

LIBERTARIAN

NEW JERSEY

A HISTORY OF PLEASURE

THE 20'S

Prohibition: an effect of the prurient progressivism of the 1910's. It made the 20's pleasure-conscious, along with radio and automobiles. Many folks actually believed that devil's brew would become extinct (like apples). Who knew that when an act is pleasurable and political, it will appeal to damn near anybody? Well, it did. People who wouldn't have drunk otherwise, did; likewise people who wouldn't have died of poisoning otherwise.

Prohibition was felt everywhere; in literature ---false books sold like hotcakes; in fashion--- witness the outbreak of hollow legs and canes. But that was later. First off, hemlines shot up real quick, partly because of Freud's popularity, but mainly to make the hiding of flasks all the more exciting. Skirts rose from six inches above the ground to above the knee, at which time women's knees began to blush rougely---also Freudian. (By then, thanks to Freud, even a hangnail was somehow phallic, not altogether inappropriately.) As vice became de rigueur, a host of new ones arose. Smoking increased over 100%; Mah Jong; confession magazines to pick up a few pointers; indecent exposure (one-piece bathing suits); golf; boudoirian cars (back seats); best of all, Henry Ford (inventor of the Revolution of 1812) by the sheer power of his intellect, convinced a lot of people that it might well be profitable to do business with him, and before you could say bull, Wall Street was fevered with activity, and capitalism was feeling no pain.

Pleasure came to fashion in two guises. In 1919 the hobble skirt was not only covering but impeding; the corset was passing more impeding. Both had to go. Of course everyone who was of a mind to be indignant, said that the raising of hems was immoral, not impractical. Nevertheless, women could move more easily in shorter skirts, as many of the indignant in their secret hearts indigned. It was bad enough you couldn't drag her by the hair or tie her up any longer---now even the symbolic bonds were cut, and the bitch was voting! Also it made dancing easier, and the founder of the Christian Endeavor Society called that, "impure, corrupting, destroying spirituality, increasing carnality." Doubtless pleasure does at least half that. Then as now, the moralists did something about it: they hollered, "There oughta be a law!" Then female-dress bills were laid before legislatures. One in Virginia forbade frocks showing "more than three inches of her throat." This was killed early on, being for most an infringement on freedom of speech.

The ones who hollered most of all were, believe it or not, clergymen and religious, ugly old women with whalebone corsets and flesh to match, and legs like roadmaps. But jealousy was secondary. Above all, they were anti-pleasure. They decried the useful as well as the beautiful.

Hair was bobbed, just to make sure nobody got dragged by the hair. Along with tonnage of heavy restrictive dress went hanks of hair that took hours to wash, dry, and style. The objections to this were, a) it wasn't pretty (nonsense); b) it was socialistic (boozhwah); and c) it gave her a few extra hours a week to be idle and fool around (hmm). Nowadays it smacks of the ascetic, but then short hair was sexy. There was nothing for gentlemen to undo, and it suggested a skip-the-preliminaries attitude. But basically, short hair was convenient. And that just wouldn't do.

In the end, silk undies grabbed a third of the market. This brought more women down than all the horsehair chairs on the continent. It was light, soft, and horror of horrors, it felt so-o-o good! The moralists screamed it was corrupting; few listened, for as everyone knows, the use of silk impairs the hearing.

Finally the ladies were painting their faces, like bad women, and if the gents couldn't tell the difference, nobody was safe; and, women slimmed down. All slimming down does is make one a bit healthier, though someone was indelicate enough to suggest that it brought one's feelers closer to the surface.

It was drinking that made it a losing battle for the anti-pleasure set. Liquor brought the country a new exercise, rum-running. Liquor loosened the tongue. (Nice girls were saying "swell.") Liquor was taken in mixed company, and for the first time in all history the sexes were getting along with one another. Pretty soon all you had to do to make an impression was, to keep an unflappable cool while hearing a confession of gross moral degeneracy. It put you just a notch below the narrator in popularity. Liquor brought frankness and made it socially obligatory.

