

YAWN

YAWN is a sporadic newsletter which seeks to offer a critical look at our culture in all its forms. Responses and submissions from readers are welcome and encouraged, especially critical observations about cultural institutions and seldom challenged principles concerning culture. Anything sent may be considered for inclusion in a future issue without specific prior notification. YAWN strives to be a collective, mostly anonymous, exchange-driven effort. Responses of any kind will be met reciprocally in the following manner: the respondent will receive those materials appearing in the next bulk mailing. Subscriptions to YAWN are available for \$10 for 25 issues. YAWN is archived at <http://yawn.detrinet.net/>.

Association for Ontological Anarchy Communiqué No. 11: Turn off the Lite!

The Association for Ontological Anarchy calls for a boycott of all products marketed under the shibboleth of LITE — beer, meat, lo-cal candy, cosmetics, music, pre-packaged “life-styles,” whatever.

The concept of LITE (in Situ-jargon) unfolds a complex of symbolism by which the Spectacle hopes to recuperate all revulsion against its commodification of desire. “Natural,” “organic,” “healthy” produce is designed for a market-sector of mildly dissatisfied consumers with mild cases of future shock and mild yearnings for a tepid authenticity. A niche has been prepared for *you*, softly illumined with the illusions of simplicity, cleanliness, thinness, a dash of asceticism and self-denial. Of course, it costs a little more...; after all LITENESS was not designed for poor hungry primitives who still think of food as nourishment rather than décor. It *has* to cost more—otherwise *you* wouldn't buy it.

The American middle class (don't quibble; you know what I mean) falls naturally into opposite but complementary factions: The Armies of Anorexia and Bulimia. Clinical cases of these diseases represent only the psychosomatic froth on a wave of cultural pathology, deep diffused and largely unconscious. The Bulimics are those yupped-out gentry who gorge on margaritas and VCRs, then purge on LITE food, jogging or (an)ærobic jiggling. The Anorexics are the “life-style” rebels, ultra-food-faddists, eaters of algæ, joyless, dispirited and wan — but smug in the puritanical zeal and their designer hair-shirts. Grotesque junkfood simply represents the flip-side of ghoulish “healthfood” — nothing tastes like anything but woodchips or additives — it's all either boring or carcinogenic — or both — and it's all incredibly *stupid*.

Food, cooked or raw, cannot escape from symbolism. It *is*, and also simultaneously *represents* that which it is. All food is soul-food; to treat it otherwise is to court indigestion, both chronic and metaphysical.

But in the airless vault of our civilization, where nearly every experience is mediated, where reality is strained through the deadening mesh of consensus-perception, we lose touch with food as *nourishment*; we begin to construct for ourselves personæ based on what we consume, treating *products* as projections of our yearning for the authentic....

LITE parodies spiritual emptiness and illumination, just as McDonald's

travesties the imagery of fullness and celebration. The human spirit (not to mention *hunger*) can overcome and transcend all this fetishism—joy can erupt even at Burger King, and even LITE beer may hide a dose of Dionysus. Buy why would we have to struggle against this garbagy tide of cheap rip-off tickytack, when we could be drinking the wine of paradise even now under our own vine and fig tree?

Food belongs to realm of everyday life, the primary arena for all insurrectionary self-empowerment, all spiritual self-enhancement, all seizing-back pleasure, all revolt against the Planetary Work Machine and its imitation desires. Far be it from us to dogmatize; the Native American hunter might fuel his happiness with fried squirrel, the anarcho-taoist with a handful of dried apricots. Milarepa the Tibetan, after ten years of nettle soup, ate a butter-cake and achieved enlightenment. The dullard sees no *eros* in fine champagne; the sorcerer can fall intoxicated on a glass of water.

The A.O.A. sometimes envisions CHAOS as a cornucopia of continual creation; as a sort of geyser of cosmic generosity; therefore we refrain from advocating any specific diet, lest we offend against the Sacred Multiplicity and the Divine Subjectivity. We're not about to hawk you yet another New Age prescription for perfect health...

