

WE ARE
THE MEN

JOHN WAYNE
ARMY
interview?

FEMALE
CIRCUMCISION

lesbian and
gay class war

BIOTECHNOLOGY

Womens FOOTIE!!

POETRY

reviews

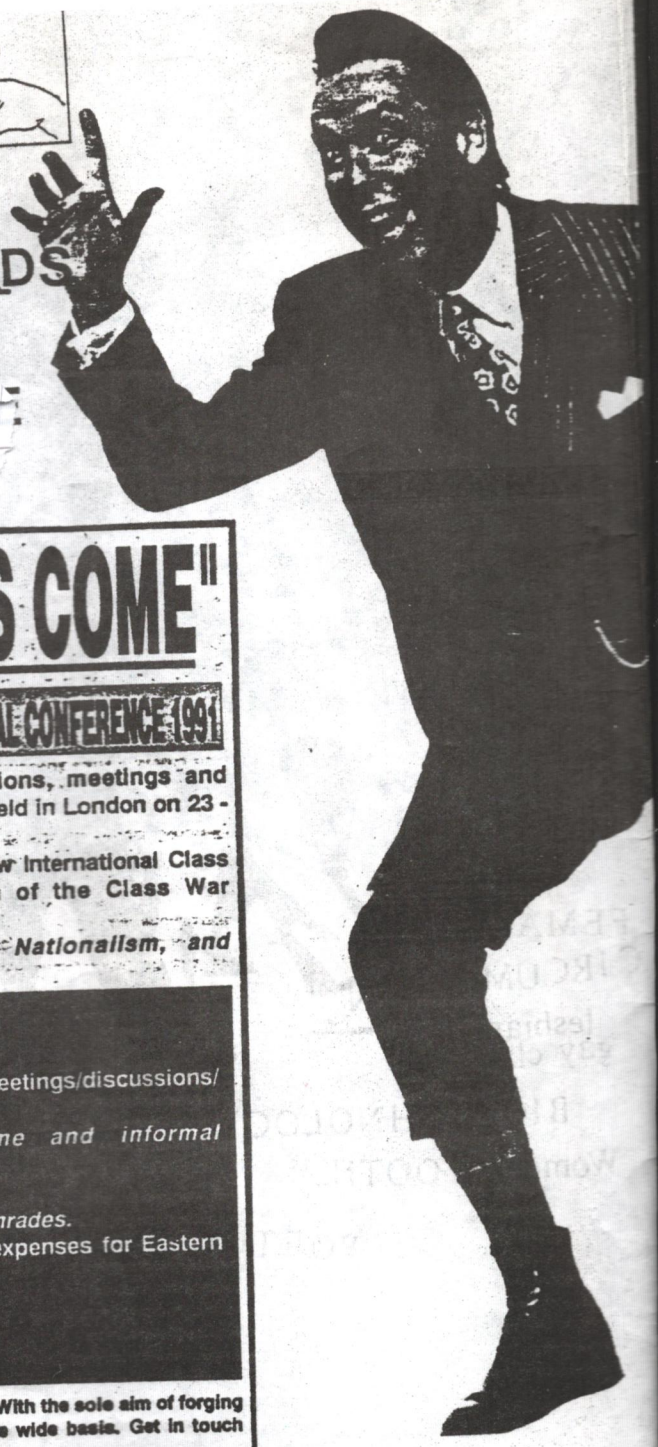
AND a whole lot
More

DNR



julie

TeADS



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Pagan talks thrash blues PUNK e e e e e



"I like the blue boat," said Jill.
"That is what I want."
Janet said,
"This is a good shop.
I like the Teddy.
That is what I want."



Jill looked and looked.
Janet held a doll.
John said,
"Here is something blue.
Here is something brown."
Jill looked up and down.



One day Father said,
"Let us go out in the boat.
Will you come, Janet?
Will you come, John?"
"Yes, yes," they said.



Janet went to the boat.
She went with Mother.
John went to the boat.
He went with Father.



WE ARE THE MEN are Ann (violin), Jayne (drums, vocals), Joyce (guitar, vocals), Laura (bass) and Sarah (bass, vocals).

Described recently in the List as "spiky feminist pop", this is not a label they readily accept!

The original three - Joyce, Sarah and Jayne - have been together since summer '88, when they started jamming together in Kelvingrove Park with acoustic instruments. The current line up developed through about four others who have come and gone.

THE MEN never have put much emphasis on demos and tapes, although they have just produced a new demo at Tower. They've always been a live music band who will play almost anywhere - parties, busking, festivals, Burns Nights!, as well as all the regular venues - and they don't have any problem putting on an acoustic set if they have to.

The thing I like best about the Men is they don't really fit in any musical camp (...yes I've been a loyal fan ever since those wickedly discordant sounds first emanated through the wall from Sarahs room, where they first practiced...).

Everyone in the band contributes to songs, someone might come up with a tune and someone else will come up with the rest. Content is, em, varied to say the least, they cover a wide range of topics, serious and ridiculous - the environment, drug-crazed-experience, angst, relationships, attitude and naughty bits.

go and see them!
book them for your gig!

details of new demo and booking:

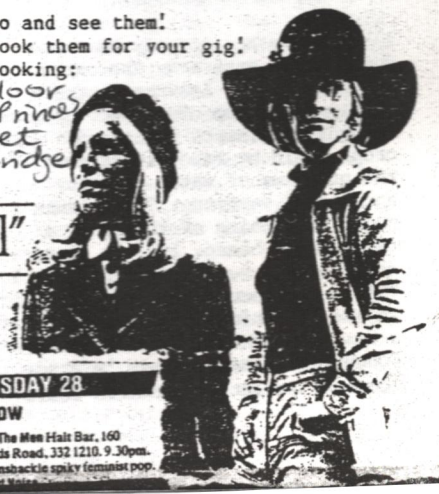
Sarah & Joyce ^{Top Floor} 294 West Princes
T/L, 45 Cecil Street Street
Hillhead, Kelvinbridge
GLASGOW G12 2RN.

Woman Jezebel"

SOUND 10 NOV '90
JOYRIDERS/WE ARE THE MEN
Glasgow Third Eye Centre
WE ARE The Men are six women, stronger on dialectic than musical ability, doing it for themselves. A curious combination of two basses, fiddle and accordion meeting the

THURSDAY 28
Glasgow

■ We Are The Men Hair Bar, 160 Woodlands Road, 332 1210. 9.30pm. Free, Ramsbackie spiky feminist pop.



