

DAGGERDOM'S MANUAL OF TRANSGRESSIONISM

**By
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The views and opinions expressed in this work are those of the author and do not reflect the views or opinions of any group, organization or other individual. I need to say that because this book is going to really piss people off.

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The Transgressionist Manifesto

We are not old, obsolete guard, nor are we new guard. We are beyond such petty labels.

We follow no rules, save those it serves our purposes for the moment to do so, in accord with the practice of expediency.

We respect no authority and defer to no pretended hierarchy.

We despise tradition, that stinking collection of moldy walls and incontinent briefs that need changing. It has no place in our lives save as a source of never-ending ridicule and laughter.

We do not fear and we cannot be intimidated. We refuse to live in hiding, cowering like frightened animals.

We do not give a damn about community nor its image. We will never allow ourselves to be controlled by such considerations. Rather we defend the right of the individual to follow his own path and make his own decisions, to express his lifestyle by whatever definition he so chooses without regard to any external consideration.

We do not defend our lifestyle to the despised vanillas. We make them defend their lifestyle to us.

We admire skill, wit and daring.

We are the Outlaws.

We are the Anarchists

We are the Future.

I

What is transgressionism?

Transgressionism is the breaking of rules for the sake of breaking the rules, raising hell for the joy of raising hell and in all ways regarding convention as something contemptible, worthy only of disdain and ultimate destruction. Transgressionists are radical individualists and libertarians who do not suffer control lightly. Even if we practice it in our BDSM relationships, we do not allow others to impose their ways and regulations upon us, but will always work to remove such regulations by whatever means prove to be expedient.

For the Transgressionist, the only rule is that there are no rules and those systems set up by others to impose their rules are fair game, as are those who would establish them. Or, as the saying goes, "Rules are made to be broken along with the heads of those who make them." Transgressionists respect no hierarchy and defer to no authority.

Transgressionists are anarchists.

This book is for those of you in the public BDSM scene who have had it up to your noses with people who have nothing better to do than make up social systems for other people to live under. It will guide you in the ways to annoy the hell out of those folks while at the same time maintaining your friendships and making new ones, defeating those who would use the concept of "community" as a means of determining how you should live your life, how you should think, speak and act. You will learn how to break the rules and get away with breaking the rules no matter what anyone else thinks or does. I go into quite a discussion of the means of gaining position in scene communities so that you will be able to get your ideas across. After all, it is not important who is speaking but rather whom is listening.

And one more real important thing. The material in this manual is all based on real time, not cyber. Cyber does not have an objective existence and should be ignored.

II

Doing your own thing

Ok, that phrase is a throwback to the 1960s and it is a bit strange to be invoking a 40 year old saying in a new century, especially considering that a large number, if not the majority of the readers of this little manual were not even born when that saying was made popular. After all, I can just imagine myself as a young man hearing some catch-phrase from the Second World War and trying not to laugh too hard. So let me translate the idea. It means, very simply, that you make your own decisions about life and love and relationships and whatever and you don't let other people make those decisions for you. Years ago I was giving a lecture and an older person in the audience asked me if I was, "advocating doing your own thing," which to that person was not a good idea. I responded that, "If you aren't doing your own thing, whose thing are you doing, and do you want to be doing it?"

When I entered the BDSM (We called it B&D or S&M and there was a real distinction back then. B&D people considered S&M people sick and S&M people considered B&D people gutless.) world back in the late 1960s to be involved in SM was very much doing your own thing and quite scary to the unwashed and unintelligent masses. It was very much the province of a cultural elite (or so we thought because no one knew about the disease of the Old Guard in those halcyon days of our youth) and it was a way to separate ourselves from the boring and the mundane who, while rejoicing in the freedom brought about by the Sexual Revolution, were never able to do much with that freedom simply out of lack of imagination. After all, people are stupid. The fact that I was willing to tie up my girlfriends, much less whip them, made me a serious edge player in that time. To be involved with me was to take a risk, and believe me, the attractiveness of that risk was probably the only reason I got laid at all. As I once said in response to the canard that you are not supposed to play on the first date, "With my face, if I don't get her tied up on the first date there probably won't be a second one."

And so it remained until 1973 with the publication of the Joy of Sex. That manual contained in a small section on bondage and with it the BD of BDSM became instantly legitimized. The people who were so weak as to need permission now had it and it no longer mattered if Ann Landers approved or not (not that it ever did). And in the spate of cheap, paperback sex manuals that flooded the marketplace in its wake, bondage was given more than a small nod, usually an entire chapter. What was said in those chapters would strike us today as extraordinarily tame and rather boring, but at the time they were written they were the cutting edge of cool.

It can truly be said that with the publication of the Joy of Sex, the Sexual Revolution ended because the rebels had won. Doing your own thing had triumphed.

If that had remained the case, everything would have been perfect. Unfortunately perfection has a sad way of slipping out of our hands and something really really bad happened in the 1970s and 80s to the S&M world. The organization people got their hands on it and everything went to hell. You see there is something about organization in and of itself that makes a mess of things and it is not only in the BDSM world. Just look at what happens to anything if the government gets involved. It gets absolutely ruined!

Centripetalism!

Organization breeds authority and hierarchy and these tend to gravitate towards a center which will try very hard to control everything in its grasp. A club needs officers and pretty soon those officers are asked to make decisions that affect the running of the club and, by extension, the activities of those involved in it. That is the nature of things.

We should not be surprised at this. Nor should we be surprised when the officers suddenly find themselves, often against their will, being regarded as authority figures on matters outside the immediate purview of their positions in the organization. Michel's Iron Law of Oligarchy runs true in every grouping no matter how loosely organized it may be. There will always be an inner circle that makes decisions, acts as arbiters of just about anything. And of course the public BDSM world, as it turned into a mass of clubs with officers and by-laws and other such bureaucratic horse manure, was no exception. Scum rises to the top and of course we all know there was no greater source of scum in BDSM land than...

III

The Old Guard

There are not enough bad things that one can possibly say about this collection of human waste material. If there is a definition of surplus population, the Old Guard is it. Forget the Fundamentalist Christian filth, forget the despised niggers, that failed experiment in evolution soon to go the way of the Neanderthal. These are the real enemy of personal freedom in the BDSM world. And these are the ones you will be opposing most often, if not directly than certainly those influenced by them, so you'll be seeing a lot of references to them in this work.

Ok, a little bit of history here. The Old Guard seems, and there is debate as to how much of this is actually true and how much is urban legend created by someone in the early stages of AIDS dementia, to have been created by a bunch of unnamed and probably unnamable WW2 gay veterans who discovered that they really like the smell of leather from all those bomber jackets. They also discovered that they liked uniforms and hierarchy and motorcycles and giving up bathing. Somehow, S&M got thrown into the mix and don't ask me how it got there, I have no idea and I don't think I want to find out. Probably they were beating up on some poor initiate and they all became erect and immediately went to sodomize the tailpipes on their motorcycles. Who knows? Who cares?

The important things to remember about the Old Guard founders were:

There were of minimal intelligence, in fact they were probably marvelously unburdened by any vestige of rational thought. In this they were typical of that most stupid of generations. Remember, the majority of those folks did not even finish high school, much less ever find their way into a college and they were accepting of authority and hierarchy in ways that would turn our stomachs. Just think "Archie Bunker." If you ever get a chance, and a library may have it, get a look at a film of the early Billy Graham crusades. They will give a very good image of the culture that produced the Old Guard.

They were incapable of adapting to civilian life after getting shot at. It was important for them to recreate the social structure that they were thrown into during the war. This led to the adoption of uniforms, rules, structures of all kinds. Again, this was typical of that generation. The sight of people marching in step did not make them want to throw up the way it does us.

They had a thing about motorcycles. Probably they liked the noise they could have made if they had the intelligence to figure out how to get the things started. Unfortunately that seems to have been beyond them and the reason certain groups still call their gatherings "runs" does not refer to the results of their rather greasy diet but to the fact that their founders had to run along the road pushing their motorcycles and making vroom vroom noises.

The Old Guard produced a lot of total garbage, in fact it can be said that garbage was all they produced, if you forget the rusting motorcycles with their training wheels still attached propped up outside the gay nursing home. That garbage included a bunch of silly uniform rules (You can pretty much ignore them, no one takes that stupidity seriously now. In fact, at a Washington D.C march recently the token Leatherman spoke wearing an absolutely ridiculous leather hat and one could just see the people in the audience trying very hard not to break out laughing.) and a paramilitary concept of "protocol." That you do need to take seriously because you are going to spend a lot of time opposing it whenever it rears its ugly head. There are a few other pieces of nonsense that pop up as well and we will deal with them later in the appropriate sections.

Now, the question that comes to mind immediately is just how did these losers in the class war come to exert any influence at all, much less the overblown one they seem to. After all, there was a thriving BDSM world that had no contact with them and would have had no use whatsoever for them and their malodorous lifestyle. Michael Leigh's *The Velvet Underground* makes no mention of them, for example and if you look at the pornopicture BDSM material from the period in which they are supposed to flourish, you see no sign of their existence. So just how did these creeps and filthbags (you would not have wanted them living in your neighborhood) get noticed and why the hell did anyone pay any attention to them at all? And, for that matter, why do people still do? After all, if when I was a young man, someone in a ridiculous biker hat and stupid-looking vest with a lot of pins on it, came up to me and said I needed to join a group and learn to bow and scrape and study in order to get the right to tie up my girlfriend I probably would have either laughed in his face or kicked him in the groin, depending upon how drunk I was.

This is going to be pure conjecture on my part but I think it worked like this.

The sexual revolution hit and, if you are old enough to remember the 60s, there was a motorcycle gang culture sort of left over from the 1950s at the same time, we're talking mid 1960s, 64-66 here. If you ever have the misfortune to see any of the old beach movies of the time, you'll notice the bad guys are a comic motorcycle gang led by the one person in the movies who could actually act. (Let's be honest and admit the only reason anyone ever went to those movies was to see if Annette Funicello's tits ever would accidentally fall out of her bikini top.) There were also a number of movies based on the fictionalized exploits of the Hell's Angels. So, at the same time as the somewhat ragged peace-love-drugs hippies were staggering around there was another culture developing around the violence/leather-wearing motorcycle culture.

Ok, now let us throw in the sexual revolution. It's now ok to be horny for any reason, which is a good thing provided you don't attack the family goat or have this strange desire to become a scoutmaster. There were folks who got turned on by S&M and who were totally turned off by the hippie formulation. Now, these

were not super sophisticated folks. They were going on pure hormones and not doing a lot of examination and sort of got their movies mixed up. They were looking for the violence, which is always a cool thing to do as long as the real thing is not happening to you. Now, it is not considered polite to say that these days, but it was true then and it is true now. There is a level of violence in what we do and anyone who watches heavy play at a dungeon can see that. (By the way, that probably explains the rather stupid appeals to violence that some members of the BDSM world tend to make when they get disagreed with.)

So we have people who are primed to respond to the costumes and the underlying ferocity of the Old Guard types. Time to add geography.

I have often said that the reason I did not encounter the Old Guard was because I was a confirmed suburbanite. I never ventured into the city except to go to the cultural stuff downtown and the idea of finding myself in the sort of neighborhoods where the Old Guard had their leather bars would have been absurd to say the least. And I would not have been caught dead in one of those places anyway. But there were folks who were looking for something, some way of getting their rocks off and that was exactly where they found themselves. We must not think too highly of these folks. They were obviously not strong-willed people or they would not have gone looking in the way they did. They would have used the strength of their own character to attract people to them, not the other way around. Anyway, however they did it, a bunch of folks found themselves invading the precincts of the Old Guard and while they rarely were accepted by the natives (especially if they were the godless heterosexuals coming in their cursed gender pairs and I stole that line from somewhere but for the life of me I can't remember where) they managed to absorb some of the ideas and culture, particularly the uniform and organizational aspects. When the time came for the horror of the discussion clubs to emerge, these were the folks who tended to start them.

There was another element, the fashion element. Leather became fashionable, particularly with the rise of what was called the "Punk Aesthetic" which was something of an oxymoron because Punk was very anti-aesthetic. The costumes of the Old Guard and their hangers-on became fashionable and this causes no small horror to them, which is actually pretty funny if you think about it. By this time the Old Guard had begun to be called "Leathermen" and the fashion thing sort of back-doored them into the larger BDSM scene. People thought they looked cool and wanted to have cool-looking people around.

In any event, for whatever reason, the plague spread and were it not for the heroic efforts of Transgressionists around the world would have totally overcome the hedonic elements of the BDSM world and this would have been a great tragedy because for all of the false claims of the Old Guard, it is, in fact, the Transgressionist who were the founders of modern BDSM, coming as they were

out of the Adversary Culture of the late Victorian period. It is important that you remember this and regard the Old Guard as the aberration, which it was.

The Adversary Culture produced Oscar Wilde and Aleister Crowley. It was the reaction of the intelligent and the cultured against the prudery that is associated with the Victorians, though hypocrisy may be a better word. The historian Gertrude Himmelfarb contends that much of that is pure myth and points to the story of skirts being placed on pianos so people would not be offended by the sight of the legs as an example, but she is lying. There is more than enough documentation for that actually occurring and the people who did it were serious.

In any event, we are the heirs of that background, a cultured and aristocratic one, not the pitiful made-up nonsense of a bunch of unfortunates who could not adapt to civilian life after their war. That is the important thing to remember. When an appeal to "tradition" is made, there are NO traditions.

IV

The contemporary Old Guard

We deal with what would be considered to be second and third generation Old Guard. The originals have pretty much either all died off, mostly with large ears, or are reduced to senile babblings and occasionally eating out of their colostomy bags like the rest of their damnable generation. While we may view the founders of the Old Guard with deserved contempt, we must look up their successors as nuisances at best and dangers at worst.

Generally infinitely more intelligent than their forebears (and they even bathe at least once a month), they are more likely to interact with the broader BDSM world and because they were so effectively brainwashed by their teachers they at times develop an evangelistic fervor for their ideas and go forth with the goal of bringing everyone into the fold whether they like to or not. Of course they can really make themselves look ridiculous to anyone who actually thinks about it, (like the poor fool in the ridiculous hat) but let us be honest, most people do not think!

What happens is something like this. A person who has been so trained has come to think in terms of "tradition." Now, let us be honest again and say again that there are NO traditions, just a bunch of made-up nonsense which some folks happened to like and those folks were the idiots sodomizing the tailpipes, so you can get an idea of what those things are worth. Well, such a person comes into a more rational setting and discovers that the things they were taught were holy, sacred and proper are not done at all. So what does this person do? They start to preach. And the funny part is that the folks who do this do not realize that it is THEY, not the people they are preaching at, are the ones being ill-mannered.

Look at it this way. A Roman Catholic goes to visit a Baptist church and immediately is shocked by the fact that the congregation does not genuflect when walking in the door. Now, if the Catholic gets all bent about that and begins to berate his hosts about this breach of his custom, he will be thought to be very strange indeed. Yet this is what the Old Guarders do all the time when they seek to impose their folkways onto a group that does not follow them. They operate under the bizarre assumption that everyone works the way they do and cannot quite understand why people think they are crazy.

