

1. The assumption that you can know anything about anybody without going to the trouble of finding out for yourself. From this flows letters after the name, degrees, established reputations etc. But if you are idle and stupid enough, perhaps you deserve 'the most eminent names in their field'.
2. The assumption that hazard is a bad thing and that you can be, and ought to be, 'safe'. Thus, the selflessly accepted duties of governments and public institutions to protect you. Freedom and hazard are inseparable. If you are unable to face the hazard (this is true of everybody at some time or another) you must place yourself under the protection and authority of another.
3. The assumption that competence is a permanent and repeatable quality. This arises from:
 - (a) the failure to see that competence is always competence in a concrete situation and therefore unique.
 - (b) the failure to distinguish between competence and the techniques that it needs to express itself. Take the example of a fencer: he must have developed the right kind of physical fitness, and mastered a repertoire of skills in handling himself and his weapon. But by itself this can only produce dead craftsmanship. Competence is living, and comes from a connection between the man and totality and uniqueness of the situation. The competence that is within him is called forth by the needs of the situation and uses the skills to act creatively. Perhaps this sheds some light on the phenomena of competence being displayed by inexperienced people, and very experienced and qualified people being, as John Rowan pointed out, quite useless.

Yours sincerely,
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DAVID HOLBROOK REPLIES:

I believe that the survival of man is bound up with his discovery of the capacity for *liebende Wirheit*, 'loving communion' - a term I take from the existentialism of Ludwig Binswanger, (see Rollo May in *'Existence - A New Dimension in Psychiatry'*). I therefore condemn all manifestations which promote hate. I have spoken against bombing and war in *'Writers Take Sides in Vietnam'* and in my novel *'Flesh Wounds'*. I have turned recently to the way in which more hate is being thrust into our society by the commercial exploitation of sex and violence. In my article I simply reported some psychological work which seemed to show that violence and sex in films *had an effect*. I intended thereby to counteract the foolish dogma of progressive intellectuals today, which declares that films have no effect. We can go on to argue whether the effect is harmful or not. To me, to strip someone of their clothes, expose their bodily privacy, and make them perform acts of copulation or defecation for the amusement of others for money is as disgusting and degrading as racism, and I have no doubt that someday the trendy minority will wake from their present brainwashed state, perhaps after watching Pasolini's scene of a man pissing over a group of others from a balcony, in

the name of our great poet - the profound and sensitive Chaucer. As it is, the reader had better not read me, as I am a pariah for having opposed cultural perversion. But if they read David Boadella they will learn how he too, as a Reichian, warns us about the damaging effects of pseudo-sexuality. That there is bombing here, or bad housing there, has nothing to do with the matter. One wrong does not excuse us from tackling another. A boy brought up in the Gorbals can still choose, as an existentialist being, whether or not to join a game of 'Clockwork Orange Youths' on a punch-up - dressed in overalls and make-up - or a gang-bang in the Marlon Brando pattern.

But my point is that the intellectual world is all in favour of pressing upon him powerful images of the Kubrick kind, which Masud Khan, the psychoanalyst, has called *a militant and malicious assault on human values*. I believe we should be doubtful about what we are doing. The 'people' do not have our self-protective irony. Their quest for genuine encounter is not being helped by our porno-kitsch culture.

Your other correspondent, on masturbation etc, should read Melanie Klein and D. W. Winnicott. They make it clear that for some (for instance, anxious children) masturbation is a way of feeling alive, which can become a great nuisance in their lives. Also, as Boadella says, quoting the Russells, the quickest way to harm a person's sexual life is to arouse his masturbation phantasies. In my analysis of Sylvia Plath I found one phrase 'masturbates a glitter' led to an analysis of her unconscious belief that, since she could not get a sense of being from the mother's breast, she hoped that by 'milking' the father's penis, she could produce a pool of semen in which she could see herself reflected. Yet, since Daddy was dead, this pool might bring her death. Such an obsession reveals the deep unconscious problems behind masturbation. The whole phenomenology of masturbation is complex, and the problem is not to be dismissed by a simple 'progressive' attitude that nothing 'bad' must be said about it: of course, masturbation is normal in everyone's life, at some stage. But a culture which almost entirely concentrates on masturbatory images is a sick one, and is trying, as by weird sensual ego-centricity, to solve problems of meaning which can only be found by *liebende Wirheit*, and not by the mere mechanical act of masturbating 'on' someone else, or in the cinema. (The research I reported showed that the main effect of 'sex' films is to increase masturbatory sexual activity).

To the individual concerned with humanistic psychology (which I interpret in the wider sense, not in terms simply of a narrow group following Carl Rogers and the 'encounter' movement) these issues are surely of great importance and are not to be simply dealt with in terms of a limited dogma? May I suggest May's book to your readers; my own survey *Human Hope and the Death Instinct* on object-relations psychoanalysis; E.K. Ledermann's *Existential Neurosis*, David Boadella's *Wilhelm Reich* and Peter Lomas's *True and False Experience*. Then perhaps we could meet on other terms than mutual distrust. I am classified by the London trendy capitalist-press-servers as a 'reactionary'- largely I believe because I have found them out. The article SELF AND SOCIETY published had been rejected by every weekly and daily in London first. What, I wonder are they afraid of?

Love, and the body's life, I believe, most of all.

Yours,
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