Suddenly they discovered sex, and on its heels Freud, and thence to the rest of psychology. If a fellow sneezed it had nothing whatever to do with his sinuses. At best he was timid, and that was his way of asserting himself; but more likely he had a sex complex of some sort. Perhaps the people were more talk than action, but the moralists were beside themselves about it...where there's smoke, you know. Anyway sex was big news, and all roads led to it. Usually in cars: the sudden popularity of the auto was now seen for what it really was---that of a mobile bedroom. It was claimed, not without reason, that the auto was wrecking the morals of young people. Movie theaters were similarly iniquitous. They were dark, and the hat business was booming suspiciously. Sex was to blame. It was everywhere; if you didn't get along with your parents, if you smoked, drank milk, or didn't, if you put your pants on left leg first, they got you coming and going---sex was at the bottom of it all. At last there was nothing to do but oughtabea the ultimate law, and IT WAS PASSED in the little town of Norphelt, Arkansas, in 1925. Behold:

Section 1. Hereafter it shall be unlawful for any man and woman, male or female, to be guilty of committing the act of sexual intercourse between themselves at any place within the corporate limits of said town.

Loophole of loopholes, it contained an exemption for married persons: "as between themselves, and their husband and wife." (?)

LIBERTARIAN

NEW JERSEY



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New Jersey Libertarian Party

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MERITORIAL

I had planned to write an article about the attitude which leads people to distinguish "good" from "bad" libertarians, or to say, "he's no libertarian." The article does not appear for the following reasons: 1 I'm pressed for time. 2 I don't like to write heavy without pay. 3 The article can be summed up with this suggestion: change "he's no libertarian" to "he's un-libertarian."

If I have a next issue, it will feature the interview with Konkin, which occurred and went well.

Not being much of a speaker, I will discuss here the matter which may be on the convention agenda.

According to sources, the Dec. 13 State Com meeting found Kathy MacAdam and Bill Schetlick eager to run for Chair/Editor. (Apparently both would be happy with either job.) A month later Jane Rehmke verified it to me. She explained that Kathy, as Executive Secretary, has letters from libertarians who have quit the party in disapproval of LNJ. Jane remarked, "We'd rather have Jersey members than out-of-state subscribers." She asked if I would continue to write for the newsletter after purge. I told her, "Don't sound me out." It should not matter either way. If I said I would, someone might think it's okay to vote me out, they're not really losing anything. I would like to see it decided on principle alone.

The main objection to LNJ is that it is anti- (not/not purely/not patently/not rabidly) libertarian. The reader cannot clearly see libertarian ideas. (They're clearly on the back page, reader.) It is also said that LNJ is riddled with venomous personal attacks (very un-libertarian). I believe these objections pertain only to my own writing. And I believe most readers capable of understanding my writing. In only two pieces was there true animosity: the mention of pet lovers in Oct. (and that was vestigial—by the time it was written I was simply amused), and the last paragraph of the response to RF3's letter in Nov. (the clue being the seemingly redundant, "shabby hypocrisy"). For the record, I am brimming with detachment; it takes a topflight event to get me hyped up. The style is crackerbarrel malicious, and I still maintain that is obvious.

In being editor, I have been trying to, on one hand, give pause; and on the other, to make a point. In keeping with policy, let's put it this way:

It is the early years of the railroads; there's a prevalent belief that, if a train runs over 25 mph, pressure forces oxygen out of the cars, and the passengers suffocate. A fellow boards and finds a group of scientists in one car, average folks in the others. He goes to the car of the scientists to convince them, that since the engineer is planning to do 35 mph, they're all about to die. It is a simple task to empty the other cars this way, but he isn't interested in them. He speaks, and succeeds in emptying most of their seats. He is not particularly happy about it, but at least he has the pleasure of getting acquainted with those who remain.

In a libertarian society, there will be many a free mouth. How much of it can you stand? That's the point.

It is also claimed that LNJ is a bad representation of the NJLP, because it is "not libertarian enough." The same was said of Bob Steiner's action of 9-22-74, with greater reason, since the principle was not so clear. I therefore suggest, for the sake of consistency, that you rid yourselves of Bob first, for his "un-libertarian behavior." This will save you the trouble over me, for I would immediately dissociate (not in Bob's fashion, I mean dissociate myself from the party). And believe me there are few acts more agonizing than having to stick up for Bob, even though he's right.

Contrary to the July meritorial, there are readers who really do care, who is Mary Mason. The following info is the best available:

She is full of useless talents, contortionism, left-handedness, mirror writing, reading upside-down, spelling backwards, holding her breath, opening locks blindfolded. She has supernumeraries, including extra teeth; floating ribs; once an appendix in the wrong place; when angered her hair stands up on the left side. She is a night person, and can carry on a conversation with anyone present while asleep and dreaming, at least in the early stages of sleep. She seldom travels, and has been known to fall back blind from looking out the window. Married to an identical triplet, her biggest thrill is trying to tell them apart in the dark. I'm afraid all this is quite true. Yet she is not expected to reply to the request for an interview. You'll have to deduce the rest.

