

## Chapter 3

### Brothers and Rivals, Stud Peacocks and Earth Mothers: Gender Relations among the Digger Heavies

All work is play when it is done with your brothers—Find your brothers.  
—a Digger

The men tended to be stud peacocks and flaunted and puffed more than the women. But our authority was not based on ownership or status or bringing in the bacon.

—Peter Coyote

Especially during the San Francisco period, deep intimacy and fraternal feeling characterized the daily lives of the men of the Digger core group. Digger brothers spent innumerable hours together, working on the same projects, performing together in happenings, conversing about relationships or the shape of the future society, getting high, fixing one another's trucks, protecting one another from the policeman's truncheon, and, at times, living in the same houses and drawing from the same communal resources. 1

Members of the core group identify no singular moment of bonding, an experience reported by some countercultural groups. Still, Peter Coyote remarked in an interview that through the sharing of intense experiences, the core members developed a common cognitive map, and an in-group vocabulary for articulating its common assumptions.<sup>1</sup> In his memoir, Coyote recalled Vinnie Rinaldi as 2

devoid of personal affectations, the best imaginable companion for our life of adventure and uncertainty. He was the kind of man who would (and did) hitchhike from New Mexico to Boston one midwinter in order to pick up a free truck and drive it back to New Mexico because his friends there needed one. He and I had shared women, laughter, and music; we had partied till we passed out. He was a trusted brother, always high-spirited, a natural comedian and a skilled musician.<sup>2</sup>

Yet not unlike the nineteenth-century Midwestern saloon described by Elaine Frantz Parsons, the intimate social world of the Diggers was also a locus for ongoing masculine rivalry. The absence of formal hierarchy within the group created a context in which Digger men competed intensely with one another on the basis of reputation, and the result was an informal rank order according to status—the "personal heaviness" that also helped to distinguish Digger men from straights and other hippies. A man's status depended in large measure not only on his projection of a convincing manhood act, but also on his charisma, which Max Weber described as "a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional qualities." Unlike the Farmies, 3

who coalesced around the single charismatic figure of Stephen Gaskin, the Digger core group consisted mostly of charismatic personalities. This further intensified the competitive pressures within the inner circle.<sup>3</sup>

Unlike the Midwestern saloon, the Digger social space was not a homosocial environment. Women's presence and participation further defined Digger manhood, in much the same way as did the contrasting presence of straight men and mystically inclined hippies outside the circle. Women's physical and emotional labor provided a disproportionate share of the capital—social, cultural, and material—that sustained the space within which the camaraderie and rivalry of Digger men could flourish. At least some Diggers defended this arrangement against feminist criticism then, and some defend it now, by arguing that the group's voluntary poverty constituted a form of primitive communism that restored the sexes to their "natural" equality. More recently Coyote, formerly one of the most ardent proponents of that position, has conceded that the group's sexual division of labor, at least, could have been far more egalitarian than it actually was.

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### Brothers and Rivals

The Digger notion of *free* rested on the anarchist presumption of unalloyed generosity and mutual aid as the bedrock of human nature. Thus, unselfish behavior carried high positive value in the group, and sincere acts of generosity could build a man's reputation for heaviness, as they did for Rinaldi. When Bill "Sweet William Tumbleweed"<sup>4</sup> Fritsch joined the core group in late 1966, he grew steadily in stature by becoming a reliable participant in the free-food operation, a task requiring long hours of labor and early-morning appearances at the wholesale produce markets. Similarly, Fritsch devoted many hours to the tedious, behind-the-scenes effort required to make the first free store a reality. His reputation for integrity became such that the group entrusted him with its cash and a very loose accounting system called the Free Bank book.<sup>5</sup>

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Camaraderie made membership in the Digger inner circle deeply rewarding. Nevertheless, both Grogan and Coyote recount many more instances of competition between men than of brotherly generosity. This may be attributable in part to the nature of the memoir as a literary form: confrontation spins much more yarn than the loan of a set of wrenches. But the demands of the genre were not the only circumstances shaping these former Diggers' accounts. The fluid process of creating an entirely new social order through life-acting provided opportunities for men to boost or squander their status as cultural innovators. Seemingly trivial choices could sometimes lead others to question one's heaviness. Coyote's comrade Brooks Butcher once criticized him for wanting to go to bed, asking why any genuine radical would choose sleep over revolutionary activity.<sup>6</sup>

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Introverted men did not fare as well as the bold and brassy. Coyote describes the introspective Billy Murcott as "the unsung genius of the Diggers," author of several influential Digger broadsides and articles and the member who synthesized the concept of *free* in the group's early months. This put him in competition with Peter Berg, who had done much to articulate the concept of life-acting. It would be an understatement to say that Berg possessed a temperament that was the opposite of Murcott's. Berg's nickname was "The Hun." There is no direct evidence of a clash between the two, but Grogan claims that upon Murcott's departure for New York City at the end of December 1966, Berg "started a rumor" that his rival "had left because the city of San Francisco wasn't big enough" for both men.<sup>7</sup>

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In further contrast to Murcott, Fritsch exemplified the swashbuckling persona of the Digger life-actor. Coyote describes the stir caused by "Sweet William's" introduction to the Diggers at a meeting of the Artists' Liberation Front in May 1966. He arrived as the escort of Lenore Kandel. Dressed in matching bright-blue leather pants, they "radiat[ed] the charisma and self-assurance of natural leaders. Their style was effortless, authentic, royal . . . [;] they would know people who were never bored or plagued with self-doubts." Coyote recalls that "you felt yourself sinking a bit in your own estimation by comparison."<sup>8</sup> Fritsch was an unknown. Yet, *he* was with *her*. Obscurity proved no bar to his immediate recognition by Coyote as a heavy among heavies.<sup>9</sup>

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Other men noticed Fritsch and Kandel's entrance. Grogan attended the meeting, and Fritsch carefully took stock of Grogan's reaction. "Emmett and I pinned each other . . . as rivals, right off," Fritsch told Coyote, years later. Grogan could have reacted with jealousy, seeking ways to undermine the newcomer's reputation in order to exclude him from the group. But in Fritsch's bold manner, he seems to have recognized a kindred spirit, someone who might become a valuable ally. Perhaps he also recognized, or intuited, that Fritsch might be more likely to undermine his influence within the group if he owed Grogan no debt of friendship. So Grogan befriended his potential competitor, and it was in no small part due to Grogan's sponsorship that Fritsch and Kandel became part of the Digger inner circle.<sup>10</sup>

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Coyote came to admire not only Fritsch's integrity and generosity, but also his authenticity: he appeared never to hesitate to gratify his own desires, heedless of the opinions of others. Nevertheless, Fritsch's constant search for the ultimate test of his manliness proved, in the end, to be his undoing. Not content to remain a leading light among the Diggers, he joined the Hell's Angels, probably in late 1967. His involvement in the club led not only to his estrangement from the Diggers, but also to the dissolution of his relationship with Kandel, after she suffered repeated injuries during barroom brawls and motorcycle accidents. Yet

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even these sacrifices on his part did not prevent the Angels from expelling him from the club a few years later.<sup>11</sup>

Emmett Grogan, too, took the life-acting stage with apparent confidence and ease. "If all of us are life-actors to some degree," writes Coyote, 11

Emmett was determined to be a life *star*. He carried . . . the absorption of a born performer. Men and women *attended* when he arrived, moving through a room with the detached concentration of a shark. He had developed a sense of drama in his bearing, his cupped cigarette, his smoky, hooded eyes, which declared him a man on the wrong side of the law, a man with a past, a man who would not be deterred.<sup>12</sup>

Coyote had to work hard to keep up with his proletarian, street-wise brothers. 12 Among Digger men, the social class of one's upbringing appears to have influenced individuals' standing in the group. Coyote describes his youth as a time spent negotiating difficult contradictions. The income that his father, Morris Cohon, derived from a tangled network of investments sheltered the son from the streets that Grogan, Murcott, and Fritsch seemed to know so well. Yet his father's rise to upper-middle class wealth and status in the anti-Semitic business culture of the Depression era had required the same feral aggressiveness that fueled Andrew Carnegie's triumphs a half-century earlier. As a young man, Peter occasionally witnessed his father's merciless retribution against those who gave offense, and the elder Cohon attempted to impart the same capacity to his son through wrestling matches in which he hammered, squeezed, and contorted the youngster's body. Unable to defeat his physically powerful father, Coyote survived these dreaded sessions through mental detachment, waiting for the lesson to end while trying to avoid serious injury.<sup>13</sup>

So for Coyote, one of the attractions of joining the Diggers was the opportunity to escape the class privilege of life in his father's shadow: as a Digger, the police were no longer his protectors. His theatrical artistry gained him entry to the group, but he still had to prove his mettle to the working-class heavies. During the first year of the Diggers' existence, Coyote managed these requirements by remaining with the Mime Troupe, resisting his fellows' urging that he make an undivided commitment to Digger anarchism. Thus it was not until the Free City activities of 1968 that he fully emerged from behind the working-class men to occupy a productive niche of his own design.<sup>14</sup> 13

We can detect a status imbalance between Grogan and Coyote in many early interactions. One occurred after the impromptu move, in December 1966, by participants in *The Death of Money* to raise bail for the two Hell's Angels who had been arrested during the happening. Grogan led the way as Digger men moved to enhance their status in the Haight through association with the gang. When one of the Angels died in a traffic accident, Grogan approached Coyote and informed 14

him that they were going to pay their respects. "I did not know what Emmett had in mind and was not comfortable with the idea," recalls Coyote, but, unwilling to appear effeminate by "punk[ing] out" (his retrospective term), he agreed to accompany his brother. As they entered the funeral home, Coyote felt his "bowels churning, but Emmett and I 'held our mud,' . . . doffed our hats, and walked over to the coffin. . . . We stood over him for a while, resisting the impulse to be rushed by the aggressive silence, then saluted George good-bye and left at a leisurely pace." Henceforth, Coyote notes, he and Grogan—and, presumably, the Diggers as a group—reaped the rewards of this perilous visit. The bikers permitted the outlaw hippies to socialize with them and acknowledged their presence when passing on the street—privileges extended to few outsiders.<sup>15</sup>

Masculine competition also extended to sexual reputation. Embarked as they were on a project of derepression, many of the Digger brothers, like sizeable numbers of other Movement men, measured their status relative to one another in terms of their fidelity to the ideal of "sexual revolution." At a later date, an anonymous member of the COPS (Committee on Public Safety) Commune of Berkeley, a group of New Left activists who had joined the Free Families, summed up past gender relations within the Movement in light of then-recent feminist criticism: "To be a successful movement male, one has to prove that as well as being intelligent, militant, and articulate, that he is also sexually liberated; sexual liberation is another arena for movement macho competition."<sup>16</sup> As historian Beth Bailey has argued, there was, in fact, not one sexual revolution in the 1960s, but three concurrent movements. One involved a modest extension of the concept of companionate marriage to include a period of cohabitation prior to matrimony. Another dedicated itself to the relaxation of obscenity codes to legitimize pornography as part of the culture of consumption. The Diggers participated occasionally in this movement as a consequence of landing with both feet in the third, which Bailey describes as "consciously revolutionary," in which "sex was *actively* . . . used not only for pleasure but also . . . power, in a new form of cultural politics that shook the nation."<sup>17</sup> The idea behind this third strand was that deliberate infractions against received sexual norms would weaken the legitimacy of established institutions. Thus, those Diggers who most nearly embodied the ideal of sexual liberation gained thereby in reputation within the group.