One thing I should point up here. You will discover that I use religion as an analogy a lot in dealing with this stuff. I don't see BDSM as a religion, in fact if I did I probably would not be within a hundred miles of it, but the denominational model is a very good one for describing differences in style in BDSM groups. In fact the division procedures that are followed in fundamentalist xtian groups make a very good model for Transgressionist operations as you will find out.

Ok, before I leave this little section, there is something you need to remember. Except for its founders, the Old Guard are not all bothersome scumbags. Most of its adherents are actually pretty nice folks once you get to know them. The difficulties come from those who cannot see beyond their own lives and expect everyone to be the same as they are. So when you encounter someone who claims to follow the ways of the Old Guard, don't jump down his throat immediately. Wait and see how he behaves in a more rational setting. Then jump down his throat.

V

Knowing yourself

Ok, enough nasty fun with the Obsolete Guard. We'll be making life miserable for them enough later on. It's time to start working on yourself. After all, being a Transgressionist is more than just saying you don't like rules. You have to be someone who goes out and breaks them for the hell of it.

You need to take a good look at yourself, your life and what you want to be, not only in the BDSM world, but just living in general. And you don't want to overdo this because while the unexamined life may not be worth living, the over-examined life makes you a crashing bore that no one wants to be around. After all just think of the annoying sub who goes into dreadful and prolonged detail about the problems she is having reconciling her submission with the traumas of everyday life. You do not want to be like that person. Why? Because she is an idiot who somehow thinks her problems matter to anyone else.

So let us make this simple. When you encounter authority, what is your natural response. Is it to go along with it and shrug your shoulders and say the contemporary equivalent of, "You can't fight city hall?" Is it to argue the point until one of you gives way? Is it to bend with the wind and grumble. Or is it to launch a nuclear war, to go after the authority figure with every weapon in your arsenal and scorch the earth in your wake? If it is the latter, then you are definitely Transgressionist material. You see, Transgressionists are fighters at heart. They don't roll over and play dead. They have teeth and they use them!

Transgressionists are easy to find. They are the risk takers. They never wear seat belts, only wimps and weenies do that. Hell, some of us even have been known to drive on the sidewalk! They don't follow orders cheerfully but will oppose them on principal. They defer to no one. They are no respecters of persons, a phrase we don't hear very often but in its day was a high compliment.

Got that? Now you have to take a good look at yourself and see how you measure up and don't worry, you don't. No one does unless he has a bunch of armored divisions at his command. So here is the first lesson in being a Transgressionist:

You do not have to fit anyone else's definitions.

To be a Transgressionist, all you have to do is call yourself one. The rest will naturally follow.

But seriously now, take a look at yourself. You come out of a culture that values the individual, at least in theory, but refuses to act that way. You are going to need some guts to be a true individualist because there are lots of people who are going to become very afraid of you and say bad things about you. But you

must not be deterred by that. Their words cannot hurt you if you have a base of support they cannot touch.

Let me give you a simple, practical, example. My wife and I organize The Chicago Slosh. She does the mailing and I maintain the website. Our organization is very simply an anarchistic oligarchy. All we do is put out the mailing and show up and pretty much let the thing take care of itself unless a crisis occurs, when it becomes time to intervene and deal with it. Now, our group is not exactly totally Transgressionist but it is certainly not Structuralist much less Formalist. We proudly declare ourselves to be a protocol-free zone and we have no problems with people showing up in fetish clothes as long as everything is covered and collars are pretty commonplace among us, sometimes with cuffs as well. We make no concessions to the tender sensitivities of the nilleraige who share the location with us except to avoid scaring the staff half to death, which means we don't allow live animals, particularly serpents or rats, and we sort of frown on weapons because they make the bouncer nervous.

Now this is not the way munches are usually organized and it is likely we are a bit of a scandal to organizers in less open parts of the country. Such is life. Suppose, however, for some bizarre reason, that one of the folks from another group on the other side of the country decides that our way of doing things makes us very bad people and starts saying bad things about us in newsgroups and mailing lists. Will this have any effect on us?

No.

Let us be honest and recognize that as long as our people are happy coming, the location likes having us (and our willingness to sue the xtians if they object to us truly endears us to the management) and we have a place to play afterwards, it really does not matter what anyone else thinks. There is nothing, absolutely nothing they can do about it. We are in no way dependant upon their good will. And it is a damned good thing too because when they hear about this book... .

This is how you must learn to view yourself, as proudly independent, uncontrollable and fearless. Once you do that, you will have won the major struggle for you will be truly unstoppable.

And that brings us to one of the most important parts of being a Transgressionist, especially if you are going to be in a leadership role. You must be OUT!

Ok, it is not absolutely essential, but it will certainly make your life easier. Being out has a number of advantages that cannot be overstated. You do not have to worry about being discovered. You have nothing to hide, which means your lifestyle cannot be used to blackmail you. It also gives you an advantage over those who are not because if worst absolutely comes to worst you can threaten

litigation and they must back down for fear of discovery while at the same time they cannot threaten you with the same thing.

I was once forced to use this lever. Some crazy person objected to my non-scene writing and threatened me in a chatroom with harassment. So I told her I would sue her. Now, as she is a social worker who works with children, she is one of those few people who HAVE to remain closeted. A lawsuit over this lifestyle that got into the media, and you can be assured I would have made damned sure it got into the media because it would have helped sell books, would have destroyed her life. She shut up real fast.

So if you can, be as out as possible. It will save you much grief in the long run.

VI

The making of a Transgressionist

A number of people over the last few years have wondered how I found myself in the position I am in of being the unofficial, self-appointed spokesman for this segment of the BDSM world. Well, it sort of came about by accident as well as by birth and upbringing.

I have never been a conformist. In fact one time, many years ago when I was in graduate school, a friend said, "Chuck is a non-conformist. First he seeks out conformity and then does the opposite." And I laughed because it was true. I was raised to follow my own light, even if it conflicted with those around me. For me, being in opposition to a community was just a natural thing to do. And I was always fascinated by the workings of power. I got my first copy of Machiavelli's *The Prince* when I was 14 and it was my constant companion in my youth. I even carried a little paperback edition of it in my back pocket in street fights. Now, you have to realize that I did not understand it very well until I had enough of a background in the history of the Renaissance to know what Machiavelli was talking about when he gave examples in the book, but my heart was in the right place even if I did not know why.

The other books that had the most influence on me were three little books of satire written by an Englishman named Stephen Potter (no relation to Harry) entitled *Gamesmanship*, *Lifemanship* and *Oneupmanship*. While presented as humor, Potter's writing had a unique and highly useful perspective on dealing with other people, particularly in gaining the upper hand in everyday interaction. If you can find them, by all means study them.

It was simply very important for me to be in control of situations rather than to be controlled. And of course for those of you familiar with my "normal" life, this has led me into some very unusual, and perhaps at times crackpot, things.

How did this all relate to my BDSM life? Well, I was never closeted. I've always said that I was too damned ornery to be so. A more accurate way of putting it was I have always simply been too contemptuous of the opinions of people to care whether they approved of me or not so it really did not matter if I was out. I have mellowed a bit with age, but you can imagine that when young I was a very difficult person to get along with. I mean, think of the poor grade-school teacher faced with a nine-year-old budding dom!

But all this had a peculiar side benefit. I naturally tend to gravitate to the center of power in any group I find myself in. Like I said, scum rises!

Thus when the time came for me to become involved with the Chicagoland Discussion Group it was only a matter of time until I found myself first the librarian, which I think was intended as a practical joke on me because it meant I

had a house full of cheap porn which I was all to glad to get rid of, and then club Secretary. And that's when things got—well—interesting in the sense of the ancient Chinese curse.

I found myself an organization man. My job was basically following behind the club President and picking up the pieces and hearing complaints. In fact I often meet people who were in the club and who of course remember me but whom I have no memory of, which means they never caused me any trouble!

But there I was, stuck in this weird and totally out-of-character role as the guardian of the Establishment, community, SSC, the whole bag of scene bullshit at the time. I even found myself supporting the use of barriers in public sex play!

Looking back I clearly was out of my mind and probably really needed professional counseling.

Now, I won't lie to you. There were real perks and I don't mean getting into the meetings and the parties free. There was respect, some modicum of power (which in the BDSM context is a rather iffy thing but you learn all sorts of things you can use if you have to but you really cannot use them) and because I usually was the ranking officer present at the play parties I did not have to care what the DMs thought. I outranked them!

There were nights when I was GOD! And what was God doing? He was following the club President around hearing complaints and picking up the pieces!

It all came crashing down in the summer of 1994, and not for the reason people who knew me then tend to think. Yeah, that's when my feud with the Obsolete Guard started because the pigs made the mistake of trying to censor something I wrote and not only got their little leather asses kicked but gained an implacable enemy, but I had a revelation about the abusive power of community and its pretensions. (Actually, it turned out to be a very good thing for me because I acquired a national reputation as someone willing to pole-axe the sacred cows and who could not be intimidated.)

One night after a meeting one of our lesbian members asked to play with me. Now, I have a rule about being asked to play. I consider it an honor. It means that the woman has decided I have something to offer her in the way of experience and that I am not going to do her in and leave her body parts scattered in garbage bags over four states. It is a compliment. But I will admit this one scared me. There was the real possibility of something going terribly terribly wrong because I was dealing with a mind that I honestly could not understand and my style of play even then got into the head a lot. So, I, who do not normally put much credit in the idea of scene negotiation, did a lot of it. We talked for a good eight hours on the phone prior to meeting.

Just before going to my house to play, we met at a local restaurant and during the course of the conversation she asked me not to let anyone know that she was playing with me because if it got out she would be ostracized. I nearly exploded. I bit my cheek real hard because getting angry would serve no purpose and besides I was not angry at her. I was furious at a community that would dare to arrogate such power to itself that it would tell someone who could or could not tie her up and torture her! And to make matters worse I could not tell her that because she was not up to hearing it.

At that moment I turned my back on "community." Never again would that word be used to control me or mine. Thus when the battle with the Obsolete Guard began, they had no idea that they were using words that I had already rejected.

The poor devils never had a chance. It was their communitarianism against raw political skill. I had the votes on the CDG board and it did not matter what anyone else thought. My old friend Uncle Niccolo Machiavelli had risen from the grave to serve me well.

Turning away from SSC took just a little more time because I did not see what an insidious disease it was becoming. But I began to play the serious contrarian role and as CDG sort of rotted away before our eyes, there were a number of times at a meeting when it would be my turn to speak and I would say, "Forget everything you just heard. It doesn't apply to your life." And it became obvious that SSC had gone from a rather silly publicity gimmick to a means of social control. I walked away from SSC.

And then CDG died and I so wanted to shout at that last meeting, "Free at last! Free at last! Great Satan Almighty I'm free at last!"

I walked away from CDG and, thanks to Mrs. Dagger, into the Chicago Slosh.

And we were determined to not repeat the mistakes that had destroyed CDG. We would not seek to tell people how to live and love and play. We would accept people as they were, as long as they did not do anything really disgusting like wear poet shirts and bellow, "Where's my Slut!" But we also took one thing from CDG. We were out, Donna and I. We would not hide who we are and we would not defer to the tender sensitivities of the despised nillers or anyone else. We would follow no standards but our own and we would maintain our autonomy no matter what any other group said or did.

And thus we have prospered.

VII Thought Control

No, this has nothing to do with my psionic stuff. One of the more annoying things you will encounter, if you have not figured it out already, is the multitude of subtle and often unsubtle tricks the communitarians will use to try to direct the way your BDSM-loving mind works. You see, they do not have the brute force available to control your actions and it is always amusing when some imbecile tries to compare the values promoted by his little segment of the BDSM world (and often that little segment is only his own hard drive) with the power of the state. Well, it is always fun to remind such idiots and sundry morons that the state has guns and they don't. The only weapons their precious little community has are disapproval and ostracism and those don't work on the popular or the powerful or on people who have their own groups.

The more intelligent of the communitarians out there, and there are actually a few intelligent ones surprising as that may seem, realize the weakness of community. They know it can do nothing against someone who is popular, powerful (in a number of contexts), inner directed and or truly pissed about something because those people will simply not care. The trick, they understand, is to make them care.

And of course in this you can see the obvious counter because if it is clear that you do not care, their leverage is somewhat diminished. I have already made reference to the beginnings of my feud with the Obsolete Guard and the fact that they tried to use a concept of community which I was in full reaction to at the time. Well, this led to a rather funny incident during the battle.

Having lost two rounds, the enemy was about to try a desperate tactic at the next board meeting (which was never used because it was made real clear to the club president that the moment it was tried she would be removed from office immediately) but in between the board meetings there was the regular, monthly CDG meeting. Talk about tension in the air! Well, we went to eat afterwards, my people at the big table and the club president and her few cronies at a booth some distance away. What they forgot was a good friend of mine had arrived and was sitting with a friend in the next booth. Walls do sometimes have ears.

You can imagine with little difficulty what the topic of conversation was at that table, or who was the main course. Chuck roast certainly took on new meaning that evening. And during the feast one person there made the statement, "You don't say Chuck and Community in the same sentence." And in that they expressed their ultimate weakness and why they never had a chance. Without being able to appeal to the concept of community, their only option was political power and I had that sewed up.

So, the first thing you have to remember is that ideas have consequences. Every time you say you agree with a concept, that concept can be used to attempt to control you. Every concept you do not assent to is a concept that cannot be used to control you.

Never forget, just because someone else says something you are under no obligation to ascribe to what is said or follow it. The important thing is that when an authority figure or group is mentioned you must not just shake your head or appear to ignore it. That will be interpreted as assent. You must say, calmly, in response, "I don't care what X says." At that point the person will sort of jump backwards in surprise. The shock will be quite visible and highly entertaining as your opponent stumbles around looking for a suitable retort. Remember, the weakness of argument by authority is that it requires all parties to agree on the authority. If one of the people in the disagreement reject the authority then the other people have lost a significant tool in their attempts at persuasion. Incidentally, that was the reason Daggerland was created. It is very difficult to argue from authority when the other person can quote an opposing authority.

VIII

“When in Rome...”

All right, let us get to the meat of the matter, actually being a Transgressionist. A lot of what you will have to deal with is not only the result of who you are but where you are. In other words, you want to break the rules, if rules there be, without making an utter ass of yourself. Just remember if you have a fat slob at a large gathering shouting “Where’s my slut?” you do not have a Transgressionist. You have an ill-mannered, fat slob.

Groups take on the aspects first of their founders and then of the people who join them and they may change along the way. If you find yourself in a Structuralist, or, gods forbid, Formalist group, you are going to either have to make some changes or get the hell out because you are not going to like them and they are not going to like you. It is at that point you will have to decide which of the three responses to such groups you will follow, evasion, subversion or overthrow, is the most appropriate.

For the most part, however, you are likely to find yourself in a mixed bunch of people, some Transgressionist, most Hedonist, some Structuralist and a few Formalists. That is the usual breakdown of the public scene. Now, let us suppose you walk in the door...

