
TANGENTOPOLI

ISSUE 19 13th October 1994

I was late. An hour and three quarters late to be precise. The march was due to kick off at 12.00 noon, and it wasn't until 1.45 that I emerged, blinking, from the Embankment tube to see the tail-end of the march still rolling by. This was the sound-system end, and -as usual- there was the surge of adrenelin as the beat kicked in. Later on I discovered that the march had actually started at 1.00, which meant that for three quarters of an hour a solid bank of people had been rolling and thundering, dancing and chanting, whistling and shouting their way through there. I don't know how many people that amounts to. But let's just say it was considerably more than the 20,000 estimated by the police. The organisers reckoned 100,000. And given that a confidential police estimate for the last march was actually 80,000, that sounds about right.

Anyway, so I was late. And having agreed to meet up with someone at the beginning of the march, and the sheer weight of numbers causing a bottleneck in places, I hopped the security barriers and tried to make my way up the side. A policeman stopped me. "Where're you going?" he demanded, placing his burly body in front of me. "I'm trying to get to the front," I replied. "Well this is a security area," he said, "you're not going this way." "Which way am I supposed to go?" "That way," he said, pointing in the exact opposite direction.

I tried to argue with him, explaining that I had to meet someone. But he wouldn't listen. And during the debate I placed my hand lightly on his arm. "Don't touch me," he said. "What's your problem?" I said. "I haven't got a problem," he said. "Yes you have," I said, "and you're imposing it on me." "I haven't got a problem," he said, "I'm just telling you what you can and can't do." "That's your problem," I said, and leapt across the road in front of the oncoming traffic, causing a far grater hazard than if he'd simply let me go where I was going in the first place.

And of course that is the problem. That's the problem with the police. And that's the problem with the CJB. That they are trying to tell us what we can and can't do. And that was the problem at the end of the march before the rioting erupted. A dumb show of unnecessary power trying to tell everyone what they could and couldn't do. I didn't see all of it. But what I did see only confirmed the incompetance of the police in their handling of the situation. Too much imposition. Too many boundaries. Too little old-fashioned intelligence and adaptibility.

This is what I saw. Zion Train and Desert Storm Posse were bringing up the rear of the march, edging their way along trying to get into Hyde Park. The police had erected security barriers again, creating a bottleneck. People were hemmed in in there, and nothing was moving. Eventually the sheer weight of numbers broke down the security barriers and the crowd erupted joyfully across the

road. A loud shout went up, and the dancing intensified. It was like coming out of a claustrophobic tunnel into space. And so the sound-systems continued to force their way into the park. And then at a certain point the riot police turned up and tried forcing the crowd back again. They formed a line and began pushing. That's when the missiles began to fly, and I thought "uh-oh" and legged it. I could see what was going to happen.

I didn't see any more. But if the police continued to act in that heavy-handed way, then they deserved every thing they got. People don't like being hemmed in. Of course the police blame a minority of trouble makers who'd come prepared for violence. And there's no doubt that a number of people were kitted out for something other than a picnic in the park. But the police gave them their excuse, didn't they? And the vast majority of people were only there for the crack and were simply refusing to be herded.

As I say, that's the problem with the CJB too. It wants to create strict limits on people's behaviour, to have us all acting like good little Tories, obeying the rules, kowtowing to the dominant power-structure like it was God. But just as the security barriers created a bottleneck that caused frustration and resentment, and that became an obvious target for people's anger, so the CJB sets up a set of false barriers around our lives, telling us what we can and can't do, making criminals of us for simply being alive, railroading us into a corner. So you're homeless. So you can't afford to buy a house, and you're bottom of the council waiting list, and you can't afford the deposit on private rented accomodation, and you can't bear the loneliness and despair of a bedsit: so what do you do? You squat. Or you get a van and travel. And all of a sudden the barriers are down again. But when the CJB takes away these options, then what are you supposed to do. All the restrictions that existed before are still there, and there's new ones to add to them. You're hemmed in, aren't you? Just like the crowd around the sound-systems. You had a clear destination, but that way is blocked. And what choice do you have then but to overthrow the whole corrupt system, to kick down the security barriers, to throw bottles at the police, to ignore the admonitions of the press and the Establishment and the self-satisfied, time-serving hypocrisy of the Criminal Justice system? You say no to all that.