The constantly roving eyes of Digger men sometimes fell upon the same woman, and personal heaviness helped to shape the outcome. One afternoon in late 1966, a young woman named Phyllis Wilner joined Coyote in serving free food in Golden Gate Park. This was by no means an unusual occurrence, but something in her manner piqued his curiosity. When Coyote asked Grogan about her, the latter responded with "a proprietary, 'Stay away from her.'" Coyote "guessed that he had already taken her under his personal purview, or was planning to, or might

want to, or might want me to think that he had, but from that day on she and I became intimate friends"—and no more.<sup>18</sup>

Given the intensity of all these forms of masculine competition, what prevented the eruption of violence among these young, armed, and proud bearers of "personal heaviness"? After the Digger core dispersed to various urban and rural communes in 1968, Coyote records numerous instances of aggression among men at those locations. For the Diggers' San Francisco period, we do not know that there was none, but only that the evidentiary record is silent on this point. Historian Timothy R. Mahoney's study of masculine subcultures in the antebellum Midwest shows quite persuasively that the informal organization of men into "sets" or cliques in Keokuk, Iowa, much as Haight-Ashbury hippies sorted themselves into HIP and Digger factions, reduced the potential for violence through a variety of mechanisms. Nicknaming—a prominent feature of core-group membership for Digger women and men—served a century earlier in Keokuk to create a jocular sociability between men of sharply different class positions, ethnicities, migration strategies, and regional origins. Members also minimized differences that might otherwise have led to violence through the use of "indirection, sarcasm, irony, and humor."<sup>19</sup>

Coyote mentions "late-night jawboning among Berg, Sweet William, Kent [Minault], Emmett, me, and whoever ambled in to join us around the Cribari wine jug of the evening." A similar conviviality also figured prominently in Keokuk's masculine subcultures. Other elements from the previous century, such as practical jokes and verbal jousting, undoubtedly served among the Digger heavies as well, but the collective's memoirists have not recorded these in any detail. The Diggers enjoyed advantages over their Iowa predecessors: the hip outlaws' sex ratio more nearly approached equilibrium, which meant that women could intercede if they sensed the potential for violence. The Diggers' location in a large urban center also gave them far more options for diversion and places of retreat if the atmosphere became too charged.<sup>20</sup>

In a variety of ways, from "holding their mud" in the presence of volatile Hell's Angels and bestowing humorous, ironic, sarcastic, or admiring nicknames on one another, to making a spectacle of their sexual prowess, Digger men created a complex system of hierarchical male status relationships within the core group. But this was no straightforward, bureaucratic pecking order. Leadership at a given moment depended on individual relationships and status, in combination with a given member's particular talents. When engaged in delivering free food, Grogan took center stage; when organizing the Full Moon Celebration of Halloween, Berg and Judy Goldhaft led the band. As noted in chapter 1, successive groups of Diggers took the initiative in making the free stores into site for life-acts.<sup>21</sup>

In the absence of formal rules and positions of authority, women could sometimes steer life-acting projects to completion. To discover what this means about relations between the sexes during the Haight-Ashbury period, we now turn to a consideration of the small body of available evidence on that point. 20

### **Stud Peacocks and Earth Mothers**

Brotherhood and rivalry shaped relations among the men of the Digger core group on a daily basis, but those relations were part of a larger social web that included constant interaction with women. Dominick Cavallo observes that, in Grogan's fanciful account of his initiation into the manly role of the hunter, his partner Siena Riffia's "dramatic function . . . is merely to give domestic feminine witness to his manhood."<sup>22</sup> But in daily life, as Cavallo would likely agree, women influenced and supported anarchist hip manhood through their labor and imagination. They helped bring to life the Digger theater of the streets as they sewed costumes, contributed ideas, punctured men's egoism with sarcasm, and shouldered a disproportionate share of the endless reproductive labor required by the group's cash-poor existence at the margins of the modern consumer economy. 21

A vignette from Coyote's memoir imparts the flavor of everyday relations between men and women as they evolved within the Diggers and Free Families. Originally, in the fall of 1968, the ranch near the sleepy crossroads of Olema, about an hour's drive north of San Francisco, had served Coyote as a solitary retreat, a place where he could recover from serum hepatitis, contracted through heroin abuse. Gradually, however, friends moved in, and the Olema ranch became a Free Families commune. On typical mornings there in 1969, Coyote walked to the main house, rolled a cigarette, and sat on the front steps to enjoy the silence of the foggy landscape. Soon, babies would awaken in the house; young mothers, "steamy from sleep and smelling of talc and breast milk, shuffled into the kitchen on maternal call." Not long afterward, older children dispelled what remained of the morning's peace, and the adults, having emerged into full wakefulness, began to converse in twos and threes. These separate conversations merged into collective planning of the day's activities: "laundry, flour, gaskets, fuel pump. . . . Runs to town were consolidated, baby-sitters designated, and the parceling out of always insufficient money . . . was usually negotiated with ironic goodwill." The men often justified their desire to spend for tools and parts by pointing out that working vehicles would facilitate the women's food procurement. The women countered that buying auto parts would leave them with nothing to spend for the evening meal. Resolution of such an impasse involved improvising ways to substitute investments of labor and time—of which the group had plenty—for expenditures of scarce cash.<sup>23</sup> 22

Coyote's memoir is one of the few sources that offer us such descriptions of the 23

everyday gendered interactions of the collective. He describes Olema as a "fool's school," at which he, as the self-described patriarch, attempted to instill in newcomers an awareness that the Digger doctrine of self-sovereignty involved not only complete freedom of individual action, but also the individual's responsibility for the welfare of the group. But his authority was not that of the patriarch of Mosaic law: in his rendering of a typical morning, we see a far more collective process of negotiation, not a group responding to the edicts of a *pater familias*. If the Digger and Free Families bands definitely were not fiefdoms, were they gender democracies?<sup>24</sup>

In the chapter epigraph, we hear Coyote claim that the group practiced the sort of gender egalitarianism that socialist-feminist scholars have attributed to many socially subordinated American populations.<sup>25</sup> However, in his more recent memoir, a measure of doubt creeps into his discussion. A sifting of the available evidence, including ex-members' assessments, will help us reach our own conclusions. Let's begin with an examination of the Diggers' clearest statements of their understanding of what we, today, call gender. 24

#### **A Hip-Anarchist Model of Gender**

The Diggers and the Free City Collective, as did most Americans of the time, took gender to be a natural construct, comprised of two incommensurable "opposite" sexes. "Let's take ourselves seriously a moment, cosmic comedy aside," wrote a Collective member in February 1968. "We're beautiful people. Our men are tough. They have style, guile, balls, imagination, and autonomy. Our women are soft, skilled, fuck like angels; radiate children, scent, and colors like the crazy bells that mark out time." In this formulation, male and female embodied *categorical* oppositions of hard and soft, material and ethereal, instrumental and affective.<sup>26</sup> 25

This categorical opposition informed the composition of a photograph of Coyote and Eileen Ewing, early in their relationship of several years. Eyes open wide and looking down upon the camera, he is clothed, wearing a headband, beads, a wide belt with a large metal buckle, heavy work boots, and durable jeans stained with dirt and grease. Leaning casually against the wall, his head erect, he is not smiling widely—his face seems impassive, his presence commanding. One leg crosses the other at the knees, both nearly straight. His left arm drapes casually over Ewing's shoulder, and he has hooked the thumb of his right hand into the top of his jeans.<sup>27</sup> 26

Ewing's pose contrasts with Coyote's tall, lean, casual toughness: her nude body conforms itself to his, her arms encircling his waist and fingers interlacing to secure herself to him. Her head rests on his shoulder, her face composed in a soft trance of loving passion, eyes either closed or cast into shadow, and framed by straight, blonde hair that offsets both Coyote's dark shirt and the rough planks 27



against which he leans. Her left leg, with foot turned outward, wraps over the top of his legs, accentuating the curve of her hip and thigh, which, in their fleshly vulnerability, contrast with his body's straight lines and the durable fabric he is wearing. He has a belt where he can hook his thumb; she has nothing to hold onto but him. He is the sturdy oak, and she the sinuous, climbing vine—the perfect, dainty object to accentuate his rugged self-possession.<sup>28</sup>

However, the group subsumed categorical opposition under an all-encompassing gender complementarity. To do this, they drew on both the Chinese gender symbolism of *yang* and *yin* and the popularized Freudian notion of adult heterosexual identity as developing from juvenile polymorphous eroticism, as evidenced in a verse that appeared in the *Free City News* two weeks before the pronouncement on style and guile quoted above. The verse suggested that the categorical differences of body and temperament tangible in the mature, sexed adult arose from a natural process that transformed the ambisexual child, tipping the original balance of latent masculine and feminine traits toward one or another sex, without entirely eradicating the other:

woman is manself beauty proven  
 body celebration food life land  
 union sky earth  
 open mirror  
 man is womans strength shown<sup>29</sup>

Familiar to Jungians, New Agers, and the mythopoetic men's movement, this notion that every man carries within himself a vestigial feminine side, and every woman, a vestigial masculine, guided the Diggers and Free Families away from a questioning of gender as culturally constructed, and hence, political. If the sexes mirrored one another as *yin* and *yang*, then the restoration of man and woman to their authentic, "natural" state of harmony through the implementation of a *free* economy was the only step required to resolve the battle of the sexes debated in the mass media of the postwar era. If, as the anarchists claimed, industrial civilization had thrust upon men forms of productive labor that robbed them of their masculine autonomy, and had saddled women with frigidly asexual, status-conscious forms of reproductive labor that stunted their artistry, then all that was necessary to dispel the alienation of both sexes was a sexual division of labor, and a liberated sexuality, grounded in the principle of *free*. Let's consider the sexual division of labor first.

