

In my hi-rise city, developers would not be permitted to uproot and bulldoze the wilderness out of existence New buildings would rise from bedrock, long stems lifting the terrain resting on that bedrock to the sky intact rocks and ferns and trees and squirrels uninterrupted in their enjoyment of the sunshine. Building residents, office workers, would take the elevator to the woods where a sign would read, "Walk on the grass, please."

There would be swings and seesaws and monkeybars for the kids, outdoor cafés, dancing allowed. Hidden nooks for lovers. But no shopping (a line must be drawn somewhere). Flying over the city it would be indistinguishable from the country, and not appear abandoned, desolate, as it does now except for a scattering of penthouses. Flying over the city, you'd be able to follow the seasons.



Star Spangled To Death - Chapter 1, Part 1 - 03.jpg

Same as the pre-Code movies of the early Thirties, cheap, off-handed, vivid,

allowing us to see and hear people as they were and not some freaky studio perfection.

CIA prefers captives "softened up" prior to interrogation.

American soldiers selected at random for softening duties blamed for taking pleasure in their work, for taking pride in their work as displayed in photos and videos.

Though some captives die, voices on the right say the practice is no worse than college hazing.

It's called "prisoner abuse", suggesting these were men and women accused of crimes, though many were not and had nothing to confess or to inform, whatever the torture.

Taking Iraqis prisoner on a whim was part of the fun.

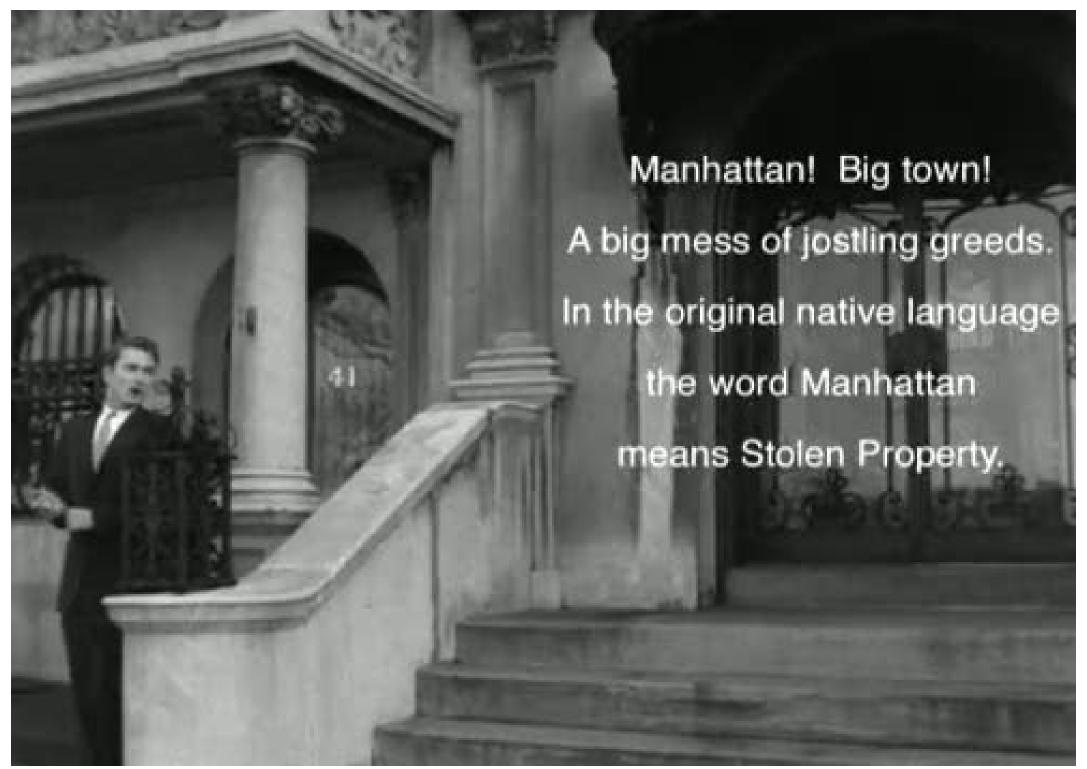
More apt than "prisoner abuse" is torture of Iraqis

for the fun of it.

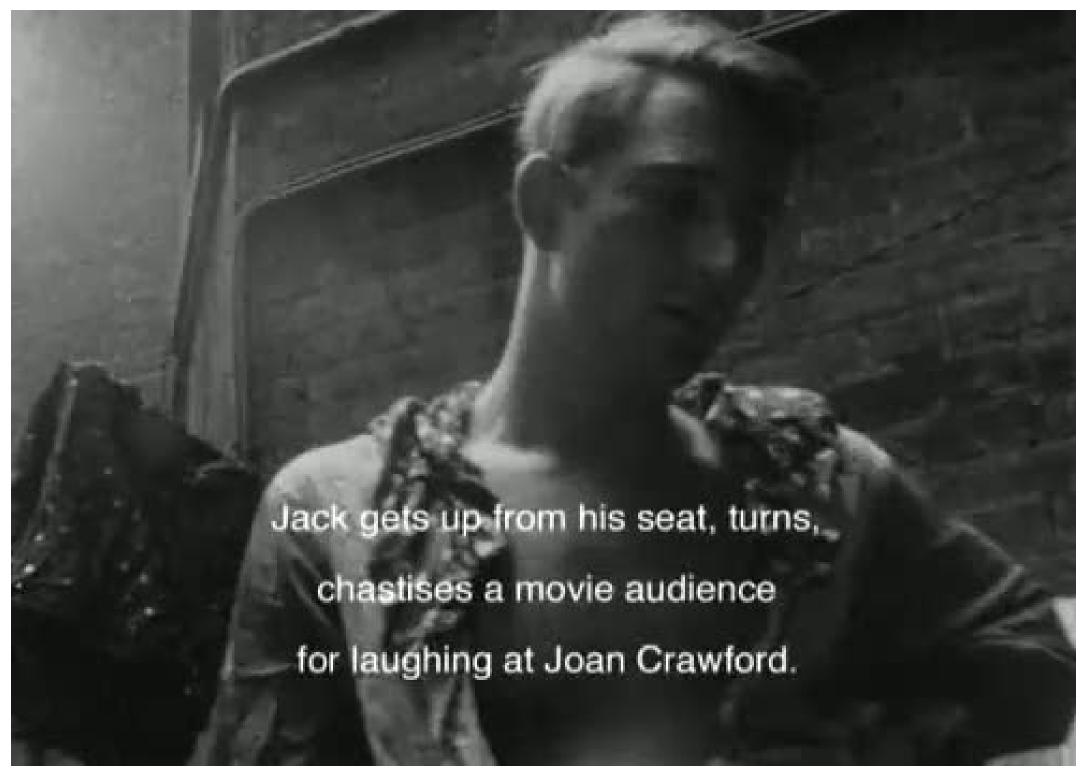
Surely the pain inflicted was no worse than mass-produced by a bomb, and there have been so many bombs, many "smart" with even more moronic. Spectacular overkill was intended as example to others: Do no hesitate to bend to our will. (I saw Bahgdad before the bombs on WorldLink TV looking like any pleasant and orderly contemporary city, with pizzerias and discos, like an upscale Brooklyn, young people strolling about dressed and behaving like young people in Brooklyn.)

It seems we are blaming unlucky, inconvenienced, threatened, disenchanted, resentful and bored young Americans for applying imagination to their chores and for personalizing the inflicting of pain. In return, brutality for brutality, some Iraqis have put a video of themselves on the web beheading a captured 26-year-old American. (The mujahideen, holy warriors, when bankrolled by USA to run the Russians

out of Afghanistan, skinned captives alive.)



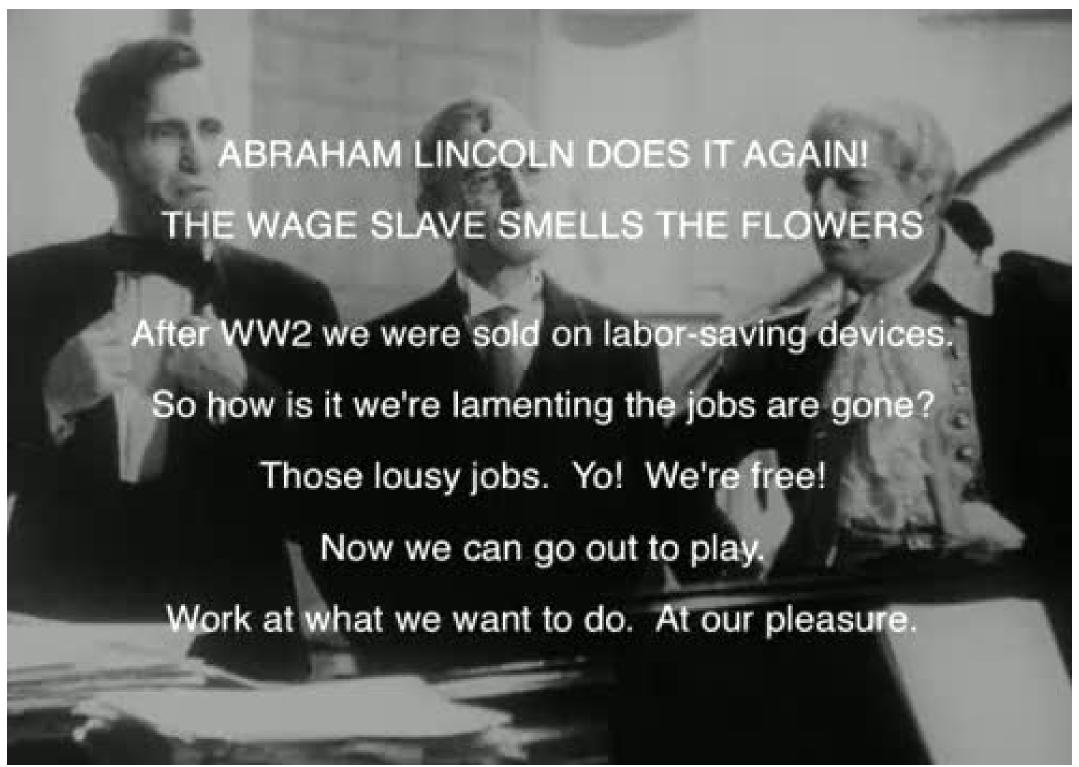
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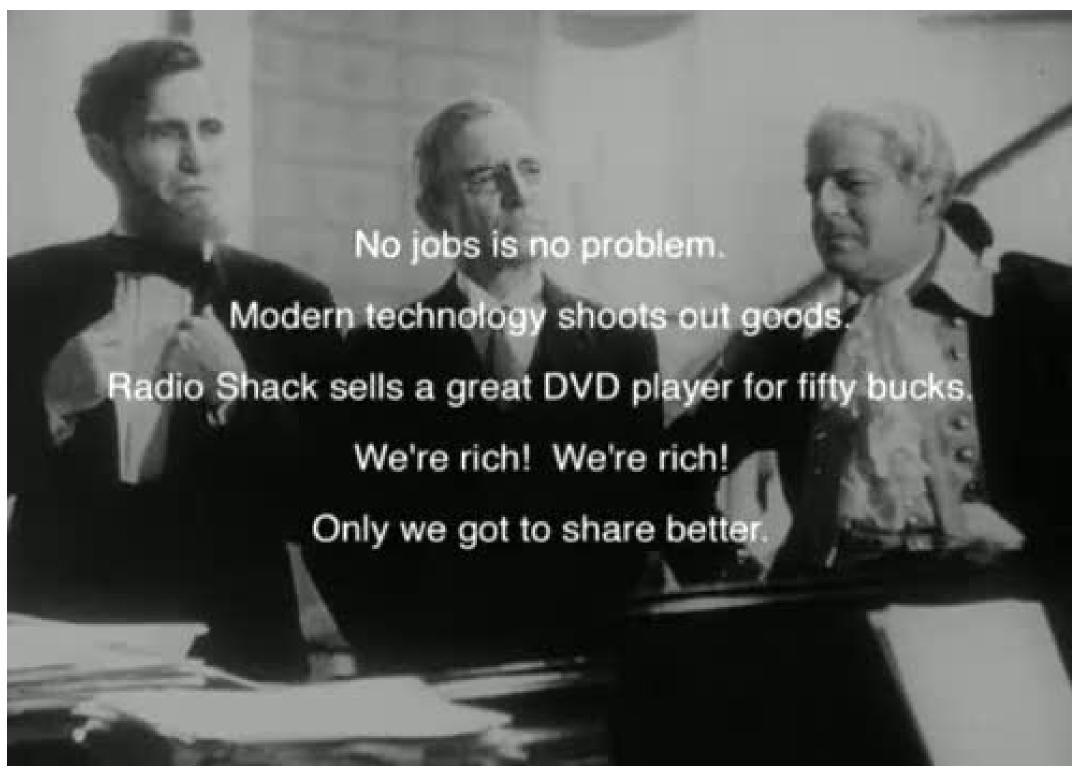


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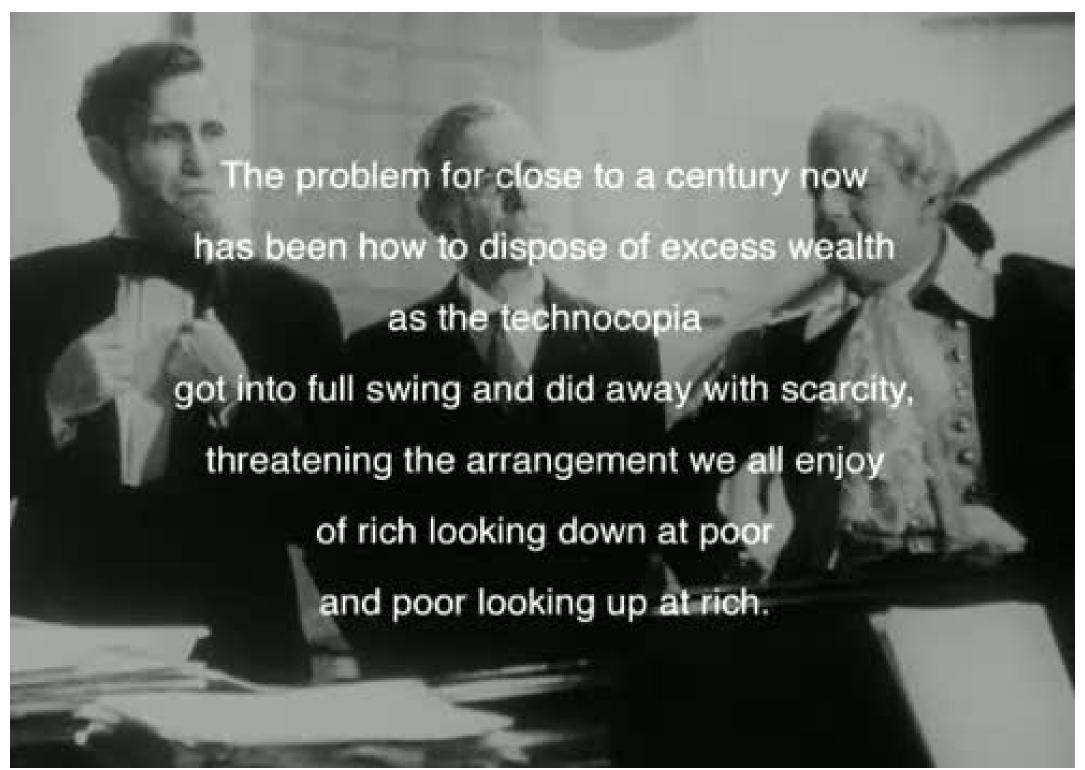


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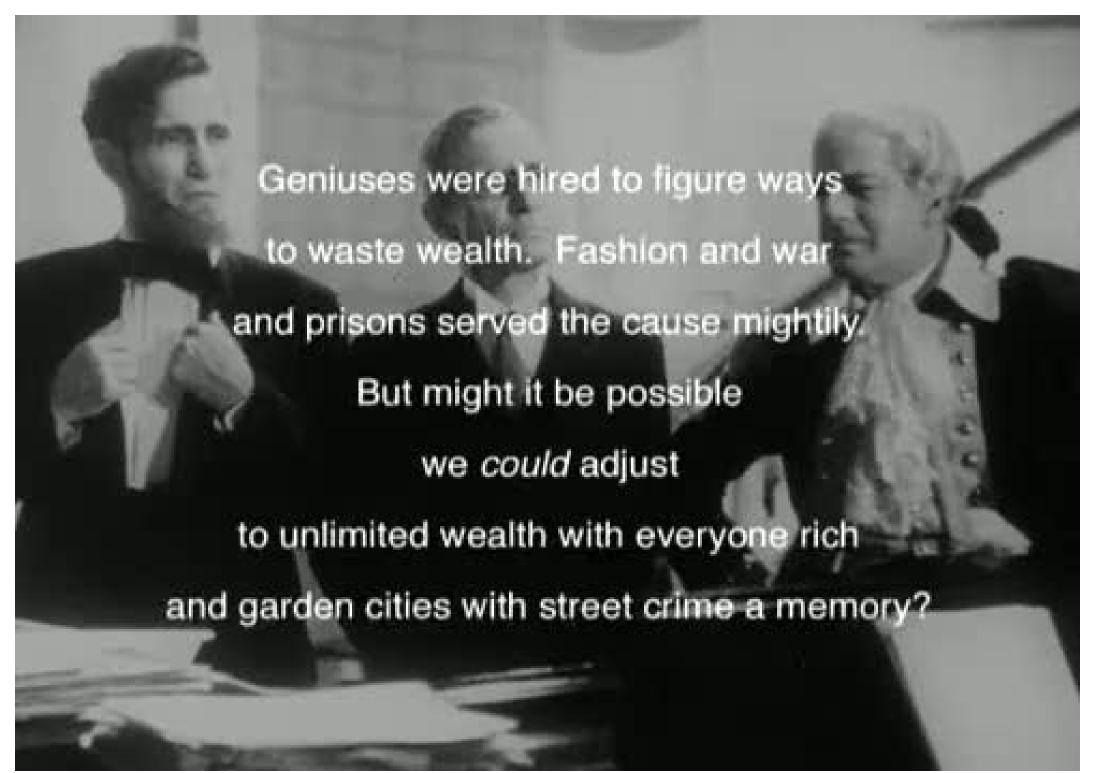




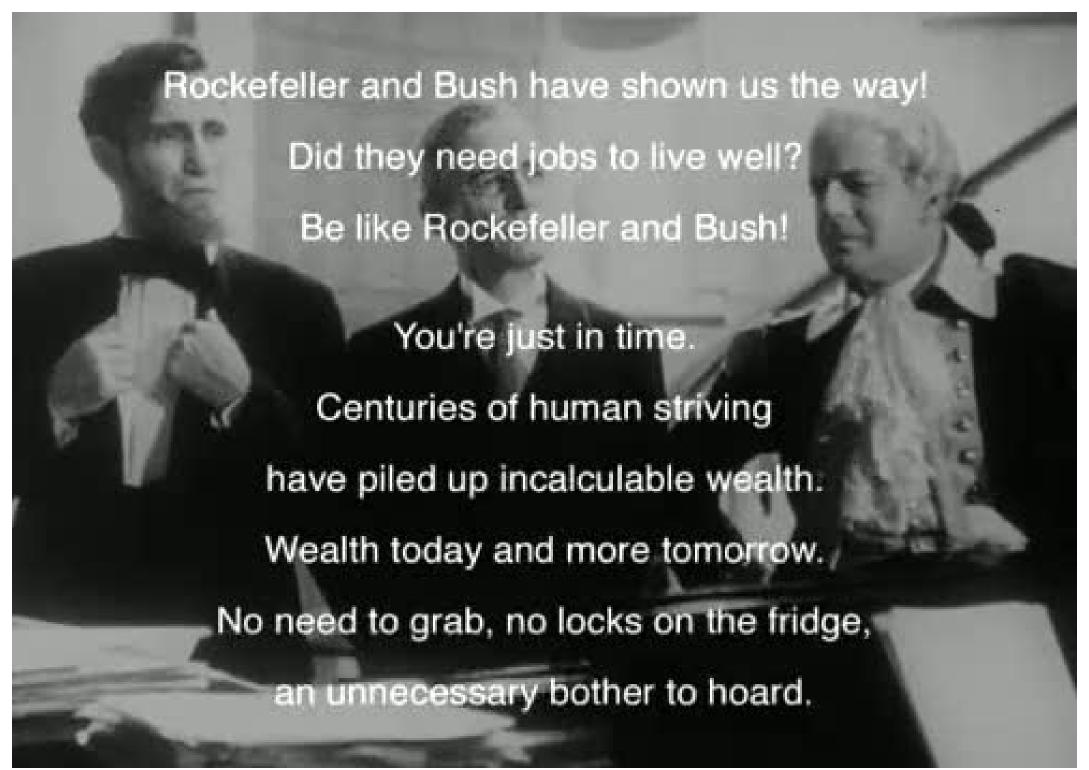
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Star Spangled To Death - Chapter 1, Part 1 - 13.jpg



Star Spangled To Death - Chapter 1, Part 1 - 14.jpg





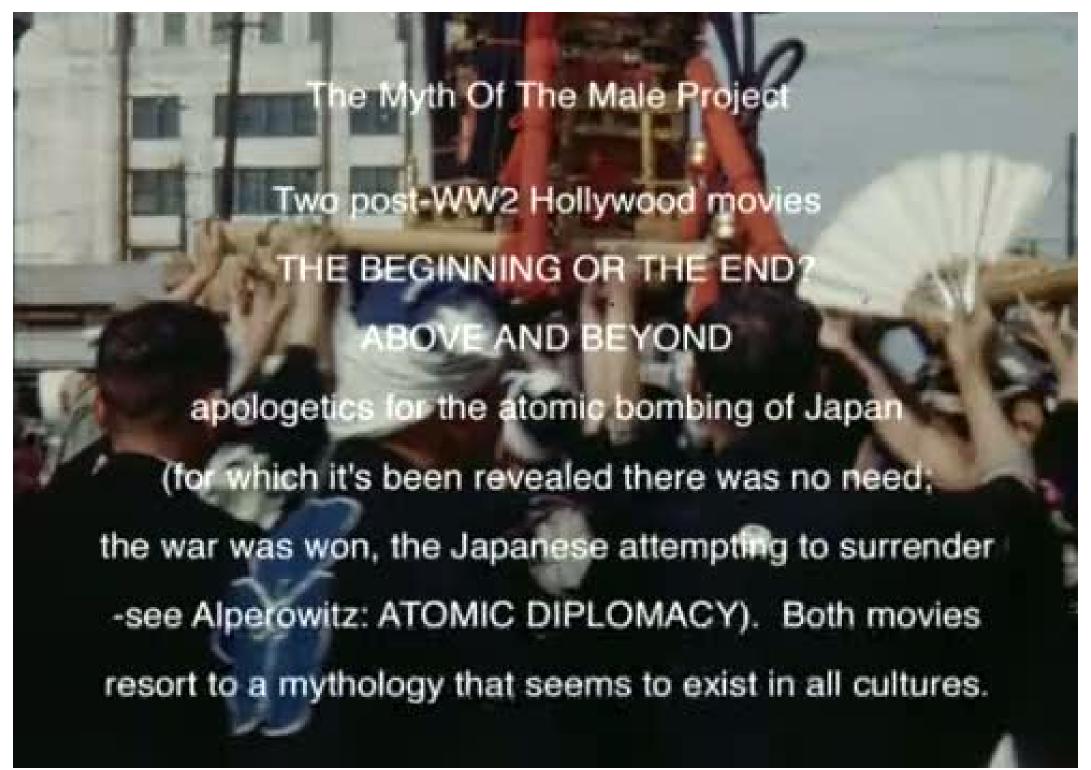
Star Spangled To Death - Chapter 1, Part 1 - 16.jpg

I remember Pearl Harbor but no explanation for it other than that Japs are evil. They were,

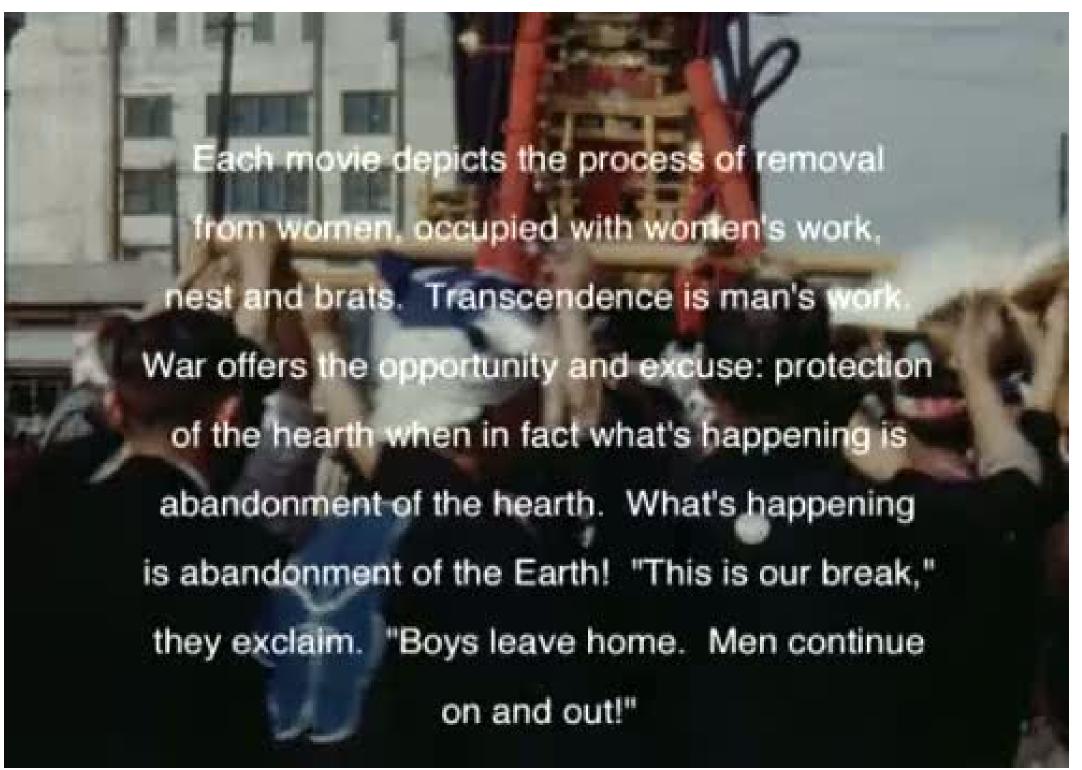
Nazi-evil in their treatment for instance of the Chinese.

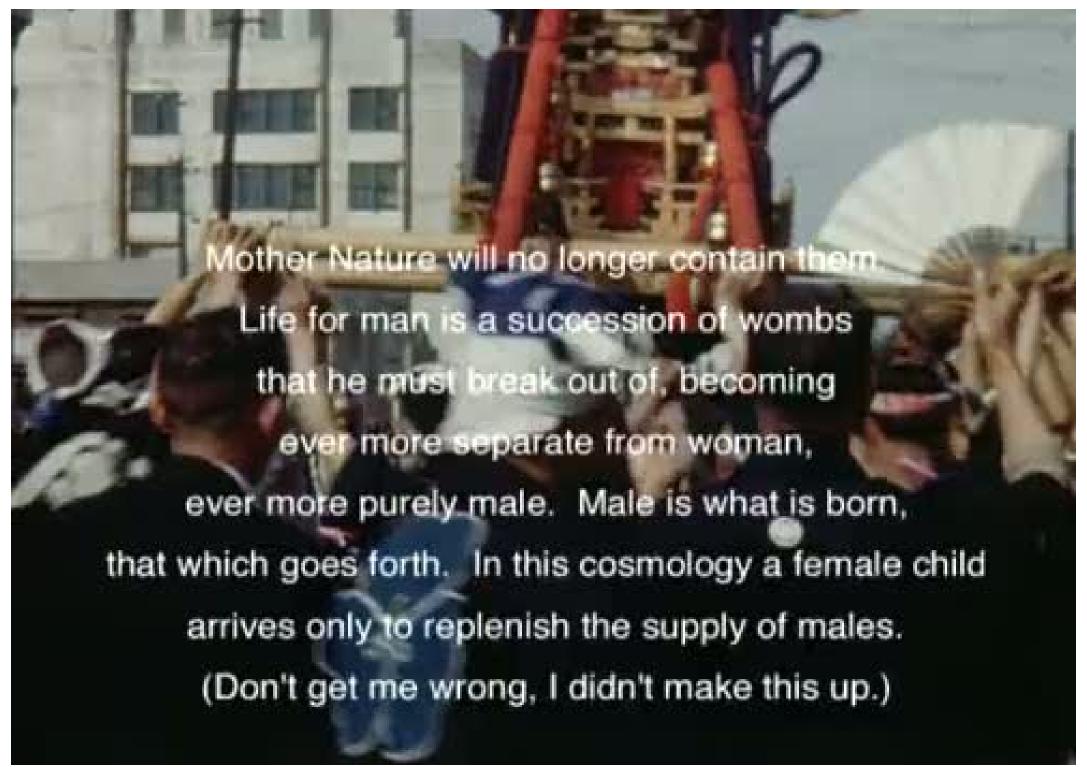
But why attack us?

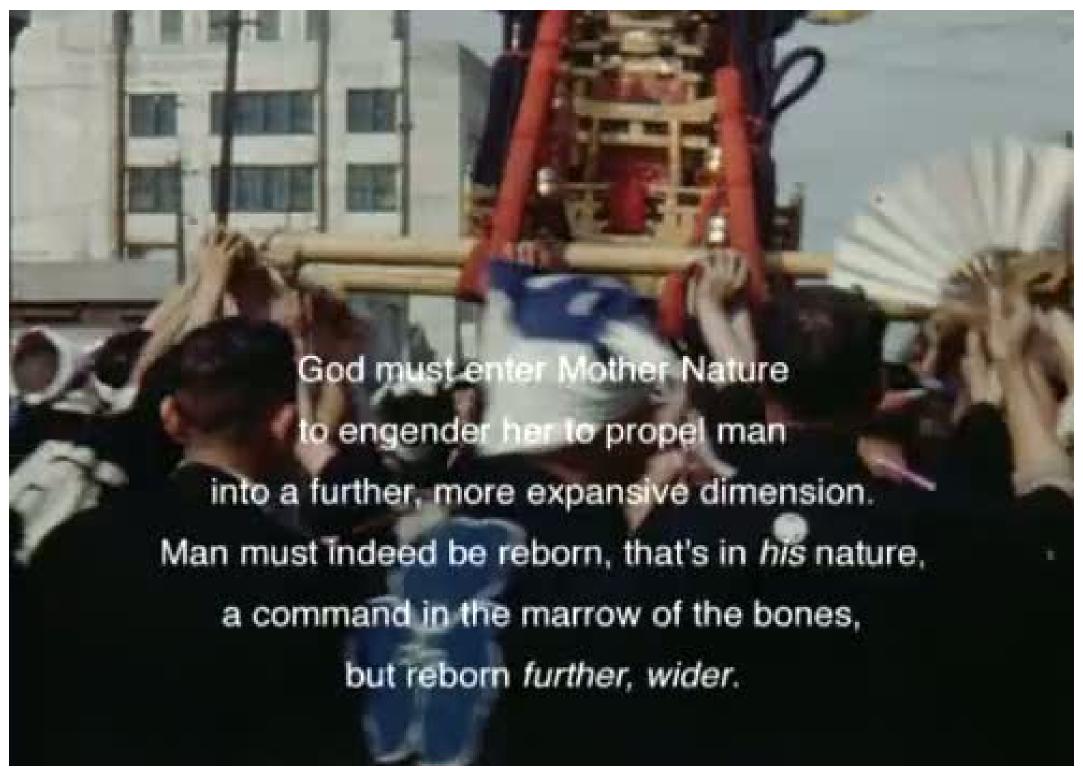
What was an American war-fleet doing so way the hell out there, so far from where it could protect our shores? I suspect, after bumping Spain, taking Hawaii and the Philippines -fueling stopsthey were intent on fulfilling the Columbus quest, continuing on towards the riches of Cathay and Hirohito, miffed, was saying "It's mine!"

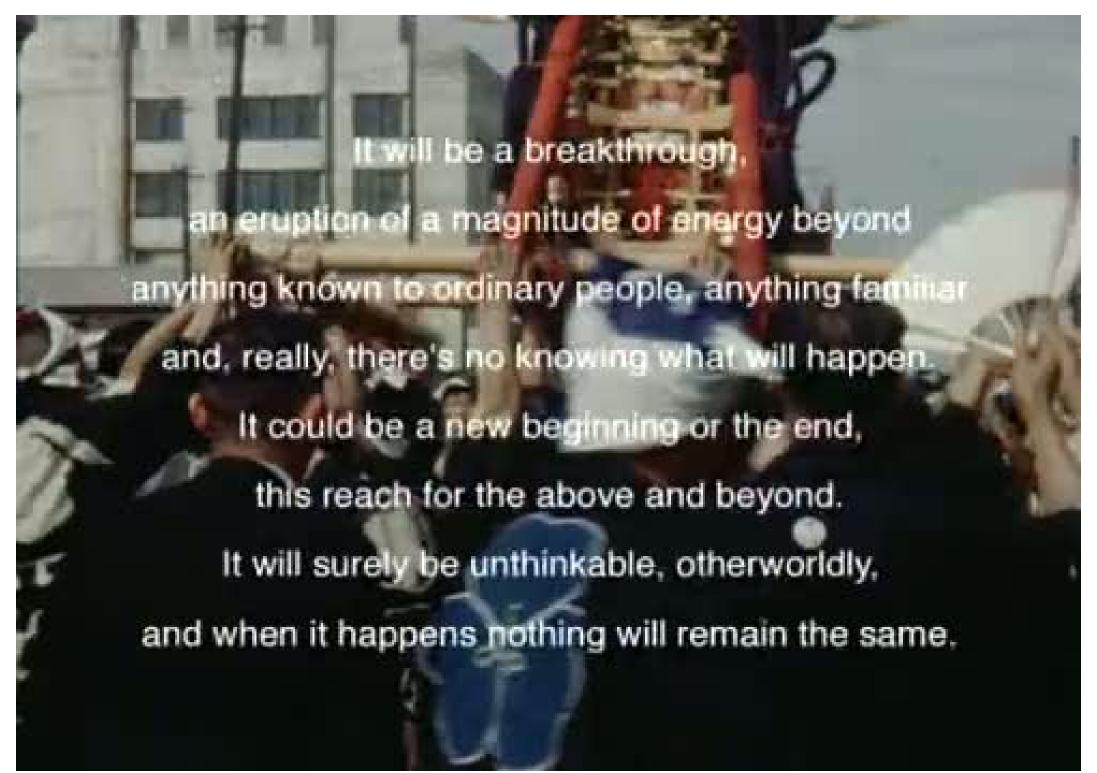






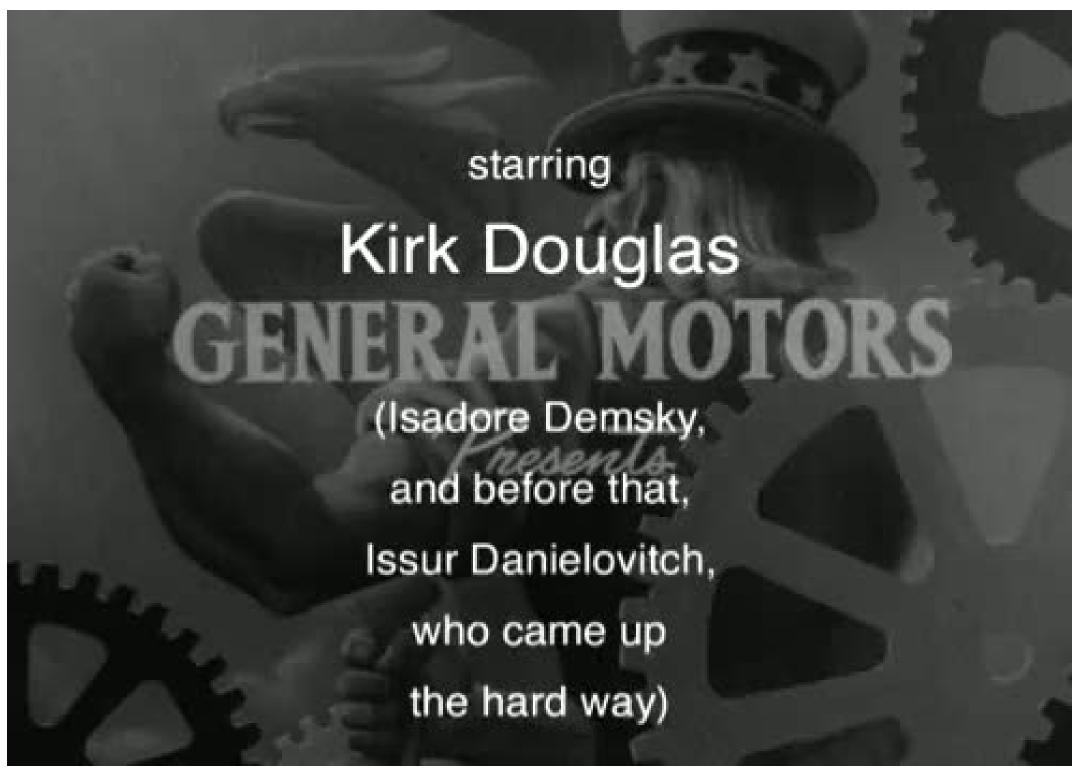






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Both movies climax with an atomic puncturing of mundane existence -as the guys would say, they uck over Hiroshima good. As if from out of this world, from some celestial superstud bull brought to arousal incalculable energy enters this teminine sphere And when it does these men know its name: as the target disintegrates (in a rare if not unique instance of pure white light filling the Hollywood screen), Robert Taylor as Captain Paul Tibbetts speaks the word "God".



