

Still from
*Century
of the Self*
(2002)
Dir. Adam
Curtis



Prologue / Lyric

The snap of the bed sheet before every thread falls unanimously in place. A flick of the wrist, a twist of the whisk. All these ideas about what we do with our hands and mouth.

THE RIGHT TO FUME Steffanie Ling

Descending from the air, I daydream about the first cigarette in a new place. Take care not to monumentalize it. Let it be more like premeditation than a daydream. Consider it a staking out of a clear familiarity on a path of absolute novelty. In places where I don't know where I'm going, what I'm saying and occasionally who I even am, at least when I get out of the air, I can smoke a cigarette and be just be a smoker smoking.

The first cigarette I ever smoked abroad was in 2012, right after I arrived at Heathrow. In Vancouver, smoking is only a matter of going outside, but in other countries, and especially in airports, I follow the rules and seek out the designated smoking areas. I located some signs that guided me to an area that resembled a loading bay where a handful of grey, silent airport staff took brief but much needed respite from jobs they evidently loathed. Their long drags and faces told me so. I smoked my first cigarette after a ten hour flight in their midst and didn't enjoy it. For some reason, I had flown to London in order to take a train to Paris, rather than flying to Paris directly. Upon arriving in Paris, my friends picked me up from Gare du Nord. On the way back to her apartment, we stopped at a grocery store to buy shockingly cheap, yet not even the cheapest, wine, cheese and cigarettes, following that narrative so perfectly. Between sips of wine and tobacco, we choked on laughter at my abominable French. Here, everyone smoked and drank, and laughed, so I felt even better. Not like a local of course—I couldn't pronounce *Gauloises*.

Years later, in Cairo, before I could reach for a pack of Camels, I was loaned a Lonely Planet guidebook by the overbearing hostel management. In the table of contents there was a section titled *Cigarettes*.

SO “*The vast majority of Egyptian men smoke, and offering cigarettes is common practice...*”

HOWEVER, “*Respectable women don't generally smoke, and certainly not in public...*”

ALTHOUGH “*...nowadays wealthier young women may be seen smoking sheeshas in Cairo's posher establishments.*”

After I read this, I didn't smoke for three days... until the clouds parted and I met an Egyptian woman, a young film critic, who lit up a Marlboro Silver in front of me like it was no big deal. I conveyed my state of mind over the last few smokeless days. I was rather afraid of what might happen if I smoked in public, and she said you should be, in a firm way that a lot of people spoke to me when I inquired about social mores. She said she wouldn't smoke just anywhere, only in certain areas by specific buildings, like the Opera House, cinemas, and basement cafes. She took it down a notch when she saw my eyebrows furrow with the confirmation of my slain Western values by saying it might be okay because I'm a foreigner. Maybe I'd get funny looks and some people might want to take my picture. I was uncertain of whether she meant because I'm a foreigner, or because I would be a smoking foreigner. Would they respect me? I respected her.

Unlike the foreigner that I was prescribed to be, I traded in a group tour to the Pyramids or seeking out a view of the Red Sea, for an afternoon



Girl in Red (1936)
Nickolas Muray.
Advertising photograph for Lucky Strike

1. See Act 1, Scene 3 for a discussion of Juliet's age between Lady Capulet and The Nurse.

screening of Franco Zeffirelli's *Romeo and Juliet*. There are about 30 adaptations of *Romeo and Juliet*, but 14-year old Olivia Hussey's represents Shakespeare's Juliet most closely by virtue of her age.¹ Zeffirelli, bearing in mind that Romeo and Juliet are 16 and just about 14, respectively, had conducted a worldwide casting call for unknown teenage actors for the title roles.

Shakespeare had written a masterpiece of teenage drama, and Zeffirelli's film was a faithful prototype for the teen romance genre. Hussey perfected the demanding tone and the sublime wail of a young girl who knows what she wants and is given something else. How I became disillusioned with the kind of idealized romance propagated by this enduring love story was because of the laughable standards of devotion it set forth, but now I'm realizing it's because adults had been performing roles written for hormonally charged teenagers. I didn't perceive this rendition as a morbid idealization of romance, but an example of how staid social principles forced passionate people (horny teenagers) to undergo secrecy and punishment. Zeffirelli had to acquire special permission to shoot a relatively tasteful nude scene with his young actors. Adding insult to conservatism, Hussey was not permitted to attend the premiere at the risk of being exposed to her own naked body on the big screen. For young women against tragic orthodoxy, for Juliet Capulet and Olivia Hussey, this was a cosmic alignment.