### **The "Free" Sexual Division of Labor**

To set the sexual division of labor among the Diggers and Free Families in context, it helps to ask, What did the most dedicated hippies see as women's intrinsic capacities? Examination of the countercultural earth-mother archetype proves helpful here. To generalize broadly, mystically inclined hippies tended to characterize the feminine side of the *yin-yang* duality as possessing a pacifistic

fertility that connected women directly to divine sources of cosmic energy. In the pages of the *Oracle*, we find a photograph of a nude woman in lotus position, suckling a child against a psychedelic background suggestive of an aura. In part 2, we will encounter mystical representations of childbirth in which halos adorn the laboring mother, newborn child, midwife, and supportive husband, very much as in conventional Christian depictions of the Nativity.<sup>30</sup>

The Diggers' version of the earth mother emphasized the "crazy-bell" carnality of the street-wise "bad girl"—think, for example, of the costumed Phyllis Wilner, standing on the back of a Hell's Angels motorcycle, wailing "Free-e-e-e-e-e-e-e!" while holding a placard reading "NOW!" Or imagine the company of scantily clad sirens assembled by Peter Berg and Judy Goldhaft, performing a belly dance on the back of a flatbed truck slowly traversing the business district of San Francisco, inviting men to lick butter laced with hashish from their extended fingers.<sup>31</sup>

In the postwar debate on whether women should devote themselves entirely to homemaking and childrearing, or combine reproductive and remunerated labor, the Diggers thought it appropriate for their more carnal version of the earth mother to "do it all." When interviewer Leonard Wolf asked Lenore Kandel, "What about a profession for a woman?" she responded that women deserved opportunities for full professional and artistic development and expression. However, Kandel assured Wolf that these ambitions did not displace women's fundamental desire for feminine fulfillment. "I'm a writer, but I'm a woman. And I wouldn't sacrifice the woman part of it for the writing part of it." Referring partly to her work on the free food, and partly to her household support of fellow Diggers, she observed, "I spend a lot of the time in the kitchen, I feed a lot of people all the time. . . . I don't see why I can't do it all. I think it's absolutely essential." Similarly, she explained, washing dishes did not necessarily effeminate a man, so long as he did his duty to the "tribe": hunting, providing, and protecting the household against enemies. Indeed, the urban-dwelling Kandel's invocation of the tribe, like Grogan's story of wilderness initiation, clearly indicates the guidance that the group took from their romantic understanding of Native American lifeways.<sup>32</sup>

During their time in San Francisco, the Diggers and Free City Collective established a fairly coherent sexual division of labor that involved women "doing it all." Women of the core group spent long hours in the kitchen alongside Kandel, but they also joined her in diverse artistic pursuits. Kandel had achieved recognition as a poet. She, Eileen Ewing, and several other Digger women performed as belly dancers at Digger happenings and elsewhere. At least one may have earned cash by performing as a topless dancer in San Francisco bars.<sup>33</sup> Elsa Marley, wife of dock worker Richard Marley (a longtime friend of Bill Fritsch), was

an accomplished abstract painter. Several Digger women, including Judy Goldhaft, Ewing, and Gail "Geba" Greenberg, continued to develop the ancient technique of tie-dyeing as an art form that, like the swirling colors of the light shows at rock concerts, evoked the visual hallucinations of the LSD experience.<sup>34</sup>

Digger women participated in the group's long-term projects as well. Initially, Grogan and Murcott handled all phases of the distribution of free food in Golden Gate Park described in chapter 1. It was not long, though, before a "half-dozen young women . . . volunteered to take over the cooking indefinitely." As the project assumed a routine status, women moved into procurement as well. Coyote recalls that the working-class men at the city's wholesale produce markets were far more likely to donate food to women than to able-bodied men, and so the group depended heavily on the women's success. Indeed, it appears from Grogan's remarks about Bill Fritsch's exceptional dedication to the project (noted earlier) that women rather quickly became the most reliable hands in maintaining this crucial (because highly visible) form of Digger *free* throughout the fall and winter of 1966–67.<sup>35</sup> 34

Similarly, work at the Trip without a Ticket entailed tedious physical labor, interrupted at a moment's notice by theatrical improvisation as a life-actor when "customers" called. Berg, Coyote, and Fritsch participated with some regularity, but Judy Goldhaft recalls working there daily "five days a week for months." As with the free food, women's labor provided the continuity that sustained the Diggers' public visibility.<sup>36</sup> 35

One could further extend this list of involvements. The point, however, is that during the San Francisco period, at a time when newspapers routinely segregated help-wanted listings by gender, Digger women painted, wrote, and danced while maintaining households and cooking the free food that men delivered to the park every day. While certainly, other American women also combined productive work, artistic creativity, and reproductive labor, the Digger milieu gave this combination a political and cultural legitimacy frequently lacking under conventional social arrangements. 36

At the same time, however, Digger women were "doing it all" without the benefit of a parallel commitment on the part of their anarchist brothers. As was common elsewhere in American society, Digger men occasionally helped with reproductive labor, cooking, massaging a partner's aching feet, and fetching groceries. Yet the men also expected, and claimed, a greater share of time for leisure, artistic pursuits, and sociability than could women. Unlike some of their nineteenth-century communal forebears, the Diggers and Free Families were not inveterate record- and calendar-keepers, so we lack the documents that would facilitate quantitative analysis of the women's "second shift." The best evidence of the imbalance of the sexual division of labor comes from former members' 37

testimony, which I will present shortly. It is useful to note, first, that in at least two branches of the Free Families, relocation to rural communes after the summer of 1968 tested some women members' faith that *free* would restore balance to male-female relationships.

From Eileen Ewing's perspective, life at the semirural Red House commune in Forest Knolls, a half-hour drive north from the Golden Gate Bridge, at first showed promise as a realization of the "Mutants Commune" vision of communalism superseding the nuclear family. Ron and Marsha Thelin had purchased the property, a single-family residence with outbuildings, during the heyday of the Psychedelic Shop. Ron joined the Free City Collective at some point, perhaps after the Death of Hippie celebration in October 1967, and Collective members moved in, one by one, converting the various outbuildings into residences. The population expanded to thirty. By all accounts, the overall level of friction remained manageable, even under such crowded conditions and despite a constantly shifting membership. Three women, dubbed "the Big Moppers"—Nina Blasenheim, Marsha Thelin, and Joanna Rinaldi—cooperated closely to manage household labor, their combined influence setting the tone for the rest. Their authority was augmented by the welfare checks they received, which provided a steady trickle of cash for the commune.<sup>37</sup>

The three received welfare checks because they had children; other women in the household, understanding this communal experiment as entailing a collective commitment to the care of its children, felt sufficiently secure to have babies of their own. Some couples in the group, such as Coyote and Ewing, Kent Minault and Nina Blasenheim, and Vinnie and Joanna Rinaldi, were commonly perceived as mated, whether or not legally married. But some single women extended the logic of the group's rejection of monogamy to the bearing of children without a long-term mate. A decade earlier, young, white, unwed mothers would have faced stark choices between illegal abortion and temporary banishment to maternity homes. The counterethics of hippiedom, faith in communal support, the availability of welfare benefits, and greater control over fertility afforded by reliable contraception combined in the late 1960s to facilitate the Red House experiment in communal parenting.<sup>38</sup>

As Barry Laffan has observed, the anarchistic communes of the 1960s and 1970s weathered cycles of florescence and entropy; the last to leave a declining commune tended to be those with nowhere else to go. Eileen Ewing remarks that one could gauge the cohesiveness of a particular commune by assessing the orderliness of its kitchen; and by 1971, when many of the more energetic, committed members had moved on, the Red House's sink telegraphed the apathy of those who remained. The Thelins, returning from a period spent with a guru from India, ejected the stragglers and ended the free-form experiment.<sup>39</sup>

The Olema commune, which was the next way-station for this branch of the Free Families, never achieved the level of goodwill among members nor the stabilizing influence that the "Big Moppers" lent to the Red House. Ewing says that the kitchen barometer told the tale: some members soon undermined agreements to rotate kitchen duties by eating on their own schedules and ignoring the accumulation of dirty dishes. This labor fell, by default, to those who could least tolerate the mess—more often women than men. Ewing recalls hurling dirty dishes out the door one morning in a rage, having awakened, and not for the first time, to find in shambles a kitchen she had cleaned the night before. She recalls, with great fondness, the thoughtfulness of an effeminate male visitor who cleaned the entire kitchen, including its mud-caked floor—and, as an added touch, strewed rose petals about the room.<sup>40</sup>

According to Ewing, the Olema kitchen was occasionally the scene of sharp antagonisms among women residents. Turnover in the commune was high, and tempers flared more often there than they had at the Red House. The Hell's Angels visited with some frequency, treating the rural location as something of a rest-and-recreation area behind the lines of their turf wars with other gangs. Some single women sought protection, or an augmentation of their standing, or both, through sexual involvement with high-status males, whether or not the latter were the mates of other women residents, leading to flare-ups of intense animosity. These divisions wreaked havoc on women's capacity to care for their own children and sharply diminished their ability and willingness to extend help to other mothers, a critical feature of the original vision of communal family.<sup>41</sup>

How do we reconcile Coyote's account of generally civil morning negotiations at Olema with Ewing's emphasis on conflict? We might resist the urge to do so—these are individual accounts of a complex reality. At present, we lack sufficient evidence to test individual members' stories. Furthermore, the limits of individual perspective, explored so elegantly in Akira Kurosawa's *Rashomon*, suggest that individual recollections of events often cannot be entirely reconciled. I would point out, however, that the two accounts are also not entirely at odds. Both suggest a relatively high level of conflict at Olema; Ewing's brief recollections call our attention to the most important moments of conflict, when power dynamics within the group became clear. Coyote, while not ignoring those moments, attempts to balance these with gestures toward less dramatic interludes, which give us a sense of how the commune held together for over two years, from late 1968 to 1971. Had relationships at Olema remained at a permanent boil, the commune could not have endured. We should also note that Coyote's account of the morning negotiation occurs at a point in his narrative after the arrival of a group called the Gypsy Truckers in the autumn of 1969. That group's winter-long presence appears to have stabilized the commune for a time.<sup>42</sup>

Amid the instability of Olema, the pattern of women "doing it all," established during the San Francisco period, endured as this branch's sexual division of labor, partly because women there lacked the solidarity to forge an alternative. It was not until some of the former residents of Olema and the Red House regrouped at the Turkey Ridge farm in eastern Pennsylvania in 1972 that an alternate pattern appeared. When the Turkey Ridgers committed themselves to aiding a local farmer, a friend of the Cohon family who was unable to attend to his dairy operation due to a broken back, the demands on the communards' limited labor-power forced the group to resort to a rotation system. Each adult—men, finally, as well as women—took a day-long turn in the household, minding children and cooking, while everyone else, including women, spent the day in the fields. It is quite telling that Coyote ruefully remembers his initiation into full responsibility for the household for a day as a "wrenching awakening" to the difficulties of such work; both he and Ewing recall that the women found his belated realization underwhelming.<sup>43</sup>

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After decades of scholarly attention to the sexual division of labor, it is instructive to work our way back from present-day awareness to the perspective of these historical agents by asking: Given the tenacity with which these two branches (Black Bear Ranch being one, and the Red House, Olema, and Turkey Ridge communes being the other) held to the original Digger division of labor, why did women find them attractive enough to join? The answers depend partly on the period under discussion. During the Diggers' urban phase, the women's belief that they were participating in the invention of a new and more egalitarian society in which their creative capacities might gain greater social recognition may have offered hope that the frustrations and inequities of the present might be relieved in a utopian future. Furthermore, the flexibility, pooled resources, and sociability of communal life partially offset the burdens and tedium of housework. For women determined to avoid repeating their mothers' lives, the Digger milieu might well have seemed a promising alternative.<sup>44</sup>

A pattern prevalent in the New Left may also have found its parallel in this part of the counterculture during the early years. Among the Diggers, as in the New Left, a significant and influential minority of participants were red-diaper babies—the children of leftist and formerly leftist parents.<sup>45</sup> At least one woman active in the Free Families, Harriet Beinfield, has spoken of her time in the group as a search for resolution to profoundly conflicting signals she received from her family and from mass culture. She says that she and her friend Geba Greenberg had grown up with a sense that they, like their activist female forebears, could participate vigorously in the world around them. Yet the seemingly homogeneous world of the post–World War Two suburbs imparted a sense of being outsiders. Even at the point when they remained unsure of what they stood *for*, the two young women

knew, from observing their alienating surroundings, that they "did not aspire to become the small-waisted wives of doctors, lawyers, or corporate chiefs."<sup>46</sup> Perhaps many red-diaper women like Beinfield and Greenberg felt not only that they worked to advance a cause, but also that, in the process, they sought to avoid their mothers' frustrated visions of women's equality within movements for social transformation.<sup>47</sup>

These advantages, if measured against the options for women in straight society *as Digger women perceived them at the time*, may also explain why several former Digger women continue to stress what they see as the gender egalitarianism of the group, despite widespread criticism of Movement sexism since the late 1960s. Historian Michael William Doyle interviewed a number of women members of the core group who addressed these issues. He chooses his qualifiers carefully when summarizing their views: 47

The women who were members of, or were otherwise involved with the F[ree] C[ity] C[ollective] *do not uniformly agree* that the men's behavior was *reflexively* sexist. Judy Goldhaft identified four women including herself who were accorded respect and unquestioned equality by even the most dominant males in the collective. Joanna Rinaldi . . . considered herself an ideologically committed feminist who declared that her autonomy allowed her to live any way she chose. Her choice was to embrace childrearing and housekeeping—traditional roles in a decidedly unconventional setting: a communal household presided over by a three-woman matriarchy [the "Moppers"]. Destiny Kinal chalked up to "tribalism" the tendency for FCC members of both sexes to embrace a more normative sexual division of labor.