Charles Higham and, more recently, Irwin Black report how Ford, GM, Rockefeller, other major corporations one might assume to be American were in fact international way back then and, both before and during WW2, hedged their bets by answering to and profiting from the war-making requirements of both USA and Nazi Germany.

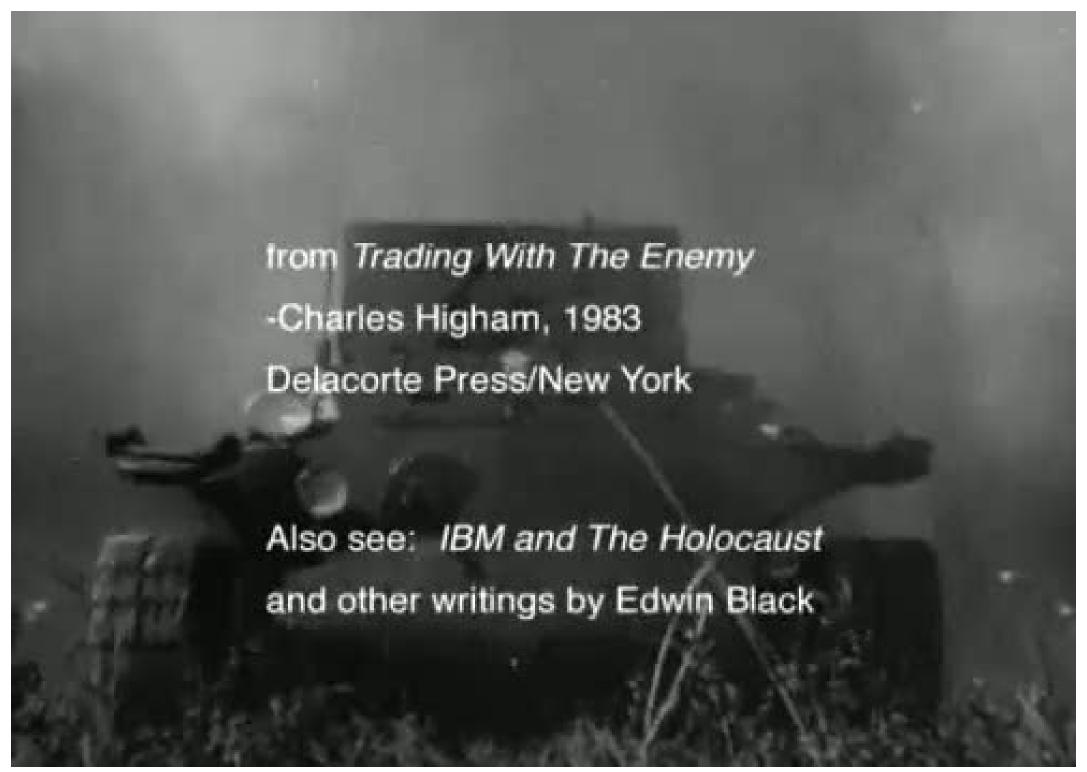
Simultaneously with the rise of Hitler, the Du Ponts in 1933 began financing native fascist groups in America, including the anti-Semitic and antiblack American Liberty League and the organization known as Clark's Crusaders, which had 1,250,000 members in 1933. Pierre, Irénée, and Lammot du Pont and John Jacob Raskob funded the Liberty League, along with Alfred P. Sloan of General Motors. The League smeared Roosevelt as a communist, claimed the President was surrounded by Jews; and despite the fact that they were Jewish, the Du Ponts smeared Semitic organizations.

The connections between General Motors and the Nazi government began at the moment of Hitler's rise to power. Goring declined to annex General Motors and indeed received with pleasure William S. Knudsen, General Motors' president, who returned on October 6, 1933, to New York telling reporters that Germany was "the miracle of the twentieth century."

By the mid-1930's, General Motors was committed to full-scale production of trucks, armored cars, and tanks in Nazi Germany. The GM board could be guaranteed to preserve political, personal, and commercial links to Hitler. Alfred P. Sloan, who rose from president of GM to chairman in 1937, paid for the National Council of Clergymen and Laymen at Asheville, North Carolina, on August 12, 1936, at which John Henry Kirby, millionaire fascist lumberman of Texas, was prominent in the delivery of speeches in favor of Hitler. Others present, delivering equally Hitlerian addresses, were Governor Eugene D. Talmadge of Georgia and the Nazi Reverend Gerald L. K. Smith. Sloan frequently visited Berlin, where he hobnobbed with Göring and Hitler.

On November 23, 1937, representatives of General Motors held a secret meeting in Boston with Baron Manfred von Killinger, who was Fritz Wiedemann's predecessor in charge of West Coast espionage, and Baron von Tippleskirsch, Nazi consul general and Gestapo leader in Boston. This group signed a joint agreement showing total commitment to the Nazi cause for the indefinite future. The agreement stated that in view of Roosevelt's attitude toward Germany, every effort must be made to remove him by defeat at the next election. Jewish influence in the political, cultural, and public life of America must be stamped out. Press and radio must be subsidized to smear the administration, and there must be a führer, preferably Senator Burton K. Wheeler of Montana, in the

White House. This agreement was carefully hidden. But a secretary who was loyal to the American cause managed to obtain a copy and give it to George Seldes, liberal journalist, who published it in his newsletter, In Fact. The patriotic liberal Representative John M. Coffee of Washington State entered the full agreement, running to several pages, in the Congressional Record on August 20, 1942, demanding that the Du Ponts and the heads of General Motors be appropriately treated. Needles to say, the resolution was tabled permanently.



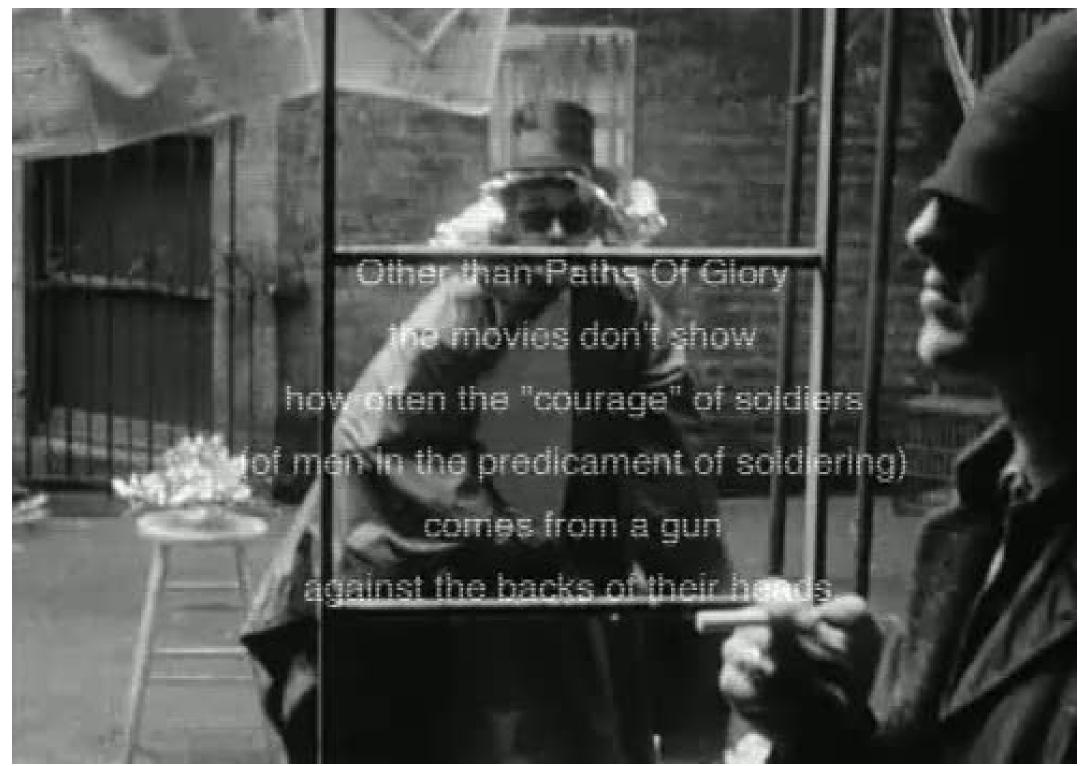
Star Spangled To Death - Chapter 1, Part 1 - 33.jpg

Mike Todd's

AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS

may not have done much for cinema

but it did help popularize the world.



Star Spangled To Death - Chapter 1, Part 1 - 35.jpg

Half of Muslim women illiterate. Police states, torturers, tyrants. Entire nations the private properties of royal families. Oil wealth invested in USA and Europe while youth remains unemployed, impoverished, humiliated. Hungry! Education a matter of memorizing the ravings of the Koran, no questions asked. Yes, the Jews are your misfortune, certainly.



Star Spangled To Death - Chapter 1, Part 1 - 37.jpg

I learned early on that war forms its own culture. The rush of battle is a potent and often lethal addiction, for war is a drug, one I ingested for many years. It is peddled by mythmakers--historians, war correspondents, filmmakers, novelists, and the state--all of whom endow it with qualities it often does possess; excitement, exoticism, power, chances to rise above our small stations in life, and a bizarre and fantastic universe that has a grotesque and dark beauty. It dominates culture, distorts memory, corrupts language, and infects everything around it, even humor, which becomes preoccupied with the grim perversities of smut and death. Fundamental questions about the meaning, or meaninglessness, of our place on the planet are laid bare when we watch those around us sink to the lowest depths. War exposes the capacity for evil that lurks not far below the surface within all of us. And this is why for many war is so hard to discuss once War Is A Force That Gives Us Meaning, Chris Hedges it is over.

Israel, a synopsis. Jews are forced out of Europe by recurrent killing sprees by Christian nations, active in the killing or on stand-by, with guarded borders preventing escape. A sort of dustpan and dustbroom concerted action. Only Denmark during World War Two moves to save Jews by spiriting them to neutral Sweden, willing (unlike USA, Canada, Britain, etc.) to absorb them, if only "for the duration" Survivors at war's end must go somewhere the hell out of Europe but invitations are slow in coming and few and they again find themselves rotting behind wires in Displaced Persons Camps. People without the right to be where they are! to be anywhere.

Declaring a legitimacy of return to land from whence Imperial Rome had first banished Jews (setting the long sad story in motion) they gather to another place where they're not wanted. Forbidden by Arabs to buy property they muscle their way in on the assumption that they Their People- were there first. If as individuals they can be murdered as a They ("I decide who is a Jew", Hermann Goering said knowing he was decreeing death arbitrarily), they figure they can in turn declare a right of eminent domain. Imagine: Jewish land. If the planet only knew. Well, if you buy that, you won't mind giving America back to the Indians. Other Arab countries refuse to absorb displaced Palestinians but instead punish "their Jews" by banishing them. To where? To Israel.

Victimization doesn't make people saints and Jews in a tight spot do what people do, terrible things. Muslim leaders had urged their Christian rivals to quicken the pace of extinction, their followers now attract a wrath others had more directly earned. Israel in the Twenty First Century remains the world hotspot. Much of the news of the day consists of what Israel did bad today, and it is bad, while we learn damned little of what Israel does or attempts to do good and plenty of Israelis are great partisans in the cause of Common Decency. Let's be straight with each other. How much do you hear about the Chechnyan cause and the hurts mutually inflicted with Russia? Say space travel had been available in 1945. Any doubt that troubled minds would be any less aggrieved today at the presence of Jews on the moon?

Stanza #1

Fury with Israeli brutality,

I share it. But would I respond differently

if my own kids were murdered for getting on a trolley?

Here's something critics of Israelis/Jews seem to forget,

lamentable but true:

they're a mix of people, no more no less.

Placed in different situations

they do what people do.

Stanza #2

Fury with Palestinian brutality,

I share it. But would I respond differently

if my own kids were murdered for sitting in a room?

Here's something critics of Palestinians seem to forget,

lamentable but true:

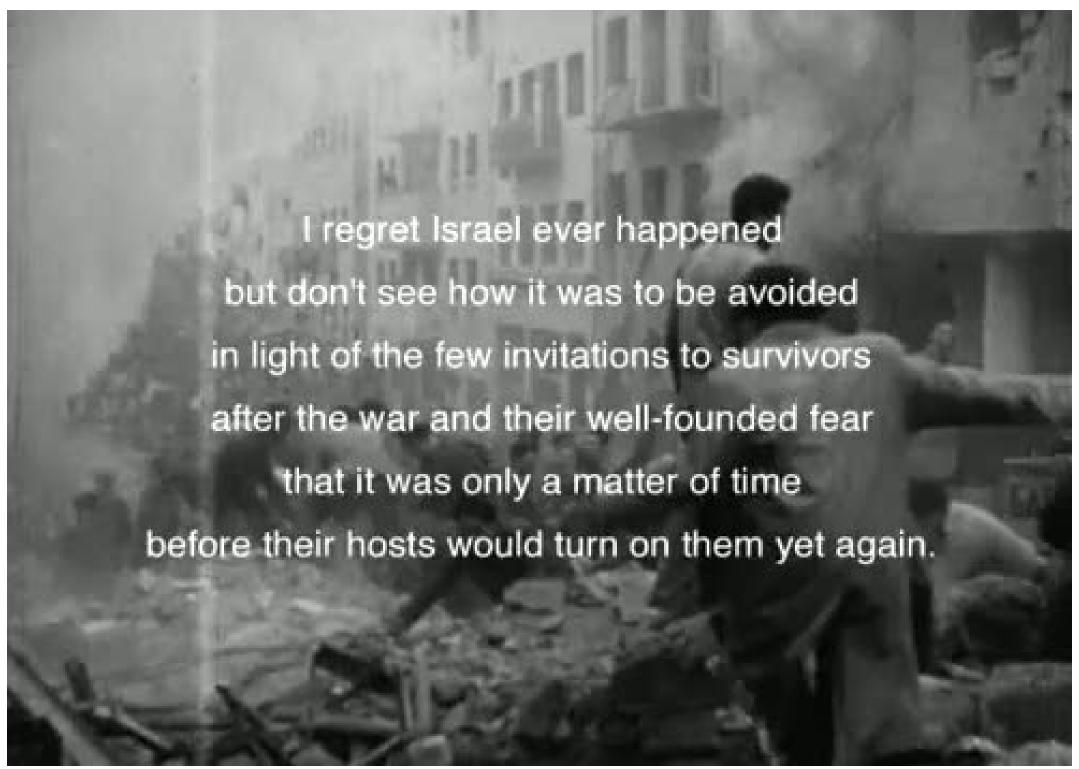
they're a mix of people, no more no less.

Placed in different situations

they do what people do.

You have to marvel at the Jews, so tiny a population of Jews, the audacity, to be grabbing up all those Arabs -or is it the world's Muslims? and forcing them into death factories. I don't see how they can even tell Arabs apart from themselves. When we shop on Atlantic Avenue

people look like my relatives.





From Auschwitz To The Moon

Where might they have been welcome? Nowhere Where unnoticed? What place so arid or iced or wild that it had been passed over as human habitation? Perhaps had science advanced sufficiently they might've become the first to colonize space.

"Hey, the Jews are going!" The Pope hears the many-throated shout and comes out to wave them off from the balcony he'd shared with Mussolini.

They're carving an empire out of a wilderness.

Yes, carving and hatcheting and blasting; and then decimating, poisoning, abandoning.

Are they homesteaders? or rapists? fucking over one virgin territory before moving on to the next.

When they aren't allowed to buy a territory they take it, and if they don't succeed in taking it they make an object lesson of it by destroying it.

They like to think of themselves as irresistible.

I'm working my way up

to believing in Jesus. It isn't easy, because when I believe

I believe everything and Jesus is particularly challenging.

Virgin Mother, walking on water, fish from out of the skies,

died so we can live then rose from the dead.

Crucified by the Romans at the demand of The Jews.

This week I begin to believe in Zeus.

Advertisers,
picking up on religious practice,
further perfected
the downhill learning curve.

They think it's wasteful and a sign of ingratitude not to eat everything on their plate, all that Providence has provided, now, quickly, with the sky about to fall on us. I think of them as high-function morons deluded into thinking that all of life came about to serve their appetites.

Facts are so....unimaginative. We are in a movieland where anything goes, fed all sorts of comforting, exciting, fun ideas: angels and devils, life after death, a watchful concerned God. Compassionate conservatism, offshore-based corporations that think only of our best interests, limited nuclear war. Not to mention postmen and neighbors living double lives as intergalactic travelers.

Those who believe they will be happy-ever-after in the here-after are known as Happy-Ever-Afterists.

"Jesus was an Aryan."

Post-WW2 propaganda to the contrary, most Nazis believed themselves to be fulfilling Christian purpose. For Catholics (Catholic Hitler has never been excommunicated), Fascism everywhere has been the defense against Godless Communism and Democracy.

In the USA, popular Nazi radio-propagandist Father Coughlin was only suppressed by the hierarchy after Germany declared war against America.

German Protestants were realizing a higher state of Lutheranism, a still more nationalist, more specifically German Christianity. Luther's statement "The Jew is our misfortune" was a Nazi axiom. Neo-Nazi groups today affirm Christian faith.

Playing up the minority of Nazi paganists was a postwar ploy to distance the churches from the enthusiastic excesses of the regime. See Richard Steigman-Gall THE HOLY REICH, Cambridge University Press, 2003 Nazi excess, in fact, was not in defiance of Christian tradition, only unusually orderly and thorough, industrialized. Yes, countless Christian believers have been decent people, but let's not dream.

Helen Ellerbe in THE DARK SIDE OF CHRISTIAN HISTORY (Morningstar And Lark, 1995) quotes Thomas Jefferson: "Millions of innocent men, women, and children since the introduction of Christianity, have been burnt, tortured, fined, imprisoned; yet we have not advanced one inch towards uniformity. What has been the effect of coercion? To make one half of the world fools, and the other half hypocrites. To support error and roguery all over the earth."

There's a photo of Jesus in the papers.

This time he's an Iraqi.

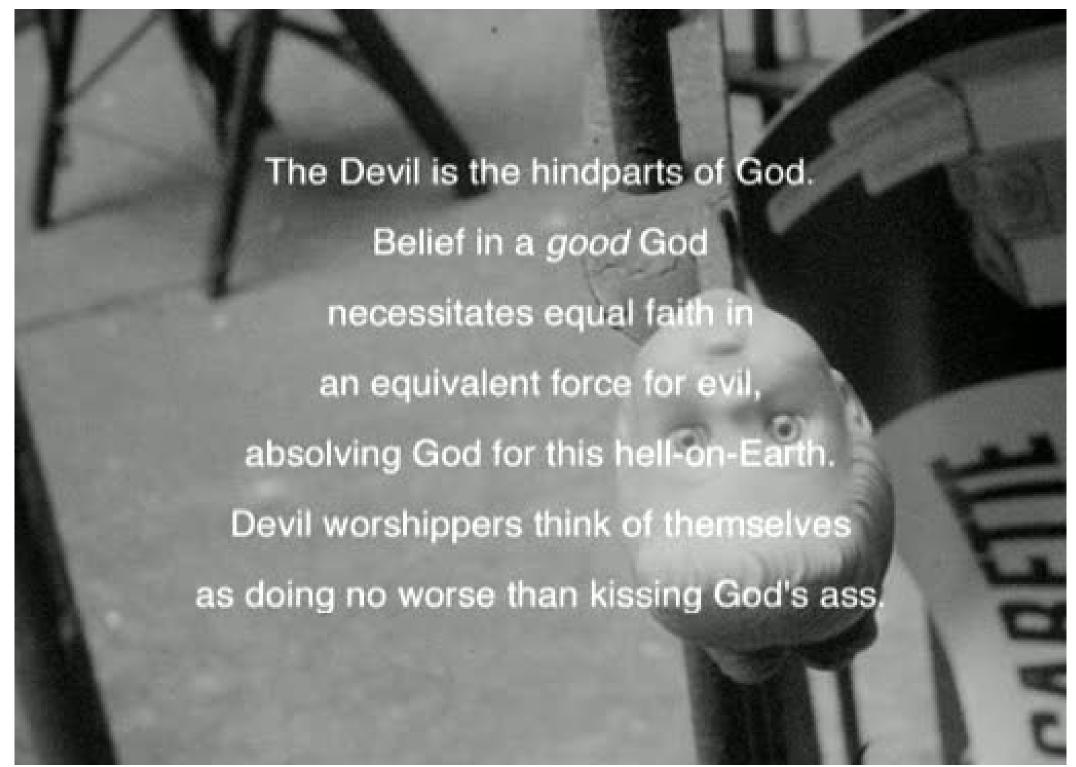
He's balancing on a box with a hood

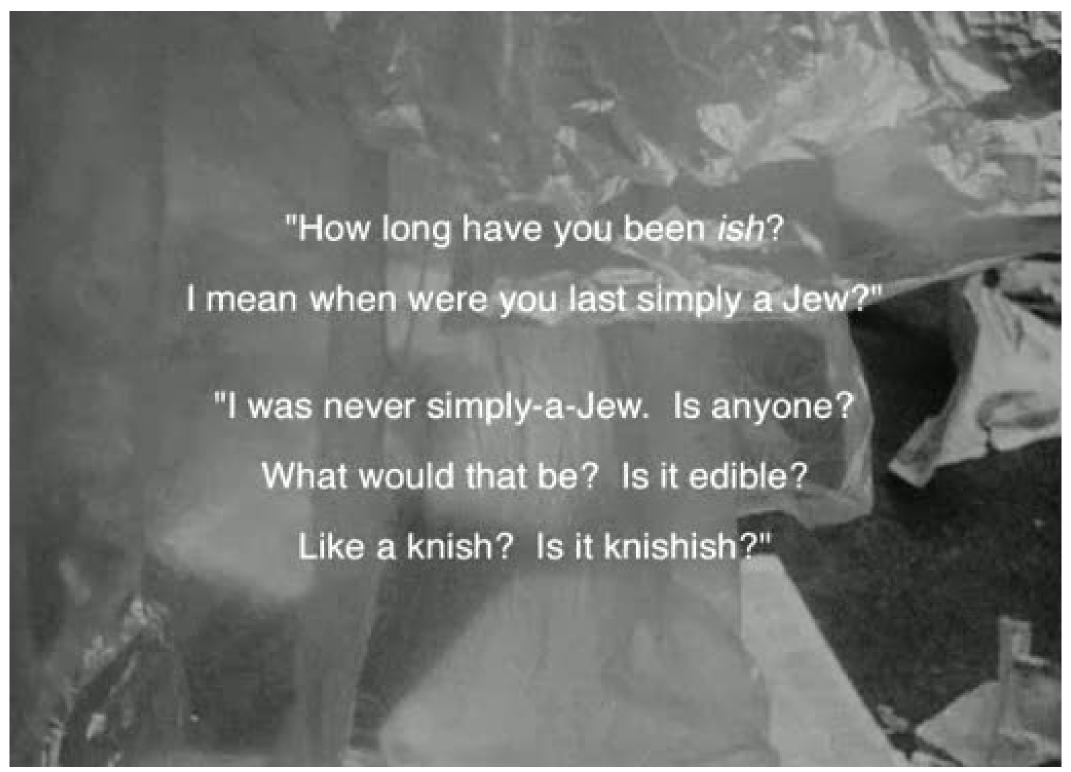
over him so he can't see and with

electrodes attached to his genitals.



Star Spangled To Death - Chapter 1, Part 2 - 12.jpg



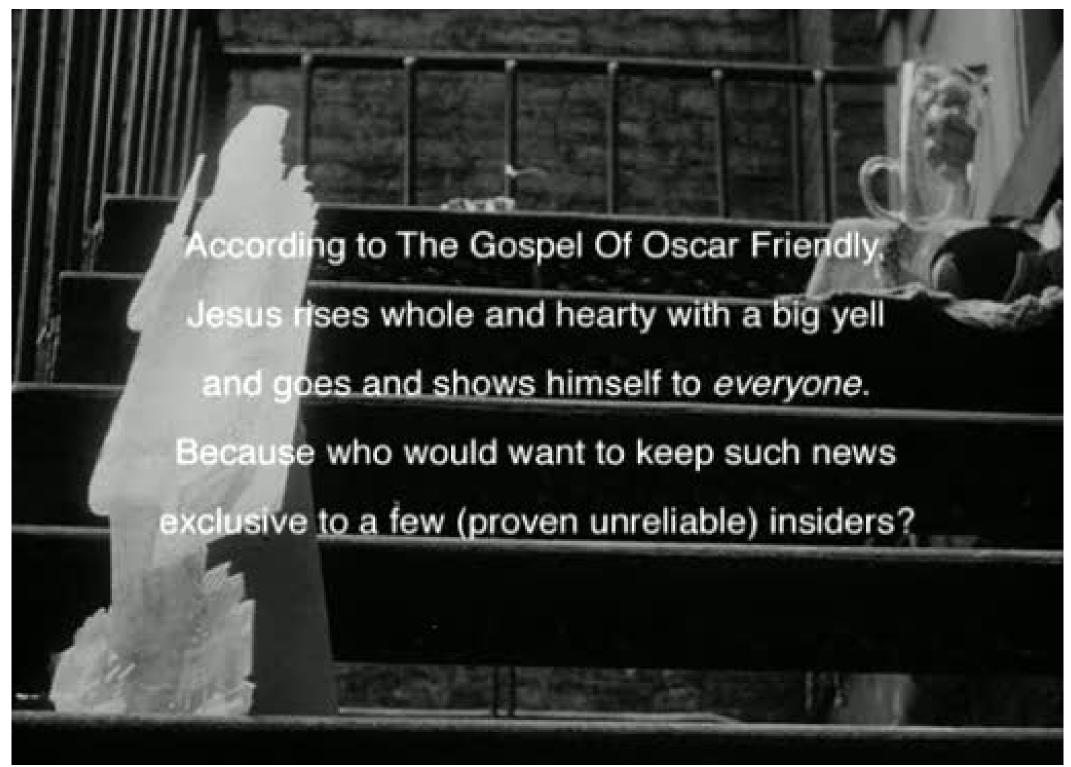


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Religion is the tax-free hustling of shares in The Beyond.

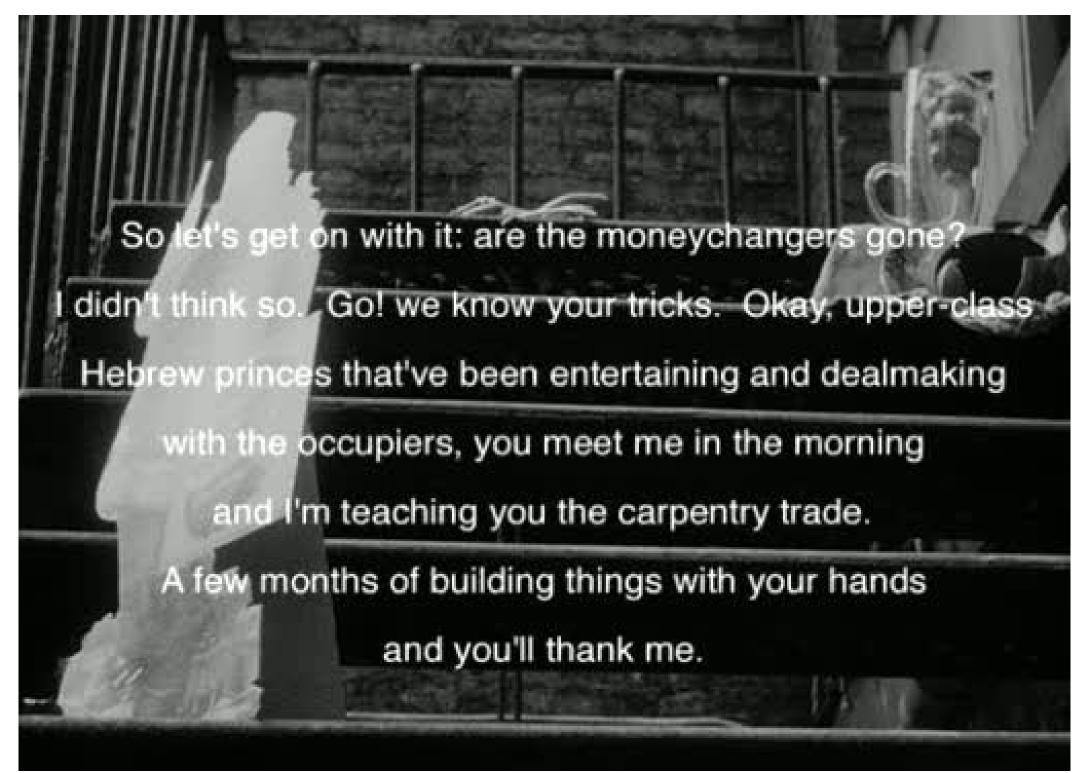
A fire-sale in unreal estate.

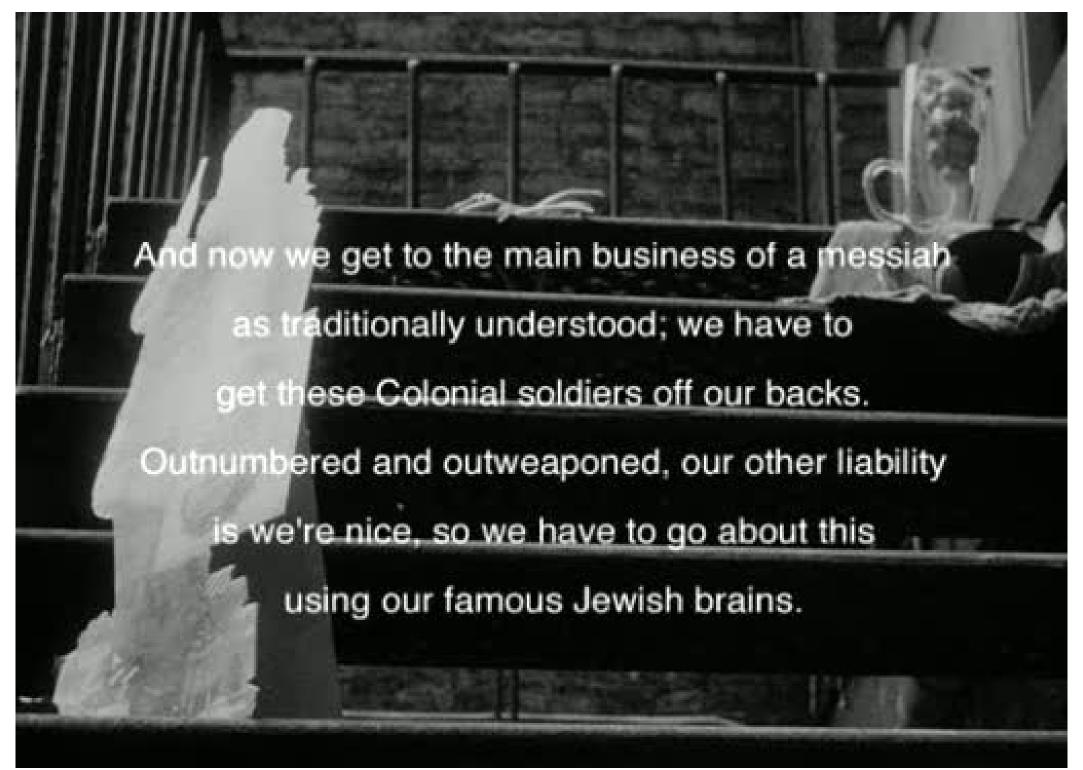
Buyer, beware.