Guardian Women's page.

DESIGNER GENES

by Jake Wilson

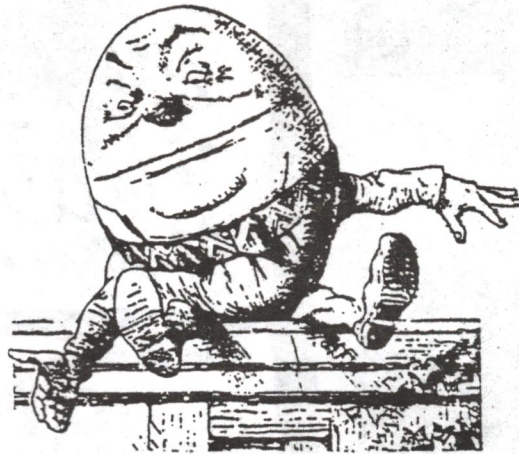
Recombinant DNA technology. Gene Splicing. Biotechnology. Genetic Engineering. We've all heard the terms, but in Britain there's been precious little public debate on the implications of this relatively new science. What does it do? And what could it do?

DNA is the double-helix molecule carrying the coded information determining how an organism will develop: a genetic blueprint. DNA is extracted from one species and partly transferred to another, by the use of enzymes which cut matching sections of DNA from each species and allow them to combine. The recombinant DNA segments are inserted into bacteria, which multiply the rDNA. Finally, the rDNA is inserted into cultured cells or a fertilised egg in the case of an animal, then implanted into a mother, who eventually delivers her 'transgenic' offspring.

It's an inexact science, which can't control where a gene will insert itself into the genome, how many copies of it will end up in the host species, nor how it expresses itself. The very insertion may trigger mutation and malfunction in other parts of the genome. But its potential is staggering, making it comparable to the splitting of the atom.

THE END OF DISEASE?

A bacterium has already been produced which eats away the salts in copper ores, leaving behind a nearly pure form of copper. Drought- and salt-resistant crops could be made, to offset the problems of water scarcity and global warming. Transplants could be a thing of the past: a replacement heart, lung or liver could simply be grown in place. TPA is a molecule used currently in the USA which "can turn off a heart attack like a switch". Congenital disease could be eradicated. Pollution problems could



be combated by bacteria which digest oil spills and synthetic wastes.

But what if plastic-eating bacteria get into vital machinery, such as planes, computers, kidney machines? The à la carte menu of the natural world is being abandoned for the specific recipes of industrialists, doctors, politicians. Will biotech go the way of other Big Science projects like 'Atoms for Peace' and the Green Revolution of the 1970s?

The Green Revolution was an attempt to solve the world food problem through the introduction of high-yielding crop varieties. It was to cause more problems than it solved, since high yields were possible only with extensive use of fertilisers. In India rice yields were upped by 25%, wheat by 50%; but fertiliser use increased by over 2000%. The new hybrids were of poor quality and of cereals traded on the world market; vulnerable to pests (hence increased use of pesticides); required so much investment in chemicals and irrigation that the crops produced had to be exported to pay the participating countries' debt.

Synthetic insulin was "the first bug-built drug for human use". It was chosen for its 'sexiness'; large quantities of insulin meant large profits. Yet diabetes is a preventable disease whose causes are mainly dietary. Synthetic insulin was going to be non-allergenic and cheaper than cow and pig insulin, of which alarmist biotechnologists predicted a shortage; none of these has proved to be the case.

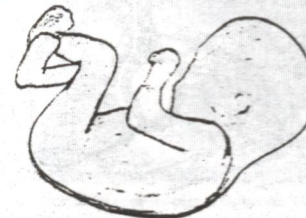
WHOOOPS APOCALYPSE?

Genetically Engineered Organisms, or GEOs, could be the pollution of the 21st century and beyond - 'biogenic pollution'. GEOs with coded resistance to herbicides could transfer that resistance to weeds via cross-pollination. Gene transfer between micro-organisms is a documented natural process. Tinkering with nitrogen-fixing abilities of plants could in a worst-case scenario cause alterations in the global cycling of nutrients. Once released, GEOs will often be impossible to recall.

"Because the organisms are alive and can reproduce, migrate and mutate, they would be a growing, moving, changing form of pollution."

Genetically engineered live viral vaccines could be unstable, mutate to cause new diseases or an epidemic of the original disease.

Although biotech holds the possibility of a cure for AIDS, (not to mention everything else - a 'cure' for homosexuality perhaps?) there are some highly plausible accounts of how the disease could have arisen in a primate research or germ warfare laboratory. We'll never know now; but if AIDS did arise in a lab is there worse in store?



'Designer viruses' and 'genetic weapons' are now a possibility: if racial or ethnic groups proved to have specific sets of genes, they could be targeted. If that sounds monstrously absurd we should remember the precedent in the USA alone: the deliberate provision of infected blankets to native Americans; and over a 6-day period in 1950 the US Navy 'attacked' San Francisco with "harmless" bacteria. From 1945-1969 over 200 secret experiments were conducted by the American military, including releases of bacteria into the New York subway system.

In 1987 the US Department of Defence had at least 100 corporate and university labs and 18 government labs working on genotech projects. It has granted almost \$2 million to a company called 'Molecular Genetics' to work on Rift Valley Fever Virus, which affects people and cattle in the Middle East. And philanthropy isn't really the Defence Dept's style.. In the UK, biowarfare research is funded to the tune of £2 million a year.

THE BOOK OF MAN

The Human Genome Organisation is an international science federation which aims to read every piece of information in the 24 chromosomes which comprise human identity - a task which has been compared to finding a misprint in the 200,000 pages of the Oxford English Dictionary. Except this book isn't printed in English. The 'misprint' corresponds to a genetic 'flaw' - the gene for cystic fibrosis, say.

Mapping and sequencing the genome will take about 15 years, after which work will begin on finding specific genes, their protein structure and its correspondence to human behaviour and characteristics. At this point the issues of sociobiology - the theory that behaviour is biologically determined - and eugenics (selective breeding) raise their heads. The prevailing assumption seems to be that behaviour and illness are mainly biological in origin - environmental and social factors are given fairly short shrift.

