

CENSORSHIP

Existence as Commodity and Strategies for its Negation

THE OLDEST OF SUPPRESSED TRADITIONS

It should come as no surprise that in a world dominated by apocalyptic illusions and the counter-real, that censorship should be popularly misperceived as a form of social repression. The contradictions which support such an inversion are manifest in every area of institutional life, they constitute the apparent "reality" of our "lives." Despite the fact that consciousness has been demonstrated time and time again by logic, philosophy, and science to be always the effect of a closed system of exclusive focus, of *censorship*, "literate" consensus maintains that censorship and silence are the negation of consciousness. It is clear that power has a vested interest in maintaining a monopoly on censorship so as to control the necessary flow of images and behaviors which constitute "social" reality. In the political presence of "free" press, "free" market, and "democratic" systems which form late capitalism, the "concept of freedom" becomes an unreachable, collapsing absolute, coherent only in the regulation of its negation. Freedom means being unable to experience the world. In "capitalist" culture, power materializes within a fragmented surface-reality, a surface which conceals the abstractions of exchange-value that define its sophisticated totalitarianism. All experiences (nonmaterial commodities) are indistinct and equal when exchanged via capital, with class "privilege" determining how much of this worthless "equality" each person is entitled to. Over all visible things circulate the malign forms of work, communication, participation, and play. As we desire the negation of the imposed surface "reality," so too we make visible the horrifying mechanism of exchange beneath the varnish of civilization. What is necessary is willingness on our part to give up the "identity" and "productivity" which capital has forced us to invest in it. We are addicted to production and to the consumption of identities to give our "lives" "value," since exchange has effectively suppressed the aspects of existing which would make it bearable. Nevertheless, in (fragmented) present time it would be useless to conjecture about the freedom of subjectivity projected for post-capitalist utopia, since such projections would only detract from the negative power of the present.

VARIETIES OF NEGATION

Anything can be censored for any reason, but the goal of revolutionary censorship is to censor everything for every reason. The censors of the "left," "right," "center," and all philosophies, theories, and religions all do their collective part, despite the fact that they imagine themselves to be motivated by the very "beliefs" important to negate. Do your part and start by censoring this text. There are of course such instances when questions arise relating to the censorship of censorship, so-called "paradox," and in such cases it is up to the "individual" censor to determine the approach (s)he wishes to adopt. Some censorship requires the extremely temporary adoption of beliefs in order to formulate a convincing negation of another belief, but in many cases it is possible to transcend this compromise through apathy.

FROM ORIGINALITY TO ONTOLOGY, THE PAIN OF THE TEXT

Censorship is a more powerful, more revolutionary, and more populist form of subjectivity than "imagination" because it requires only familiarity with dominant "reality," rather than the production of other ("imagined") realities. The possibilities for communal transformation of the world thus lie in the "negative" when one is capable of disconnecting from imposed notions of economy. Plagiarism is the "beginning," the negative point of culture which finds its justification in the "unique." Censorship supersedes plagiarism as an intelligent negation of "originality" because it suppresses not only ("original") production, but also the *reproduction* (plagiarism, appropriation, etc.) which revalues the "original" and maintains its circulation in "reality." Censorship is to the present what plagiarism is to herstory. Both go instantly

beyond the empty siren-song of academic "deconstruction" (a philosophy "against language" [sic]), that capitalist scam which pretends to talk about the negation of "reality" without ever mentioning it. "Deconstruction" and its "critical" contemporaries become raw vital material for plagiarism and censorship. As a revolutionary practice, both turn the tremendous waste of western "critical thought" into tools for the complete transformation of everything. We rewrite the situationist slogan thus: "Everyone, one step less if you want to be revolutionaries!"

THE HEALING POWER OF DOUBT

"Take things one step farther by not doing them."

—Charles Boyd, 1984

Experimental philosophy finds its coherence in the creation of situations. In order to practically examine questions of truth it is necessary to suppress ideas which are initially believed, and then to observe popular reaction. Find reasons to stop yourself from thinking or saying things, and to stop other people from thinking or saying things. At least, try to get them to stop themselves from thinking or saying things by presenting them with ideas which make what they are thinking or saying seem obviously incorrect, but which to not offer alternatives. Perhaps begin by focusing on ideas, objects or actions which you are "against" and progress towards censoring things which you were previously "for." Kill your desires and live. Erase, destroy, and make useless recorded information. Physically and otherwise attempt to suppress expression in art, politics, and philosophy, and investigate the more technically difficult negations of science, math, history, and so on. Resist culture and all other forms of institutional identity. Refuse to participate in and suppress interpersonal and mass social relationships. As you see fit, smash the "imagination," "schizophrenia," "death," "sexuality," "values," "time," and other forms of seduction, propaganda, and abstraction which you are capable of perceiving. Experimentally break down the frames of reference by which you organize non-valued perceptions into valued entities: e.g., objects, ideas, means of self-perception, etc.

AN END TO SOCIAL RELATIONS

"Self-destruction" is an impossibility, a semantic swindle. The "self," when reordered beyond dominant social reality will always seem "destroyed," but the "self" by definition always "is," and its alteration beyond recognition is nothing to worry about. Just as there is no opposite of "being" (what would it be?), the self transformed simply cannot be perceived as what it was before. Thus the moralism against suicide is a reactionary resistance to change. Intrinsic "rationality" is an economy of language which reconstructs the physical reality of military capitalism on a mental plane. Given the total colonization of everyday life by capital, we are forced to speak the received languages of the media. It seems that only complete opposition to everything is not reversible. If this polemic then seems contradictory or absolutist, it is because it poses itself in opposition to a coherent totality, an absolute contradiction.

THE FESTIVAL OF CENSORSHIP

"There is no deprogramming, the only deprogramming is death, there is no death."

The Festival of Censorship is a patanational, completely decentralized event which will take place in the Summer of 1988, two short years before the commencement of the **ARTIST'S STRIKE**, a period during which (at minimum) no creative activity will take place. The Festival aims to begin on a limited and visible scope what will expand and constitute a new and total organization of everyone's life. Some events have already been planned for the festival, including international performances on July 4th and other holidays during which participants will look into the daylight sun for a full hour. A day of "cover-ups" is also planned, during which participants will go to rigorous lengths to hide traces of their mundane activities. We are eager for people to come forward with contributions or to organize other events to be presented under the banner of the festival, being free to organize events unconnected to the Festival under its banner. The Festival is intended to involve research into the practice of censorship, in "culture" and beyond. It is not important to us that participants agree with "our" polemic. We plan to stage manifestations in several major European and American cities, including New York, Baltimore, Montréal, London, Berlin and San Francisco. We need your help.

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