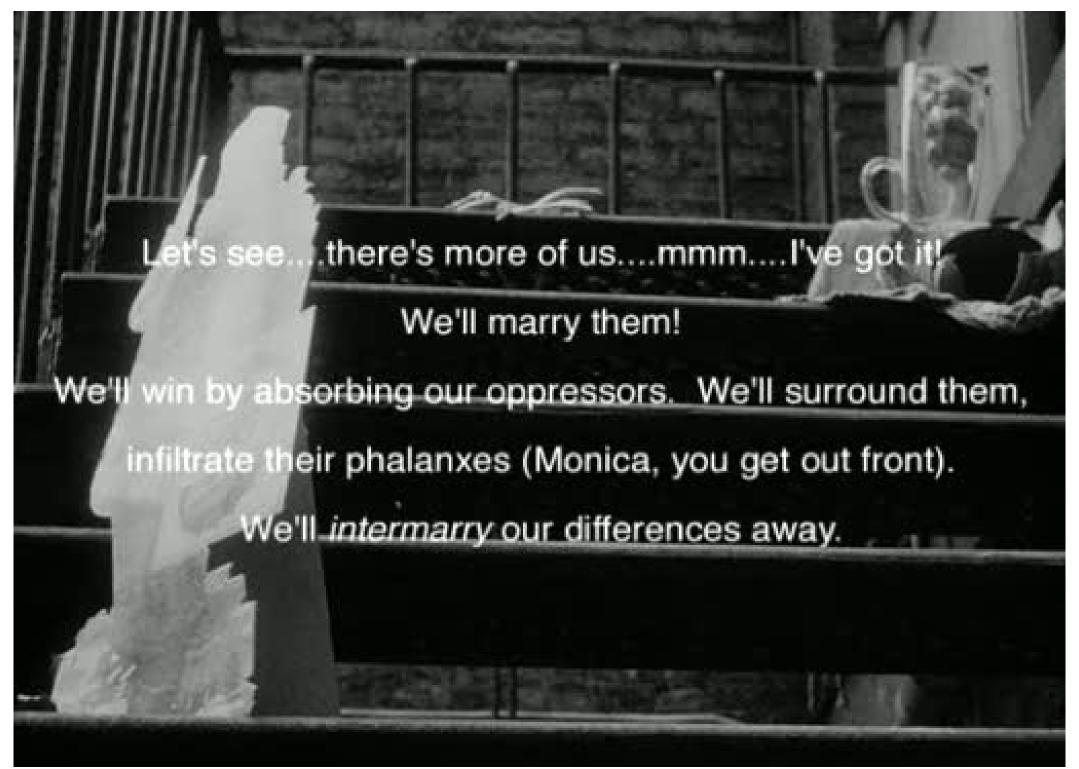


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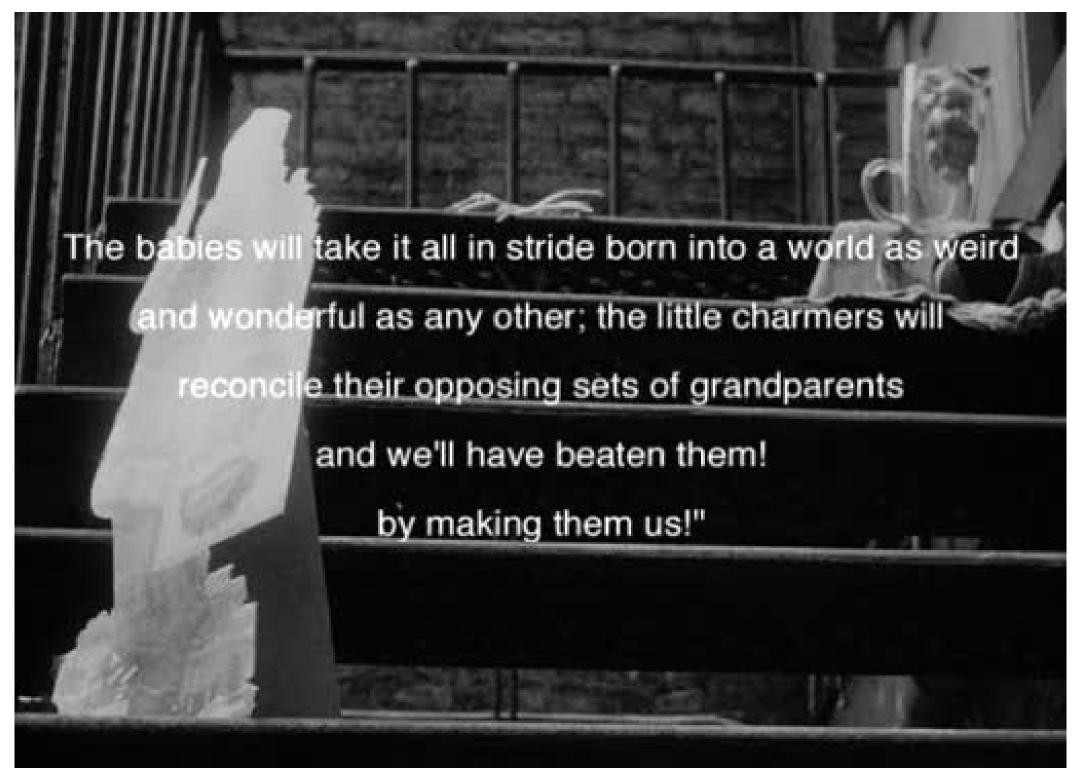
The people gather and Jesus says, "Look, folks, it's a miracle! I was dead and now I'm alive Wow, I really must be The Messiah! It's great to be back, folks, and certainly don't intend to waste this opportunity by returning immediately and inexplicably to My Heavenly Father instead of completing what I came here for, not after all I've just been through. Because that would be dumb dumb dumb. Can you imagine me leaving that task to those feckless groupie disciples that left me hanging there without once whistling for the multitudes that believed in me to come to my rescue? My erstwhile sunshine-disciples.



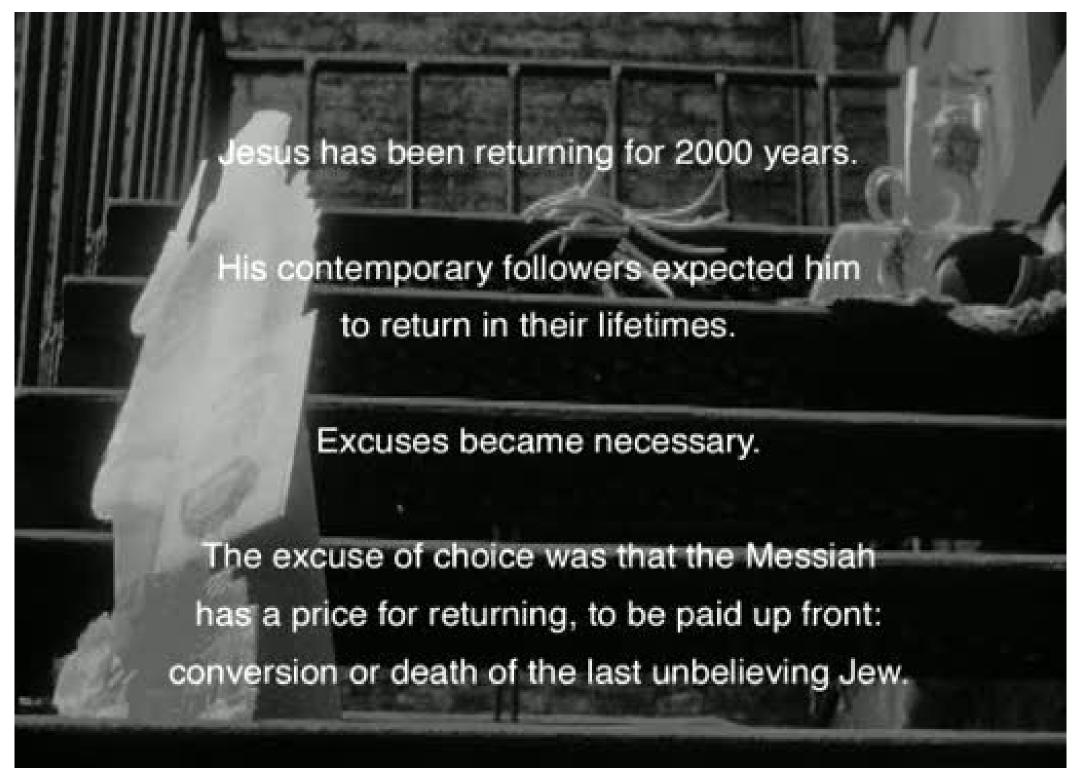


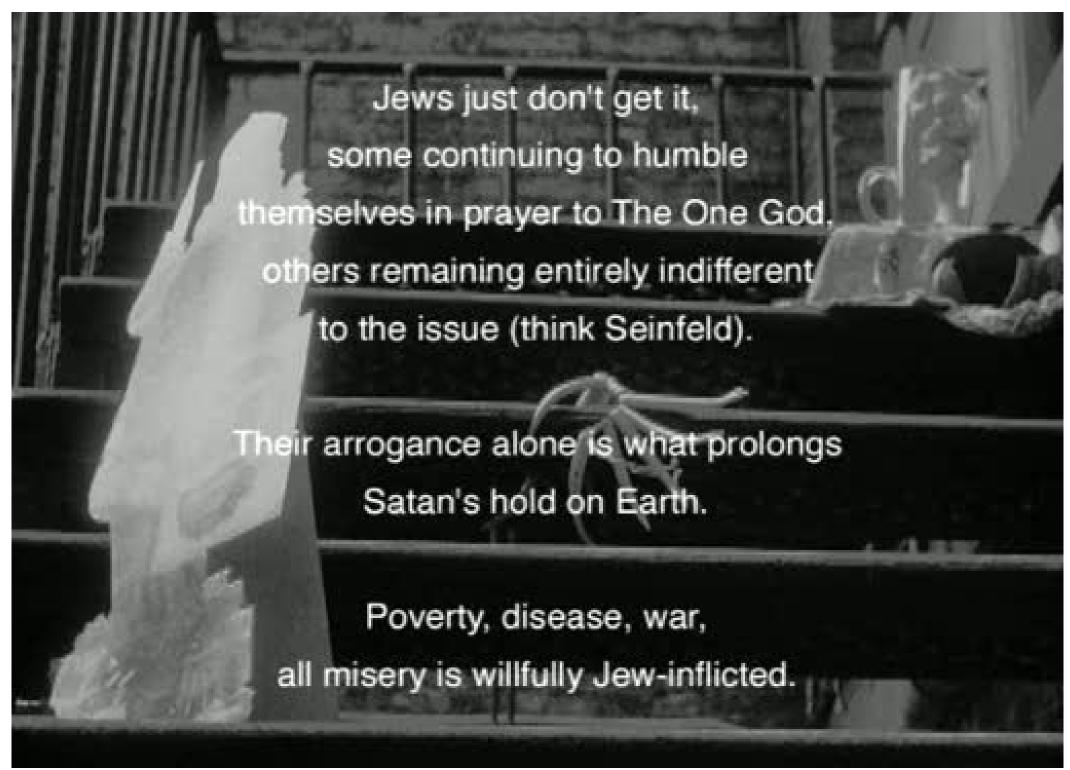


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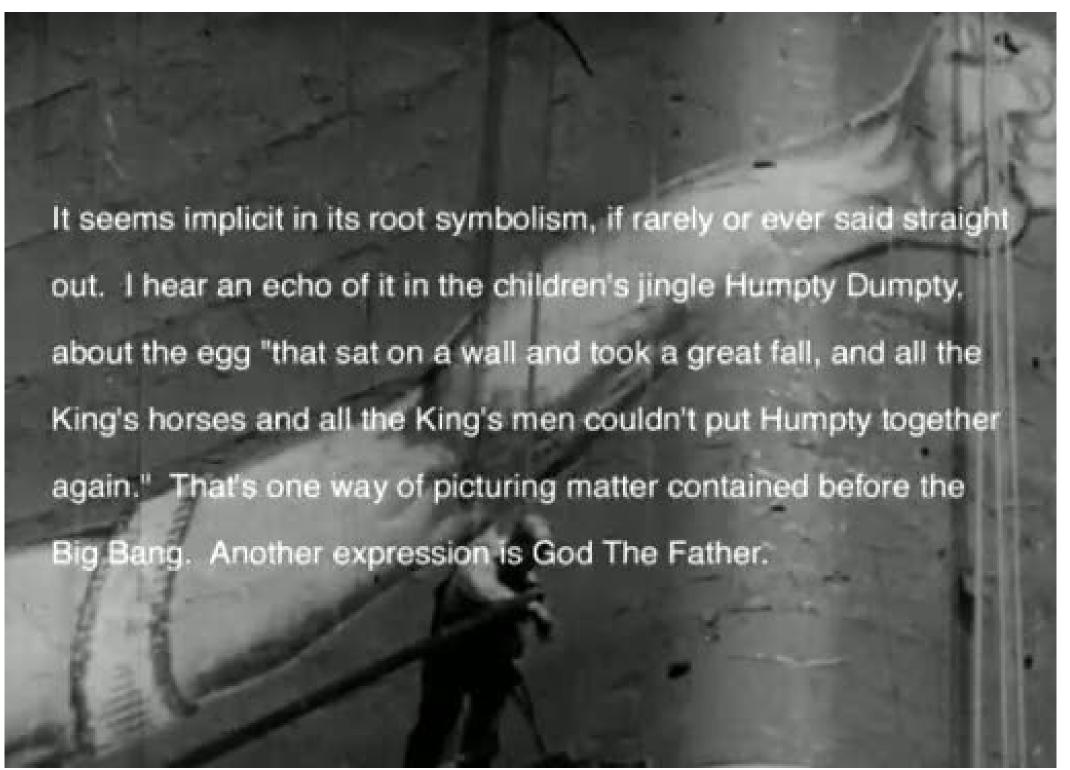




Oh, thou smilyface fanatics. You think Jesus dies for you and George W. Bush lies for you, you figure you're sitting pretty, spared what we will endure. In fact like the good folks trusting in Jim Jones you will experience enormous pain, you will watch your children experience enormous pain, and you will die wondering how you could've been such assholes.



A movie is an aphorism.



Star Spangled To Death - Chapter 1, Part 2 - 27.jpg

Gone, dismembered, in process of disintegrating into ever smaller fragments that will lose their erruptive force until there's nothing but suspended dust in absolute quiet. God is what people have called whatever was before the disruption and longing for God is for a return to that state. Life is the shards of God scrambling to get back, desperately struggling to reorganize. One monstrous and ironic result being that each of God's manifestations is at odds with the other, each wound up to fill the universe in its own likeness, with its own kind.

Each, of God, aims to be God, resulting in universal strife. The dream of The Peacable Kingdom puts in soft-focus the fact that the living live on other lives, by grinding up the competition and converting it to themselves. Here's an animal you say that's content to graze? It's masticating and digesting (in an acid bath) a plant that itself is nothing other than pure will-to-live. The really successful species would fill the universe with itself to the brim, assuming it could survive on a diet of its own body.

I take God The Holy Ghost to be a poetic way of indicating the exploding cosmos, God now, on the skids.

God The Son is us, people. Animals with oversized freak cerebellums, that alone among all attempted solutions to the challenge of survival crossed over into reflective awareness. Among other projections of a collective self we picture a man suffering on an upraised cross, lifted above the ground where he scans an enormous vista, seeing suffering everywhere.

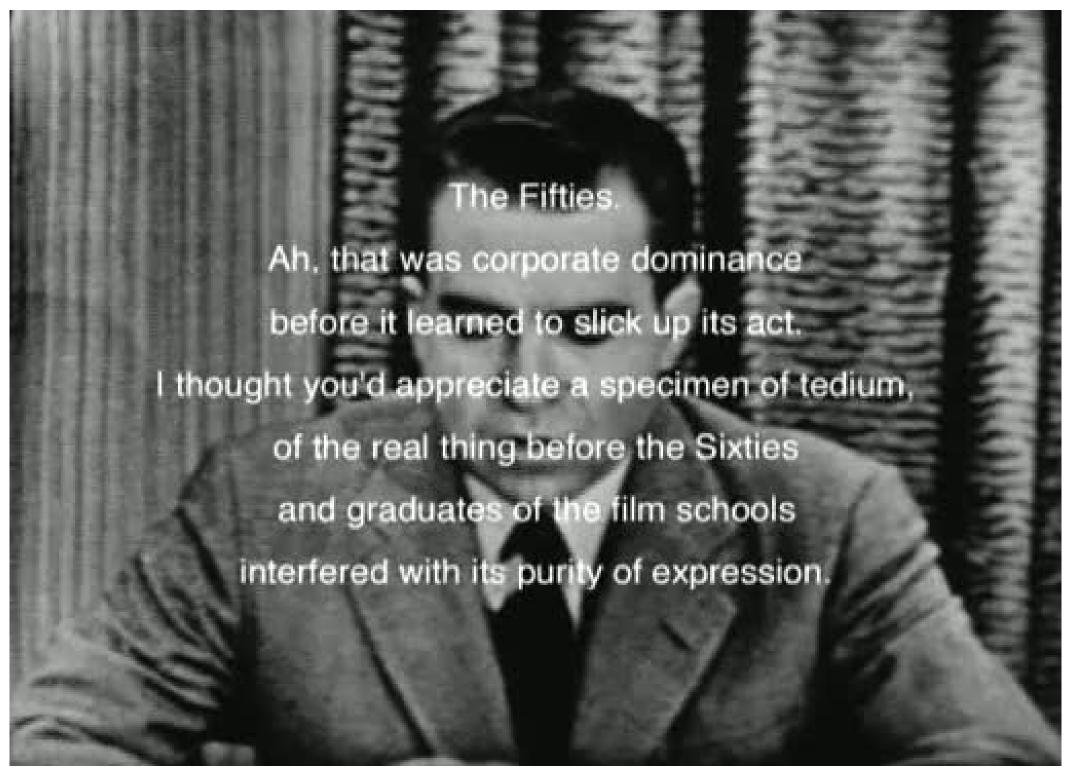
The jingle faces up to tragedy but stops short of suggesting the possibility of salvation within that finality. Not afterlife-wishing salvation but justification for lives that make little sense as efforts to gather up a broken cosmos falling to ever smaller pieces, which is what Humpty/The King/God wants of us. Can't be done. Wouldn't be worth anything if successful: an eternity of energy held in perfect equilibrium unaware that it's there. What is saved, all that can be saved, is an awareness of what's happening, a feelingful awareness. Poor God, magnificent and pathetic and tyrannical blind Existence caught in a human snapshot between all and nothingness.

Nixon is appealing to our hearts. He had contempt for those of us opposing slaughter in Vietnam. We were unmanly Kissinger assured him we didn't have the big picture. It takes a big man not to allow the suffering he inflicts to get to him. We were softies, bleeding hearts. The story goes that Jesus was a bleeding heart.

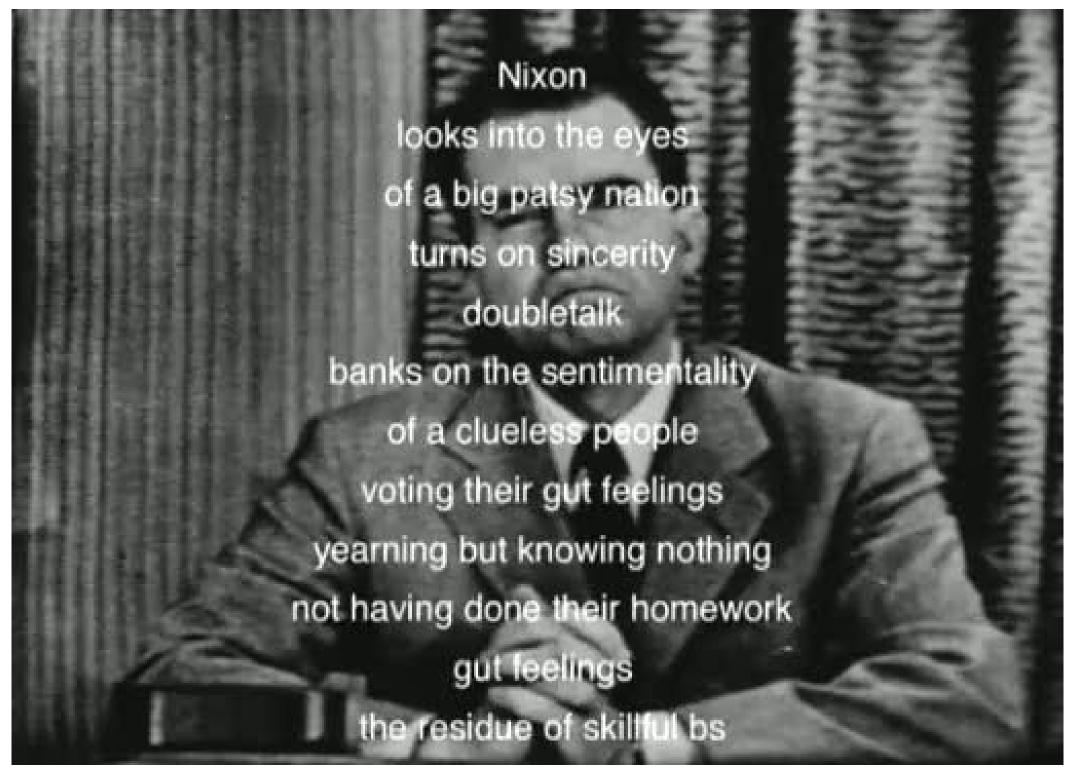
The Fifties We had tedium down then. To be young and full of juice in the time of Ike and his Igor, Richard Nixon and wrestling on tv and supermarkets. With leftists kicked out of popular culture and precious little alternative culture other than some great jazz if you could afford the drinks. People afraid to sign their name to anything. Everyday the Cold War threatening to turn hot until you could no longer react and it became life or death and so what?

We were artists with no art-market. We were throwing away our futures gambling on the present, sticking with the present. It was easy. Whatever promise America might've had was now bitter memory. It had come out of WW2 untouched. It felt good at war. It would stay at war. It liked to play with fire. What futures? America had nothing to offer. We only had the present and -our good luckthe present was another story. It featured eccentrics.

A good eccentric is a zen marvel. It isn't true eccentrics are dysfunctional. They may be useless, of no use to the economy, that's the beauty of them; they're self-contained, a variant of existence itself. They function like artworks, nests of fascinating particulars. Once the present coughed up Jack and Jerry into my life, for instance, I felt I had nothing to complain of. This movie is an arrangement of found films and found personalities.



Star Spangled To Death - Chapter 1, Part 2 - 36.jpg



I was ready to.

Nixon and Billy Graham were among the leaders of America's Anti-Communist Crusade. I figured I *must* be a communist, by nature, because I so despised *them*. I went to Communist Party headquarters in Manhattan to join.

Some men were coming down the steps to the street, continuing a discussion. A well-dressed and self-assured black man spoke, others turning to attend to his words.

A young woman at a desk asked what it was I wanted.

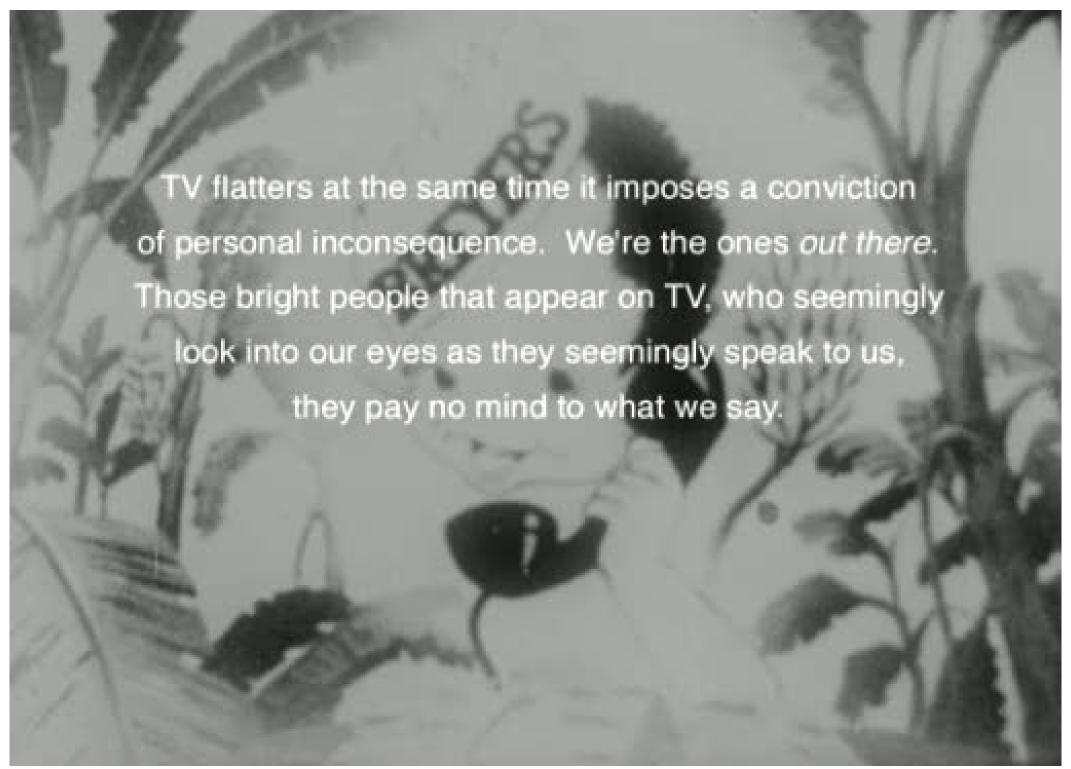
This is what it must be, I thought, to take one's life in one's hands. I said: to join, to become a member.

She explained it was late, a Friday. She told me I could return on Monday.

Nixon made a fortune, after he was forced to resign for his criminal actions, when he was made a partner in a New York law firm. Criminal? Law? Mmm. We're to believe he returned to law practice and not that this was payoff time.

What practicing what law? He maybe prepared briefs? Harangued juries? Let's say he facilitated contacts far and wide, vacationed, bitched ("Goddam kikes!"). stayed drunk weeks on end and after some years made statesman appearances The murderer. Of many thousands.

It hurts to think that democracy is enough of the people fooled enough of the time for con-men to lead all the people anywhere they damn well please. was wondering about voters tested on what they were voting about, their individual test score the value of their vote. Could the questions be fair? The issues presented honestly? The grading be fair? So that most any person who did their homework could score a hundred?



Star Spangled To Death - Chapter 1, Part 2 - 42.jpg

They couldn't care less when we moon them. We learn personal inconsequence as children, as toddlers, when nice men and women address us sweetly from the tube and draw out our affections, but when we speak, when we tell them our good news and bad, show them our new doll or toy truck, they don't shift their gaze, they don't respond at all. Nothing we do or say seems to matter! We come to realize that they are on and we are not. Only they matter,

those on the other side, the stars. Humbled, catching on, growing up, we take our place among those that watch.

Hating "America"

I do. Toto began to pull the curtain back while I was still a teen but what I saw was no loveable old fake. I saw instead a consumptive banshee, Greed personified. It was consuming lives by the thousands, the hundreds of thousands, yet complained it needed more. It told me it had the authority to recruit me to assist in feeding it. It expected absolute commitment from me: "You will kill or maim or be killed or maimed in Korea or wherever I send you," it said, "and no backtalk". Or it would punish me with incarceration in a place where anything goes, where men are men. If I obeyed without question, however, I would be defending Freedom.

As a Depression-baby I'd grown up thinking New Deal amenities granted to most (white) Americans, Social Security and the right to unionize, a social net and public housing and so on had always been the going ways. And then learned they were a recent exception to what's been one long sweep of might making right on every level of social organization. Sweet-talker Ronald Reagan, a face of The Great Depression, began repeal of the New Deal and return to tradition "to make America competitive again". The poor saps bought it, with Bush continuing the return to extreme iniquity, now beyond recall without revolution and that won't happen so long as bullies can be hired and armed.

Jay Gould, "The Wolf of Wall Street", 1836-1892

perpetrator of mass poverty,
when asked was he afraid
the people might rise against him,
answered,

"I can always hire half the working class to kill off the other half."

(see A CORNER IN WHEAT, D.W. Griffith)

It might be that The Still Greater Depression will swing politics the other way but I suspect it's too late: they've taken all the money. We're broke, deep in unpayable debt. Kids unborn are in debt, will stay in debt unless they're recruited by The Man. But if we were to start again, if a new day was to dawn, the debts would have to be renounced, a new currency issued, a fresh deck placed on the table in the form of an entirely open meritocracy with helping hands for those that need help, and a new name for mercy's sake. Like Jim, or Sally. Some unpretentious name that doesn't get dinned into our minds day in and out like a Coke commercial.

They couldn't care less when we moon them. We learn personal incansequances as children instoodlers when nice men of petition and the petition of petition and the petition of petition of petition and the petition of petition and the petition of petition of petition and the petition of pe Those of get put affections about when we seemingly look has we tell them they good news speaked us, show them our new day not than truck with the wear't shift their gaze, they don't respond at all. Nothing we do or say seems to matter! We come to realize that they are on and we are not. Only they matter. those on the other side, the stars. Humbled, catching on, growing up, we take our place among those that watch

The Towers loom in memory. But the Pentagon hit was the more extraordinary one. More difficult to pull off not only because of its squat structure but because the amateur pilot had to have expected interference, expected that it would be protected. High-speed military aircraft should have intercepted and brought down the offcourse passenger plane; yes, with its doomed passengers. But the immeasurable failure to protect the supposed center of national protection is hardly ever mentioned. A non-stop repair-replacement job was done and the pose is that we tossed off the blow. Islam knows better. Near-miracles of precise derring-do, the names of the nineteen that swung Allah's sword that day will be taught to children and celebrated in song until doomsday.

Capitalism, unrestrained, pollutes air, water, land making life untenable. Capitalism aims to convert all of life to cold cash. If the purpose of an economy is to sustain life, Capitalism fails in practice.

Capitalists look ahead,

operating on a system of "cost-benefit analysis".

They figure the odds: possible cost to themselves

of the damage they do, criminality undertaken, taking

into account, for instance, the number of survivors

that might successfully sue.

They measure money to be got against risk of getting caught:

"Is it worth it?", they soberly think and consult lawyers.

Lawyers and accountants tabulate how much they'll pay out

if they get caught against how much they'll keep

from what they steal.

Lawyers know the law and how it can protect their clients.

They know the lawmakers and pay them to protect them.

Smart robbers don't wear masks;

they appear smiling on society pages.

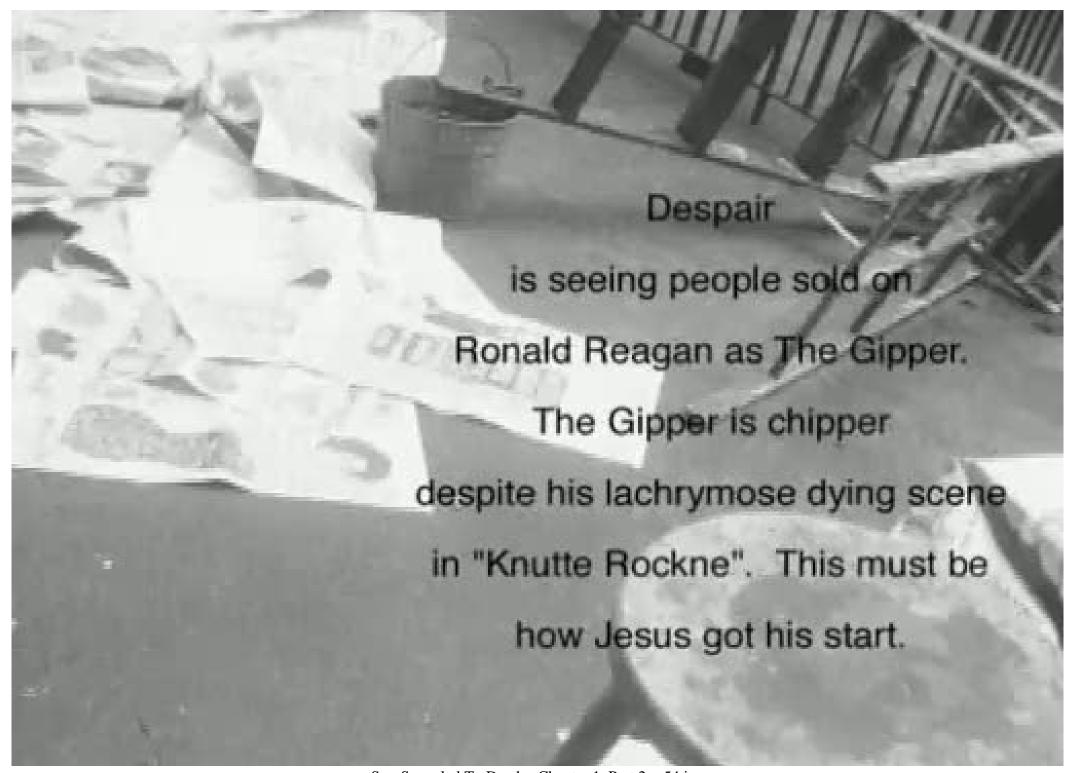
Charles Manson, behind bars these many years, is laughing.

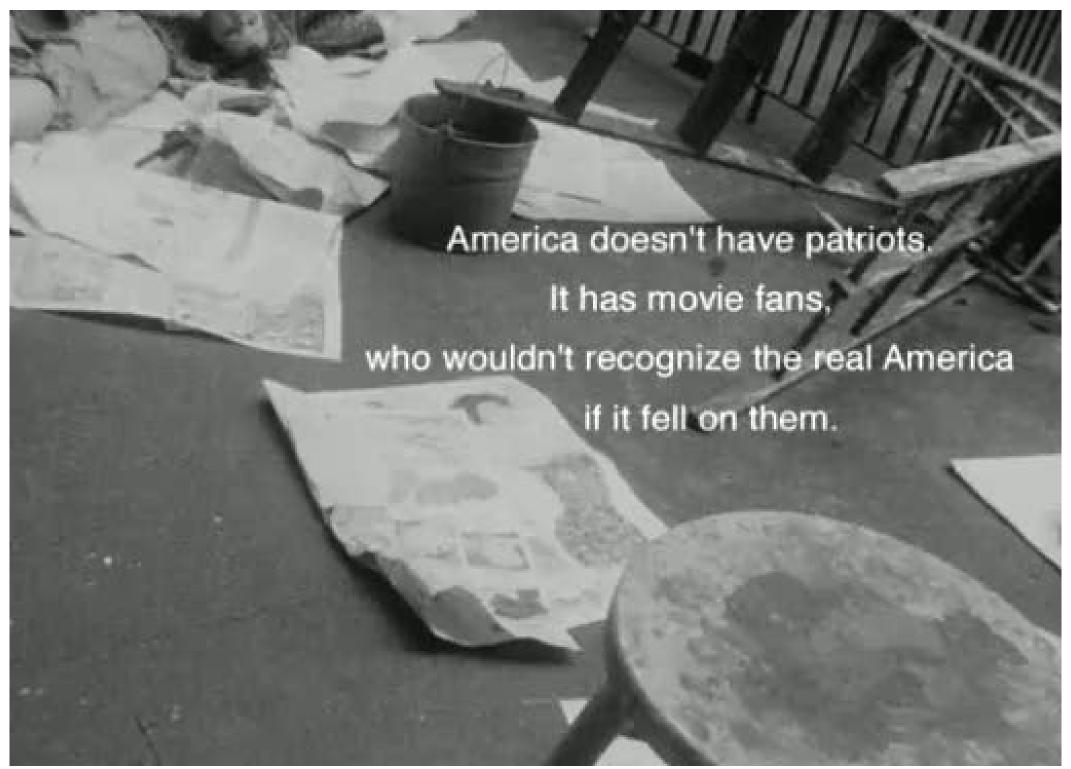
He has tv privileges and it amuses him

to observe Normal Behavior.

Preventative War

has him in stitches.