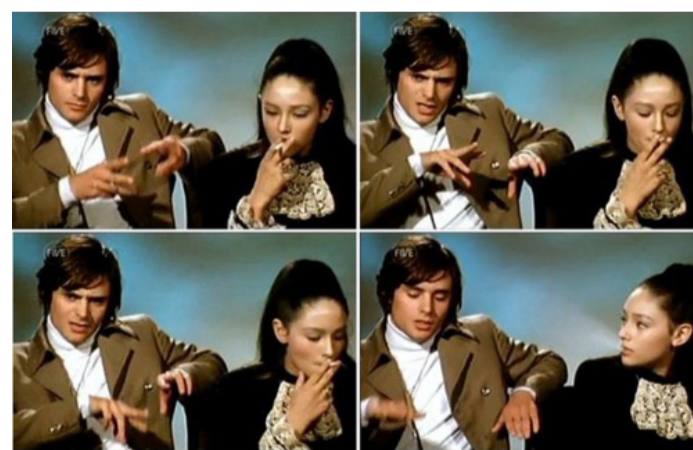
demographic, or more bluntly, a target market. *Romeo and Juliet* grossed \$38.9 million in 1968, which was worth approximately \$247.8 million in 2010, the same year as the highest grossing teen romance, *Twilight Saga: Eclipse*, which yielded \$300.5 million. The conundrum is that the moment a subversive gesture is imaged, it becomes flushed with cultural capital, which almost always transforms into someone else's capital-capital. The broad acceptance of women smoking in public was directly correlated to their spending power as well. The women smoking in Cairo are wealthy and young in "posher" establishments. The most meaningful cigarettes were "torches of freedom" that Edward Bernays (widely seen as the founder of modern public relations) paid elegant young women to smoke as an act of "solidarity" and "protest" during the Easter Parade of 1929. When this became exposed as an elaborate marketing conspiracy (public relations strategy) concocted by Bernays—with the cooperation of the blossoming fashion industry—it would be inaccurate to say that our right to fume was hard won—"Powerful womanhood? What a joke! Her smoking is evidence that she is a weak, brainwashed victim of corporate mind control."²



Women Are Free! (1929) Lucky Strike

2. "Louise" in reply to "Karissa", Wendy Christensen "Torches of Freedom: Women and Smoking Propoganda" <<https://thesocietypages.org/socimages/2012/02/27/torches-of-freedom-women-and-smoking-propaganda/>> February 27, 2012. Accessed November 23, 2016

I've almost convinced myself that smoking has never been as political as Bernays would like us to think. His involvement almost confirms that it wasn't. However, smoking is positioned to be as contentious as the seemingly banal things we demand in the history of feminism. When my



Olivia Hussey & Leonard Whiting interviewed by Bernard Braden, after their appearance in Franco Zeffirelli's *Romeo & Juliet* (1968)



Above: Still from *Romeo and Juliet* (1968) Dir. Franco Zeffirelli; below: Oliva Hussey and Leonard Whiting



Amantine-Lucile-Aurore Dupin, aka George Sand. French Novelist (1804-1876)

Teenagers and women apparently must transgress in order to articulate their desires and identity, but their rebellion is considered inauthentic, still. Zeffirelli's film was released in 1968 when teenagers began to constitute a

3. Without the freedom of pleasure, leisure becomes protest. Protest in public becomes an image, and that image becomes a product; the lifecycle of a transgression and smoking in the developing to the first world.

status as a legal and socially accepted smoker also comes into question, it feels like this is a small but early sign of other questions against my character and livelihood to come: whether I can conduct my own choices, enter into certain relationships or careers, or at its utmost extreme, whether I can walk alone at night, or take public transportation un-harassed. If I couldn't expect these conditions in the country I lived, I would smoke too. The gross and important distinction is that I choose very much to smoke, for pleasure, not politics.³ For every economy there is a counter economy... and if we stop having teenage sex and smoking then the churches and pharmaceutical companies prevail. So, it is indeed a *choice*, and one we cannot make unscathed.

Between a reel take during an interview, Hussey lights a cigarette. The interviewer states, "There aren't many girls at fifteen who smoke cigarettes publicly," and with minimal haughtiness she replies, "Oh, there are." "And how does your mother feel about that?" "She told me to stop but I'll do it behind her back anyways." There aren't many little girls like Olivia Hussey. Oh, there *are*.



