

UH NEWS liberated press

Let It In and Let It Out

-DAN RILEY, Editor Emeritus
censored by hardy

When I was in high school we used to play 45 RPM records at 78 speed on the record player. This was in the days before Dylan or the Beatles, so pop music didn't have much to say about the world we lived in. The music did, however, engage our purient interests and many a good evening was spent around the record player, listening to the Kingsmen sing "I'll nev-ver la-ay you a-gain." "Louie Louie" was banned in Michigan but it made Number 1 on the hit parade at DRC.

Anyway, despite my early encounters with filth, I was still pretty much surprised when I read the word "screw" in the University of Hartford CALLBOARD. (The CALLBOARD - for those of you ignorant in the history of U.H. journalism, was the name of the campus paper before it became THE CAULDRON, which is what it was before it became a CHALLENGE, which it was before it became a LIBERATED PRESS.) In any case, Craig Senior used the word "screw" in his last editorial before retiring. It was nothing more than a hit and run job-but good enough to arouse epitaphs from the immediate community.

"What are they teaching at that school anyway?"
"Isn't anyone reading that paper before it's printed?"
"They oughtta kick the editor out!"

That was in 1964 and even then they were convinced that U.H. was the Sodom and/or Gomorrah of the Western world. Not quite. The Berkeley Free Speech Movement-better known as the Filthy Speech Movement-was making a much greater impact. Huntly and Brinkley carried films nationwide showing the Berkeley demonstrators marching with their sign-KILL IS A FOUR LETTER WORD! The point they were making was obvious enough. You can carry a sign in this country which reads "Bomb Hanoi" and that implies charred bodies-motherless children-homeless families-devastated cities and widespread starvation. You cannot carry a sign that reads "F!+ for Joy" because that implies ecstasy-passion-genitals and it appeals to society's basest primitive interests.

They were questioning the hypocrisy of that moral stand in 1964. Something tells me that question ought to be raised again. The LIBERATED PRESS did not raise the question. The purpose of that Nixon cartoon was not to raise the question of hypocrisy. The question of hypocrisy must rise out of our discussion of that cartoon. Why do we instantly react so fiercely to a harmless cartoon and yet allow our state statutes to outlaw various acts of lovemaking?

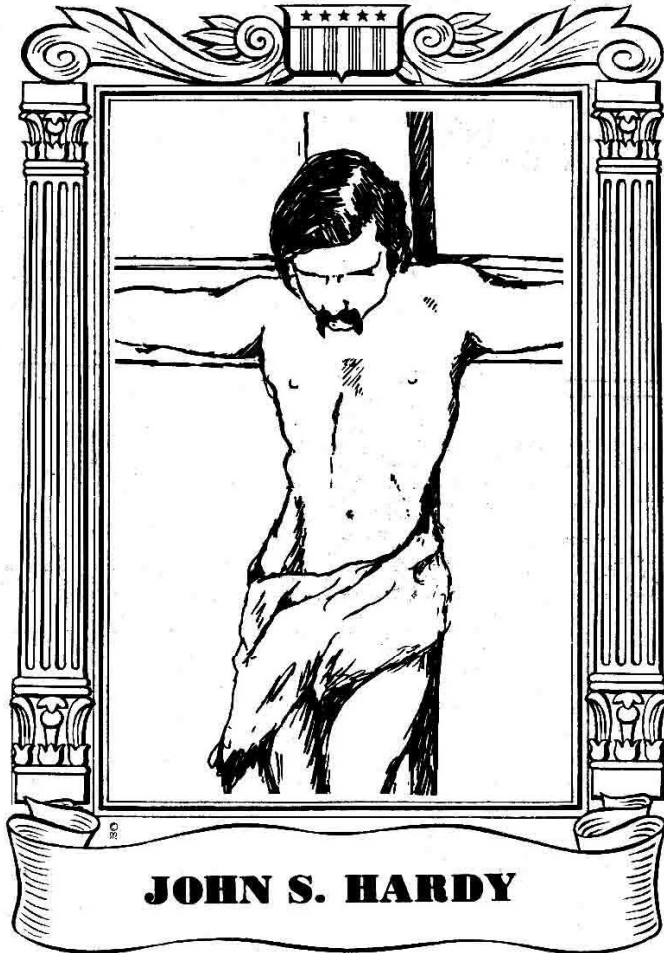
We should be answering that question in our psychology classes-sociology-history-literature. The school paper only raises the question. Perhaps U.H. should enter into an in-depth inter-disciplinary study of obscenity.