The first thing you need to do is keep your mouth shut! Be polite, friendly, but say as little as possible about your opinions of how things seem to be done. Remember you are a total newcomer and the folks who have been around for a while, which in this case means literally everyone else in the room, will not welcome criticism even if you have 45 years in the scene and have been a club officer in another location for 20 years. One of the things that always works to our advantage is that the Structuralists and Formalists never seem to quite understand this and manage to alienate people every time they open their mouths. And for Satan’s sake, never, under any circumstances, say, “This is how it is done in X city.” There is no quicker way to make enemies and turn off people. I well remember back in the early days of CDG when we were, in effect, creating the Chicago het public scene from scratch, how offended we would get when someone would tell us how things were done in New York or Sacred San Francisco (may they both fall into the ocean!). You do not want to offend people the first night.

Another reason to keep your mouth shut is that the first impression may be totally wrong. The group may be Transgressionist to the core but that night they have a Formalist for a guest speaker and they are merely being polite. Obviously they are not going to blast the person (especially if the person is an event organizer and they all want to get in for half price) and so their politeness may be mistaken for assent. Wait and see what the group is really like before making any decisions.

Every group has certain does and don'ts. Even the most Transgressionist group will have injunctions about getting the furniture messy or other practical matters, such as fireplay next to the draperies. It is important to watch and see how the people interact with each other. If the subs call everyone who appears to be a dom "Sir" or "Ma'am" then you know you may have fallen in among Structuralists. If everyone stands around the bar talking to everyone and cracking jokes, then you can be pretty sure you've landed in among your fellow Transgressionists, or at the very least among happy hedonists. You have to learn to keep an eye out for these things.

Above all else, learn to keep a straight face. If some sub comes up to you and says something absurd like, "If you wish to ask my Lord, he may allow you the honor of a scene," by way of asking you to play with her, do not burst out laughing even though every bone in your body is going to want to. Yes, it is ridiculous and yes, the poor dear must be an idiot to say it, but that is neither the time nor the place to point it out. And until you are established it is poor form to fall over laughing if you are introduced to "Lord Ralph." Yes, we all know that people who put Sir or Lord in front of their scene name are, for the most part, talentless poseurs who have read too much cheap porn, but not always, so keep quiet, bite your cheek and resist the temptation to introduce yourself as "Emperor Norton" in response. Some of them are actually very good people when you get to know them. (I can think of several right off hand.)

Pay attention to how you dress. Much as we may hate the very notion of conformity, if everyone is wearing black, you are going to look very odd in paisley. By the same token, if everyone is wearing paisley, stick to black. It will make you look thinner and while you will stand out, you will stand out in a desirable way. Seriously, some groups take dress codes to a bit of an extreme and those you probably will ignore if only because they aren't common in the het scene. But there are munch groups that worry about how people come dressed.

Now, if you are coming from a group like ours, where pretty much anything goes as long as it is legal and you don't catch cold, you may be a bit shocked to find that the group you are going to gets weird about collars and even leather vests. It does no good to complain that you came from a group that never worried about such things. These are obviously folks who are worried about scaring the horses and while you will be making the horses panic soon enough, you do not want to be asked to leave. Follow their rules until you are in a position to change them or have created your own group.

IX

Status

Status is everything, reputation is nothing. If you have status you can have the worst reputation in the scene and it will not matter. Believe me, I know. If you do not have status the best reputation will only get you nodded at. Besides, if you do the Transgressionist thing right, you will get a very bad reputation among certain people, but as they will not count in your world, it will not matter very much.

Status comes from ability. In the public scene, the thing that ultimately matters beyond anything else is ability on the play floor. You can be the most crashing of boors, the most annoying person on the planet, but if you can do something that makes the subbies swoon at the sight of it, it will not matter. By the same token, if someone is a mundane player, with the usual compliment of floggers and maybe a singletail, he will be liked but he will not be given that little bit of extra deference that makes being a Transgressionist possible.

You may wonder why I am going into this. Well, you must remember that by your very nature, being a Transgressionist is going to annoy the hell out of a number of people and for you to be effective you have to be in a position where they cannot hurt you. If you are an acknowledged expert in a particular play style, you can be disliked by lots of folks but there will be even more who will want you around simply because of your abilities. And, if you can combine those abilities with wit and charm, so much the better. There is no substitute for intelligence but you have to be able to use that intelligence. It is very easy to be the smartest person in the room and the most boring person in the room at the same time. I know. I've done it. I'm not saying you have to dumb yourself down to the level of the people around you. That does not work. What I am saying is you have to develop a wit and a style that will make you interesting even when you really are not.

Another source of status aside from ability is the appearance of your victim, especially when she is stark naked, which she will be most of the time while you are in the play space. A beautiful sub will make you far more desirable to have around than if you have a dozen subs who can only fit one at a time into an elevator. Yes, I know that is unkind, but it is simply the way things are. Appearance does matter, and not only the appearance of the dom. There is a difference between having a harem and having a herd. Now, if neither of you are particularly favored by nature (and believe me, I am certainly not) that does not mean you will be exiled to outer darkness and listening to talks about safety for the rest of your life. It simply means you have to work on the inner beauty of the sub. Find a type of submission she will excel at and the appearance factor will be forgotten. One of the real virtues of BDSM lies in the fact that we ultimately will accept any body type.

In the end, the key to status is style.

Now, there is such a thing as negative style. Negative style makes people disliked or worse, boring. No one wants to hear of the travails of a sub who read one too many websites and is trying to be a good sub but cannot seem to fit her life to the ideas she has been exposed to. And no one wants to hear trivia. **NO ONE CARES WHO STARRED IN THE FIRST STAR TREK MOVIE!!!!**

And most of all, no one gives a damn about the difference between a submissive and slave and a dom who goes off on that will find himself in a room full of people who all wish they were elsewhere and seriously sending him elsewhere, like the bottom of the nearest river. That is as boring as the latest color-coded terrorist wolf-crying alert. You do not want to put people to sleep when you talk.

Learn to keep certain opinions to yourself, even when you are in a position to be as outspoken as I am. Avoid commenting on other people's relationships if the comment is negative. Yes, the dom may be an abusive, controlling dickhead, but it is the sub's choice to be in that relationship and your approval or disapproval does not matter. There is no way to become disliked and ignored quicker than by sticking your nose where it does not belong. Even when you are asked for an opinion (and if you gain sufficient status you will be) be very cautious and circumspect in what you say. The important thing is that people are happy in their relationships, not what we may think of the nature of those relationships.

Do not take yourself too seriously.

X

Power is the name of the game

We hear a lot about “power” in the scene. Usually it comes in the context of “power exchange” which is one of those silly little catch-phrases various online idiots use in an attempt to describe our little hobby to the trailer trash and the great unwashed. That is not what we are concerned with here. One of the things Transgressionists do not waste any time over is trying to define the dynamics of their relationships. No, we are concerned with power as a political reality in the context of BDSM groups.

The most important thing you can remember, and something that cannot be stressed forcefully enough, is that BDSM groups are ALL voluntary associations. People are in them because they want to be and they can leave whenever they feel like it. This ranges from the largest organized group in the world to the smallest unit—the couple. No one is holding a gun to anyone’s head and forcing them to be involved in any group. And no group can use brute force to try to enforce its edicts, not and get away with it for any length of time because someone is going to sue somebody. What this means is people in these groups have the ultimate say about the group and its existence because if enough of them vote with their feet the group will die.

And there is nothing to prevent anyone from forming a group of their own. I will go into that in some detail later.

Now, every once in a while, someone will get a bit carried away with the size of their organization and the fact that no one has seen fit to set up any competition and will say, “We’re the only game in town.” Well, with an attitude like that, they will not be the only game in town for long. They have failed to understand the limits of their power.

Ok, so what constitutes real power. Well, having information certainly is power. We are the keepers of secrets. Anyone who has been in the scene for any length of time will naturally learn stuff about people that they want to or need to keep secret. And it is important that you remember one thing about this. The secrets are never, ever to be revealed except as an absolute last resort when you have no alternative because the moment that is done the bridges are going to be in flames. When a scene feud reaches that point it is scorched earth and nuclear war, the sort of tactics you would normally use on niggers and law enforcement. So while having information is a power tool, it is a tool that has to be used with great care.

It can, however, be a very good source for influence strategy. If you know what a person’s desires, interests and weaknesses are, you can more readily maneuver that person into following your way of thinking. It is then merely a matter of getting into the person’s head. If you are able to do this with a number of people,

you can position yourself to challenge the dominant ethos of almost any community by subversion or overthrow.

But back to the voluntary association thing. All BDSM groupings are consensus groups. They have to be in order to survive. A consensus is reached among the participants as the group forms concerning the nature of the group, how it will do business, who will belong, and what behaviors are proper and improper. The issue of consensus is important because very often the Transgressionist's first task will be to successfully challenge that consensus.

You have to use some skill in this. The one thing you absolutely do not want to do, unless you have been in that community long enough that you can get away with it and two weeks is NOT long enough, is to go charging in like the holy prophet reading to the people the Transgressionist revelation. No one will listen to you and you may end up like a prophet and get stoned, in the biblical, not the good, sense.

Again, this is where you keep your mouth shut for a while. Listen to what people are really saying and try to learn what they are really thinking. It may be that you have landed in an overwhelmingly Structuralist environment and the consensus is too strong to breach. In that case your only choice in dealing with such a community is evasion.

However, it may be that you have a Transgressionist consensus with a Structuralist veneer. In that case you can begin the process of subversion.

In any case, you must also work to acquire as much personal power as possible. How do you do this?

First, you have to be at least a little bit likeable. Someone must be able to stand you. That means regular bathing (and I'm not joking. I wish I were.), some basic knowledge of the theory of standard BDSM, in other words, the stuff everyone likes to talk about even if it is utter bullshit (for a good collection of that, see www.castlerealm.com or read SM 101), and you must have some skill that the broader group desires. For example, in my own case, I was not the most popular person to fall off the turnip truck when I appeared at what became the CDG. But I had a real good working knowledge of how to run a small non-profit organization and put programs together. These were extraordinarily useful skills in a group that had no one in a leadership position with any similar experience and once it was discovered that I actually knew what I was doing on the playfloor I was advanced rapidly in the group.

Once you are in such a position, Michel's Iron Law of Oligarchy will start to take effect and you will find yourself being asked your opinion on a whole bunch of things. Be a little circumspect in your answers. You are not trying to blow anyone out of the water yet. Couch your opinions so that even if the person may

not agree with them they will not seem as outrageous as they may be in reality. Always appear to have the best interests of the group and its members at heart, and in fact you should have. Transgressionism, is, of course, making sure everyone is happy even if they are so benighted as to disagree with us. Now that does not mean you should outright lie if you are asked about something that really gets you upset, like Old Guard bullcrap for example, but you should state your opinion in such a way as to not insult the person you may be disagreeing with. So, instead of saying, "Protocol sucks!" which is what you really feel, say, "Given the way this group is put together, that is probably not going to work." And, if you have done your homework properly, that is the opinion that will carry the day.

Let me give you an example. Years ago, CDG parties tended to be noisy. Chicago people like noisy dungeons. Well, one of the women got all weirded out about that and made a bit of a fuss at one of the meetings, which almost turned the meeting into a brawl with her nearly getting disembodied by a chair as I sat at the library table in the back of the room watching in horror. The club President turned to me and said, "She's right." To which I responded with a bit of a snarl, "She isn't!"

Well, we had lots of phone calls back and forth about this issue and finally I said, "Look at it this way. We have 70 people who can come to the party. If we have a noisy dungeon 10 of them will not come. If we have a quiet dungeon 60 of them may not come. Which can we afford to lose?"

As in all rational discourse, principal took a back seat to economics and we kept our dungeon noisy.

Now, I could have kept snarling and the club President could have kept snarling and nothing would have been accomplished except to marginalize me. But by putting the case in purely pragmatic terms, my view carried the day and the crisis was averted. Now, of course, there was another time after that when pragmatism had to be put aside for principal but that was for a big, capital P principal and even then I made sure I had control of the board first, otherwise I would have backpedaled real fast. Nothing is gained by losing.

Popularity and power go together in the scene. If you have one, you may not necessarily have the other, but they are closely related. And remember, this tends to be a bit of a rollercoaster. You may be at the top of the heap one day and at the bottom the next and back on top on the third. Learn to recognize the vicissitudes of this and when you head down, as you will, relax. You'll be heading back up again.

Cultivate the friendships of people who matter but at the same do not ignore the ones who do not because they may prove to be your own followers when you need them. The people who matter, who are at the top of the pecking order, can

advance you with great speed if you handle them properly. Do not appear to be toadying to them, but be supportive. An occasional compliment on the food or the program is always welcome. And if there seems to be a bit of depression on the part of one of the leaders, because this can be a very wearing position to be in, a word of encouragement is always going to be remembered.

And when you have to attack, try, if at all possible, to attack ideas rather than people. Oh, there will be people you will go after but be sure that they do something to deserve it that is pretty obvious. The county cow inseminator in his poet shirt bellowing "Where's my SLUT!" at a public gathering is an easy target and one you should not hesitate to go after. There will be more than enough people disgusted by his mere presence that you can do so with impunity. Keep close watch and see who is vulnerable and what kind of attack they are vulnerable to. You never know when you may need that information. When you get home from a meeting or gathering or party, do a post-mortem and maybe even keep notes on what happened, who gossiped about whom, which relationship seems to be fraying, what stresses are appearing in the power structure and alliances. All of these things need to be kept in mind.

Be certain never to overestimate yourself and what you can accomplish. The last thing you want to do is make a demand that no one accedes to. That is the quickest way to look stupid and worse, weak. In fact, it is best to never demand anything. Your tools are reason, wit and experience. If they are not sufficient to get what you want, no amount of bluster is going to succeed. Only fools threaten and only cowards listen to them. If you are forced into a position where that is the only course of action, be damned sure that you are in a position to carry it out. This is important not only in dealing with the scene folk, but especially in dealing with the godless nillers and even then threatening is foolish. Merely act without warning or let your lawyers do the threatening.

And finally, the absolutely most important thing you must have in order to have any power in a scene community at all is the ability to perform on the play floor. You have to be damned good at what you do, if possible be the absolute best at it. You can never be too skilled. What you do as a player is the thing that will remain longest in the minds of the people who are most active in the scene. If you can develop a unique skill or style, by all means do so and do not make the mistake of doing a program or demo about it every few months. Make sure that a demo on your part is not an ordinary meeting or program, but an event that the group or playspace can use to bring new people in. So work on your skills, (more about that soon) and work on your speaking style. Practice speaking in front of a camcorder so you can see what you look like and what you need to work on (like making sure your fly is closed). And practice your art in front of a camcorder as well. You need to know what you look like, what your technique is, so that when talk about it to an audience you will know what they are seeing.

XI

On the playfloor

This is where the leather meets the flesh, quite literally. As I just said, your position in the scene and any influence you may have depends totally on your ability as a player in the public scene. You may have played privately for 30 years, but unless an audience has seen you and gone into ecstasies with fulmious praise, you are a nobody, a poseur. You might as well call yourself Sir Dom Master So-and-so for all the respect you and your ideas will garner.