Doyle concludes that the modes of social organization employed by the Free City Collective seemed to offer these women a "desirable alternative to the nuclear family," even though, as he notes, "gender roles . . . remained strikingly constant between the two forms."<sup>48</sup>

Speaking at a workshop in 1982, Judy Goldhaft warned latter-day readers of the Digger handbills that "the verbiage of that literature . . . will look a little sexist or a little antique. It was written in the street language of the time." In her view, this language merely reflected an unexamined attitude without deeper material consequences. "I don't think the Digger movement was a sexist movement. I did a lot of stuff that I wanted to do: I was one of the leaders. So my advice to anybody reading that literature is, remember that it was 1966."<sup>49</sup> 48

My impression is that women who joined the Free Families after the San Francisco period tended not to have been red-diaper babies. Nevertheless, many of the same attractions and motivations drew them into the communal underground. Faith in an eventual brighter future kept at least some of them hanging on through the instability of life at Olema, and at Black Bear Ranch, a commune founded in the fall of 1968 at an abandoned mining camp in remote Siskiyou 49

County, near the California-Oregon border. From 1968 to 1974, it was home to as many as eighty and as few as a dozen Free Families members—and even, in the early days, a few Black Panther allies. But there were also negative factors that kept women at the communes. Ewing testifies to the difficulties of leaving the group with children in tow: at any given moment, a calculation of short-term economic tradeoffs made staying in the group a logical choice. The emotional costs of staying were high, but so were the costs of leaving. Ewing had built close ties to those with whom she had shared the dream of realizing the *free* economy. Leaving meant accepting the loss of that dream and the identity that went with it. Before she could leave, she had to be very sure that she could no longer stay—and that determination took time.<sup>50</sup>

In his early retrospective appraisals of gender relations within the Free Families, Peter Coyote adopted a position quite unlike Ewing's, and far closer to Goldhaft's. In 1989 he argued that he and his brothers had been accused of sexism by unnamed parties, but that in fact, in matters of fundamental importance—economic power and decision-making—the group practiced a substantive, if imperfect, gender egalitarianism in which masculine egoism proved merely superstructural, because

the women had all the authority that we [men] did. . . . It was no fun to live anywhere with an angry woman. . . . So, accommodations always occurred. The men tended to be stud peacocks and flaunted and puffed more than the women. But our authority was not based on ownership or status or bringing in the bacon. The "bacon," more often than not, might have been food stamps . . . that one of the women had brought in. Now, thirty people might live in a house that one welfare check paid for—but still, it was a woman that got it.<sup>51</sup>

This perspective parallels Engels' conviction that gender equality reigned under primitive communism, when men and women coexisted as equals in mutual economic interdependency.<sup>52</sup> Socialist feminists have extended Engels' argument to include proletarian and even enslaved wives and daughters, in cases where their households remained sites of primary productive labor.<sup>53</sup> We might say, then, that Coyote, Goldhaft, and Kinal advanced an anarchist version of this reasoning.

More recently, however, Coyote appears to have modified this view. Research for his memoir *Sleeping Where I Fall* (1998) revealed to him the deep anger and pain that accompanied some women's recollections of life in the Free Families.

Joanna Rinaldi remembers: "Even though the women may have embraced and enjoyed their tasks, they were not tasks that were coveted." She is right, of course. All of [men's] "appreciation" of the women and their work did not extend to valuing that work as dearly as our own. With hindsight, our division of labor seems archaic, particularly for a visionary community. The Digger scene was quite



conventional in terms of men's and women's roles, until the labors at Turkey Ridge demanded radical changes.<sup>54</sup>

The key factor in this shift is Coyote's broadening of his definition of *value* to include men's attitude toward the work that women routinely did. Feminist materialists have pushed this kind of analysis even further by critiquing the Marxist assignment of value solely to processes involved in the production of capital. When we expand political economy to encompass women's unwaged labor, including the multitude of forms of emotional labor (which Anthony McMahon gathers under the rubric of "taking care of men"), then it becomes clear, according to sociologist Anna G. Jónasdóttir, that "men . . . continually appropriate significantly more of women's life force and capacity than they themselves give back to women." In this way, men gain what feminist materialists call the *patriarchal dividend*: through appropriation, they "build themselves up as powerful social beings and continue to dominate women through their constant accumulation," such that "if capital is accumulated, alienated labor," then male supremacy "is accumulated, alienated love."<sup>55</sup>

The very feature of Digger communalism that attracted women hoping to avoid repeating their mothers' lives—the group's encouragement of women to "do it all"—opened the way for Digger men to alienate their sisters' love. Men fashioned the "peacock feathers" that made them swashbuckling figures on the countercultural landscape by drawing on this store of gendered capital.

For the Diggers and for Americans generally, cooking, cleaning, childcare, and food procurement were not the only sources of that capital. Women's sexual labor—their sexual love—formed a part of their work of taking care of men, and thus sustained the flaunting and puffing so integral to Digger masculinity. A close reading of the group's participation in the sexual revolution will lend further support to a feminist-materialist analysis of Digger gender hierarchy.

### **"She's Not Property": The Digger "Sexual Revolution"**

Let's return, for a moment, to the Free City pronouncement that "woman is manself beauty proven / . . . man is womans strength shown." This principle of gender complementarity could have inspired any of a wide range of gender configurations of sexual practice drastically at odds with the sexual conventions of the mid-1960s United States. For instance, it might have legitimized same-sex attraction, or transvestism, as revolutionary practices. Occasionally these perspectives did appear in Digger and Free City writings, and they did find somewhat broader expression at Black Bear Ranch between 1972 and 1974.<sup>56</sup> As we have already seen, however, most men in the group far more often equated homosexuality with the degeneracy of men who surrendered their autonomy to the regime of private property and bourgeois morality.<sup>57</sup> Thus for this group, as for many other radicals of the 1960s, the sexual revolution involved the

derepression of heteronormative sexuality.<sup>58</sup> How did they enact their vision of gender complementarity in sexual terms?

The Diggers developed prescriptions for relations between the sexes that followed directly from their bohemian understanding of gender and their anarchist analysis of property as the linchpin of all oppression. They argued that in private life, as in the public realm of politics, bourgeois property relations determined the structure of relationships, giving rise to unrealistic expectations of sexual fidelity within formal marriage. Coyote, when asked if women had the same right to promiscuity as men, and whether his own partner's infidelity might disturb him, responded that "that seems somehow the wrong way to talk about it. It's like . . . *she's not property*. She makes her own decisions."<sup>59</sup> 57

Thus the Diggers renewed some aspects of nineteenth-century anarchism's resistance to marriage as the unwarranted intervention of church and state in matters of the heart. With his characteristic flair, Murcott pronounced the "1919 007 betty crocker miss clairol family institution" a "death form," and dismissed "all that horseshit about leaving your wife, as if there weren't at least one million other women you could groove with." Within communes, he argued, sexual relationships could form without resort to contractual marriage or property ownership. However, the Diggers diverged from the historical mainstream of free-love philosophy in one respect: most nineteenth-century American anarchists rejected both legal marriage *and* promiscuity, as did the prominent anarchist Angela Heywood. She regarded sexuality as "fraught with immeasurable power for good or ill." On that basis, she argued for sexual self-discipline, while insisting that "nothing in its proper time, place, or use, is 'common' or 'unclean,'" and that sexuality constituted "a divine ordinance, elegantly natural from any eye-glance to the vital action of penis and womb, in personal exhilaration or for reproductive uses."<sup>60</sup> 58

In place of sexual exclusivity, autonomous life-actors owed one another absolute honesty. Kandel held that "if a man and a woman are together, and one of them cheats on the other, well, that's a betrayal. . . . But if they come out straight and say, 'Look I love you, but I can't help it, I'll make it with somebody else sometime,' that's the way it is. It may be painful, but it can be worked out because it's right up front." When interviewer Leonard Wolf asked her, "But what if he can't take it?" she responded, "Then he breaks. Do you love him like a mother? Because that's the way a mother acts toward her children. That's not what a woman and man are supposed to be. I don't feel that a man should marry his mother."<sup>61</sup> 59

This prescription for sexual relationships seems clear enough, but when it comes to documenting the way that the Diggers and the sprawling, heterogeneous Free Families lived out *free* sexuality, the sources become too narrow to permit reliable 60

generalization. The Digger core group's diaries and correspondence are not yet archived, and these anarchists have trusted relatively few scholars sufficiently to grant extended interviews on this or any other subject. Moreover, apart from some contributions to the Black Bear commune's two anthologies, the group's memoirs have been authored by men. Years ago women of the Families worked on a collective memoir of their own, but publishers have proved reluctant. As time has passed and prospects for publication have dimmed, their motivation to revisit painful memories that they have already worked through, as part of a long process of post-countercultural recovery, has understandably declined. I still hope that they may find a way.<sup>62</sup>

At Black Bear Ranch, some members quickly dove into what one of them called a game of "musical beds," while others, particularly some long-term couples, chose not to participate, resisting even the attempts of a self-styled "Red Guard faction" to dissolve all dyadic bonds in a campaign to "smash monogamy."<sup>63</sup> Somewhat later, a small group of Black Bears, influenced by contact with the radical-feminist and gay-liberation movements, attempted, with only partial success, to renegotiate the nonmonogamy principle and the presumption of heteronormativity that the group had brought to their remote location.<sup>64</sup> However, as far as I know, the branch of the Free Families that occupied the Red House, Olema, and Turkey Ridge communes never witnessed similar efforts to rewrite the script of the sexual revolution. Coyote's memoir provides one perspective; two women residents have afforded me ways to balance and evaluate his testimony. What I can say, based on the available evidence, is that the Digger "no-rules" prescription for sexual derepression proved stubbornly persistent, despite the fact that jealousy roiled everyday social relations within both branches of the Families throughout their existence. Before attempting to analyze that persistence, some examples of the jealousy it inspired are in order.