Who will control and interpret information about individuals' genetic makeup? In the US, genetic screening in the form of prenatal screening is carried out mainly by the educated rich. Already insurance companies are discriminating against individuals carrying genes for particular diseases: a two-year-old with the gene for polycystic kidney disease was turned down by an insurance company. Possession of a particular gene is not a definitive indication that the associated disease will subsequently develop. In the 1970s an extra sex chromosome was discovered in some male criminals. (Remember a TV series called 'The XYY Man'?) If 'bad' people are seen to be born rather than created by social injustice, a new moral absolutism rooted in reductive science may be just around the corner.

"If .. parents were genetically unfavourable, they might be allowed to have only one child."
Francis Crick, discoverer of DNA's structure

GENETIC IMPERIALISM

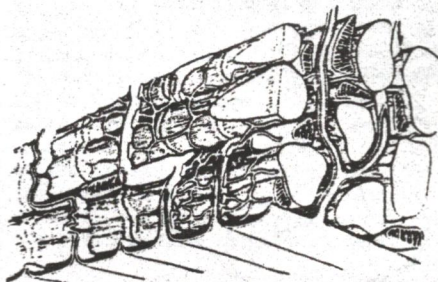
A couple of centuries ago, 5000 species of food plants were grown worldwide; in 1991, 90% of global food needs derives from only 20 species. Multinationals are strip-mining the genetically rich tropics for marketable products; none of the revenue finds its way back to the original source countries. Seeds are big business, worth \$50 million p.a. Ciba-Geigy sells sorghum seeds coated with chemicals to protect them from a herbicide manufactured by the company. Biotech could produce microbial pesticides without the toxic side-effects for land and people which the chemical variety bring; but most research by the 12 seed and chemical companies which will control the world market by 2000 is into protecting their own seeds from their own chemicals. Farmers will be sold a package of seeds, fertilisers, pesticides and herbicides - increasing the companies' market control and profits.

Forty thousand kids starve to death every day. Although genetic engineering could be a tremendous weapon against poverty and hunger, research is into the North's agricultural crops and the South's cash crop exports, not the basic food staples of the poor. High Fructose Corn Syrup was engineered from maize starch; it's now destroying the market for cane sugar, a vital export crop for several under-developed countries.

**ONLY HEALTHY SEED
MUST BE SOWN!**

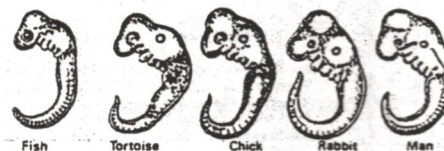


The situation isn't hopeless: community seed banks have been set up in some countries, as has an International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, based in Trieste and New Delhi. The idea of the ICBG is to create an incentive for multinationals to share biotech discoveries with the Third World. The only countries supporting the ICBG are Italy, Greece and Spain.



One of the most publicised GEOs has been BST - Bovine Somatotrophin, a synthesised growth hormone administered to cows which increases their milk yield by up to 20%. Despite concerns over its safety for both cows and consumers, and the fact that it was unlicensed for use in the UK, BST milk from cows at experimental farms whose location was secret went into the common UK milk pool for 4 years. BST is made by Monsanto, those nice people who used to make explosives for the US nuclear weapons programme, and who are now offering PST - for pigs this time. It's claimed PST will reduce back fat in pig meat by 70% and feed costs by 25%. Monsanto denied that BST had any negative effects on cows' welfare, despite evidence to the contrary; will pigs, already abused by intensive systems, benefit from regular injections. of yet another drug?

"They act differently from the time they are born. Then later on some of them develop problems and die."
Verner G Persel, creator of transgenic pigs at Beltsville, Maryland.



One of the crippled pigs at Beltsville, Maryland.

The Bethesda pigs - aka 'big pigs' or 'Superpigs' had a human growth hormone gene inserted. The result was an animal which is nearly blind, riddled with arthritis, prone to developing ulcers and pneumonia, and barely able to stand up. In April 1988 DuPont were granted a licence for the world's first patented animal, a mouse with a human gene which causes cancer: Oncomouse™. A mouse designed to develop cancer within a few months of life and hence suffer continuous pain is a sad application of human ingenuity, but it's only the beginning. The US Patent Office ruled that "non-naturally occurring, non-human multi-cellular organisms including animals" could be patented. Pig No.6707 - the arthritic cripple - was still fairly clearly non-human in addition to being non-pig and non-happy. Where is the threshold of humanity? The chimpanzee shares 97% of our genetic material and is still fair game for vivisection and so forth. In 1987 American researchers fertilised a female chimp with human sperm, but killed the baby before it came to term. The researchers talked of possible applications in organ banks or "doing dirty jobs".

"at the Animal Research Institute we are trying to breed animals without legs and chicken without feathers."

Canadian researcher

MADE TO BE BROKEN

Who regulates the gene-splicers? All sorts of committees have been set up to control research and releases: engineered foods are looked at - maybe - by the Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes at MAFF. Such examination is voluntary. The Tories' eco-waffle Environmental Protection Act is intended to cover release of GEOs, but doesn't require all releases to be scrutinised, and doesn't make the GEO's originator liable for any damage caused. So if Newcastle gets wiped out by killer tomatoes the best we can hope for is an apology from Michael Heseltine. Compare this to German legislation promising fines of £33,000 and 5 years in prison for unregulated releases; BASF Chemical has just moved its Biotech Division to Boston.

Monsanto are trying hard for an image of social responsibility and accountability, claiming they can "clearly identify, track and retrieve" GEOS by engineering them to turn blue in the presence of a certain chemical. How do you detect a single bacterial cell in a 20-acre test field? (Even if it is blue?) Another option is the insertion of 'suicide genes' programmed to self-destruct; they could, however, be deleted by chemicals in the soil or even by sunlight.

NO MORE MR NICE GUY

"What I see coming is a gigantic slaughterhouse, a molecular Auschwitz in which enzymes, hormones and so on will be extracted instead of gold teeth."