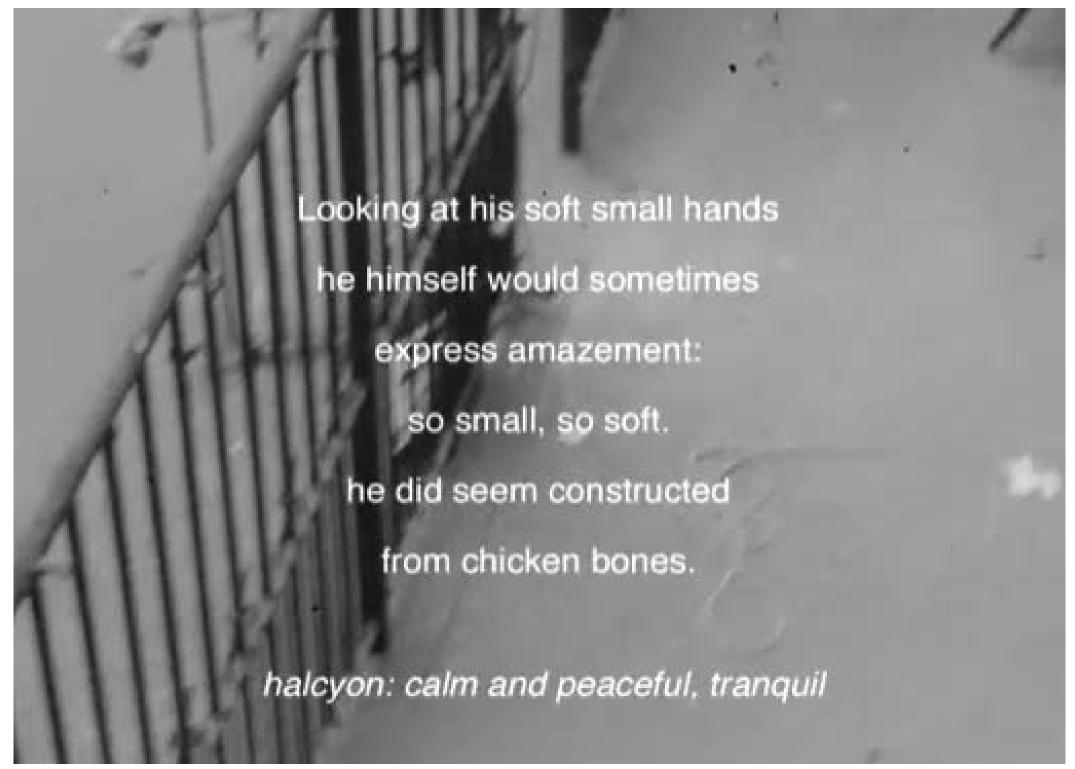


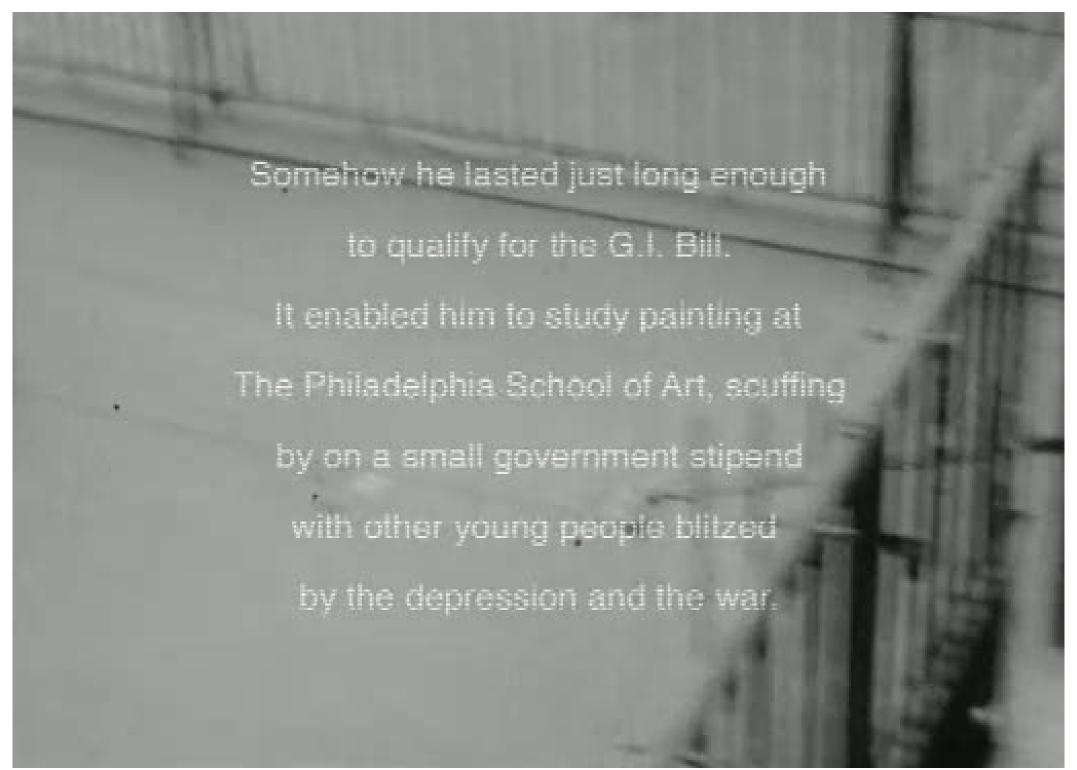
Star Spangled To Death - Chapter 1, Part 2 - 55.jpg

USA! USA! USA!

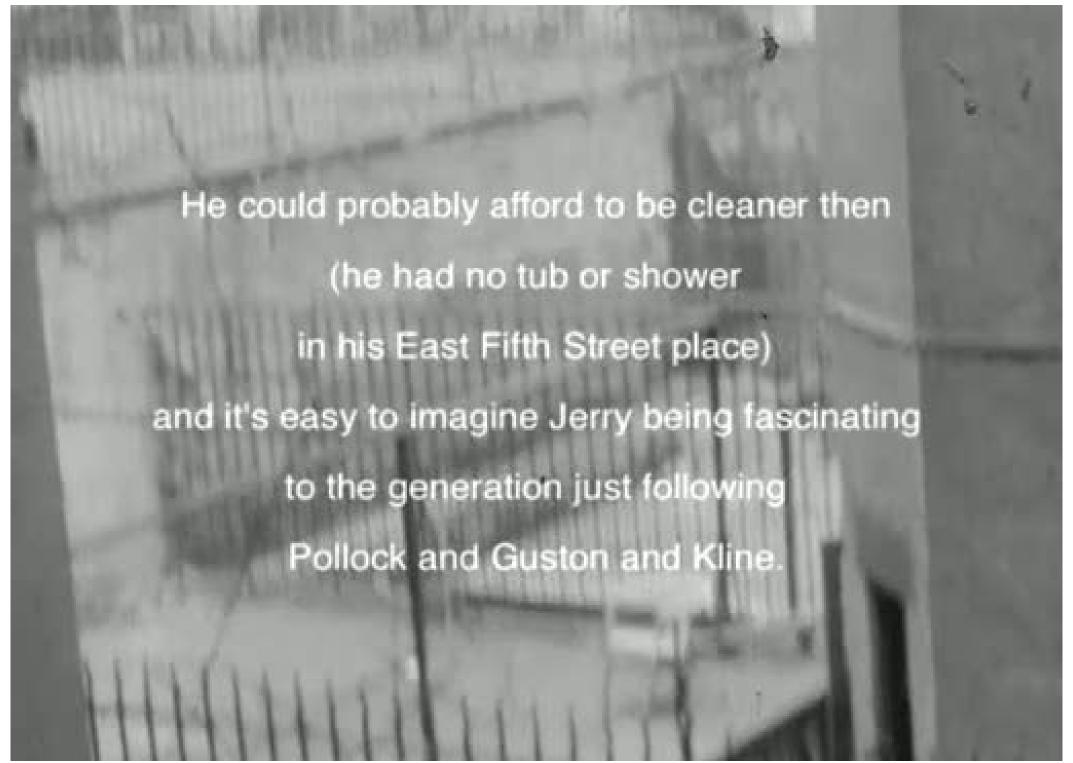
These people are at the movies and don't you forget it.

HIS HALCYON YEAR Some ten or so years earlier Jerry had been given a medical discharge out of boot camp Yes, it had to've been a desperate moment in the war against Fascism for the US to be drafting The Sims (what kind of physical?) and expect him to run obstacle courses and snap to attention and shoot the breeze with the guys.

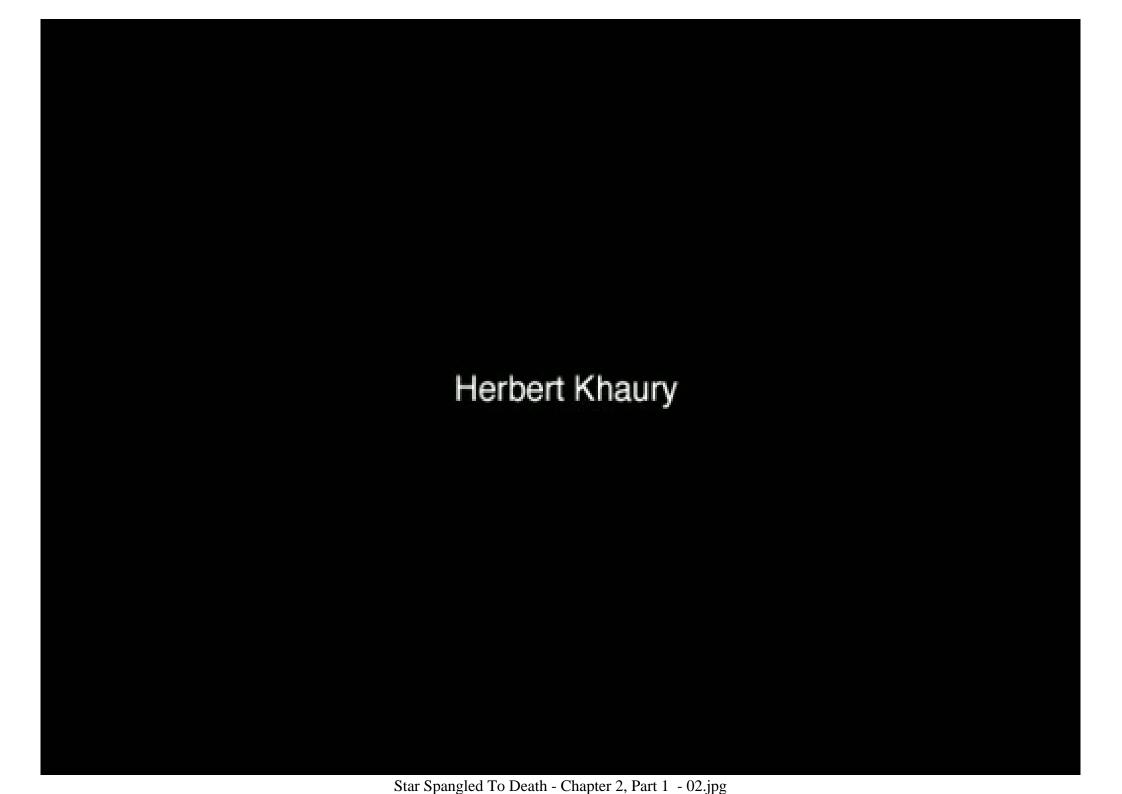




Afterwards he would speak of seedy 1946, the year the Holocaust moved forward from the bottom of page eleven of The New York Times, as his "halcyon year", when for the very first time he felt among people he could speak with, among friends.



We met with a man getting along with no visible means of support. I don't mean hovering over the ground but as regards livelihood. It was in Berlin almost twenty years ago. He had traveled a lot in Africa, a smuggler we thought or something worse. Yet this knowing and cynical fellow was not without some heart. "Africa," he said "is a basket case."



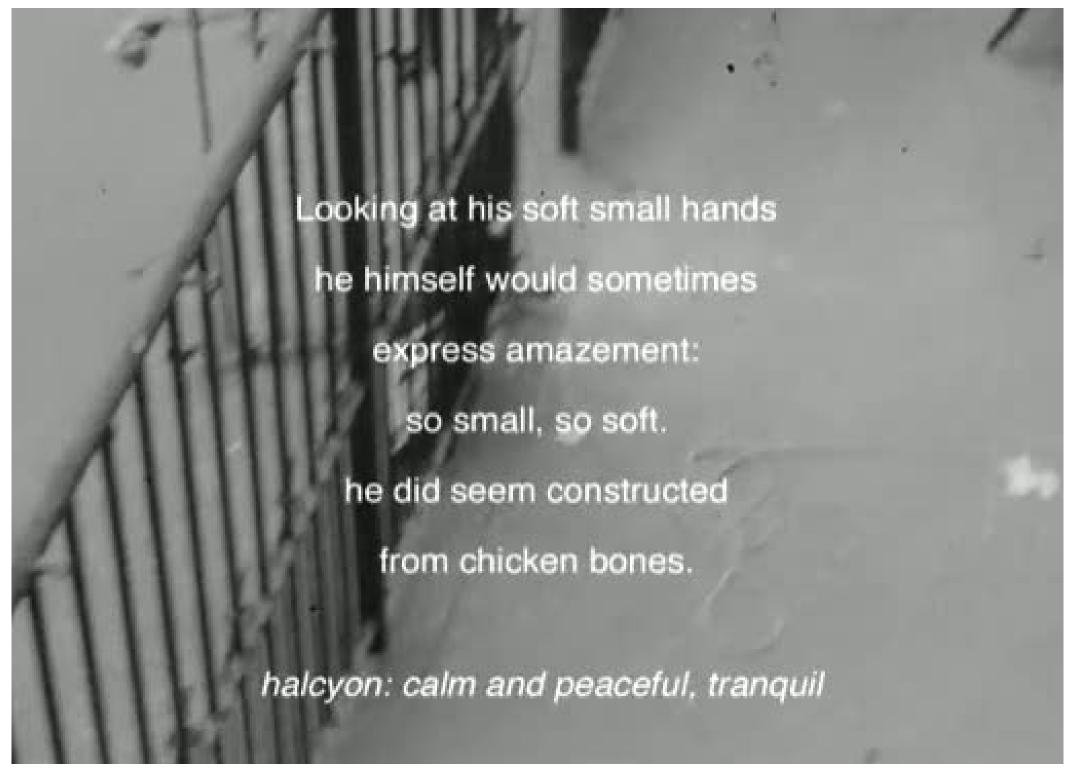
The Great Depression gave people Blue Moon,
It's Only A Paper Moon, Pennies From Heaven,
Ten Cents A Dance, Lullaby Of Broadway,
among any number of exquisite songs
and dance numbers.

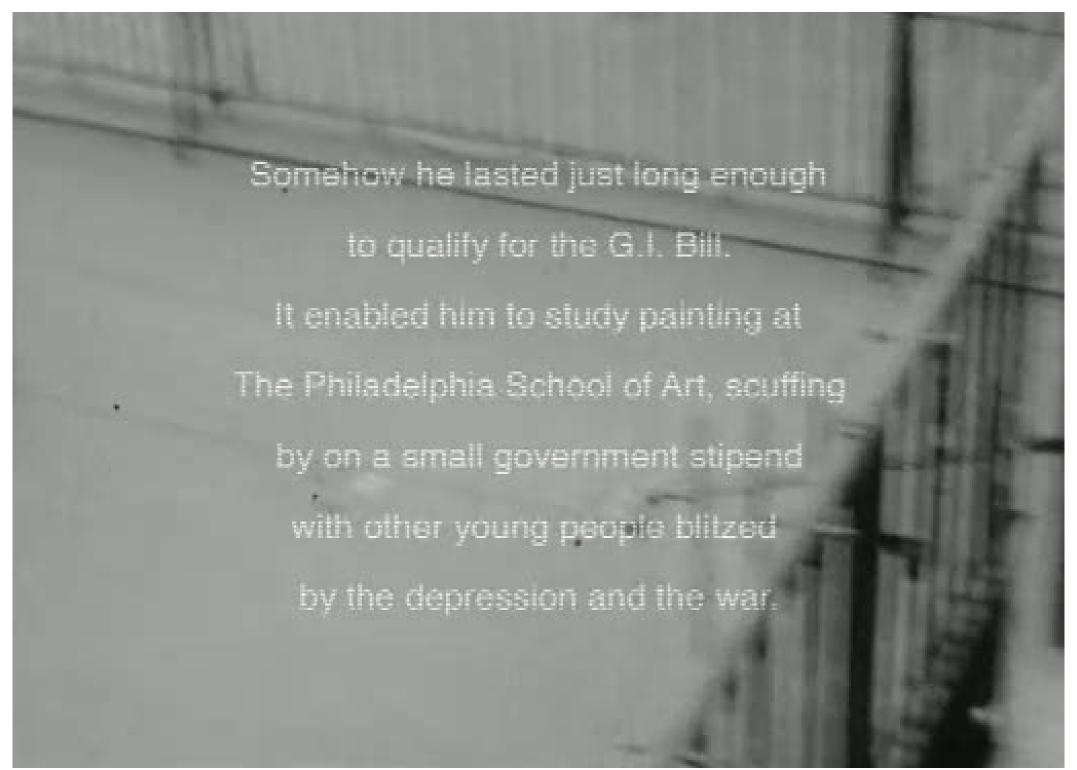
But what do we get? while sinking into

The Even Greater Depression:

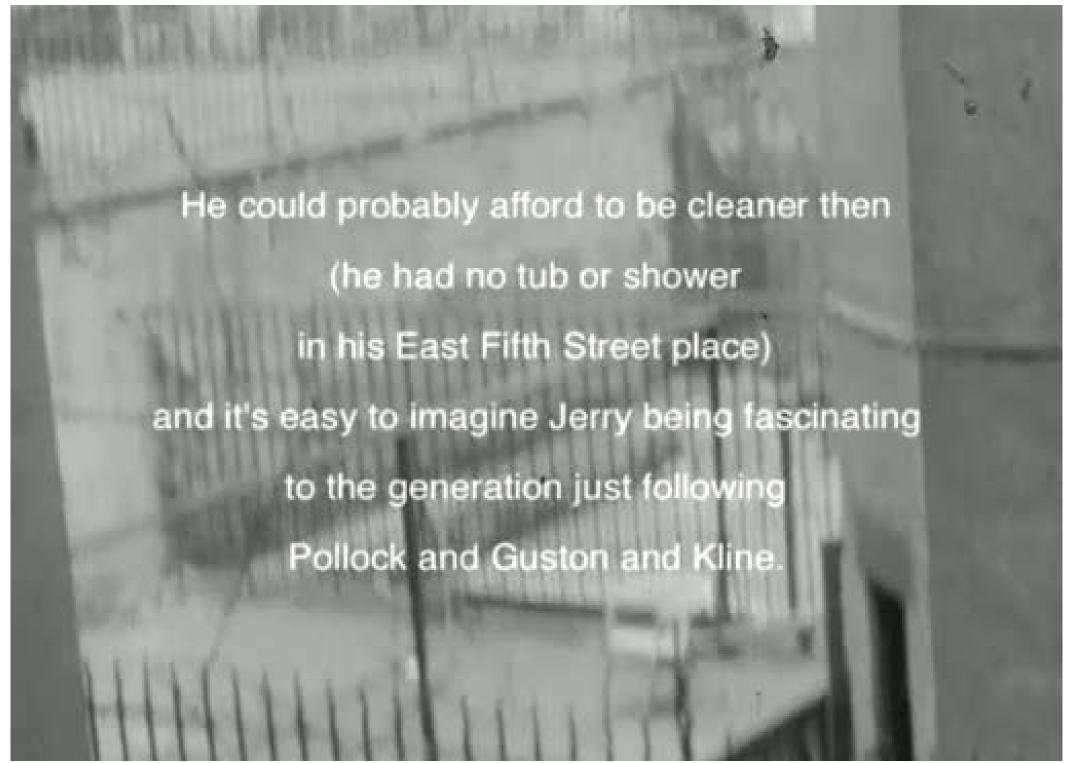
Gangsta rap!

HIS HALCYON YEAR Some ten or so years earlier Jerry had been given a medical discharge out of boot camp Yes, it had to've been a desperate moment in the war against Fascism for the US to be drafting The Sims (what kind of physical?) and expect him to run obstacle courses and snap to attention and shoot the breeze with the guys.





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HEART OF GOLD

making money
moneymaker
a real moneymaker
was John D. Rockefeller
he didn't make money
from nothing

he converted what had been forests and seas animals and people in all their specific detail to medium of exchange his money e would size someone up on the spot and know what they were worth to the penny

Movies tell us that money is no measure of success.

Money, in fact, is a *precision* measure of success,

to the penny.

Capitalists don't figure money to be the *reward* of success; accumulation of money by any means, only get away with it, is the success.

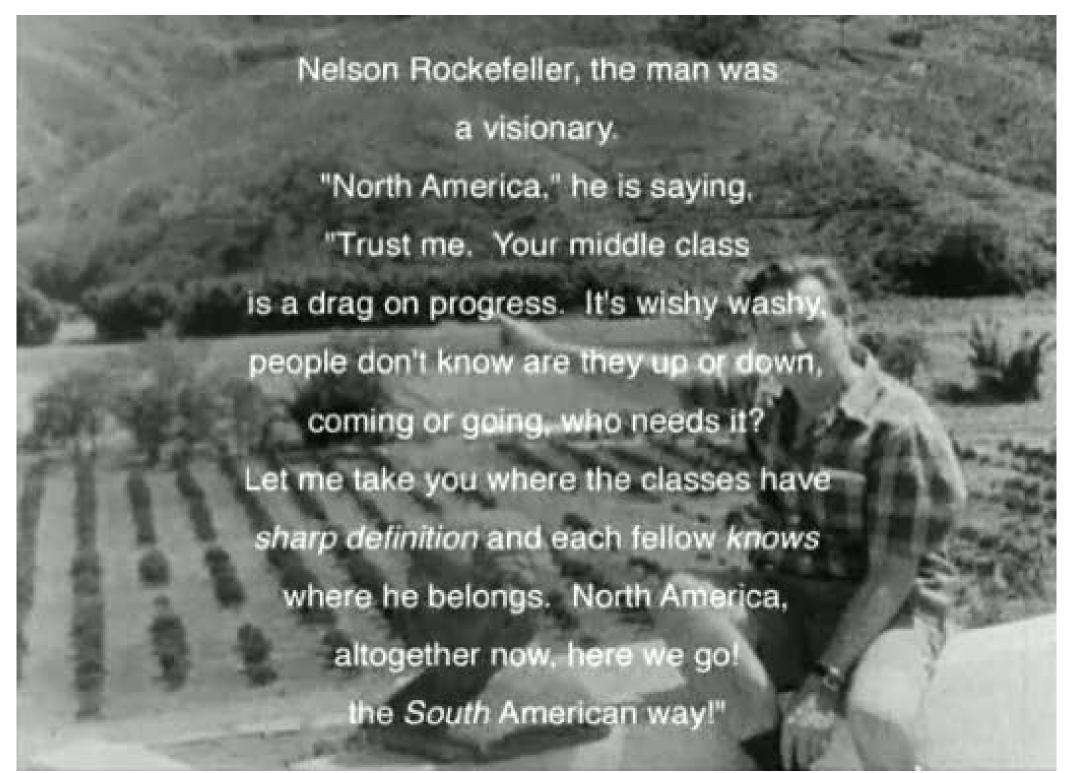
Jay Gould, "The Wolf of Wall Street,"

when asked was he afraid

the people might rise, answered,

"I can always hire half the working class

to kill off the other half."



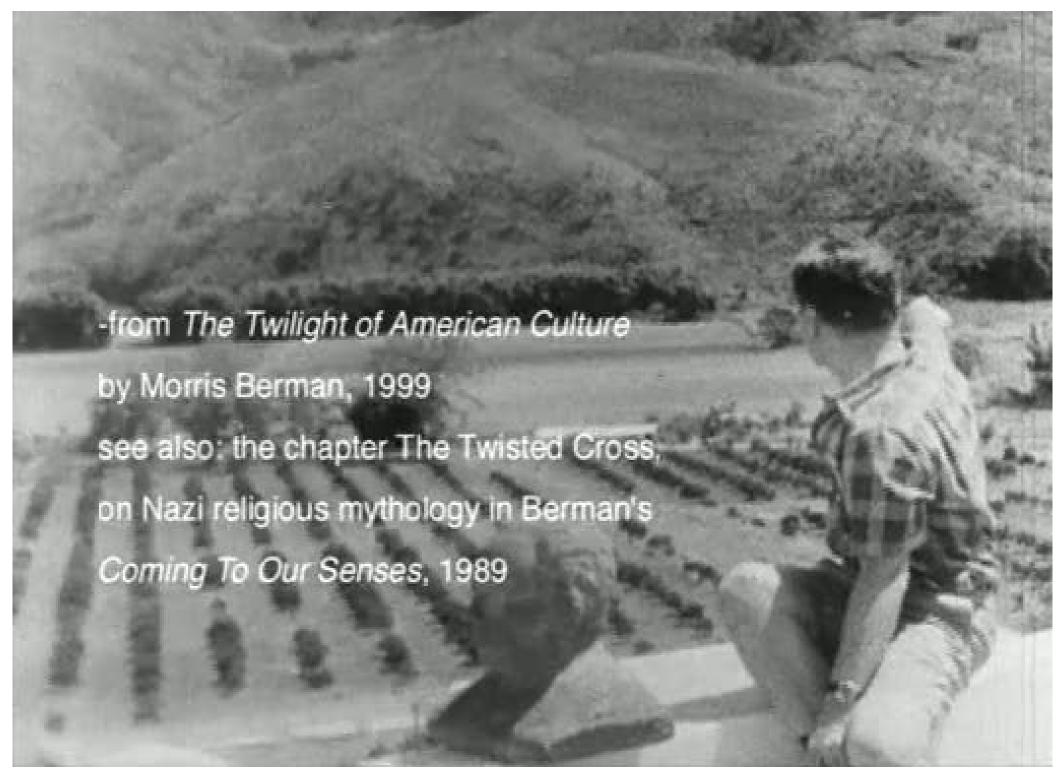
We are, in short, drifting toward a situation such as exists in India, or Mexico, or Brazil, and nothing is being done to halt this. During the period from 1991 to 1994, for example, the number of Mexican billionaires went from two to twenty-eight. Ernesto Canales Dantos, a corporate attorney who has represented may of these men, calls it "the Aztec pyramid model, much of which was made possible by U.S. investment, and which, in turn, had repercussions for our own lopsidedness. Thus David Calleo (The Bankrupting of America) writes: "The advanced part of the 'American' economy seems a more and more prosperous enclave, barricaded within a deteriorating nation. Rather than providing a model for the third world. United States appears to be imitating it.

"If anything," adds David Rieff of the World Policy Institute,
"America, with its widening income gap, its vast, deepening
divergences in everything from education to life expectancy
between rich and poor, is less democratic today...than it was
in 1950."

The effect of these trends, and of growing corporate hegemony. has been particularly devastating on children--not only in the United States, but in other parts of the world as well. Between 1979 and 1990, the number of American children living below the poverty line rose an astonishing 22 percent. A 1996 article entitled "India's Child Slaves," in the International Herald Tribune notes that 15 million children in India work eleven to twelve hou daily in dangerous conditions, and are beaten if they try to escape. In the silk industry--financed by the World Bank--children as young as six and seven years of age are forced to plunge their hands into scalding water. To avoid starvation, many Indian families send their handicapped offspring to wealthy Arab nations to beg. Girls under ten are sold into prostitution, and India is hardly alone in this (Asian countries employ an estimated 1 million child prostitutes). Worldwide, according to the UN's International Labor Organization, 250 million children between the ages of five and fourteen are now employed across Asia, Africa, and Latin America, and this involves slavery, prostitution and work in hazardous industries.

Events such as these do not happen in a vacuum. Involvement of the World Bank, and/or U.S. corporations, is part of the whole fabric of oppression. Global corporate hegemony, multinational and transnational in nature, means by definition that these events are linked by a web of interdependent markets, investments, and trade agreements. The wealth of America's top quintile is implicated not only in the pover South Central Los Angeles but also in the slums of Buenos Aires. In 1991, the Nike Corporation made \$3 billion in profits, paying its factory workers in Indonesia -- mostly poor, malnourished women--\$1.03 a day, not enough for food and shelter (Just do it!)

By 1996, the 447 richest people on the planet had assets equal to that of the poorest 2.5 billion--42 percent of world population. What do we think it means when we buy a new sweater and the label reads MADE IN THE PHILIPPINES, or a transistor radio stamped MADE IN KOREA? What do we imagine the social and economic reality is behind these seemingly neutral words? behind the cup of Colombian (Brazilian, Angolan, etc.) supremo that we drink every morning, or the cleverly crafted decaf latte with 2 percent milk that we enjoy on a sunny autumn afternoon in a chic caté with our friends? We hardly need Ann Landers to tell us to "Wake up and smell the coffee." The truth is that it is a bitter brew that the affluence of the few is purchased at the misery of the many.

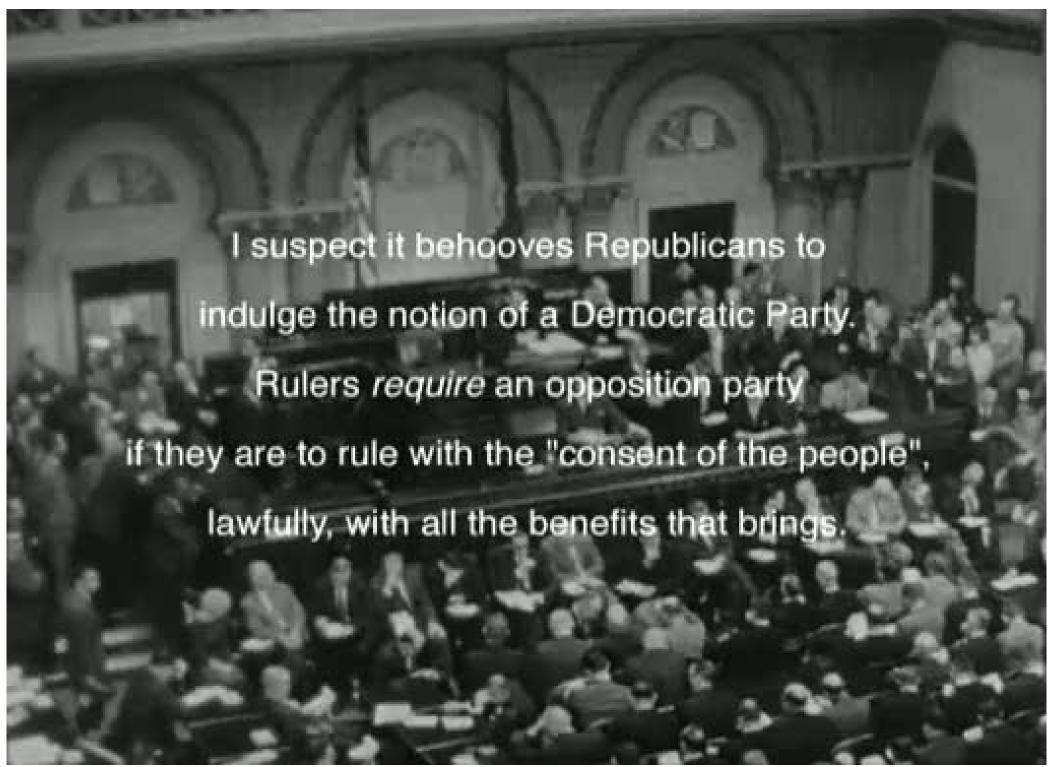


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Star Spangled To Death - Chapter 2, Part 1 - 19.jpg

The Republican Party is hard as nails, convincing. It looks to be a tightly controlled corporation. On the other hand, is there a Democratic Party? It seems more like a bazaar where an individual sets up a stand to hustle to the cut-rate crowd some item not so different from what Republicans hawk LeRouche cult-followers run as Democrats and the party does nothing about it.



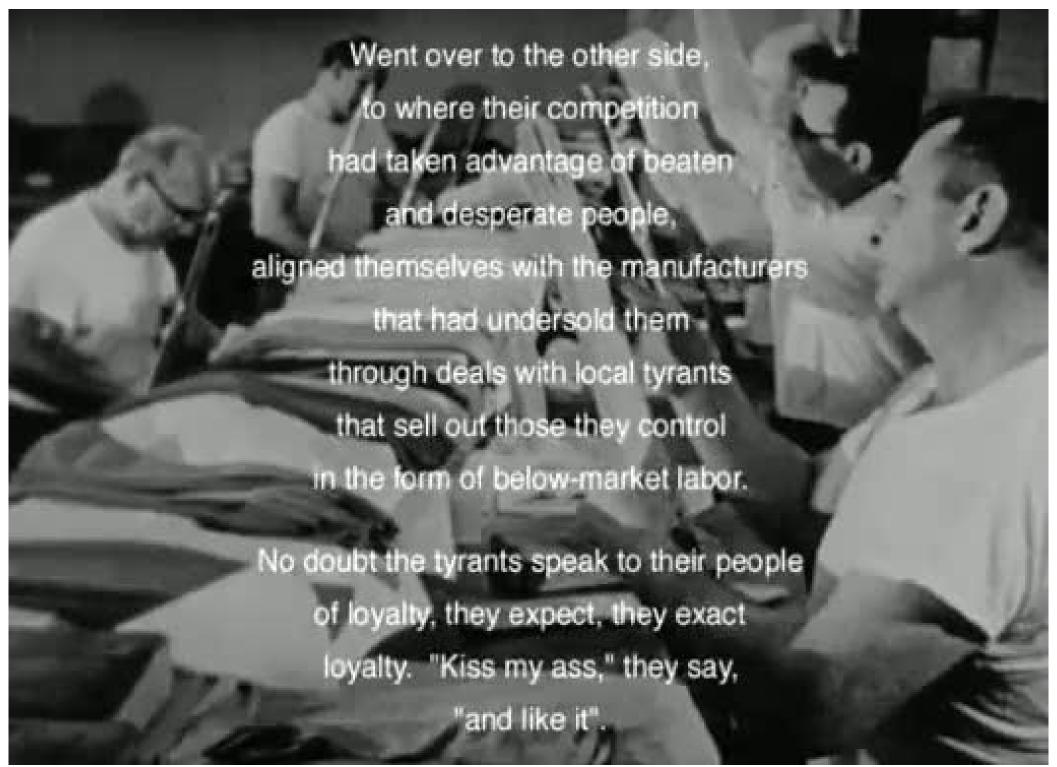
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They get the law in their hands at public cost and it's far less trouble and looks better than out and out tyranny.

Criticism becomes badmouthing the will of the people as manifest in their chosen representatives.

To achieve this, however, requires an offer to the people of some semblance of choice if only for a brand name up for grabs with no specific meaning.

Winner-take-all does the rest.

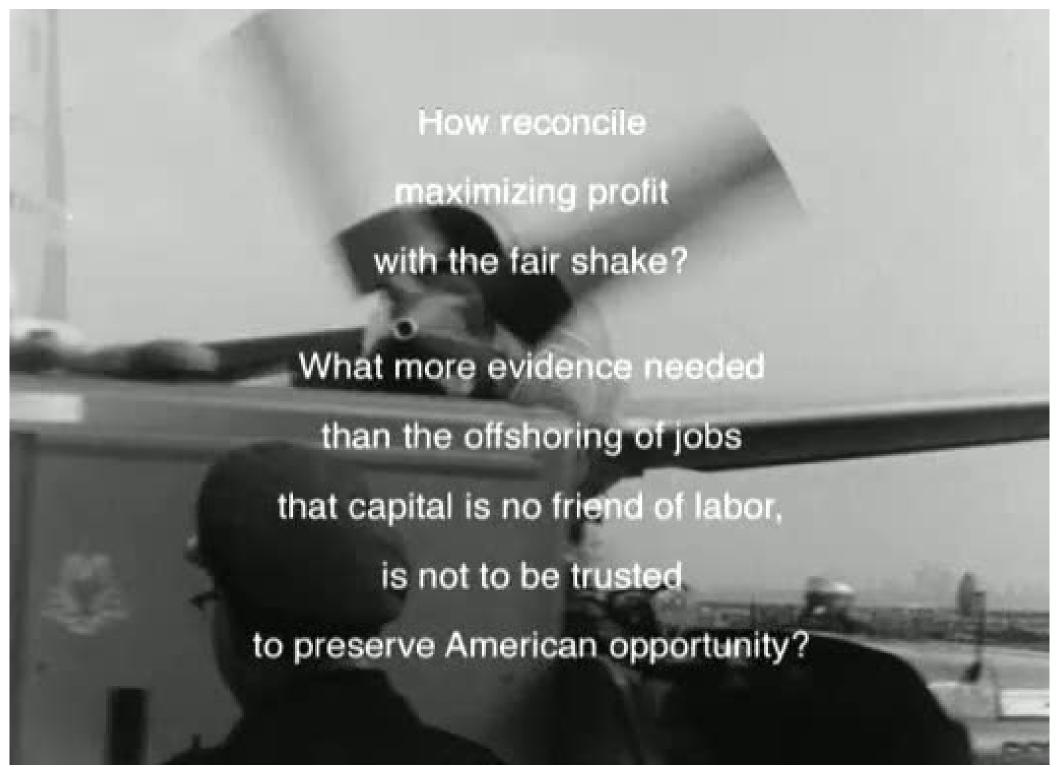


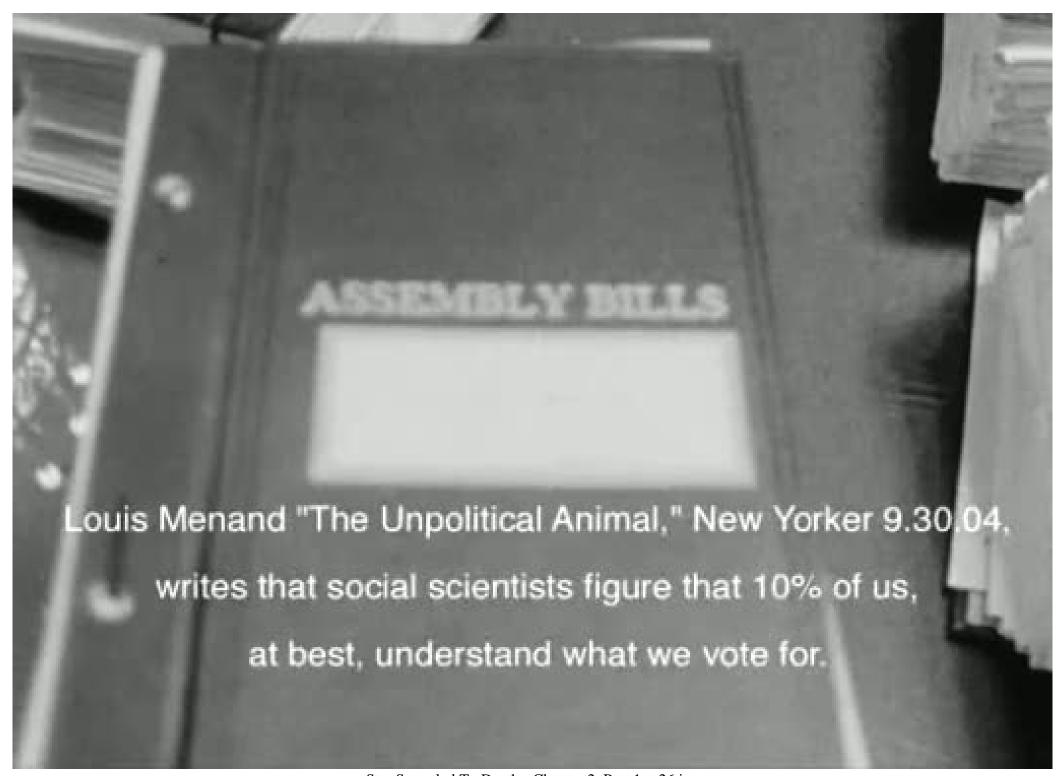
OFFSHORING AS TIME TRAVEL

When manufacturers and other bosses send jobs overseas they are sending them back in time, to the Nineteenth and early Twentieth centuries when they had things entirely their way and workers in America had no protections.

