does not move under them or when no blinding, overpowering experience ensues. A normal orgasm is regarded as somehow an evidence of failure, of a "middle-class Protestant-ethic hangup" (the ultimate in humiliation for some); a longing for the impossible leads to a progressive inability to experience the possible. The result is what Philip Nobile calls "the new impotence" (after Dr. George L. Ginsberg). According to Ginsberg, "elevating orgasm to beatitude" has had a profound effect on sexuality. It has depreciated virginity and made girls aggressive. The new impotence is not a problem of the elderly but of the young and is very common among college students.¹⁸ Thus as the U.S. and Western culture have in recent generations moved towards a sexual humanism, they have also moved towards a higher incidence of frigidity and impotence than previously.¹⁹

Some have remarked that the twentieth century is the age of paper Christianity, when church action means endless reports and manifestos. It is also the era of paper sexuality, when people are busy reading about, and viewing on stage and film, more sexuality than they are capable of practicing. A handful of groups play at the idea of group marriage, and we are told a revolution is on, and books and articles cover the minuscule event as though it were of world-shaking importance. In terms of the new faith, it is of world importance if it opens the doors of experience to the cosmic

18. Philip Nobile, "What Is the New Impotence, and Who's Got It?" *Esquire*, October 1972: 95-98, 218.

19. As a university student in the mid-30s, I recall a girl, a fellow student, reporting that she had asked her aged English grandmother if the reports on Victorian prudery and frigidity were true. Her grandmother's response was to laugh and observe that there were only two differences between her Victorian days and the 1930s: "People went to church more and believed less than people do today, and, where sex is concerned, they talked very little and did far more and with more zest than people do today."

orgasm, but we are seldom told of the tragic aftermath of some of these experiments.

One experience failing them, the humanists seek bliss in another experience; the experiential quest has taken them to a variety of movements. Occultism is one, in which the quest is for power through experience in magic, witchcraft, and related nonsense. Indeed, this is the Age of Aquarius for many as they try in one way or another to experience the New Dawn. Their new dawn, however, proves only to be the fading twilight of private hells.

For others, experience is sought in the various forms of the charismatic movement, a humanistic masquerade of Christianity wherein, instead of the sovereignty of God, the sovereignty of experience prevails. *Christianity Today*, which claims to be the voice of evangelical Protestantism, has in recent years become the voice of neo-Pentecostalism, and its hostility to Reformation theology is marked. Doctrines such as the sovereignty of God and predestination are shelved in favor of a reverent treatment of the charismatic. Perhaps the ultimate in pornography is the identification of ego-centric experientialism with Christianity. In this identification the emphasis is on the ultimacy of experience and personal salvation, while the sovereign God of Scripture serves as but the façade. In all these forms of experientialism, we have humanism in its last stages of decay.

Experientialism has dominated Western culture for two or three centuries at least. It has saturated the mind of man with the idea that the real is the experienced. Such an equation leads to the erosion of objective standards and values in favor of the criteria of experience. Earlier, we cited the attitude of an old immigrant, an invalid, whose delight in life remained because he was the head of a family of which he was proud. Life for him clearly meant a family to be proud of; it meant sons who were themselves responsible men; it meant a responsibility of authority faithfully discharged. He had been an old autocrat, a strong and moral man; he had provided for his sons and left them a small but respectable inheritance. To the last, he felt every inch a man and a commanding patriarch. Life for him meant *family and responsibility*.

The end result of experientialism has been the Now Generation, a generation determined to have the end at the beginning, to realize all things *now*. It has neither past nor future by choice, because of its existentialism. Family and responsibility are despised as middle-class (or peasant) concerns. The appeal of sexual humanism is its promise of release, the orgiastic flight from reality and responsibility into a soaring orgasm in which the earth moves under them, *a la* Hemingway. But in the real world, unlike the world of fiction, the earth does not shake and tremble because some creature has a sexual climax. Those who pursue the experiential quest end in suicide, culturally and personally.

IX

LIFE AS FICTION

As a culture declines, it begins to lose its sense of reality and begins to seek refuge in various forms of escapism. This era of humanism is no exception. By its very dedication to modernity, to the present moment, it abandons a long-range view and that historical perspective which is so essential to balance. The self-absorption that marks a decaying culture is especially in evidence today. Metaphysics, the worldview, has given way to psychology, the inner view. As a discipline, metaphysics is in disrepute; as a faith, psychology has conquered even the pulpit, once the stronghold of theology and the cosmic view.

The roots of this change are in modern philosophy. When René Descartes made the starting point of philosophy the ostensibly autonomous mind of man, he gave a new center to the universe. Not God but man was now the point of focus; reality was now ostensibly ascertained by the mind of man. Following Immanuel Kant, philosophy held that the mind of man determines reality, and Karl Marx boldly made this new faith the starting point of his revolutionary philosophy. In his "Theses on Feuerbach," Marx wrote, "The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to *change* it."¹ This came to mean that man makes reality by his act of will. As Jerry Rubin

stated it, "We create reality wherever we go by living our fantasies."²

Art is sometimes quicker at grasping the implications of a philosophy than the philosophers themselves. Very early in the modern era, art developed into new and previously unknown forms. Most notable was the birth of the novel. It became the most popular intellectual and emotional diet of people at large. From the days of Samuel Richardson through those of Charles Dickens to the present, people of all walks have found absorbingly fascinating the lives of fictional characters. Some are ready to ascribe this intense absorption (as witness the grief on both sides of the Atlantic over the death of Dickens's Little Nell) to a more naive era. This is far from true. In the twentieth century this same intense reaction has been present; the only difference is that it has been transferred from the novel to the motion-picture and television world and its actors. The will to live in the world of fiction is intense. The novel as a literary form has been a product of the modern era; whether it will survive it is an open question.

Opera also has been a product of the same will to fiction. As a commanding form, it transplanted musicians from the church to the theater and to impossible heroic plays and dramas of love. The echoes of church music are very strong in many an opera, because the same religious earnestness and awe have been transferred from God to man in love and to heroic man. Not surprisingly, in Wagner the urge to create a new religion was very strong, so that the will to fiction and the world of faith were beginning to merge more vitally. The theater and the opera became the stage for the new passion play of man, the tragedy, a type of perspective very alien to the Biblical worldview in which *all* things work together for good to them that love God, to those who are called according to His purpose (Rom. 8:28).

Poetry took on a new function, a prophetic one in a new sense. With the romantics, its function came to be that of opening up a new world of truth, the inner world, an emphasis which

1. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *On Religion* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1955), 72.

2. Jerry Rubin, *Do It!* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1970), 143.

painting and then sculpture adopted. Music also left its objective frame of reference, God, and (in the case of popular music) the rounds of folk life, to explore the newly tapped religious power, the inner world and the imagination of man.

The will to fiction came into its own with television. Man in earlier eras had been continually faced with reality, and only occasionally had a “respite” from the world of work and responsibility. He might shirk that world, but it was still there. Now, with television, modern man can immerse himself in fiction and hold reality at arm’s length. For women in the home, fiction via the tube is continually on tap. The same is true for small children: they are nursed on a diet of fiction. Schoolchildren and working adults give more than a little daily time to television (and radio) and its music and drama of fiction.

Never before has a culture been able to immerse itself more deeply in fiction. In the Marxist nations, the production of “culture” — approved forms of fiction for the masses — is one area of unflagging activity.

The result of this will to fiction is, among other things, pornography. As Dr. Erwin Straus has pointed out, pornography is a form of voyeurism. The voyeur wants to look at sex and life from a distance; he desires not to participate in reality but to be merely an onlooker, an imaginative onlooker for whom reality is only a stage to satisfy his imagination and impersonalism.³ According to Dr. Robert Stoller, “there is no non-perverse pornography.” Its basic elements are voyeurism, sadism, and masochism.⁴ As Ian Robinson adds, “Pornography doesn’t cause depravity and corruption; it is depravity and corruption.”⁵

In the modern worldview, because psychology has replaced metaphysics, the inner world is the primary and essential world, and the outer world is a creation of man. Because man has separated himself from reality, he can view it impersonally and can treat it as a thing to be used to gratify his own exploiting imagination.

3. Erwin Straus, “Is Shame Beneficial? Shame as a Historical Problem,” in *The Case Against Pornography*, ed. David Holbrook (New York: Library Press, 1973), 105.

4. Robert J. Stoller, “Pornography and Perversion,” in *ibid.*, 111-128.

5. Ian Robinson, “Pornography,” in *ibid.*, 175.

As a result, modern man has a deeply rooted tendency to pornography. He can speak of pornography as regenerative, and as essential to his freedom, because modern man has so defined himself that he can lose his economic liberties without much concern, but he cannot surrender his *Playboy* and his various pornographic stimuli without feeling his liberty threatened. Freedom now means not the objective freedom from the coercive powers of the state — which freedom once meant — but, rather, man's right to treat other people as things to be used by his voyeuristic imagination. In consequence, "Don't get involved" means that outer reality is neglected for the safe and omnipotent play of the imagination, for the preeminence of the inner world.

Little wonder, then, that reality does not set well with today's generation. Where the will to fiction dominates, "Life is a drag." The following report thus comes as no surprise:

Being a kid isn't so much fun these days. In fact, many of America's youth wish they were dead.

In a recent survey of under-18-year-olds, a group of researchers discovered that almost half had suicidal impulses.

The researchers at the University of Nebraska put this question to 598 children: "Are there times when you really wished you were dead?"

And 43 percent answered, "Yes." Forty percent wanted to die "occasionally." The other 3 percent wished for death "frequently."⁶

The suicidal impulse is not new. Thomas Masaryk wrote of it many years ago, in the 1890s. Suicidism virtually did not exist in the Middle Ages, he pointed out; it developed especially in the nineteenth century. Genuine misery is not the deciding factor in suicide. Masaryk saw suicidism as a growing plague, whose victims often outnumber war casualties in a country. He observed that "the modern educated man chases happiness, but catches death." Masaryk saw the roots of the problem in the radical subjectivism of modern man, in the contemporary "annihilation of objectivity." From Kant to Stirner to Nietzsche to Panizza, modern man developed a philosophy of "absolute illusionism."⁷ The objective Word

6. "It's No Fun!" *Listen*, August 1973: 20.

of God was abandoned in favor of a radical subjectivism that enthroned man and ostensibly secured him in the sealed-off world of his imagination, as his own world and god.

A. Alvarez, whose approach to suicide differs markedly from Masaryk's, frankly remarks: "It goes without saying that external misery has relatively little to do with suicide." Alvarez cites Antonin Artaud regarding the reasons for suicide. Artaud noted: "By suicide I reintroduce my design in nature, I shall for the first time give things the shape of my will. I free myself from the conditioned reflexes of my organs, which are so badly adjusted to my inner self, and life is for me no longer an absurd accident whereby I think what I am told to think." Of such people Alvarez observes: "They deliberately use suicide to create an unencumbered reality for themselves or to break through the patterns of obsession and necessity which they have unwittingly imposed on their lives."⁸

Engels was in line with this kind of thinking when he called the external world "the kingdom of necessity" and the inner world "the kingdom of freedom." Engels, of course, hoped that the inner world would impose its reality on the external world. When one is disillusioned, the passion to impose and recreate readily gives way to suicide, the ultimate means of obliterating external reality.

The pornographic mind prefers the inner world of the imagination, where the ability to manipulate people without challenge or failure, and without consequence, reigns undisturbed by reality. In pornography, people act, not in terms of any standard of reality, but in terms of a perverse imagination that makes the dream figures fulfill every whim and desire of the writer and reader. For this reason pornography is inescapably bad writing. It lacks a logical nexus between character and events, and between the various persons involved. At all times, characters and events move to fulfill a pornographic imagination.

Pornography is cousin to suicide. Those who like pornography prefer their imagination to sexuality. When they act sexually,

7. Thomas G. Masaryk, *Modern Man and Religion* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1938), 34, 48, 98.

8. A. Alvarez, *The Savage God: A Study of Suicide* (New York: Random House, 1971), 98, 129.

it is to act out their imagination. The sadist and masochist require some subject who will submit to their whims, either for pay or to fulfill his own perverse needs. Pornography stimulates prostitution, because it requires the irresponsible use of a person in terms of the imagination. Marital sex requires mutuality and is an aspect of a life of responsibility. The pornographic mind finds itself progressively impotent in a responsible context and progressively potent only in an irresponsible and lawless context, in the realm where the imagination defies the responsibilities that the external world and other people impose. In that world of the pornographic imagination, the individual finds a peculiar and perverse omnipotence, of which hostility is an essential ingredient. Freedom to be irresponsible means the freedom to treat all external reality as a thing to be manipulated by the pornographic imagination.

There is thus a kinship between pornography and suicide in more ways than one. A common trait among the suicidal is the extensive imaginative playing with the idea of suicide. The suicidal person imagines his death, the grief and guilt of friends and family who supposedly wronged him, or never understood him; he is both actor in and stage manager of an oft-rehearsed drama. As one person, suicidal in impulse, admitted to a pastor who challenged him sharply about his avoidance of the pastor and asked what he had been thinking about, "I've been rehearsing my last moments." The reality that will not surrender to man's will is made over by the imagination into a stage where the "omnipotent" ego reigns supreme. The will to fiction is essentially a will to death.

