

new extension to the National Gallery opposite the Lincoln Inn at the end of Nassau Street), if sometimes controversial. We like the look and feel of buildings made with stones, e.g. Trinity College Dublin or the Bank of Ireland at College Green, and older buildings are often admirable (although perhaps only the nicer ones have stood the test of time, older ugly buildings may have been razed). We enjoy open spaces to live and breathe, and buildings that convey a sense of history and memory (if the walls could talk what stories would they tell us?). We enjoy buildings that allow us access to interact with each other freely, that don't cut us off from other humans.



The M50 is a prime example of architecture that suppresses. Bland, uniform, no space to breathe, monopolised by cars, suburbs anonymised even further as motorists zoom over the speed limit by the sound break walls, the semis and TV aerials poking their heads over the top. The only green spaces are the middle furrow and banks, choked with carbon monoxide and slowly decaying litter. And this type of architecture surrounds the modern world. No wonder we're all miserable, lonely, single, and full of hatred for each other. Each time another one of these fucking ugly concrete fascists rears its ugly head and erected in a field on a river, another part of our freedom is chipped away. There are kids who know nothing but concrete parks, and people who can identify a hundred different shop logos but not a single type of tree leaf (yes, personally guilty as charged as well).

BUT: If we give up because of architecture, then we have failed. The facets of human experience that turn our lives into a series of 'moments', these can break through the concrete cocoons, and no matter where we live, no matter what our surroundings, we can still grow, evolve, love, and celebrate. That's why stuff like Reclaim The Streets, Critical Mass, graffiti, raves in abandoned warehouses, street football, squats, etc are important. They are symptoms of a desire to breathe in a space that chokes. Even though urban architecture prides commerce and traffic over pleasure and people, we still find a channel of communication with each other, and we use the space to create beautiful moments for ourselves. The M50 tightens its grip on the city but we can't and won't let it kill us. We'll turn it on its head and use it as a playground. If we let the architects of the M50 crush our spirits and it turns us into commuting slaves, then surely the even-blander prairies of the semi-D suburbs (and all the bastard offshoots mentioned previously) will have us frog marching in our thousands at gunpoint with heads bowed for automaton labour within the end of the decade.

So don't hate the M50: it doesn't want to hate you. It's just being misused at the moment. It sits there every night just as lonely and cold as all of us. At night it cries itself to sleep because every day when it wakes up all it sees are cars and miserable people crying inside them. We have to turn the M50 into something beautiful (along with all the other architectural mistakes, but the M50 is as good a place as any to start). Think of the flyovers as places to hang banners. The sloping walls that connect the flyovers are canvasses for your next messy semi-political-inspirational scrawl (this is it, no second chance; you are beautiful; don't become what you hate; or whatever comes into your mind). Go drinking on the verges of the roundabouts and wave your genitals at the passing motorists (as long as they aren't Garda cars... ah fuck it, why not). Take loads of acid and walk the distance to the Westlink and let the lights flowing over the Liffey valley melt your brain. When you do these sort of things then you will realise that mental space doesn't have to be confined by physical space. And your mind will be free to wander in physical places where it shouldn't. Who knows what could happen then? The M50 acts as a physical link between thousands of people from different socio-economic suburbs and backgrounds, and by using this physical link we can forge friendships and tongs all along its back, something that was never expected. Rather than disappearing into the cracks in the monolith, we can paint around the cracks and plant flowers, destroying the oppressive atmosphere of brutalist concrete shelving and creating hope and joy. This is the last exit, you have to take it.

## [guilty as charged: we never pleaded innocence]

"What I tell myself: I need the money. I'm here for the money. I am not defined by my job. I am who I am. This job/these people know nothing of my dreams, my ambitions, my capabilities. Only X amount more time and I don't have to do this any more. My dreams are more than this job or any job could be. I'm not harming anyone. I need the money to continue. My responsibility is to my dreams." – Anto Dillon, Promise Me Skies issue 2 (one pound from 35 Mapas Road, Dalkey, Co. Dublin).

I was in the Swan for 'the Queen of IE-dance' birthday drinks in recent months. I got chatting to Conor Krossphader about political and personal beliefs, and what it meant to him. I asked him for advice, how to deal with people in situations where they were abusive towards him for his beliefs, particularly where they called into question his own ethics and morals, as if they were somehow better. He often came across this he said, and his reply to people was that he wasn't their guru, that he wasn't without fault either, nobody is. Of course there were inherent contradictions and problems in the practice of his beliefs, but he felt he was trying, and he had a belief system that he developed as his own, and he was trying to do something constructive with his life and

live by his beliefs as much as he could. I'm paraphrasing here of course, a pub is not the place where everything said is remembered clearly the next day...