Yardley's new Poetry Collection:[™] Nine tender lipfrosts designed to make a Juliet of you. And a Romeo of him.

HAVE YOU SEEN
ROUQUET PINK
ROUNDELLAY ROSE
BALCONY AMBER
SOURET PEACH
COUPLLET CORAL
ROMEO RED
JULIET'S BLUSH
BALLAD BEIGE

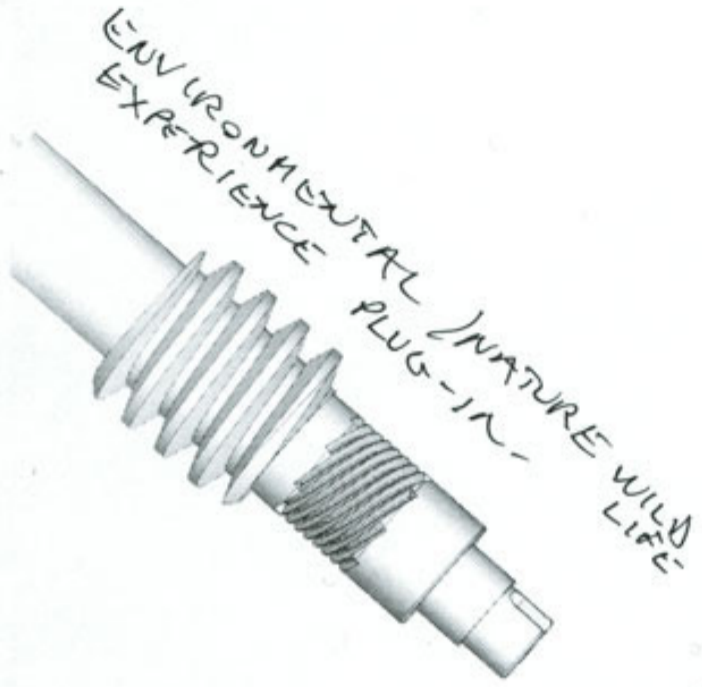
Yardley's new love poems for lips, all soft and silver-touched:
Juliet's Blush, soft pink morning light for your lips. Romeo Red, the warm rose he wishes all girls would wear. Balcony Amber, a golden sunset for kisses. And there are six other creamy-dewy lipfrosts in Yardley's Poetry Collection.
Slip one on. Today, love. And see what love stories you inspire.