So, what is to be done? You have to become an expert at something. I'm sure you have been to the local dungeon and seen some people doing odd things, no not THOSE odd things, but, shall we say, peculiar things, like sitting alone and tying complicated knots, or staring at a blade as they weave it through the air. No, these folks are not masturbating. They are meditating. They are working to perfect their art. And you will notice that rather than being avoided as crazy people, they tend to be among the most popular and powerful people in the place. And there is a reason for that. People know that if they play with somebody the person they play with is going to be in for a unique and valued experience at the hands of an artist, not merely an artisan.

Look, anyone can swing a flogger. Learning the basic skill with that takes about five minutes and perfecting aim is pretty easy. In some ways they usually just sort of aim themselves once you get them going in the right direction. Everyone knows this. So flogger people branch out. They tend to collect large numbers of them, some pretty exotic and work on elaborate movements, such as working two of them at the same time. But in the end, it is just a person with a flogger and yeah, the double flogger thing may look impressive the first time out, but it gets old real fast. Flogger work can be very pleasing to the partner, but it is not the key to prominence, unless you can make using one look far more dramatic than it is.

The key to a flogger is momentum. Once it is moving it wants to keep moving in a circle. This is why some doms will wear leather vests, to protect themselves from their own instruments as they come around. If you are going to use a flogger, and you will, it is a standard tool, learn to take advantage of the momentum of the instrument. As it moves, move with it, spin around after a good stroke and then flip the flogger to the opposite hand and strike with a backswing. Or learn to use a bit of humor with it. On occasion I will let the flogger come up and wrap itself around my head, and then look very sternly at it. It does it again and I take the flogger and spank the handle! Well, anyone watching practically ends up in tears laughing.

Electric play is always spectacular but has become commonplace as everyone knows that you can get good deals on violet wands at ebay and cattle prods at the local agricultural supply store. (In my part of the world Farm and Fleet is the

one but there are different chains all over the place. As people also go to those places to buy cheap riding crops you should have no trouble finding out where one is.) Like flogger work, the key is style. Anyone can plug in a violet wand and play havoc with the dungeon sound system if it is not properly grounded (the sound system, not the wand). The joy of these instruments is that you can gain the reputation of being a somewhat dangerous player (which for a Transgressionist is a very good thing) while not actually endangering your victim at all. Just study them and learn how they work and what parts of the anatomy they work best on. I will go into the appearance of danger at play in some more detail later on.

And of course any blade play is welcome, but for Satan's sake, use a decent sized blade and not a kitchen knife. You want to appear threatening without being ridiculous.

“So settle your studies, Faustus, and begin to sound the depths of that thou wilt profess.” If you do not have a regular play partner, get one. And practice practice practice.

One important thing here. Occasionally you will come across someone who dislikes dungeon performers, as they call us. Ignore them! That is only sour grapes from people who are so mundane as to put everyone else in the place to sleep, including their partners. Always remember that public play is for the audience as well as for your partner. Anyone who does not realize this is seriously deluded and does not understand human nature at all.

XII

Evasion

I have referred to evasion a number of times as a tactic for dealing with a structuralist or Formalist community and while you have probably guessed at what I mean, let me explain in more detail.

Evasion is avoiding the community altogether. It is the approach you use when you find that the established BDSM groups are so fuddy-duddyish that no amount of reason or wit can move them out of their positions and they will spend all their time wondering who should wear the funny hat, or who is the right person to be in their group or any number of other things. Very often it will take the form of a peculiar political correctness, such as practiced by one large organization that has as one of its rules a style of discourse that enjoins participants to “not make someone wrong,” to which the obvious retort is that you are not “making them wrong,” they were born that way! Social control can take many many forms. The human mind is always thinking up new social systems for people to live under and trying to impose them.

BDSM communities and groups can be controlling and abusive (particularly if they call themselves Old Guard) and not at all averse to sitting in judgment on everything their members do, from the clothes they wear, to the friends they have, to their play style, particularly their play style. And when a person is so unfortunate as to land in such a group, very often the only solution is to get out but at the same time, having found fellow pervs, just getting up and leaving can be an emotional shock because the person has grown accustomed to having company. Fortunately it is possible to develop a counter-group with relatively difficulty. In fact, the ability to do this is one of the great benefits of online.

In the old days, if you wanted to split a group, you had to be established and well known. You had to have contacts already in place and phone numbers because the ancient phone tree was one of the most important means of communication. That is no longer the case. Anyone with a computer and an ISP can now create their own group in a very short period of time.

The initial key to such activity is a chat room. Now, chat rooms have a deservedly bad reputation because a lot of garbage goes on in them and they make good hunting grounds for nasty people who leave their victims in garbage bags over four states. However, a regional chat room which attracts people from a local community is a very good tool for communication and gathering information. And information is where you have to start.

You can take it as a given that if you are uncomfortable with something, other people will be as well. No group is so well put together that it will appeal to everyone (which is why I have been known to tell people they might not be happy

with ours and direct them to other groups less boisterous). The key to creating your own group is to find those people.

When I was in college I had a geography class. It was designed for liberal arts majors who had no interest or ability in science or math to fulfill the science requirement for graduation. And at one point, for some reason, the lab sections of the course got a little too difficult for the lab time allotted, largely because the text was badly written and the professors realized it. One of them said, "When people get frustrated they start talking." If people are getting frustrated with the way a certain group is going, they will talk about it, and they will talk about it most loudly in local chat rooms and on mailing lists. At this point, you must resist the temptation to blast the powers that be and listen to what is being said. Make careful notes of who is saying what about whom and why.

When you have a list of people who share your views, create a private chat room and invite them in. Once you have your little chat group, get that group going on why they do not like the established organization and after a time, propose starting your own little munch group. This should occur after about a week or two because you want to move while you have people showing interest.

Select a location that will be convenient for everyone and where you can get away with a lot of things. A bar is better than a restaurant because children are generally not allowed in bars so no one can complain to the management that you are perverting their children when you talk about naked people being tortured as recreation. The time will come when you will be much more aggressive, but not at this point! You are just putting this thing together and while scaring the horses into a stampede is desirable, it is not desirable right now.

Once you have your location, send out the invites to the people on your list. Do not be discouraged if you have a small turn-out at first, this is normal. It will grow provided you do not turn people off with movie trivia or talk about safety. Remember, this is a gathering of like-minded folk who dislike the way the larger group is being run. So at the munch, direct the conversation as much as tactfully possible to how bad things are at the established group, particularly their tendency to rule-making and control behavior. You are aiming for a certain evangelical fervor here, but you do not want to be too overt about it because you do not want to turn people off, you want to get them excited about the possibility of good, nasty fun. Make this the first of a regular gathering, preferably weekly. Why? Because people will not always be able to make it and if they miss a weekly one, well there is always next week, but if they miss two monthly ones in a row they may give up on it altogether.

After a few munches, it is time to think about organizing a party. This is not too difficult, all you need is a hotel room, a suite if possible and people willing to chip in for the expenses and refreshments. And if you have acquired a member with

a home dungeon, as you most likely will as they are pretty common these days, so much the better.

Ok, so now you have a core group that meets with some regularity, a party planned and the possibility of play space. What more do you need?

Lawyers.

Seriously, there are two types of people you should cultivate as members of your gathering. Lawyers and people with money are both good things to have. It is called "human resources" and we will talk about them more later on.

There you have it, you now have a working group that has its own play parties. You no longer are dependent upon the larger group and can totally break off from it at any time. By doing this you destroy the one piece of leverage that groups can claim. It is impossible to ostracize someone who has their own organization. The people who run the larger group may claim that you are dividing the community, but as you do not value unity or consider community to be more important than the desire of the individual members such objections will, of course, carry no weight with you or your people and you can laugh them off with impunity. There is nothing they can do but complain and stamp their impotent little feetsies.

XIII

Subversion and Overthrow

How to win friends and manipulate people! This is fun stuff once you get over the fact that you may have to become a very nasty person in order to accomplish these things.

Most groups and communities are not monolithic structures with everyone goose-stepping to the same little drummer boy, in spite of the desires of Guy Baldwin. They tend to be dynamic, in the sense that they are always changing. There is a constant flux of people and ideas and ways of doing things which is why the boat keeps rocking. The group you joined a year ago probably has already undergone some subtle changes that may be barely recognizable but will have a very real effect on how the group perceives itself and acts in the future. This is why the post-mortem after every meeting is so damned important. It is what allows you to keep track of the changes and be able to deal with them. There is nothing more unpleasant than being in a position of leadership and then getting blindsided by something you had no idea was even developing. Believe me, I know!

The key to subversion is knowing people. No one agrees on everything but a lot of people can agree on a number of things. The trick, as before, is to find those people who agree with you and use them to spread your ideas. And if they want to take the credit, or the blame, for them, that is ok. What is important is that the ideas are being spread, not whom is spreading them. In fact, there are times when it is going to be very useful to have someone else do the work. That way if it does not meet with the level of acceptance you would like, the other person will get the heat and not you. Resist the temptation to always be in the spotlight. It can become very warm there and the rollercoaster ride can be pretty rough if you are not used to it.

In the process of subversion, Transgressionist ideas do not come blasting at people, but rather subtly insinuate themselves into the group consensus. For example, one does not thunder against having Dungeon Monitors at the very beginning, even though their elimination is one of the central Transgressionist doctrines, one simply wonders why rational adults are in need of baby sitters. Imply that the presence of DMs does not really have anything to do with safety but rather with a control-freak attitude on the part of those who want the job. And, of course, this is only the truth. As every group will have people who have had problems with DMs at the group parties, it is a simple matter to build a consensus that DMs are really a very bad idea and have to go. This idea will, of course, be rejected out of hand by the powers that be, but as the concept spreads through the community, DMs will become a rarity at other parties and finally be so despised that no one will go to parties that have them. In the end, the leaders of the group will have no choice but either to abandon the DM concept or give up having parties. Every new idea gets either ignored or

ridiculed at first but after a while it sort of spreads until it becomes the new norm and those who hold to the old ways are isolated and ignored in their turn. The important thing is that the ideas that win be the ones you want.

The other key to success in this is humility. To have humility is not to be humble. It is, after all, not the earth the meek inherit, it's the dirt. Always appear to be deferring to the group leadership, even when you are sticking a knife in their collective backs. Be willing to publicly accede to things you privately despise. But the important thing is not to be oily in the process. You must appear to always be thinking of the good of the "community" even when it seems to be going against your own desires until you are in a position to decide what the good of the community is. But at the same time, be very proud of your ability on the playfloor, which is, as I have said, where things really count. Your confidence in your skills plus the unique expertise you bring will propel you into the inner circle faster than any other quality.

Subversion is the groundwork for overthrow.

How is the group organized? This is important. Does it have an elected board and officers or does it have a self-selecting board? Or is it a proprietary dictatorship? These things determine how you will take over.

And elected board is the easiest to deal with if you have done the work of subversion properly. By the time you are ready to think in terms of actually running, you should have enough people who agree with you that you can put up an entire slate of candidates. And, unless you really like the work, do not run for club President. That office is a barrel of aches! It is better to run for a minor office yourself and control the board by the authority of your personality.

Electioneering in scene groups can be a tricky matter. You do not want to be too pushy because you do not want anyone to feel threatened by you. On the other hand, if you have succeeded in making the policies of the present administration totally disliked, then you can run a full-blown campaign with little risk. But in the words of the Patron Saint of Wisconsin, St. Vincent Lombardi, "Winning is not the main thing. Winning is the only thing." If you win, nothing else matters. If you lose, nothing is going to help.

So you do what you have to win the election. And when you do, you put the Transgressionist program into place as the will of the electorate and prepare to see if the door will hit the Structuralists on the ass as they flee through it.

A self-selecting board is a bit more difficult. To take over the club in such circumstances requires that you insinuate yourself with the powers that be. This is done by volunteering your time for various jobs that need doing around the club, be it taking the money at the door, doing programs, helping keep the place clean. Anything will do, as long as it keeps you in contact with them.

You use this contact to impress them with your grasp of the organization and its problems and stresses. That is why you keep notes after every meeting. You need to know where the mob is going so you can be there to lead them! But the power of reason, combined with actually knowing what is going on, will endear you to the overworked leaders. And in such organizations the leaders are always terribly overworked. That is why they need people close to the ground to listen to the complaints.

If you do your job right you will eventually find yourself on the board of directors. Take this role very seriously. If the club is a corporation you not only have a legal responsibility to it and its members, but to the state as well. Make sure that the records your office requires are kept meticulously and if any paperwork for the state is necessary, be certain that it is done properly and on time. Being a Transgressionist does not excuse sloppy bookkeeping. This will make you more important as time goes on and increase your power on the board itself. Remember, you do not have to be club President in order to dominate the decisions of the board but if you do not dominate those decisions it will not matter if you are the club President. Control of the board is everything!

The final type and the most difficult to take over, is the proprietary dictatorship. In fact, this can be almost impossible to take over as long as the person running it is in good physical and mental shape so if you find yourself in this environment and it is, at the moment, the only game in town, then you really need to think in terms of starting your own group and if it is the only game in town you will find starting your group amazingly easy because no matter how benign the dictatorship, there will always be those who do not like the way things are done.

However, let us say the unlikely is possible. The person who owns the club is getting tired and wants to step down and you have been in a position of friendship with this person. It is only natural you will want to be involved in the takeover. After all, you have your interests to protect as well as the Transgressionist cause. This one you need to play by ear. Do not hesitate to follow your instincts and keep all of your options open. If there is a financial risk involved, you may not want to even think of taking the position for yourself but rather leave that to others and be certain you are positioned to have an influence on the decision making process but understand that the new owner will of necessity have his or her own ideas of how things should be done. Be sure you have a bolt-hole to dive through if things go wrong.

XIV

The “C” word

Community is a word that leaves a bad taste in the mouth of the Transgressionist. It implies a mechanism of social control that must never be submitted to. Yet we must remember that even as we work to make Transgressionism the norm in groups the groups are not the whole community. Rather they are what, for the most part, make up the BDSM community, at least as far as the influence of the community can be felt. The independent players and party-goers are, for the most part, Transgressionist already and do not need to be helped towards doing their own thing and breaking rules for the joy of breaking rules. Communities, on the other hand, seek to impose controls and values and behavioral norms on everyone and therefore must be brought to heel by whatever means are necessary.

It is a rare geographic scene community now that does not have a number of groups. In some areas these groups cooperate with each other and get along with no trouble. In others you cannot get members of them into the same room without an argument. And the larger and more populous the area, the more groups will form and the greater will be the degree of independence of them.

As all scene groups are voluntary associations, all scene communities are made up of autonomous groups. While willing to cooperate on matters of common concern, they tend to be quite jealous of that autonomy and unwilling to surrender it. This fact is, in our case, a significant advantage. In the final analysis no group is going to allow itself to be dictated to by any other group or collection of groups. In spite of this fact, there are going to be certain ways of doing things which will be expected from all the groups and this will vary. Atlanta has a very Structuralist community and thus Structuralism is considered a norm. Chicago has a fundamentally Transgressionist population and Structuralism is not supported by the broader community. Therefore, while a Transgressionist may have an easier time fitting into the Chicago BDSM community, he will actually have more fun in Atlanta because he can drive people to distraction. But he will also have more work!