There's talk in the cultural tong of wrapping up this freesheet in the next two or three issues. Our anonymity has been compromised too much (the danger of posting to newsgroups, letting people know who you are at gigs, raves, etc) and too many people close to us are aware of our writings and actions. The initial will to disappear and remain as clandestine as possible, then gave way to being more overt from the happiness incurred from meeting like minded strangers, who were much inclined to chat with us and make us feel happy. But in recent months broadening the net also has had its down side.

The tong never claimed to be some sort of pillar of society, some kind of alterno-religion that was ultimately pure in its words and deeds. We never claimed to be anything! Of course we are full of bullshit, mistakes, fears, paranoia, just like everyone else. But for a day, an hour, a minute, a second, we dreamt that something else was possible. What are people afraid of? That our wildest dreams and desires we've harped on about over the last year and a half might actually be achievable? Who knows: we certainly don't. But we'd like to think that just around the corner (within all of our grasps) there's something beautiful waiting for us.

Through our printed words and our actions elsewhere we'd like to think we are trying to make our world and the world for our family and friends a better place. We're not perfect: we aren't trying to be. Our imperfections make us human. But we're trying, EXTREMELY FUCKING HARD, to do the right thing. Atonement doesn't come in a day. But yet... some days it all feels like a fucking waste of time. All the small erosions of 'modern comforts' we've taken in the last 18 months (no more watching TV, kebabs, no more holidays, no money for drink) we've learnt from and although it would have been easier to just sit back and do NOTHING, we know that we've done something that we're happy with (reading and writing more, not supporting animal cruelty as much, taking time off for protests and court appearances, spending our own money on posters and flyers). But at every turn, there's someone there to criticise, to put down, to dismiss our efforts as pointless, hypocritical, pathetic. What can you do? At a party recently a Dublin techno producer (complete no less with a mohawk – evidence that 'fashion' and ideologies are completely separate entities) said to us that all anti-capitalists/protesters/whatever were totally full of shit if they weren't willing to live in potato sacks and eat dirt. This is just one example of many examples of the charge of hypocrisy being levelled at the tong in recent months. We'd like to think that this sort of meaningless horseshit rolls off us but when its fired from all sides (friends, workmates, family, passers by, people off their faces or locked standing next to us, general whingers and neurotic spoilers) we can't help but be affected by it – we aren't made of steel.

We don't want to sink to the level of negativity we've been exposed to – the point of the [path] is to encourage people to find pleasure and joy in their lives and seek out more, while learning and experiencing different kinds of pleasures, and to (hopefully) get the same things from life we have, from not working, producing this sheet, taking control of our lives that little bit more, and all the other crap you've read in the previous issues. It would be very tempting to tell people to JUST FUCK OFF, and probably a lot more instantly gratifying, but everyone is welcome. We don't want to and physically can't exclude anybody from forming their own tong, and we don't want to discourage them either – there are so many amazing things out there that haven't happened to so many people yet, and if we dismiss them out of hand simply because they eat meat, work for a multinational, wear nike, drive a car every day to work, then we become elitist and self-righteous.



Anyway, enough meandering. Here is an article from Jane E. Humble from the excellent Crimethinc Collective ([www.crimethinc.com](http://www.crimethinc.com)) book "Days of War, Nights of Love". We don't like re-printing material but this pretty much sums up what we think about this. It addresses hypocrisy and inherent problems with being an anti-capitalist (because, as much as we hate any sort of pigeon hole label, we would have to fall in there admittedly), and anyone out there who thinks that they can't get involved, we hope this passage gives you as much succour as it did for us. We are constantly trying to reconcile our beliefs with our actions, don't close your eyes, but please don't criticise, we want to be better. We're trying.

Hypocrisy: The will to a system is the will to a lie. Today it is impossible to avoid hypocrisy in any struggle against the status quo. The political and economic structures are constructed so that it is practically impossible to avoid being implicated in their workings. Today, whatever a man thinks of the employment opportunities available to him or of our economic system itself, he has almost no choice except to work if he does not want to starve to death or die of an illness for which he could not afford health care. If he does not believe in material property, he still has no choice but to buy all the food and clothing he needs and to buy or rent living space (that is, if he is not ready to live at odds with our very effective legal system)--for there is no free land left that has not been claimed by someone, almost no food or other resources anywhere that are not someone's "property." If a woman wants to distribute material criticizing the capitalist system of production and consumption, she still has no way to produce and distribute this material without paying to produce it, and selling it to consumers--or at least selling advertising, which encourages people to be consumers--to finance production. If a woman does not want to finance the brutal torture and slaughter of animals in the name of capitalism, she can stop eating meat and dairy products, purchasing health products which

are tested on animals, and wearing leather and fur; but there are still animal products in the films in her camera and the movies she watches, in the vinyl records she listens to, and in countless other products which she will be hard-pressed to do without in modern society. Besides, the companies she buys her vegetables from are most likely connected to the companies who make meat and dairy products, so her money goes to the same ends; and these vegetables themselves were probably picked by migrant workers or other oppressed labour.