X

PORNOGRAPHY AND THE LAW

We cannot understand the modern world without an awareness of its will to fiction, its radical depersonalizing of life and people. The growth of this will to fiction, a manifestation of the will to death, is apparent in every area. A woman who for four decades operated a house of prostitution in Kentucky, has commented on the changes in the world of prostitutes, noting, among other things,

I found it increasingly difficult to understand just what motivated a lot of the younger girls who worked in my stable during my last few years in business. Far fewer of them seemed to be working as prostitutes because they needed money badly or had a specific ambition in life. More of them seemed to be in the business strictly for kicks.¹

The will to fiction is rather mild in Pauline Tabor, which no doubt accounts for the fact that, although her book has sold well, sales are modest in view of her subject and the general interest in it. *Gentleman of Leisure: A Year in the Life of a Pimp* (1972) has done better, being more contemporary in its orientation and a clear example, if a sickly and grim one, of the will to fiction. Xaviera Hollander's three books (*The Happy Hooker*, 1972; *Xaviera!*, 1973;

1. Pauline Tabor, *Pauline's* (Louisville: Touchstone Publishing Co., 1971), 287.

and *Letters to the Happy Hooker*, 1973) have been bestsellers; they are also, clearly, full of romantic gush about prostitution. Miss Hollander is a prime example of the will to fiction. Her future, with age and disillusionment as enemies to fiction, may be a distressing one.

Clearer examples of the will to fiction are to be found in the world of arts and letters, and of the sciences. Natalie Shainess and others have pointed out the voyeuristic and depersonalizing attitude of much "sex research." Kenneth Keniston of Yale, reviewing *Human Sexual Response* by Dr. William H. Masters and Mrs. Virginia Johnson, wrote in *Contemporary Psychology* that it is a "medical treatise whose objectivity is flawed by physiological reductionism, methodological naivete, and ethical insensitivity." Shainess points out that the work of Masters and Johnson has also been without independent investigation of their data, tabulations, and treatment results, so that it is in these ways also defective.² More important, what sex research does is to depersonalize sex. Sex cannot be reduced to the genital organs. Sex is an attribute of the whole man, and the whole man cannot be reduced to one attribute — sexuality. If man is to any degree reduced in his image of himself, he is to that extent subjected to murder or suicide. Contemporary scientific reductionism has reduced man in his image of himself, with the effect that man is becoming a pygmy, no taller than his genitals. Voyeurism is exploited in every area, so that an impersonal assessment of other people goes hand in hand with the inner will to fiction, which regards the world as an instrument for the individual's pleasure.

To gain that self-fulfillment of pleasure, it is held that pornography and all kinds of perversions must be tolerated. In one American city, a problem with respect to bestiality was solved when word leaked out that the police, helpless to interfere on any other basis, planned to intervene on the basis of protecting the welfare of the animals involved. David Holbrook's report on the European situation offers a parallel:

2. Natalie Shainess, "How 'Sex Experts' Debase Sex," *World*, 2 January 1973: 21-25.

Emlyn Williams recently reported pictures of a woman naked beneath a stallion, and *Le Monde* reports that a young woman has made a fortune and a name for herself performing with stallions and dogs. The Danish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals is petitioning the courts to stop the use of four-footed animals in sexual exhibitions.³

Because the radical division and schizophrenia in modern man divides ideas and the external world, we have the contradiction in which the *New York Times* approves of pornography in its reviews and opposes "the pornographic condition of Times Square." Walter Berns acutely observed: "What it [the *Times*] denounces as filth on the editorial page it praises as art or serious social comment on the film and drama pages, and that is absurd to the extent to which it is not hypocritical.... The conclusion is obvious: unless it is content continually to treat symptom rather than cause, the *Times* must ignore the porno dealers in the Square below and get rid of the porno dealers on its own staff."⁴ The same judgment applies to other periodicals. *Time* magazine, for example, treated *Last Tango in Paris* with pompous reverence and philosophical gravity (22 January 1973). Of course, there are always more than a few churchmen who are ready to see a hidden gospel in all pornography, and they are readily heard from also, with the same pomposity.

Meanwhile, social decay, of which pornography is one aspect, continues. What should the relationship of the law be to pornography? More than a few have argued that pornography cannot be defined. True, definitions are always a difficulty because they are abstractions, but they are not an impossibility. Competent legal authorities have made it clear that sound legislation is not a difficult problem here. We are often told that in the past "many" worthwhile books have been banned. To be sure, some have been, but their number is not that significant. Man being a sinner and possessing knowledge often faulty, the laws he passes are quite likely to be faulty also. This has always been the case and will continue to be so. Should we abolish all laws because of this? Some men have at

3. David Holbrook, "Introduction," in *The Case Against Pornography*, ed. David Holbrook (New York: Library Press, 1973), 8.

4. Walter Berns, "Absurdity at the New York Times," *Harper's*, May 1973: 34-40.

times been wrongly accused of and condemned for murder. Shall we therefore legalize murder to avoid errors in legal process? Legislation and court action are processes whereby errors in society are corrected and those in the legal process gradually rectified. I for one have a very low opinion of the judges of our time, and a radical distrust of them, but I must still aver that I know of no better alternative for justice than legal process combined with the religious and moral renewal of men and society.

Sound legislation is not an impediment to freedom but an asset to it. The only liberty possible is civil liberty; the alternative is anarchy. Anarchy is what many want. Art Johnson declares, "And we, the youth of America, are breaking on through with our long hair, our home-grown marijuana cigarettes, our rock and roll, our personalized psychedelics, levis, insatiable drive to total freedom!"⁵ John Sinclair concurs, declaring, "We demand total freedom for everybody!" He continues:

WE ARE THE SOLUTION. We have no "problems." Everything is free for everybody. Money sucks. Leaders suck. Underwear sucks. School sucks. The white honkie culture that has been handed to us on a silver platter is meaningless to us! We don't want it! F— God in the ass. F— your woman until she can't stand up. F— everybody you can get your hands on.

Our program of rock and roll, dope, and f- in the streets is a program of total freedom for everyone. And we are totally committed to carrying out our program. We breathe revolution. We are LSD-driven total maniacs in the universe. We will do anything we can to drive people crazy out of their heads and into their bodies.

Rock and roll music is the spearhead of our attack because it's so effective and so much fun. We have developed organic high-energy guerilla bands who are infiltrating the popular culture and destroying millions of minds in the process.⁶

The rebellious youth of the 1960s commanded a higher ratio of the population than many a successful revolution, but it failed to create a revolution because its will to fiction destroyed its sense of reality and made it progressively irrelevant. Sinclair's statement is

5. Art Johnson, "Get Back to Where You Once Belonged," in *Underground Press Anthology*, ed. Thomas King Forcade (New York: Ace Books, 1972), 61.

6. John Sinclair, "White Panther Statement," in *ibid.*, 93f.

an example of irrelevance. "We are the solution," as a working answer, is about as relevant to the world scene as *Grimm's Fairy Tales*.

Have we nothing to fear from the sexual revolution and its pornography? Clearly, in more ways than one, we are dealing with impotent people. The world of pornography opens up a strange world of impotent and twisted people whose lives move in terms of perverse fictions. People who find ecstatic fulfillment in being urinated and defecated on (or in doing it to others — in either case, the ultimate in the sadomasochism that is implicit in the pornographic worldview) and in drinking urine and eating feces are not world conquerors. They are the failures and fallout of society. They have no future. This is not to say that they are harmless. Exceedingly drunk and belligerent men cannot run a ship, but if they are not brought under control, they can bring disaster to the ship by impeding its safety or operation.

Pornography represents at least a multi-million-dollar power. Law-enforcement officers state that independent producers of pornography are virtually nonexistent now. The criminal element has put them out of business in order to keep its monopoly of this activity. Indeed, pornography is now one of the most lucrative activities of organized crime. True as this is, and necessary as it is both to eliminate the criminal activity and to legislate against pornography, the fact remains that the main answer lies elsewhere.

There is, after all, a popular demand for pornography. This must be recognized. It gratifies a growing segment of the population. Countless numbers have perverted appetites that require pornography, and they applaud the sexual freedom movement because it gives them status and respectability. As one man wrote to Xaviera Hollander, very happily, "After reading your book, I no longer feel 'kinky.'"⁷ This has been the key to Miss Hollander's appeal: she has romanticized and made respectable a wide variety of sexual practices. Legislation will not remove this perverse factor and its will to fiction.

7. Xaviera Hollander, *Letters to the Happy Hooker* (New York: Warner Books, 1973), 122.

The popular goal is a “permissive society.” However, George Cook, writing on comparative ethics in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, has observed:

As every stable society has a code which “bids men do this and not do that,” it follows that you cannot have a “*Permissive society*.” The two words “*Permissive*” and “*society*” are contradictory. The Oxford Dictionary defines “permissive” as “each individual free to do what he likes.” “Society” is defined as “the customs and organization of a civilised nation.” Obviously, we cannot have “customs and organisation” if each individual “does what he likes.”

Legislation is thus necessary, but it is definitely not the solution. The past century has seen both the increase of legislation and the increase of pornography. The U.S. Supreme Court decision of 1973 on pornography is not likely to alter matters greatly, although the court’s awareness that a problem exists is mildly commendable.

In *The National Letters*, H. L. Mencken, in another context, spoke of “the love of ugliness for its own sake, the lust to make the world intolerable.” When a culture has a strong drive towards a particular direction, it can only be turned from that drive by failure and collapse, or by another drive. The love of ugliness is very much a part of our culture, as is the lust to make the world intolerable. We are at the end of the age of humanism. The revival of humanism in thirteenth-century Europe led to the Renaissance. The new temper was temporarily sidetracked by the Reformation and the Counter Reformation, but both were soon infected by it. The Reformation found new roots in North America, in what became the United States, but yielded again to humanism because of the Reformers’ mixed presuppositions. Today it is humanism and its two great and holy institutions, the state and the state school, which are in rapid decay.

The roots of the decay are in the image of man and in the schizoid worldview, which is essentially a psychology. Pornography is a serious matter: it calls for thought and action, but all such thought and action will be futile if the central problem goes untreated. Man’s religious faith has been in man, and his sorry god has failed him. No flight into the inner world and its will to fiction can hide the fact of cultural decay and ideological collapse.

The root of the problem is religious, and no answer can ignore this fact except at the certain peril of becoming irrelevant. Liberals and conservatives alike have a common answer to problems: either pass or repeal a law. The radicals have a similarly irrelevant answer: destroy something and kill somebody.

John Sinclair held that, "We are the solution. We have no 'problems.'" On the contrary, we are the problem, and we do not have "the solution." For that, we need faith, action, patient work, and, above all else, grace. The ingrained modern reaction is to reject grace, because, as one man commented, "It is not in us, nor of us." This is the popular faith in the ultimacy of the inner world, of the supposedly autonomous mind of man. It is all around us, and very vocal, but also far gone in blindness and decay. For those who are self-willed in their blindness, only the end remains: send no flowers, for better things should command your time and money. Let the dead bury the dead; the living have work to do. A new culture is to be shaped, and a new civilization is to be created, and the poor, sorry creatures who want to be defecated on have no part in it.

XI

UNDERGROUND MAN AND ELITE MAN

Dostoyevsky, in his *Notes from Underground*, pointed to a new power in modern culture, the underground man. Dostoyevsky's underground man introduces himself by declaring,

I am a sick man.... I am a spiteful man. I am an unattractive man.... I used to be in the government service, but am no longer. I was a spiteful official. I was rude and took pleasure in being so.

The sickness of the underground man then and now is, first, primarily spiritual, mental, and religious, although it has its psychosomatic repercussions. The underground man not only has no part in the faith and movement of his civilization but is also a sardonic parasite who finds his life in the progressive death of the host body. The underground man cherishes an outhouse view of society. For him the only honest and satisfying perspective is from the bottom of the cesspool, looking up. The consequences of such a position are predictable and, to the underground man, a source of masochistic satisfaction. The view from the cesspool feeds his resentment against and hatred of civilization. He wants to reduce civilization to the level of the cesspool, and every scandal and every book that reinforces his view of society is welcomed with delight.

Second, the underground man is marked by a radical self-absorption. Dostoyevsky's character says:

But what can a decent man speak of with most pleasure?

Answer: Of himself.

Well, so I will talk about myself.

The boundaries of the universe are limited to the confines of the ego and its will. The world of man becomes psychology, his psychology. From a subject of minor importance, our era has seen psychology become the major growth industry of our time. What began in Kant, Stirner, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche is perfected in the underground man, who has reduced reality to the individual ego.

Third, in this sick world of the underground man, every morbid and diseased aspect of the ego is not only a momentous fact but also a prized one. As Dostoyevsky's underground man observed, "People do pride themselves on their diseases, and I do, maybe, more than anyone." The works of Henry Miller and Xaviera Hollander, in themselves of no merit, are in this sense significant: they mark the emergence with pride of the underground people — proud of their self-absorption and sickness and determined to establish them as the new health. Works that make masochism, sadism, bestiality, homosexuality, coprophilia, etc., a matter of erotic delight and respectability are eagerly welcomed and hailed as the new wisdom. The underground man has captured many citadels of learning and criticism and made them resound with the self-justification of his being.

