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Resolution for the 90's: Boycott Cop Culture

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If one fictional figure can be said to have dominated the popcult of the 80s, it was the Cop. Fuckin police everywhere you turned, worse than real life. What an incredible bore.

Powerful Cops—protecting the meek and humble—at the expense of a half dozen or so articles of the Bill of Rights—“Dirty Harry”. Nice Human cops, coping with human perversity, coming out sweet’m’sour, you know, gruff and knowing but still soft inside—“Hill Street Blues—most evil TV show ever. Wiseass black cops scoring witty racist remarks against evil white hick cops, who nevertheless come to love each other—Eddie Murphy, Class Traitor. For that masochist thrill we got wicked bent cops who threaten to topple out Kozy Konsensus Reality from within like Giger designed tapeworms, but naturally get blown away just in the nick of time by the Last Honest Cop, Robocop, ideal amalgam of prosthesis and sentimentality.

We’ve been obsessed with cops since the beginning—but the rozzers of yore played bumbling fools, Keystone Kops, Car 54 Where Are You, booby-bobbies set up for Fatty Arbuckle or

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Buster Keaton to squash or deflate. But in the ideal drama of the 80's, the "little man" who once scattered bluebottles by the hundred with that anarchists bomb, innocently used to light a cigarette—the Tramp, the victim with sudden power of the pure heart—no longer has a place at the center of the narrative. Once "we" were that hobo, that quasi-surrealists chaote hero who wins through *wu-wei* over the ludicrous minions on a despised and irrelevant Order. But now "we" are reduced to the status of victims *without* the power, or else criminals. "We" no longer occupy that central role; no longer the heroes of our own stories, we've been marginalized and replaced by the Other, the Cop.

Thus the Cop Show has only three characters—victim, criminal and policeperson—but the first two fail to be fully human—only the pig is *real*. Oddly enough, human society in the 80s (as seen in the other media) sometimes appeared to consist of the same three cliché/archetypes. First the victims, the whining minorities bitching about "right"—and who pray tell did *not* belong to the "minority" in the 80s? Shit, even cops complained about their "rights" being abused. Then the criminals: largely non-white (despite the obligatory and hallucinatory "integration" of the media), largely poor (or else obscenely rich, hence even more alien), largely perverse (ie. the forbidden mirror of "our" desires). I've heard that one out of four households in America is robbed every year, and that every year nearly half a million of us are arrested just for smoking pot. In the face of such statistics (even assuming they're "damned lies") one wonders who is NOT either victim or criminal in our police-state-of-consciousness. The fuzz must mediate for *all of us*, however fuzzy the interface—they're our only warrior-priests, however profane.

"America's Most Wanted"—the most successful TV gameshow of the 80s—opened up for all of us the role of Amateur Cop, hitherto merely a media fantasy of middleclass resentment and revenge. Naturally the truelife Cop hates no

one so much as the vigilante—look what happens to poor and/or non-white neighborhood self-protection groups like the Muslims who tried to eliminate crack dealing in Brooklyn; the cops busted the Muslims, the pushers went free. Real vigilantes threaten the monopoly of enforcement, “*lèse majesté*”, more abominable than incest or murder. But media(ted) vigilantes function perfectly within the CopState; in fact, it would be more accurate to think of them as *unpaid* (not even set of matched luggage!) *informers*: telemetric snitchers, electro-stoolies, ratfinks-for-a-day.

What is it that “America most wants”? Does this phrase refer to criminals—or to crimes, to objects of desire in their real presence, unrepresented, unmediated, literally stolen and appropriated? America most wants ... to fuck off work, ditch the spouse, do drugs (because only drugs make you feel as good as people in TV ads appear to be), have sex with nubile jail-bait, sodomy, burglary, hell yes. What unmediated pleasures are NOT illegal? Even outdoor barbecues violate smoke ordinances nowadays. The simplest enjoyments turn us against some law; pleasure finally becomes too stress-inducing, and only TV remains—and the pleasure of revenge, vicarious betrayal, the sick thrill of the tattle-tale. America can’t have what it most wants, so it has “America’s Most Wanted” instead. A nation of schoolyard bullies.

Of course the program still suffers from a few strange reality-glitches: for example, the dramatized segments are enacted *cinéma vérité*-style by *actors*; some viewers are so stupid they believe they’re seeing actual footage of real crimes. Hence actors are being continually harassed and even arrested, along with (or instead of) the real criminals whose mugshots are flashed after each little documentoid. How quaint, eh? No one really experiences anything—everyone reduced to the status of ghosts—media images break off and float away from any contact with actual everyday life—phonesex—cybersex. Final transcendence of the body: cybergnosis.

The media cops, like televangelical forerunners, prepare us for the advent, final coming or Rapture of the police state; the “Wars” on sex and drugs: total control totally leached of all content; a map with no coordinates in any known space; far beyond mere Spectacle; sheer ecstasy (:standing outside the body”); obscene simulacrum; meaningless violent spasms elevated to the last principle of governance. Image of country consumed by images of self-hatred, war between the schizoid halves of a split personality, Super-Ego vs. the Id Kid, for heavyweight championship of an abandoned landscape, burnt, polluted, empty, desolate, unreal.

Just as the murder-mystery is always an exercise in sadism, so the cop fiction always involves the contemplation of *control*. The image of the inspector or detective measures the image of “our” lack of autonomous substance, our transparency before the gaze of authority. Our perversity, our helplessness. Whether we imagine them as “good” or “evil”, our obsessive invocation of the eidolons of the Cops reveals the extent to which we have accepted the manichean worldview that symbolize. Millions of tiny cops swarm everywhere, like the *qlip-poth*, larval hungry ghosts—they fill the screen, as in Keaton’s famous two-reeler, overwhelming the foreground, and Antarctic where nothing moves by hordes of tiny blue penguins.

We propose an esoteric hermeneutical exegesis of the Surrealist slogan “Mort aux vaches!” We take it to refer not to the deaths of individual cops (“cows” in the argot of the period)—mere leftist revenge fantasy—petty reverse sadism—but rather to the death of the *image* of the *flic*, the inner Control and its myriad reflections in the no-place-place of the media—the “grey room” as Burroughs calls it. Self-censorship, fear of one’s own desires, “conscience” as the interiorized voice of consensus-authority. To assassinate these “security forces” would indeed release floods of libidinal energy, but not the violent running-amok predicted by the theory of Law’n’Order. Nietzschean “self-overcoming” provides the principle of

organization for the free spirit (as also for anarchist society, at least in theory). In the police-state personality, libidinal energy is dammed and diverted towards self-repression; any threat to Control results in spasm of violence. In the free-spirit personality, energy flows unimpeded and therefore turbulently but gently—its chaos finds its strange attractor, allowing new spontaneous orders to emerge.

In this sense, then, we call for a boycott of the image of the Cop, and a moratorium on its production in art. In this sense...

MORT AUX VACHES!