One resident of Black Bear, who took the name Estrella Morning Star, recalls the chilly reception she received from women with steady male partners when she arrived at the wilderness commune. They feared that her presence would tempt their men to divide both their sexual attention and their assistance with household reproduction—for example, with a new sexual partner in the offing, they might be more willing to chop firewood for a new flame's household than for their mate's. Ewing testifies to resenting newly arrived single females at Olema. When men actually did divide their sexual attentions, intense jealousy was often a result, as when a Black Bear man attempted to live out the sexual-revolutionary proposition that one could love more than one person at a time. The "triangle" proved unworkable, despite the best efforts of all participants. Men experienced intense jealousy as well. Don Monkerud left Black Bear for several days while recuperating from repeated sightings of his partner engaging sexually with other men during one of the Ranch's Dionysian equinox celebrations. Late in the

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commune's existence, Martín Linhart found himself attempting to separate two brawling men interested in the same sexual partner.<sup>65</sup>

63 Jealousy also figures as an important theme in available accounts of the Red House–Olema–Turkey Ridge branch of the Families. Eileen Ewing and Peter Coyote first became mates (a word that members sometimes used in reference to ongoing sexual relationships) during the summer of 1967, as he was completing his last engagement with the Mime Troupe. Their accounts of the relationship differ in many ways, but both agree that it was fraught with tension, a major source of which was the principle of nonmonogamy. Ewing, drawn to the group's vision of communal family, understood and publicly articulated the nonmonogamy principle in 1968, but interpreted it as broad enough to accommodate mates' free choice to promise exclusive attention to one another: for her, when a relationship was sufficiently fulfilling, one partner was enough.<sup>66</sup>

64 This seems to have been her initial hope for the relationship, but as Coyote admits in his memoir, and as Ewing states emphatically in her communications, Coyote sent mixed signals, sometimes fostering that hope but frequently dashing it. In light of this equivocation, it is instructive that he recalls one of his paramours as "a sunny girl with a captivating smile, an abundance of sexual energy"—and, presumably in contrast to Ewing, one who made "minimal demands." At times, Ewing tried to accommodate Coyote's pursuit of Murcott's "million other women" by conforming her feelings to the nonmonogamy principle; more often, finding his behavior a betrayal of her understanding of their relationship, she attempted to thwart his sexual adventures. After years of struggle, she finally gave up on the relationship and left Turkey Ridge. After Ewing's departure, Vinnie Rinaldi, Joanna's mate, suffered heartbreak at the sight of Coyote's dalliance with a woman who had never requited his secret longing for her. According to Coyote, the resulting animosities led to the dissolution of this branch of the Families. I do not intend to suggest that Coyote was the sole source of problems with jealousy in this branch of the Families; it is simply the case that most of the evidence that we possess at present concerns him.<sup>67</sup>

65 One way to approach this evidence is to compare outcomes regarding nonmonogamy to the expectations implicit in its formulation. Standing in Murcott's shoes in 1968, we might have expected jealousy to subside over time, after an initial period of jarring dislocation and difficult individual adjustments. The evidence, however, suggests that jealousy persisted at a high level, and may even have increased as the Diggers' more decentralized and diverse patterns of residence in San Francisco gave way to the formation of rural communes. In the countryside the birth of children increased the demand for reproductive labor, and women needed reliable support for their efforts to cope with the increasing workload. The shared belief that communal living could replace the nuclear family

raised women's expectations of such support. However, especially at Olema, in the absence of "center women" like the Red House's Big Moppers, individual women in long-term relationships turned to their mates to fill the gap—and men's actual contributions fell far short. When these shortchanged women saw their mates chasing other women, and other women poaching their mates, their response, logically enough, was jealousy reinforced by need.<sup>68</sup>

This state of affairs might have prompted members of the group to ask: If jealousy amounted to little more than an atavistic expression of outmoded property relations, why did it, and the desire of many women and not a few men for long-term relationships, persist so stubbornly? Could the persistence of jealousy and dyadic bonding indicate that these might be impulses at least as authentic as the impulse toward sexual variety?<sup>69</sup> Why privilege one set of impulses, and not the other? Even though these anarchists defined freedom as the individual's right to heed his or her innermost desires, the consensus of the group with regard to *free* sexuality continued to hold: jealousy and sexual exclusivity were evidence not of authentic feeling, but of the depth of Americans' social conditioning to property relations. Some Black Bear women tried to force a reconsideration of sexual-revolutionary principles in the early 1970s, but their success was limited. At Olema, it appears that attempts toward such reconsideration never took place.

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How might we interpret this privileging of the impulse toward sexual variety? I suggest that this outcome was strongly overdetermined from two directions. The Free Families, along with others who in Beth Bailey's terms practiced sexual transgression as a weapon of cultural revolution, inherited their distrust of bourgeois sexual "uptightness" from the Beats. The constant rearticulation of this distrust within Movement circles in the 1960s and 1970s made it a cardinal assumption of most radical men's efforts to create counterinstitutions.

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At the same time, the unexamined gender socialization of members of the Free Families overdetermined their persistent adherence to 1960s conceptions of "free love." Women in the Families faced constraints on their participation in the shaping of the group's utopian vision, including the meaning of sexual freedom. John Berger's work on the dynamics of gendered presence suggests that the requirements of maintaining a feminine social presence attenuated even the capacity of socially adept, highly articulate Digger women to operate as heavies. Men, says Berger, embody their power directly: "a man's presence is dependent on the promise of power which he embodies"; it "suggests what he can do to you or for you." (Recall Bill Fritch's comment, that he and Grogan "pinned" one another immediately.) Women, says Berger, must adapt to the social circumstance of "being born into the keeping of men." Thus, while seeking to embody what power they have (for instance, as did Lenore Kandel in her splashy

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entrance at the Artists' Liberation Front), they must also modulate that embodiment according to how men will appraise it. "One might simplify this," says Berger, "by saying: *men act* and *women appear*. Men look at women. Women watch themselves being looked at." Thus, not only does the man objectify a woman with his sexually interested gaze; the woman, by internalizing the male gaze, "turns herself into an object—and, most particularly, an object of vision: a sight."<sup>70</sup>

The necessity that women must engage in a double move of monitoring their feminine self-presentation while also embodying their power meant that Digger women participated in the face-to-face process of shaping the group's cognitive map—including the shaping of its principles of *free* sexuality—in a different way, and at a decided disadvantage. Coyote's broad-brush recollection of a gendered division of discourse in the Digger core group's early conversations "around the Cribari wine jug of the evening," with the women talking mostly among themselves, at times barely concealing their amusement at their brothers' competitive intellectual jousting, tends to confirm this.<sup>71</sup> So, too, does former Black Bear member Kathy Nolan's recollection of that commune's planning sessions:

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Back in S.F., there were meetings at the Good Karma Café—the men all vying to be "heavies." Rose Lee Ikler was the only female "heavy" [who] comes to mind. She was certainly one of the movers and shakers, and somehow always knew how to do that and still be her sexy, mysterious self.

Richard Marley arrived in the thick of it, a major political theorist. Those guys! No wonder they strutted as they thrust forth their visions. What an opportunity it was, to . . . contemplate starting a new life in which you-me-we all wrote the book. Pretty heady stuff!<sup>72</sup>

This does *not* mean that women never influenced the process of theorizing. As the audience for the strutting stud peacocks, their applause or derision did matter. Yet they were not situated to challenge men's theorization of sexual freedom in terms of masculine self-interest. By ascribing to women a sexuality of promiscuous nonpossession, the outlaw-theorists of the Digger sexual revolution created a social environment that inhibited women's ability to articulate their own authentic needs and impulses. The continued insistence that women like Ewing should reexamine their feelings of "possessiveness," rather than question the sexual-revolutionary principle of nonpossession, meant that the full depth of women's suffering remained nearly invisible, *even to its witnesses*. It took organized effort by women—and the leverage afforded by recourse to outside resources of feminist theory—for them to finally articulate their needs and their anguish within the Free Families. We see the struggle involved in a report from an urban branch of the Families, located in Berkeley:

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At first it was just monogamy itself that was wrong; couples, even a woman and man who spent a lot of time together, were suspect. So some of us (primarily men) developed the idea that to smash monogamy meant to relate to several women intimately, rather than just one . . . , and some communal orgy ideas. A commune meant, to some, communal sex.

Men had very different expectations than women: men usually initiated . . . sexual liaisons. At this stage, we thought that we should be open to acting on any attractions that we felt. To act upon them was to be spontaneous, not to act upon them was to be uptight, and we felt that we should be spontaneous at any cost. Many of us, especially the women, felt that there was something wrong with this, but didn't know how to express it, or were afraid to. We went in for a lot of bourgeois-baiting at that time. A lot of bitterness and pain has come out of those days.

The anonymous author described the group's new understanding of revolutionary sexuality as no longer a rejection of monogamy *per se* but rather of its conventional forms, which alienated mates from one another and perpetuated the oppression of women.<sup>73</sup>

### **Outlaw Manhood and Male Supremacy**

Because they understood freedom in anarchistic terms, as the absence of all hierarchy and rules, the Diggers and Free Families organized social and sexual reproduction around their choice to resist the regime of money and property. Digger masculinity emerged from the group's efforts to replace bourgeois society with anarchic, primitive communism. Automation would replace human industrial drudgery, and work would become a groove—a nonalienated, artistic pursuit. Similarly, in the communal household, the free agent whose love and assistance sprang from spontaneous regard, not from the compulsions of status and custom, would replace the nuclear family and monogamous marriage. For the Diggers and Free Families, the free man was the outlaw who lounged on the street corner or hustled resources according to his own inner impulses, and who proudly defended his freedom and his communal family with weapons if the need arose. This understanding of authentic manhood deeply informed the group's dealings with the rest of the counterculture and the straight society. Expressing scorn for the effete masculinity of thralls to property was one of their primary tactics as they tried to lead other hippies toward maximum individual autonomy and responsibility, and away from the *Oracle* mystics' search for a fountainhead of natural law in the metaphysical realm.

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Committed deeply to the presumption of gender as a "natural" characteristic, the Diggers and Free Families created a distinctive form of countercultural manhood; in turn, their commitment to manhood shaped their politics and daily life in profound ways. The intensity of their efforts to build a counterculture meant that

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they engaged with gender at every turn, and could not take it for granted to the same degree as could their straight white peers. But they were not gender radicals; their crafting of a variant masculinity did not usher in a sea change in gender relations. While their lifeway offended and angered many Americans, the Free Families never escaped the battle of the sexes, any more than did their straight detractors. Analysis of their sexual division of labor and their prosecution of the Digger sexual revolution shows how far short of substantive gender equality they fell.