Fourth, the underground man is what he is *by choice*, because he prefers his way of life and nurses its every quiver and anguish. He makes himself a victim in order to feed his hate. In his paranoid imagination, the higher world is in a conspiracy against him because it has laws and rules that contradict his ego and will; as a result, he nurses an unrelenting and irrational hatred against it. The underground man chooses negation as the safer way. He prefers displeasure as his source of pleasure, because his ego can effortlessly and endlessly imagine a chain of wrongdoing against it, and his pleasurable answer to the world is a lifelong response of spite against it.

Thus, fifth, the underground man cultivates his status and nature. He is not a barbarian from without but the deliberate and malicious barbarian from within. His purpose is not to cure his condition but to cultivate it. Henry Miller's success has been his cultivation of the role of the new barbarian, the man from underground who proudly announces his contempt for God and for civilization. Miller's affirmation is chaos and destruction. Judging by his own account, one is aware that Miller's only real inner crisis was to recognize that from the beginning he was by disposition an underground man:

Even as a child, when I lacked for nothing, I wanted to die; I wanted to surrender because I saw no sense in struggling. I felt that nothing would be proved, substantiated, added or subtracted by continuing an existence which I had not asked for.... To want to change the condition of affairs seemed futile to me; nothing would be altered, I was convinced, except by a change of heart, and who could change the hearts of men? Now and then a friend was converted; it was something to make me puke. I had no more need of God than He had of me, and if there were one, I often said to myself, I would meet Him calmly and spit in His face.¹

This certainly involves a suppression of the will to live and a cultivation of the will to death. But by means of semantic juggling, this will to death, in its every manifestation — pornographic and otherwise — is called the will to live. The underground man, with his hatred of life, nurses the delusion of radical persecution, even when all goes well. The world, he declares, is always against him, even though all he wants to do is to live in peace. From Darwin to Miller, the myth of persecution has been carefully cultivated. (In 1859, Darwin's *Origin of Species* sold out its entire edition on the day of publication and met worldwide receptivity, from churchmen, critics, and public. Only a handful of scientists and one or two churchmen stood out against the crowd, and their mainly sober comments were called persecution.)

Sixth, underground man's seeming love of peace and life masks a deep hostility, and without hostility there can be no pornography. The language of sex in pornography is the language of hostility, aggression, and warfare. The "honesty" sexual language

1. Henry Miller, *Tropic of Capricorn* (New York: Grove Press, 1961), 9.

called for, beginning with f—, is heavily charged with aggression. It also depersonalizes sex.

Aggression and depersonalization lead to both pornography and a false virtue (of which prudery is an aspect). Both factors were strong in what has been called Victorianism. False virtue maintains a depersonalized form while despising the meaning. These two dispositions were present in the case of Lord Ward:

Lord Ward's favourite pastime was to gaze for hours on end at his wife as she lay naked — except for her jewels — on a sofa draped with black satin. When Lady Ward complained to her parents of scenes that caused her, first terror, then disgust, they told her that her husband's peculiarity came within the meaning of the marriage vows and that she must submit to his humours. The rest of the story, though not strictly relevant to our immediate theme, is not uninformative. Lord Dupplin's appreciation of Lady Ward was markedly less passive than her husband's; when the latter discovered her infidelity he turned her into the street at three in the morning. Though she was pregnant, her parents refused to shelter her. She died soon afterwards. Lord Ward, described as a pleasant man, wrenched apart the corpse's jaws to show a friend how bad his wife's teeth had been.²

Seventh, the goal of this depersonalization is destruction, the will to destroy. Whenever we depersonalize anyone in our thinking and relationships, we are to that extent regarding them as meaningless or dead to us. If we promote this depersonalization with hostility towards them, then we are willing their death.

This fact should tell us much about most modern psychologies. During this writer's university days, the psychology department and its textbooks made no mention of mind or consciousness when discussing man. The language was one of "drives" and "responses." One psychologist of the day dismissed consciousness as an "epiphenomenon." This radical depersonalization of man leads logically to a view of man and woman that reduces them to their genital organs. To illustrate: an underground man (with university degrees) declares emphatically that a woman (any woman) is "nothing but a cunt." This is pornography; it is marked by a voyeuristic impersonalism and the hostility that is the basic ingredient

2. Peter Fryer, *Mrs. Grundy: Studies in English Prudery* (New York: London House & Maxwell, 1963), 197.

of sadism and masochism (or, better, sadomasochism). It is not, however, a form of pornography that can be legislated against; it is the outcropping of humanism in its dying and depersonalized form. It is a religious statement about life, an affirmation of faith that emphatically denies personalism to everything but the private ego. The world is limited to one person, the subject, and all other people are reduced to their usability by him. It is the humanistic analogue to God's declaration, "I am the LORD, and there is none else" (Isa. 45:6).

Although Henry Miller declared that "everything has soul," in practice all things are for his use, or they mean little or nothing. It is his soul and his consciousness that really matter to him, and he affirms his own ultimacy:

And now here I am, sailing down the river in my little canoe. Anything you would like to have me do I *will* do for you — gratis. This is the Land of F——, in which there are no animals, no trees, no stars, no problems. Here the spermatozoon reigns supreme. Nothing is determined in advance, the future is absolutely uncertain, the past is nonexistent....

Sailing down the river.... Slow as the hookworm, but tiny enough to make every bend. And slippery as an eel withal. What is your name? shouts someone. *My name? Why Just call me God — God the embryo.* I go sailing on. Somebody would like to buy me a hat. What size do you wear, imbecile! he shouts. *What size? Why size X!* (And why do you shout at me? Am I supposed to be deaf?) The hat is lost at the next cataract. *Tant pis* — for the hat. Does God need a hat? God needs only to become God, more and more God.³

Because he is god, the other person is only at best a fool. However, even as the underground man, with his total self-absorption, welcomes the modern worldview because he can reduce other people to his tools thereby, he rages against the idea of being himself something to be used. The student revolutionists of the early 1960s who rebelled against being classified by computers ("Do not fold, staple, or mutilate") insisted on treating all others as impersonal nothings. Dostoyevsky's underground man felt the same way:

3. Miller, *op. cit.*, 204f.

And that is not all: even if man really were nothing but a piano-key, even if this were proved to him by natural science and mathematics, even then he would not become reasonable, but would purposely do something perverse out of simple ingratitude, simply to gain his point. And if he does not find means he will contrive destruction and chaos, will contrive sufferings of all sorts, only to gain his point! He will launch a curse upon the world, and as only man can curse (it is his privilege, the primary distinction between him and other animals) it may be by his curse alone he will attain his object — that is, convince himself that he is a man and not a piano-key! If you say that all this, too, can be calculated and tabulated — chaos and darkness and curses, so that the mere possibility of calculating it all beforehand would stop it all, and reason would reassert itself — then man would purposely go mad in order to be rid of reason and gain his point!⁴

This is underground man, proud in his negation, spitefulness, and hatred, reducing all the world to nothing so that he can be something. There can be no pattern or structure (or, to use Sartre's language, essence) in the universe or in himself that is not of his own making. Man must make his own essence; whatever essence things external may have, they can have that essence only by his ordination or recognition.

Underground man has been with us since antiquity. He is always there, ready to take over and to destroy, to annihilate a world he never made because *he* did not make it. Underground man is thus a constant factor, always with us, always delighted at an opportunity to back up the sewers to overflow the temple and palace. He is not the key, and concentration on him, as though he were the heart of the problem, is a serious mistake.

In every era, history is dominated by a self-conscious elite, men who are moved by a sense of power and privilege or by a faith that commands society through them. It is not majorities that govern history but dedicated minorities. Elite man is future-oriented; he sees the world and society in terms of a faith and a pattern that are inescapable truths, and he governs history by these things. When one elite loses faith, it is replaced by another; if a new elite is not immediately forthcoming, then underground man gleefully takes over to vent his spite and depredation.

4. *The Short Novels of Dostoyevsky* (New York: Dial Press, 1945), 149.

To concentrate on what underground man is doing is to join his ranks in a policy of negation. To all too great an extent, this is what the anti-pornography movement has done. Its affinities with the underground man are strong: a common scientism, a depersonalization of reality, an absence of faith and purpose, and a view of action as negation. The anti-pornography movement too often has a nostalgia for the past rather than a pattern for the future; it is not an elite but the confused heirs of a bygone elite.

To understand the American scene, it is important to recognize the roles of elite groups in the United States. Since this is the briefest of surveys, only three major groups will be cited, and these only in passing.

The Puritans were the first major elite group. They dominated the colonial scene and the early years of the United States. The Puritan worldview soon commanded all the colonies and became progressively more powerful in the South. That worldview embraced the obligation to establish God's law-order on earth and to make of America "God's new Zion" by the total dedication of all things to the sovereign and triune God and their subservience to His law. In its dominant forms, the Puritan faith was postmillennial, that is, it asserted the certainty and inevitability of God's triumph in history. Its work ethic produced a purposive vitality that led to inventiveness, exploration, and dominion.

So deeply did the Puritan worldview shape America that, even though its dominance is long since gone, issues and directions in American life still reflect the Puritan point of view. Puritanism, however much despised, is still under the skin of conservatives, liberals, and radicals to a great extent.

The second major elite group was Unitarian. Unitarianism and its related movements began to dominate American life by the 1850s, and especially after 1860. Socialism, anarchism, transcendentalism, and much more were by-products of this elite group. Its anarchism and socialism were closely related. Elite Unitarians had no vision of society; elite man either shaped all others, or he went his own way. Secession was a product of Unitarianism, and it was this origin that kept the South from adopting it in the days of Cal-

houn. The leaders of the South, Jefferson Davis and especially Alexander H. Stephens, were not happy with the idea of secession; their intellectual roots were in a Southern elite that was overwhelmed by the war. Southern theologians like James Thornwell, Robert Dabney, and Palmer represented a part of the older Calvinism, which Unitarianism was determined to destroy.

Unitarianism affirmed the goodness of man, inevitable progress, and the ultimacy of the present — modernity. Unitarianism infiltrated all other religious groups and also education. Its first victory, in fact, was education. Very early, it commanded historiography and began at once to rewrite American history in the Unitarian image. The revival of Puritan studies in the past generation has, ironically, begun in the old Unitarian stronghold, Harvard. The revival has not yet been effective to the point of replacing the essentially Unitarian reading of American history. History, once a theological discipline, is within a humanistic and Unitarian domain. (This shift took place much earlier in Europe.) Another major educational victory of Unitarianism was the command of education by the state through the efforts of dedicated Unitarians, headed by James G. Carter and Horace Mann.⁵ Before the nineteenth century was over, the universities were also captured.

Unitarianism (as a movement and a temper, rather than as an institution and a church) is still a powerful force, but it is no longer in the forefront, and its original optimism has become a querulous complaint against reaction. Like conservatism, it is now better at seeing enemies gathering against it than at acting and commanding. It is a critical rather than a commanding force, and more effective in turning on its leaders (such as Lyndon Johnson) than in following them.

A third elite has also been briefly and powerfully in evidence in the twentieth century, but is already in the process of dissolution. I refer to the Jewish elite. Its kinship to Unitarianism has been close, but its drive more specifically political and equalitarian. Coming as emigrants from the “old world,” the Jewish elite was

5. See R. J. Rushdoony, *The Messianic Character of American Education* (Nutley, NJ: Craig Press, 1963), 18-39.

determined to use the opportunities of the “new world” to create a heaven on earth, to remove all evils, hatred, bondage, and bigotry. The Jew quickly sacrificed his old orthodoxy and waged war on all other orthodoxies. By his dedication, he has earned eminence and power. It has been said that seventy-five percent of all serious books have a Jewish audience, and that, except for the independently wealthy Kennedys, all major candidates in recent years have had at least fifty percent of their contributions from Jewish sources. The bigots who condemn the Jews for this fail to recognize that power is commanded by those who work for it and are ready to pay its price. Few things are more ridiculous than the belief of some that because they are of Anglo-Saxon descent, power is rightfully theirs and anyone else who assumes it is by definition evil and a lower breed.⁶ A majority or a minority will always dispossess itself when it assumes that power is an inherited birthright and refuses to exercise the responsibilities of power.

The remnants of the Puritan and Unitarian elites expect men to serve them because they are what they are; but what they fail to realize is that they are now largely impotent. In both circles, intellectual effort has been replaced by emotional binges. Good will and good intentions (“Hold a good thought”) have replaced intelligence and study. The content of preaching in evangelical and modernist-Unitarian circles is appallingly childish and slight, and the assumption is in effect that if everybody makes the right affirmations, somehow all will be well. Pietism and its twin sister romanticism have corroded the minds of evangelicals and Unitarians. The contents of political speeches are as wretched as those of pulpit-teering, if not worse. The high point of all this was the ineffectual John F. Kennedy, whose words and person had a charismatic effect that passed for erudition and progress. Since then, disillusionment with Kennedy has not altered matters: there is a search for new charismatic leadership. In the churches, the charismatic movement represents the last stages of bankruptcy, but it is held to be the birth of a new reformation.