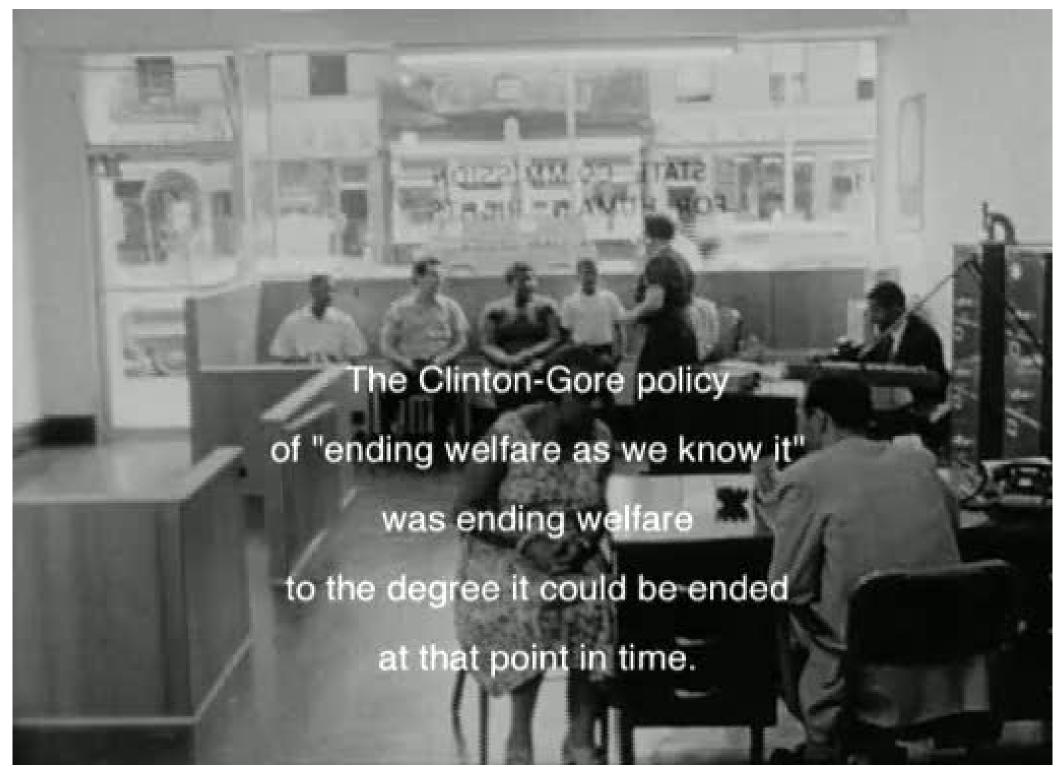
Cops and state militia and criminal goons could be set upon people struggling for a living wage.

Children did the work of adults for a fraction of the pay





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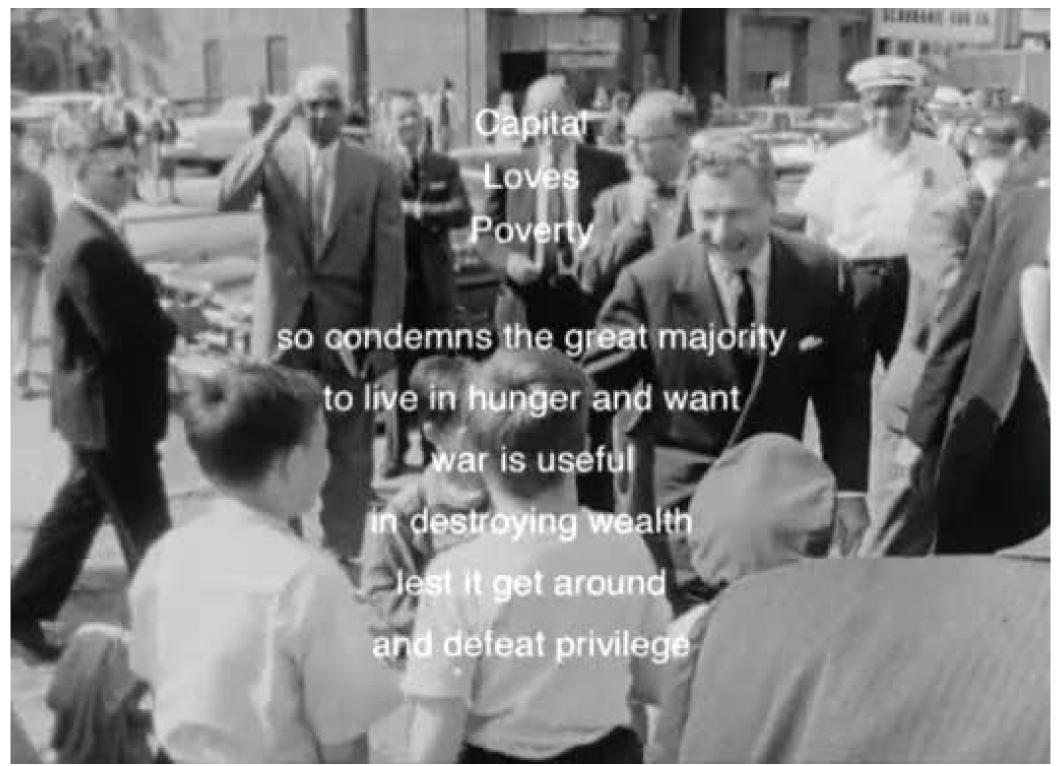


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wonder if long range plans of our masters include terminating consumer culture. It's a recent development, after all, coming about in the late 1800's. Why not have it ebb out? They own the board, they don't need all this turmoil and waste and further fouling of their planet. They could use a lot less of us, now with uncomplaining machines doing more and more of the chores We threaten privacy of their beaches. It is conceivable they may opt for return to the landed gentry model, featuring castles segregated from hovels. North America going the South American way. There will be royal families, their retainers and courtiers, and us and the cops and priests and lawyers to contain us.



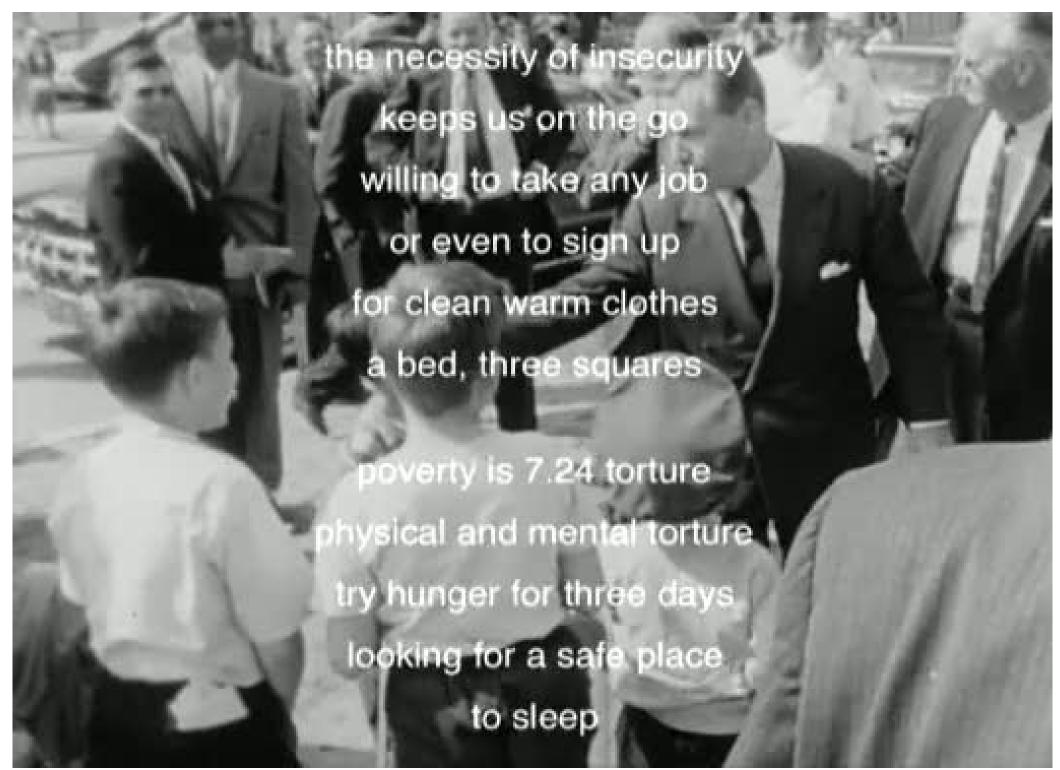
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Star Spangled To Death - Chapter 2, Part 1 - 30.jpg



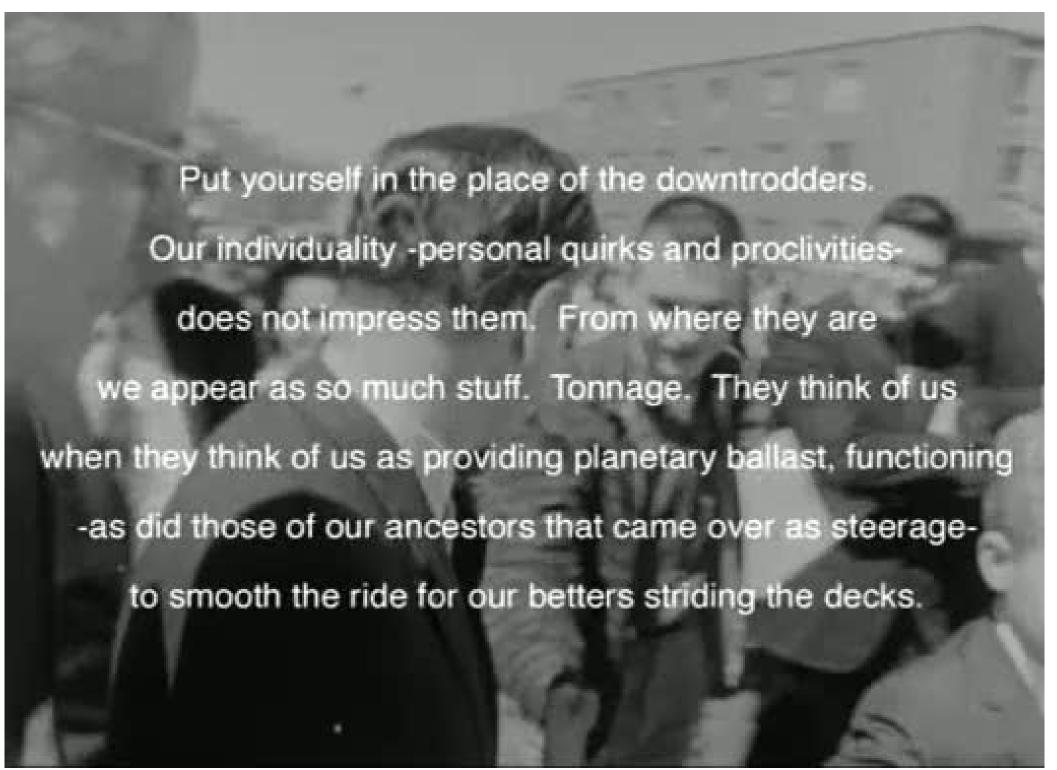
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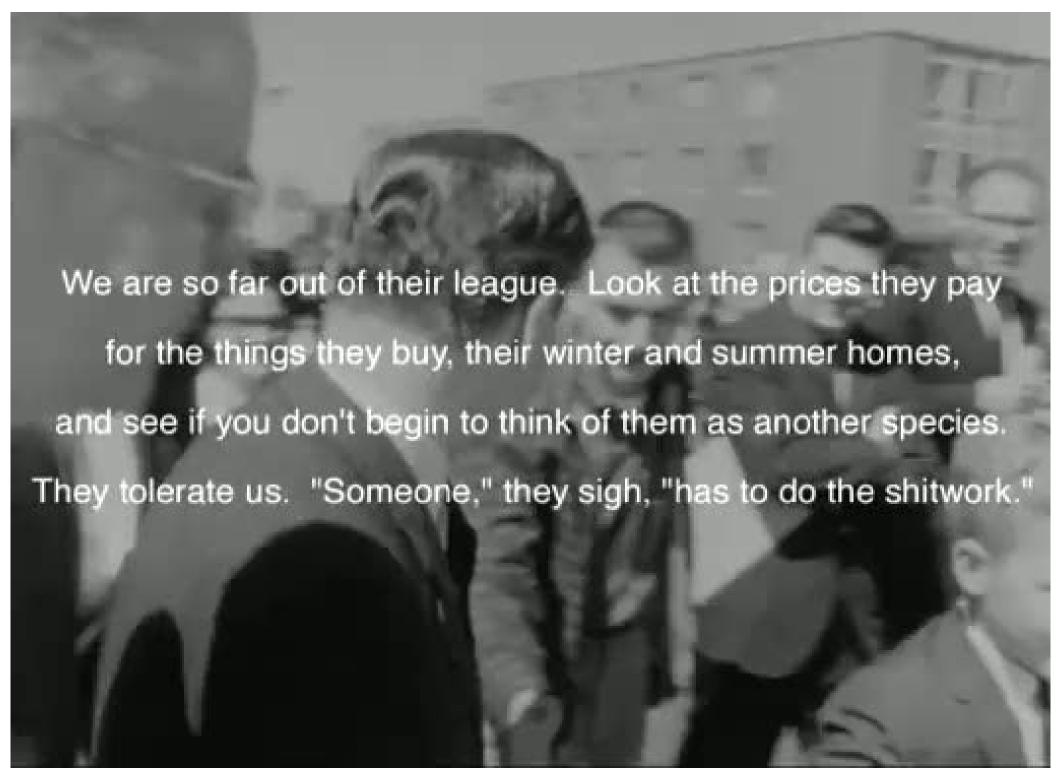


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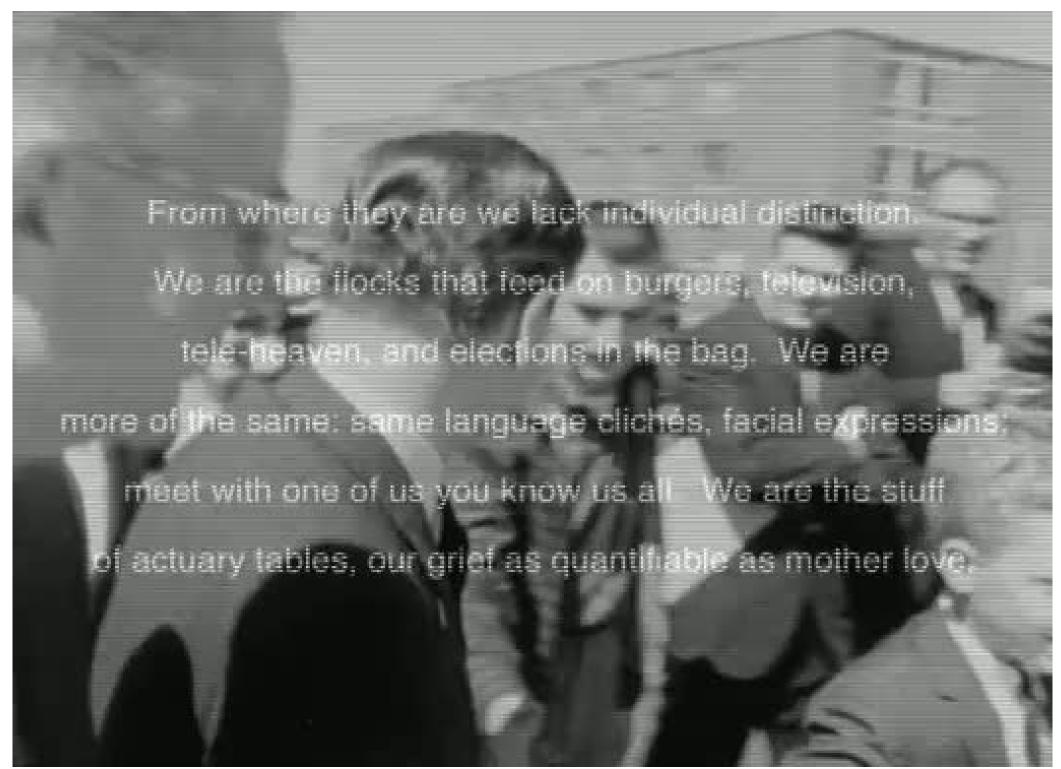


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Star Spangled To Death - Chapter 2, Part 1 - 36.jpg

Many consider Nelson's speech challenging Goldwater for the 1964 Republican nomination his finest, most courageously liberal public statement. And perhaps it was, but he was in no position to challenge Goldwater on conservative grounds and was also getting much flack for his divorce and re-marriage; the speech was not without self-interest, it was quite possibly all he could do to hang in. He of course lost the nomination as he'd lost against Nixon in 1960, and would again lose to Nixon in 1968.

Nelson Rockefeller and Barry Goldwater

San Francisco, 1964

Nelson Rockefeller, the liberal Republican governor of New York, was given five minutes to address the convention. He warned, before a hostile and frequently booing crowd, against making the conservative Barry Goldwater the Republican candidate.

Goldwater was nominated in the end, but not before Rockefeller confronted extremists within the party.

"Some of you don't like to hear it, ladies and gentlemen, but it's the truth. These extremists feed on fear, hate, and terror. ...

There is no place in this Republican Party... for such hawkers of hate, such purveyors of prejudice, such fabricators of fear.

Whether Communist, Ku Klux Klan or Birchers!"

The crowd boos and begins a continuous cheer of "We want Barry!" "There is no place in this Republican Party for those who would infiltrate its ranks, distort its aims and convert it into a cloak of apparent respectability for a dangerous extremism. And make no mistake about it, the hidden members of the John Birch Society and others like them are out to do just that."

Goldwater, in the famous conclusion to his acceptance speech, seemed to respond directly to Rockefeller's criticisms.

"Now, my fellow Americans, the tide has been running against freedom. Our people have followed false prophets. We must, and we shall, return to proven ways - not because they are old, but because they are true. We must, and we shall, set the tide running again in the cause of freedom. And this party, with its every action, every word, every breath and every heartbeat, has but a single resolve, and that is freedom - freedom made orderly for this nation by our constitutional government; freedom under a government limited by laws of nature and of nature's God; freedom - balanced so that liberty lacking order will not become the slavery of the prison cell; balanced so that liberty lacking order will not become the license of the mob and of the jungle. ... "I would remind you that extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice. And let me remind you also that moderation in the pursuit of justice is no virtue."

-Is This Thing On? by Peter Edidin, The New York Times,
 August 29, 2004

The millionaire vote alone can't swing an election. Big money gets its numbers playing the race card and making an ally of Christian fundamentalists avid for fulfillment of prophecy. Odd marriage, The Masters Of The World and those that want it blown all to hell.

Tells you the spot
Israelis are in
when they must accept
support of Christian crazies
intent on egging on Armageddon.

The fun part of Osama bin Laden is how he's a dead ringer for Jesus.

Don't put it past the owners to maybe one day tell us they've sold us to China, in the market for cheap labor and a place to dump industrial waste "Enough with that stars and stripes bullshit, next week you talk Chinese. Yeah, yeah, well life is full of surprises. Think of it this way, it means jobs, lots of work for everybody. We're packed, we're going, ta ta.

Oh yeah, you might as well know now:

There was a class war, all along, from day one."

Jerry's worst fear (he lived in fear) was of being taken for dead and buried alive. He smelled dead: fetid feet, fetid socks. Microbes of rot would emanate from his body, grab onto things and not let go. One day, before we could protect it with something disposable, Jerry hit the sack on our couch. It was redolent, stomach-turning. We had to carry it down into the street and dump it.

Jerry says we're up againt the nescient and benighted on the street level, where we live, and you can't beat 'em. Their stupidity is settled, they are Gibralters of stupidity.

You can hire them, induct them, aim and release their resentment as you wish; appealing to their good sense and common decency is a mistake. You will waste breath attempting to explicate the system that's cheated and brutalized them.

They want to beat their chests, flex muscles and to hit.

They want to be paid and be given permission. License.

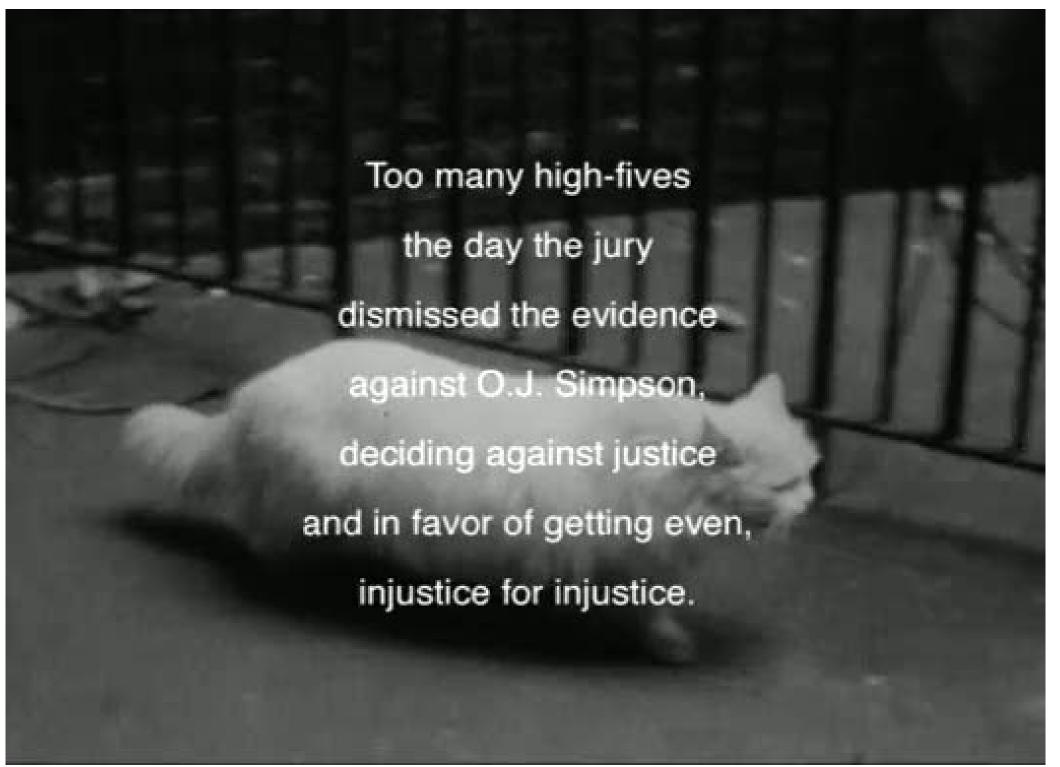
Rape, you want rape? rape's their specialty. Release them on college protesters and you can save your money.

Had there been no Civil War, no President Lincoln, who's to say ownership of human beings would not be legal in USA today.

Who's to say doing unto others whatever you damn well please, property rights being sacred, would not be a Consititution-protected freedom along with stocking up on AK47s in USA today.

General Colin Powell, and his lousy son heading the FCC, eager to consolidate the public airwaves in the hands of a few private corporations, presented as examples of how Blacks can rise in America from their former humiliation as slaves, do not look Black to me. Black African. Only if you go along with old Mississippi believing that "One drop of Black blood makes a person Black!"

Colin Powell and his lousy son,
I don't see slaves, or just barely.
Like with a lot of Blacks in America,
one sees the genes of slave-owners.
Not only the raped but the rapist.



The late Seventies

and prospects for a white world-champ looked bad. America The Movie* needed to invent Rocky. In the movie-America many Americans inhabit, their cheer-up fantasy just this side of Heaven, the thing that is most taken to heart is most real. Rocky the inarticulate (like GWB, all heart) was a hit. Rocky would then slide further Right to appear as Rambo, military killing machine at loose ends, who tears up a comfortable American town with the audience's approval.

* LIFE THE MOVIE, How Entertainment Conquered Reality, by Neil Gabler

In essence, the movie-makers succeed in moving the audience to cheer on Rambo as he upsets and demolishes themselves! The immediate motivation provided is the brutal Southern bigot sheriff running the town, a stock-villain drafted for the purpose of triggering Rambo's righteous fury regarding those comfortable home-bodies that chickened-out (US soldiers commit atrocities in the midst of war, now isn't that just terrible) and pulled back and prevented Rambo and his good buddies from finishing the job they'd begun in Vietnam.

In the early Nineteen Fifties, African-Americans in the civil rights movement adapted Ghandian principles of non-violent protest: "We are human," they insisted and demonstrated a nobility that startled the world. The Sixties anti-imperialist and social justice movements began at the lunch-counters and bus boycotts down South.

Many Jews were among the whites that could not stand by.

They supported the civil rights movement with time, skill,
money, some joining African-Americans in putting their bodies
on the line. And so the historical shift began.

Jewish involvement in the civil rights struggle aroused the antipathy of Black Muslims. Jews were frustrating their ambitions. Equal rights and release from poverty would not advance their cause, inclusion was exactly what they didn't want.

They still hate Jews for their liberalism, at the same time that the example of Israel (and how they hate Israel) lights up their lives. They want blacks to give up on America exactly as many Jews became convinced they had to give up on Europe, and to go for a Zion of their own.

Take them at their word: they want to rule

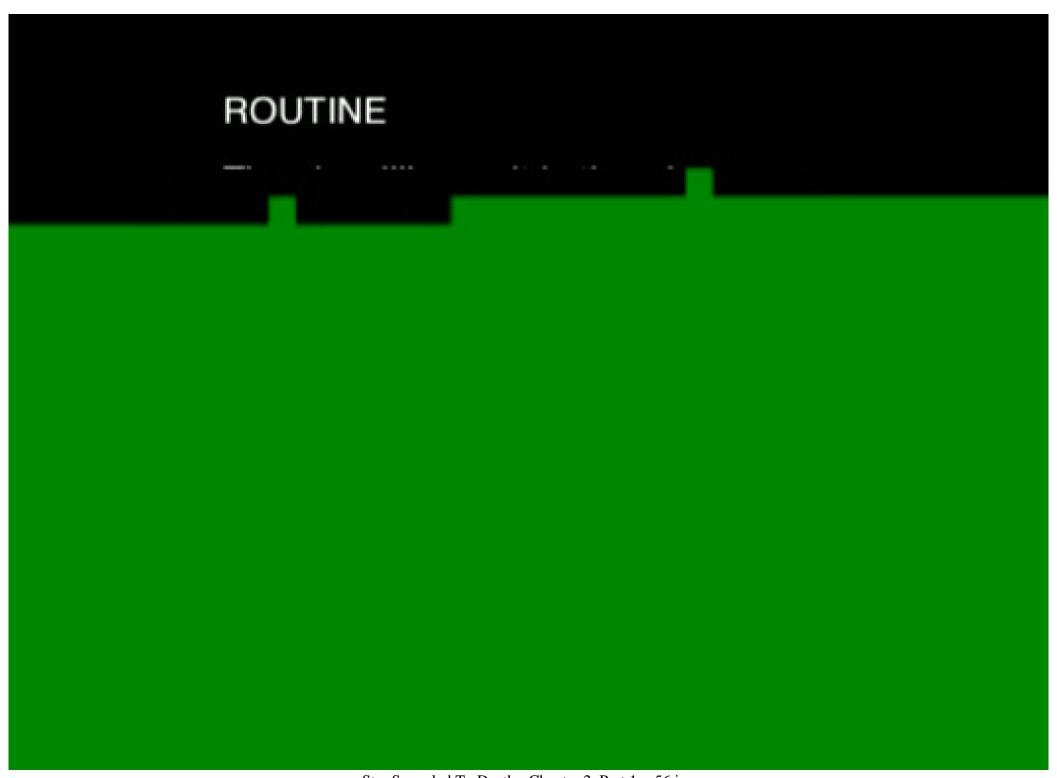
an exclusively black

fundamentalist Islamic

separate nation.

Common cause with the KKK comes natural. Empathetic Jews screw up their plans.

The NOI still hates Jews for their liberalism, at the same time that the example of Israel (and how they hate Israel) lights up their lives. They want blacks to give up on America exactly as Jews became convinced they had to give up on Europe, and to go for a Zion of their own. Take them at their word: they want to rule a

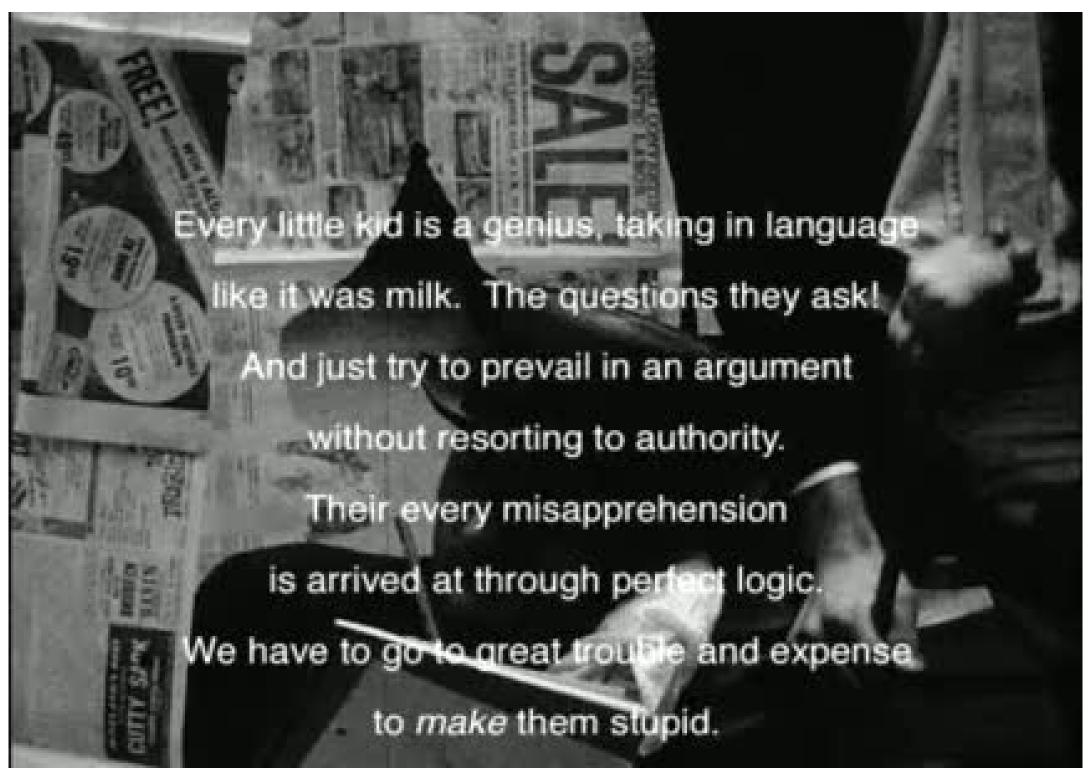


As a kid in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, I liked everything I met with of what it was to be a Jew and to this day value it all. Later I would experience more middle-class and Americanized ways and that was a turn-off. I never felt any pressure to believe, any criticism when I didn't, and for that I'm grateful. God went even before the Shoah.

Oscar Friendly's Rant

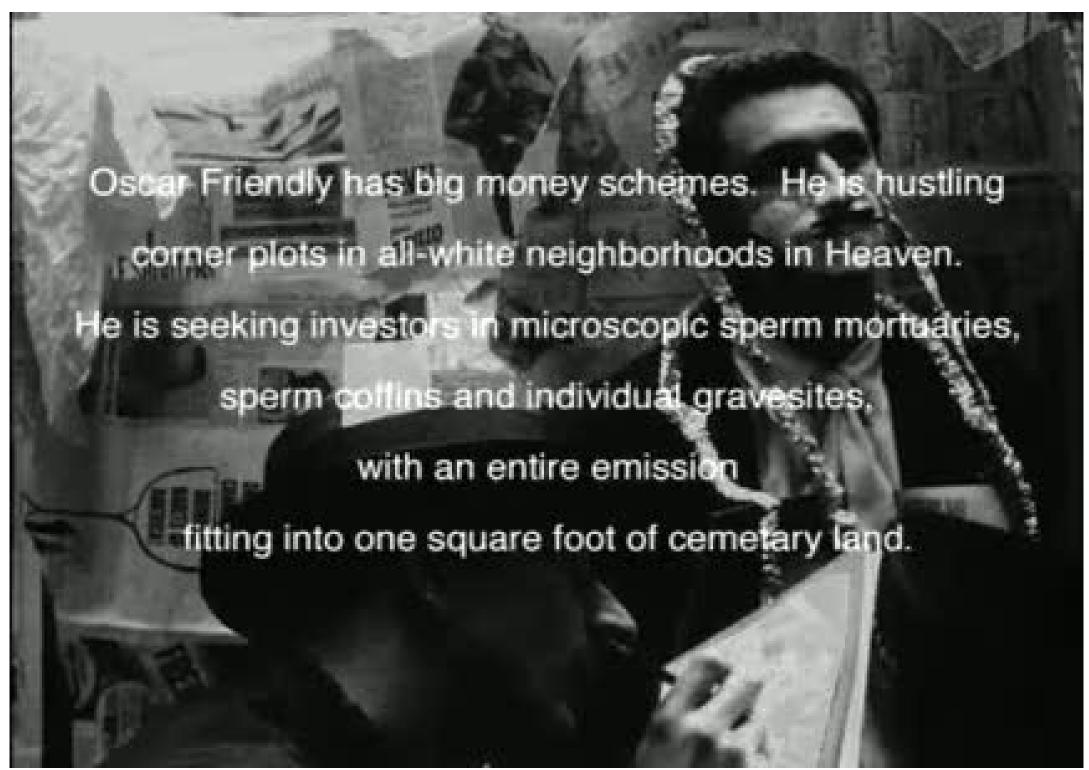
Hollywood Reds ruined my life. They wrote anti-Fascist, anti-greed movies and radio stories that pictured an America of dreams, a Lone Ranger nation affirming justice for all. Good neighbor Policies. They set me up for disappointment with the historical reality. Have you met with the historical reality? Beginning with Christopher Columbus? Have you read, for starters, Howard Zinn? THE PEOPLE'S HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES.