Before you think that “community” is all bad, the controlling aspect of it is only one part and the part you will work to blunt if not destroy. There is another aspect you must consider.

The upside of “community” is resources. Not everyone you encounter that considers themselves communitarian is a controlling dick-head. Some of them are very nice people and will actually go out of their way to help folks who need it. You have to be sure to make the distinction because you should never turn down a resource that can be useful as long as it does not come with an unacceptably high price.

Therefore approach the “community” cautiously. Think of it as a sleeping beast, it looks soft and furry but it has claws that you have to clip before being able to properly tame it. Use it, but do not depend upon it and never, ever forget to sit with your back to the wall in its presence.

For all its good points, community is never to be trusted. Intensely political in ways that most professional politicians can only imagine in their nightmares, it can turn on the proverbial dime depending on whom are the most vocal members. When dealing with it, you have to be armed to the teeth, figuratively speaking, and willing to go to war at the drop of a flogger if it should attempt to impose its will upon you and yours.

This last is very important. Communities have a peculiar capacity to subsume the individual, to pour him into a mold and have him come out the same as everyone else. You must be willing to not only resist being poured, you must be willing, and have the capacity, to shatter the very mold itself.

XV

The Transgressionist Community

Transgressionist communities are defined by the fact that they are made up of people who are rule-breakers and non-conformists who on occasion discover that they are conforming to their own non-conformity and get all upset about it. That actually can be pretty funny at times such as the one meeting of such a group that spent a couple of hours working on by-laws only to be reminded they were formed to avoid such things and tore them up immediately.

It is true, however, that Transgressionism implies something to transgress. Thus there is a sort of symbiosis between the Transgressionists and the broader community, with the Transgressionists being the trouble-makers who make everyone else rather nervous. There is a peculiar satisfaction that comes from knowing that the good communitarians are sitting in their meeting listening to tales of your group's latest enormities and saying to each other, "THEY ARE GOING TO GET US ALL KILLED!" Given that, it is perfectly legitimate to wonder how such people can form a community at all.

The answer lies in the nature of the community. A Transgressionist community is formed to give mutual support to its members, often in the face of significant opposition from other members of the broader BDSM community. By its very existence a Transgressionist group neutralizes the enforcement capacity of the broader community because the one weapon it possesses, ostracism, cannot be used. They cannot threaten anyone with social isolation when there is a group that is all too willing to welcome them with open arms and dungeons. Furthermore, as the Transgressionist community is often established in reaction to the norms of the broader BDSM community, the behavior of its members will be a constant cause of worry to the broader community which is helpless to stop them.

Transgressionist communities tend to be made up of people who are fundamentally unafraid. Because they are not worried about the opinions outsiders may have of them they have a tremendous freedom of action both on and off the playfloor. They also tend to be powerful in the real sense, with human resources in the form of lawyers and other individuals whose mere presence can intimidate outsiders.

Transgressionist communities are also made up of independent thinkers, people who do not parrot the party line even of their own group and are thus there is a tendency to be contentious. Disagreement is common and expected as norms are rejected out of hand (with the possible exception of bathing regularly, after all this is not a rescue mission we are creating). Opinions in such communities will run the gamut from those who see BDSM as a spiritual path akin to Raja Yoga, to those who are strictly in it to get laid.

As players, the members tend to be a bit more skilled than their counterparts in the broader BDSM community because they are more likely to put all of their money into their toybags and not on their backs in the form of lots of dead cow. In fact, it is not unusual to hear references to the “Inverse Leather Rule,” which states that the ability of a person on the playfloor is in inverse proportion to the amount of leather he is wearing. Transgressionist communities are meritocracies. People are respected in them strictly for their abilities and personalities. It does not matter how long the person has been in the scene. What matters is what kind of person he or she is and what he or she can do. It is not unusual for a newcomer in a Transgressionist group to take on a leadership role very quickly.

The choice of clothing worn at Transgressionist events will run the gamut from full fetish-wear to tee shirts and blue jeans and, at play parties, total nudity. In fact, Transgressionists will often have no compunctions about scenewear in non-scene locations if only because it can shock the despised nillers. And more on that later as well.

There are a few things that are never found in Transgressionist communities. Dungeon Monitors are frowned up, for reasons to be explained later, and tolerated only at large events. There is rarely formal organization of any kind. Usually the most organization is the maintenance of a mailing list to inform folks of gatherings and parties and maybe roast the Structuralist enemy on occasion.

There is, one thing that is never, ever found in a Transgressionist community or group—PROTOCOL!

XVI

The disease of protocol

Have you ever been to a state fair and gone to the arcade section. They have this real disgusting game where plastic gophers pop out of holes in a board and you are supposed to bop them on the head with a hammer, and of course they keep popping up again. When I deal with protocol I often tend to feel like I am playing that game because no matter how many times I smash it down it keeps popping back up and has to be hit again. But the effort is necessary because Protocol with the capital P is one of the biggest damned nuisances that beset the scene. Its mere presence grinds on the nerves of Transgressionists because being the inveterate rule-breakers that we are, we have little use for people who try to create new ones that make no damned sense.

It is also the most bizarre. I have never quite been able to understand why the practices of a post WW2 motorcycle gang should have any bearing on the way anyone would behave now. It would have been nice if someone had been able to explain to them that the war was over and they did not need to worry about being shot at any more. But they were not told that and now we have this mess. And no, it makes no sense at all if you think about it. They might as well as expect people at play parties to wear leather zoot suits! Yet this is, nevertheless, the case and you will encounter it and have to deal with it.

We have to start by recognizing that protocol is one of those words that has a double meaning in BDSM land. It can mean just ordinary good manners or it can mean an elaborate system of behaviors indulged in by folks depending upon their ranking in the pecking order. And it can get very very elaborate!

So, let us dispense with the small p stuff right away. There are certain things which are, in fact, common in the BDSM world and actually make sense. It is considered very improper to rummage through the contents of someone else's toybag without permission, much less just sort of borrow something even with the intention of returning it. Toys are very personal things, like guns, fishing rods and golf clubs. You do not just look on them as community property.

Likewise vict-er-bottoms or subs or whatever they are called this week are not community property. If someone is tied buck naked to a cross you do not just go and fondle her. That is considered very bad manners unless the person who tied her there has said, "Ok, everyone, have at her!" and in some cases that happens.

If a couple is playing it is considered very bad form to go up and talk to them while they are busy. This stuff can require some concentration and accidents have been known to happen, usually to the person interrupting them. Those are the good manners things. Good manners are usually pretty self-explanatory. They serve a useful social function. If you have a guest in your

home you do not freeze him, starve him, insult him and throw things at him. That goes without saying.

Protocol with a capital P is another matter. It may have served a useful function in the groups where it was created, if only to determine who got to sodomize which tailpipe, but it is totally out of place in most BDSM groups, particularly in the larger, public scene where elaborate social hierarchy is neither supported nor maintained.

Now, there have been lists of what some folks of the Structuralist persuasion consider to be their basic Protocol and I am going to go through some of them to illustrate the ideas and the Transgressionist response for you. I have sort of stolen them from a bunch of web sites and modified them a bit to protect the persons who listed them in the first place and make them a little more intelligible.

1. It is not considered proper to touch another person's sub without approval of the dominant partner. This goes for casual touching (hugs and handshakes) as well. You must ask the dom's permission before engaging in any type of physical contact.

In a Transgressionist group this is nonsense. We are not talking about intimate touching or hauling off and grabbing the person, we are talking about shaking hands for God's sake! Any dom that is that proprietary is probably mentally ill and the sub should be rescued from him before he does any damage. This is just plain nuts.

2. And it gets worse! It is also considered improper to personally address the sub without permission. In some circles it may be considered insulting to the dom to address property without first asking the dominant if she is allowed to speak at all. In a formal BDSM setting some subs only speak when they are first spoken too. This is determined by their dominant.

This is, as you can imagine, utter garbage. It is one thing to claim control over the sub, that is not uncommon, but here they are claiming control over everyone else in saying whom they may or may not speak to. Who cares if the dom is insulted? If he is that big a prick he deserves to be. In a Transgressionist group everyone talks to everyone else. I would no more tell someone they cannot talk to our sub than I would tell them they could not write a letter to the newspaper. Talk about BAD MANNERS!

3. When knowingly dealing with a collared sub, all requests for meetings, munches, play parties and so on must go through the dom first. You do not send an invitation directly to a collared sub. The invitation must go to their dominant partner first, asking permission to invite them to the function. The dominant partner then has the right to impose whatever limits he or she sees fit.

This one gets a bit iffy. If you are talking about asking the sub out to play, then that is sort of improper simply because that is intruding on the relationship, but if you are dealing with a meeting, gathering or large event, there is no intrusion in sending the invitation directly to the sub, especially if she has asked to be on the mailing list in the first place! The key to dealing with these matters is that you realize that it is a relationship and you act accordingly. But the idea that the sub is sort of kept cloistered and every communication has to go through the dom is absurd.

4. In a formal settings all dom/mes are called Sir/Madame/Ma'am. Only the dominant of a sub should be called Master or Mistress by their sub. In most cases Sir or Madame is a general acknowledgement of station and not granting them "title". Calling one Sir or a domme "Lady" is not to be confused with a formally titling them Sir / Lady X.

Huh? Well, that seems a good reason to avoid formality. In any event, Transgressionists do not recognize the idea of station external to the relationship. Outside of the context of their own relationships, everyone is equal.

5. When the Master or Mistress is engaged in a conversation and it is necessary to interrupt, the sub should first wait to be acknowledged before speaking. Once acknowledged, the sub should relay the information in a simple, concise manner. In the event of an emergency or critical need to know information, the sub should interrupt by saying "Excuse me Master/Mistress, Sir, and Madame" and wait for further direction from the Master or Mistress. In a formal setting, a Master or Mistress should not be interrupted unless the information is important and needs immediate attention.

Oh good grief! This is utter nonsense. I can just imagine our sub coming up and saying, "Oh great, wise and supreme Master of the Universe, this lowly sub wishes to communicate with you the fact that my arms are falling asleep and could you please loosen the ropes." If the sub has something to say, goddamn it, let her say it! And a conversation should be open enough that subs can take part in it as well. They are not there as window dressing.

6. If a dom acts like an asshole towards a sub, it is not the place of the sub to correct the Dom's actions. Instead, the Master or Mistress or Dungeon Monitor is to be informed of the incident and it is their responsibility to deal with the situation.

I'm sorry. If someone insults my sub, she does not need to go to me first. She can tell the idiot off on her own (unless she needs me to take her gag out first). This just adds not only an extra layer of communication and it can actually escalate a crisis because the second dom, hearing the hysterical sub, will become quite angry and next thing you know blades are flying across the room.

In any event, DMs are never present at a Transgressionist function so they would not be there to be informed.

Now this next one I am copying intact because I cannot make hide nor hair out of it.

7.” When a Dom is a guest in the home of another Master/Mistress and their sub/slave, (the senior slave, alpha slave) has authority over the visiting dom as directed by the Master/Mistress of the house. Although the sub/slave may request that something is done or not done, this request is phrased as such out of respect. The alpha slave has the last word in the house in the event that the Master/Mistress is not on premise or unless otherwise indicated by the Master/Mistress of the house.”

This is one of the more bizarre manifestations of Protocol. What is this authority crap anyway? The rules of hospitality would say the guest can request anything in reason and just because the folks involved wear leather underwear does not change that. And what is the respect thing involved? A request is a request and no one is going to phrase a request by being unpleasant.

8. “Depending on circumstances and the event in question a senior sub/slave also known as alpha sub can have over technical authority Dominants and other slaves. This being the case the alpha sub will be accorded the respect befitting their position of said situation. For example: Munch’s conventions or other events.”

Again, what is this authority business? No one has any authority unless they are an event organizer, official such as a DM, or a club officer. No Transgressionist would ever recognize such a claim and no one would be foolish enough to attempt to press it on a known Transgressionist unless they want to start a loud argument. Again, and it cannot be said often enough, outside of the relationship itself, everyone is EQUAL!

9. “A new or young (not chronological age) person should not self select the title of Sir, Master/Mistress or Lord until such time their basic skills are easily recognized by the established peers in the community.”

Well, the folks who wrote these up saved the best for last. Titles are usually the mark of the poseur and the wannabee or the pro domme. For that reason they are never used outside of the relationship and no one who is respected is ever addressed by them or expects to be. In particular, the concept of “station” is never recognized in a Transgressionist community and therefore titles of any sort are rather improper (and usually pretty funny) unless used in jest or affection between partners in a relationship. And just who are the established peers in the community anyway? Do they wear stupid hats or just little name tags that say, “Kiss my ass, I’m a peer.”

This was the simple stuff. It gets a lot more complex the more Formalist the group and if you want a good look at the rest of the list set your browser to <http://www.darkangel.com/kinks-protocol.html>. Some of them have very elaborate rituals for greeting, such as who introduces whom first which can get very confusing because sometimes people do not know who is whom, and who wears which stupid hat and all that old Emily Post bullshit that no one pays any attention to any more.

The huge problem with Protocol and one that those who advocate it never seem to quite understand is that it externalizes the dynamic of an interpersonal relationship and assumes that everyone else in the building is in the same kind of relationship. In other words for example, a sub holds a position inferior to her dom, and therefore is inferior to every other dom. This is absurd on its face. Just because she is in a relationship with one dom does not in any way imply an obligation to anyone else. Outside of that relationship, she is the equal of everyone else in the room and deserves to be treated that way. To do otherwise is an insult, not only to her, but to her dom because there is an implication that their relationship is open to everyone.

The other problem is that in the public scene the relationship dynamic is not always that of Dom/Sub, or Master/Slave. In many communities and groups the predominant relationship dynamic is Top/Bottom/Switch, purely hedonic in nature with no concept of rank involved. For someone to assume that their ranking system should apply to those people is an insult at best. It does not and cannot.

The idea of scene Protocol has very definite negative consequences as well aside from making Formalists objects of ridicule and targets for spitballs. It can cause serious conflict, sometimes dangerous conflict. I will give a few examples.

In the summer of 1992 there was a BDSM night at a nightclub in Chicago and CDG was asked to participate. We got a few perks, like getting in free and our own box and it was great fun. Well, not great fun for everyone.

One of the female tops agreed to bottom on stage for another top and after their scene, for some reason that has become lost in the mists of time, a Domme from out of town and very into Protocol, expected certain respect-oriented behaviors from the top who had bottomed on stage. Well, you can imagine how the top reacted! It turned into a full-blown catfight that ended up out on the street in front of the nightclub with the Domme out cold on the pavement. The top hauled off and decked her!

That was my first experience with seeing the Old Guard in action. I was not impressed. (And my opinion of them was not helped by hearing someone describe how he had earned his leather vest by being pissed on by a dozen men while we were trying to eat dinner after a meeting.)

But it got even worse than that!

CDG was not an Old Guard club but we had a couple of members who considered themselves to be and could be rather obnoxious about it. So obnoxious in fact that we began to get very worried. You see the place we rented for parties was not in a very good neighborhood and as most of our members were civilized people from the suburbs, they were naturally concerned about their safety going to and from their cars. So, of course, they carried guns. It would be safe to say that at any given party, about half the people there were so armed.