Their significance in the history of American gender relations lies, then, in the fact that their colorful, chaotic experiments held up a mirror to the larger society. Neither custom nor law held any American men accountable for an equal share of reproductive labor. Having discarded matrimony and fidelity, Digger men were freer than most to seek the sexual-revolutionary grail of unlimited sexual access to women—"sex without consequences," as it was called then. As a Free City author suggested in "Avatars of Delilah," many American men openly or secretly envied hip men's presumably more florid sexual lives. Yet the envious, by and large, did not flock to Free Families communes, because the actual living-out of sexual freedom was strenuous, and risky to one's financial solvency and social status. Those straight men who felt called to the quest had recourse to less demanding forms: the extramarital affair, the bachelor party, the pornographic magazine, prostitutes, sexual harassment, and even sexual assault. Digger men tried to live openly what straight men did furtively, or fantasized. To imagine America before the 1960s as a society where such transgressions were rare—as so many conservative pundits of the culture wars do these days—is to imagine our past the way it never was.<sup>74</sup>

Given that the grail of unlimited sexual access lies deeply embedded within our culture, it may prove difficult for future movements of cultural radicalism to resist the lure of sexual freedom in terms equivalent to those of the Diggers. Paula Kamen's research on the sexual behavior of young women in the 1990s uncovers what she calls a "sexual evolution." Understanding freedom and gender equality in terms of sexual as well as economic parity rather than revolutionary transformation of structure and values, Kamen's subjects have claimed for themselves the prerogative to build the kind of varied sexual résumé that Digger men boasted in the 1960s. Kamen warns that protagonists of "the sexual evolution . . . ha[ve] not yet overturned the basic male definitions of sex and sexual freedom," and eschew the kinds of political consciousness about sex-class and the need for solidarity that facilitated women's challenges to those male definitions at Black Bear and the Berkeley commune.<sup>75</sup>

If the sexual evolution is the harbinger of the future of sexual politics, then the aphorism attributed to Mark Twain, that history rhymes rather than repeats, may



hold considerable predictive power in this case—and many of the cautionary lessons of the Free Families experiment may go unheeded. But if we can remember the distance between the formal equality of Digger gender complementarity and the substantive inequality of their sexual culture and sexual division of labor, then perhaps future radicals can consider this line of experimentation satisfactorily explored and unpromising as a vehicle for a gender-radical break with the past. Perhaps, instead, they may begin where the Berkeley branch left off.

### Freedom and Limits

The Diggers and Free Families took freedom, defined as the absolute absence of limits, as far as dedicated cultural revolutionaries could. They discovered, through difficult experience, some absolute limits: that the demands of trying to reinvent culture from the ground up, in a single generation, could easily exceed individuals' capacity to endure hardship—lack of sleep, inadequate diet, emotional conflict, and other forms of stress. Many of the Digger core group resorted to a variety of hard drugs, including heroin, in order to cope with the strain. But this self-medication caught up with its practitioners at one time or another. For Grogan and several others, abuse of hard drugs eventually ended tragically, in death. Others suffered forms of LSD psychosis. Coyote endured two severe bouts of serum hepatitis.<sup>76</sup>

In the autumn of 1968, as Coyote convalesced at Olema from one of these bouts, he brooded over the contrast between his comrades' glowing vision of a world populated by robust life-actors and his own fragile state. If freedom really *was* the absence of all limits, then how could frail humans—so prone to disease, aging, and the consequences of overindulgence—ever be truly free? He consulted a shamanic healer, and as he regained his strength, he vowed to bring his daily practices into a more consistent relationship with his spiritual beliefs and to reduce his reliance on destructive drugs.<sup>77</sup>

Coyote's sickbed resolution went the way of many a New Year's pledge. Yet over time, the loss of friends, the collapse of Turkey Ridge, and his forging of a postcommunal identity in the world of paid work paved the way to a revision—*not* an abandonment or renunciation—of his former understanding of the meaning of freedom. He came to accept the fragility of the body and the inevitable interdependence of individuals who could not, in actuality, achieve Murcott's standard of masculine independence: "tak[ing] care of all his needs himself. Alone." These realizations led Coyote to an acceptance of the notion of a social contract more elaborate in structure than Digger absolute freedom. He came to believe that human existence requires acceptance of some definite structure of social relations, and that individual freedom acquires substantive meaning only within the limits of such structures.<sup>78</sup>

79 While Coyote convalesced at Olema, anthropologist Victor Turner pondered the role and limits of "anti-structure" within human cultures—those moments of ecstasy arising when a heterogeneous group of initiates, "ground down to a uniform condition" in the rite of passage, develop an intensely egalitarian comradeship he called *communitas*. The leading figures of British structural anthropology had dismissed ritual in general as the product of barbaric superstition, and reports of communal religious ecstasy as uncivilized chaos. Turner countered that *communitas* constituted a profound human need, and that the truly humane society balanced this moment of anti-structural social leveling with the demands of structure: ordered hierarchy, economy, custom, and law. Applying this insight to his own complex, highly industrialized society, Turner applauded as salutary hippies' groping efforts to restore the experience of *communitas* to a place of social honor.<sup>79</sup>

80 And yet, he argued, hippies often mistook *communitas* as the foundation for a transcendent social order and dismissed structure as archaic and repressive. Clearly, Olema residents tolerated inefficient daily negotiations over cash expenditures, the absence of a formal leader, and the friction caused by the nonmonogamy principle, because they judged that keeping structure to a minimum would hasten the day when the world's people would live perpetually in ecstatic communion. Grasping this, Turner cautioned that

Spontaneous *communitas* is a phase, a moment, not a permanent condition. The moment a digging stick is set in the earth, a colt broken in, a pack of wolves defended against, or a human enemy set by his heels, we have the germs of a social structure. This is not merely the set of chains in which men everywhere are, but the very cultural means that preserve the dignity and liberty, as well as the bodily existence, of every man, woman, and child. There may be manifold imperfections in the structural means employed and the ways in which they are used, but, since the beginnings of prehistory, the evidence suggests that such means are what makes man most evidently man.<sup>80</sup>

81 Since his departure from the Free Families in the mid-1970s, Coyote has studied Buddhism in order to understand freedom in relational terms: as arising from acknowledgment of the human need for both ecstatic *communitas* and ordered structure, as Turner would have it. He now views the idea of absolute freedom, of existence without limits, as "a kind of imperfect understanding, because it's only half the picture. The other half of the picture is complete and total interdependence. Within that there is some kind of freedom."<sup>81</sup>

82 Ironically, as Coyote ruminated at Olema and Turner elaborated his theory, a highly principled Haight-Ashbury spiritual seeker was developing a vehicle for social change featuring sharply defined limits. Where the Diggers sought freedom from all restraints, Stephen Gaskin taught that marriage, and sexuality within marriage, represented in microcosm the interplay of *yin* and *yang*, the universal

female and male principles—and transcendent harmony could result if both partners dedicated themselves to the task of perfecting their lifelong, monogamous relationship. For Gaskin, vows of marital fidelity and premarital chastity took on significance as spiritual commitments of the first order. This meant the renunciation of major elements of the sexual revolution—but not because straight authorities said so. While earthly law and morality might be erroneous and unjust, no one could ever hope to evade the universal law of karma: every action carried consequences for one's eternal soul, and for all other sentient beings trapped on the wheel of reincarnation.

Yet even for Gaskin, durable structures such as "tantric" marriage served the ultimate goal of achieving eternal *communitas*, a perfectionist state of ecstatic grace. He preached to the Haight that all human beings should take the vow of the *bodhisattva*, dedicating their lives not only to the Eightfold Path of Buddhism, but also to assisting others who had not yet attained enlightenment, a state which none could enter until all were ready to do so. 83

Still, because he accepted immediately the role of limits in social change that Coyote realized only gradually, Gaskin's successive vehicles toward utopia—the Monday Night Class, the Caravan, and The Farm—organized hip manhood in a form quite distinctive from that of the Digger and Free Families anarchists. In many ways, the two groups stood at opposite ends of a continuum of hippie masculinity. In the next section, I will explore how and why The Farm developed such a distinctive variety of hip manhood. 84

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#### Notes:

**Note 1:** Peter Coyote, interview with Etan Ben-Ami, Mill Valley, Calif., 12 January 1989; transcript online at [http://www.diggers.org/oralhistory/peter\\_interview.html](http://www.diggers.org/oralhistory/peter_interview.html) (accessed 9 January 2007), par. [56]. For a description of a moment of communal bonding, see Barry Laffan, *Communal Organization and Social Transition: A Case Study from the Counterculture of the Sixties and Seventies* (New York: P. Lang, 1997), 34–35. Laffan also notes (64–67) that communal life tended to reinforce shared beliefs among members. The Digger core group never lived under a single roof or on a single parcel of land, but the intensity of their work exerted some of the same influences.

**Note 2:** Peter Coyote, *Sleeping Where I Fall: A Chronicle* (Washington, D.C.: Counterpoint, 1998), 284. Although Rinaldi does not appear in Coyote's account until the post-Haight period, the anonymous author of an essay commemorating the tenth anniversary of the publication of the *Digger Papers* places Rinaldi among the Free City Collective in April 1968. See "Deep Tried Frees," *Kaliflower*, n.s., no. 3 (30 April 1978): [3]; Digger Archives; available online at <http://www.diggers.org/kaliflower/dtf.htm> (accessed 9 January 2007). As it happens, "Frees" relates yet another Rinaldi expedition to New York, this time to retrieve a printing press for the Free Print Shop in Berkeley. A photo of Rinaldi appears at [http://www.diggers.org/images/photos/20b\\_I.jpg](http://www.diggers.org/images/photos/20b_I.jpg); the same photo appears in *Sleeping*, between pages 178 and 179.

**Note 3:** Elaine Frantz Parsons, "Risky Business: The Uncertain Boundaries of Manhood in the Midwestern Saloon," *Journal of Social History* 34, no. 2 (Winter 2000): 287; Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, ed. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, 3 vols. (New York: Bedminster Press, 1968), 1:241.

**Note 4:** There is no evidence to suggest how Fritsch acquired these nicknames. It should be noted that "Sweet William" has been applied to men in widely separated times and places: e.g., Canadian jurist William Henry Draper (1801–74) and the son of Charles, Prince of Wales (1982– ), so it cannot be presumed to carry a single, stable meaning (*Pseudonyms and Nicknames Dictionary: A Guide to 80,000 Aliases, Appellations, [and] Assumed Names*, ed. Jennifer Mossman, 3d ed. [Detroit: Gale Research, 1987], s.v. "Sweet William"). Approached from a sex-roles perspective, the fact that "sweet" carries effeminate overtones in some contexts might seem to make it an incongruous nickname for the only Digger admitted to membership in the Hell's Angels. But once released from the rigidity of the sex-roles approach (in which manliness comprises a single set of attributes to which all men in a culture or subculture conform), it becomes possible to imagine more complex possibilities. Whatever qualities Fritsch's manly "sweetness" may have represented (if any—the usage could also have been ironic), they coexisted quite amicably with his capacity for violence, and those who shared the local knowledge that came with membership in the group apparently had no difficulty keeping the categories sorted.

**Note 5:** Peter Coyote, "Sweet William's Story," chap. 12 in *Sleeping*, 113–29; Emmett Grogan, *Ringolevio: A Life Played for Keeps* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1972), 258, 282.

**Note 6:** Coyote, interview with Ben-Ami, par. [60]. Coyote identifies the friend as Butcher in *Sleeping*, 323. Cf. Dominick Cavallo's discussion of the generational influences operative in the highly competitive New Left, in *A Fiction of the Past: The Sixties in American History* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), 8.

**Note 7:** Coyote, interview with Ben-Ami, par. [21]; Grogan, *Ringolevio*, 264.

**Note 8:** Coyote, *Sleeping*, 117.

**Note 9:** Artistic reputation alone, however, did not immediately earn Kandel status as a heavy among the Diggers. Her willingness to contribute to Digger street theater, to assist with projects such as the preparation of props for street happenings, and to associate with street people (including members of the Hell's Angels) as equals, made her a revolutionary artist in the eyes of other Digger heavies, and thus worthy of participation in the inner circle.