Prof. Erwin Chargaff, pioneer in molecular biology

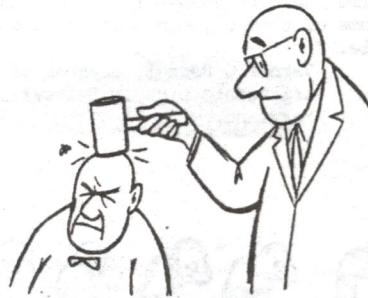
Biotechnology is not entirely new; through the selective breeding of crops and animals, and the application of micro-organisms (bacteria and moulds) we have transformed milk, grape-juice, barley and wheatflour into cheese, wine, beer and bread. The crucial difference is that such interactions are between whole organisms - they can occur in nature; yet biotech works on the molecular/cellular level to create combinations virtually impossible outside of a laboratory. Nature controls combinations likely to upset the ecological balance; the military-industrial complex wishes to manipulate the world's building-blocks to make a fast buck. In the words of ICI's 1988 report, 'Making the World a Better Place', their aim is "giving nature an added nudge towards greater efficiency".

Biotechnology is in the hands of Shell, Monsanto, Ciba-Geigy, DuPont, Nestlé, Eli Lilly, Sandoz and Unilever. The Confederation of British Industry "urges caution over allowing greater public access to information on genetic engineering developments". Biotech is not a science to encourage empathy with the natural world, more the final seal

on exploitation and domination of the natural world which we've barely begun to understand.

Four years ago an engineered rabies vaccine was smuggled into Argentina and secretly injected into cows; 18 months later seventeen cow-hands were revealed to have caught rabies - but nobody understands how it happened.

We need an immediate moratorium on the release of GEOS and proper social control and discussion of the technology. Do we really want animals 'improved' so they can eat sawdust, cardboard and industrial waste? We can't invent biotechnology any more than nuclear weapons; we can and must ensure that science meets the needs of the starving and the dispossessed. They need justice, not square tomatoes.



"Trust me, I'm a doctor"

"I propose that the core of sadism, common to all its manifestations, is the passion to have absolute control over a living being, whether an animal, a child, a man, or a woman."
Erich Fromm

THE FREEDOM BOOKSHOP, Angel Alley, 84b Whitechapel High Street, E1, 247 9249. Mon-Fri, 10.00am to 6.00pm, Sat, 10.00am to 2.00pm.

If you arrive after 2pm on a Saturday, you might still find a note saying how to find the retainers in a pub. Freedom is an anarchist bookshop run by the Freedom Press and staffed by unpaid volunteers. To reach the shop you have to pass through a hole to the left of Kentucky Fried Chicken and down a narrow alley full of panicking pigeons. What it lacks in easy accessibility it gains in intimacy, and if the site has been good enough for the last 20 years there's no reason why it shouldn't be now. A phonograph (not a stereo) plays country blues, and the shop is small enough to look at shelves and talk to very amicable staff at the same time. Tea is often offered if the kettle's boiling. While much of the shop is arranged around themes - syndicalism, libertarianism, pacifism and there is a strong focus on your Bakunins, Proudhons and Godwins, there is also space for wild and wonderful writing of differing kinds, and for intellectual radicals the staff feel have kinship, like Chomsky. The range of political magazines assembled here is good, and the place is also invaluable for self-help literature like the 'Squatter's Handbook'.

CERVICAL CANCER - THE DISEASE

Most cancers of the cervix appear to be preceded by a long period of changes in the epithelial cells on the surface of the cervix. The aim of a cervical smear or 'Pap smear' is to detect these abnormal cells before they progress to become cancerous. These early stages can last for up to 20 years and cause no detectable symptoms. Invasive cervical cancer is preventable by regularly screening healthy women. If abnormal cells are present they can be treated to ensure that the cancer never develops. A grade 5 smear, CIS, severe dysplasia means that the cancer is confined to the surface layer of the cervix and has not penetrated deeper layers of tissue.

Not all abnormalities develop into cancer. Some progress, others do not. At our present state of knowledge and with our present technology, it is not possible to predict which will or will not progress, therefore all must be treated as if they will.

The suggested treatment for CIS will vary in individual cases. Cryocautery (freezing), diathermy (extreme heat) and laser are possible treatments.

AZT's Inhuman Cost

AZT is the only drug approved for use against AIDS. It's now known that AZT also postpones the onset of AIDS in people infected with the virus. Yet there's a massive obstacle to wider use of this life-saving drug - its extraordinary cost. At \$8,000 a year for users, AZT is said to be the most expensive prescription drug in history.

CHARITY IS LIKE PARKING AN AMBULANCE AT THE FOOT OF A NOTORIOUSLY DANGEROUS CLIFF INSTEAD OF ERRECTING A FENCE AT THE TOP.



Piccadilly Kiss-In

PICCADILLY Circus never saw anything like this. On 3 September 200 Lesbians and gays turned up for a kiss-in at Piccadilly. A protest against the law prohibiting the showing of affection in public places between gays was openly flouted in front of the police. As usual there was the odd nuttoid handing out leaflets "You were born a sinner, who cares? I'm happy". The event lasted over 2 hours. There were no arrests.

GAY ACTIVISM

From the Pink Panthers vigilante groups in the US to new campaigns of civil disobedience in the UK, gay people are fighting back, as are people with AIDS. ACT-UP (AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power) is now two years old in the UK, and 1990 saw it picketing the DSS in London to protest at benefit levels for people with the illness; pressing the boycott of Marlboro (manufacturer Philip Morris supports the ultraright US senator Jesse Helms who opposes cash for AIDS research and treatment); and keeping up pressure on Taxaco, which refuses jobs to people who are either HIV positive or who won't submit to a test. Meanwhile, OutRage launched in May to campaign for gay rights. Fifteen gay men were murdered in 1990, many clearly victims of queer-bashers, and Gay Times has identified 12 queer-bashing gangs in London alone, yet the police seem more willing to devote

scarce resources to staking out public toilets. OutRage's message is simple: action not entrapment. After its recent Piccadilly Circus kiss-in, one Met superintendent declared that gay people would no longer be arrested on his patch for such public displays of affection

JOHN WAYNE ARMY

Burn your Texas CDs. Kill Del Amitri. Glasgows flaccid music scene has taken a sinister turn and then some. John Wayne army are straight outta the zombie country. An apocalyptic landscape of septic benders, saints, holy visions and lucifers. I caught up with this living hell in the infinitely more pleasant Partick as I stared into the bloodshot eyes of Alistair. All I could ask him was why. His eyes seemed to pierce my very soul.

