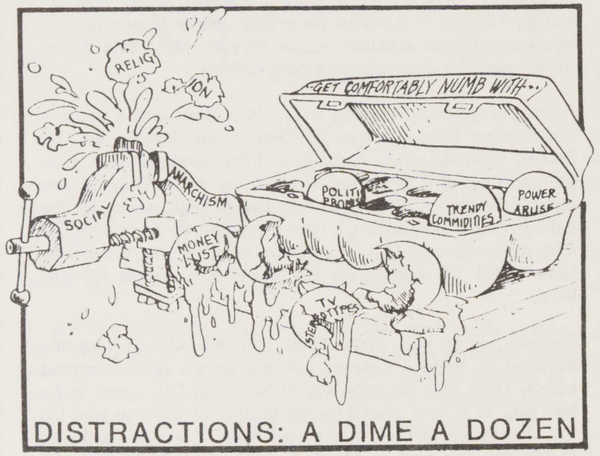
CALLING ALL CONSUMERS: I'M CALLING IN SICK (YOU CAN TOO)

(THIS IS THE FIRST IN A TWO PART SERIES)

I may not be the Erma Bombeck of anarchy, but I sure am tired of those stupid come-ons and outcries from the world of advertisements. Do you remember the last Brooke Shields jeans commercial you saw and couldn't tell if they were selling Calvin's pants or Brooke's bottom? ...or wondered why blue jeans, of all things, were being offered to the public as a godsend from designers? If so, you've won half the battle already. Realizing that the business world creates this razzle-dazzle and little more may seem pretty obvious, but you'd be amazed how many people I still see reciting ads *to the word* (humming that jingle) on their way to mindlessly grab up all these items. They're shown to us as avenues to a better life; yet when purchased and applied to you and me individually, do little more than take up space in our already crowded surroundings. Maybe they perform a semi-useful task and maybe they don't, but I'll bet in most cases they could be replaced with a more personalized end-product made by you, me, or anyone else with the interest to get *involved* in their own lives, rather than pasting images of who-knows-how-many different, unrelated items together to make up what is commonly called a *lifestyle.*

First of all, we all have to get on those pushy people who tell us we *need* something, or, if we already need it, we need *more* of it. How do they know I *need* Tide? *I* don't care if the neighbors think my family's clothes aren't as clean as theirs, and if they did, I wouldn't give a shit; they've got their own problems. And how many of *their* beers can you consume watching all those gross commercials (showing you sports personalities



DISTRACTIONS: A DIME A DOZEN

I've never heard of)? Would anyone in their right mind compete with someone to have *fresher* breath? You know and I know that *we* judge, *we* gauge, *we* are the ones who decide how much of anything we will do, take, or buy.

Then there's always the person who's telling you how much faster you can get there, or how much sharper you'll look in it, or how all the problems are taken out of it. Trouble is, by taking out the problems, they also take out your ability to get into the whole process of what you want; you lose a little appreciation for the conveniences you're acquiring. I guess it just gets lost in the translation. Have you ever made something—a model, a pot holder, a shirt, or whatever—or fixed something instead of replacing it? There's just something there that you miss by letting someone else do it for you.

And finally, I can't remember how many times this week I've heard the words "choice" or "variety" from the voices of consumerism. What a joke! Don't you think *you* can make something more unique, more personal, if not better than that stuff they're offering? Sure you can! And if there's any question about it, think about the last product you bought that was "completely personal, absolutely singular, thoroughly intimate" and "simply you", and turned out to be either cheaply devised or as mass-produced as postage stamps. You don't have to limit your possibilities to such a shady sort of folks. Do it yourself! (This is getting a bit out of hand; finish this article as you will. . . .)

Jean Raynham

CLIP 'N' SAVE!

THIS COMMODITY IS EITHER OVERPRICED OR UNNECESSARY.

(THINK ABOUT IT)

MAKE/DO IT YOURSELF!

NOW THAT'S A CHOICE.

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CUT THIS OUT AND GLUE IT TO THE MOST DISGUSTING AD/PRODUCT YOU KNOW...