**Note 10:** Coyote, *Sleeping*, 117. My argument here draws on Timothy R. Mahoney's observations on the function of camaraderie among business rivals in antebellum Midwestern cities. Because personal fortunes depended in part on the economic success of the local economy as a whole, town boosters expended considerable effort to attract the most capable business people, professionals, and farmers to their towns, even though welcoming newcomers abetted potential competitors. See *Provincial Lives: Middle-Class Experience in the Antebellum Middle West* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1999), 81–83.

**Note 11:** Coyote, *Sleeping*, 115, 118–28. Coyote's account speaks only of an initiation period of seven months; I infer that this was after the Summer of Love, 1967, not before. This date coheres with the relative order in which Coyote lists the events narrated, 117–20.

**Note 12:** *Ibid.*, 67; emphases original.

**Note 13:** *Ibid.*, 22–31, 265, 272, and passim. He began to use the name *Coyote* when, after ingestion of peyote, his own footprints in the snow seemed to resemble those of the animal (*ibid.*, 65–66).

**Note 14:** The claims in this paragraph are mine, derived by reading between the lines of his memoir. The last claim, however, comes from an examination of Michael William Doyle's account of Free City activism, in "The Haight-Ashbury Diggers and the Cultural Politics of Utopia, 1965–1968" (Ph.D. diss., Cornell Univ., 1997), 235–341.

**Note 15:** Coyote, *Sleeping*, 96–98; quotation at 97–98. Coyote's choice of the highly gendered term *punk* is retrospective, not contemporary to the events he describes; still, it is telling that he chooses this term when remembering a moment when he feared he might project effeminate weakness by declining to attend. On *punk*, see the relevant entry in the *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, 2d ed. [CD-ROM, v. 1.11] (Oxford, U.K.: Oxford Univ. Press, 1994). Note that the *Dictionary's* editors connect the archaic usage, meaning "prostitute," with the modern, "a passive homosexual," thus heightening the

gendered character of the term.

**Note 16:** "COPS [Commune], As Reported by a Member," in *Utopia USA*, ed. Richard Fairfield (San Francisco: Alternatives Foundation, 1972), 174.

**Note 17:** Beth [L.] Bailey, "Sexual Revolution(s)," in *The Sixties: From Memory to History*, ed. David Farber (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1994), 239; emphasis original

**Note 18:** Coyote, *Sleeping*, 91–92.

**Note 19:** Mahoney, *Provincial Lives*, 88–100; quotation at 89. Nicknaming also figured in the Diggers' practice of life-acting: a nickname might serve as an emblem of the ideal self that members were expected to construct and enact in everyday life.

**Note 20:** *Ibid.*, 100–101; Coyote, *Sleeping*, 86.

**Note 21:** In a public discussion of Digger history, Judy Goldhaft claimed that leadership was project- and context-dependent; see Judy [Goldhaft] Berg and Peter Berg, "The Diggers," in *The History of Collectivity in the San Francisco Bay Area*, ed. John Curl, Judy [Goldhaft] Berg, and Allen Cohen (San Francisco: Homeward Press, 1982), 34–35. My consultation of sources corroborates her claim.

**Note 22:** Cavallo, *A Fiction of the Past*, 136.

**Note 23:** Coyote, *Sleeping*, 202–3. This investment of labor and time in order to conserve scarce cash resources resembles, in some ways, the economic strategies of many nineteenth-century households; see Jeanne Boydston, *Home and Work: Housework, Wages, and the Ideology of Labor in the Early Republic* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1990). Of course, the Free Family of Olema chose this mode of existence, while even those among Boydston's subjects who engaged in waged work could not avoid this strategy, because the purchasing power of prevailing wages could not replace the unwaged labor power that women and children provided to the household economy.

**Note 24:** Coyote, *Sleeping*, 179.

**Note 25:** The source is Coyote, interview with Ben-Ami, par. [40]; this interview dates from 1989, while Coyote's memoir, *Sleeping Where I Fall*, appeared a decade later. For examples of socialist-feminist attribution, see Deborah Gray White, *Ar'n't I a Woman? Female Slaves in the Plantation South* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1985); Jacqueline Jones, *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow: Black Women, Work, and the Family, from Slavery to the Present* (New York: Vintage, 1985); Christine Stansell, *City of Women: Sex and Class in New York, 1789–1860* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986); Sarah Deutsch, *No Separate Refuge: Culture, Class, and Gender on an Anglo-Hispanic Frontier in the American Southwest, 1880–1940* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1987); Irene Silverblatt, *Moon, Sun, and Witches: Gender Ideologies and Class in Inca and Colonial Peru* (Princeton Univ. Press, 1987); and Carol Devens, *Countering Colonization: Native American Women and Great Lakes Missions, 1630–1900* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1992).

**Note 26:** On "incommensurable sexes," see Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1990). Quotation from [Peter Coyote?], "Flower Power Smothers," *San Francisco Express Times* 1, no. 6 (29 February 1968): 8; authorship conditionally attributed by Doyle, "Diggers," 327.

**Note 27:** Tom Weir, photograph of Coyote and Eileen Ewing, 1967, reproduced in *Voices from the Love Generation*, ed. Leonard Wolf (Boston: Little, Brown, 1968), 110; and in Coyote, *Sleeping*, between pages 178 and 179.

**Note 28:** *Ibid.*

**Note 29:** "Eye ball confrontations," Free City handbill, ca. 14 February 1968, HSDR, folder 6, MS 3159, NBL-CHS.

**Note 30:** Michael Hilsenrad, "Madonna," in *The San Francisco Oracle, Facsimile Edition: The Psychedelic Newspaper of the Haight-Ashbury*, ed. Allen Cohen (Berkeley, Calif.:

Regent Press, 1991), 382; Ina May [Gaskin] and the Farm Midwives, *Spiritual Midwifery* (Summertown, Tenn.: Book Publishing Co., 1975), fold-out illustration between pages 252 and 253.

**Note 31:** Susan Keese, "Early History," in *Free Land, Free Love: Tales of a Wilderness Commune*, ed. Don Monkerud, Malcolm Terrence, and Susan Keese (Aptos, Calif.: Black Bear Mining and Publishing, 2000), 20 (this collection cited hereafter as Monkerud, Terrence, and Keese, *Free Land, Free Love*); Coyote, *Sleeping*, 91.

**Note 32:** Joanne Meyerowitz, "Beyond the Feminine Mystique: A Reassessment of Postwar Mass Culture, 1946–1958," in *Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar America, 1945–1960*, ed. Joanne Meyerowitz (Philadelphia: Temple Univ. Press, 1994), 229–62; Lenore Kandel, interview with Leonard Wolf, n.d., in *Love Generation*, 34–35. For analysis of Emmett Grogan's self-cloaking in the mantle of "tribal" masculinity, see chap. 2 of the present work, pp. 68–72; and Cavallo, *A Fiction of the Past*, 129–39.

**Note 33:** See "Selections from the Free City News," *Realist*, no. 81 (August 1968): 21; Coyote, *Sleeping*, 91, 116, 249; Keese, "Early History," 20; Doyle, "Diggers," 174, 336. With regard to topless dancing, my source is Jane Lapiner, personal communication, 21 January 2002.

**Note 34:** Grogan, *Ringolevio*, 298; Coyote, *Sleeping*, 196–97; Susan Keese to Digger Archives, 17 September 1996; document available online at <http://web.archive.org/web/19980201173746/www.diggers.org/gstbk96.html> (accessed 9 January 2007). A photograph showing Goldhaft at work with tie-dye at the Free Store appears at [http://www.diggers.org/images/photos/11a\\_l.jpg](http://www.diggers.org/images/photos/11a_l.jpg), as of 9 January 2007.

**Note 35:** Quotation from Grogan, *Ringolevio*, 248; Coyote, *Sleeping*, 132. On the importance of the public visibility of the free-food project, see Charles Perry, *The Haight-Ashbury: A History* (New York: Vintage, 1985), 260. As the Summer of Love approached, free food became increasingly sporadic. Grogan commented publicly on the breakdown in the spring of 1967 (X [Emmett Grogan], "about time we started doin' our own livin' and dyin'," com/co handbill, 20 April 1967, CC-032, Digger Archives; document available online at [http://web.archive.org/web/19990219135700/www.diggers.org/images/cc032\\_l.gif](http://web.archive.org/web/19990219135700/www.diggers.org/images/cc032_l.gif) (accessed 9 January 2007), as well as in his memoir, cited above.

**Note 36:** [Goldhaft] Berg and Berg, "The Diggers," 34. See also Coyote, *Sleeping*, 89–91.

**Note 37:** Eileen Ewing, personal communication, 8 August 2006; Coyote, *Sleeping*, 133–40.

**Note 38:** Ewing, personal communication, 8 August 2006; Rickie Solinger, *Wake Up, Little Susie: Single Pregnancy and Race before Roe v. Wade* (New York: Routledge, 1994); John D'Emilio and Estelle B. Freedman, *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America*, 2d ed. (Univ. of Chicago Press, 1998), 314–15.

**Note 39:** Laffan, *Communal Organization*, 235–37; Ewing, personal communication, 8 August 2006; Coyote, *Sleeping*, 140–41.

**Note 40:** Ewing, personal communications, 23 and 24 April 2004.

**Note 41:** Ewing, personal communications, 23 April 2004, 7 August 2006; Coyote, *Sleeping*, 179–87, 209–13.

**Note 42:** On the Truckers, see Coyote, *Sleeping*, 200–204; Ewing found their arrival a positive development (personal communication, 23 April 2004).

**Note 43:** Coyote, *Sleeping*, 286–89, quotation at 289; Ewing, personal communication, 9 August 2006.

**Note 44:** Ruth Rosen asks why women participated in the youth activism of the 1960s, arguing that a distinctive "female generation gap" arose out of baby boom women's determination not to repeat their mothers' lives. See Ruth Rosen, "The Female Generation Gap: Daughters of the Fifties and the Origins of Contemporary American Feminism," in

*Women's History as U.S. History: New Feminist Essays*, ed. Linda K. Kerber, Alice Kessler-Harris, and Kathryn Kish Sklar (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1995), 314–16. On the belief that counterculture would effect gender equality, see the quotation from Wise, interview with Wolf, in n. 24 of the introduction to this work, above; see also Chelsea Cain, introduction to *Wild Child: Girlhoods in the Counterculture*, ed. Chelsea Cain (Seattle: Seal Press, 1999), xxv.

**Note 45:** Peter Berg and Judy Goldhaft, in an interview with Marty Lee and Eric Noble, San Francisco, 29 April 1982, detail the family backgrounds of several members of the core group; partial transcript available online at [http://www.diggers.org/oralhistory/pb\\_jg\\_0482.htm](http://www.diggers.org/oralhistory/pb_jg_0482.htm) (accessed 9 January 2007), par. [8–9]. As was the case in the New Left, a sizeable proportion of the early Diggers came from Jewish backgrounds. On the families of origin for many New Leftists, see Kenneth Kenniston, *Young Radicals: Notes on Committed Youth* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1968), especially the first four chapters; Sara Evans, *Personal Politics: The Roots of the Women's Liberation Movement in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left* (New York: Vintage, 1980); and Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (New York: Bantam, 1987), 66–71.

