

Internal Discussion

WHOA, BCY!
By L. Marcus
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Several of my all-seeing, all-hearing confidantes within the organization tell me that some of youse out there are reifying my analysis of unmediated relationships. Hearing that report, and finally getting myself off the ceiling and down the wall back to my chair, I must begin--forgive the slight tremor in my voice and a compulsion to wag my forefinger at you--"That ain't what I meant!" Some of you are saying (I don't know what you are doing) things about "love my comrade" and "love my contact"...Well, getting to that sort of "love" via the nearest bed has the whole matter Bass Ackwards.

Permit me a few apothegms, and then I shall get to the matter systematically. "You can find bed in a certain kind of love, but you will never find love in bed." "A bed is not a classroom." I could reel off goodies like that for several pages. Enough, Now to cases.

There are two ultimately connected, but distinct forms of love. The distinction between the paired love relationship and love among friends, which exists for this culture, exists only in a different form in unmediated relationships; that is to emphasize, the distinction will undoubtedly persist as long as the human race exists. However, during the period of the weaning-trauma, called adolescence, it is permissible to confuse the two forms, especially since a certain amount of experimentation during that period may be helpful in developing a clearer sense of the important differences between the two for later life. In the mature individual, confusing the two is not only sloppy, epistemologically pathetic, downright nast etc., but is actually damaging to both the potential for creative mentation and the viability of the individual as a trustworthy revolutionary cadre.

1. Processes of Mentation

When some of you begin to discover the beginnings of self-conscious creative mentation, you will learn--to your initial dismay and profound pain--that the form of thought is pure "feeling." Thought as feeling has object-images attached to it. As you learn to call up your feelings as feelings, you will discover that so doing moves the object-image attached to the feeling. Attempting to prevent yourself from carrying out the object-image identified actualization of the feeling will turn the feeling against your sense of identity, causing more or less acute anxiety.

In this same process of self-exploration, you will discover that your notion of your Self, in any deeper sense, is a notion of "pure feeling," and you will by this means understand what is otherwise known as the "religious feeling," the same feeling-state you attempt to enhance as the objective of love-passion. The sense of

the "feeling-Self," the sense of the "soul" as empirical knowledge of one's inner Self, is a sense of the creative processes of mentation in their irrational, bestialized form.

Self-conscious creative mentation, which I shall elaborate elsewhere, is a process of becoming conscious of a correlation between an ordering of feeling-states during cognition and the successful ordering of objective knowledge. That is, by proving that new knowledge attained through cognition (as distinct from learned knowledge) does correspond to successful world-historical practice, one has proven the validity, the truth, the "this-sidedness" of those specific orderings of "feeling states" of mentation which produce valid hypothesis. Thus, by self-consciousness of such orderings of the feeling-states of creative mentation, one discovers the fallacy of formal logic, and the need to represent mentation (and knowledge) in a "non-algebraic topological" form (in the heuristic sense) as opposed to "algebraic" forms.

There is no straight-forward recipe for such a self-transformation from what you presently are into what you must become to be effective revolutionary mass leaders. You can not simply sit in a room and contemplate your mental states and make any progress. The mind can not compare itself with itself and accomplish any meaningful distinctions, and without distinctions there can be no sense of difference, no discrimination, no self-consciousness. Without love, there can be no development of creative mentation. Indeed, it is the amount and quality of love which parents are able, under given material circumstances, to supply their children, which determines the quality of intelligence they attain in later years. (A child needs, of course, the material objects, etc., to be cognized as his social powers in respect to his culture, but to actualize cognition, he depends upon the quality of all-lovingness by parents which transforms a richness of material resources from a potential into an actual knowledge.)

Love is practically the sensibility by which one "takes in" the "feeling states" and material circumstances of life of other persons. One adduces the feeling-states of other persons by matching those to comparable feeling-states in oneself. In that way, knowing all the material circumstances in which others experience those feeling-states, one "takes the other person's mind inside oneself." This is not a matter of admiring in that way what one admires in others; exactly the contrary. To know others it is indispensable to be able to recognize the most abhorrent feelings in oneself as one encounters them in the behavior of others.