6. For an example, see Wilmot Robertson, *The Dispossessed Majority* (Cape Canaveral, FL.: Howard Allen, 1972).

The Jewish elite, while intellectually the heir of Unitarianism, has been, by virtue of its background of orthodoxy, related also to Puritanism. It has emphasized, like the Puritan elite, intelligence and work; it is a commonplace that for some years Jews have been the better students in schools. (In California, for a time, this was also true of Japanese students.)

The war against orthodoxy, however, has led to trouble in the ranks. Jewish young people now have the same problems of delinquency, rebellion, and experimentation as other youngsters, and the breakdown of the Jewish family because of permissiveness is destroying its future.

At the same time, the inadequacy of intelligence and work in an age of crisis is becoming more and more apparent. A humanistic faith is no longer adequate, and the Jewish elite is at least in crisis and probably in a state of dissolution. When Jewish young people go home for a university holiday deliberately sporting the badge of an Arab terrorist group dedicated to the destruction of Israel, then it is clear that internal decay has set in.

Essential to the decay of every elite group is a loss of faith. Essential to the rise of any elite group is a strong and commanding faith. Underground man struts on the stage today because no one else commands it.

Basic to command is not only a faith but a *systematic* faith. The fundamental premise of systematics is that the universe is a unity, and that all reality is one universal law-order under God. Without a background of systematics, science cannot develop, nor is progress possible. With the decay of systematics, a culture decays because meaning and direction are gone.

It is, however, a fundamental premise of modern theology (and of much evangelicalism), as well as of most modern philosophy, that systematics must be abandoned as impossible. There is no universe of law, being, or meaning. There is only brute factuality. This position is not only the source of pornography but also the ultimate in pornography; it is the radical reduction of all things outside man's ego to meaninglessness, and it is the depersonalizing of all external reality. In the Biblical perspective, every fact in the

universe is a personal fact and has meaning because it is the creation of the totally personal God. The universe has total meaning; that is, there is no area of it that is without meaning or purpose, or that can be reduced to a *surd*, to a meaningless, irrational nucleus.

But it is precisely the modern belief that life is in fact *absurd*, opposed to manifest truth, irrational, meaningless, preposterous, and ridiculous. All things are the same, meaningless, so that the only meaning possible is a purely private meaning. The only possible world is the purely private world, and the only possible affirmation is a purely private affirmation, which can mean anything or nothing.

Henry Miller gives us the results: man the scavenger:

I shall be as a visitor to this earth, partaking of its blessings and carrying off its gifts. I shall neither serve nor be served. I shall seek the end in myself.

... Death is behind me and birth too. I am going to live now among the life maladies. I am going to live the spiritual life of the pygmy, the secret life of the little man in the wilderness of the bush. Inner and outer have changed places. Equilibrium is no longer the goal — the scales must be destroyed.⁷

Miller openly declares himself to be a scavenger, a hyena, avowing that

I am only spiritually dead. Physically I am alive. Morally I am free. The world which I have departed is a menagerie. The dawn is breaking on a new world, a jungle world in which the lean spirits roam with sharp claws. If I am a hyena I am a lean and hungry one: I go forth to fatten myself.⁸

Miller is now tame fare compared to those who have succeeded him. His successors have not equaled his honesty.

Neither condemnation nor suppression of Miller and his heirs will suffice. They simply voice the essential faith of the modern era. Nor is the answer simply a new elite. We have no lack of education and intelligence today. The ingredients for leadership are all around us, but the faith to motivate them is lacking. Until it

7. Miller, *op. cit.*, 348.

8. *Ibid.*, 98f.

is forthcoming, underground man will continue to work his will,
and pornography will be one more facet of cultural decay.

XII

DECAPITALIZATION

The prostitute Kitty describes one aspect of her relationship to Silky, the pimp, in a transcribed account of the life of a pimp and his girls:

We're all playing a game. Someone said that the world was a stage and we're all actors. I'm playing Silky's whore. I create myself. It's fun.

Of course, Silky lies to make us feel good. He tells us a different story every time about where this will all lead. He figures out what we want to hear and then he promises....

All the lies he tells are lies to make us happy. They're not really lies, because, whatever he says, while he's saying it, he really means and believes it.

Silky's whole thing is being himself. He might say the same thing to me that he says to Linda, but that's just the way he talks. You can only think of so many things to say!¹

Those who lie to themselves will excuse lies in others, because life as fiction is essential to them.

Life as fiction means life can be lived in terms of one's imagination. Janis Joplin summed up this philosophy in her motto, "If

1. Susan Hall and Bob Adelman, *Gentleman of Leisure: A Year in the Life of a Pimp* (New York: New American Library, 1972), 142.

it feels good, do it.”² For Janis Joplin, this meant, among other things, lesbianism, narcotics, and death. The test, if it feels good, can cover all things — perversion, cannibalism, murder, theft, and death. It means simply that the only ultimacy is in the mind and the feelings of the individual, so that the will of the individual is the only law. The ancient thesis of occultist groups, “Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law,” is now the premise of the common man.

It is also increasingly the premise of medicine. In one of its publications, the American Medical Association carries an interview with Nobel laureate Dr. James D. Watson of Harvard, codiscoverer of the molecular structure of DNA. The subject of discussion is the work at Cambridge of Dr. Robert G. Edwards and Dr. Patrick S. Steptoe, who “have developed techniques for removing an egg from a woman’s ovary, fertilizing the egg in the laboratory, and then growing the resulting zygote in vitro until it reaches the blastocyst stage. The last step, thus far not taken, will be to attach the blastocyst to the uterine wall of the woman and allow the fetus to develop normally.” Watson’s “reservation” about such experimentation is that the doctor should be allowed protection against abnormal births by having the right to kill a deformed child. As a general principle, Watson holds,

Our society just hasn’t faced up to this problem. In a primitive society, if you saw that a baby was deformed, you would abandon it on a hillside. Today this isn’t permissible, and with our medicine getting better and better in the sense of being able to keep sick people alive longer, we are going to produce more people living wretched lives. I don’t know how you get society to change on such a basic issue; infanticide isn’t regarded lightly by anyone.

Fortunately, now through such techniques as amniocentesis, parents can often learn in advance whether their child will be normal and healthy or hopelessly deformed. They then can choose either to have the child or opt for a therapeutic abortion. But the cruel fact remains that because of the present limits of such detection methods, most birth defects are not discovered until birth.

2. Peggy Caserta with Dan Knapp, *Going Down with Janis* (Secaucus, NJ: Lyle Stuart, 1973), 22, 147.

If a child were not declared alive until three days after birth, then all parents could be allowed the choice that only a few are given under the present system. The doctor could allow the child to die if the parents so chose and save a lot of misery and suffering. I believe this view is the only rational, compassionate attitude to have.³

Ultimacy with regard to life and death is vested in man; such a perspective also presupposes the “right” to abortion and euthanasia. The standards of “primitive society” are favorably cited as against those of Christian civilization.

With respect to the future, Watson has this to say:

Prism: Will success for the Edwards and Steptoe technique have a profound effect on our society in the new future? Watson: Per se, I don't think so. It will, however, accelerate the trend toward the demystification of life that has been going on over the past century, in which life ceases to be a gift of God but, instead, becomes something we control. In that sense, hopefully, a society may emerge that takes a more active role in its own destiny.⁴

The depersonalization of life begins with the denial of God as the ultimate person behind all factuality. In the modern perspective, “personality” is a meaningless concept, and man's self-consciousness a recent and perhaps ephemeral aspect of being. Man's only hope is for the scientist to play god without regard for life, which “ceases to be a gift of God but, instead, becomes something we control.”

The root of pornography is voyeuristic depersonalization and the impersonal. This depersonalization of man is a form of hostility that is sadomasochistic. How can a society logically combat hard-core pornography when it tolerates and honors with prizes the same hard-core depersonalization of man in sciences? The scientist can plead justification for his depersonalized experimentation in the name of an amoral social utility; the pornographer (producer or customer) can plead justification in terms of an amoral private utility. One excuse is as good as the other. Henry Miller, unlike the hard-core pornography people and the scientists, honestly con-

3. James D. Watson, “Children from the Laboratory,” *Prism* 1, no. 2 (May 1973): 12f.

4. *Ibid.*, 34.

fesses himself to be a hyena, a scavenger bent on using people and things. Others lack this honesty. But who is the worst hyena, Miller, the hard-core pornographer, or the depersonalized scientist? To go after pornography at the local “adult” newsstand is to miss the heart of the matter and to treat symptoms, not the disease. Hard-core pornography is a very serious matter, because it works to undermine that central institution of life, the family, but the philosophical and scientific premises of pornography, as we meet them in the intellectuals of our time, strike at life itself.

The net result of this false philosophy is a continual erosion of the meaning of life and the decapitalization of society. Without capitalization, progress is impossible. Progress has as its premise the capitalization that is made possible by purposive work and thrift. Capitalization is hostile to the do-it-now mentality of the Now Generation. It calls for the postponement of consumption with a view to accumulating capital for more productive ends in the future. The ability to consume at a higher level, as well as to produce at a higher level, requires capitalization. The accumulation of capital is thus a necessary prelude to social progress, and it requires generations to keep a civilization in motion in any purposive and progressive manner. The influx of capital from without cannot capitalize a country unless it is already capitalizing and producing; such influx is an artificial stimulus that has little effect on productivity while exercising more than a little effect on consumption. A civilization that is being decapitalized either by statist controls (taxation or confiscatory policies, or both) or by a decline in productivity and a rise in pleasure and present-oriented living, is destined to have a declining standard of living, shortages, and increasing want.

Monetary capitalization is only one form of accumulated wealth and stimulus to progress. Capitalization takes many forms for a society to advance. To cite one example, there was a time when much of the clergy, especially in the Calvinistic tradition, was marked by a strong emphasis on learning. The minister’s library was a major form of intellectual capital in many a community as well as the means to his own growth and intellectual renewal. Today, the clergy is drastically decapitalized in this respect; few

clergymen read serious books. To continue the illustration of the clergy, it was once commonplace for a pastor or a priest to spend his entire pastoral lifetime in a single parish, or, at most, in two or three. The stability of leadership provided by such a continuing pastorate was an important form of the capitalization of character and stability in a community. This, added to the similar stability of a sizable segment of the population, meant an ongoing culture and character.

This kind of capitalization began to decline rapidly after World War II. An urban pastor of a congregation of 600 stated in the 1950s that in five years there had been a one hundred percent turnover in the membership of the congregation. The community thus regularly faced a radical decapitalization and an inability to develop a character. (In some urban areas, this migrant character had begun earlier.)

By way of asset, this shifting character of the population has meant that a quick and easy habit of friendship has developed. The long, slow process of assessing a stranger has given way to ready friendliness of one stranger to another. However, the awareness of the possibility of moving on has also led to a superficial and almost impersonal friendliness. The absence of strong ties tends to decapitalize the moral capital of a society.

Most important, society has been decapitalized religiously. The basic capital of any culture is always its faith. Every other form of capital is a consequence of this, the basic faith of a society.

The Supreme Court ruling cannot alter this area of radical decapitalization. The 1973 decision has led to the banning of *Playboy* and *Penthouse* from some localities in the South. (Their public schools still teach the radical depersonalization of man, after modern science.) In the major cities, some underground papers have tentatively added a slight amount of censorship: stars are placed over nipples and a patch over the pubic area. The written contents still feature orgies, lesbianism, homosexuality, and whatever else people may want.

The courts and the legislators cannot affect the radical cultural and religious decapitalization of the modern age. In one sense,

pornography is a form of decapitalized sex. It has been stripped of its theological and familistic frame of reference and set in the context of chaos and the void. This change has been wrought by science, the schools, and a derelict clergy. In any battle against pornography, the role of the courts and legislatures, while sometimes a necessary one, is far from the essential one. The recapitalization of man and society begins with faith.

Henry Miller holds that, "I am my own saviour."⁵ The prostitute Linda says of the pimp Silky, "He calls himself Jesus. That really gets me. I still have a little religion. He calls himself 'Silky Christ.' Silky thinks he's God."⁶ Again, Henry Miller declares,

...self-expression is the all important. Not what is expressed nor how, but just expressing oneself. One feels like urging them to try anything, if it will further self-liberation. There is nothing in itself, we have been told time and again, which is wrong or evil. It is the fear of doing wrong, the fear of committing this or that act, which is wrong.⁷

It is a question of ultimacy. Pornography simply takes seriously the answer of the modern age.