Ok, you see the situation. Annoying Old Guard folks plus upset no guard folks who are carrying guns--this could get interesting to say nothing of noisy. In this case it could be said that Protocol can get you killed. Well, we did our best to make sure that that did not happen. We sort of arranged that the annoying people always had someone with them when they left figuring our people would not be willing to shoot both of them while keeping the fact of their danger away from the oblivious Old Guardians. And fortunately it worked! No one got murdered.

The whole issue comes down to communication and assumptions about people, usually erroneous assumptions. I like to use as an example the notion that because it is considered improper by Protocol folks to talk directly to a lowly sub they have to speak to the sub's dom about everything. Now, when Mrs. Dagger and I play, she bottoms to me because she likes the sensation but we are a two-dom couple in relation to everyone else. So, let us say that like at the nightclub, someone who is not familiar with us sees us play and assumes that Mrs. Dagger is my sub. Now, after we play she sits at the bar at our normal play space as is her custom and I plump down on the couch because I hate bar stools. The stranger overhears her conversation with someone and thinks she has said something unbecoming and goes over to me to remonstrate over her "improper" behavior. At this point he is making two serious mistakes. First, he is complaining to one dom about the behavior of another, which is a breach of his own beliefs. Second, and more serious, he is complaining to me about my WIFE!

Guess which relationship dynamic is more important? He will be lucky to merely be told to go to hell.

Ok, I suppose I should go into relationship dynamics here a bit and how they relate to this issue.

Protocol people tend to think that everything should go by a rule book of some kind. "This is the way things are done and all relationships in the scene need to

be in conformity with it.” They think in terms of social structure and ranking, pecking orders and hierarchy. They judge behavior on the basis of those ideas.

Non-Protocol people, not only Transgressionists, are relationship based. They are less, if at all, concerned with fitting what they do into the standards of the rule book and it is the relationship that is important, not the preconceived notion of how a relationship should work according to whomever is preaching that day. As relationship based BDSM is based on affection between the parties rather than fulfillment of the requirements of a role, neither party can do any wrong as it relates to those outside of the relationship. They honestly do not care if someone else thinks the person who is dom in the relationship is properly domly and likewise do not care if the sub acts as a “good submissive” or not.

The Protocol person must realize that any attempt to impose their views on such a relationship is going to be interpreted as a personal attack. Transgressionists in particular can get very testy about such things.

For these reasons Protocol has no place in a Transgressionist environment.

So, as Vladimir Illych said, “What is to be done?” The virus is out there and needs to be cured.

When you create your group you must make it very clear that Protocol will not be honored or respected in your group. For that reason our Sloss is defined as a “Protocol-free zone.” There will be no externalization of relationships. A dom is dom only to his sub and to no one else. A sub will owe whatever it is she owes in her relationship, be it respect, obedience, crawling around on the floor, whatever, only to her dom and to no one else. No one is obligated in any way other than that which is dictated by good manners. There will be no place for rank or title. Everyone is equal.

When you find yourself in an exclusivist group where Protocol is practiced, it is best to leave unless you are in a position to challenge it. In a mixed group, where there are those who follow it and those who do not, make it clear that you are among those who do not and you have little patience with anyone trying to force it on you. It may be best to be on a bit of a hair trigger on this one. If the P people know that you will react instantly and negatively to any suggestion that you submit yourself or your sub to their approach, they will avoid the subject with you. If it is known you will challenge any speaker on the subject, the organizers will be hesitant to schedule such speakers, especially if you have done your homework and can respond to them with some knowledge. This is where you need to study the ways of the enemy.

Slash and burn tactics are useful, but there are times when a well-placed one-liner can be infinitely more effective. You need to know something about the speaker and the approach the speaker will take. If it is someone from the

outside, he or she will usually have a website and you can glean the approach from that. If the person is affiliated with another group, by learning something about that group you can gather a bit of the direction the talk will take. Generally speaking, a quick thrust to the heart of the argument will deal with the problem.

If that is not possible, and you must engage in debate, your best tactic is to emphasize the multiplicity of relationships in your community and how the P protocol is simply not going to work with the bulk of them, and that to imply that it should is an offense to the lifestyle of everyone not included under its umbrella. If the appeal to Tradition is made, it is a simple matter to point out that not everyone follows that particular tradition and again, just because a bunch of shell-shocked losers at the end of the Great Patriotic War did something a certain way is by no means to be considered binding on those two or three generations later. This is a tactic which is almost impossible to counter and the most that the speaker can then hope for is to get everyone to agree to disagree. Any other response will make him or her look very foolish.

Remember in engaging in such a duel that you are not trying to move the speaker from his position. You are not going to be able to do that. What you want to do is nullify any attempt to impose his way of doing things on you and your people. And, of course, if all else fails, you can simply say that you are not going along with it. Since there will be a significant number of folks who agree with your position, or you would not be there in the first place, you can achieve stalemate which is a victory for you.

XVII

SSC, RACK, PUKE!

If you think Protocol is a problem, this is worse!

In the summer of 1988 a meeting was held in Dallas and one of our folks went to it. She came back with a slogan, an advertising gimmick which went Safe, Sane and Consensual. What none of us realized at the time was that she came back with a Frankenstein's Monster that should have been killed at the moment of its creation for this one little slogan has proven to be the biggest pain in the ass since slogans were invented. It has become the tool of the do-gooder and the control freak, the safety scum and the nervous nellies all of whom have nothing better to do with their time than try to gain a lock on the behavior of the good Transgressionist.

Of course the Transgressionist has nothing to do with SSC so their efforts always fail. This causes the control freaks out there great distress, which we greatly enjoy.

But let us take a look at this horror and examine it more closely.

It was intended to be nothing more than a nice catch-phrase, something that people could use to make our little hobby acceptable to the degenerate nillers out there swilling beer in their mobile homes and watching the Jerry Springer Show. The basic reasoning behind it was that the nillers were terrified of us and if we could make ourselves appear to be safety-conscious lap dogs they would not persecute us. Well, right away you can see the flaws in this.

First, the bulk of the nillers do not care about us, never have and never will. Rather than being frightened by us, they find us amusing and funny. Which is ok, because we are amusing and funny. All one need do is look at the local play space and see the outfits some of the folks suffering from overmuch middle-aged spread are trying to fit into and you can see just how ridiculous we can be when we want to be. People have more important things to do with their time, even the despised nillers. They have to worry about bills, the price of beer, the rent of the lot for their trailer, making sure the old pick-up truck doesn't fall off the blocks in front of the trailer, keeping their kids out of jail or away from the randy scoutmaster or Catholic priest. They do not have time to worry about BDSM folk and our habits.

The notion that there is some huge number of anti-bdsm people out there just waiting to destroy us is utter bullshit. The bulk of the population could not care less what we do as long as we do not physically attack them and since we rarely do that unless we are really drunk they are not a problem. Rather they can be a wonderful source of amusement for us.

The threat that exists to us is from a tiny, very very tiny, group of nutcases as well as the chicken-shit bean counters who may listen to them and these are people who must be crushed the moment they appear. More about them later.

But think about it. The slogan is supposed to protect us from either people who do not give a bloody damn about what we do and therefore have probably never heard it and would not care if they did, or people who are nutcases and lunatics who would not be impressed by it no matter how many times we hit them over the head with it. Talk about a waste of effort!

This fact does not deter its proponents in the least. They actually believe all that rot and somehow think that by repeating the mantra over and over again it will somehow register in the public consciousness and lead everyone to paradise. Reality seems to somehow not be a part of their system. Certainly they have no grasp on it or they would see the utter absurdity of this belief. But they persist and keep trying to force SSC upon us, so we have to deal with them.

The slogan itself is pretty dumb. Even its most ardent proponents agree on that. After all, what do the words mean? Whatever anyone wants them to mean. Those who argue to retain the mantra say that the open-ended aspect of it is a point in its favor. That because it can be interpreted in any way the individual sees fit it can be twisted around just about anything. Unfortunately it does not work that way in practice. In practice it becomes a means of social control over the play styles, the lifestyles, the relationships, even the thoughts and words of those who say they ascribe to it.

Which means, of course, that the best defense is to not ascribe to it.

Look at what SSC has turned into in practice.

Experienced players push envelopes. They have to if only because things can get very old very fast if they do not change. There reaches a point where just swinging a flogger can get pretty dull. And as their skills increase they are willing to use them. The problem in the context of the SSC folk is that increased skills tend to look scary. And if something looks scary some idiot is going to think that it is not safe. Well, they are probably right. If it is done wrong it probably is not safe but the person doing knows what he is doing, only they do not know that!

And there is always the possibility of an accident. When I have a sub stark naked, her hands tied behind her back and my knife to her throat, it only takes a slip and she is dead meat. That is reality and if it should happen I have to get rid of the body and see to my alibi because there is no way you can talk your way out of that no matter how many times you repeat the mantra! This is reality. Safety is an illusion!

Unfortunately the poor new person who has been brainwashed into believing the SSC crap does not know that. He really thinks that BDSM can be safe and that there are safe ways to play. Well, there are, but who wants to be that boring? So he takes one look at the experienced player and has to run to the bathroom to change his underwear and then go crying to the Dungeon Monitor (which is one reason why Transgressionists do not allow DMs at their functions). Enough episodes of this and the experienced players go to evasion strategy, in other words they play at private parties and leave the public scene altogether. And, of course, after that happens the same damned fools who drove them out bemoan the fact that the experienced people have all left.

By allowing extraneous personnel, in other words everyone you are not actively playing with, to judge the safety of your style of play is to invite all manner of interference and preaching. No matter what you do there is going to be some damned fool of a pompous ass who will think it is unsafe.

So how do you answer that. Well, the first thing you do is make it known that you do not buy into SSC. That pretty much pulls the teeth of most arguments right there. Next, you sort of look at anyone who claims that what you are doing is unsafe and say, "Of course it is. If it were safe I wouldn't be wasting my time with it." That should reduce them to sputtering and get them out of your way real fast.

Ok, now we go on to Sane.

This used to be the easiest part of the mantra to deal with because everyone admits that the concept is relative and it was probably put in to sound nice and alliterative. But, wouldn't you know it, some asshole has written on how the Sane clause should be used to judge the nature of people's relationships. So guess what? Now every Tom, Dickhead and Silly Jillie will think they have the right to tell people that their relationships do not fit their standard of sanity, as if they would ever have anything to say in the matter. No Transgressionist worth his cattle prod is going to listen to that sort of garbage. One of the fundamental principles of Transgressionism is that everyone has a right to create a relationship on their own terms and no one outside of that relationship has any right to judge it.

If you should ever have the misfortune to encounter such a person, do not debate with her, do not reason with her. Tell her to go to hell.

And now onto Consent.

Consent is strictly to keep the lawyers happy. Seriously. Other than that it becomes another means of controlling people. It all depends on how the word is defined. Some of the definitions get very loose indeed and there are those who would even extend its protections to the despised nillers and their disgusting, snot-nosed offspring!

The Transgressionist policy on consent is simple. Consent as a principle only applies to the physical actions in play itself. It does not apply to verbal interaction except in extreme situations and it does not apply at all to what others may see, most especially in a scene environment. Anyone not directly, physically involved in the action can neither give nor withhold consent. For all practical purposes, they do not exist. The horses are made to be frightened.

Well, as you by now probably know all too well, the abuses of SSC have reached the point where people are pretty disgusted by it. It has been repudiated by a bunch of folks and not just Transgressionists who realize that it was a mistake to have ever created it in the first place and adopting it was making a deal with the devil. This created a problem for the organization types. Without SSC, they would be sloganless and how would they defend what they do to the lynch mobs of outraged niggers? They sat and they pondered and they paced and they came up with:

RACK

Rhymes with GAAACK

RACK stands for Risk Aware Consensual Kink and it was intended to replace SSC. On the surface, it does not sound like a bad idea. The phrase implies that there are risks involved in what we do and therefore the idea of safe simply cannot apply and that the people involved are aware of the risks and give their consent to them. Ok, that makes a certain sense.

Until you get people fighting over what constitutes aware consent.

Never underestimate the power of the hair-splitters. They will find some hook in there to control people no matter how much they have to torture logic and believe me, they torture logic far better than they torture their subs. They can come up with convoluted reasoning that makes a 19th Century Papal encyclical look like straightforward speech by comparison. And as with SSC, argument is a waste of time. Deal with RACK the way Alexander the Great dealt with the Gordian Knot. Cut it!

Remember what I said before about acceding to ideas and the consequences therefrom? That is nowhere more true than in the SSC/RACK matter.

Person A may say that he follows SSC and has a very definite, personal version of how it applies. Unfortunately, Person B sees him play and informs him that his style of play is not SSC. At that point, A feels that it is incumbent upon himself to defend his actions in accord with SSC and thus proceeds to explain. Unfortunately he is at a terrible disadvantage.

By saying that he follows SSC he is giving B the right to judge his (A) behavior not by A's behavior, but B's criterion. And for A to argue, he must argue that his behavior is SSC on B's terms in order to persuade B that he (A) has not crossed the boundaries of SSC. No matter what his personal belief, A is going to have to defer to B's definition. B is therefore defining the nature of A's play, not A himself.

But, suppose that A does not ascribe to SSC? In that case it does B no good to complain because his grounds for complaint are not recognized. It would be the same as a Roman Catholic trying to persuade a Baptist of something using the authority of the Pope! This is why it is so important for a Transgressionist to openly reject SSC. In doing so, he removes a control lever from those who would cheerfully use it. And a Transgressionist group should state clearly that it does not support either SSC or RACK. In that way, what goes on at their functions will be immunized from criticism by those who do follow those slogans.

Oh, they will still criticize, but who will care? At that point the saying "Those who care do not matter and those who matter do not care," will be all too true.

Get rid of SSC, from your play, your lifestyle and your groups. You will be the happier for having done so.

XVIII

How to play “unsafe”

In spite of our annoyance with the plague of SSC, it does give us one real benefit which I touched on in the last chapter. It gets to allow us to have the reputation of being “unsafe” and “dangerous.” For someone in the more conventional BDSM world these are very bad things because they mean that some people may not like them. But for us Transgressionists, they are very good things because they mean we will attract to us the sort of people we want to be around and at the same time give the do-gooders and the safety sluts the absolute willies. The trick is to appear to be very unsafe in your play while at the same time make sure that your victim stays in one piece. Think of it as a sort of magic trick, fooling everyone into thinking something horrible is happening when in reality nothing of the sort is.

Ok, now first you have to realize that there are certain implements that you cannot use in this because they are either inherently safe, like floggers, or so dangerous in and of themselves that you cannot do some stuff without actually killing the person, like singletails and knives. But you can do wonders with bondage, breath control, electric play and suspension that will make everyone scared to death to have you in a dungeon for fear they may have to help get rid of the body.

Most people will shake their heads in confusion about bondage being dangerous, but the fact is that badly done bondage can cause real injury, especially if the person pulls one hand loose while struggling during a flogging and wrenches her back. A hogtie that is too severe can cause serious back and leg muscle problems and if it is a neck/ankle hogtie that is done wrong, she really can strangle. So you have to develop some skill at this before you begin to work at terrifying the onlookers. It is not a sport for beginners.