The purpose of such undertakings is not, of course, to revel in the muck of human self-degradation. Quite the reverse. You are a revolutionary cadre because you are 5-6% human and only 95% or so muck. We attracted working-class potential leaders (the now proverbial ones and twos) mainly because they are 4-5% human, as distinct from the 96% of them that is muck. The ones and twos are distinct from other workers who are variously only 3%, 2%, 1/2% human.

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In taking in the muck of others, which is the only way to practically recognize it in oneself, by attacking their muck, you are attacking your own.

I shall return to discuss that "operation," and how it proceeds.

There is nothing inherently "bad" in the feelings as feelings. However, feelings do not exist as feelings. They exist for us with object-images attached to the feelings. To call forth a feeling is to call forth the movement of the object-image attached to the feeling.

For example, to ensure your close attention to the subject, I shall discuss sex. There is nothing "evil," "wicked," etc. in sexual impulses (they are not really sexual in the literal sense, but we shall keep to X-rated standards here for better reader interest.) However, this set of healthy feelings has object-images attached to each part. When you act on a "sexual feeling," you move according to the object-images attached to the feeling. You have ideas of the physical and other characteristics of the type of person suitable to actualize the sexual impulses, and object-image notions of the types of actions needed to realize that feeling. No matter how often life demonstrates to you that your whole selection approach and procedure is made of the stuff of the morning-after mouths, you will repeat it faithfully--and miserably--again and again.

The other example which may appeal to your interest in sports is that of the training of the karate expert. It is of course necessary to acquire certain habits of movement, develop certain physiological apparatus, etc., but the essential thing to striking a killer blow, etc., is to "learn" to call up the feeling of the killer stroke and have all the musculature move in a coordinated fashion to actualize the object-image attached to that "trained" relationship between the objective striking and the recall of the feeling for striking. Call up the strongest feeling, have the object-idea of the movements attached to that feeling, and the blow will sensuously actualize the force of the feeling to the very limit of your physical capacity.

The much which makes up 95% (only 95% because you are actually superior people) of your internal mental life is of exactly that form. Object-images attached to feeling-states (or, what psychoanalysis identifies as "cathexis"). By removing such objects from the feelings, you reconstruct yourself. By locating within others the small force of humanity by which they can act upon their muck, you have loved them, you have identified that in them which is human, that which you share with them in the labor of displacing inappropriate objects from healthy feelings.

A healthy human relationship is always of that form. Either both are working, by "taking in" one another's agony for mutual

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attack on a mutual problem, or one is using his or her successful experience in dealing with such problems in the past to assist the other. The feeling of social love which accompanies this is what would properly be called friendship, comradeship. It is the polemical, dialectical method, which is only dialectical when it is honest, when you yourself are acknowledging the present or past actual crap in yourself.

This is a profoundly practical political problem. To the extent you are still alienated, you are going to be shocked and dismayed as soon as you begin to really know most of the welfare organizers and other working class cadre-types with whom we come to work. Thus far, most of you show an idealized image of these people, as pure "class-for-itself" versus "class-in-itself" types. As soon as you discover how much crap is in those people, your tendency will be to show a sense of "being cheated." The sensation is not unlike that you experience when you first discover that a new mate is human. The "oceanic feeling" of "perfect love" goes pop, and you think there is a bad smell somewhere. When you react in that way, you really show how viciously you misunderstand yourselves, and you also show your incapacity to deal with working people, or to understand (make strategic and tactical political decisions) involving the movement, the development of masses of just such "horrible imperfect" human beings.

To love people is to locate within them the human force to which you can connect in some specific fashion to conquer in them the same sort of crap you either still have or had in yourselves. In that process, by "taking others" inside you in that way, by becoming conscious of them within in that way, your consciousness of others becomes for you your means for becoming conscious of your own mental states. It is by discriminating different object-images attached to the same feeling-state that the feeling-state itself can be discriminated, known.

We have two interconnected things here. Firstly, such developed habits of loving--polemical, dialectical methods--are the essence of revolutionary politics. Developed initially for a limited domain of work, these powers become the capacity to love and thus move masses in the same way. Secondly, these processes are identical with the process of developing self-conscious powers over creative mentation in one's self.