Perhaps I'm giving Hardy and his crew credit for asking questions and raising issues they didn't even realize. That often happens in controversy-people and their intentions are exaggerated beyond their own expectations.

Let us simply judge the Nixon cartoon at face (?) value. It was an attempt to comment on the election of Richard M. Nixon to the presidency of the U.S.A. Of course a bullet blasted into Nixon's head would have been a comment on the election also. But we don't have to worry about that kind of thing from Jack Hardy. Hardy, like most of our other young radicals today is too civilized to attempt an assassination. Assassinations and other acts of violence occur when individuals have lost recourse to other means of expression. They have been deprived biologically; or, society fails to provide them with adequate means of expression or fails to respond to those meagre means of expression already at their command.

The LIBERATED PRESS is not and will not get that desperate. If Allen Ginsberg or Norman Mailer were on the staff, the cartoon perhaps would not have been necessary. Anger over the election would have been expressed more convincingly, verbally. That, however, was not the case. Hardy knows, as anyone in the field of communications today should know, that in order to break through to people, you usually have to be somewhere between outrageous and violent. Otherwise, people don't care.

The problem is not Hardy's or the University of Hartford's alone. In a few years we have moved from non-violent vigils to brutal confrontations. Our theme is no longer "We shall overcome" but "Up against the wall mother-f!*&%\$". And our leaders no longer dress in three piece suits and march with a quiet courage. Now they wear warpaint and carry Mattel models of the M-16. Escalation is the name of the game.



drawing by John zanzal

"Margolis knew he couldn't win, they would all plead insanity," a concerned citizen

"It could be argued that it is a form of political expression, but then so is political assassination." Margolis

Castrate a people. Sterilize their means of communication and they must try to reach you with what they have left. Hubert Humphrey says "I'm a Soul Brother" and the Hartford Gas Company uses pop art on their billboards and NBC produces the Mod Squad. NEWSWEEK and TIME talk about "hang-ups" and college professors ask you if you're "up tight" about something. Marshmallow Fluff!

Everywhere you look there's Marshmallow Fluff-incredibly resilient-sickeningly sweet-annoyingly sticky. Jab a knife into Marshmallow Fluff and it embraces the knife. Withdraw the knife and Marshmallow Fluff fills in the intrusion with more Marshmallow Fluff.

America is Marshmallow Fluff! So, we have a problem here. It's not Jack Hardy's obscenity. Obscenity (if there is such a thing) is a symptom-that's right-just like ghetto uprisings are a symptom of some greater ill. Our problem is as complex as our historical outlook-our social make-up and our psychological hang-ups. It is certainly too complex to be answered by cries for "Law and Order" or by changing campus editors.

The Beatles tell us the Revolution has changed battle grounds. We don't want to liberate administration buildings anymore. We want to free our minds-all of our minds. The Establishment (and there is such a thing) is making savages of us all-reducing us to our most primitive modes of expression. We must be more than an annoyance. Chicago showed us what the Establishment can do to an annoyance-they can out savage us any day. We need a new tactic. We have to ignore their obscenities (Nixon-Humphrey-Wallace) and make our own world from the bottom up.

The Shadow School!
Underground Drama at U.H.! (any kind of drama at U.H.)
A really liberated Press that doesn't have to respond so much to the Establishment's obscenities but can really serve as a creative and unifying revolutionary force.

Political ground work for 1970 and 1972!
It's only the beginning and it's all been suggested before. But now is the time to start working-now the real "shit work" begins. Forgive me for using the expression but we have to do our own thing. We can't get hung up on Richard Nixon or any of America's other social problems. Nixon will be dead soon and so will Hoover and Hershey and Art Linkletter. Time is on our side and we must use it for our own good. The old men are rotting to death.