5. Henry Miller, *The World of Sex* (New York: Grove Press, 1959), 20.

6. Hall and Adelman, *op. cit.*, 167.

7. Miller, *op. cit.*, 82.

XIII

THE TRIUMPH OF UNREASON

The Bourbon regime and the French Revolution both squelched the Marquis de Sade for pragmatic reasons; their essential perspectives were not at odds with Sade's radical humanism. The ultimacy of man, as Sade logically saw, means that man takes precedence over all laws. If man is ultimate, nothing can bind or restrain him without that thing denying man's ultimacy. There is also no truth outside man's will: the truth is what man says and does. In Nietzsche, the validity of the lie was affirmed on these terms, and the world was again shocked, as it had been at Sade. However, the world of practicality had long been acting on this premise. The Darwins had a loose view of truth. On November 23, 1859, the day before the publication of Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species*, Erasmus Darwin wrote brother Francis concerning the problems in Charles's theory: "In fact the *a priori* reasoning is so entirely satisfactory to me that if the facts won't fit in, why so much the worse for the facts is my feeling."¹

In philosophy, the distinction between reality and ideas was steadily under attack. Alexius von Meinong, a widely influential philosopher, held that *all* is real and objective, whether the actual

1. Francis Darwin, ed., *The Life and Letters of Charles Darwin* (New York: Basic Books, 1959), 2:29.

world around us or the ideas in our heads. Objective reality now had a new definition, the actual and the ideal alike being included in it. The old-fashioned distinction between the real and the ideal had disintegrated, and a new philosophy of action was born, resting on the objective reality of man's revolutionary ideas.

The new philosophy was also the triumph of unreason; reason was despised as a latecomer on the evolutionary scene and hence superficial. The kind of "thinking" required, if the word can be used, is "gut thinking," primitive and violent in force. Because the real, in both the actual and the ideal worlds, is seen as primitivism and raw force, it follows that such reality must be cultivated. True experience, therefore, calls for the surrender of reason to a raw emotional force that is supposedly untainted by reason.

Such thinking placed the sexual orgasm in a new context. First, it became what Rollo May refers to as "the apocalyptic orgasm," an experience of total reality, of mystical and blinding force.² It is a substitute religion and ostensibly a source of insight and vision. Second, it is also what I have termed "the cosmic f—." This involves the mystical element of the "apocalyptic orgasm," but it is also a rape of reality, a wresting of primeval force from a hostile universe. It is rife with the hostility and aggression implicit in the word f— (and in all who use the word). As May notes, "The word f— is the most common expletive of our contemporary language to express violent hostility."³ When applied to persons, the world, or God, it clearly sets forth a savage hatred and a will to dominate and humiliate.

But even more is involved. There is, clearly, third, the desire to foul and to pollute. One aspect of the sexual revolution sometimes escapes notice, but it appears in many of the movement's publications: the contempt for cleanliness. Earlier, anal intercourse was suggested, and cunnilingus taken for granted, with care for cleanliness urged. Now, some underground publications regard concern for cleanliness as a mark of the effete and the rationally inhibited frauds in their movement.

2. Rollo May, "Sex and Love," in *The Case Against Pornography*, ed. David Holbrook (New York: Library Press, 1973), 19.

3. *Ibid.*, 22.

Moreover, since there supposedly is no law, various publications are ready to approve of virtually anything that is voluntary. A letter to *Forum*, titled “Golden Showers,” records a young man’s happy account of an “exciting and erotic experience” — drinking his wife’s urine. The editorial comment, after discussing the medical aspects: “In any case, your enjoyment of each other may be of primary value and your decision could be made in that context.”⁴

To illustrate from another area, a professor emeritus of bacteriology, Dr. Theodor Rosebury, finds our modern world too squeamish about dirt, feces, and urine. He is, however, optimistic about those wonderful children of nature, the Chukchis of Siberia. But, according to Bourke, whose views are not Rosebury’s, the Chukchis

offer their women to travelers; but these latter, to be shown worthy, must submit to a disgusting test. The girl or women who is to pass the night with her new host gives him a cup full of her urine; he must rinse his mouth with it. If he has the courage to do so he is looked upon as a sincere friend; if not, he is treated as an enemy of the family.⁵

Rosebury seems to imply his willingness to be “a sincere friend” and is clear in his contempt for our prissiness. Yet Rosebury is dismayed at the spread of venereal disease, and he wants drastic measures to eliminate it. (He naively believes that Red China has eliminated it.)⁶ The value of morality and cleanliness in this context does not seem to impress him.

We find also that in some of the youth of today, not only is dirt cultivated (and cleanliness despised as a bourgeois virtue), but also venereal disease is regarded as a badge of honor, an “in-thing.” Richard Neville is distressed that “venereal disease may even be a new now status symbol.”⁷ This attitude is not new, of course. Erasmus held that “in his day a man who did not have the pox was accounted a rustic and not a polished gentleman.”⁸

4. “Golden Showers,” *Forum*, August 1973: 77.

5. Theodor Rosebury, *Life of Man* (New York: Viking Press, 1969), 129f.

6. Theodor Rosebury, *Microbes and Morals* (New York: Ballantine, 1971), 298.

7. Richard Neville, “All God’s Children Got De’Clap!!” in *Underground Press Anthology*, ed. Thomas King Forcade (New York: Ace Books, 1972), 181.

8. Rosebury, *Microbes and Morals*, 137.

Today, however, this idea has a democratic force, and is more than ever linked with “underground” ideas and forces. Let us see some of the nexus of ideas as they appear in a book that was turned over to me by a mother, who found it in the possession of her teenage son. The book had come from a Paris drugstore and had been passed from boy to boy in the U.S. The book begins with lesbianism (among seemingly innocent young girls) and homosexuality. It involves sadism and rape, seduction, sodomy, masochism, cunnilingus and fellatio, a delight in urine (“thread of gold”), rape by a rod, incest, and so on. There is not one healthy act or motive in this crude and degenerate work.⁹

Twenty or thirty years ago, this book would have been regarded by its young readers as a “dirty book.” A generation before that, it would have had almost no appeal, because the demand then among youth was more for “straight” sex rather than “kinky” sex. Why should this type of book circulate underground among youth today?

Asking questions of youth sometimes prompts an unusual reply. One such reply I heard, in another context, from a young man of a nationally prominent family. He was a college student and was then in prison. He had organized a gang of students into a theft syndicate that made the police look ridiculous. Only a youthful indiscretion through enthusiasm led to his arrest in the late 1950s. His justification was a simple one: the world after Darwin was a world beyond good and evil, without any right or wrong to it. Everything is theft, some forms legal, some illegal. The beginning of wisdom is to recognize these facts and operate in terms of them.

Since then, this justification has become commonplace. Youth says of sex: anything goes. There is no right or wrong. I may have hang-ups because of my square parents, but the more far-out the books I read, the sooner they will clear my head of the baggage of morality from the square world. I admit that some of this turns

9. Rand Alphonso, *The Educational Method of Uncle Lem* (Paris: Oceanic Press, n.d.).

my stomach, but then I have been brainwashed by a Christian hangover.

The result of this “openness” by youth is their induction into the world of unreason *and* of total hostility. To cite the thesis of a routine work, and mild compared to many, a totally masochistic male marries a woman whose conception of sexual pleasure is the utter debasement of the male. The sadomasochistic activities are carried to the point of Michael’s death, and then Hilda, deprived of her masochistic husband, commits suicide.¹⁰

Leslie Fiedler has traced the significance of the gothic romance to the present. The gothic novel substituted terror for love, a love of death for love. “More than that, however, the gothic is the product of an implicit aesthetic that replaces the classic concept of nothing-in-excess with the revolutionary doctrine that nothing succeeds like excess.”¹¹ The Marquis de Sade saw the implications of this and exploited them to the full. Jac Lenders’s book is in line with this: it is an excess of love, and the love is now violence, perverted violence.

Humanism, having made man the focus, which replaced the eighteenth-century emphasis on Nature (Nature had replaced God), transferred the attributes of Nature to man. Instead of Nature being red in tooth and claw, man now fulfills this role of raw and primitive vitality. Fiedler, in speaking of the urbanization of violence, notes that “violence is transferred from nature to society, from the given world that man must endure to the artificial world he has made, presumably to protect himself from the ravages of the first. There is, of course, a special horror in considering the law of fang and claw walled in but unmitigated in the brick and glass of the city-planners.”¹²

All this makes clear a *fourth* aspect of the new idea of sexual orgasm — violence. Violence demonstrates that the person is unfettered by reason. Do violence to the other person, take him with violence and without tenderness; in short, be primitive. *Going*

10. Jac Lenders, *An Excess of Love* (New York: Grove Press, 1968).

11. Leslie A. Fiedler, *Love and Death in the American Novel* (New York: Stein & Day, 1966), 135.

12. *Ibid.*, 482.

Down with Janis is described as “a raw and scathing portrait.” The book is that and more: its idea of sexuality has violence and hostility embedded in it.

To be a part of this underground world — the world of unreason, the world beyond good and evil — is regarded by many as a mark of distinction. Interestingly, in Los Angeles, a candidate for the board of education was listed as a “Gay Feminist Activist” in the *Sample Ballot and Voter Information Pamphlet* for the primary election of April 3, 1973.

Unreason rules in literature, art, politics, daily life, and, of course, sex. The triumph of unreason means a hostility to the idea of an elite, or to any idea of quality, excellence, or character. A godly young woman mentioned to a fellow employee that she had gone out with a brilliant young man, and then began enumerating his abilities and attainments. The employee, a young woman also, dismissed all this with contempt and declared there was only one consideration: “Can he screw?”

The hatred of excellence is very real. Everything that points to the world of the mind and to the discipline of an ultimate moral law is despised and hated. If good and evil are valid and basic categories of thought, then the idea of an elite is inescapable. The idea can be abused, a wrong kind of elite fostered; but, despite this, the concept of excellence remains.

John Dewey, however, objected strongly to orthodox Christianity because of its commitment to the ideas of right and wrong, heaven and hell, the saved and the lost, and he objected to it on the grounds that it fostered the idea of a “spiritual aristocracy.” “I cannot understand,” said Dewey, “how any realization of the democratic ideal as a vital moral and spiritual ideal in human affairs is possible without surrender of the conception of the basic division to which supernatural Christianity is committed.”¹³ More than one generation has been reared on Dewey’s philosophy. Having denied the validity of standards above man, it looks for vitality from within and below man. In Freud’s language, the superego, moral training,

13. John Dewey, *A Common Faith* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1934), 51f.

is discarded; the ego, the reality principle, disregarded; and the id, the pleasure principle, enthroned. In this process, pornography is important. It is an aspect of the triumph of unreason, but not the triumph of man. The loss of a reality principle is a mark of death.

XIV

COSMIC BLUES

With the Renaissance, a serious dislocation in man's image of himself began to permeate Western civilization. An anarchistic individualism set in, combined with a radical collectivism. The rule of tyrants became routine; simultaneously went the steady centralization of power into their hands. The motto of the Renaissance prince was "First my will, then the right." As this creed infected the world, it progressively meant simply: first and last, my will. In Benvenuto Cellini, the individualism was "autarchic individualism"; in Castiglione, "aesthetic individualism." White observed, "In the courtier, this energetic activism is sublimated into a passive aestheticism." This aesthetic "individual needs society, as a resonance box.... He is, in a word, tied to his society, to his class. The medieval saint was virtuous in the desert also. The invisible eyes of God hovered above him. Universal man needs society in order to display his virtues. His realm is only of this world."¹

Society had come to play the role of God, to be man's universe, stage, and judge. And the more man emphasized the ultimacy of man, the more he needed other men as his stage and audience, his approving god. Anarchistic individualism and collec-

1. John S. White, *Renaissance Cavalier* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1959), 7-9.

tivism walk hand in hand; the exaltation of the individual unto ultimacy as his own god means that man in the mass is the great god-mass or the devil.

But how could anarchistic man have a point of contact with other equally anarchistic persons? Each is totally absorbed in his own act, each eager for approval, and each determined to hold the center of the stage. Instead of communication, there is warfare; each and every one playing this game is wrapped up in loneliness and self-pity. At this point, communication opens up. In that deep well of self-pity, that sense of cosmic isolation, there is a fleeting meeting ground. The appeal to humanistic man is this appeal to self-pity.

This mood gained popular focus in Goethe's *Sorrows of Young Werther*. In recent years, Hermann Hesse and many others play on the same sensitivity to self-pity. Other more popular forms have been the "blues" and popular music, not to mention rock, which has certainly been a powerful focus of this mood. Concerning Janis Joplin's singing, Myra Friedman writes of "that grand reciprocal swallowing, Janis of the audience and the audience of her, the cosmic moment to dispel her Kozmic Blues."²

One of Janis Joplin's most famous songs was "Oh, Lord, Won't You Buy Me a Mercedes-Benz?" In addition to its overpowering self-pity, the song demands that God appear as man's servant, to give on demand, to "prove that you love me."

Such total self-absorption means that, when a person is his own universe, he is not only his own god and heaven, but also his own hell. No man has the omnipotence or wisdom to be his own god and heaven, and the result is that such an aspirant becomes his own devil and hell. In a moment of honesty, Janis Joplin said, "I'll feel better in hell." She wanted the best of all possible worlds, a suburban home, a "square" husband, children, and stability.³ She also desired the freedom to live her own life as her own god. But, above all, she needed an audience. She could command bed partners, but she had to act before them, faking orgasms readily; "inordinate

2. Myra Friedman, "The Last Days of Janis Joplin," *World*, 17 July 1973: 25.

3. *Ibid.*, 26, 29.

self-criticism, insecurity and self-hatred bubbled just beneath the surface of almost everything she did.”⁴ Man as his own god and world is also man totally dependent on the mass-man-god’s approval and judgment. But man and mass-man in these last days of humanism make contact only in some form of the cosmic blues.