As Tony Benn had stated from the platform earlier: "You may have a legal obligation to obey this law, but you have no moral obligation whatsoever." In other words, break the fucking law kids: you know it makes sense.

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presents
on

Thursday 27th Oct

Thursday 10th Nov

Special guests

Special guest

▶ **DIGS & WHOOSH** ◀
(DIY)

▶ **EMMA** ◀
(DIY)
and *live DJ's*

and live DJ's

▶ **KIER & TOM** ◀

▶ **OZ** ◀

▶ **NICK** ◀

at the works, Canterbury. 9pm - 2am. £3

▶ At first we had been happy heads trying to explore one last fairy tale so we could be rationalists for ever, and instead we encountered something enormous. Something alive and very old and very strange. ◀

parties and gossip...

SAT 24TH SEPT - LONDON

A van load of us set out at 3pm on Saturday from Whitstable full of the joys of a universally shared hangover from the night before.

That had been a "quiet" night out in Whitstable celebrating Alex "chicken and chips" Bird's birthday which allegedly he'd been memorializing all week. Anyway, as usual, quiet really meant a drunken orgy of hedonistic self abuse of the liquid variety.

The tVC PA was rigged up in "Lift Off", now owned by Karl, and the wheels of steel were duely spun by Alex, Oz and Tejen. And yes Oz and Tejen did play with each other. Again. Although the volume did creep up during the nights activities no noise complaints were made and a jolly good time was had by the diehards.

After, it was off to a "small", "quiet", "gathering" in Cromwell Rd. where the upstairs room was duly squatted and control of the tape deck siezed by the party posse who then proceeded to dance around in a very intoxicated manner, moaning noisily about the lack of beverages available.

One DJ present that night, mentioning no names, (although he does possess the longest name, has long curly hair and is often seen in darkened bars playing with Oz) was seen inebriatedly slipping up and head butting the floor much to the amusement of everyone else. Not ten minutes earlier the very same nameless DJ was spotted kicking a bottle of beer over in the very same spot he later slipped in. Karma? We think not.

Mike E kept the party spirit going by popping round to his "plush" abode and returning with a carrier bag of Forsyth Sagas. Hurrah!

Consequently by Saturday afternoon everyone in the van posse was rather subdued and looked quite peaky. Keef especially was experiencing the joys of overstimulation and was rather quiet until he managed decamp to an offy and pour copious amounts of lager down his rather raw-eyed throat, cheering up noticeably as he did so.

Everything went smoothly, picking up "Lampy" Ramsden from Fav and all his gear (some of it left in the "Hole" which had to be picked up along with a swift pint) which filled the van without the six people squashed in the back too.

So, with the van full of merry banter

and witty backchat we set off on our way to London. We had just got onto the M2 when "Lost It" Ramsden remembered he'd forgotten to pack the leads box!!! So we had to drive up to the Maidstone turn off (a mere 30 miles) turn round, go back (a mere 30 miles), pick it up, then drive another thirty miles just to get back to where we had started off. The only person who didn't seem to mind was Martin's Dad. It'll cheer him up for weeks. "Martin. You bastard". During that jolly jaunt we only had two piss stops as well.

So two and a half hours into our journey we were thirty miles up the road. "Skin up, Martin".

With care to intricate detail and an eye for the main chance the tVC sound system posse lovingly recreated the famous 7th Heaven (and every other party we've ever done) interior at the 414 Club for the benefit of a soon to be wowed capacity London congregation.