Editrix historicae NJLP salutem dicit: s.v.b.e.v.

Kathy, I've received your report demonstrating how some libertarians "have been very active" in spreading their ideas. Of course you did the best you could, but you left out Bill George. Against the Wall reaches more libertarians than we do, and you really should have mentioned them.

While I do not enjoy sticking my nose into other people's littleness, I feel it necessary to point out at least that flaw in your report. Against the Wall has been prospering for some three years now, and when it contains an article it is quite an appetizing paper.

Congrats on being appointed unofficial historian. Be a good girl and do as you're told.

—MMB

pleasure

from p. 1

And so it went. Ban a book and the author made a fortune. Ban a movie and nobody was home o' nights. Excommunicate a rascal and he's the latest Society's Darling. Ban the bottle and one third of a nation is blotto. But they kept on banning, a Freudian finger in every dike, and pleasure was responding to the no-no stimulus. Without liquor it would have taken an extra decade or two.

The intellectual state of the nation was dualistic. The intellectuals were in the main pro-pleasure: anti-religion, anti-censorship, free-lovers. They made "Victorian" a slur. They made intellectualism popular----because they made it pleasantly witty. In short, they ran with the pack of the hour. The rest of the land was the moralists, and, for lack of a better word, the drones. The former kept on trying to rein the world; the latter went along as usual.

The war for the souls of the drones was never more peculiar than in the Battle of 1925, exactly 5,929 years after the war was decided futile. The Anti-Pleasurist to Beat All, one William Jennings Bryan, hard Presidential aspirant, soft thinker, went to Dayton, Tennessee that summer to be utterly humiliated and (none-too-) soon die.

On the side of science in that absurdity was Clarence Darrow. Allegedly the trial was that of John T. Scopes, for teaching evolution. Actually, it was between Fundamentalism, that old-time religion, and Science, the New Path. Somewhere in there too was the issue that man descended from apes, and Dayton was certainly the place to prove it. A vast motley horde of evangelists, revivalists, vendors, hicks, reporters, flappers, and even experts swept into town. It was a circus in the old human tradition. Bryan, described as "a man with no discoverable brains of any kind" by George Bernard Shaw of all people, eventually took the stand and made a practiced ass of himself. He followed the Fundamentalist line.

Bryan was the perfect Fundamentalist. It was a loud breed back then; it had to be what with the drinking, dancing, smoking and general carousing going on. You may not remember Billy Sunday too well ("What do I care if some puff-eyed little dibly-dibbly preacher goes tibly-tibbling around because I use plain old Anglo-Saxon words?") But Bryan must ring a bell. His was the big attack on the gold standard: "You shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold." (Of course not, if wood was good enough for Christ, paper ought to do for us.) He was the man who said in 1924, "It would be better to destroy every other book written, and save just the first three verses of Genesis." He was the man unreasonable enough to write,

"If we have to give up either religion or education, we should give up education."

That was Bryan, that was Fundamentalism. They called him the Great Commoner, a name as appropriate as germs on a fly's legs. Bryan died only ten days after the trial, of embarrassment.

Today any teenager knows he is descended from a lower form of animal, two in fact; but then it was debatable. Bryan, who was known to make even bigger mistakes when given the opportunity, chose to make Fundamentalism a cause, and in doing so brought the last gasp to both anti-pleasure religion, and his own unpleasant body. The clergy still talk---but not very loudly now. The moralists could have sunk in dignity on any number of issues; twice they picked a loser.

In 1626, some Indians who did not own it sold the island of Manhattan to Peter Minuit, thereby inventing the real estate business and establishing a New York tradition which survives to this day. Just three hundred years later... To Be Continued

FROM NLN:

Rumor has it that a plot is afoot to oust Your Favourite Neighbourhood Anarchoeditor. What, who's being authoritarian? Find that staff member, and purge him! I want files on everyone! Bring them to my underground bunker...

AND

(Review of LNJ)

I haven't the faintest idea of what number this is [Oct. 1974 issue] or how much it costs [\$3 yr.] since the zine doesn't waste space with such trivial information. It prefers to cover battles between various members of the NJLP... This issue includes the now-famous fist fight between congressional candidate Robert Steiner and C. William George, editor of Against the Wall.