And at the same time, modern Western culture is so deeply ingrained in our minds, indoctrinated with it as we are from an early age, that it is practically impossible to avoid being influenced in our actions by the very assumptions and values which we are struggling against. After a lifetime of being taught to place a financial value on the hours of our lives, it is hard to stop feeling like one must be rewarded materially for an activity for it to be worthwhile. After a lifetime of being taught to respect hierarchies of authority, it is very difficult to suddenly interact with all human beings as equals. After a lifetime of being taught to associate happiness with passive spectatorship, it is hard to enjoy building furniture more than watching television. And of course there are ten thousand more subtle ways in which these values and assumptions manifest themselves in our thoughts and our actions.

This does not mean that resistance is futile. Indeed, if our choices today are so limited that we cannot act without replicating the conditions from which we were trying to escape, resistance is all the more crucial. This does mean that "innocence" is a myth, a counter-revolutionary concept which we must leave behind us with the rest of post-Christian thinking. The traditional Christian demand upon human beings is that they be innocent, that they keep their hands clean of any "sin." At the same time, "sin" is so difficult for the Christian to avoid (as counter-revolutionary activity is today, for us) that this demand leads to feelings of guilt and failure in the believer, and ultimately to despair, when he realizes that it is impossible for him to be "innocent" and "pure." In fact, by forbidding "sin," Christian doctrine makes it all the more tempting and intriguing for the believer; for whether the mind does or not, the human heart recognizes no authority and will always seek out that which is not permitted to it.

We must not make the same mistakes as Christianity. The demand that people be free from hypocrisy, free from any implication in the system, will result in the same effects as the Christian demand that people be free from sin: it will create frustration and despair in those who would seek change, and at the same time it will make hypocrisy all the more tempting. Rather than seek to have hands that are clean of implication in the systems we struggle against, we should aim to make the inevitable negative effects of our lives worthwhile by offering enough positive activity to more than balance the scales. This approach to the problem will save us from being immobilized by fear of hypocrisy or shame about our "guilt."

Besides, demands that we avoid hypocrisy deny the complexity of the human soul. The human heart is not simple; every human being has a variety of desires which pull him or her in different directions. To ask that a human being only pursue some of those desires and always ignore others is to ask that he or she remain permanently unfulfilled. . . and curious. This is typical of the kind of dogmatic, ideological thinking which has afflicted us for centuries: it insists that the individual must be loyal to one set of rules and only one, rather than doing what is appropriate for his or her needs in a particular situation.

It might well be true that the whole self can only be expressed in hypocrisy. Certainly a person needs to formulate a general set of guidelines regarding the decisions he will make, but to break occasionally from these guidelines will prevent stagnation and offer an opportunity to consider whether any of the guidelines need re-evaluation. A person who is not afraid to be hypocritical from time to time is in a great deal less danger of selling out permanently one day, because he or she is able to taste the "forbidden fruit" without feeling forced to make a permanent choice. This person will be immune to the shame and eventual despair that will afflict the person who strives for perfect "innocence."

So be proud of yourself as you are, don't try to get the inconsistencies in your soul to match up in a false and forced manner or it will only come back to haunt you. Rather than holding inflexibly to a set system, let us dare to reject the idea that we must be faithful to any particular doctrine in our efforts to create a better life for ourselves. Let us not claim to be innocent, let us not claim to be pure or right! But let us proclaim proudly that we are hypocrites, that we will stop at nothing, not even hypocrisy, in our struggle to take control of our lives. In this age when it is impossible to avoid being a part of the system we strive against, only blatant hypocrisy is truly subversive--for it alone speaks the truth about our hearts, and it alone can show just how difficult it is to avoid living the modern life which has been prepared for us. And that alone is good reason to fight.