James Loewen? LIES MY TEACHER TOLD ME

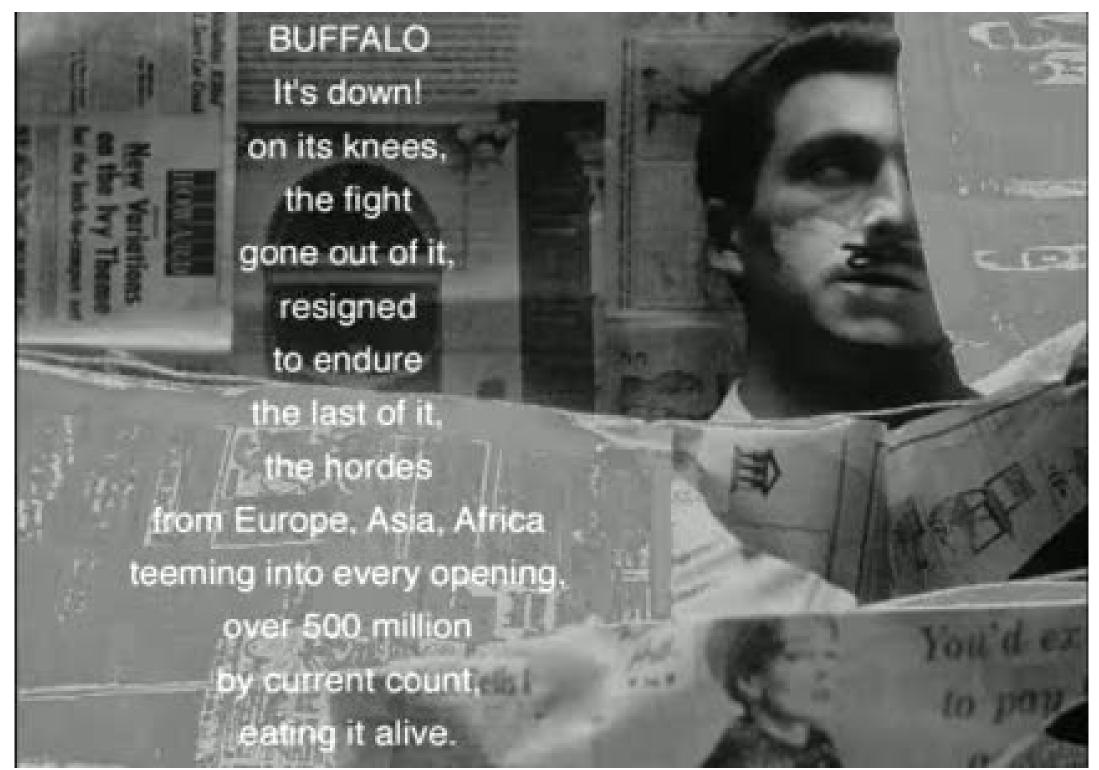


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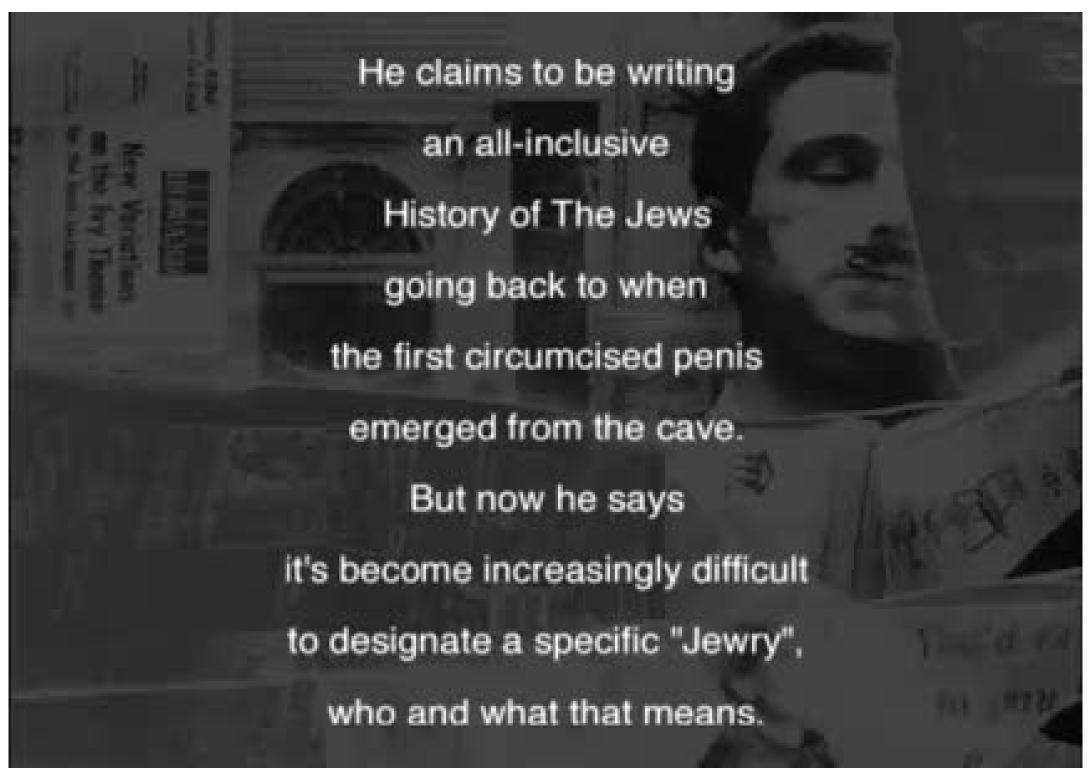
could be ordering tresspassers off my oceanfront but Hollywood Reds made me love the people....who would've voted senile Ronald Reagan in for a third term if allowed. Compassionate Conservatism. Governor Schwarzenegger. To persist in loving The People you need an anal fixation. I was a 15 year old soda jerk when my boss Phil Feigelman said to me, "People will buy shit if you tie it with a ribbon." The man was prescient, this was years before Warhol. But I, deep in the throes of Red Hollywoodism, objected!

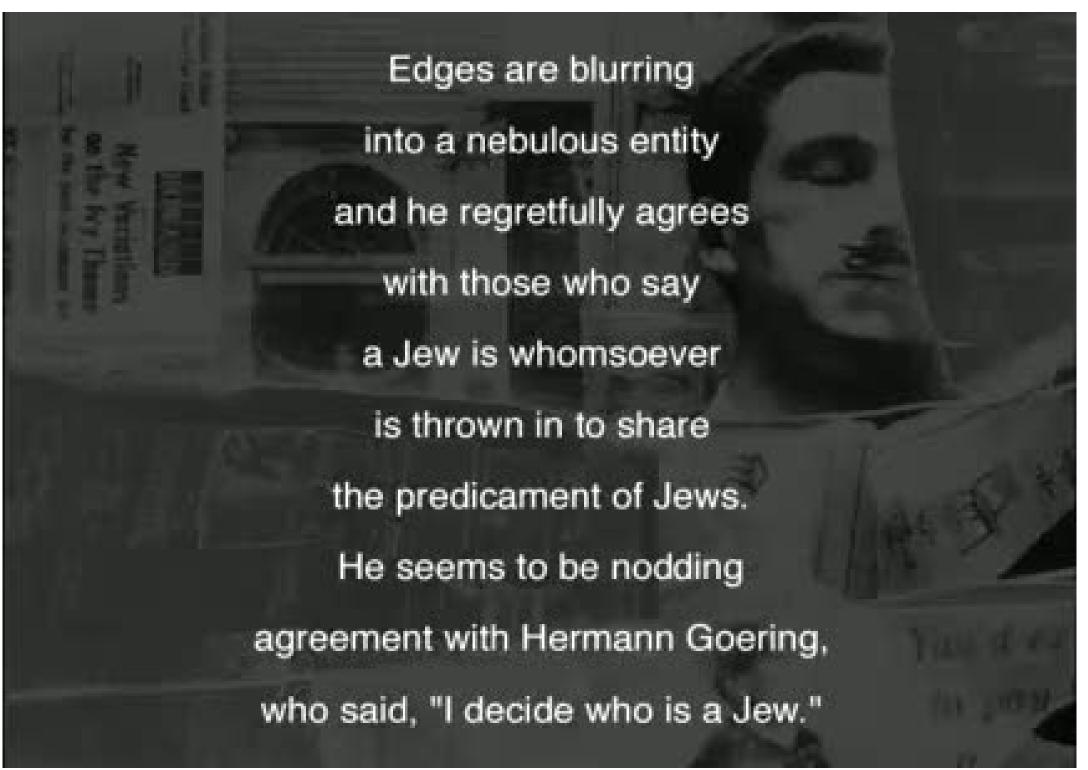


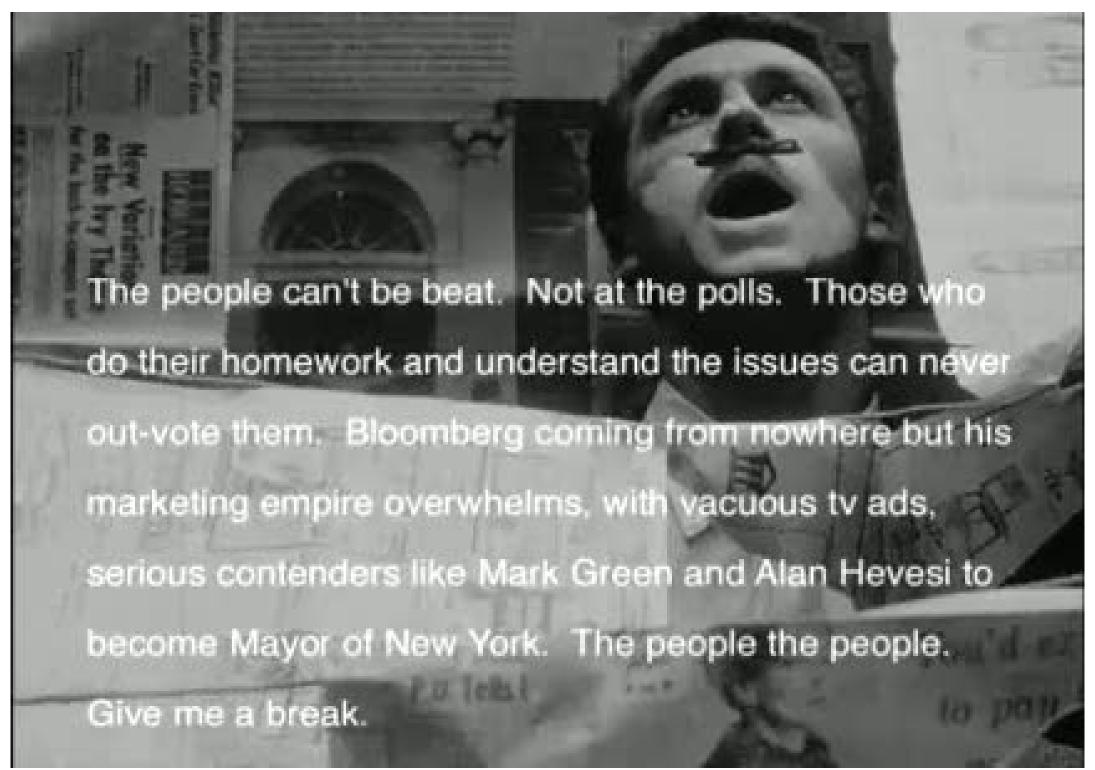
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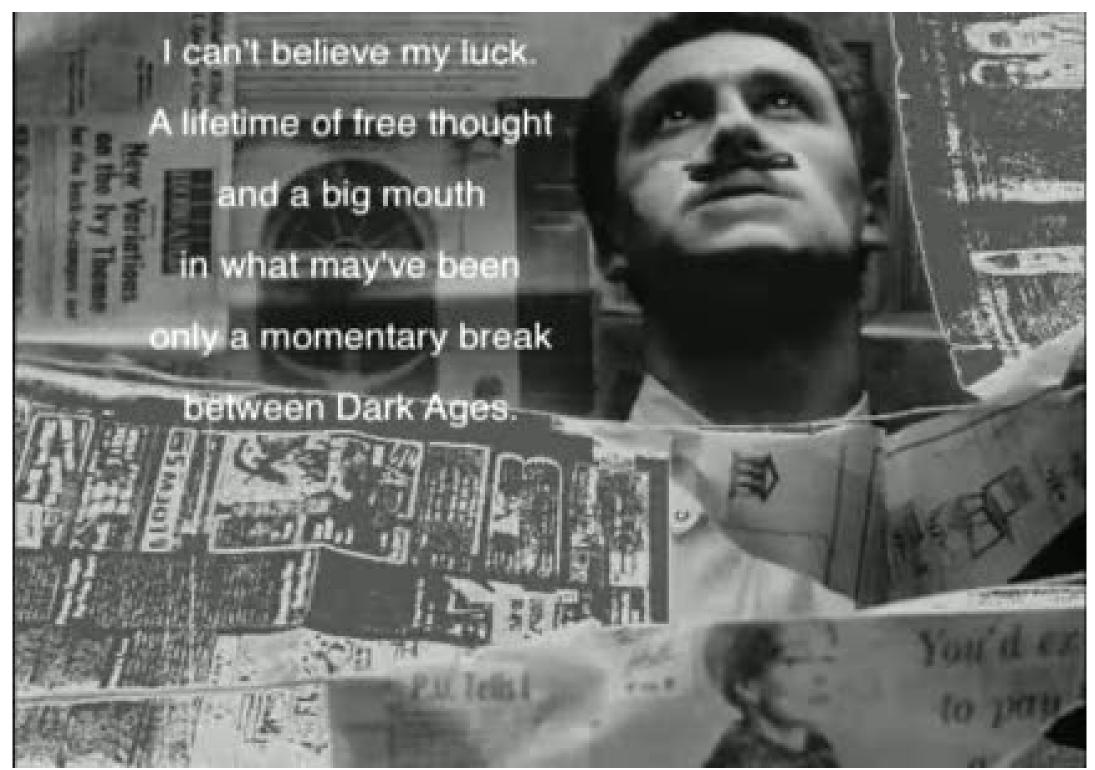


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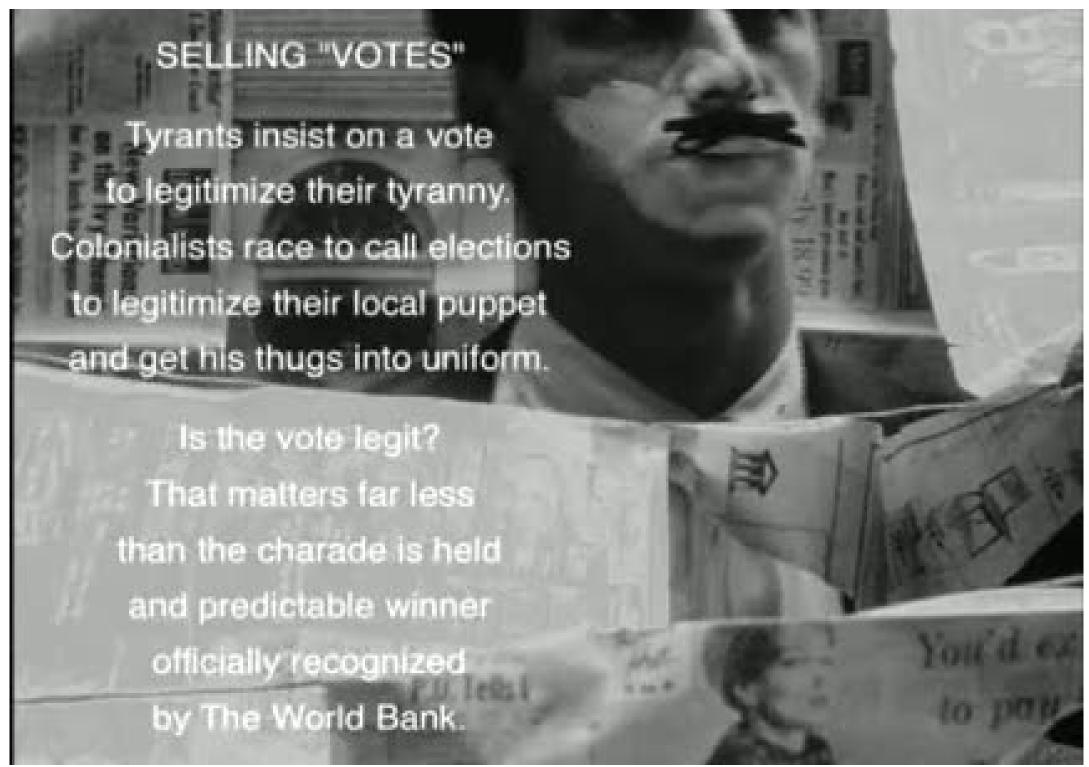


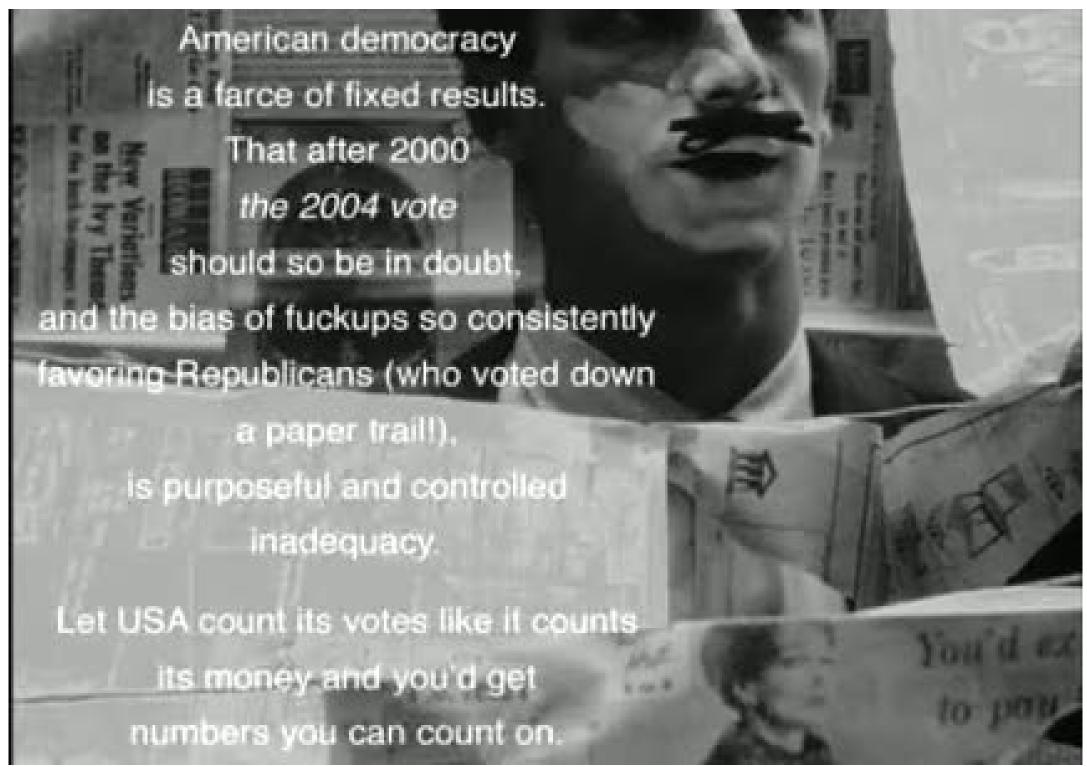






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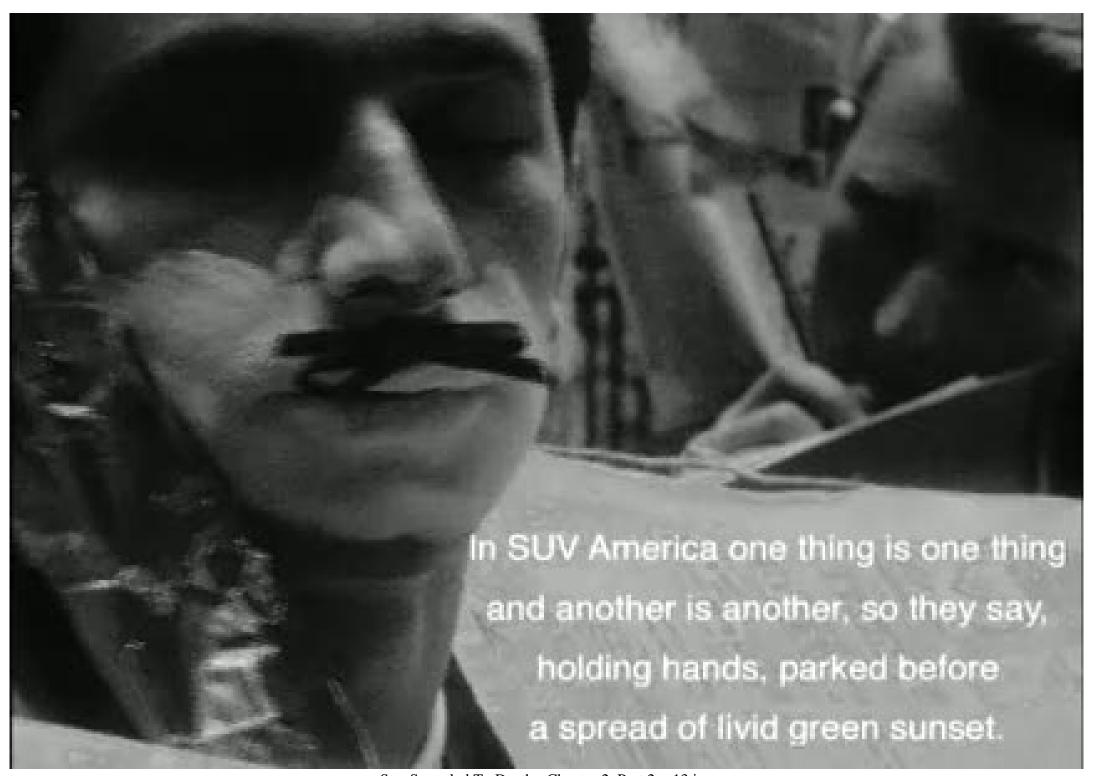


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"There is a Turkish proverb that says: 'If Allah gives you authority. He will give you the brains to go with it.' Like many proverbs, this one is both dangerous and false....the acquisition of authority more often than not leads to a loss of brains, to an atrophying of the mind, to a chronic state of stupidity."

-Paul Tabori

from The Natural History of Stupidity



Star Spangled To Death - Chapter 2, Part 2 - 13.jpg



Star Spangled To Death - Chapter 2, Part 2 - 14.jpg

I Am Trying To Explain

This is a story about knowing your place and staying in it. In which people are taught to beat off enlightenment, when offered, with a stick or worse. A thrilling story of two sacrificial lambs, one beloved, the other despised, and of a royal benefactor from on high betrayed by the lowly creatures he comes to uplift, not Jesus in this instance but Azazel.

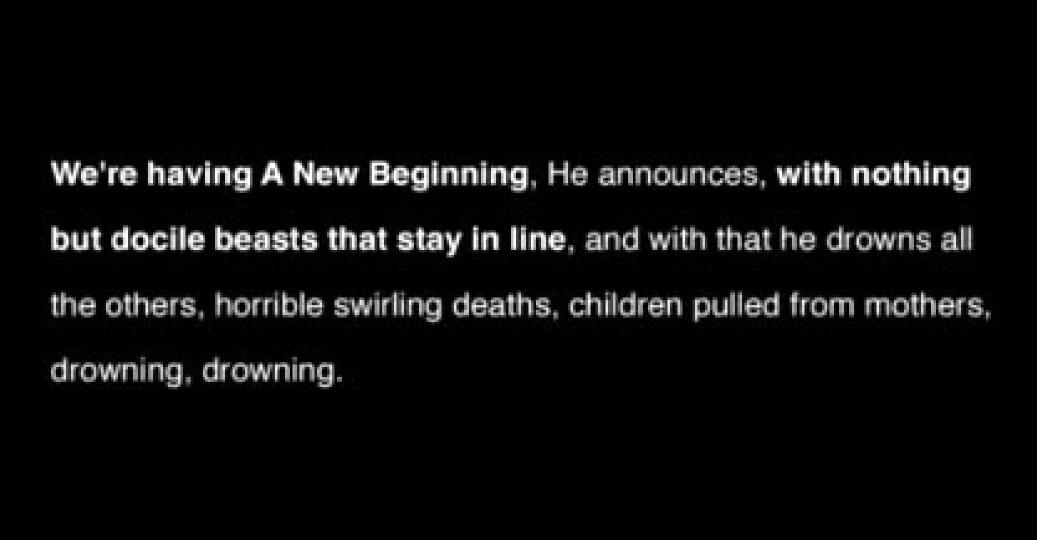
It seems the Sons Of God, angelic creatures made of God's light, were cavorting in Heaven, going out for long passes, whatever, when they chanced to look down to where the daughters of men caught their eyes. Now these were lowly creatures of another altogether, made of clay, of earth, humble humans as-from-humus slapped together by God on one of His whimsical benders, God knows why.

One doesn't hear of the Daughters Of God supposedly because God in his solitary glory was not about to reproduce Himself in figures of a feminine likeness, so it's understandable that these surprise beings would look good to the Sons. (It's a story! don't demand that it make sense! don't ask why Sons? which implies penises, and no proper mates for them in all Creation, because what kind of good God hangs up his own Sons like that?)

Understandable they would fall bigtime, fall hard, for these beckoning lovelies singing Down, Down, Big Boys, Come Down To Earth. And so, led by Azazel (seems the Ancients couldn't conceive of a leaderless cohort), they disobeyed their Father (unthinkable, right? there's your Big Bang) and descended to the level of the receiving women in a great Revolt Of The Angels, something you can easily picture in your mind, the sun glinting off their widespread wings like sword clashes in samurai movies.

"There were giants on the earth then," the scriptures say of the issue of these miscegenations, proud straight-A kids infused with God's light. The parents might've been pleased but not God, weird irrascible Lord of land, sea and air and of upper and lower firmaments: My light?, He says, mixed with the shmutz? God was now besides Himself: Not kosher!, He screams. Where's that goddamn Azazel?, He roars. Uppity little shits, that's it, I'm bringing on The Flood.

Two by two (He whistles)
they come marching through,
sweethearts on parade.

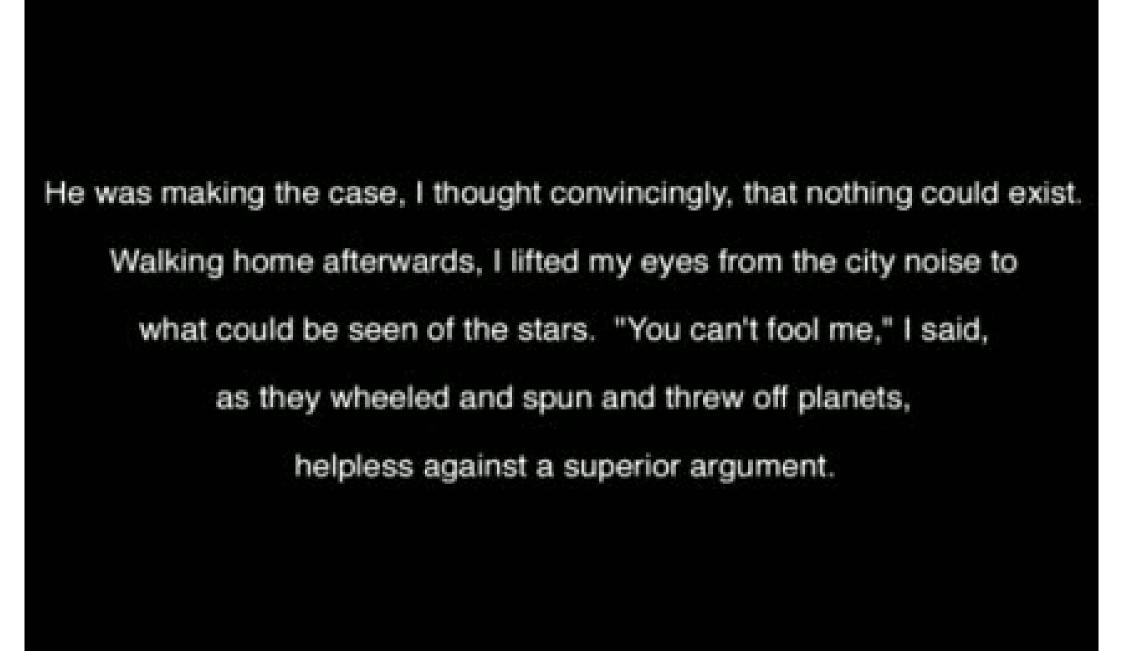


I wish the story ended there. That's bad enough. But we have to speak of God's people (the ingrates) who curse Azazel to this day, the Jewish Prometheus, offhandedly as a commonplace of speech and ceremonially at the most crucial of holy days. Yom Kippur. In the traditional ceremony two perfect young/virginal/ innocent animals are selected to be sacrificed in a purification ceremony designed to cleanse the tribe of its sins, its unavoidable transgressions of God's many laws, not all of them known (Moses dropped one tablet and it shattered). I have to wonder was authority and infractions of authority's dictum invented to justify guilt, like the folks couldn't take on enough guilt.

Two spotless white lambs or goats that in their innocence (oh, people, let them gambol!) that in their innocence have the capacity to absorb -like dry sponges- the tribe's black sins. Their deaths will serve because they are undeserving of punishment. While almost indistinguishable from each other the two animals receive very different treatment. One is killed quickly, burnt, a savory trail of ash rising to God's nostrils. The other, named Azazel, is released....to seek its redemption in the wilderness, meaning truly inhospitable terrain, often after having a leg broken to push up the ante. The wilderness is called the place of Azazel and when the folk mean each other ill they say Go to Azazel the way others might say go to hell.

The ceremony marks the birfurcation of history, with the sacrificial lamb that returns immediately to The Creator signifying Jesus and those identifying with Jesus, and the wandering lamb, Jewry. In fact both Christians and Jews identify with the first lamb, with Christians forcing Jews to the position of Azazel, so that, historically speaking, Jewry is Azazel. Odd, the lamb signifying a virginal Jesus, who defies both Nature and God's edict to Multiply! damn you, call it The First Law Of Life, gets lauded to the skies and the horny beast true to its nature, punished.

"A stiff-necked people" my ass; this paean to submission is their core story (not that Jew-threateners shouldn't be seriously considering the story of Samson). My irreligious take on it? Well, we named our son Azazel. When he asked me to tell him the story, virgin Jesus glorified, priapic Azazel condemned, me working up a fury at the injustice of it all, his comeback was, "Yes, Dad, but who had the most fun?"



Americans were designated by international controllers of wealth to fight Vietnamese opting for self-government. The Vietnam Memorial Wall in Washington commemorates only some of capitalism's very recent victims. It needs extending, perhaps a mile, to include Vietnamese and Cambodian dead, wounded, mutilated, sickened, made desolate and impoverished. Extend it to place the names of all of capitalism's victims and it will put the Great Wall of China in the shade.

Doctor Harlow demonstrates the psychological mechanics of love as they can be seen to operate in the rhesus monkey and invites us to apply his findings to ourselves, other machine things, perhaps -only perhaps- with more moving parts.

Advertisers, the military, cult leaders and politicians love this guy.

They're about triggering responses

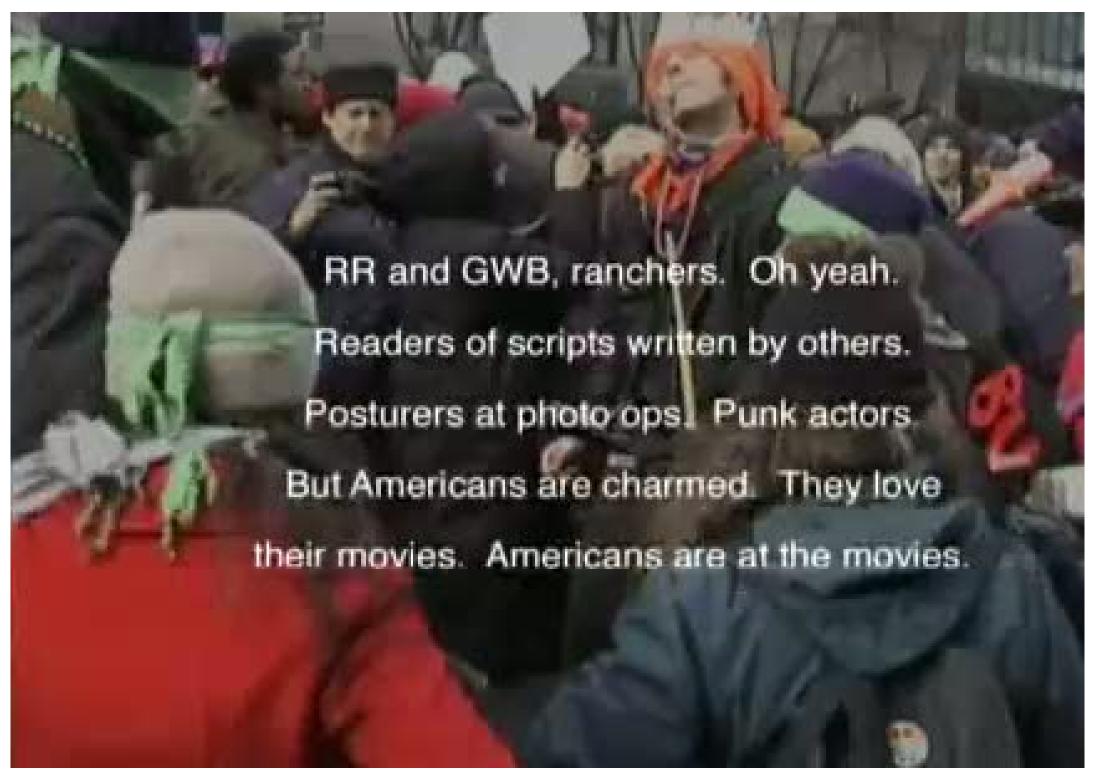
Do This Now!

and Harlow is showing just where in the pulpy, dreamy substance of ourselves the triggers may be found.