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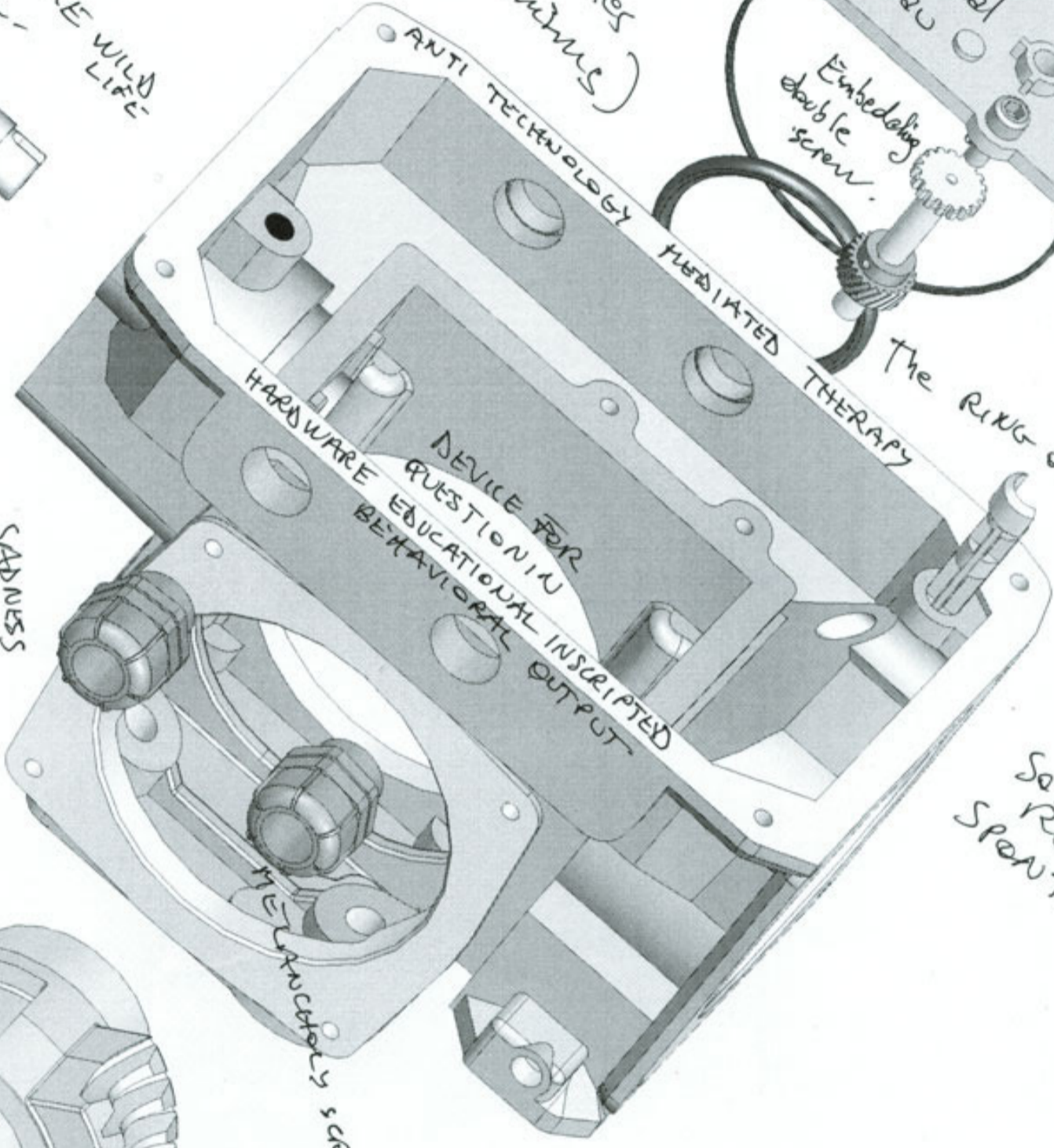
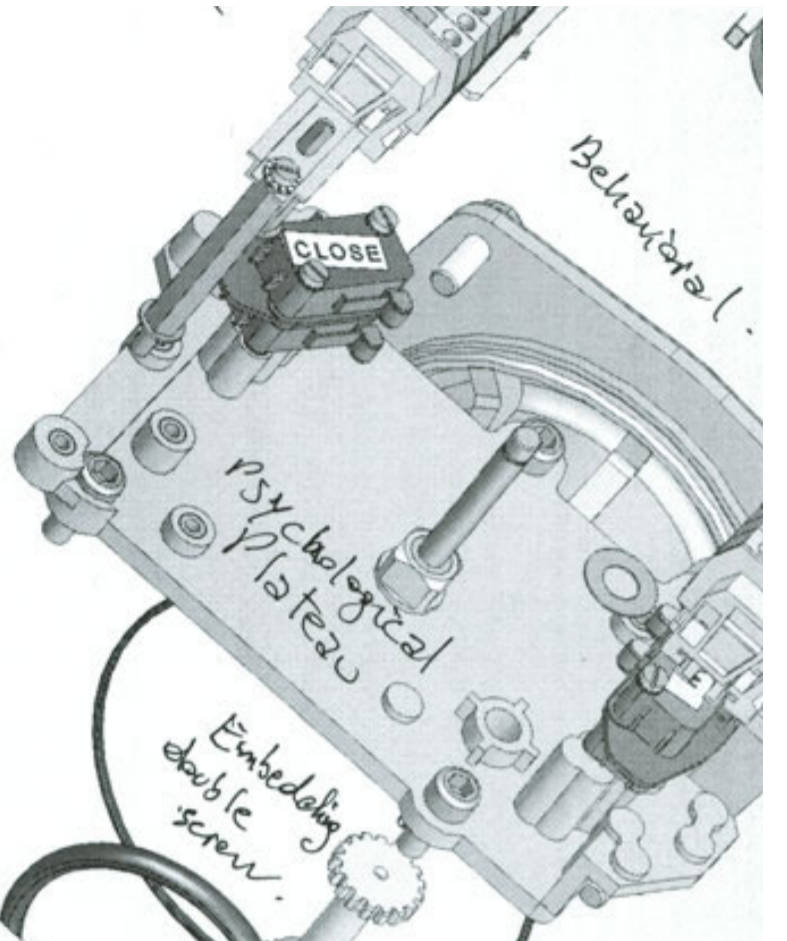
OLIVIA HUSSEY,
STAR OF THE
FRANCO ZEFFIRELLI
PRODUCTION OF
ROMEO AND JULIET,
A PARAMOUNT PICTURE,
WEARING JULIET'S BLUSH
BY YARDLEY.