The result is a minor cult of suicidism, a faddist enthusiasm for those whose blues carry them to the point of death. It is the tail end of what Mario Praz called “the romantic agony,” and the examples of it in the nineteenth century are many. The British poet James Thomson (1834-82), in “The City of Dreadful Night,” wrote with reeking self-pity of the sorry lot of man:

O melancholy Brothers, dark, dark, dark!
 O battling in black floods without an ark!
 O spectral wanderers of unholy Night!
 My soul hath bled for you these sunless years,
 With bitter blood-drops running down like tears:
 O dark, dark, dark, withdrawn from joy and light!

Here we clearly have the cosmic blues, with relish. These lines plainly echo line eighty of Milton’s “Samson Agonistes”: “O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon.” Bound and blind, Samson thus is invoked. But, even more, Thomson recalls that sacred scene in the Garden of Gethsemane, and compares himself to Jesus Christ, whose “sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground” (Luke 22:44). Thomson, as the Christ whose passion it is to be a lonely god-man in an empty universe, writes of his “bitter blood-drops running down like tears.” In music, the blues are songs of lost and especially rejected love. In the cosmic blues, the theme is again rejection, followed by self-pity because of it. The innocent and suffering soul knows what will set the world aright, but the cruel world of brutal bourgeois man, the military-industrial complex, the establishment, organized religion, or whatever else it is called, dooms the sensitive soul, damns it, and persecutes it. Hence the cosmic blues. Henry Miller has talked much of opposition while holding rank as a guru of the modern age. Rock singers have become very rich, while holding aloft the

4. Peggy Caserta with Dan Knapp, *Going Down with Janis* (Secaucus, NJ: Lyle Stuart, 1973), 88.

myth of isolation and persecution before vast and adoring audiences. (Each of Janis Joplin's four record albums grossed more than a million dollars in sales, and she commanded as much as \$50,000 for a concert.)

The cosmic blues mean self-pity, and a paranoid sense of persecution, of being alone in a hostile universe. This vein of feeling is most pervasive. Countless liberals and radicals are convinced that they are lonely fighters against evil rightist conspiracies, and they write as doomed Sir Galahads who still go bravely (and with self-pity and hatred) to the fray. Youth is sure of the establishment's conspiracy against its very obvious solutions. Many conservatives too are sure that the world is in conspiracy against them, and that they are great and lonely fighters against darkness. The cosmic blues have bathed the world in self-pity.

To such a world, pornography offers the omnipotence of the pornographic imagination, a readily available world in which everyone is the pornographer's creature and is bent to his every whim. Schopenhauer spoke philosophically of the world as will and idea. In pornography, man applies this strictly: the world becomes his will and idea, and his impotent loneliness in the outer world is replaced by a total command and potency in the inner world.

The cosmic blues, however, have a serious fallacy: man is never alone in the real world, or in any world, nor can he ever be. Unfortunately for man, God spoils the cosmic blues — He is always there.

Epilogue

For the Marquis de Sade, the only reality is the natural world; whatever occurs in nature in terms of the existential promptings of man's libido is therefore normal. The natural is the normal, and the only crime is to negate any desire of man by a pretended higher law from God or from society. Sade's thesis was given scientific respectability by Alfred C. Kinsey and the Institute for Sex Research. For Kinsey, any sexual act that had occurred or could occur was by virtue of its existence in nature normal. The normal sex life thus included all kinds of acts, perversions, and sexual offenses. Kinsey seemed to see the main function of religion as sexual repression.¹ As Edmund Bergler and William Kroger noted of Kinsey, "His only yardstick is mammalian behavior: *if he can show that specific practices are observable in animals, pronto, the normality of the act is attested.*"² Since the early 1950s, Kinsey has had a host of followers and imitators, all proceeding on the same premise: whatever occurs in nature is thereby normal. Not surprisingly, at the same time the works of Sade have been republished

1. Sol W. Ginsburg, "Atomism of Behavior," *An Analysis of the Kinsey Reports on Sexual Behavior in the Human Male and Female*, ed. Donald Porter Gedes (New York: New American Library, Mentor Books, 1954), 38-40.

2. Edmund Bergler and William S. Kroger, *Kinsey's Myth of Female Sexuality* (New York: Grune & Stratton, 1954), 52.

and Sade has been proclaimed the great psychologist, a philosopher, an existentialist, and the key thinker for the modern man.

In view of all this, we should little wonder that we have pornography. The surprise is that its sweep of Western civilization has not been even more extensive. The logic of modern thought not only requires pornography but must view it as a liberating force by means of which the impediment of Christianity can be removed and destroyed.

Because man is a unit, there is a unity between faith and life, between thought and action. Not surprisingly, the Sadean philosophy is leading to a "new morality" in which anything goes, in which all acts are justifiable simply because they occur. What are the social consequences of such a philosophy?

Joseph Daniel Unwin, by studying the relationship between sexual regulations and cultural behavior, set out to dispel the idea that any causal relationship exists. Studying the data from all cultures, past and present, "primitive" and civilized, he had to conclude that a very definite and precise relationship exists. Many so-called primitive societies give evidence of having degenerated from a more energetic and civilized ancestry. Unwin found that the more lax the premarital and postmarital sexual regulations, the lower the culture, whereas in monogamous societies, the culture is always on a higher level. There is a strict correlation between the extent of sexual regulation leading towards a strict monogamy and the extent of cultural achievement. By these regulations, societies can be classified as zoistic, manistic, or deistic in ascending order.

Unwin's study radically undercut all ideas of racial differences in cultural potential. The key, according to Unwin's research, is neither in environment nor in racial heredity, but in moral behavior. Premarital continence, monogamy, and postmarital chastity produce great social energy, whereas premarital and postmarital promiscuity (although Unwin avoids the word) leads to a low cultural energy and level.

There is no evidence whatsoever of an absolutely monogamous society that failed to display great cultural energy. Nor does any evidence exist of a promiscuous society that failed to degen-

erate from the level it inherited (if it inherited a good past) or to stagnate culturally as long as its promiscuity continued. Monogamous societies have been dominated by a strong masculinity, whereas homosexuality appears in a declining society that has been monogamous. Unwin hoped that sexual equality for women would be compatible with monogamy.

The key to social progress is thus moral — specifically, sexual morality. The results of monogamous standards begin to emerge in the third generation in great energy and cultural activity. Unwin saw Western society as the product of middle-class social energy, but with the decline of middle-class morality, he saw, in 1934, no new energetic group arising to provide energy and progress.

Unwin found that it was necessary to analyze in detail the subject of necessity in human affairs. His conclusions clearly militated against the humanistic beliefs in man's freedom to chart his own course without regard to some inescapable moral law. Unwin found, as a first primary law operative in all human societies, this fact:

*The cultural condition of any society in any geographical environment is conditioned by its past and present methods of regulating the relations between the sexes.*³

As a second primary law, Unwin found that

*no society can display productive social energy unless a new generation inherits a social system under which sexual opportunity is reduced to a minimum. If such a system be preserved, a richer and yet richer tradition will be created, refined by human entropy.*⁴

Unwin cited, from his conclusions, three secondary laws:

Any society in which complete pre-nuptial sexual freedom (outside the exogamic regulations and prohibited degrees) has been permitted for at least three generations will be in the zoistic cultural condition. It will also be at a dead level of conception.

If in any human society such regulations are adopted as compel an irregular or occasional continence, the cultural condition of that society will become manistic. If the compulsory continence be slight, the

3. J. D. Unwin, *Sex and Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1934), 340.

4. *Ibid.*, 414.

post-funeral rites will partake of the nature of tendance. If it be great, they will partake also of the nature of cult.

If in any human society the girls of an uprising generation are compelled to be pre-nuptially chaste, that society will be in the deistic cultural condition....⁵

Unwin rejected the atomistic view of man and society. Its application to the problems of culture could have only a destructive and uncomprehending effect:

It is sometimes said that a human society is a mere collection of males and females. That, in my view, is a profound error. It would be as true to say that a chemical substance like water is a mere collection of electrons and protons. Instead, it is an aggregation of atomic groups, which are held together by invisible forces that are not yet understood. First, the electrons and protons are gathered together into atoms, which vary in size and constitution. These are then collected into molecules. The event we call water emerges from this structure.

In a similar manner, a human society is not a collection of individuals but of human groups, which are held together by forces that have not yet been analysed and understood. The males and females are first united into families, which vary in size and constitution. These are then gathered into clans, moieties, and territorial units. There are also cultural and economic groups, such as secret societies, brotherhoods, sisterhoods, guilds, unions, federations, and fraternities. The event we call a human society emerges from this structure.

The outstanding difference is that, whereas, so far as we know, an electron can only be part of one atom at one time, a human being can be a member of any number of human groups. But this fact does not alter the fundamental nature of a society's structure.⁶

There are laws which govern human behavior and affairs, and basic to these are those which affect sex and marriage, in that the consequences culturally are very great.⁷ But "various forces are now at work in our society to change the character of the family."⁸

5. *Ibid.*, 347, 354, 358.

6. J. D. Unwin, *Sexual Regulations and Cultural Behavior* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1935), 23f.

7. See J. D. Unwin, "Marriage in Cultural History," *Hibbert Journal* 26, no. 4 (July 1928):695-706; J. D. Unwin, "Monogamy as a Condition of Social Energy," *Hibbert Journal* 25, no. 4 (July 1927); J. D. Unwin, *Hopousia, or the Sexual and Economic Foundations of a New Society* (New York: Oskar Priest, 1940).

8. Unwin, *Hopousia*, 126.

One of these forces for change, which has become a major force since Unwin's death, is pornography, which works zealously for a new freedom. This new freedom, however, is the old slavery and degeneracy. Discussing the barbarism of specialization, Ortega y Gasset said that the scientist who sees nothing beyond his limited field "also believes that civilization is *there* in just the same way as the earth's crust and the forest primeval."⁹ The champions of pornography are guilty of a like barbarism. They believe that they can abandon Biblical standards of morality and still retain the results of twenty centuries of struggle and progress.

In the politics of pornography, there is neither hindsight nor foresight. The Sadean thesis, that the natural is the normative, will reduce man and society to the level of barbarism, to a world in which all acts and practices are valid, because all occur in nature. In such a world there is no standard whereby progress is possible, nor is there any standard whereby life can be rated as better than death: both are equally natural, and equally common in terms of statistics.

Such a world, however, is impossible. All that the pornographers will do is to render themselves irrelevant. History will pass them by, and a new and moral elite will take over.

Booker T. Washington saw the implications of the Puritan work ethic and morality. He recognized also the signs of failure in white society and its growing contempt for the values that had made it great and powerful. As a Negro leader, he sought to point the way to power, to create out of the American Negro a new Puritan class, a newly dedicated class of moral, working people. The Negro social protest of the 1950s and 1960s was in part a protest against the white establishment. It was, even more, a protest against the way to power that its own middle class, the heirs and followers of Booker T. Washington, was pointing out. The success of this rebellion was extensive, but far from total: the black middle class is more than ever resolute in its course. Moreover, a growing segment of the white middle class has turned to the Christian

9. Jose Ortega y Gasset, *The Revolt of the Masses* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1932), 126.

school movement (and of the black middle class as well) as a means of strengthening the faith and morality of their children.

From one source or another, a new power elite will appear. It will not be the pornographers, the new Sadean class. Their lot is a self-inflicted irrelevance and suicide, a lot which in its commission is harming Western civilization greatly. One thing is certain, the pornographers will soon be dead and gone. Mourners will be a luxury, and there will be no flowers.

Appendix I

LEGISLATION AGAINST PORNOGRAPHY

One of the most common objections to legislation against pornography is that such laws would be unworkable because (1) no one can define pornography, (2) such laws would actually cover too much ground and would limit freedom of the press, and (3) such laws would be readily used by a tyrant to stifle dissent.

The last reason (most common with students) is of little consequence. Tyrants do not need that excuse. They find it very easy to manufacture any number of grounds for whatever they do — if indeed they need any ground at all. By the time a dictator takes over, the absence of a law against pornography is no defense against his totalitarian powers, nor is it any defense against incipient dictators. A people's first and essential line of defense against the destruction of its liberties is not the existence or nonexistence of certain laws, but their essential character and their own commitment to freedom and independence.

Is pornography beyond legal definition? With the willful, anything can be beyond definition. Having heard willful and unbelieving clergymen quibble endlessly over the definitions of doctrine in order to avoid being committed to and governed by them, I am well aware of how many problems can be created with respect to definition. Statute law, however, requires definition, extended and

meticulous definition, having elements of both precision and imprecision. Definition, while difficult, is not impossible. Legal definitions have a character different from that of dictionary definitions. Dictionary definitions establish meanings; legal definitions establish the jurisdiction of penalties. To establish the jurisdiction of penalties means defining not only the offense but also its degree and extent.

To illustrate, it is easy to define *theft*: the dictionary says that it is the act of stealing, larceny, the seizure of the property of another. This is clear and simple. Statute law (unlike common law) requires the very particular definition of each form of theft in relation to a penalty, that is, the meaning of the theft of ideas, and the penalty thereof; the meaning of embezzlement, and its penalty; and so on.