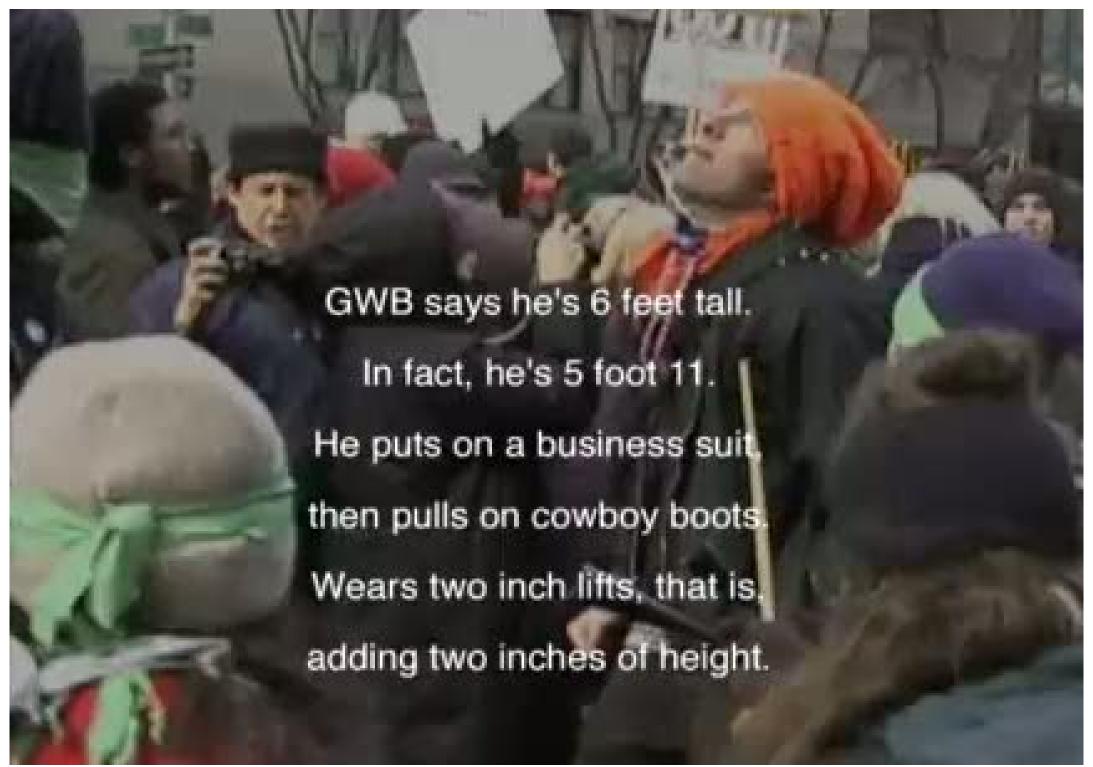
How many shopping-days till the end of the world?



Star Spangled To Death - Chapter 3 - 005.jpg



Star Spangled To Death - Chapter 3 - 006.jpg



Star Spangled To Death - Chapter 3 - 007.jpg

Only in the first few days after 9.11 did the press reveal a bottom floor of one Tower was NY CIA headquarters. Given the 1993 bombing, was it not irresponsible to maintain a CIA presence there, legitimizing the Towers as military targets? And to keep noncombatants in the buildings as unknowing hostages?

That revelation was ordered out of public consciousness along with Mayor Guiliani and the quasi-public MTA's culpability for Buliding 7's collapse. They defied NY fire regulations regarding placement of an oil tank, placing it *on* one of the floors rather than below. A friend reports seeing from close-up how Building 7's fire spread from that floor.

We were a good-humored compliant crowd of every age and condition, some in wheelchairs, and this despite the cold and our disappointment at not being allowed to gather with others to the UN, many traveling in from other states to do so.

Mayor Bloomberg had made the choice to not allow an image of the actual number of protesters to be available to media and employed his police to illegally pen most of us well out of news-camera range. However,

even in the pens it had been a pleasure to meet with so many others sharing one's feelings, who didn't require post-invasion commissions to tell us the pretexts for invasion had been lies.

(Kerry, Clinton, Schumer, every official that voted to give Bush war-making powers and afterwards were shocked simply shocked to learn they'd been lied to is lying. Bush now says he was "misled"!)

What could have provoked such fury in the police?

Was this a special contingent of psychopaths?

Some protesters had engaged in civil, even affable discussion with some of the cops assigned to pen us in.

The warning I recorded was all the warning we got.

From the get-go these cops moved in wanting to hurt and to maim.

I learned afterwards that US attack pilots are prepared with government-issue bennies of some sort that induce a rush of aggression; could it be the nutso cops were on drugs? Can it be our War On Drugs is over?

Did we win? switch sides?

They don't show it in the movies

(Paths Of Glory being the exception)

but the courage in battle of most soldiers

proceeds from a gun placed against the backs of their heads.

SECRETARY RUMSFELD'S TOWN MEETING WITH THE TROOPS TWO DAYS BEFORE ABU GHRAIB BECAME CAMP REDEMPTION

"I've stopped reading the newspapers." (Huge applause.)

I completely understand Secretary Rumsfeld's feelings. The NY Times alone is too much for me. Modern communications is a heartbreaking deluge of things one can do little about unless one is some modern saint like Helen Caldicott, or an Amy Goodman of Democracy Now. One reads the bad news of distant places: a school bus breaks through a bridge railing in Italy; a fire has broken out not across town (people once could do something about a fire, step into a bucket brigade, give a hand, the news was local news), it's a fire on another continent.

Exotic genocides. Israelis, Palestinians.

Droughts and children starving.

A million land mines left buried, spitefully, after military pullouts.

On and on. It becomes unreal, becomes The News;

our agitated sympathies are converted to a form

of aimless entertainment;

we become unreal.

I can imagine Secretary Rumsfeld's heart,

big as it is, getting to where it says "no more".

Naturally our popular appointee

might then decide to cut the news off at the source. Oh.

He's referring to the news of the tortures he and Bush

set as policy (Operation Iraqi Humiliation).

He's stopped reading the expressions of outrage and disgust.

Our boys and girls over there are applauding this decision.

SHANGHIED BY THE STATE

Boot camp we're told makes men of boys when in fact it conditions childlike unquestioning obedience. The individual is conditioned, harshly, to be operated in unison with fellow soldiers. Lined up alphabetically or by height or some other arbitrary individual-denying system, he is punished for less than a trigger response to command. He will march, eat, sleep, deficate in rows. at a fixed distance from his identically uniformed fellow trainees (shit, it should be added, without privacy on a line of toilets themselves "at attention" with mouths fixed wide open). With identically shorn hair he will sing and shout in cadence, on beat, merging and losing himself in collective patterning.

The whole point of boot camp as with any cult indoctrination is to first of all kill off the sensitized probing questioning and deciding ego, feeling and thinking its own way into life, struggling to take charge of its own life free of parental and other authority control. The military assumes ownership of the individual, the inductee is not free to walk away without huge and designedly demeaning punishment. The brig is an institution dedicated to humiliating and breaking the resistant will and it is always there, the threat of it, backing the absolute authority the inductee has signed allegiance to.

The military takes body and mind from the self with the aim of honing it to a machine part meshed among other machine parts at the ready for service ("The Service") as ordered.

This thing will now, on command and without hesitation, in its team function, betray and abandon its former self, to kill or to mutilate and allow itself to be killed or mutilated.

The happy soldier is a perfect communist in accord with the worst caricature of the communist. This thing, with its indoctrinated contempt for "soft civilians", is now supposed to protect us and our freedoms from "those that would enslave us".

Slaves will protect our freedoms, you bet.

Boot camp does not make men of boys.

It is designed in fact to un-man the individual and make of him a thing, an obedient and unquestioning, tethered thing, trained to turn off thinking. Saluting superiors, eating shit as ordered. Supposed compensation is the license given to be a conduit for humiliation and death, passing it through oneself to inflict on and devastate others. Boot camp transforms the individual into a clean gun barrel that can be aimed by superiors in the interest of their superiors.

To induce normal people, not psychopaths, to do acts of unspeakable cruelty, like Heinrich Himmler exhorting his SS troops you must appeal to their best instincts, their most loving selves, tap into their protective responses and enlist them in the fight against Evil. Of course it always helps to allow them to cloak their individuality in a uniform.

The Nation pegged him right: our What? me worry? president.

No Lincoln-like brooding for this Commander-In-Chief.

A photo-op at a VA hospital doesn't faze him.

He's got the world's attention on him; others worry

what stupid move next; he's happy.

He likes to strut in a flight suit, with codpiece, straight out of the movie ARMAGEDDON.

That's W's picture of himself, W and a lot of dodos with their minds at the movies. It seems the statute of limitations for a stolen presidency runs out before lunch. That the fix was in is proven now but Democrats remain good sports.

The winning formula, Florida style, Exclude the retired Jew and African-American vote, rage at a true count (why not a re-vote when the first vote is this quesionable?), pass a message to your confederates on the Supreme Court and the machine pays off to where the economy can be turned inside out like so many empty pockets.

Seeing is believing?

("Wag The Dog")

Our gullibles believe

what they're told.

Colin Powell, "black" Secretary Of State, next to whom I look swarthy, defending US attack of Iraq before UN (with bogus charge regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction), insisted Picasso's GUERNICA be covered while he spoke; a confession that he understood the parallel, the rhyming of atrocities.

After close observation of Reagan, Bush the elder could size up Chickenhead and still say, "Why not?"

Picture George W. Bush without the dynasty.

Maybe on his own he could've risen to be
the gabby manager of a franchise restaurant,
less in the office with the books than out there
shooting the breeze with customers.

An affable and forgettable lightweight.

Maybe, if he could stay sober.

The Sieg Heil Folks
USA! USA! USA!
Are At The Movies
And Don't You Forget It

Cowboy movies explain the Bush appeal. It's frontier-town USA, where men are men, women either virgin-mothers or dancehall whores, and there's rule by the six-shooter. The sheriff and his thug-deputies, the sissy mayor and drunken judge take orders from the slickster owner of the dancehall/gambling hall. Rough men drink and carouse and piss away their earnings from grubbing for gold, from sheep and cattle herding out on the lone prairie.

Just when they should be sober and watchful, at the gambling table, they're enticed to "Drink up, boys!" A sub-human black or shiftless injun or jolly Chinaman might appear for comic relief.

Never are the good, churchgoing, but uninteresting and intimidated townsfolk shown to organize against their oppressors, while the narrative often requires a lone hot-head to be quickly dispatched by the thug-deputies to demonstrate the futility of resistance. Effective redress only appears in the person of a federal marshal (government wickedness is only local; going higher in government one approaches Heaven, the face of

The Law becomes less ethnic and elected officials are shown as sober and upstanding direct descendents of The Founding Fathers) or by way of a quick-trigger loner passing through, a man on a mission who routs the bad guys and sets things straight before moving on to secure still further territory for homesteaders. The lesson to moviegoers is the old lesson: Endure, be patient, keep low; a savior is on his way.

(Homesteaders are the nails driven to fasten America to the globe. Free land beckoned them from the eastern territories and from Europe, lands thoroughly carved up before they could claim a share. The prior inhabitants of the New Lands, marvelously, do not count. However developed their arts, their calendars and languages, they are strangers to Jesus. They are wilderness, and it is only necessary to clear them away along with rocks and trees before the seasonal planting, thanks to God. Tobacco pouches made of Indian scrotums and vaginas are tokens of Providence every bit as much as lampshades made of Jews.)

Bush effects a cowboy persona. That's enough for this crowd. He can speak gibberish, no problem, they don't *know* anything; facts would only make them uncomfortable. What's important is the cadence of what's said, the two-gun stance, the sashay to the podium as if to the climactic showdown.



Bush Cheney Rumsfeld Wolfowitz Perle are dead people, walking talking dead people, untouched by the misery they bring to living people. Bad news doesn't faze them, they go on.

Their mission

is a grand sweeping conversion of living to dead.

Really smart bombs

would be troubled bombs, capable of reversing course,
that might object to how they're used
and return with a vengeance, reminding USA
as did Malcolm X, "What goes around comes around."

We can't really object, can we? to getting some of what we give?

The methods of the stupid can be ingenious.

Stupidity is not a matter of I.Q.

It's a psychological condition,

as Sigmund explained;

an emotional problem.

A cat isn't stupid because it doesn't read. A child, someone who just got here, isn't stupid when it misapprehends reality. Real stupidity is a brilliant mind working to ensure a bad end for itself; the wrong move carefully repeated; it is losing in order to be steadfast to how the twig was bent. "Loyalty and trust" is what the stupid call their inflexible stupidity.

Freud was not sex-obsessed. He was trying to understand the place of sexual trauma in the puzzle of stupidity. "Look at this marvelous animal." he was saying (I paraphrase), "turning away from pleasure, employing its super-cerebellum to hurt itself. What in hell is jamming the works?"

Marx had said "property" and the value it had placed on patrimony in the passage from monkey to man. Mystification of authority stupified minds. Imposed codes of behavior gave rise to shame and guilt, to denial and neurosis.

Slow maturation of the human brain for all its benefits

also allowed for the tabooing of impulse

in the soft brain of the child

and the inculcation of stupidity.

"I know not what I think.

I see not what I do.

He, she, they are guilty

and deserving of punishment.

God punishes. I punish.

God is good. I am good."

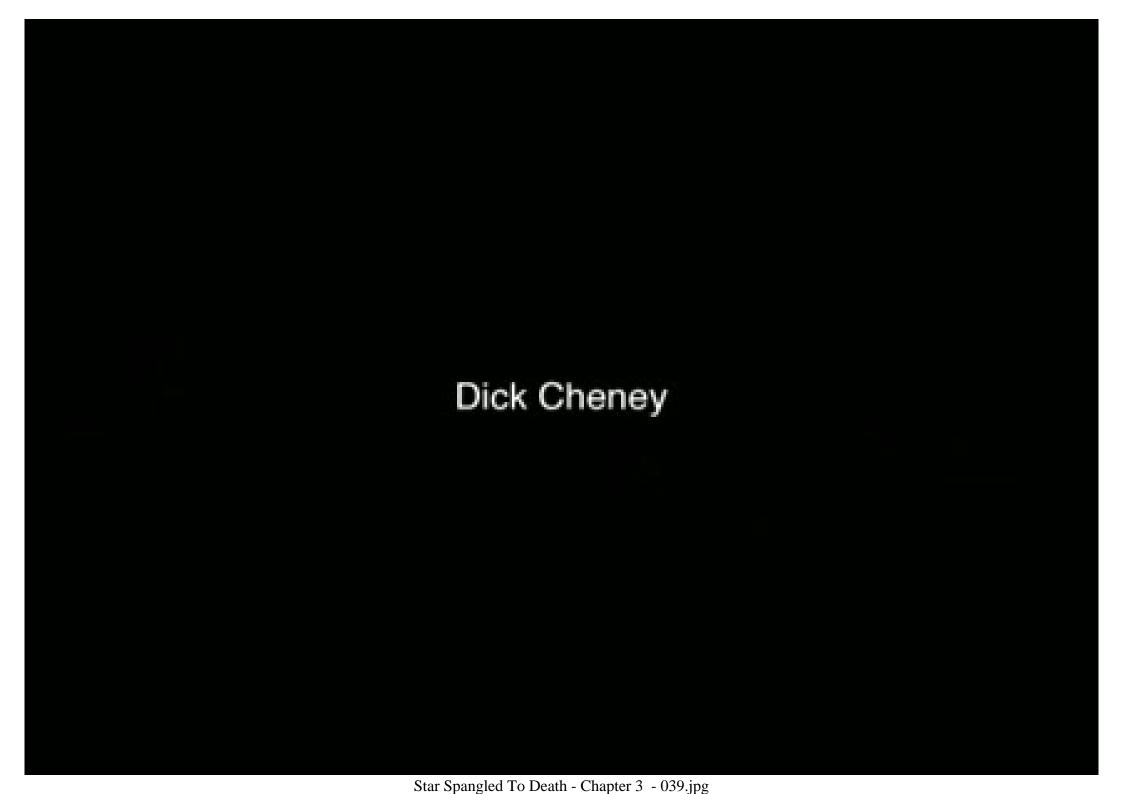
Man's vaunted adaptability also meant adapting to the knots and twists to the psyche introduced by your average childhood.

Bodies don't necessarily show these grotesque disfigurements.

They become evident in the cultural production of a group, its fanciful mythology set in stone as religion, as nationalist lore, and pride of race.

I'm disappointed because I made the mistake of identifying America in general with modernism and the falling away of tribal rigidities in the new cosmopolitan mix, abetted now by the internet. That happens but not for everyone and the cultural divide between Americans is now being spoken of as our generation's equivalent to the Civil War.

Forward thinking people are astonished by their stubborn compatriots and the word "stupid" is in the air. The Heartland blames the tv pornucopia on East and West Coast liberals (holding Republican corporate sponsors hostage, one supposes). Some are wondering might we actually go to war, Blue States against Red, before this is over and wouldn't that be stupid?



John Gotti understands Dick Cheney. John Gotti
sees Dick Cheney
and says,
"My kind of guy".

On one hand:

"Bush shmush.

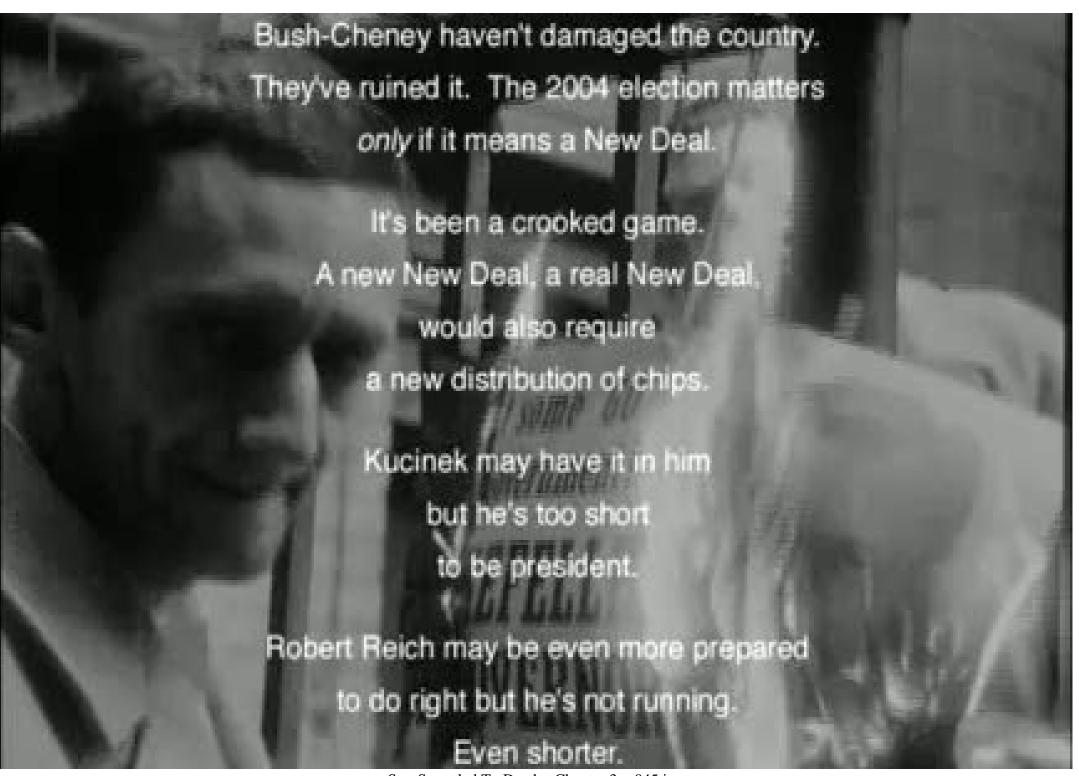
It's not like this is
the first fascist regime."

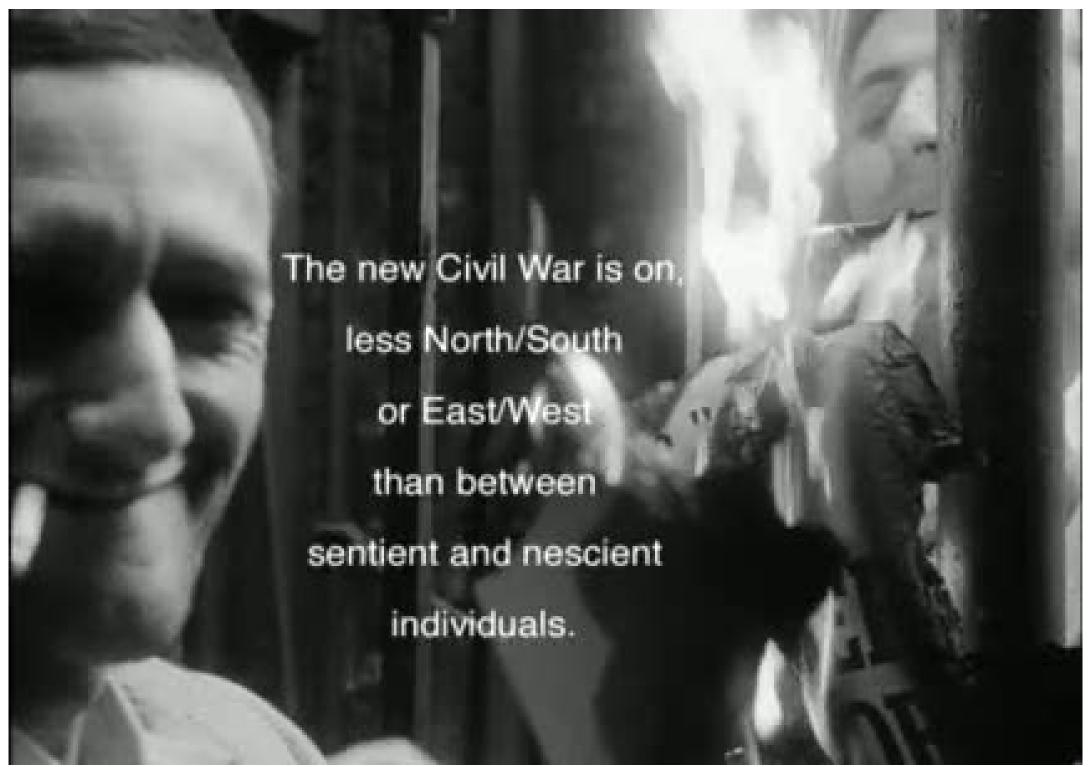
On the other:

"It is the first with nuclear weapons and stated intent to use them."

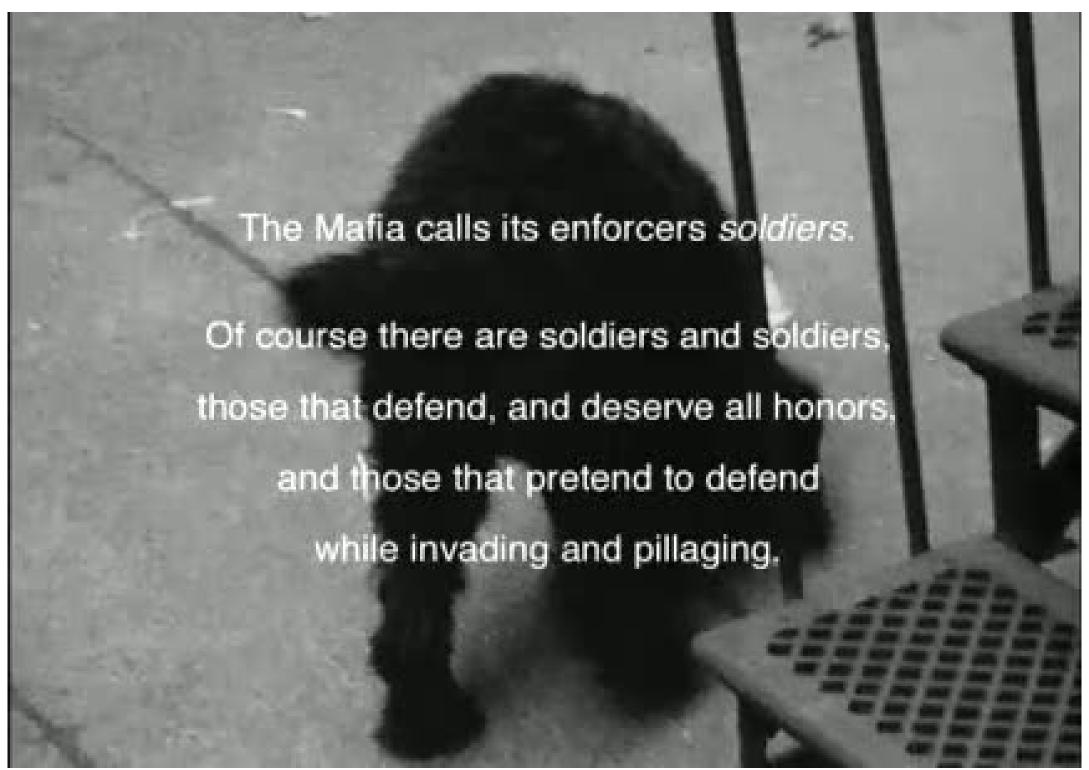
Give Me The Fact, Man

The irrefragable fact, Jerry, if you really want to know, is that this lovely moment, this kitten, this pup. couldn't exist without every other moment preceding it, accompanying it. Sure you want to embrace it? That sunny smile has the Shoah clinging to it. History is what's irrefragable but to get through your day you want to be spared being mindful of that fact every moment of your day. Concentrate on your painting. Your high culture and extensive vocabulary and kind friends won't save you, the fact is, but distraction helps.





Star Spangled To Death - Chapter 3 - 046.jpg



Star Spangled To Death - Chapter 3 - 047.jpg

A regular soldier can serve years in the Army and hardly ever hear the word "kill" outside bayonet practice, a vestigial relic of the days before the use of assault rifles. (No American soldier has participated in an organized bayonet charge since the Korean War.) Army manuals and drill sergeants speak of "suppressing enemy fire," "engaging targets," and "attritting" the enemy. "We attempt to instill reaction," said Captain Tim Dunnigan, who trains infantry in the woods of Fort Benning, Georgia. "Hear a pop, hit the ground, return fire. Act instinctually."

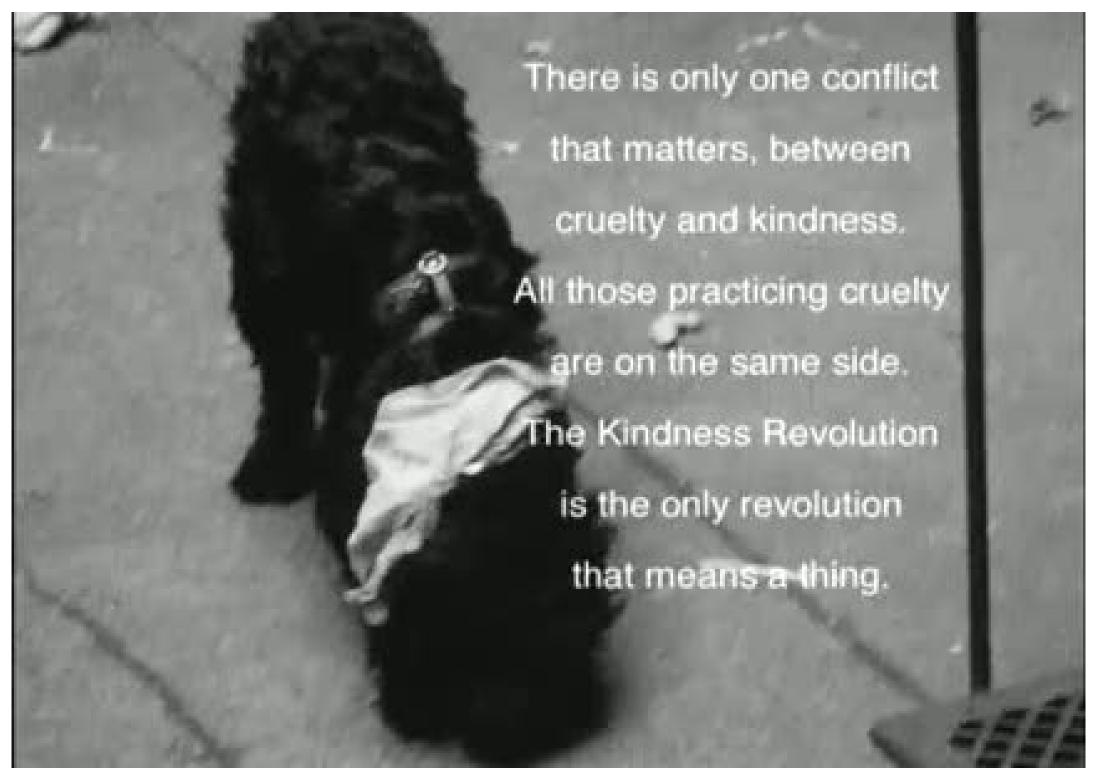
Captain Jason Kostal, a twenty-eight-year-old former commander at Fort Benning's sniper school, says that, even in a unit whose motto is "One Shot One Kill," explicit discussion of the subject is avoided. "We don't talk about 'Engage this person,' 'Engage this guy.' It's always 'Engage that target," he said. "You're not thinking, I wonder if that guy has three kids."

-by Dan Baum, The Price of Valor

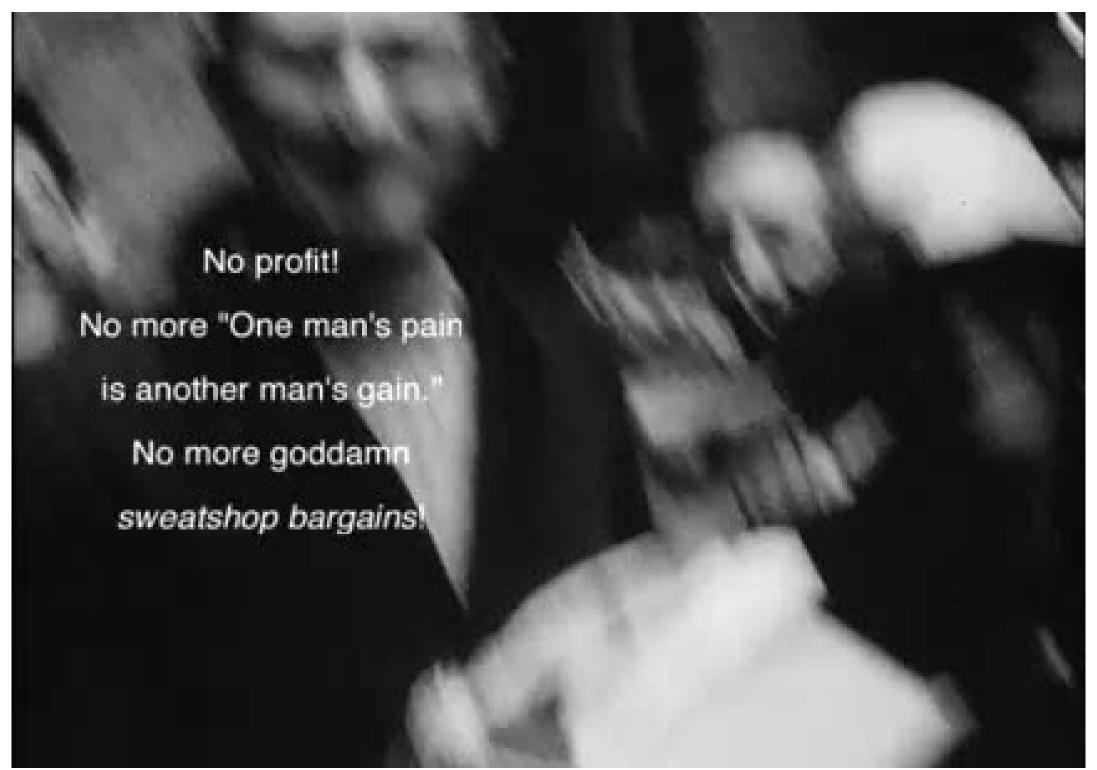
We train our soldiers to kill for us.

Afterward, they're on their own.

The New Yorker, July 12-19, 2004



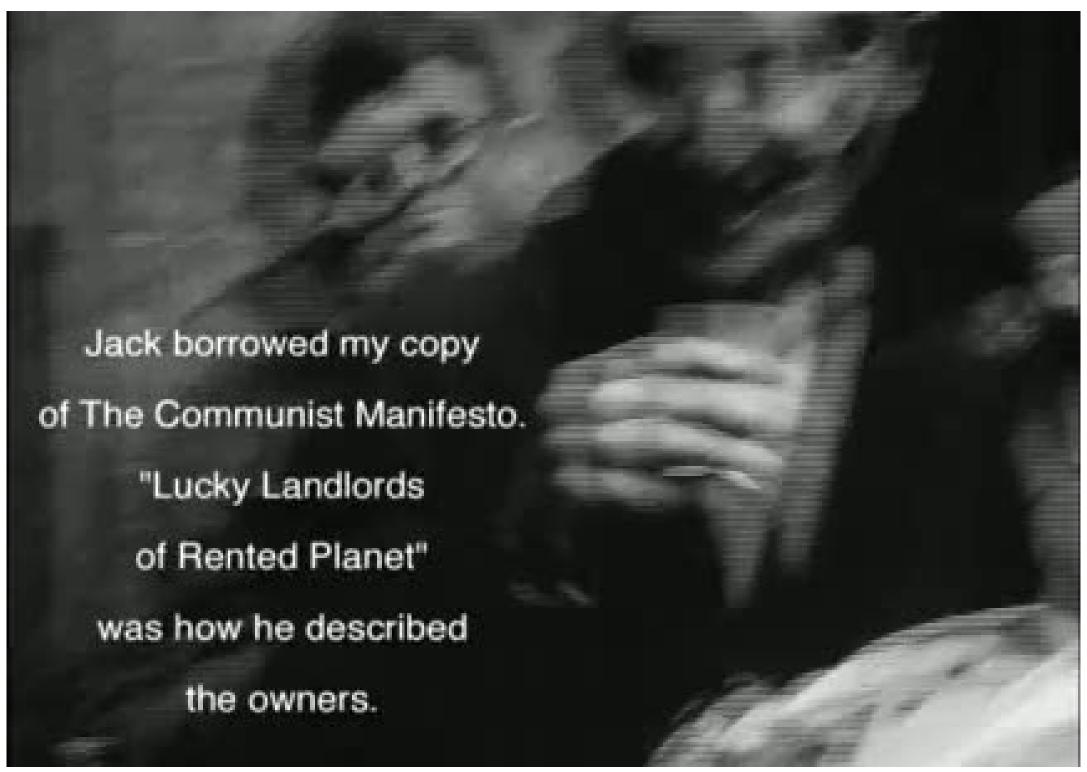
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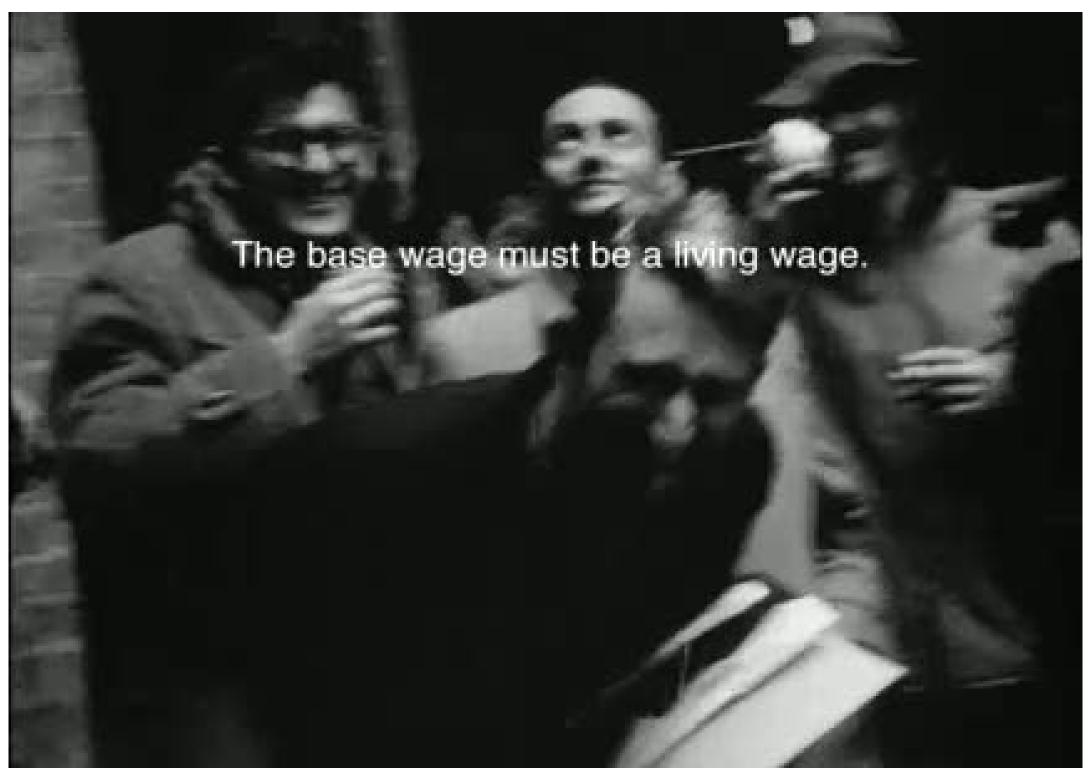
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Star Spangled To Death - Chapter 3 - 057.jpg

SURELY THIS PICTURE HANGS CROOKED

I am assailed by a simplistic image of history, a nasty caricature. Imbalanced. I need reminding of the good news. I grew up believing in Captain America, tri-color opponent of bullies. Then learned there was hardly a racket he didn't control, alone or together with other bullies. Turf wars sometimes break out between them and he then enlists us to fight for him, puts us on parade, a sea of spiffed up nobodies. Generations written off the books, no matter.