"Because. Because it's in and its got to come out. Because being in an uptight indie band or even a cool hardcore band singing suck my dick isn't enough. Because I wanted to sing about being locked up and locked inside, feeling lonely and wanting to destroy pain and fuck, be possessed and hurt my friends. Country music. Johnny Cash Live at San Quentin. I like this music."

Scotland has a dubious musical heritage of asshole trendy rock and pop bands throwing violins and blue notes into their records and videos for that fake roots cred hook. His Latest Flame and The Silencers for example. When John Wayne Army play Hank Williams "I saw the light" for real how can they justify fawning to the bloodstained Uncle Sam?

"I hate the Scottish crypto-fascist patriotic bullshit. The Americans stole our songs from the immigrants and the yodels from the slaves. You get rednecks dressed up like fat desperadoes then they sell it back to the fans. You get Nixon coming down to the Grand Ole Opry introducing the acts. It gets censored and commodified and its selling govts to cretins. We want to destroy it: we're throwing it back in their face. You get people coming down that want to hear Mudhoney or Culture Shock or some pale imitation. Fuck them."

The average John Wayne Army gig is a convoluted mess of parody and self parody without descending into Hank Wangor-desque kitsch. Yet at times its as intense as the Swans or something very self-important. Sentimentalism is vociferously denied. Their songs are about: wanting/ to destroy their audience, or the fakery of certain more gothic crooners who think they're in jail, or truckers on a shooting and fucking trip.

"We're anti-suffering. We don't tell you what to do. We're against self indulgent sub-Velvet Underground pop dross. Bands like the Pastels or Bob we want to make wise up or preferably shut up. Unless you deal with some serious shit its an abuse of your petty fame. Its flaunting their most basic and boring angst and the real fucked up business glossed over in a charade of cuteness.

But don't the John Wayne Army parade their masculine angst and play with unhealthy obsessions for mere shock value?

"No. Its a homage to Hank Williams, Johnny Cash, and everything they had to leave out. Its more sexy, ins tinctual and threatening."



mounted policeman



cap



handcuffs



fingerprint



motorcycle

There's a shit-eating smile breaking across his face. He takes a drag from the coffee cup as I take a pause from the onslaught. I wonder if they've had any problems with the name?

"Only from the self-righteous, the unimaginative, and the narrow minded. We're named after a disgusting brave guy. Noone calls Badgewearer or Dawson fascistic. John Wayne played a symbol that was really a crude womanhating gay who hates red indians and negroes and gooks but fancies, like Montgomery Clift in Red River so he wants to kill Monty, himself, everything. So that's us, tainting the name of violence with self-violence and sadism. It's maybe gung ho but so fuck. Everyone speaks the language of the gun now, you can't censor or marginalise it. The people who find that offensive are the ones who are going to want to find for their country."

The secret of the John Wayne Army who really have a unique sound - Somewhere between Fugazi and Patsy Cline, Comparisons with Husker Du or Dinosaur come to mind. The drummer uses brushes, the bass is your country walking and running thing half the time and the rest of the time is weirdfunk. The guitar is everything: Duane Eddy, lightning chord changes, strumming, feedback. Each song is totally different. There's a fiddle playing the sweetest lies like the whitest drug. There's even two singers: Alistair's tortured crooning offset by a perfect blue beautiful girl voice. Alistair explains.

"Its got to be tuneful. Our outrage gets honed into a knife that's hypnotising, carved, something so cool and wild you want to kiss it. I don't want to just scream and rant and be anno ing. I want to sing like Roy Orbison. The holy trinity as far as I'm concerned are Hank, Johnny Cash and Elvis. So sad they don't need to put it in words its just there in their throat. Hank Williams using heroin as a painkiller. The zombie country at Minor Threat speed. The poison that you gotta pay. That's what Hank wrote before he overdosed. We want to pay it all back."

Alistair is here to arrange a Scottish tour and has to meet some promoters. Real cowboy stuff. The men in the black hats for sure. The hillybilly hardcore holocaust continues.



helmet



notebook



torch



truncheon



whistle



uniform



cuffs



telephone



gloves

'AN ACT OF LOVE, NOT CRUELTY'

The practice of female circumcision is still alive in some ethnic communities

Evidence is emerging that circumcision is still being carried out in Britain's ethnic communities, even though the practice was made illegal in 1985. Groups campaigning for the eradication of female circumcision say it has gone underground in the last 4 years. Female circumcision is steeped in centuries of tradition, and the communities who practice it are determined to keep the tradition alive.

This issue presents enormous difficulties—problems surrounding child abuse are questions of race, language and the right of communities to protect their culture. There are two main opposing views on whether female circumcision constitutes child abuse. The first advocates the absolute right to cultural self-determination and includes people who believe that the practice is not harmful to the child.

Shamis Dirir of the London Black Women's Health Group, believes that female circumcision is harmful, but thinks that nothing has been achieved by making it illegal. "Ways of bypassing the law are always available," she says. "Our ultimate goal is that through education, eradication of this practice will be reached. We do not want these families who already suffer discrimination, to be alienated and labelled child abusers and criminals. We know that the operation is felt to be an act of love not cruelty."

Dirir, herself from Somalia, says that among the Somali community in Britain, female circumcision is just as widely practised as before. Many parents, afraid of prosecution in this country, take their daughters "on holiday" to countries where the operation is legal and return with them circumcised. Others who can afford it, go to Harley Street.

The opposing view is that a tradition or customary practice that causes harm to children constitutes an abuse and should be stopped by every available means. This view is held by Efua Graham, a Ghanaian woman who runs FORWARD (Foundation for Women's Health Research and Development)

Graham is well aware of all arguments put forward by communities practising female circumcision, and she has frequently been under attack for the strength of her opposition. But she is convinced that every effort must be made to what amounts to the

grievous mutilation of young girls and women. "If parents go ahead and do it, they should face the consequences. If you just ignore it, it may disappear in three centuries because it conflicts with the modern world. Changes may even happen more quickly outside Britain than within."

NINETEENTH CENTURY

Female circumcision was practised in England in the nineteenth century to treat psychological disorders. One Dr Brown used to remove the clitoris with a cauterizing iron. He considered it "of little importance whether present or absent". His patients included a French girl "addicted" to masturbation and a 30-year-old woman who had developed an extreme distaste for her husband.

Some form of female circumcision is practised in more than 20 African countries, parts of the Middle East and south east Asia. Although it is not advocated in the Quran, some Muslim communities justify female circumcision in the name of religion. However, female circumcision is carried out by non-Muslims and not all Muslims perform it.