One of the simplest, safest and scariest to see bondage methods is strappado. Now that is named after a real torture method where the victim’s hands are tied behind her back and she is lifted off the ground by them. That will cause severe dislocation and totally wreck the shoulder and upper arm muscles, the rotator cup and devil knows what else. So of course you want everyone to think you are doing just that! The key is knowing how the anatomy of your victim works.

As long as she is not off the ground or jerking in her bonds, it is safe to keep a submissive in this position for a significant length of time. Her back will get sore from being bent over but the strain on her shoulders will not be as great as it appears. Still, she may be very uncomfortable and if you are into it, it is a good punishment tie.

All you need to accomplish this is a victim, a pair of leather cuffs, a length of rope or chain and some overhead point to attach them to. If you have a hoist

available so much the better. It is better to tie her hands behind her with the leather cuffs than with the rope because with her weight on her wrists you do not want sudden and unexpected tightening. It is not going to be her full weight, but there will be enough that you need to watch out for that.

Hook her wrists together behind her back and attach the rope or chain. Pull up the arms as far as they will go until she is forced to bend over at the waist and then attach it to the overhead point. If you have a hoist, hook it to the wrist cuffs and slowly crank her arms up. As the strain on her arms increases, the onlookers will become more and more aware of the cranking noise as the hoist works its inexorable will upon her body. At a certain point she will not be bent over yet, but her arms will be pulled up almost at a 90 degree angle from her back. This is the most uncomfortable and scariest point of the exercise and if you are doing a punishment thing this is where you should leave them and forget her. Go over to one side and sit down and watch. As people see her like that and you appearing to be ignoring her, they will start to get nervous and wonder just how long she is going to be kept like that. And the longer she is kept that way the more the discomfort will show on her and within a couple of days if all goes well, the gossip mill will be begging to work its wondrous ways and you will have acquired the reputation of being a merciless and possibly insane dom. People in the scene are used to rear ends being paddled to the color of ripe eggplant and seeing welts appear on an upturned ass from a riding crop or cane, but they are not emotionally prepared for something as simple as a submissive tied in a very uncomfortable posture and left. That scares them.

What more can you want? You have had the pleasure of a naked submissive tied helpless in a truly uncomfortable posture for a significant length of time and you have managed to scare the bejesus out of everyone who does not know what you know. Believe me, it works. The last time I did it (as of this writing) I actually frightened Mrs. Dagger who had never seen me use the technique before (even though the woman I was involved with on and off for six years before I met her was tied that way a lot because it was a favorite position for both of us) and I had the people in the lounge wondering what had gotten into me. And everyone knows I am a ferocious player who delights in causing sophisticated pain rather than in using brute force.

It does not take much to impress the nervous nellys. One little thing we do is shoot suction cup darts at our submissive. Now, unless you hit her in the eye, it is impossible to injure anyone with these things and a blindfold removes that danger with little trouble. Well, one night a friend of ours who has seen us do this a number of times, was in a chatroom and mentioned it. The people in the chatroom, all of whom probably have no real time experience at all, were horrified. He had great fun telling me about it and I told him he really missed his chance by not saying that this dom (me) gets away with it because he carries big knives and has been known to kill people who disapprove of him. That last would have been totally untrue of course but can you imagine the reaction it

would have gotten! Just imagine a bunch of cyberBDSMers all leaving their keyboards and running to the bathroom at the same time.

Breath control is one thing that gives everyone a good scare and again, it is largely due to panic-peddling safety scum. It is dangerous, which is of course why you want to do it because if something is not dangerous it is not worth the trouble of doing.

Most adults can hold their breath for 30 seconds. Some can hold it for 45 seconds and some can even go longer than a minute but not many. This knowledge is the key to doing breath control safely while making sure everyone seeing it is convinced you are trying to kill your poor sub. It is important, however, that the sub never actually lose consciousness, because even when she comes to, as she probably will, brain cells die and pretty soon you can have a very daffy sub.

The best method of breath control is very simple. First, you have to make sure the sub cannot move. Secure bondage is important for this. Then, tape her mouth shut. Finally, hold her nose and look at your watch. Timing is important to this because you want her to get just to the level of panic before you release her nose but at the same time you do not want to deprive her of air long enough to cause her to pass out. Remember, the brain needs oxygen.

If this is not enough to get people running for the door, strangulation bondage will!

Stand the sub with her back to a post and tie her securely. Tie a rope loosely around her neck. Now, and this is a delicate and actually quite risky operation, twist the neck cord from behind the post. Do this very slowly. There is a real danger of crushing the windpipe and then you have to do an emergency tracheotomy or have a dead sub and if you break your toys you cannot play with them again, to say nothing of the nuisance of having to get rid of the body. You just want to constrict the windpipe a little, enough to get that look of total terror on the face of your victim that we all know and love to see.

Except for the onlookers who are convinced you are accidentally going to kill her.

This one works. One time a couple arrived at the dungeon from England. They were in town and had heard about the dagger play and came to see it. Our sub arrived and we tied her fully clothed to the post and proceeded to use our knives by her throat and face and then added the strangulation cord. The folks from England were gone in five minutes. We scared the living daylights out of them!

Neck bondage in general is usually sufficient to get tongues wagging. There is the old wive's tale, told by old wives to their children going out to play, that one must never tie anything around somebody's neck. Now, for small children that is

probably real good advice. Neck bondage takes some skill and they usually do not have that. (Of course then they ask about Daddy's necktie and Mommy has some quick explaining to do.)

Anyway, the mere sight of someone tied to something by the neck is often enough to get folks nervous but, like the good magic trick, there is no danger if it is done properly.

It is a matter of anatomy and physics. If the stress is on the front of the neck there is danger of strangulation by crushing the windpipe. If it is on the sides, the neck may break and if it is on the back there is usually no danger. If you ever see the circus act where the acrobat hangs by her neck, you will notice that the weight of the person is all on the center of the back of the neck where it is taken by bone and the risk is minimized (unless there is a strong jerk to snap the spine but they work real hard to prevent that!).

If you do neck bondage, it is best to use a wide collar rather than rope except for the simplest ties. It is usually safe to put a rope around the neck around a post or a chair to hold the neck and head in position provided you are careful to make sure that it is not too tight and will not tighten on its own. If there is going to be any stress on the front of the neck, however, the wider the collar the safer the victim. It is a simple matter of physics. A wide collar spreads the stress across the neck better and using a collar prevents accidental tightening. You can still make her very uncomfortable and frighten the audience, but barring some freak accident she should be in no danger whatsoever. And, of course, the safety scum being what they are, they will immediately think of the freak accident. (If you want proof of this, just mention that you have gone out and left your sub tied up at home. Some idiot will ask, "What if the house catches fire?" to which you will answer, "It's insured.")

So, if you really want to get them chattering all over the place, use the neck hogtie. This takes a bit of work to put together but it is very attractive, makes the sub very uncomfortable and drives the safety scum up the wall, all very desirable things.

Tie her hands behind her into the small of her back. This is done by tying the wrists parallel and running the rope over her shoulders to pull them into position. You then tie the rope in any convenient or creative way. That is not important. Any website illustrating shibari will give you all the information you need on that.

With her hands and probably her arms tied as well, bring her collar around so the ring is at the back and lay her down on her stomach. Tie her ankles and then bring the cord not to her hands but to the collar ring and push her ankles up with your free hand. It is not a good idea to just thread the cord through the ring and then pull on it to force up the ankles. Tie the cord so she cannot reach it with her hands and then let nature do the rest.

If you were using a rope around the neck for this, it could be very risky very fast because the rope might decide to slip or spontaneously tighten if you have used the wrong kind of knot. As I am lousy at knots, I use a collar on my victim to avoid that danger. But, the image of the feet pulling the neck is a very powerful one and people with nervous dispositions will get very nervous when they see it.

The one other thing you should practice is electric play. Again, there are a ton of myths surrounding this, one of the most common being that you should never use anything electrical above the waist. That is over generalized nonsense. What you must avoid is a current going through the heart. A current going from a nipple to the clit is not going to affect the heart at all unless the sub is wearing a pacemaker. We scared the bejesus out of someone using a modified tens unit once doing that. She was watching us convinced that we had sent a current across the chest of our sub when the instrument was doing nothing of the kind. It was hilarious and we let her suffer for a whole year under that illusion while everyone had a good laugh behind her back.

Anyway, one of the most frightening and easily obtained electric toys is the good, old-fashioned, cattle prod. There is something about just the name of it that sends shivers up people. I once had one of the heavier gay players in Chicago tell me had been given one as a gift but had never had the nerve to use it. My feeling is that the reputation of the toy has less to do with the toy itself than the image of them being used on civil rights marchers in the mid 1960s.

Anyway, the cattle prod is a very safe toy with a very bad reputation. They come in various power levels and you should have some idea of the jolt that comes out of it before you use it. This is done by holding it just barely touching a doorknob and firing it. The length of the spark is how you tell how powerful the jolt will be. Generally speaking, the stronger the jolt, the fleshier the part it should be shot at. It is pretty safe to hit an ass cheek with any cattle prod.

The trick to the cattle prod is that there is no current. It is all static electricity, like you get when you touch something metal on a cold day. It travels over the surface of the skin rather than penetrating it even though it does not feel that way. It feels, so I am told, like a sudden, sharp stab. Anyway, the voltage travels between the contact points of the prod, which are usually less than an inch apart and in no way can go near the heart even if it is used on a nipple. The only dangers are if you use it on metal, such as piercings or hold it to the skin for any length of time because then you can cause burns.

Of course the safety scum do not realize this and they believe all the nonsense they have been told, that it can cause nerve damage and stop the heart and other such bullshit. Which is why sometimes using a cattle prod can be more fun with the onlookers than with the victim!

When you use the prod, there are a few little things you should consider. It is best that the victim be blindfolded, that way you can surprise her. And if she is expecting a vibrator it can be a REAL surprise. That happened once when I used it on a sub tied to the main beam in the basement and she nearly pulled the house down.

It is a good practice to have her very well secured. The cattle prod can produce involuntary muscle contractions and we do not want her wrenching anything, like her back or legs. The less movement she is allowed the better, and, being, totally helpless and knowing that thing is going to strike can have one hell of a psychological impact as well.

Any form of suspension will get the safety scum all twittery. So learn how to do wrist and ankle suspension and you will get them panicked in no time.

Be certain that you do learn how to do properly though, because there are some serious risks to suspension. In fact most of the injuries in BDSM are the result of attempts at suspension that have gone wrong.

Wrist suspension is particularly risky. There is a nerve ganglia at the base of the thumb which, if compressed, will cause the hand to go numb very quickly and stay that way! The shoulders are not actually designed to be weight-bearing so you have to be very careful about how you put the weight on them. Tie the wrists of your victim in cuffs designed for suspension and then hoist her carefully and slowly. Do not have her stand on something and then pull it out from under her! And never forget, the thumb is not a weight-bearing structure. Yes, you can actually hang her by her thumbs, but you do not want to unless you are an absolute expert at what you are doing. The risks from that are enormous. She will never forgive you if she has to go without thumbs for the rest of her life.

Ankle suspension is much safer but you have to make sure that the bindings do not slip and drop her on her head if her arms are tied behind her (which, of course, they will be). Also, everything in the lungs will respond to gravity and she may have trouble breathing. Of course the blood will rush to her head, that is to be expected.

With practice, you can suspend your sub and make it look like you are about to kill her with perfect safety. Of course the audience will not know that.

Another extremely good method of making people nervous is to play without safewords. Now, a lot of people do not use safewords but there is such a feeling among the safety sluts that they are necessary that merely by saying you do not use them you can send a delightful frisson of terror up their spines. And, if you go even farther and let them hear you tell your sub that she has no choice in what you are going to do to her, no hard limits, then they will start shaking and have nightmares about you. You do not have to mean it, you just have to make

people think that you mean it. When it gets around that you do not allow limits the do-gooders and SSCers will have an absolute fit! They will be sputtering with helpless indignation and stamping impotent feetsies all over the place.

If you follow these little steps, you too can get the reputation of being a dangerous top and the cowards among us will be unhappy knowing that you are having all manner of fun and that there is nothing they can do to stop you. In fact, your reputation will bring you more victims than you will know how to handle because the thrill of danger will always outweigh the desire for safety.

It is a perfect example of using the gossip mill to your advantage.

XIX

The Joy of Gossip

Gossip is one of the great pleasures in life. It is legal, non fattening and only a problem to those weak enough to let it be a problem. If you are a Transgressionist you can be certain that you will be talked about, rumored about and probably lied about. This comes with the territory and there is nothing you can do about it, nor should you want to. Gossip, particularly on the part of folks you do not like, can be a very useful tool. If you bear in mind that unless you are a Catholic Priest or a scoutmaster there is no such thing as bad publicity, you can take full advantage of the fact that you are being talked about. In fact, if you are not being gossiped about, you might as well not even exist.

You will encounter one of the strangest holdovers from puritanism in the BDSM world and that is the ridiculous objections that will be raised to gossip. These objections are based on the old-fashioned notion that it was important to have a good reputation. They are still living in a time when it mattered what the neighbors and relatives thought, forgetting that in our society people do not know their neighbors and do not like their relatives. Furthermore, their personal livelihood is not tied to the approval of the neighbors or the relatives. It honestly does not matter what they think. Likewise, in BDSM world that exists now, it is of no importance how you are viewed in any one group. It is far too easy to create your own to be bothered by that.

Well, in our time, the badder the reputation you have the better. It works like this. People do not like do-gooders. They do not like people telling them how to live or act. And anyone who can drive do-gooders to distraction is automatically a hero. There are few experiences more gratifying for a Transgressionist than to have people calling out for him to be cast forth from the scene with fire and brimstone and then to walk into his group and get a standing ovation for precisely the stuff the other folks are upset about. They just do not understand that the very fact that they are making of issue of something in a person's life makes that person more desirable to have around in the eyes of people who do not agree with them.

And, of course, if you can get them gossiping about something that no one cares about at all, then you really have an advantage because the people who do not like you are making themselves appear doubly foolish. This is a useful trap for dealing with communitarians and Structuralists as well as the safety scum. It is good to be hated by the hated.

Of course you get to gossip too, but when you do, make sure that you are reveling in it. If someone on the other side of a dispute does something funny, make them look funny. There are few defenses against well-placed ridicule and this is a powerful weapon in dealing with niller enemies as well. (We'll cover that with Alinsky's Rules for Radicals.)

On the whole, it is best to look upon those who object to gossip as ineffectual weaklings. If they are of such poor spirit as to be unable to withstand people saying nasty things about them then maybe they do not belong in the public scene in the first place for this is no place for such folk. Harry Truman's line, "If you can't take the heat, get out of the kitchen," applies nowhere better and much as I hate to quote song titles there is a perfect one from the 1980s that fits.

"Who gives a damn about a bad reputation?"

And, the answer is, "No one."