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# the [chosen] path

## [entrance to exit: the M50 manifesto]

It was one of those schizophrenic early autumn evenings where the weather couldn't decide which way to swing. Shanahap gave me a blow on the blower to tell me he was hovering around the Blanch neck of the woods, doing whatever necessary. Earlier that day a new section of the M50 had opened. He tore around in the Corsa and we bailed out down through Chapelizod, avoiding paying the 80p toll on the Westlink, joining back up with it on the southside. It was late and a light drizzle began to fall. We flew past rakes of suburban houses, warehouses, factories, office parks (complete with corporate faux art) luminous mobile phone signal booster aerials, with a battered Carl Cox mixtape blaring out the one working speaker, the yoke at the wheel still getting a buzz out of turning up and down the bass. All of a sudden the noise of the road dimmed considerably as the surface changed from cracked to smooth black uninterrupted tarmac. We were on the new part of it and there was fuck all traffic except us. The light rain made the black tarmac shine and glaze over like marble. We took photographs from the moving car. Shanahap drove at just under the legal limit. At the end we stopped and took night photos (at time of writing undeveloped) of the bridges and flyovers near Stillorgan, many miles from our abodes.

We drove on into the unknown terrain of the southside, vaguely aware of what postcode we were in. More houses and suburban tributary roads, parks, schools, places much like our own. We scouted around a bit taking wrong turns and coming back the way we came. We headed towards Tallaght and got some garlic chips, and eventually found our way back on.

The M50 forms a ring around Dublin. It ploughs through suburbs and flows near others, its influence felt every morning with the chaos it causes when it backs up with traffic as soon as the sun rises (and these days long before that). I have a strange relationship with it. Its kind of a duality, a love/hate thing that I have trouble defining. By all rights I should hate the fucking thing and no more. A curving, unyielding tarmac monster that butchers fields and forests in its wake, another Peripherique or M25 'orbital' for a bloated city with an exaggerated sense of self-importance. Full of yuppie wankers (one to a car) in fossil-guzzlers, low racing skirts and boot spoilers, chrome exhausts with fuel-injected turbo ultra nitrogen tuned engines, gently purring at one extreme and deafening roaring at the other, poised continuously for yet another statistic, another number in the road death count. Exclusionary (no bikes, L drivers, under 50cc, single mothers, etc) and polluting, populated with bridges teeming with murderous rat-faced tached little shits dropping concrete blocks and cider bottles through windscreens. Slip roads crammed full of road ragers, all tuned into nauseous 'drive time' shows, informing them of how long more they're going to be sitting there.

And yet... I find myself drawn to it. As a young whelp I had my first introduction to vodka as part of the foundations were being dug, and ended up face down in ankle deep mud, groaning and praying for a quick death rather than go home and face the parents. Maybe some of the M50 embryonic mud seeped into my veins and subconsciously put me in love with the damn thing. In later mid-teenage years as drugs were discovered I would wander up there on warmer nights and climb underneath the arc of the Navan Road interchange. I sat there as the traffic hummed overhead, the extension towards Finglas/Ballymun nowhere near completed, the road below covered in gravel and my spit, the dull glow of the orange lights would shimmer in the distance as my eyes rolled into the back of my head, and I would meditate on life the universe and everything else until the buzz wore off and it wasn't as warm as it had been. Even before these comatose drink/drug moments, I now recall going up there in pre-pubescent years with other 'road' heads on the bikes (ah the freedom), throwing Superquinn trolleys, pallets and traffic cones into the canal, and wondering what the hell they were doing with the bridges for the water and the railway line (the concept of the 'triple decker sandwich' at the Navan Rd. interchange was not in my mind). Much fun indeed.

The formation of personal and social identities is heavily influenced by the architecture of the place we live in. When you go to a city abroad and you think it's a miserable shithole, what forms this opinion? It's because of what you immediately see. Grim faceless grey cubic monoliths adjacent to power lines and bypasses don't make for much aesthetic pleasure. If you come home every night to a square, meaningless, boring and depressing space, then your life will undoubtedly take on those qualities as well. If your surroundings become broken down and destroyed, then this chips away at and destroys your soul too (and vice versa - broken lives get taken out on homes because they're an expression of who you are). If you go to work in an office that's dark, cramped and confined, you're obviously not going to enjoy your job much. Mono charcoal-slide colours, straight lines, concrete, traffic lights, multi-storey car parks, enormous internally-driven malls with no windows, tarmac, multiplexes, roundabouts, houses with small windows, 'retail parks', drive-thru restaurants (how incredibly stupid can you get?), flyovers, tunnels, underpasses, runways and terminals, curtain walls, solid elevators, industrial estates and business 'parks'. Enough to drive you to tears, aspirin, morphine, valium. Grim as hell and equally as painful, I think it's fair to say that all these facets of modern architecture have a negative impact on the mental health of the populace.

So what sort of places do we like to live in? You know the answer to this one. Wide open spaces, lots of light and sunshine, lots of green and colour. We like thought to be put into a building, instead of just functionality. Buildings that break the mould are also pleasing (e.g. the Sports Hall for Belvedere College at the junction of Denmark St/Gardiner Place and Temple Street, or the

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