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CONSIDERING HOW TO AVOID
LIFE AS A MANAGED EXPERIENCE



Potential
Deviations
plug-in holes
(Safety mechanisms)

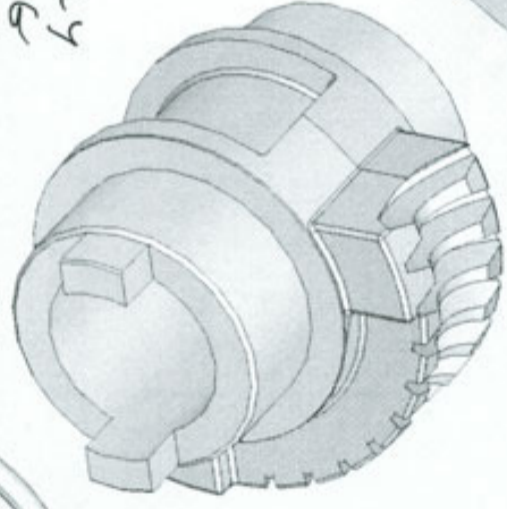


The Ring
of PROTECT
The Ring of CUSTODY

SADNESS
SCREW

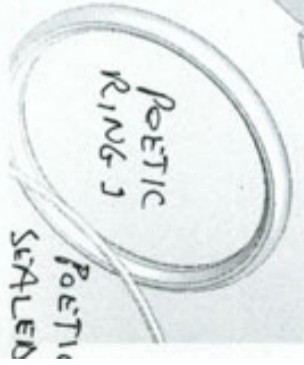
PARTIALLY
ROTATING
CONSCIOUSNESS
RE-DEFINING
DEVICE

SOFT HOLLOW
ROOMS OF
SPONTANEITY



EMERGENCY
PLUG/CANONIC
REBOOTING
EMOTIONAL
RESPONSE

COLLECTOR
DISTRIBUTOR
(REGULATOR OF PA
INPUT/OUTPUT)

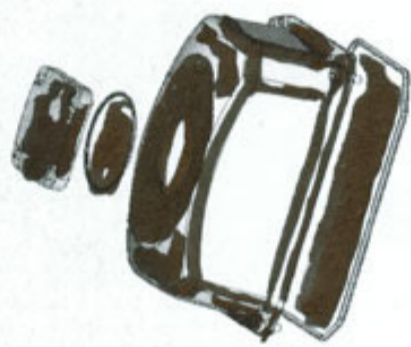


ACTUATOR SYMBOLIC N.I

TO AVOID LIFE AS A
MANAGED EXPERIENCE

Protection
Capsule
Intimacy
Secrecy
Personal
Being
transparency
imposed.

Environment
Substitute comfort with BUA



concentric device to accumulate sen
Adaptator to re-modulate environm
coding (feedback security level one)

Sensibility wheel
differentiated non-self reflexive
device to implement a
different relationship/understanding
behaviour.



EMPATHY TRANSFORMER CIRCUIT
INTEGRATED AND TRANSMITE

check point
flux-control
insertion
channel
Modulating
slow-release
flux
Demultiplizator
Ring 2
Ring 1
Enhancer

TRANSLATION OF SENSORY INPUT
CONVERTING TO KNOWLEDGE

CORE SYSTEM (value/ethic/perhaps a form of en

Security
Device
preventing
dispersion.
chip
Actuating Ring
attitude
Second
Filter
one
Filter
one

Concentric
philosophical
capsules
4 levels + 1

Matrix behavioral N.7
Matrix/Mirror Cognitive/humoral

Two brain code-screens

philosophical input
Circular / At times Self Reflexive

v

John Murchie

Sent: Wed 10/05/06 4:29 PM

hi knowles eddy knowles,

ah memory! i fondly remember frankfurt where i spent my only ever ten days in europe. the zoo is great. i am still thinking about the jewish cemetery.

your questions.