XX

The Gadje

“When caravans are outlawed, only outlaws will have caravans.” Old Gypsy saying

So much for being a Transgressionist as it relates to the people in our own world. Now we must deal the outsiders, the despised nillers, that failed evolution that is as doomed to die out as the Neanderthals were when modern humans appeared. They are at best a nuisance and at worst a danger and they must be looked up as genetic inferiors, a lower form of animal life without the benefit of being soft and cuddly, to be controlled if possible and destroyed if necessary. We must not allow ourselves to be sentimental in this. In the end, they are the enemy without.

And they must not be feared. Like all animals, nillers can smell fear and will attack when it is present because they know they can get away with it.

A conflict with nillers is a fight to the death and must be regarded as such. There can be only one victor, and that must be you and to that end, everything is permitted. You can never be too ruthless in dealing with this heartless breed.

In our interactions with nillers it cannot be emphasized too much that to be an effective Transgressionist you must be OUT! Nillers will attempt to utilize the fear of the more timid class of our brethren to attempt to control us, operating on the assumption that we will not use their own institutions against them for fear of being revealed as the evil, disgusting people they view us as. If they find themselves facing activists who do not care what other people think, they will usually not even attempt to attack for fear of unleashing a dreadful retaliation. If they find that they are facing activists with batteries of lawyers and media people, they will hide in their trailer parks. For this reason, you must be as out as humanly possible.

Now, you have to use some modicum of reason and taste in this. Being out does not mean you have to wear your whips to the office. They look ridiculous with your gray suit anyway. And you really should avoid making BDSM your only topic of conversation. That will make you very boring people who get satirized in the Onion.

What it does mean is that you do not hide who you are by running around the house putting toys away if the relatives decide to drop in. After all, what are they going to do about if they do see something? The worst thing that can happen is you will not see them again and that is probably a very good thing because then they will not be wanting to borrow money from you or give you dread diseases that their disgusting offspring have picked up at school.

Being out has another advantage. It can help increase the numbers of our people. We have to realize something here. The notion that people into BDSM

are somehow a distinct and tiny minority of the population is utter nonsense. It is the nillers, the true nillers with their inefficient central nervous systems that are unable to process the information that comes with BDSM that are the true minority. That is why they are going to die out. We are, in fact, the majority of the human species as it now exists. The problem is that there are vast numbers of people who not realize that they are really BDSMers and they have to be exposed to it for that little program in their genetic structure to kick in. Fortunately, thanks to the blessings of online, that fact is becoming increasingly clear as more and more people are having those innate stirrings and learning that it is right and proper for them to have them. Of course, this creates an interesting problem because when BDSM becomes the social norm, what will the good Transgressionist have left to Transgress? Well, do not worry about that. With the tendency of folks to try to make rules for other people to follow there will always be a place for us.

With this fact in mind, however, it is important that you place your group meeting where people can see it, especially if it is an informal gathering where people just come to meet and pick up partners for the next trip to the dungeon. Oh, and by the way, if anyone tells you that their group is not a meet market, they are either lying or nuts. Every group is whether it admits it or not. That is one of the reasons why people go to them in the first place! But I digress.

A well placed Slosh, in the cocktail lounge of a nice hotel which is the proper and civilized way to do things, is not only a gathering of folks who have come to socialize and meet folks they have talked to online and now wish to see in human form. It is, you should pardon the phrase, an evangelistic outreach.

Ok, you can stop laughing now.

Seriously, think about it. You have a happy group of people who pretty much look like everyone else except for a bit of extra leather or jewelry here and there, gathering together at the same place every week. Pretty soon people will get used to seeing you and before you know it you will start getting recruits as people sitting at the bar wonder what your group is and maybe even try to pick up someone in it (yes it happens). Or your people see someone attractive at another table and set about to pick them up (oh boy, does that happen). At one time, our group was so busy recruiting that we were seriously considering having tracts printed up with the heading, "Do you know that perverts love you and have a really really interesting plan for your life?"

The benefits of this are obvious. First, it helps our poor brethren who thought they were humans trapped in nillerland find other pervs. Second, it helps those who thought they were niller realize their true nature and enable them to rise out nillerhood. And it helps our people as well because while they may think they are closeted, in the right environment they learn the blessings of being out. I remember one of the most heart-warming sights we ever had at our munch was

seeing a couple who always proclaimed how closeted they were sitting with a couple of people who had just come into the lounge because they were staying at the hotel and explaining BDSM to them. Even the bouncer at the lounge finally became so curious that he went and sought out a professional Domme so he could see what it is we do and he was amazed at the skills it required. Of course when he told us I told him he could have come to our favorite play space for a fraction of what he spent and we would have shown him a lot more.

XXI

Fighting the good fight

Dealing with true nillers requires that you never forget one essential principal of Transgressionism. Consent no more applies to them than it does to cows and sheep. It does not matter what they see or hear. They are of no consequence except that their discomfort may produce some laughter for us. We have absolutely no moral obligation to them nor to anyone associated with them. If we want to take a sub out on a leash and it bothers the poor nillers, too bad for them. We have no more obligation to concern ourselves with their tender feelings in such matters than we would in our choice of reading matter on a train or the food we order in restaurant. On the contrary, scaring the horses, as this little game is called, is great fun if you choose to do it in the right environment. I will never forget the look on the faces of the young people in McDonalds years ago when I came in with a sub whose hands were chained together. And if you really want to have fun, talk about the previous night's party at a restaurant with a couple of nillers in the next booth listening. They will never forget that meal.

Some of our communitarian brethren live under the unfortunate illusion that somehow if we are nice to them they will be nice to us. Some will even go farther and insist that if we are to be tolerated by them, we must respect them.

THAT IS UTTER ROT!

Nillers deserve no respect whatsoever and it is not a matter of them tolerating us, it is a matter of us tolerating them. In the final analysis, they will stay out of our way, not because they like us, but because they have been taught to fear the consequences of interfering with us. We must study and use the ways of power, political, legal and economic power and use these ruthlessly and without regard to whatever collateral damage we do in the process. We must not be sentimental in this. If we must make war, then we must use all of the legal and political weapons that society has put at our disposal.

Never forget, with each victory, our opponents will become less and less likely to fight because they will see no chance of winning.

There are three classes of people you must have in your circle in order to be effective: lawyers, people with money, people with media access such as reporters. Often the mere knowledge, or even belief, that there are lawyers present will deter opponents. I will give a practical example.

Our Slosh had its origins in a large gathering held in March of 1998. There were well over one hundred people in a hotel lounge on a Saturday night and everything went very well. So well that the next Friday a group of people talking on line decided to go over to that lounge and get together before going out to play. That was the beginning of the weekly Friday gathering.

Anyway, the large gathering had been so successful that it was decided to do another one in May at the same location. We all showed up and things were a bit lively with an idiot in a poet shirt making a fool of himself (which was not hard for him because he was obviously born that way) and everyone having great fun with the toys they won in the raffle. Well, about Midnight a number of us left to go to a party and as we were leaving we could not but help to notice that three busloads of young people from Canada were arriving at the hotel. The next week we heard that things had become even more lively after we left. In fact they became so lively that the panicked hotel staff called the police who came and did—nothing.

Nothing whatsoever.

Why did they just stand there and tell the hotel management that as long as nothing was being destroyed and no one was being injured they were not going to act? It was because there were a lot of people wearing suits.

Gatherings of people in suits deter cops. These are people who have lawyers and file lawsuits. So, in this case, it was not even the presence of lawyers (and there were at least ten there) but the mere possibility of their presence was sufficient to deter a police department from acting.

This is why it is important to have lawyers in your group and let everyone know you have them. The knowledge that you are loaded for bear is a good way to keep the campground safe from predators of the niller persuasion. It is for this reason that I always stress the importance of a legal defense fund. It does not need to have much money in it, just exist as a bank account, because then if it is needed the paperwork is already in place and it is just a matter of dumping the money in. But there is more to it than that. A legal defense fund is an aggressive tool, like a shield. It is a warning that you are prepared to fight back if attacked. And of course, this is why you need people with money, so they can dump money into the legal defense fund. If the opposition knows you have those two things, they will back off rather than press a matter that they are almost certain to lose.

And then we get to the media access people. There are few weapons more powerful than the press once you get it on your side and if you can do that, you can pretty much run roughshod over the opposition. There is nothing a law enforcement agency likes less than the thought of a major news outlet digging through all of their records looking for someone they can hang in retaliation for busting people the press happens to like. And our job is to make the press like us, even if they think we are weird and funny. In fact being thought weird and funny is an advantage because people rarely attack that which they laugh at. On the contrary, it makes them sentimental favorites.

And this brings us to dealing with institutions in general.

Saul Alinsky's Rules for Radicals.

"1. Power is not only what you have but what the enemy thinks you have."

Remember the gathering and the cops standing there afraid to act.

"2. Never go outside the experience of your people. It may result in confusion, fear and retreat."

You have to have people with expertise in dealing with the enemy. When you have these people, use them as a resource.

"3. Whenever possible go outside the experience of the enemy. Here you want to cause confusion, fear and retreat."

Institutions such as businesses and churches are used to acting and thinking in a pretty narrow manner. If you can blindside them, you can defeat them. Law enforcement is not set up to deal with people who will make them the issue in a public debate and go after them in a personal manner in the press.

"4. Make the enemy live up to his/her own book of rules."

If you can catch them in hypocrisy, by all means make an issue of it. If you can set up a law enforcement agency by so frustrating its people that they plant evidence and then have the video of them planting that evidence, you can destroy not only the careers of the officers involved, but their lives and the lives of their families as well.

"5. Ridicule is the man's most potent weapon."

Never be afraid to get the other side laughed at. If you can portray your opponents as refugees from the trailer park you will have them on the run. When dealing with the media, remember to think in terms of the one funny sound bite that can characterize them in the most unfortunate light. Remember that no idea is as powerful as the one-liner that can destroy it.

"6. A good tactic is one your people enjoy."

This goes without saying. The more pleasure your people take in creating discomfort for the enemy, the better they will be at it.

"7. A tactic that drags on too long becomes a drag."

This is why boycotts are not good tactics. They are rarely successful and get real boring to carry on. Just look at the attempt by the Baptists some years ago to boycott Disney. They have never recovered from that. You want to use tactics that can bring rapid results, like lawsuits and media ridicule.

“8. Keep the pressure on, with different tactics and actions and utilize all events of the period for your purpose.”

This is less complex than it sounds. It merely means to change methods occasionally to keep an entrenched foe off balance so that they no sooner come up with what they see as a counter to one offensive when you have launched a different one from another direction.

“9. The threat is usually more terrifying than the thing itself.”

Ever been in the waiting room of a dentist? Every sub tied naked to a cross knows this feeling.

“10. The major premise for tactics is the development of operations that will maintain a constant pressure on the opposition.”

Do not let up for a minute. Once you have them on the run, keep them running.

“11. If you push a negative hard and deep enough it will break through into its counterside.”

Again, find the weak point in the opposition and keep pressing the issue.

“12. The price of a successful attack is a constructive alternative.”

The opposition will be forced to change its policies or cave or disband. Remember what the Church of Scientology did to the Cult Awareness Network.

“13. Pick the target, freeze it, personalize it and polarize it.”

If you can make the personalities of the opposition the issue, you should do so. Consider what the Clinton administration did to the career of Ken Starr. Do not be averse to name-calling. If you can effectively label an opponent as a “Frigid old prude,” then by all means you must do so. Find out the leadership of the opposition and keep hitting that person with everything you can. If you have a good investigator in your circle, put him to work finding out every bit of dirt on the target you can.

These are proven methods of attack. Saul Alinsky was one of the great radical thinkers of the 1950s and 60s and his campaigns had a degree of success that have been unrivaled ever since.

The most important thing in dealing with an enemy is to make certain that the enemy knows that you are not going to retreat or give in, but that you will not only fight back but retaliate with every weapon at your disposal and not stop until he or she or it is destroyed. The religious nut may be able to withstand personal ridicule, but will she be able to withstand that ridicule directed at her children from the schoolyard? When she knows that someone is going to look for an excuse to sue her husband's company out of existence she may have some serious doubts about the will of God. When a church is seized to pay a judgment and transformed into a public dungeon, they will learn their lesson.

The prosecutor may think she has a good case, but when she looks at other good cases that got killed by juries who thought the whole idea of prosecution was a waste of tax money she will pause and when she knows that she will be the object of a national campaign of media ridicule every night on at least one late night comedy show, she will have serious second thoughts. And if she does not, her superior who has to run for re-election and knows that at least one reporter has enough on him to put him in Marion, will.

And that is how we do the nasty to the other side. We do not run, we do not hide, we do not reason, we do not debate. We do our thing and if they try to stop us, we demolish them, without mercy and without remorse.

Of course it does not all have to be threats and intimidation. We can make the system work for us in other ways if we are willing to use a personal touch.

Politicians are human and as such like to be stroked. If your people make campaign donations, they will be listened to. And there is the opportunity to influence policy that every voter has if he is willing to take the time.

Legislators like to remind their constituents of their achievements. To that end they send out little flyers on a pretty regular basis.

Now, when you get one of these, resist the temptation to use it to light the barbecue. Read it carefully and find at least one thing in it you can agree with and one thing you disagree with. Then sit at your word processor and compose an intelligent letter, no more than three pages, to the legislator or congressman or senator. After a couple of weeks you should receive a form letter thanking you for your response.

Repeat this procedure each time you get one of the flyers. After a few times you will get a more personal letter because you will become known as a rational person who has an interest in public affairs and is willing to make your interest known. Politicians like this. It helps them to argue with lobbyists. Seriously, any number of times a lobbyist will be talking to a Congressman about some issue he may disagree with but not quite know how express that disagreement and he will

say, "Well, this is what one of my constituents had to say about this." In effect you are becoming a one-person lobby of your own.

Now, this is not the time to bring up BDSM. You have to wait for the right opportunity and you must be careful not to focus your argument too narrowly. But when the time does come, you will be voice that will be listened to, provided you do not become shrill or mention that you have this book. Especially do not mention that you have this book!

Pay particular attention to federal court appointments. Keep a good working relationship with your US Senator even if you disagree with most of his ideas. The federal courts are our most powerful weapon and if we can get a pro-BDSM majority on the Supreme Court, and we can, then we need not care what any other legislative or judicial body in the country thinks. And they will know it!

Always remember, decisions that matter are rarely made in the public eye. By the time the public hears about them it is often too late. Your community needs to place people in the corridors of power, as staffers and advisors. With them in place, you can pretty much influence things to go your way.

And it is a good idea to be a rewarder of your friends. If a business is good to you, then be good them. Give them free publicity on your website and recommend them to everyone you can. Never forget that no words speak as loud as money and if a business sees you as an asset, they will work to keep your business, especially if they know you have lawyers in your toybag.

XXII

In the end

Transgressionism stands for freedom, freedom for us to do our thing. In an ideal world this can happen without anyone else's toes being stepped on but we do not live in an ideal world. This means we have to accept that in living our lives as we wish to live them there will be those who will disagree with us, those who will dislike us, those who will try to stop us. The means of social control are many and varied and I hope that in this brief study I have given you the basic means to overcome them.

Never forget, freedom means doing what you want, not what others think you ought. To a Transgressionist, the only rule is that there are no rules. We are the adversaries, the outlaws.

We are the future.