Legal definitions thus do present problems at all times, and most court cases involve problems of definition and technical applicability rather than justice. This does not mean that legal definitions are impossible. In 1972, when Californians faced the Anti-Obscenity Initiative Measure, Proposition 18 (which lost), the main argument against it was that it was too vague and thus endangered freedom of the press. The California Justice Foundation, whose chairman is Attorney Robert M. Damir, supplied, on the request of a state senator, a legal opinion on September 28, 1972, which, buttressed by court cases and analysis, ably refuted this idea. The Foundation's opinion neither supported nor opposed the initiative; it simply analyzed the measure's constitutionality. The opinion found that the measure avoided the obstacles of vagueness and uncertainty, and that it was constitutional in its sections and provisions.

The Hill-Link Minority Report of the Presidential Commission on Obscenity and Pornography (1970) extensively cited legal decisions (428-478) that had held that pornography and obscenity are not within the area of constitutionally protected speech or press. These court decisions indicated no danger to freedom and much care and attention to the issues of freedom as well as of social responsibility.

There is no reason to fear that a law, in and of itself, can remove our liberties. Unless a people have first lost interest in freedom, no state can limit its liberties without thereby endangering itself.

It is wrong to expect too much from laws, or to expect laws to solve problems that have their origin in the life and character of the people. It is also wrong to feel that laws are irrelevant and do nothing. The best laws are those that need the least enforcing, because they best meet the requirements of justice and the interest, character, and abilities of the people, so that even the lawbreaker feels, as he breaks the law, that he does wrong.

Law must represent not only an ultimate standard but also a process of social adjustment and growth. In a strong and healthy society, even bad laws have a sound function, in that they bring certain issues to focus. Civil liberties have largely forged ahead precisely because on numerous occasions lawmakers have erred, and their errors have brought into focus certain basic issues which were previously not clearly understood. Some of the finest legal thought of recent years has occasionally been stimulated by bad laws and bad court decisions.

From this perspective, we can welcome the trend in recent years that has overturned the anti-pornography laws, not out of agreement with the decision, but in agreement with the process, whereby implicit issues and problems are becoming explicit. Viewed from the same perspective, we can hope for sounder legislation in the future, and better court decisions. The law is both logic and experience. And much more.

Appendix II

ENVIRONMENTALISM

Mary Blume, in a report on a discussion of a French encyclopedia of sex, cited a very interesting exchange of comments at the meeting:

“How can your book state that stealing a car is a mere peccadillo, that the person who does so is not a thief?” inquired one indignant lady.

“The adolescent has no sense of property,” answered the expert. “In stealing a car he is trying to get the phallus he has not yet acquired.” The expert did not add, as he did in the book, that in addition to symbolizing the paternal penis, the automobile represents the nest-like comfort of the maternal womb, but he may as well have.

“A *historire* of a phallus because someone steals a car,” muttered an indignant voice. The audience rumbled in agreement.¹

The opinion of the “expert” aroused hostility, because it touched on a sensitive area, but it is likely that the majority of the audience shared the same basic premise, that is, that man is a creature of his environment rather than the environment essentially a creation of man. The Bible does not permit the plea of environmentalism: Adam and Eve tried it with God, and it was rejected.

1. Mary Blume, “New Encyclopedia of Sex Arouses French Objections,” *Los Angeles Times Calendar*, 12 August 1973.

However, in varying degrees, modern humanistic man, who set out to be god over the world, has come to believe that he is a creature of the world. This environmental philosophy has made him progressively alien to Christianity. The present condition of man is a consequence of his philosophy, and to trace the reason for it to minor aspects of his world and actions is to miss the point.

A recent Gallup poll has pointed up certain interesting trends in American life, which some will quickly ascribe to the rise in pornography and to related phenomena. According to the poll,

In terms of attitudes on premarital sex, two out of every three Americans four years ago held the view that premarital sex relations are wrong. Today, the public is closely divided, with 48% believing sex before marriage is wrong and 43% hold that it is not.

An increase in liberal attitudes regarding premarital sex is recorded for all major population groups but is most pronounced among Catholics who, as a group, now hold more liberal views than do Protestants.²

It would be easy to say that the recent liberalization of laws on pornography has caused this. It would be more accurate to say, however, that the recent liberalization is an aspect and consequence of the decline of faith and theology that has long been under way.

We must always remember that from the standpoint of the Bible, pornography has its seat in the hearts of the people. When men and women are alienated from God, they are sinners and therefore their tastes and acts should not surprise us. When they are reconciled to God in Christ, their character and discipline will steadily eliminate the importance of the pornography market.

Symptoms are important and sometimes very serious, but it is very wrong and dangerous to treat symptoms rather than the underlying disease. Pornography is a symptom; it is not the problem.

2. "Views on Sex More Liberal, Survey Finds," *Los Angeles Times*, 12 August 1973.

SCRIPTURE INDEX

1 Samuel

2:6 – 54

Proverbs

23:7 – 37

Isaiah

45:6 – 111

Matthew

4:4 – 82

Luke

22:44 – 135

John

8:36 – 72

Romans

8:28 – 94

2 Corinthians

9:4 – 70

Hebrews

1:3 – 70

11:1 – 70

INDEX

- Abbot of Misrule, 14
Abortion, 9, 47, 51, 121
Adam, 78
Adamites, 17
Adelman, Bob, 84, 119, 124
Adultery, 9, 12, 29, 63–64, 75,
77–79
Age of Aquarius, 91
Alphonso, Rand, 128
Alvarez, A., 3, 97
American Medical Association,
120
American Psychiatric
Association, 53
Anarchism, 19, 113
Animal Love, 79
Anthropology, 9
Antinomianism, 3–5
Apuleius, 11
Arminian theology, 74
Art (Arts), 21, 25–27, 65, 71,
94, 101
Artaud, Antonin, 97
Ashbee, Henry Spencer, 56
Ashbury, Herbert, 81
Atheism, 43, 47, 51–52
Atlantic, The, 86
Augustine, 17

Ba-Ila, 10–11
Bailey, Benjamin, 46
Baird, James, 8
Bakunin, 51
Baptism, 13
Beauvoir, Simone de, 58
Beethoven, 21
Berdyayev, Nicholas, 18
Bergler, Edmund, 137
Berlin, Isaiah, 20
Berns, Walter, 101
Bestiality, 11–12, 50, 89, 108
Birth control, 46
Blake, William, 43
Blanchot, Maurice, 55–57
Blues, cosmic, 133–136
Blume, Mary, 147
Bou Jeloud, 87
Brahma, 37
Brown, Helen Gurley, 77
Brown, Norman, 87
Brute factuality, 116
Buggery, 32
Burke, Kenneth D., 22
Burroughs, William, 87
Burton, Sir Richard, 11
Byer, Stephen, 87

Caillois, Roger, 11–14
Calhoun, J.C., 113
California Justice Foundation,
144
Calvinism, 114, 122
Cannibalism, 9, 15, 120
Carter, James G., 114
Cartwright, Peter, 74
Caserta, Peggy, 120, 135
Castiglione, 133
Cathari, 35
Catholics, 148
Cellini, Benvenuto, 133

- Censorship, 29, 32–33, 123
 Chance, 70
 Chaos, 11–12, 14–16
 Charismatic movement, 91, 115
 Child molestation, 64
 Christ, 82, 135, 148
 Christian School Movement, 141
Christianity Today, 91
 Chukchis, 127
 Circumcision, 13
 Civil liberty, 39, 145
 Civilization, 57
 Clark, Kenneth, 28
 Cleanliness, 126–127
 Clothing, 16
 Collectivism, 133
 Communism, 18, 21
 Consenting adults, 41, 45
 Conservatives, conservatism, 114, 136
 Cook, George, 104
 Coprophilia, 108
 Cosmic f—, 23, 87, 126
Cosmopolitan, 77, 85
 Coulteray, George de, 76
 Coulton, G. G., 14
 Council of Basel, 14
 Counter Reformation, 104
 Courts, 101
 Covenant, 14
 Cowley, Malcolm, 31
 Crews, Frederick, 87
 Crime(s), 3, 5, 48
 normality of, 3
 Crocodile cult, 11
 Cultural imperialism, 7–8
 Cynics, 33
 Dabney, Robert, 114
 Dale, Andrew Murray, 10
 Damir, Robert M., 144
 Danish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, 101
 Darwin, Charles, 2, 14, 28, 50, 109, 125, 128
 Darwin, Erasmus, 125
 Darwin, Francis, 125
 Davidheiser, Bolton, 54
 Davis, Jefferson, 114
 Decapitalization, 119–124
 Decter, Midge, 86
 Definition, 101
 as a principle, 88
 Dehumanization, 67–78
 Deism, 2
 Democracy, 19
 Depersonalization, 59, 67–71, 99–100, 110, 113, 116, 121, 123
 Deposuit, 14
 Descartes, Rene, 93
 Dewey, John, 130
 Dialecticism, 37
 Dickens, Charles, 30, 94
 Dirty books, 35, 36–37
 DNA, 120
 Dostoyevsky, 20, 54, 107, 111
 Douglas, (Justice), 39
 Dualism, 36, 63
 Dunleavy, Yvonne, 89
 Dupplin, Lord, 110

- Durkheim, Emile, 3
 Ecology, 19
 Edie, James M., 18
 Education, statist, 114
 Edwards, Dr. Robert G., 120–121
 Edwards, Jonathan, 73–74
 Ego, 15, 67–70, 131
 Elite man, 112–117
 Elliott, J. H., 9
 Ellul, Jacques, 17
 Emerson, 87
Encounter, 32–33
 Engels, Friedrich, 94, 97
 Environmentalism, 16–17, 147
 Epiphanius, 17
 Erasmus, 127
Eros, 32
Esquire, 32, 90
 Establishment, 8
 Euthanasia, 51
 Evangelicalism, 115–116
 Everyman, 24
 Evolution, 3, 14, 25, 65
 Excellence, hatred of, 130
 Existentialism, 54
Experience, 79
 Experiential quest, 81–92
 Experiential shock, 80
 Experientialism, 73–80
 Experimental religion, 74
 F— word, 4, 23, 45, 59, 82, 85, 87, 102, 110, 126
 Fairchild, Hoxie Neale, 9
 Fall of man, 2–5, 18, 41
 Family, 82–83, 91
 Farragut, Admiral, 8
 Feast of Fools, 14
 Feces, 46
 Fertility cult, 11–12
 Feuerbach, 93
 Fiedler, Leslie, 61, 129
 Film, 76–79, 90, 101
 Finney, Charles G., 79
 Fithian, Marilyn, 16
 Flexner, Stuart Berg, 23
 Food, 16
 Forcade, Thomas King, 85, 102, 127
Forum, 127
 Fosburgh, Hugh, 19
 Four-letter words, 23, 33, 34
 France, 18, 34, 36, 38, 39
 Freedom, 18, 29, 34, 36–40, 59, 67, 71, 83, 86, 96, 98, 102–103, 141, 144 total, 38 unlimited, 72
 French Revolution, 9, 15, 42, 49, 125
 Freud, Sigmund, 2, 15, 22, 25, 36, 67, 130
 Friedman, Myra, 134
 Fryer, Peter, 110
 Gallup poll, 148
 Gasset, Ortega y, 141
 Gear, Norman, 51
 Gebbard, Paul, 64
 Gedes, Donald Porter, 137
 Genet, Jean, 86

- Germans, 8
 Gethsemane, 135
 Ginsberg, Dr. George L., 90
 Ginsburg, Sol W., 137
 Ginzburg, Ralph, 31–32
 Girodias, Maurice, 25, 34–39,
 59
 God
 (as) space, 74
 alienated from, 148
 and grace, 16
 and His Law, 2
 death of, 2, 60
 freedom of, 38
 kingdom of, 46
 law-order, 51
 omnipotent, 12, 70
 predestination, 73, 91
 sovereignty of, 12, 91
 Goethe, 21, 134
 Golden Rule, 42
 Golden Showers, 127
 Goodman, Paul, 87
 Gothic novel, 129
 Grace
 from below, 22
 God's, 16
 Graham, Billy, 80
 Gray, Louis H., 13
 Greek tradition, 36
 Greenwald, Dr. Harold, 63
 Greenwald, Ruth, 63
Grimm's Fairy Tales, 103

 Hall, Susan, 84, 119, 124
Happy Hooker, The, 89
Harper's, 101

 Harris, Frank, 25
 Hartman, William E., 16
 Harvard, 114
 Hastings, James, 13
 "Head" religion vs. "heart"
 religion, 74
 Hegel, Friedrich, 2, 14
 Hell, 134
 Hellenic thought, 63
 Hemingway, Ernest, 24, 82,
 90, 92
 Hesse, Hermann, 134
Hibbert Journal, 140
*Hill-Link Minority Report of the
 Presidential
 Commission on
 Obscenity and
 Pornography*, 144
 Holbrook, David, 95, 100, 126
 Hollander, Xaviera, 89–90, 99,
 103, 108
 Holmes, Oliver Wendell, 80
 Homosexuality, 12, 22, 46, 64,
 79, 86, 108, 123, 128
 Hoop skirts, 28
 Hopkins, Gerard Manley, 81
 Humanism, 5, 28, 30, 33, 61–
 62, 70, 77, 81, 86–92,
 104, 111, 129, 134,
 139, 148
 Hyde, H. Montgomery, 83
Hypostasis, 70