Complementing the in-house rig of 2kw with our very own, and much loved, "lampy" JBL 3.5kw supersounding, resonating rig, we were ideally suited for the feast of the warm, yet rich and spacious delicacies of deep soulful house music that would soon reside on the welcome ears of the Jump patrons. Tony, the 414's main man, nearly shit himself when he saw the amount of equipment we had but was soon reassured that we weren't going to blow the roof off when everything kicked in at 11pm sharp.

* Honestly, it sounded a dream. It was velvet. Melted chocolate. Warm, resonant, rounded. It made us shiver with its sheer beautifulness. House music had never sounded so good. I wept and fell madly in love with Martin. And that was only the soundcheck.

Nothing could really go wrong. Could it?

Little Now Ey "Lost the Plot" I'm Fucking Knackered etc etc Steve was the only one to complain. "It's not loud enough". DJ Rob also complained about the monitor. "Couldn't hear it mate". Whaatt!! If you want volume get yaself off to Perfect World and slap yer head in the bins. Eskimo Noise (who else). To the rest of us it was exquisite. Even the famous terrorstrobe, attired in a shaded sunstrip, seemed right at home.

Kier and Tom (for it was they) kicked things off at 12 (a little late 'coz they "got lost"). For both the DJ's and the many appreciators of their persnickety (yes it is a word) trademark of heartfelt, deep garage US calmness the early slot was indeed a treat. Coming up on the, er, euphoric atmospheric aura to a fine selection of the cream of American sparsenessabounds was a melodic, trancey treat. This sound state of affairs gradually eased the floor (and indeed the people on it) into a pumping frenzy. By the end of their oh so short two hours the jammed floor was truly rocking. We were all well into the groove with a whole four hours to go. The smiles, handshakes and hugs were spontaneously and liberally sprinkled over the joyful, intoxicated sponge known as the 414. We knew we were on a good one.

"Schoolteacher" Oz swaggered in a swaying, wide-eyed sort of a way towards the blurred decks for his set. A surfeit of seamless pumpdom overtook the land (well, Brixton) and for those deep, bassy, groovy, funky, pianoy 90 minutes we were truly in 7th heav...oh fuck this shite. He was crap. Believe it.

A certain tVC DJ, who shall remain nameless, fell asleep at his girlfriends house and didn't bother to turn up (for the third time). You're, mmm, er, ooh, sacked.

But that didn't matter. In stepped Luke from the Deliverence Sound System and the Jump Clubs best DJ. A fine, smooth blend of new tunes mixed with a few classics kept the groove rocking. "He was good", said one of the party peeps, "but he wasn't Tejen". She meant of course DJ Nameless.

Rob, in his first big out of town "top spot" for tVC slapped his dominoes on the table, strangled the girly handbag (indeed set it on metaphoric fire), and proceeded to play a set dominated by left field, deep progressive meanderings to the delectable delight of the by now ecstatic, stomping house soldiers. Farking sooperb.

Thanks to a well chummy Kent contingent. Aaron squared, Kate and Mike, Pam and John, Nicky (not playing tonight but should have been), Keef, Watson, that guy with the dreads. The Dover posse. The London tvc posse especially Caroline, ROBIN, Pete, Ramsden the second (yes there is now two of them), Toby (or not Toby, that is the question), Trudy, Debbie, Fav boys (and girls). And last but not least Planet Thanet Theoroids. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

The 18th of Nov marks the day of a regular night for us at the 414. Lekk out for the usual japes and guest DJ's. A coach will be available for those of you who wish to travel in comfort and style.

Salut.