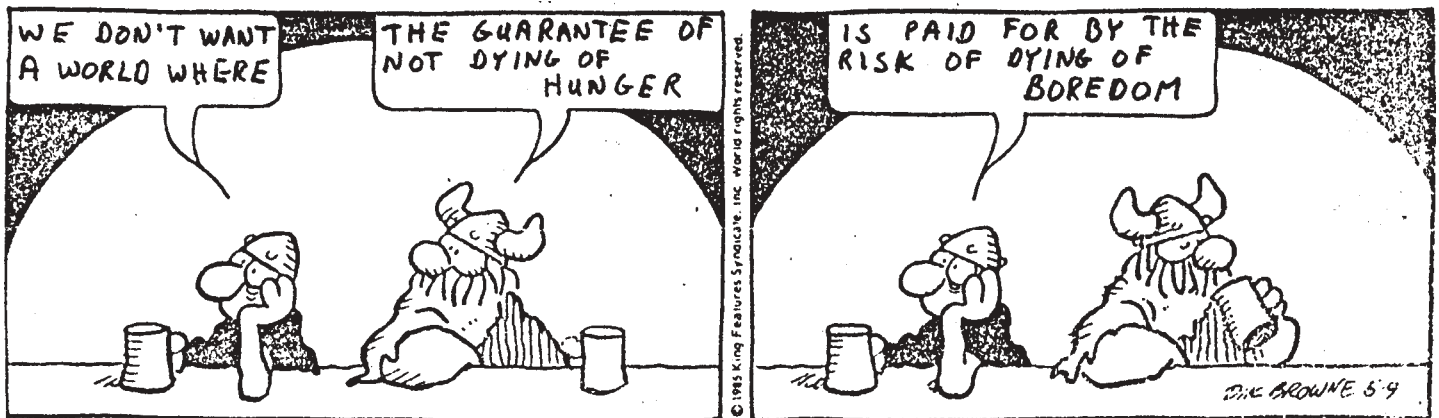
Our culture, choking on its own pollutants, cries out (like the dying Goethe) for “More LITE!” — as if their bland weightless tasteless characterlessness could protect us from the gathering dark.

No! This last illusion finally strikes us as too cruel. We are forced against our own slothful inclinations to take a stand and protest. Boycott! Boycott! TURN OFF THE LITE!

[Hakim Bey]

Art Strike?... Nothing wrong with choosing to pursue farming, or charity work, or rabble-rousing, or whatever, in the hopes that you will then help the starving. But combatting hunger is only one reasonable human vocation. Combatting neuron death through lack of beauty is another. To say an artist should give up art and work at helping the starving is totalitarian crap. The starving should give up starving and work at helping artists. Just kidding — sort of. But I do believe that requiring everybody to devote himself to charity work, as a full time job, is as idiotic as telling social workers to quit and make art. To feed people in a world without art would be criminal....

[Bob Grumman]



STRIKE DOWN CENSORSHIP

WE CALL ON ALL ARTISTS TO JOIN THE ART STRIKE AND THUS PARALYZE THE OPERATIONS OF THE BLOODSUCKER ART MARKET AND HIS BIG BROTHER OPPRESSOR, THE ART BUREAUCRACY.

WE DONT WANT YOU TO STOP MAKING ART, BUT TO STOP SERVING THE SYSTEM AND TO BOYCOTT THE GALLERIES, MUSEUMS, DEALERS, AGENCIES.

WE ALL HAVE TO CREATE ART IN PROMOTION OF THE STRIKE AND FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE STRIKE.

THIS IS THE ONLY WAY TO FIGHT AGAINST THE TYRANNY OF ART MARKET AND ART CENSORS.



STRIKE IS ART!
ART IS STRIKE!
JOIN THE ARTIST STRIKE!

THE LOWER EAST SIDE NEOST FRONT

ART STRIKE 1990-2000

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