 Id, 15, 67–72, 131
 Illusionism, 97
 Immigrant father, 82
 Impersonalism, Impersonality,

- 78–79, 95, 111
 Impotence, 22, 90
 Incarnation, 18
 Incest, 4, 10–11, 15, 43, 46–50, 63, 65, 89
 Individualism, 133
 Infanticide, 47, 51
 Institute for Sex Research, 137
 Ionesco, Eugene, 67
- Jacobins, 21
 Jerks, 74
 Jesus freaks, 4
 Jewish elite, 114–116
 Jews, 61
 John of Damascus, 17
 Johnson, Art, 102
 Johnson, Donald, 16
 Johnson, Lyndon, 114
 Johnson, Virginia, 100
 Jones, Brian, 87
 Joplin, Janis, 119, 134
 Joujouka, 87
 Judges, 102
 Judicial process, 102
- Kant, Immanuel, 93, 97
 Karpel, Craig, 87
 Kazin, Alfred, 31
 Keats, John, 31, 46
 Keniston, Kenneth, 100
 Kennedy, John F., 115
 Kennedys, 115
 Kermode, Frank, 30–31
 King, Richard, 87
Kinsey Report, 64
 Kinsey, Alfred C., 64, 137
- Kipling, Rudyard, 8
 Kleist, Heinrich von, 16
 Kline, George, 18
 Knapp, Dan, 120, 135
 Kroger, William S., 137
 Krummacker, 48
- Ladies' Home Journal*, 31
 Laing, R. D., 3
Last Tango in Paris, 101
 Law, 39, 45–47, 50
 as covenant, 14
 as experience, 80
 as logic and experience, 145
 God's, 12, 43, 46
 man's, 45, 49
 relationship to liberty, 39
 Lawrence, D. H., 31
Le Monde, 101
 Legislation against
 pornography, 143–148
 Lenders, Jac, 129
 Lenin, 18
 Lesbianism, 89, 120, 123, 128
 Liberals, 136
 Libertarians, 41
 Libertinism, 42, 46, 56
 Libido, 68, 137
 Life as fiction, 93–98
Listen, 96
 Los Angeles, 130
Los Angeles Herald-Examiner, 79
Los Angeles Star, 4
Los Angeles Times, 148
Los Angeles Times Calendar,

- 147
 Loud, Grover, 74
 Louis XIV, 39
 Louis XV, 1
 Lowen, Alexander, 78
 LSD, 102
- Magnificat*, 14
 Mailer, Norman, 85
 Man, 61–66
 as an animal, 54
 as matter, 63
 autonomous, 47, 105
 elite, 112–117
 in God's image, 36, 65, 83
 makes his own essence, 112
 playing God, 54, 56, 57
 reduced to sex, 100
 underground, 107–118
 unity of, 138
 Manicheanism, 35, 78
 Mann, Horace, 114
 Mannix, Daniel P., 11
 Manson, Charles, 83
 Marcuse, Herbert, 15–16, 77, 87
 Margenau, Dr. Eric, 84
 Marriage, 13
 Martin, Clyde E., 64
 Marx, Karl, 20, 51, 93, 94
 Marxism, 37, 95
 Masaryk, Thomas, 96
 Masochism, 89, 95, 108, 128
 Masters & Johnson, 77
 Masters, William H., 100
 Masturbation, 33–34, 63
 Matricide, 47
- Maturity, 8
 May, Rollo, 2, 126
 Meaning, Meaninglessness, 70, 117, 122
 Medicine, 120
 Meinong, Alexius von, 125
 Mencken, H. L., 104
 Meta-history, 18
 Metaphysics, 93, 95
 Michaelson, Peter, 62
 Middle Ages, 14, 96
 Miller, Henry, 61–62, 71, 85, 108–109, 111, 117, 121, 124, 135
 Millett, Kate, 85
 Milton, John, 135
 Minorities, dedicated, 112
 Molnar, Thomas, 70
 Monism, 36, 63
 Monogamy, 47, 138
 Moore, Robin, 89
 Morgan, Robin, 85
 Mozart, 21
 Music, 95
 Mysticism, 87
 Myth of persecution, 109
- Naegele, K. D., 3
 National Socialism, 37
 Nature (natural), 2–3, 5, 42–47, 49, 50, 51, 55, 129, 141
 Necrophilia, 64
 Negroes, 141
 Neo-evangelicalism, 4
 Neoplatonism, 35, 78
 Neville, Richard, 127

- New Evangelism, 4
 New Left, 85
 New Morality, 1, 86, 138
New York Times, 101
 Nietzsche, Friederich, 2–3, 97,
 125
 Nobile, Philip, 32, 62, 90
 Noble savage, 8–12, 20
 Normality of crime, 3
 Novel, 94
 Now Generation, 92, 122
 Nudism, 16, 25

 Occultism, 91, 120
 Odajnyk, Walter, 54
 Oedipus, 11
Olympia Reader, The, 25
 Opera, 94
 Orgasm
 apocalyptic, 126
 as beatitude, 90
 as violence, 129
 cosmic, 90
 faked, 134
 Orgies, 123
Origin of Species, 14, 109, 125
 Ortega y Gasset, Jose, 141
 Orwell, George, 57
Oui, 87
 Overpopulation, 51

 Palmer, 114
 Pan, 87
 Panizza, 97
 Parricide, 15
 Parsons, T., 3
 Pearl, Cyril, 28

 Pentecostalism, 91
Penthouse, 62, 71, 78, 82, 89,
 123
 Permissiveness, 104
 Persia, 71
 Personality, 70–71, 121
 Perversion, 120
 Peterson, Walter J., 81
 Philip II, 48
 Pietism, 115
 Pill, the, 63–65
 Pimps, 83, 99, 119
 Pitts, J. R., 3
Playboy, 62, 71, 82, 85, 87, 96,
 123
 Poetry, 94
 Pomeroy, Wardell B., 64
 Pornography
 against the family, 83
 and impotence, 103
 and legislation, 102–103
 and suicide, 98
 and the Law, 99–105
 anti-movement, 113
 as "holiness", 25
 as bad writing, 24, 97
 as depravity, 95
 as *garbahzh*, 1
 as literature, 27, 32
 as power, 57
 as regenerative, 96
 as religious expression, 7–
 26
 as symptom, 148
 as voyeurism, 95
 civil liberty, 39
 crime of, 7

- defined, 101, 143–144
 dehumanizing, 33
 holiness, 46
 its money, 62
 its religious roots, 105
 legislation against, 143–
 148
 liberal defenses of, 29
 morality of, 27–40
 new and old, 1
 opponents of, 28
 politics of, 41–52
 presuppositions of, 35
 social significance of, 27
 statute law, 144
 violence of, 25, 55–59
 Postmillennialism, 113
 Pragmatism, 29
 Praz, Mario, 135
 Predestination, 73
 Premarital sex, 62, 138, 148
 Primitivism, 8–10, 13, 14–17,
 18, 19, 21–22, 23, 49,
 68, 121
Prism, 121
 Proposition 18, 144
 Prostitution, 11, 64, 81, 89,
 98, 99–100, 119
 Protestants, 148
 Proulx, Cynthia, 84
 Prudery, 110
 Psychology, 22, 37, 93, 95,
 104
Psychology Today, 88
 Puritan, Puritans, 39, 73–74,
 113–116
 Pushkin, 21
 Racine, 21
 Radio, 95
 Rape, 12, 48, 128
 Reality, 71, 73, 96
 Reason, 51
 unreason, 125–131
 Reconstruction, 85
 Red China, 127
 Reformation, 104
 Regeneration, 10–17, 74
 Reich, Charles, 88
 Reign of Terror, 42, 51
 Relativism, 51
 Rembrandt, 21
 Renaissance, 14, 104, 133
 Revelation as “meta-history”,
 18
 Revivalism, 74–76, 79
 Revolution, 17–18
 Richardson, Samuel, 94
 Robertson, Wilmot, 115
 Robespierre, 17–18
 Robinson, Ian, 95
 Rock and Roll Music, 102, 135
 Romanticism, 43, 115
 Rome, 8–9, 11, 17
 Rosebury, Dr. Theodor, 127
 Roszak, Theodore, 87
 Rousseau, 15, 20
 Rubin, Jerry, 94
 Rushdoony, R. J., 13–15, 39,
 51, 54, 68, 114
 Sade, Marquis de, 1–5, 34, 41,
 55–59, 78, 125, 129,
 137–138

- "Justine", 57
 hatred of man, 57
 murder, 64
 on equalitarianism, 50
 on God, 49
 on God's law, 51
 on incest, 50
 on love, 58
 on murder, 50
 on politics, 52
 on religion, 49
 on sexual crimes, 50
 on sodomy, 50
 on suicide, 51
 on violence & torture, 55
 relativism of, 51
 worships Satan, 55
- Sadism, 55, 89, 95, 108, 128
 Sadomasochism, 42, 111, 121
 Saint-Agnes, Yves de, 65
 San Francisco Earthquake, 81
 Sandburg, Carl, 19
 Sartre, Jean Paul, 54, 112
Saturday Review of the Society,
 84
 Saturnalia, 14
 Scanlan, James P., 18
 Scholasticism, 36
 Schopenhauer, 136
 Science, depersonalized, 121
 Seaver, Richard, 42, 55, 58, 64
 Secession, 113
 Seduction, 128
 Selby, Jr., Hubert, 30–31
 Self-abuse, 33
 Self-expression, 124
 Sex
 and the mind, 37
 as sin, 35
 as violence, 59
 cosmic coition, 23–24
 depersonalized, 110
 mysticism, 23, 126
 normal, 137
 over-valuation of, 90
 premarital, 138, 148
 violence, 45
- Sexual molestation, 64
 Sexual revolution, 23, 85, 126
 Shainess, Natalie, 100
 Shakespeare, 21
 Sherrill, Lewis Joseph, 75
 Shils, E., 3
 Sickness, 3
 Silky, 119, 124
 Sin, 63, 64
 Sinclair, John, 102, 105
 Smith, Edwin W., 10
 Socialism, 18, 113
 Sodomy, 50, 56, 89, 128
 Sonnini, C.S., 11
 Sparrow, John, 32
 Spouse swapping, 78
 Stalin, 18
 Steiner, George, 33
 Stephens, Alexander H., 114
 Steptoe, Dr. Patrick S., 120
 Stirner, Max, 2, 47, 52, 97
 Stoller, Robert, 95
 Straus, Erwin, 95
 Substance, 70
 Suicide, 3, 51, 96–98, 135
 Sumner, Charles, 66
 Superego, 67–71

- Surd*, 117
 Swapping, 79
 Sweden, 65
 Sweet, William Warren, 74
 Systematics, 116

 Tabor, Pauline, 99
 Tacitus, 8
 Television, 95
 Theater, 67
 Theft, 144, 147
 Theism, 37
 Thomson, James, 135
 Thongans, 12
 Thoreau, 19, 87
 Thornwell, James, 114
 Thought and act, 37
 Tillich, Hannah, 2
 Tillich, Paul, 2
Time, 86, 101
 Tolstoy, Leo, 20, 21
 Tragedy, 94
 Transcendentalism, 87, 113
 Trilling, Lionel, 32
 Troyat, Henri, 21
 Tynan, Kenneth, 32–33, 37
 Tyranny, 38
 Tyrmand, Leopold, 18

 Ugliness, 104
 Ullerstam, Dr. Las, 64
 Underground man, 20, 35,
 107–118, 128, 130
Underground Press Anthology,
 85, 102, 127
 Unitarianism, 113–116
 United States Supreme Court,
 27, 50, 104, 123
 Unreason, 125–131
 Unwin, Joseph Daniel, 138
 Urine, 103, 127–128
 Utopia, 17, 57

 Van Doren, Carl, 74
 Van Til, Cornelius, 15
 Van Til, L. John, 37
 Venereal disease, 127
 Victorianism, 28, 31, 90, 110
 Violence, 53–59
 Voltaire, 2
 Voyeurism, 95–96, 100, 110,
 121

 Wagner, 94
 Wagoner, Raymond, 29
 Wainhouse, Austryn, 42, 55,
 58, 64
 Wallach, Leah, 78
 Ward, Lord, 110
 Warfield, B. B., 79
 Washington, Booker T., 141
 Watson, Dr. James D., 120–
 121
 Wentworth, Harold, 23
 Wertham, Dr. Frederick, 53,
 59
 White, John S., 133
 Whitman, Walt, 19
 Wilkes, John, 83
 Will to fiction, 94–95, 99–
 100, 102–104, 119
 Williams, Duncan, 46, 53–54
 Williams, Emlyn, 101
 Wolfe, Linda, 78, 79

- Women
 as commodities, 62
 liberated, 85
- Woodway Square Apartments,
 84
- World*, 100, 134
- Wright, Louis B., 9
- Youth, 8
- Zeldin, Mary-Barbara, 18
- Zoroastrianism, 36

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