I read where everyone fears Captain America. Perhaps more ultimate a disaster than the Black Plague is the Red White and Blue. How did this happen?

America is Europe on a rampage. An extension of Europe that declared itself free of the obligation to split booty with original investors. Don't be fooled by the change of flag from skull and crossbones to stars and stripes. The appetite's the same, vociferous, wanting it all the whole wide world for themselves. The brtuality's the same. Plllaging east to west and then on out to sea, the Columbus grasp still reaches.

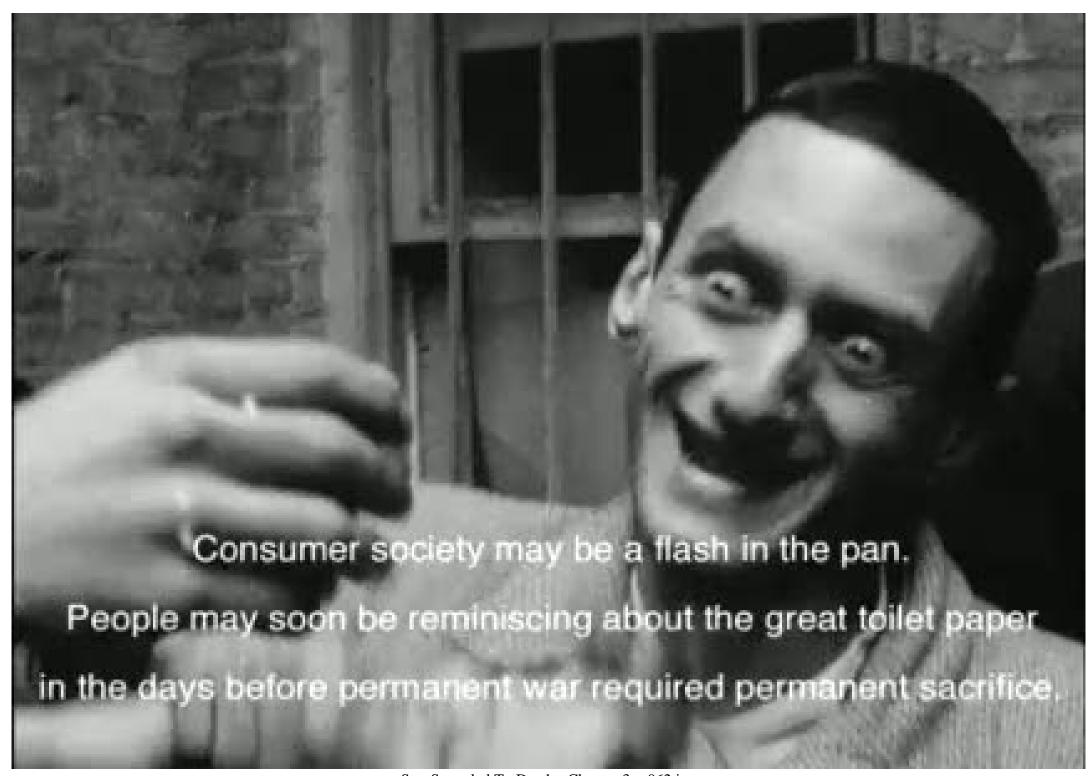
What were all those warships doing at Pearl Harbor?

So far from where they could defend American shores.

Hawaii and The Philippines were fueling stops. China was the prize, and Japan entered the competition for it.

China can protect itself today. Europe may've come to its senses, "Old Europe", and be capable of getting along nicely with others. America, though, has difficulty imagining itself as other *than* the rampage.

America, I'm disappointed in you. Comic boks taught me mobsters say dese and dose. The movies showed government whitening as it ascends from the thugs in local command to the feds, noble and resolute narrow-nose patricians, all shmutz falling away on the final ascent to The White House. just below Heaven. In fact, the white mob had the country in hand from the beginning, the bullies and wiseguys proving themselves among the locals graduating to state control. The very wise guys risen to the very top positions are those that can work smoothly with squabbling lesser mobsters. I was sold a bill of goods and they turned out bads.



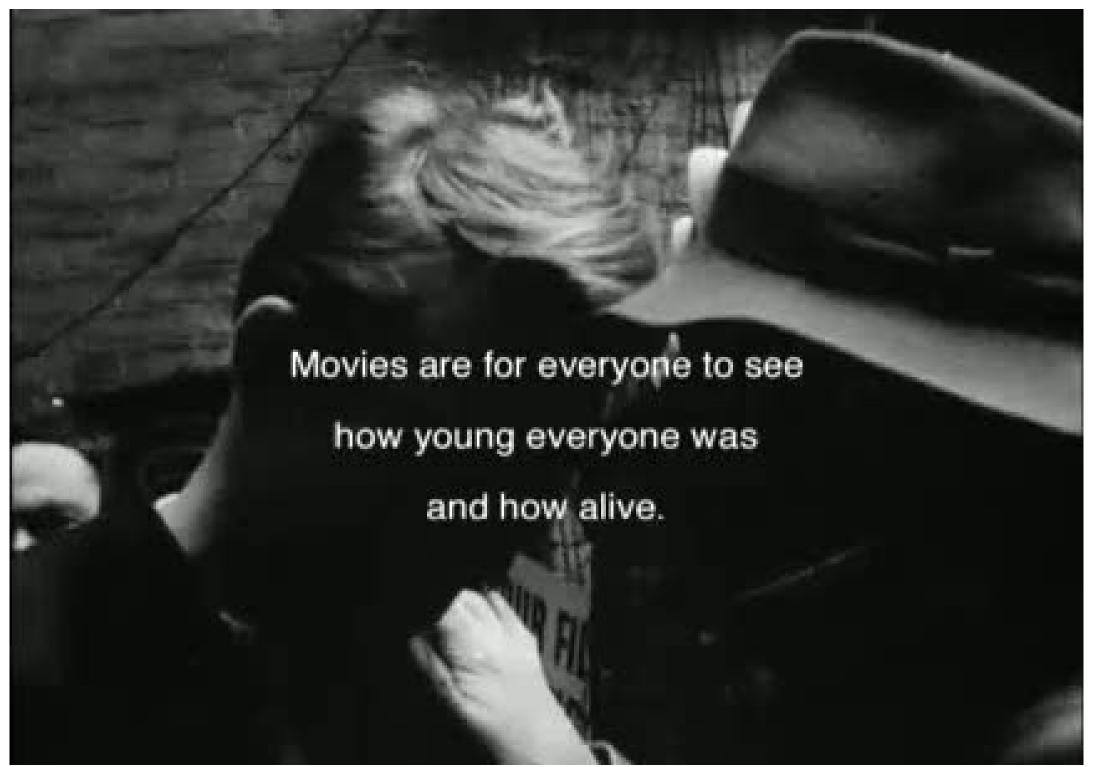
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Coincidence Is The Precision Of Narrative

Gib (the Evil with the moustache) belonged to a college fraternity that somehow bagged Elizabeth Taylor as single preciding female at their yearly stag banquet. Gib, their football star, found himself seated next to her. Here was the exquisite profile, the flower petal skin. She was spiffed out like a princess but saying nothing, her presence had to have been a contractual obligation. But what the hell, Gib figured, they're the same age and he also thought formal occasions a chore; he'd speak to her: "Hi, my name is also Taylor." "Fuck off," the princess said and turned away.

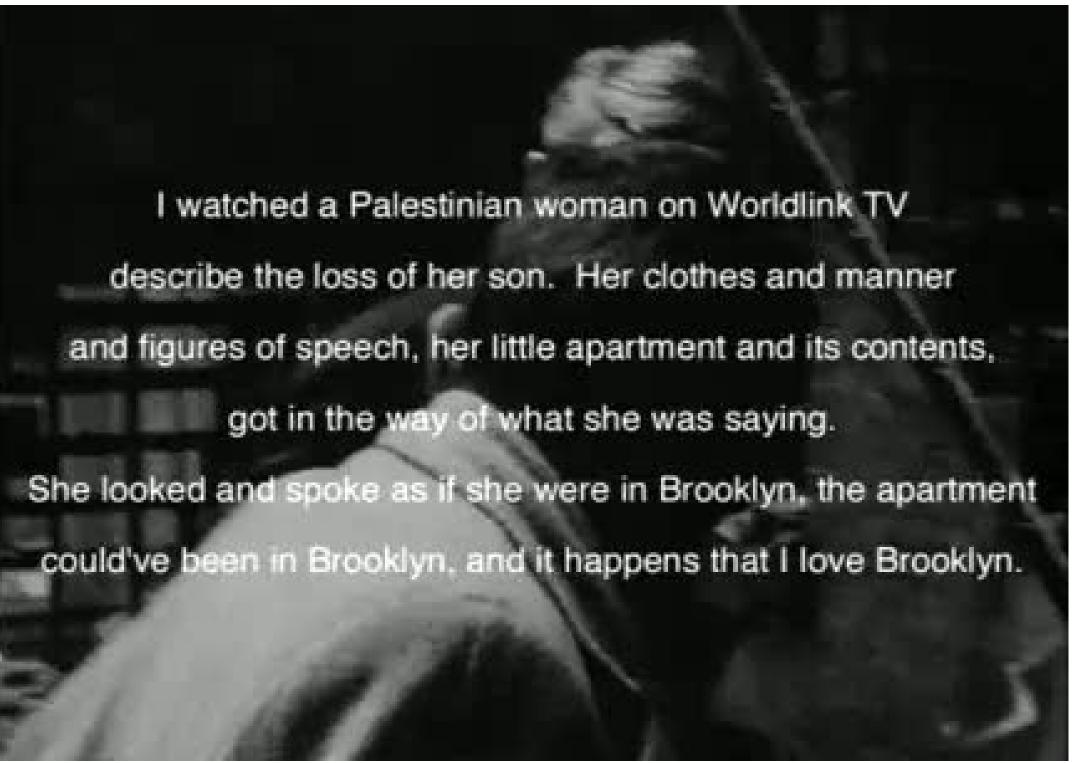
Cinema seemed the democratic art, assuming one might wrest the making and screening of works out of the exclusive grip of studios and banks. We made a splash with Underground Cinema. We made it possible for commercial movies to break free, to a degree, so that soon audiences could get sexy outspoken entertainment without having to deal with innovative form. Even before Reagan a friend was calling this territory Ground-Under Cinema.

I would eventually have second thoughts regarding an aspect of cinema I thought emblematic of its democratic character, how we each get a center seat on the action; rich and poor from every seat in the house enjoy the identical camera perspective, the world laid out to left and right for each of us. Problem there (as with computer games. The New World of movies) is the delusion that movies confer importance to the individual viewer. Making for a crash as one ermerges from the movies to find oneself adrift in the noise, many of us only a Social Security number away from total anonymity, with the result that many become movie-addicts and never entirely emerge. TV facilitates the addiction. And then these bleary ones vote; minds reduced to pulp they are assured they do their patriotic duty by selecting the most effective contender for their movie-addled knowknowing gut-reaction. They decide who they like. Sigh....



Star Spangled To Death - Chapter 3 - 066.jpg

I dug Jack and Jerry in large part because they were beyond my understanding. Why and how they did what they did eluded me. They suggested, in their distinctive complexities, that personality could be a breakaway excursion from ineluctable cause-and-effect; at the least a show of defiance against all "that makes us tick". I knew there was no escape but the impression of the unfathomable the two gave off intoxicated me.

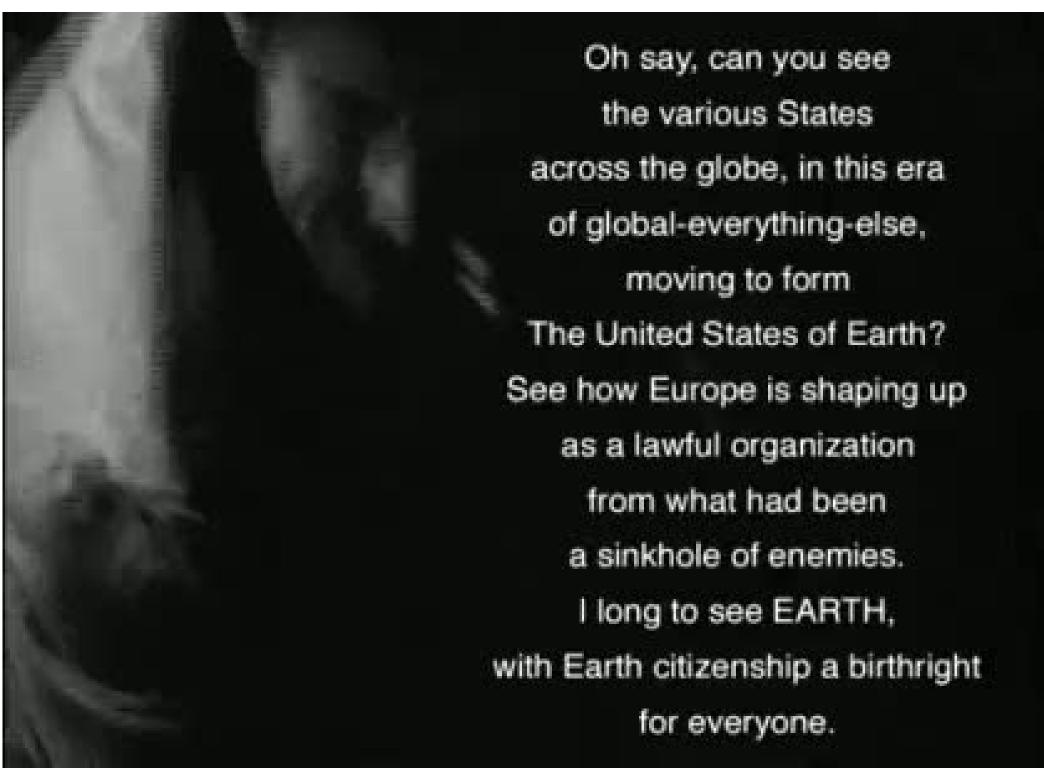


Letter to The Nation, April 12, 2004in those cases where Western leftists advocate a vague. naive anti-Zionist binationalism--where their intent is not to subordinate Israeli Jews in an Arab state but to express an idealistic commitment to egalitarianism and post-nationalism as a practical program for Jews and Palestinians here and now--the real-world effect of their beguiling fantasy is to lend aid and comfort to coercive binationalism.

Their blandishments stoke the frenzy of resistance to genuine two-state peace efforts, accelerating the transformation of Israel into a pariah state, fueling the campaign to realize a malign binationalist nightmare. Such misbegotten noble intentions will help pave the road to perdition, bolstering the Israeli right, feeding Jewish fear and paranoia and Arab chauvinist triumphalism. If successful, they will sweep Israelis and Palestinians down to the next rung of the raging Middle Eastern inferno. engulfing them in the great and intimate flames of civil war.

GIDON D. REMBA
President, Chicago Peace Now







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Wars and a growing crater in the Middle Class

has been Compassionate Conservatism.

2004 Bush takes the gloves off.

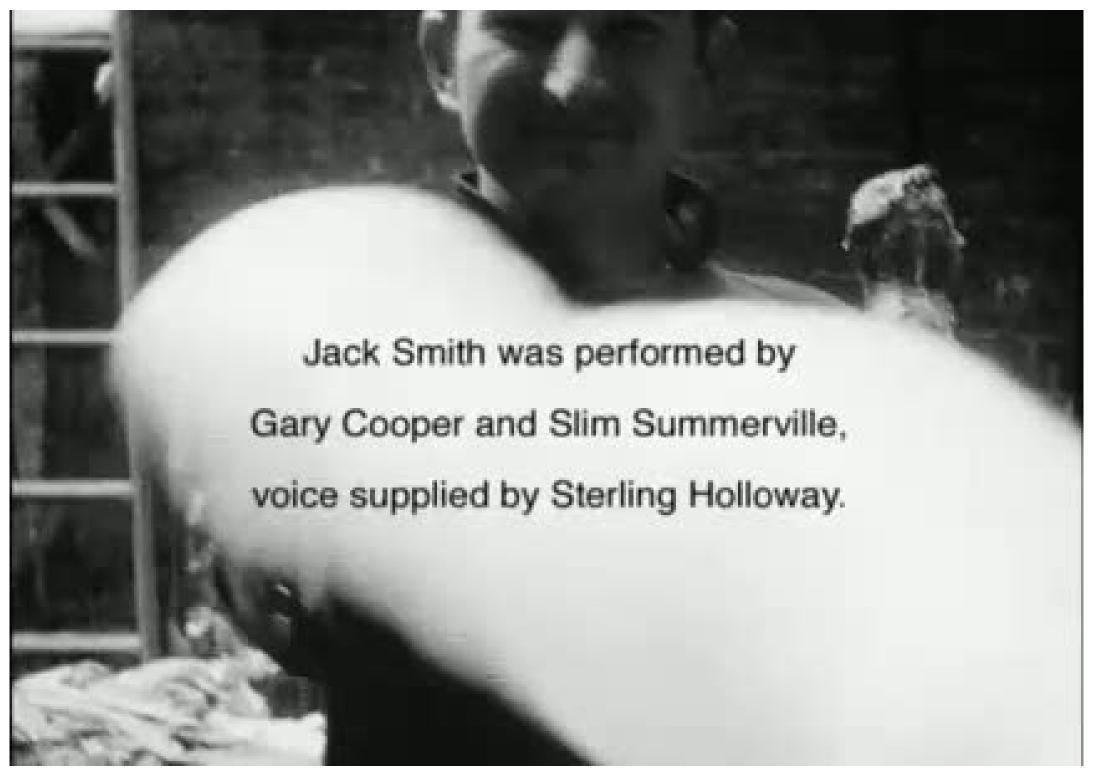
No more Mister Nice Guy.

We invade Canada.

Because it's there.



Star Spangled To Death - Chapter 3 - 077.jpg



Star Spangled To Death - Chapter 3 - 078.jpg

It was a time when Jack had put aside movie-making. He eventually showed me what he had been filming, an indoor color-scene of a costumed young woman directed to look longingly across a lagoon (built of bricks by Jack in a loft on 26th Street). She was painfully overlit and in sharp focus and what came through was mostly a study in unfortunate skin texture. It was a reach for an ideal of beauty that had struck him as a teenage moviegoer, Sheherazade come to Kansas, but in fact the filming was as unseeing as it was humorless. His movie was all in his head.

Now he was developing his skills as a photographer, with hopes of getting commercial jobs and pulling out of poverty. He showed me fashion magazine photographs, saying, "Look how abstract they are! And they get printed in the thousands and into the hands of regular people. Movies may be lousy now but this is also popular art and it's great"!

I didn't buy it. I lent him a copy of The Communist Manifesto and afterwards he thanked me and that was the end of Jack adapting to the market. (Years later he would say to Diana Bachus, "Kenny taught me to hate America.") His photographs began to genuinely picture his fantasy world and they really were great, in my book the best because most creative, each staged picture of yearning costumed seekers evoking an entire if non-existent movie.

On a shoestring he opened The Hyperbole, a storefront photo-studio on 8th Street. This was The Lower East Side years before it became East Village, with artist types very marginal. It was there one day waiting out front for Jack to return that I first met Jerry Sims. He clutched my arm and laid on his desperate case and that's how we got married.

Jack later told me his first meeting with Jerry was through smell. He'd been in back of the studio in his tiny living area when the smell spread over the partition. He came out to see a runty derelict in oversized clothes and imagined he could see fumes spilling out from under his trouserlegs and curling up to fill the space. He was delighted at seeing his new catch (the studio, a flop as moneymaker, now existed mostly to lure performers for his own photographs) and ecstatic to hear his rant, eventually adapting many of Jerry's zany ways as his own. One thing had to change, though. Jack said, "I showed him how to wipe his ass."

Cool It With Abstract Art (Nuance Will Save Us)

Sensitizing to art in its more abstract forms is imperative if we're to survive our own hunger for thrills.

We're hard-wired with a capacity for thrills, to internal adrenaline flushes, that can make us crave brutal and shaking events.

Many people, for instance, think back to war as "when they really lived".

But following even very slight changes of form from place to place in an artwork can offer equal adventure, living experience of enormous intensity when we learn to sensitize to the changes.

The trouble with stories is they're usually

the troubles of people

and tend to feed and promote sado-masochist inclinations.

Most of our entertainments brutalize, which is why

the violence must always get more shocking.

Abstract forms and their interactions, as in instrumental music,

can substitute for the havoc we're conditioned to enjoy.

I advocate sensitization. more experience from the subtlest changes of color and shade and direction and weight and so forth. Dance is one play on gravity that can satisfy atavistic instincts that have outlasted their usefulness. so we don't need to see cities falling. Abstract art is way out of fashion now, young people aer not learning its languages; the ferocious computer game is hot, gangsta rap is what's hot, bloodbath movies. Arnold Schwarzennegger is Governor of California. Elected by a landslide, indeed.

Forget the propaganda that sensitivity is sissy.

Only a turn to delicate nuance can save us.

Republicans are campaigning to change the Constitution to allow Schwarzenegger to run for President in 2008. Assuming there's any history after the moron now in office, you can bet on this perfect match of superpower and superstar, the perfect apotheosis of America The Movie (seeing as Reagan never rated more than second billing other than in B-pictures). Government by spin couldn't do better than be annunciated by someone still capable of pressing two hundred fifty pounds. Over-the-hill Nazi-ideal occupies White House, bestows Oscar on himself as populace applauds. Intellectuals call it a day and depart for Canada, leaving USA

Is Iraq a bigger hole?

It's test-time.

I'll give you a hint.

The name of the crooked auditing firm making headlines was

Arthur?

....Andersen.

Name twenty top-name corporate and financial institutions shown to be stealing billions from small investors.

Who went to jail?

You got the last one right.



The Nation, May 12, 2003 from

The Right's Grand Ambition:
Rolling Back the 20th Century
by William Greider

....The movement's grand ambition--one can no longer say grandiose--is to roll back the twentieth century, quite literally. That is, defenestrate the federal government and reduce its scale and powers to level well below what it was before the New Deal's centralization. With that accomplished, movement conservatives envision a restored society in which the

prevailing values and power relationships resemble the America that existed around 1900, when William McKinley was President. Governing authority and resources are dispersed from Washington, returned to local levels and also to individuals and private institutions, most notably corporations and religious organizations. The primacy of private property rights is re-established over the shared public priorities expressed in government regulation. Above all, private wealth--both enterprises and individuals with higher incomes--are permanently insulated from the progressive claims of the graduated income tax.

....All in all, the right's agenda promises a reordering that will drive the country toward greater separation and segmentation of its many social elements--higher walls and more distance for those who wish to protect themselves from messy diversity. The trend of social disintegration, including the slow breakup of the broad middle class, has been under way for several decades--fissures generated by growing inequalities of status and well-being. The right proposes to legitimize and encourage these deep social changes in the name of greater autonomy. Dismantle the common assets of society, give people back their tax money and let everyone fend for himself.

Election Mystique

Tyrants never fail to call for elections ASAP. Elections

allow winners to claim mandates.

That is, to *legally* tyrannize in the name of the tyrannized!

The tyrant epitomizes the triumph of the will of the people, get it?

See how ecstatically they fall in line.

They've been given their places.

Winning elections by whatever means necessary is all that is necessary to assume the right to order uniformed goons to imprison and torture and murder individuals that won't fall in line.

Crooked elections, American elections. may be monstrous travesties of democratic government but once a winner is declared nothing can be done; a mysterious code comes into play whereby the call is irreversible no matter the chicanery revealed. So we're given to understand.

Because we have rules;
because heads have nodded
and media has spoken,
and so that's the way things are
until the tyrant has a notion
to change or go around the rules.

THOU SHALT TORTURE

White House counsel Alberto Gonzales advised Bush that Geneva Conventions anti-torture provisions are "quaint" and "obsolete", unleashing horrible treatment of people, 70 to 90 per cent admittedly picked up at random, exactly

as the Japs and Nazis were shown to treat people in the movies we saw when each matinee began with hands over hearts and a heartfelt salute.

As I write Gonzales is being elevated to Attorney General. Republicans plan on placing him on the Supreme Court. This is an extraordinary moment.

Someone known to represent Gestapo repression tactics is being made top cop of the nation with no denial of his cruelty and disdain for law.

Provisions against torture? only redefine the word.

Republicans want us to recognize the new reality.

This is a sea-change all the more terrible
because it isn't making waves across America.
Have you registered the fact that any citizen of USA
can now be picked up and incarcerated however long
with no explanation, no contact to family, no legal representation?
Are you entertaining an idea of America
that jibes with current reality?

You bigmouth malcontent, should you expect to be tortured?

those close to you... your kids... I'm afraid

the America we pledged allegiance to in school

and at the start of each saturday matinee is equally quaint
to these bastards. So what is this thing that's replacing it?

Doesn't look good

but does look familiar. Does allegiance require sticking with a thing that's turning into the very thing it once pictured as the detested enemy?

Weren't we swearing allegiance to the principles
America stood for? affirming common decency,
and not some mystical geographic entity, some
enchanted real estate. (Say, does God's Country end
exactly along our borders with Mexico and Canada?
and then resume a skip away in Hawaii, in Alaska?)

"Evil is practical,"

Jack says in BLONDE COBRA.

Choosing when to recognize evil

can be practical.

Saddam Hussein was our monster until he interfered with oil profits. Capitalists pimp the planet.

Disease?

A dead Earth?

Forget it.

They will have had their lives.

Capitalism ("Greed Is Good")

can excite virulent activity

for the short run

like a terminal disease.

America, I'm disappointed in you. Comic books taught me mobsters say dese and dose. The movies showed government whitening as it ascends from the thugs in local command to the feds, noble and resolute narrow-nose patricians, all shmutz falling away on the final ascent to The White House, just below Heaven.

In fact,

the white mob had the country in hand from the beginning, bullies and wiseguys proving themselves among the locals moving up to state control.

The very wised-up rise to the very top positions because they can work smoothly with lesser gangsters.

I was sold a bill of goods and they turned out bads.

They pretend to be American corporations, subsidiaries of America.

In fact, they are an off-shore based invasion of America taking it for all they can. Nations are their prey.

Soon as the shit flies here they'll be gone.

A massive deception has taken place. America has been rust-belted by an unannounced hostile take-over followed by the looting of assets. The "service industries" (the counting and assigning of money earned by others) are now crossing the seas. Bollywood movies have begun to speak with American accents.

Bush is their man, having enabled a looting thorough beyond their dreams.

They've taken our money, pulled it out of circulation and our economy is drying up.

They distract us with abortion as the big issue, gay marriage.

(Straights have had it with marriage,

so now gays want in on the act.

Church-folk should be kissing gay asses

for renewing faith in contractual love.)

Iraq has been a great success.

Our dollars are now their dollars.

We've been taken good.

The operating principle of capitalism is cost-benefit analysis.

Cost-benefit analysis

determines what can be got away with

at whatever cost to others.

There's no getting our money back.

They've got the law. They will turn our own military upon us.

That's how it's done, a classic maneuver.

Jay Gould, "The Wolf of Wall Street",

perpetrator of mass poverty,

when asked was he afraid the people might rise,

answered,

"I can always hire half the working class

to kill off the other half."

For ruler convenience we come color-coded for easy divide-and-conquer.

Religion divides us, gender, national origin.

Eating habits. Hair style.

Jay Gould knew one more thing:

The people,

with exceptions that can be dealt with, are sheep.

And should the people begin to wise up
it will only be necessary to once again point out
those among their exploiters
who happen to be Jews.

Communism is dead and socialism has taken some drubbings and the unions are kaputt. The system is secure in place and there's no longer the need to restrain capitalism's inequities as Roosevelt attempted to in the Thirties. Capialism with a human face (and the furthering of the middle-class) has been triumphantly replaced by Reagan's face. Will we go the South American way? Grotesque disparity of wealth together with martial law and disappearances?

Capitalism

leaves behind too much garbage.

The heroic Western trek; how much the result of pioneer despoilaiton of land and water? Why replenish when you can exhaust and move on? God wants us traveling West to where more "raw" land can be cleared of "Wildlife" with rifles and sixguns and scalping knives. A continent is not enough. Think globular.

This land-mass named America, like some great living thing brought to its knees, a swarm of parasites eating it alive. Today its cities and towns look like hell. Waters poisoned. Criminally abused, really, by criminals that get shown to the best tables. You come back from a visit to Europe, after a look at the care given places in Europe, and you see the decrepitude here and you can cry. New York is an abandoned city.

Old Europe

sadly observes

its American progeny:

Oh, say, dear chap, do you see

the bombs bursting in air?

Ever more bombs

bursting in air?

On land and sea

and everywhere?

Is this young nation

a nut-case or what?

David Frum and Richard Perle An End To Evil published 2004

Like "the war against terror", a title to chill the heart of the Spirit Not Of ..., who recognizes a call to extinction as insane as by any of the other convinced believers.

Question:

Is counter suicidal readiness
as national policy
the challenge to Islamic extremism
we want?

Fascists were all God and Country, forbidding talk of class division, and Communists sang The International, of their faith in a fair and science-based future. Team identities may be less team-jacketed today but the same antagonism of disposition exists, more than between Haves and Have Nots. between hard-hearted and bleeding-hearts. I intend to learn the words to The International.

from WAIT FOR ME AT THE BOTTOM OF THE POOL

The Writings of Jack Smith

Edited by J. Hoberman and Ed Leffingwell

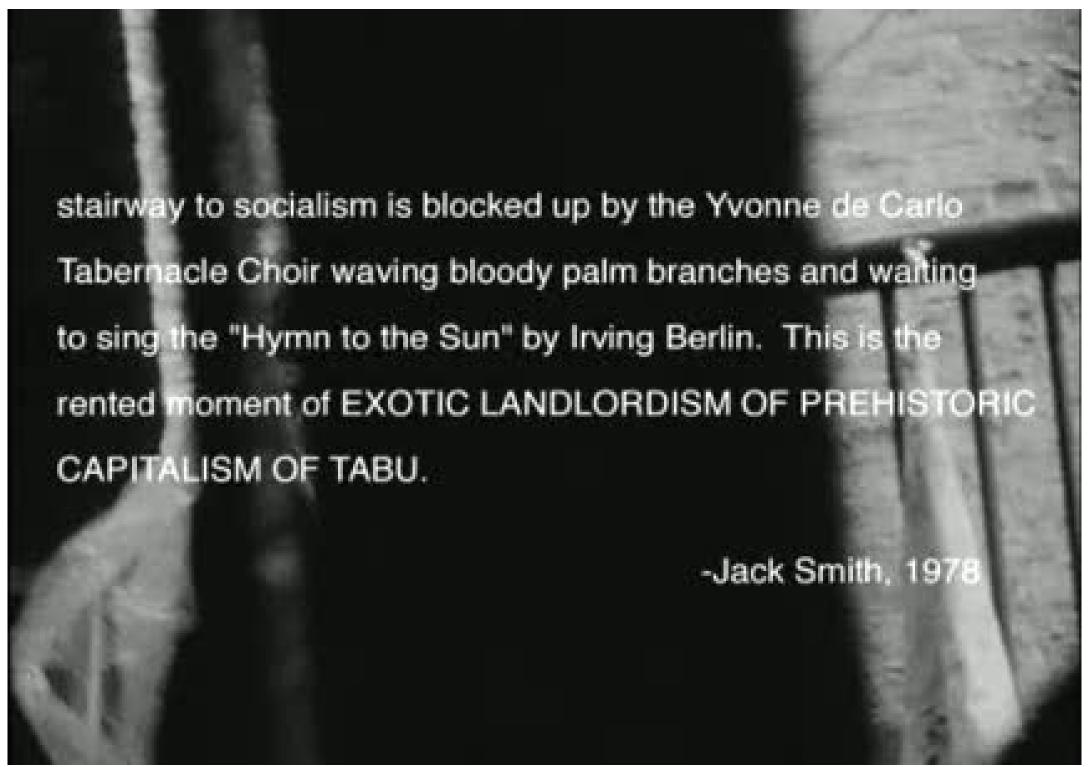
Capitalism of Lotusland

Could art be useful? Ever since the desert glitter drifted over burnt-out ruins of Plaster Lagoon thousands of artists have pondered and dreamed of such a thing, yet, art must not be used anymore as another elaborate means of fleeing from thinking because of the multiplying amount of information

each person needs to process in order to come to any kind of decision about what kind of planet one wants to live on before business, religion, and government succeed in blowing it out of the solar system.

Let art continue to be entertaining, escapist, stunning, glamorous and NATURALISTIC - but let it be loaded with information worked into the vapid plots of, for instance, movies. Each one would be a more or less complete exposition of one subject or another. Thus you would have Tony Curtis and Janet Leigh busily making yogurt; Humphrey Bogart struggling to introduce

a basic civil law course into public schools; infants being given to the old in homes for the aged by Ginger Rogers; donut-shaped dwellings with sunlight pouring into central patios for all, designed by Gary Cooper; soft, clear plastic bubble cars with hooks that attach to monorails built by Charlton Heston that pass over the Free Paradise of abandoned objects in the center of the city near where the community movie sets would also be; and where Maria Montez and Johnny Weismüller would labour to dissolve all national boundaries and release the prisoners of Uranus. But the



380 tons of super-explosive materials (one pound brought down the Lockerbee passenger jet) has fallen into possession of Iraqi insurgents. It became news after months of suppression by the Bush-Cheney gang. It was a cache known to and successfully contained by UN inspectors. What is amazing, and ominous, about this election is that there's a question of a Bush-Cheney defeat. I have to read WHAT'S WRONG WITH KANSAS?

Sadly, we seem to be embarking on another Civil War, "North and South" now less a geographic divide than intellectual or, more accurately, psychological (see DeMauss, Foundations Of Psychohistory, re psychological-evolution levels). Our emotional retards are pawns in big-money hands just as they were in Nazi Germany. Poorly educated, economically expendable, systematically bewildered, they are unable to recognize their actual oppressors and betrayers. But somebody must be punished for their humiliation. Bummed out as they are, they are flattered at the idea of "a world of enemies".

This election is the dirtiest ever in USA. The 2000 Forida theft set the style for Republican machinations nation-wide, with Carl Rove the man of the hour. Republicans prefer to take power, so much more masculine an action than currying votes from workingclass inferiors. These are not, after all, the people they consult running their businesses, and isn't America their business, their corporation-of-corporations?

Chapter Three, The Height Of Folly, has come to an end. This saturday-afternoon-serial breaks off at this point. The date is 10.26.04, only a few days before the election. Unlike competing studio's cliffhangers, our's concludes with the audience left at a precipice. We will be watching to see how you get out of this one. What am I saying? I just looked down. We're dangling alongside you....