Shamis Dirir says: "Among the Somali community it is mainly believed to be religious. It is only now that women have realised it is not in Islamic teaching. Although women awoke to their unjust treatment under the pretext of Islam a decade ago, they put up with female circumcision as a traditional practice. Now they need the support and understanding of the men. It is only through a joint effort that female circumcision will be eradicated."

Clearly this educative process can only be carried out with representatives of the communities concerned, who are known and trusted by the women.

Efua Graham believes the term "female circumcision" is a misnomer, and that "genital mutilation" is more accurate. While male circumcision involves cutting off the foreskin causing no harm to the penis, female circumcision nearly always causes severe physical and psychological damage to the girl. There are three main types of female circumcision. First, female circumcision proper, when only the hood of the clitoris is cut off, leaving the glans and the actual clitoris intact. This mild form is called "sunna" in Muslim countries.

The second type, excision, involves cutting off the hood of the clitoris, plus removal of

the glans and sometimes the whole clitoris as well as the labia minora.

This operation is very bloody and excruciatingly painful. The third form, infibulation, is excision followed by joining the two sides of the vulva and stitching them together with thread, catgut or thorns. The entrance to the vagina is obliterated apart from a small rear opening to allow for urine and menstrual blood to escape. This opening is made by inserting a piece of wood the size of a matchstick during the operation.

Girls can be circumcised at any age from a few days old to adolescence. The most common age is around seven. The luckier or better-off girls are taken to hospital, where there is a smaller risk of infection. More often the operation is carried out by old women in villages. Here the child is pinned down by three or four women, anaesthetics are never used and the incisions are made with knives, razors or glass. Many girls pass out through a combination of fear and pain. Short-term medical complications can be severe - haemorrhages, acute infections, bleeding of adjacent organs and retention of fluid. In the longer term, chronic internal infections can lead to infertility. Obstetric complications are inevitable after infibulation, and psychological problems often occur. Many circumcised women never experience any sexual pleasure.

FORWARD believes that the purpose of these operations is to control female sexuality and conserve the monogamous status of women. Infibulation guarantees the virginity of young women and future husbands are sometimes allowed to verify scarring. Infibulation is also thought to protect women against their own sexuality in cultures where women are seen as dangerous sexual creatures.

The first national conference on genital mutilation was organised by FORWARD in February 1989. The conference agreed that although genital mutilation does constitute child abuse, it does not constitute child sexual abuse, and several practical proposals were made. The conference recommended that to the six categories of children at risk, a seventh should be added - a child at risk of genital mutilation. It also recommended that a consultative body be set up incorporating black community members, to bridge the gap between the communities involved and officials (social workers, teachers, health workers etc.). Although the Prohibition of Female Circumcision Act 1985, prohibits

the practice of female circumcision in this country, it does not make provisions to stop children being taken abroad. Jane Connors, a lecturer in law at the School of Oriental and African Studies, helped produce a report on the subject for FORWARD.

LAST RESORT

FORWARD suggests that as a last resort, wardship may be the best option in many cases of possible genital mutilation, as it gives fast and comprehensive protection to the child, and is available to any person concerned with the welfare of the child.

However, under the Children Bill, wardship will be restricted. It appears that a local authority would have to take action, but it would need to prove that the child is likely to suffer harm, and apply for a care or supervision order.

According to Peter Riches of the NCB:

"Complex cases like female circumcision are the type of cases for which wardship should be an available option." The advantage of wardship is that it does not criminalise the mother, it merely protects.

Efua Graham says three centuries is too long to wait to put an end to female circumcision. "When you come into this you are going to be attacked, but you must know what your goal is. People may dislike me, but who is going to break the cycle for future generations?"

"If someone does it in the home and the child dies, there will be such a hoo ha. You will have judges and social workers who know nothing about the practice. We are trying to forestall this. In the event of such a tragedy the black communities will feel that they are under siege."

Report on Female Genital Mutilation from FORWARD, 38 King St, London WC2E 8JT. (£3)



Britain's richest person by common consent is the Queen whose personal fortune is put at more than £4,000 million. She owns 350,000 acres of land spread throughout Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and England including some prime properties in London, such as most of Regent Street and Regents Park, and scattered parts of Kensington. She also has considerable but secret shareholdings which are held in an anonymous nominee account with the secretive and blue blooded stockbrokers Cazenove. Despite having an income of some £22 million a year from her land holdings, tax payers also stump up £4 million to the Queen and varying smaller amounts to other members of the Royal Family.

Paying for the Royal Family 1986

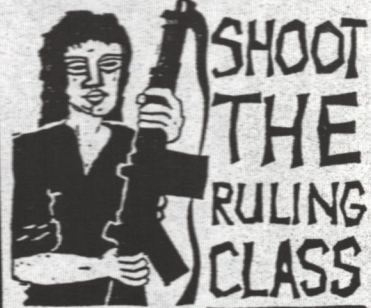
	£
Queen's Civil List	4,136,800
Queen Mother	359,100
Duke of Edinburgh	200,300
Duke of Kent	132,000
Princess Alexandra	125,800
Princess Anne	124,800
Princess Margaret	121,500
Duke of Gloucester	97,800
Prince Andrew	50,000
Princess Alice, Duchess of Gloucester	49,200
Prince Edward	20,000



The Conservative party, the defender of public schools, is laced with those having a private education and also Oxbridge graduates. 248 out of 392 Conservative MPs or 63 per cent went to public schools including 45 to Eton. Almost half (48 per cent) of Conservative MPs went to Oxbridge.

The Conservative cabinet is an even greater bastion of privilege than the Tory party as a whole. Over two thirds went to public school and the same proportion went to Oxbridge.

BULLETS NOT BALLOTS



Lord Hailsham, Eton and Christ Church, Oxford

Britain in the 1980s is becoming a more divided nation under the rule of the so-called 'one nation' Conservative party. The rich are getting a bigger share of income and the nation's wealth, while the poor are getting even poorer.



SOME FACTS FIGURES...

A Cabinet's privilege

15 out of the 22 cabinet members went to public school. 15 out of 22 went to Oxbridge.

