TO HAVE DONE WITH THE
Massacre of the Body
No matter how much it proclaims its pseudo-tolerance, the capital-
list system in all its forms (family, school, factories, army, codes,
discourse…) continues to subjugate all desires, sexuality, and affects to the
dictatorship of its totalitarian organization, founded on exploitation, property,
male power, profit, productivity…

Tirelessly it continues its dirty work of castrating, suppressing, torturing, and
dividing up our bodies in order to inscribe its laws on our flesh, in order to rivet
to our subconscious its mechanisms for reproducing this system of enslavement.

With its throttling, its stasis, its lesions, its neuroses, the capitalist state imposes
its norms, establishes its models, imprints its features, assigns its roles, propa-
gates its program… Using every available access route into our organisms, it
insinuates into the depths of our insides its roots of death. It usurps our organs,
disrupts our vital functions, mutilates our pleasure, subjugates all lived experi-
ence to the control of its condemning judgments. It makes of each individual
a cripple, cut off from his or her body, a stranger to his or her own desires.

To reinforce its social terror which it forces individuals to experience as
their own guilt, the capitalist army of occupation strives, through an ever more
refined system of aggression, provocation, and blackmail, to repress, to exclude,
and to neutralize all those practices of desire which do not reproduce the
established form of domination.

In this way the system perpetuates a centuries-old regime of spoiled pleasures,
sacrifice, resignation, institutionalized masochism, and death. It is a castrating
regime, which produces a guilty, neurotic, scrabbling, submissive drudge of a
human being.

This antiquated world, which stinks everywhere of dead flesh, horrifies us
and convinces us of the necessity of carrying the revolutionary struggle against
capitalist oppression into that territory where the oppression is most deeply
rooted: the living body.

It is the body and all the desire it produces that we wish to liberate from
“foreign” domination. It is “on that ground” that we wish to “work” for the
liberation of society. There is no boundary between the two elements. I
oppress myself inasmuch as that I is the produced of a system of oppression
that extends to all aspects of living.

The “revolutionary consciousness” is a mystification if it is not situated within
a “revolutionary body,” that is to say, within a body that produces its own
liberation.

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etitled “Three Billion Perverats: Great Encyclopedia of Homosexuals.” The
French Government seized and destroyed all issues of the journal and charged
Félix Guattari, director of publications, with “affronting public decency.”

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authorship to Guattari.
Women in revolt against a male power—a power that has been forced on their bodies for centuries—homosexuals in revolt against the terrorist “normality,” young people in revolt against the pathological authority of adults: these are the people who, collectively, have begun to make the body a means of subversion, and have begun to see subversion as a means for meeting the “immediate” needs of the body.

These are the people who have begun to question the mode of production of desires, the relationship between pleasure and power, the relationship between the body and the individual. These are the people who question the function of such relationships in all spheres of capitalist society, including within militant groups.

These are the people, in both sexes, who have finally broken that perennial barrier between “politics” and reality as it is actually lived—a barrier that has served the interests of both the leaders of bourgeois society and those who have claimed to represent and speak for the masses.

These are the people, of both sexes, who have opened the way for the great uprising of life against the forces of death—even as these latter continue to infiltrate our organisms in order to subjugate, with greater and greater subtlety, our energies, our desires, and our reality to the demands of the established order.

A new cutting edge, a new line of more radical and more definitive attack has been opened up, and because of it there will necessarily be new alignments among revolutionary forces.

We can no longer sit idly by as others steal our mouths, our anuses, our genitals, our nerves, our guts, our arteries, in order to fashion parts and work in an ignoble mechanism of production which links capital, exploitation, and the family.

We can no longer allow others to turn our mucous membranes, our skin, all our sensitive areas into occupied territory—territory controlled and regimented by others, to which we are forbidden access.

We can no longer permit our nervous system to serve as a communications network for the system of capitalist exploitation, for the patriarchal state; nor can we permit our brains to be used as instruments of torture programmed by the powers that surround us.

We can no longer allow others to repress our fucking, control our shit, our saliva, our energies, all in conformity with the prescription of the law and its carefully-defined little transgressions. We want to see frigid, imprisoned, mortified bodies explode to bits, even if capitalism continues to demand that they be kept in check at the expense of our living bodies.

This desire for a fundamental liberation, if it is to be a truly revolutionary action, requires that we move beyond the limits of our “person,” that we overturn the notion of the “individual,” that we transcend our sedentary selves, our “normal social identities,” in order to travel to the boundaryless territory of the body, in order to live in the flux of desires that lies beyond sexuality, beyond the territory of the repertories of normality.

So it is that some of us have felt the vital need to act as a group in liberating ourselves from those forces that have crushed and controlled desire in each one of us.

Everything that we have experienced on the level of the personal, intimate life we have tried to approach, explore, and live collectively. We want to break down the concrete wall, erected by the dominant social organization, that separates being from appearance, the spoken from the unspoken, the private from the social.

Together, we have begun to explore all the working of our attractions, repulsions, our resistances, our orgasms, the universe of our representations, our fetishes, our obsessions, our phobias. The “unconfessable secret” has become for us a matter for reflection, public discussion, and political action—where politics is taken as the social manifestation of the irrepressible aspirations of the “living being.”