2. Childhood and Sexual Love

So far, we have referred to specific acts of love, to specific human relationships. Now consider the universal for all such specific relationships. The universal can only be some degree of approximation of unmediated identification with the entirety of the human struggle within oneself and another person. The specific questions which occupy us in friendship,

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comradeship, are now "dissolved" into a single "oceanic" celebration of the general human conquest of one's general internal agency.

In small children, who are fortunate to have loving parents, what is loved in the child's development is his or her development per se. To the extent that a parent adores only specific facets of childhood development, the child is not loved, except with an embittering, unsatisfying sort of friendship love. One sees children confronted with such truncated parental love struggling, sometimes violently to broaden the love! "Love me for myself mommy and daddy, not just when I am 'good.'" To the extent that a child both enjoys such all-loving for the longest possible period of his or her early development, and this loving is associated with access to a diversity of objects characteristic of the culture's specific powers, the child will develop what we are unfortunately compelled to regard today as extraordinary gifts of creative mentation.

We have merely outlined the central tendency; the way in which development occurs is actually more complex, but it necessarily reduces to this essential form in effect.

In adulthood, the need for that same kind of all-lovingness is essential. That is what is primary in what is called "sexual love." "Sexual love" does not derive from the possession of sexual organs -- except to bestialized minds. Mind is sensuousness; it demands actualization. Complete mind, completeness of the feelings which are mind demands a search for completely sensuous acts, sensuousness for its own sake. Mind seizes upon whatever means fall to its power to accomplish such realization.

Not to respect that fact, to regard "sexual love" as having any lesser goal than this, is to destroy oneself. Precisely so, because it is in this aspect of adult life that a healthy sense of personal identity (for myself!) is located, radiating from that central point to every other aspect of life. Such love is Mind in all its necessary sensuous actualization. It is not perfect; it is never complete, could never be complete, and one should never demand it be complete--unless he wishes to drive himself to the edge of suicide. There is no perfection in life, the universe, or Mind. There is only the process of self-perfecting, self-moving. Love is, must be the highest form of labor, in the Feuerbachian sense. It must be a part of life in which one struggles yet again to advance self-perfection another notch, for a more complete realization of the mental relationship, and a more complete, appropriate sensuous realization of the quality of allness Mind demands.

If you must have adolescent sexual acrobatics, have them--but never call them love, never degrade yourself, your revolutionary potential by raising the trivial to such importance. Above all, do not use my words on the merits of unmediated rela-

tionships to make a mockery of life and Mind itself. Do not use the ideas pertaining to the best and noblest wretched men and women sometimes attain to lend dignity to your adolescent banalities.

You see, this not a personal affair, but a profound political question.

3. "X-rated" Performances

I have repeatedly used a pedagogical device which appeals to me because it so precisely captures the poetry of capitalist life, the cruel commedia of capitalist culture.

Imagine yourself, I repeat myself yet again, returned one afternoon to your old neighborhood. You stand there for a while, with a special kind of pleasure, like the tastes and smells of Thanksgiving dinner of childhood memory. You watch the familiar faces and figures moving to and from familiar places. One watches them meeting, the casual exchange of homely greetings as they pass one another.

Then, you must speak. You must shake a familiar hand, look into a friendly face, smile, and say the old meaningless things that strangely meant so much to you then.

They do not see you when you speak. They do not hear you. You even strike an old friend; he continues chatting to someone else. It occurs to you that you do not exist. You are alive: you see, you feel, ...but you have forgotten to wear your mask, your persona. You therefore cannot be known, you cannot be loved; you are psychologically dead within society. None of your feelings can go outward; the more you feel, the more total your anxiety, as each unactualizable feeling becomes turned inward against you.

It is that terrible fear, that nightmare, which you have all experienced repeatedly in life. You think not? I tell you you live through that agony a thousand times each day. I have seen each of you in just that agony each time I have watched you-- especially at internal meetings and public meetings.