Public school (1985 fees per year before extras)

Eton (£5,310)	Paul Channon, Lord Hailsham, Douglas Hurd, Nicholas Ridley
Winchester (£5,750)	Sir Geoffrey Howe, Nigel Lawson, George Younger, Viscount Whitelaw
Latymer (£2,295)	Peter Walker
Westminster (£5,625)	Nicholas Edwards
Rugby (£5,535)	Tom King
St Pauls (£4,878)	Kenneth Baker
Nottingham High School (£6,180)	Kenneth Clarke
Marchiston Castle School (Edinburgh) (£4,800)	John MacGregor
George Watson's College (£1,860)	Malcolm Rifkind

Cambridge

Emmanuel College	Tom King
Gonville & Caius	Kenneth Clarke
Jesus College	John Biffen
Trinity College	Nicholas Edwards, Norman Fowler, Douglas Hurd, Viscount Whitelaw
Trinity Hall	Sir Geoffrey Howe
Oxford	
Balliol	Nicholas Ridley
Christ Church	Paul Channon, Lord Hailsham, Nigel Lawson
Magdalen	Kenneth Baker
New College	George Younger
Somerville College	Margaret Thatcher

No War but the Class War!!

THE PRICE OF PRIDE.

On 9th December last year the Lesbian & Gay Action Group Outrage held a demo against rugby and police harassment. The march was advertised as ending at the 'Winter Pride Festival' at the University of London Students Union, what the publicity didn't say was that it was £5 to get into this event. No concessions. After marching for 2 hours in the freezing cold we assumed our gay brothers & sisters running the Pride Festival would welcome us with open arms. At the very least we could have liked to be able to go to the toilet, or get a fairly cheapappa. How could we have been so naive?



I got to ULU, and were told by the police AND Outrage stewards to disperse or go into the building. Finding out it was a liver, with n concessions, 5 or 6 of us, who re on the dot or low incomes, asked- 2,50, £3 or so.

The organisers of the festival, the Lesbian & Gay Pride Organising Committee (LAGPOC), refused to even discuss why there was no concession fees. They told us "If you can't afford it you shouldn't be here", and there's plenty of people who will try. True enough, on a freezing day, people were paying just to get in if the street. Inside you had to pay more steep prices to have a hot drink or drink etc. A lot of them, but even though they were being up, however, knowing they had to afford 5 quid.

I tried arguing with the organisers, pointing out how they were excluding people with less money. They threatened to call ULU security and even the cops, to throw us out. Only solidarity or what: the gays with

the power use the cops to bash the poor gays. After being threatened with the cops, we refused to leave the foyer and were physically assaulted & thrown out. LAGPOC got 4 large male honours to do the job & we were kicked, manhandled, and literally chucked out on to the street.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO FUCK PEOPLE OVER

PINK

PARANOIA.

TO SURVIVE

The organisers did give us one reason for having no concession price - "everyone would rip us off... we need the money to pay for the Gay Pride march in the summer." Fair enough, it was a benefit. But all 6 of us who were thrown out have organised events: benefits, cafes, gigs, conferences. In our experience, if you have concessions, let's not only open to more people, but you get MORE people in and so you raise more cash. Everybody doesn't "rip you off".

QUEER ELITE.

Maybe we shouldn't be surprised at this attitude. So many people in the gay community spend their lives exploiting others, they probably think it's the only way to "live". Our community is riddled with gay yuppies and pink businessmen who have nothing in common with, say, a lesbian mother on the dole, or their sexuality. Many of them are out to get themselves "accepted", to become good little capitalist queers, that'll help prop up the system that's kicking the shit out of us. They refuse to see the links between the fight for lesbian &

OUTRAGE?

FUCKING RIGHT.

The Outrage group is supposed to be about 'outing' in solidarity against homophobia and anti-gay attacks. Why then march to a festival that splits us into people who can afford to pay to be proud and those who can't? Are Outrage that different to LAGPOC? They won't tackle issues & problems faced by black gays & lesbians. They spend great energy on demanding a more accountable police force (what do we want? More queer cops????). They're run by the same little clique of activists that have controlled other campaigns in the past. On reflection, do we really want to unite in solidarity with middle class gays who rip us off?

Any group that fights for reforms and single issues needs to beware of straggling in one direction, blind to the links that have to be made between us and other working class people. We can't be free as gays and lesbians until everyone is free. Ignoring class differences, poverty, racism among gay people only leads us up a blind alley - into the arms of the ruling class.

This page taken from Issue 4 of PINK BRICK LESBIAN AND GAY CLASS WAR FREESHIEET address on contacts 11515

of social control we face - criminalisation; arrests; media policing; day to day harassment - are also being used against poll tax non payers; on the streets of the North of Ireland; against black communities and the working class in general. We live in these communities, we're part of them & we have to make the links within them in their struggle.

PINKSPECT? Anti-sexist feminism.

Mainly aimed at the pink scene - but a good read for all men. 30p plus postage from PO Box 24, Hertford, Herts, SG14.

LEICESTER LESBIAN/GAY ACTION.

Local campaigning group. 25, Walton St, Leicester, LE3.

CLASS WAR. Working class paper & movement. Contrary to popular rumour Pink Brick is not the queer wing of this lot. 40p & postage from PO Box 39, SW PDX Manchester M15.



KEY: Radical direct action against AIDS exploiters, HIV & seros group. Free Tuesdays at ULU, 69 Coombe St, Fitzrovia, London W1. 7.45. Also available in other towns.

SHOCKING PINK. Rad women's mag. Not as shocking as us. C/o 136 Mayall Rd., London, SE24. Tel 071 2743150

Those who can't see
call us blind,
but you have shown us
how to see the color
of the time to come.

Those who can't hear
call us deaf
but you have shown us
how to hear everywhere
the supple sound
of human tenderness.

The cowards call us cowards,
but with you we face
the darkness,
change its face.
The criminals call us criminals,
but with you we revive hope,
put an end to crime,
to prostitution,
hunger.
And we give eyes,
a voice,
ears,
a soul,
to the heart of man.
The racists call us anti-human,
but with you we give hate
its universal tomb
in the city of embraces.

They call us so many things.
And those who say them
forget,
they are so stupid,
that tomorrow
their grandchildren
will joyously
fall in love with
the star-filled letters
of your name;

revolution.