NOTES FROM URBAN WALDEN: WHEN SLASH COMES TO SLASH

Lash out. I can't hear you man. The TV's turned up too loud. Oh yeah it's DEVO. And they're whipping it. Whip it good. I started dancing with the TV on. What's this? DEVO outdoing Larry Flynt? It was just then that I noticed that the lead singer of the group was whipping the clothes off of a bound woman in his dumb-assed cowboy costume. Who ever thought that was what they had in mind? Why am I watching TV in a nightclub anyway?

When tonight's live band hit the stage I found myself wanting to push and shove. Chaos, yeah. So much spontaneous interjection. It's amazing how natural it can feel. It becomes live without anyone saying a word. If the conditions are right there can be free-for-all dancing. We agree to push and shove out there. Not hoping to abuse by touch but to cause some effect, start a reaction. There it is, my presence is now felt. As we are bludgeoned senseless by sound it is not difficult to fall into the zombie dance. We are taken by a current, an outrageous static which takes us into the inner reaches of our panicked selves. I recognize that deafening drone. It's never loud enough, but I know it resonates with the frayed chords of my soul.

I can feel my cage apparent while amid such wild spontaneity. This is truly anarchy in play, when our natural instincts keep it all safe. Falling down is nothing to fear as we jostle in harmony with the all-out sensation of each individual. This form of dancing is fine with me if I at least may have a short dance on my own. But I didn't come out tonight to be left alone amongst so many new people.

I can feel all the tolerance and taboo, measured out by my freedom. Now I may see how equally I will knock back at a short young female, now that she's lashed out at me. What is my timidity? Can I not be free to make some non-sexual contact? To let go for awhile from the ancient rituals of established response. I relish the chance to rebel against the societal norms which dictate my presence of mind before both sexes. Is it true that for once I can be allowed to approach some fellow humans without being automatically typed among the throngs of my sex or the formalities of my home town. I just want to have a chance to share with others. Wanna make some contact before I have to prove myself in someone else's arbitrary game. This time it's mine with everyone else, and if I'm harboring any artificial taboo I'm gonna know it.

Now out of breath, I find the release a thrill as everyone is respected and considered as another person to protect, or include in the uninhibited fun. I feel safe from thugs who might hope to get attention by being cruel. It has been right tonight, positive energy flowing; pure anarchy becomes pure anarchistic community, where evil is banished. A scene where a proprietor of mean intent isn't allowed to become contagious and set a precedent.

The form should be such that everyone becomes involved or else the "slam" should be limited to a particular area. While Slam dancing seems to be a playful answer to an over-crowded world and the citified interpersonal chill, it still seems to draw us perilously close to mindless anonymity. That drone, drone, drone wears on us, sends some to move too hard, too selfish to notice my hand on the floor which in fun times would have been safe. Ah but the drone seems as if it is there only to satisfy itself. As the chords to "gang fight" pulse the mood, spontaneity is lost and the game is left to the ritual seekers. Punk has been a chance to release the anger in ourselves. Now flies an elbow. The dance-floor is taken over by a few strong clones who by force now have it to themselves.

Currently, those New Wave clubs piss me off because there is always an established set of people who dominate the floor with bullshit. Their "dancing" isn't Anarchy, it's war. I might as well go to Studio 54, things are so fucking predictable. Get on my goochies and boogie. What's the difference? Thank God for Hairall or I just couldn't set foot out of the house. Come on, the New Age is in our heads, not on them.

I think that New Wave has gotten too safe. All those video films are so shallow. They say nothing. Gasp at Adam Ant; Debbie let her hair go brown; Bowie has his own video crew. It's fun, why not, but so is bowling, and it doesn't claim to be an end in itself. We've got to become ourselves before society tells us it is Punk or New Wave (or New Age for that matter). Otherwise we're just kidding ourselves. It's only another insignificant phase. Slam dancing and wild clothes have their place when they happen naturally; when it feels right. Who needs to be guided by their own "individuality" just at a time when Rock and Roll has got one helluva job to do.

R.S. Vigeant.

PUNCH'IN' TH' CLOCK