It does have one redeeming virtue; the writings, ramblings, and general bitchings of the editrix, worthy of NLN's "Notes & Views." Follow Ms. Mason's career----it should be interesting----and keep the movement interesting. No way she is going to last in something as anti-individualist as the LP.

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AGAINST THE WALL

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LETTERS

You'll always have carpers on the sidelines bitching about the way you run things----don't let it bother you, the doing of it, the writing is the most important part.

Your "Libertarian New Jersey" is wild and really free---you have real talent. If the complaints get too hot, defuse them by splitting the material----two pages for straight news and two for editorials and letters.

Ron Darrah
Indiana LP

I have just recently had a look at that weapon you innocently call a newsletter, and I'm truly delighted to see that there really are libertarians (well, one anyway) who can take on English prose and show it who's boss.

Is there any way, dear lady, that you can be charmed into sending us your publication on an exchange basis?

Ron Neff
Books for Libertarians

Ed. note: I am my beloved's, my beloved is mine.

A IS NOT A!

New York: A glyph claiming to be "a" was found wandering aimlessly about Washington Square last night, and was taken to Bellevue Hospital. When asked its identity, it went into a crying jag, later maintaining it was a victim of amnesia. This morning one Professor Ravenscroft J. Cloudeley, physician twice removed to the celebrated author D. A. Borgmann, appeared to sign release forms for the glyph. Cloudeley is awaiting trial on charges of breaking the Law of Identity in New York State, which carries a maximum fine of election to governorship. A was carried away screaming, "A!, Brute?" to the attendants, who gave him vague promises of a square deal in the upcoming Cloudeley test case.

CLOUDESLEY'S EXPECTED TESTIMONY:

- 1) $a \neq b$
 - 2) designate sum of a and b as c:
 $a + b = c$
 - 3) multiply both sides of (2) by $(a - b)$:
 $(a + b)(a - b) = c(a - b)$
 - 4) multiply out both sides of (3):
 $a^2 - b^2 = ac - bc$
 - 5) transpose two of the terms in equation (4) from one side to the other by changing their signs:
 $a^2 - ac = b^2 - bc$
 - 6) add quantity $(\frac{1}{4}c^2)$ to both sides of equation (5):
 $a^2 - ac + \frac{1}{4}c^2 = b^2 - bc + \frac{1}{4}c^2$
 - 7) factor both sides of equation (6), which happen to be squares:
 $(a - \frac{1}{2}c)^2 = (b - \frac{1}{2}c)^2$
 - 8) extract square root of each side of equation:
 $a - \frac{1}{2}c = b - \frac{1}{2}c$
 - 9) add quantity $(\frac{1}{2}c)$ to both sides of equation:
 $a = b$
- IF $a \neq b$, THEN $a = b$

PLATFORM of the NEW JERSEY LIBERTARIAN PARTY

THE PARTY OF PRINCIPLE

We, the members of the Libertarian Party, challenge the cult of the omnipotent state, and defend the rights of the individual.

We hold that each individual has the right to exercise sole dominion over his own life, and has the right to live his life in whatever manner he chooses, so long as he does not forcibly interfere with the equal right of others to live their lives in whatever manner they choose.

Governments, throughout history have regularly operated on the opposite principle, that the State has the right to dispose of the lives of individuals and the fruits of their labor. Even within the United States, all political parties other than our own grant to government the right to regulate the life of the individual and seize the fruits of his labor without his consent.

We, on the contrary, deny the right of any government to do these things, and hold that the sole function of government is the protection of the rights of each individual: namely (1) the right to life - and accordingly we support laws prohibiting the initiation of physical force against others; (2) the right to liberty of speech and action - and accordingly we oppose all attempts by government to abridge the freedom of speech and press, as well as government censorship in any form; and (3) the right to property - and accordingly we oppose all government interference with private property, such as confiscation, nationalization, and eminent domain, and support laws which prohibit robbery, trespass, fraud and misrepresentation.

Since government has only one legitimate function, the protection of individual rights, we oppose all interference by government in the areas of voluntary and contractual relations among individuals. Men should not be forced to sacrifice their lives and property for the benefit of others. They should be left free by government to deal with one another as free traders on a free market; and the resultant economic system, the only one compatible with the protection of man's rights, is laissez-faire capitalism.



THERE AINT NO SUCH THING AS A FREE LUNCH

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