We have decided to break the intolerable seal of secrecy which the power structure has placed on the reality of sensual, sexual, and affective practices; thus we will break the power structure’s ability to produce and reproduce forms of oppression.

As we have explored collectively our individual histories, we have seen to what extent all of our desiring life has been dominated by the fundamental laws of the bourgeois capitalist state and the Judeo-Christian tradition; all of our desires are subjected to capitalism’s rules concerning efficiency, surplus value, and reproduction. In comparing our various “experiences,” no matter how free they may have appeared, we recognized that we are always and forever obliged to conform to the officially sanctioned sexual stereotypes, which regulate all forms of lived experience and extend their control over marriage beds, houses of prostitution, public bathrooms, dance floors, factories, confessinals, sex shops, prisons, high schools, buses, etc.

Let us discuss this officially sanctioned sexuality, which has been defined as the one and only possible sexuality. We do not wish to manage it, as one manages the conditions of one’s imprisonment. Rather, we wish to destroy it, eliminate it, because it is nothing more that a mechanism for castrating and recastrating;
it is a mechanism for reproducing everywhere, in every individual, over and over again, the bases for a system of enslavement. “Sexuality” is a monstrosity, whether in its restrictive forms, or in its so-called “permissive” forms. It is clear that “liberalizing” attitudes and “eroticizing” the social reality through advertising is something organized and controlled by the managers of “advanced” capitalism for the sake of a more efficacious reproduction of the officially sanctioned libido. Far from reducing sexual misery, these transactions only increase frustrations and feelings of “failure,” hence permitting the transformation of desire into a compulsive consumer need, while also guaranteeing “the production of demand,” which of course is the very motor of capitalist expression. There is no real difference between the “immaculate conception” and the seductive female of advertising, between dutifully-fulfilled marital obligations and the promiscuity of bourgeois women on the go. The same censorship is at work in all cases. The same will to put to death the body-that-desires perpetuates itself. Only a change of strategy has occurred.

What we want, what we desire, is to burst through the screen of sexuality and its representations in order to know the reality of our bodies, of our bodies-that-desire.

We want to free this living body, make it whole again, unblock it, clear it, so that it may experience the liberation of all its energies, desires, intensities, which at present are crushed by a social system that prescribes and conditions.

We want to recover such elementary faculties as the pleasure of breathing, which has literally been strangled by the forces that oppress and pollute. We want to recover the pleasure of eating and digesting, which has been disrupted by the rhythms imposed by Productivity and by the bad food that is produced and Prepared according to criteria of marketability.

And let us not forget the pleasure of shitting and the pleasures of the anus, systematically destroyed by the coercive conditioning of the sphincter—a conditioning used by capitalist authority to enslave even into the flesh its fundamental principles (relationships of exploitation, neurotic accumulation, the mystique of property of cleanliness, etc.). Or the pleasure of masturbating happily and without shame, which no anguish feelings about failure and compensation, but simply for the pleasure of masturbating. Or the pleasures of shaking oneself, of humming, of speaking, of walking, of moving, of expressing oneself, of feeling delirious, of singing, of playing with one’s body in every possible way. We want to recover the pleasures of producing pleasure and of creating—pleasures which have been ruthlessly quashed by educational systems charged with manufacturing obedient worker-consumers.

We want to open our bodies to the bodies of other people, to let energies circulate, allow desires to merge, so that we can all give free reign of our fantasies, to our ecstasies, so that at last we can live without guilt, so that we can practice without guilt all pleasures, whether individual or shared by two or more people. All of this pleasure we desperately need if we are not to experience our daily reality as a kind of slow agony which capitalist, bureaucratic civilization imposes as a model of existence on its subjects. And we want to excise from our being the malignant tumor of guilt, which is the age-old root of all oppression.

Obviously we are aware of the formidable obstacles that we will have to overcome if our aspirations are not to remain simply the dream of a tiny set of marginalized people. We are quite aware that the liberation of the body and the freeing of sensual, sexual, affective, and ecstatic feelings are indissolubly linked to the liberation of women and the abolition of every kind of sexual categorization. Revolutionizing desire means destroying male power and rejecting all its modes of behavior and its ideas about couples; revolutionizing desire means destroying all forms of oppression and all models of normality.

We want to put an end once and for all to the roles of identities instituted by the Phallus.

We want to put an end once and for all to any rigid assigning of sexual identity. We do not want to think of ourselves anymore as men and women, homosexuals and heterosexuals, possessors and possessed, older and younger, masters and slaves, but rather as human beings who transcend such sexual categorization, who are autonomous, in flux, and multifaceted. We want to see ourselves as being with varying identities, who can express their desires, their pleasures, their ecstasies, their tenderness without relying on or invoking any system of surplus value, or any system of power at all, but only in the spirit of play.

We have begun with the body, the revolutionary body, as a place where “subversive” energies are produced—and a place where in truth all kinds of cruelties and oppressions have been perpetuated. By connecting “political” practice to the reality of this body and its functioning, by working collectively to find means to liberate this body, we have already begun to create a new social reality which the maximum of ecstasy is combined the maximum of consciousness. This is the only way that we will be able to directly combat the hold of the Capitalist State exercises over us. This is the only step that will truly make us STRONG against a system of domination that continues to strengthen its power, that aims to weaken and undermine each individual in order to force him or her to bow to the system, that seeks, in effect, to reduce us all to the level of dogs.