Many times, I have talked with an individual member or a small group of members. Because I demand it and because I am compassionate, in our conversation sometimes we get at their real concerns: What we should do, what needs to be corrected, and so forth. From them come the most excellent notions. I am delighted, because I feel I am becoming less needed, that as you take over more and more in your --for me-- exciting progress as revolutionaries and as human beings, I shall be permitted to become one of you instead of old grandfather with the aching gut who must take everything into himself. (I do not like being Heine's Atlas; Prometheus is not Hercules --look at me!-- to be coopted to such duties.) Then, I see the same persons at

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the next meeting. Often, I am glad to say, something of what you said comes through effectively there. You should know my joy at such things! But, more often...

You speak, maybe once, perhaps twice. Nothing or almost nothing of your task-oriented concern comes through. Before an audience you become a performer, a person needing love, seeking to get the maximum love from the meeting by conciliating, almost pandering to the lowest common denominator. Oh, sometimes you are clever about it: you attack the lowest-common denominator viciously. That, I admit, is rather clever, but my intestines, which are very wise organs, warn me there is something wrong here. Then, it is clear why I feel that pain. You permitting the lowest-common denominator to dominate your participation in the meeting. As a result, meetings are too often several miles beneath the poorest level of political mentation of any individual in the room.

There is nothing wrong in dealing with the lowest common denominator. That, in fact, is always necessary. The issue is, how is it done? The object of locating muck is to eliminate it with its positive counterpart. If a member (or worker in a public affair) is choked up to the eyeballs with his ideological muck, how do you remove his need to hold onto that muck. Many of you understand exactly that task with a certain degree of excellence. But, we all know that this depends upon your courage to be independently responsible toward our work. You cannot be afraid of lost "mana" for advancing something you know to be necessary. You must, of course, be concerned whether your ideas are correct, etc., and whether you have accomplished something by speaking. If you worry about being liked for what you say, worry about being acceptable to the world outside our organization, etc., you are prevented from being honest with yourself or the organization. Banality seeps in.

What is this? Is it a flaw in the meetings? Is it a peculiarity of socialist groups, etc.? By no means. It is the ordinary agony which you suffer to a lesser degree than anyone outside our organization. You, only to a lesser degree than they, suffer the fear I have described in connection with the hypothetical neighborhood visit. The meeting becomes for you that neighborhood.

Can the meetings be improved by rules and procedures to eliminate this problem? Only to be a limited degree. In general, the stronger the task-orientation and the clearer the tactical leadership, the less troublesome the problem within the meeting. As our activity is turned outward, the sensuous actualization of politicalized impulses obviously reduces the incidence of the anxiety of feelings turned inward upon the organization and its members. Other anxieties, as we have noted, of course, come into play from fear of actualization in the "outside world" -- the flea versus the elephant. The problem of the meetings is

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rapidly being solved by the rapid development of many members, and the obvious imperatives of relevant "outside" work.

There is no need to lambaste ourselves. Excepting those remarkable qualities which can be generally attained only under conditions of mass upsurges, our organization is already the relatively perfect model for any other organization in the world in its internal humanity, etc. There exists no "objective" standard by which anyone but a miserable carping fool could pick flaws in us by "objective" standards. It is simply not good enough. We are caught in the wonderful predicament of having attained a certain degree of actual humanity. We never rest; every progress is not the end of the effort to progress, but the necessary precondition and therefore the necessity for new qualitative advances. I do not censure you; I love you. But, we have not yet reached even the quality we must reach as a minimum for a vanguard organization nucleus capable of establishing workers' government. We must make a new leap forward. Such struggles--especially with ourselves--will never cease. To actualize a new society, we must begin to actualize in ourselves something that partakes, however minutely of that we are bringing into being.

On that account, since we have grown up so much in the past years, we have reached the point when a higher standard of human relationships, within the organization and in our connections to those close to us outside, must be attained. It must be attained because we are ready to attain it. Find such joy and personal identity as a human being wherever you can in the intricacies of your daily life. That is your affair; it is your right. You can no longer tolerate banality in even your personal relationships. If, for example, you cannot help but be adolescent in some matters, that is not a great problem for us. Merely do not dignify your adolescence by associating with it those notions and forms of relationship which reflect the noblest aspects of humanity within our reach.