1. i was a smoker, a serious smoker. we did smoke everywhere including the library where you could then also eat and drink. by and large that aspect of your questions is truth, not imagination. the structure of the institution had as much to do with youth and the 60s. most everyone was very young. i became director of the library at 29 and by 31 was administratively responsible for all aspects of the college other than financial and directly instructional. i was not untypical, age-wise. youngness and the experimental ethos of the 60s were critical.

i don't think nscad's structures were "loose." garry kennedy kept pretty tight "control." but his control also allowed many to follow their intuitions wherever they may go. garry also encouraged an attitude that the entire joint was a "studio" and who the fuck can work in a studio without smoking? well, at least the freedom to smoke if you want. or drink. or fornicate. or sleep. or ...or...or... that may mean "loose" or it may only mean that you can define and regulate and account for everything everywhere all the time.

generally, it wasn't myth. and that doesn't, didn't, mean it was perfect.

2. today everywhere there is more prescription, less tolerance for risk, no tolerance for "error." my sense is that 30+ years ago there was a generalized sense that "anything is possible" and today there is more of a generalized sense that "nothing is possible." hyperbole, that is, but meant to be suggestive toward the truth.

the work?...i don't know. not to be evasive, but we make good and bad art under all conditions.

3. nice. clothes and hair have always been good. almost anything can be shared and we can always find shared experience that will piss off all the people who should be pissed off.

From:

Garry Neill Kennedy

Sent: Thu 11/05/06 7:50 AM

Hi Knowles Eddy Knowles,

Good to hear from you. By the way if you haven't already done so, try to visit the new Portikus Gallery. It's on an Island -- just up the river a bit but still in the city.

Also the Museum of Modern Art is a very good place to visit.

Your questions;

1. Smoking tobacco was very accepted in the 70s (I smoked cigars myself) so it had little to do with easygoing attitude. Smoking pot was a different thing -- it did reflect a laid-back loose attitude but was not practiced in public paces. So there would have been no pot smoked in classrooms. Its use back then was as discreet as it is now but, there was probably a little more excitement around its use -- because of its relative newness to our culture and oppositional note that it struck

2. Looseness effect on the work being made. Hard to answer. It was "looser" then to be sure. There was a strong feeling of opposition -- throughout society, mostly among the young, particularly the university student and most particularly, the art student. There was a revolution -- change was needed and it could happen -- even though there was a war raging (like there is today -- but without noticeable opposition), and leaders (King and Bobby Kennedy) being assassinated. This revolutionary spirit (looseness) was the reason for the revolutionary art (looseness) of that time.

3. Banning smoking. I believe smoking is unhealthy, period. It should be banned and it is in our interest that it is banned. The banning of smoking that we are now experiencing is one of the positive outcomes of the freedom of the 70s. It is the result of this revolution that the poisonous products of tobacco conglomerates were challenged. Would you believe that the Halifax Conference (the one where in 1970 twenty-five international art stars were invited to the college) was sponsored by Benson and Hedges -- a subsidiary of the Philip Morris company -- one of the largest cigarette companies going at the time (and maybe still is)?

I hope there is something in here that is helpful. good luck.

Garry

From:

Gerald Ferguson

Sent: Fri 12/05/06 2:34 PM

Hi Knowles Eddy Knowles,

In answer to your questions:

1. All true.
2. Greatly enhanced student work - and faculty.
3. Swearing and screwing in public I suppose.

Its sad when the most radical thing you can do in an institution is smoke. All that academic structure (to make it a "real" school) and political correctness is the kiss of death, especially for an art College. Mercifully I am retired now and can smoke to my heart's content in my studio.

Good luck on your project.

Jerry

From:

Martin Barlosky

Sent: Mon 15/05/06 12:36 PM

Thanks for your note. As a student and teacher of organizational theory, I have some reservation of equating "institutional looseness" (see Karl Weick's writing on "loose coupling" in organizations) with smoking. I would also suggest that every institution/organization has both tight and loose aspects -- this was certainly the case in NSCAD. Much that may have seemed loose coexisted with much that was very tight (e.g., white was the official colour of the College as I found out when I painted my office differently).

institution, but who wants to live in an institution?"

Sent: Mon 26/06/06 4:45 PM

This being said, NSCAD certainly was an institution distinctive in the degree of freedom that it extended to students, at least when compared to other Halifax institutions of its day. Perhaps its not surprising that most students conformed to these norms -- so much so, that NSCAD students could often easily be identified as such.