**Note 46:** Harriet Beinfield, "Those Not Busy Being Born are Busy Dying: A Chronicle of Context, or How I Came to Black Bear Ranch," in Monkerud, Terrence, and Keese, *Free Land, Free Love*, 56.

**Note 47:** Rosen, "Female Generation Gap," 313–34; particularly 315. Note, however, that red-diaper daughters were not the only women who sought to escape repetition of their mothers' lives; see Wini Breines, *Young, White, and Miserable: Growing Up Female in the Fifties* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), 77–83.

**Note 48:** Doyle, "Diggers," 329–30; emphasis added.

**Note 49:** [Goldhaft] Berg and Berg, "The Diggers," 35.

**Note 50:** Ewing, personal communications, 23 April 2004, 9 August 2006.

**Note 51:** Coyote, interview with Ben-Ami, par. [40].

**Note 52:** Friedrich Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, trans. Ernest Untermann (Chicago: C. H. Kerr, 1902). This argument figures prominently in the scholarly literature on communes, both contemporary and historical. See Jon Wagner, "Sexuality and Gender Roles in Utopian Communities: A Critical Survey of Scholarly Work," *Communal Societies: The Journal of the NHCSA* 6 (1986): 178.

**Note 53:** For sources, see n. 25, above.

**Note 54:** Coyote, *Sleeping*, 288–89.

**Note 55:** Anna G. Jónasdóttir, "Sex/Gender, Power, and Politics: Towards a Theory of the Foundations of Male Authority in the Formally Equal Society," *Acta Sociologica* (Oslo) 31, no. 2 (1988): 167. In the original, Jónasdóttir uses the term "male authority" instead of "male supremacy." For a cogent account of the emergence of feminist materialism from the socialist-feminist controversies over the "unhappy marriage of Marxism and feminism," see Anthony J. McMahon, *Taking Care of Men: Sexual Politics in the Public Mind* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 39–49).

**Note 56:** See, for example, "Two Men Expressing Love," com/co handbill, n.d., box 25, folder 3, JLSP, BHL. A few men at Black Bear Ranch experimented with transvestism, and a few more declared gay or lesbian identity. See Blue Mountain Ranch Commune, *January Thaw: People at Blue Mt. Ranch Write about Living Together in the Mountains* (New York: Times Change Press, 1974), 25–31, 104–13; Monkerud, Terrence, and Keese, *Free Land, Free Love*, 154–55, 226–28; Coyote, *Sleeping*, 154.

**Note 57:** For an explicit expression of this view see Kandel, interview with Wolf, *Love Generation*, 28, and Coyote's declaration that he did not "want to be another fag sucking the economic cock of the country," interview with Wolf, *Love Generation*, 126.

**Note 58:** For an overview of the general pattern, see Timothy Miller, *The 60s Communes*:

*Hippies and Beyond* (Syracuse Univ. Press, 1999), 205. Cf. Eldridge Cleaver's views, as rendered in Leerom Medovoi, "A Yippie-Panther Pipe Dream: Rethinking Sex, Race, and the Sexual Revolution," in *Swinging Single*, ed. Hilary Radner and Moya Luckett (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1999), 143.

**Note 59:** Coyote, interview with Wolf, *Love Generation*, 137; emphasis added.

**Note 60:** [Billy Murcott], "Mutants Commune," *Barb* (Berkeley, Calif.) 5, no. 7 (18 August 1967), 8–9 (also available online at <http://www.diggers.org/diggers/mutants.html>); Angela Heywood, *The Word*, April 1881, 3, quoted in Martin Henry Blatt, *Free Love and Anarchism: The Biography of Ezra Heywood* (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1989), 108. For scholarly interpretation of the anarchist rejection of marriage, see Laurence Veysey, *The Communal Experience: Anarchist and Mystical Counter-Cultures in America* (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), 34, 58, 429–31; Hal D. Sears, *The Sex Radicals: Free Love in High Victorian America* (Lawrence: Regents Press of Kansas, 1977), passim. For a discussion of "sexual varietism" beyond the boundaries of anarchism, see Sears, especially at 22 and 241.

**Note 61:** Kandel, interview with Wolf, *Love Generation*, 35.

**Note 62:** Eileen Ewing, personal communications, 21, 22, and 23 April 2004; Blue Mountain, *January Thaw*; Monkerud, Terence, and Keese, *Free Land, Free Love*.

**Note 63:** The slogan "smash monogamy" originated in the summer of 1969 as a policy of the Weather Underground. Writing separately, chroniclers Kirkpatrick Sale and Ron Jacobs describe it as an attempt to discipline individual members to a singleness of paramilitary purpose by eliminating competing personal loyalties. The national leadership also promoted the policy as necessary to maximize women members' political effectiveness, releasing them from the competing claims of male husbands and lovers to "their" women's sexual and personal service. See Kirkpatrick Sale, *SDS* (New York: Random House, 1973), 584–85; Ron Jacobs, *The Way the Wind Blew: A History of the Weather Underground* (London: Verso, 1997), 45–46; Susan Stern, *With the Weathermen: The Personal Journal of a Revolutionary Woman* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1975), 114–15, 186–92 (my thanks to Barbara Winslow for recommending this source). See also "Honky Tonk Women," reproduced without attribution in *Takin' It to the Streets: A Sixties Reader*, ed. Alexander Bloom and Wini Breines (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1995), 453. Interestingly, a recent account of the Weather Underground makes only brief reference to "smash monogamy": see Dan Berger, *Outlaws of America: The Weather Underground and the Politics of Solidarity* (Oakland, Calif.: A. K. Press, 2006), 291.

On the subsequent prevalence of "smash monogamy" in the New Left generally, see Echols, *Daring to Be Bad*, 222; see also "Some Questions," reprinted in *The Movement toward a New America: The Beginnings of a Long Revolution*, ed. Mitchell Goodman (Philadelphia: Pilgrim Press; New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971), 55. Concurrently with the Weather Underground, some feminists outside that organization argued that monogamy constituted a form of masculine possessiveness and advocated women's promiscuity. Todd Gitlin emphasizes *some* feminists' adoption of "smash monogamy" (*The Sixties*, 375) without also acknowledging countervailing, vociferous feminist *criticism* of the concept—for which see Barbara Leon, "The Male Supremacist Attack on Monogamy" [1971], in Redstockings of the Women's Liberation Movement, *Feminist Revolution: An Abridged Edition with Additional Writings* (New York: Random House, 1978), 128–29; Jacobs, *Weather Underground*, 92.

**Note 64:** Tim Hodgdon, "'The Male Work Ethic was Busted': Manhood, Feminism, and the Sexual Division of Labor at Black Bear Ranch," *Communal Societies: Journal of the Communal Studies Association* 23 (2003): 95–120.

**Note 65:** Estrella Morning Star, "Free Luv and the Sexual Revolution," 151; Don Monkerud, "The Day I Disappeared," 125; and Martin Linhart, "Milagra's Fourth Birthday," 157–58; all in Monkerud, Terrence, and Keese, *Free Land, Free Love*. On the experiment with a "triangular" relationship, see Blue Mountain, *January Thaw*, 70–74.

**Note 66:** I derive Ewing's perspective from several personal communications and postings to the Digger Archives discussion forum, cited above. For an early acknowledgement of the two as mates, see the reference to "Peter's Sam" (Ewing's nickname was Sam) in "Kiva: Storytales Street Supernatural People Fables Speaking," com/co handbill, ca. 17 July 1967, HSDR, folder 3, MS3159, NBL-CHS. For Coyote's



framing of the relationship, see *Sleeping*, 84–85.

**Note 67:** For the quotation, see Coyote, *Sleeping*, 172; for Coyote's descriptions of Ewing's attempts to conform her feelings to Digger principle, see *ibid.*, 252, 283; for attempts to thwart, see, e.g., 235–36, 251. For Ewing's articulation of the principle of nonmonogamy, see her interjection in Coyote, interview with L. Wolf, *Love Generation*, 137. On jealousies precipitating dissolution of this branch, see Coyote, *Sleeping*, 291–310.

**Note 68:** This paragraph summarizes Ewing's personal communications and postings to the Digger Archives discussion forum, cited in this chapter. The term "center women" comes from Karen Brodtkin Sacks, *Caring by the Hour: Women, Work, and Organization at Duke Medical Center* (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1988). African American women played an important role in the organization of a union at the Medical Center because they formed dense networks of informal mutual aid with their coworkers. Once recruited into the union campaign, women at the centers of these networks, "centerwomen," could bring the members of their network into the fold far more readily than outside organizers following the usual recruitment practices—although, without the leadership of those organizers, the "centerwomen," acting alone within the institution, could not have overcome the institutional hierarchy's resistance to unionization.

**Note 69:** In our own time, no scientific or philosophical consensus exists on this question; the resulting heterodoxy is too complex to summarize briefly here. The point is not that hip anarchists could, or should, have forged a commonsense answer through a process of re-evaluation; rather, the point is that in the branches of the Free Families for which we have evidence, such re-evaluation did not begin to appear until the early 1970s, proved difficult to sustain, and sparked intense conflict.

**Note 70:** John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (London: British Broadcasting Corp.; Hammondsworth, Middlesex, U.K.: Penguin, 1972), 45–47; emphases original.

**Note 71:** Coyote, *Sleeping*, 86.

**Note 72:** Kathy Nolan, "Then and Now," in Monkerud, Terrence, and Keese, *Free Land, Free Love*, 133.

**Note 73:** "Political Communes," *Every Other Weekly*, 1971; reprinted in *Utopia USA*, ed. Richard Fairfield (San Francisco: Alternatives Foundation, 1972), 177–78. See also, in the same volume, "COPS [Commune:] As Reported by a Member," 174–75.

**Note 74:** Here I paraphrase Stephanie Coontz's title, *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap* (New York: Basic Books, 1992). While my emphasis here on continuities between hip and straight sexual culture across generations and historical periods might seem to run counter to John D'Emilio and Estelle B. Freedman's interpretive emphasis, in *Intimate Matters*, on change over time, my sense is that we cannot understand the sexual past without holding *both* approaches in balanced tension.

**Note 75:** Paula Kamen, *Her Way: Young Women Remake the Sexual Revolution* (New York Univ. Press, 2000) 233. See also Arlene Stein, *Sex and Sensibility: Stories of a Lesbian Generation* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1997), excerpted as "Seventies Questions for Nineties Women," in *Identity Politics in the Women's Movement*, ed. Barbara Ryan (New York Univ. Press, 2001), 227–41.

**Note 76:** Coyote, *Sleeping*, 323–26; *idem*, interview with Ben-Ami, par. [63].

**Note 77:** Coyote, *Sleeping*, 167–72.

**Note 78:** *Ibid.*, 170; interview with Ben-Ami, par [64]; Murcott, "Mutants Commune," 9. A similar process of revision characterized the life-courses of many 1960s radicals. See Jack Whalen and Richard Flacks, *Beyond the Barricades: The Sixties Generation Grows Up* (Philadelphia: Temple Univ. Press, 1989).

**Note 79:** Victor W. Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Chicago: Aldine, 1969), 94–140.

**Note 80:** *Ibid.*, 140.

**Note 81:** Coyote, interview with Ben-Ami, par. [74].

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