Within the stomach's crowded vault
a rat squirms past lippgloss guts,
its fur sleek with blood.
Alert to the roaring vessels, gourds,
it forages along intestines.
Claws lay open furrowed ducts,
soft corrugations of fat
probed with clotted snout.
Climbing tentatively up your ribs
the delicate feet press and tear.
The whiskers strange as a hair in your mouth.
Your chest clicks and scrapes.
Then a sound of recognition.
Like a buck-toothed child
broaching an awaited apple
the rat bites deep, and clean.

In a armchair
By the fire
Sits the old man
The flames burning in his eyes
Reflecting a nemery
From another man's youth
Reflecting - a child - looking out the window
into a world
His future tears in a old mans eyes

Inte the sunlight
Run the children
Their smiles stretch out across their faces
In the Park - the fragrance of freshly
cut grass
Mingling with the buttercups and roses.
There we would pick blackberries
chase Butterflies and Bumble bees
Play by the lillie Pend, tease the Park-keeper
Swear
And later before teatime-we would raid
Orchards, -our peckets stuffed with apples,
Pears, and seur Plumes we would never eat.
And there was someone there -a girl-
who you would love forever.
Holding hands -making Promises- And when
it was time to go here.
You would kiss her. Your insides tingling
So much you couldn't eat.
It was always summer when you were
young. And there were dreams!

Outside -the tea-time traffic shoves &
Pushes
The lone voices of newspaper sellers
eche across the city.
January now. The trees are naked.
Through the curtains of a dirt-stained window
A clect ticks -the seconds Pushing,
in a room -A old man shivers
Reaches
In the armchair -a head drops
The fire burns alone
In the street -the traffic continues.

Nike Sponsored Soldiers
Are running amuck in my town
They stormed in this morning
Burnt the vicarage to the ground

The vicar tried protesting
Got on his knees to pray
But the Nike Sponsored Soldiers
Just blew the fucker away

they neutralized the chip shop
And cordoned off the video store
I shouted 'who's in charge here'
Back came 'This is war'

You'd better get used to it
We're only the promotional team
They handed out Be a Soldier Ads
And a Pepsi magazine

They kissed some babies faces
And took pictures with the Mayor
Then blew up all the bridges
And bazookered Market Square

They left us one of their Shopping Malls
So you couldn't really complain
You have to take what you can
In this friendly freedom game.

War - if you please

The Panic Wave breeze
As a mass first reaction
and the ease - if you please
that taxi drivers start
putting stick-on Geordie lads
Soldier flags inside their cabs
PLEASE

The war is over
what does that mean
And which war
I can't tell anymore
which war
They mean.

The 1st World war
The 2nd World war
The 1st of the 1st world wars
The 1st of the 3rd world wars
The Out war
Against the In war team
The Pirate war the State war
The Poor war.
The War to end all wars
The war of Independence
From - the machine
Has some broken -
Free from - the machine
The dependency
IS SO easy
And every day In every way
there's a little bit more

I have seen him.
like a Jehn the Baptist
Maniac Eyes
That reach me.
The Psyche -in the doorway
says he's you.
Late night.
Journey -through the tunnel.
I wish -fer nernality,
sometimes -to not feel as much
the levers -I wish
walking home
Drunken couples fucking in alleyways
scares me
I knew those eyes
can understand them
shouting out
screaming.
But ne-one gives
Secretly, ne-one knows
But everyone knows!



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AND LIVE FOR PLEASURE NOT PAIN

THE MORNING AFTER

by Don Mackeen



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A very well produced Q's feetic zine. To be honest I'd never heard of such a thing until Mark sent me these, but I'm well impressed with it. There are articles by women and men on a wide variety of issues and also some neat cartoons. BORN KICKING are not at all separatist as their goals (he he) are to get Q's football accepted as an Olympic sport and to get a national Q's League. Good news is that the Football Trust are giving a grant of £150,000 over two years to promote the development of the Q's game. There are also articles on how crap the media are/ European Q's feetic/ the England Q's team/ sexism/ WFA/ history and more. There's a page of networking, a letters page and if any North East person wants to help with typing and distribution etc, then get in touch.

Editor: Jane Purdon,
A High Sandgrave, Cleaden,
Sunderland. SR6 7RW.
Back issues are available.

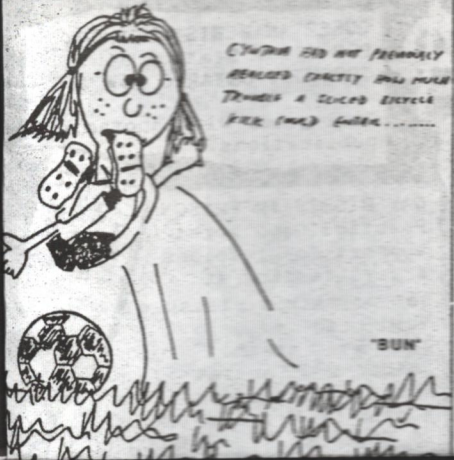


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ASK A POLICEMAN

I am a policeman's wife, and the other day, as I passed a neighbour's house, I heard her telling her little boy to behave, or else, 'because that lady's husband is a policeman'. It made me angry to hear my husband, who is very fond of children, being used as a kind of bogymen. It is so important that every child should be taught that a policeman is his friend and is there to turn to if he is ever lost or in need of help.

(Mrs) A.R., Carshalton



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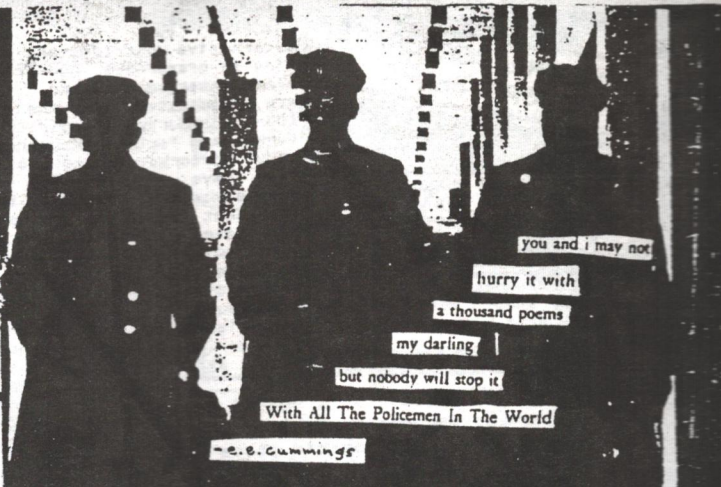
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