I answer your questions within your text below.

Martin

> Dear Martin, this is Knowles Eddy Knowles, alumni of NSCAD, writing to you from Frankfurt, Germany. I am researching the correlation between an institution's looseness of structure and policy and its innovative character, if such correlation exists. For example, whenever I used to hear about NSCAD's 'golden era' of the seventies and eighties there was always some anecdote of the school's easygoing attitude toward smoking, the dark seminar rooms full of swirling columns of smoke like illustrated streams of thought. My questions to you:

> 1) How much of this is myth or imagination?

I would use the 50% rule: 50% myth/imagination; 50% "reality". Different people would, of course, put very different phenomena into each group. Much depends on individual perception, values, and investment.

> 2) How do you think this atmosphere of looseness (now somewhat extinguished) had effects on the work being made?

If it had any effect, the effect was indirect. That is, the notion of freedom -- real or imagined -- helped to create a lifestyle that played in various ways into the work made in studio spaces. In any case, it was "cool" to do certain things (e.g., question the commodification of art) and "uncool" to do others (e.g., to paint or to make things) -- and everyone at NSCAD knew the difference. Bohemianism has always been around; we just find different things to be bohemian about and these things keep shifting.

> 3) If smoking is banned in every institution, what kind of symbolic medium of dialogue could stand in its place?

Again, I'd be careful about attributing too much to smoking or not smoking. You might look at smoking, however, as being indicative of more significant aspects of personal freedom, individual eccentricity, and institutional difference. In this case, I think you might be justified in seeing a retreat from adventurism (e.g., a rise of legalism and adversity to risk) in today's educational institutions. You might, then, find a connection between this "retreat" from freedom and a more general retreat from the risks of imagination. But remember that correlation ain't causality...

Hi Knowles Eddy Knowles,

I was away for a bit and am slowly trimming away at my correspondences.

When I went to University, (university of montana) 1958-63, a lot of the professors smoked in class and in most rooms students could also.

At the Brooklyn Museum School of Art where I received a Max Beckman scholarship in painting (1963), a lot of us smoked in the studio area. and during the seminars.

Later at The Kansas City Art Institute, generally the same but not so much in academic classrooms.

Generally all schools were pretty much this way until after 1986 or so.

At York University, where I taught during the early 80s, the grad seminars were always smoke friendly and even beer was brought in.

NSCAD put in a no smoking policy around 1986-87 but people continued to smoke in the studios.

Also students drank and did drugs through most of the 70s & 80s in their studios (I dont think any hard drugs although in the early 70s there was some heroin, opium, and speed used by a few students that I knew about) The cafeteria served beer and smoking was banned there during the late 80s.

I dont know if smoking had any affect on work being made.

It seems that quite a few students are now vegetarian, health conscious and mineral water drinkers although at social gatherings, beer and wine is served but no one smokes at any of these except outside where its allowed.

In NY now smoking is banned everywhere and also in LA but generally a lot of artists still smoke and in Europe probably even more so.

Im sure there can be other things. It seems that people are using increased amounts of mood pharmacy prescriptions.

I think smoke has had its hay day so by by.

In the end I dont think allowing smoking extends creativity and conversation.

The late 60s and early 70s were generally easy going - the economy was good, once the Viet Nam war ended, even better - people felt free and optimistic and risk taking, playing with context and deconstruction was the order of the day.

Hope this is of some help - Im not in touch with many in the school now and most were not part of those days anyway and all of the other students are scattered all over so I wouldnt know who else right off hand who might write something.

best,

David



Exhibition details:

Knowles Eddy Knowles

Inhale Exile pt 2 (*Mein anderer Vater trank Bier auf Ex aus dem Aschenbecher*)

Dec 7 – Dec 22, 2016

Husslehof

Koblenzer Strasse 12, 60327 Frankfurt am Main

Organized in partnership with Leonhardi

Kulturprojekte

Part 2 of Inhale Exile, subtitled *Mein anderer Vater trank Bier auf Ex aus dem Aschenbecher*, includes works and documents(*) by Michael Fernandes, David Hammons*, Gareth James, Leisure (Susannah Wesley, Meredith Carruthers), Lee Lozano*, Sean Lynch, Steffanie Ling, Anthony McCall, Daniel Olson, Nick Santos Pedro, Alessandro Rolandi, Lawrence Weiner*, Norman Rockwell*.