THURS 29TH SEPT - 7TH HEAVEN

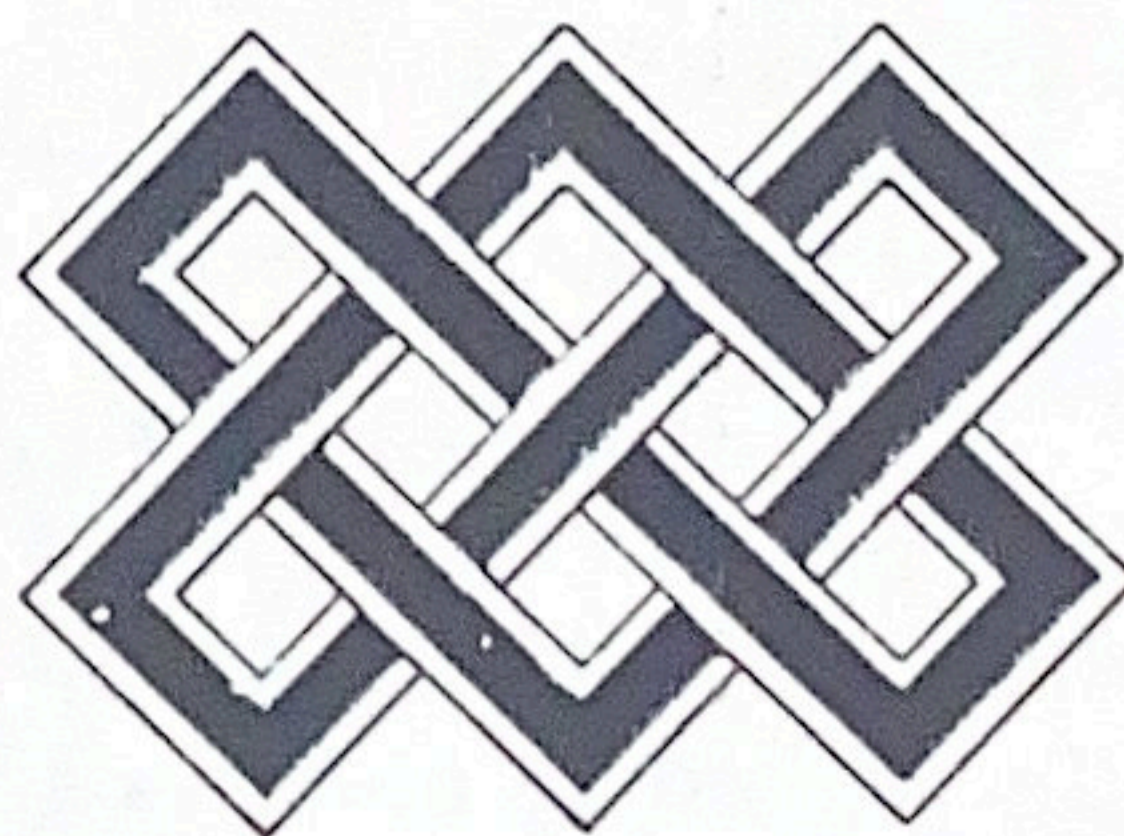
A deep house special starring, dah dah, the grimace free zone boys (and girl): "Formally" Ed (wah-doe), slap head "gabba boy" Tom (get your fucking hair cut!), "laid back" Kier (yeah, whatever, mate), "It's always alright"

Liam (was that alright? Was it?) and Nick (NOT Nicky) (Faaark orrrrrf vooo caaan't). She makes Micky from Lush appear like a girl scout.

But the star of the show had to be Walter "lend us fifty quid will ya?" Bastard Face for the sheer bare faced audacity of blagging a pony and spending it on things he shouldn't have. Not, as he said, his "taxi fare". He palmed another cheque of on the poor hapless taxi driver saying "Don't worry I'm the landlord of the (censored). Outrageous And we want our money back.

The music, DJ of the night had to be Swamp and Donkey for the, er, deepness of their tunes. But then again flowing consistancy is, now, the minimum expected standard. And damn right that it should be. There was none of the usual peaks and troughs just one solid groove eeked out as the baton was passed from DJ to DJ. Quite magnificent. At the first of the forthcoming London parties at the 414 (18th Nov) the deep DJ's are having the whole of the upstairs and the full 8 hours to start, what may well be, the first regular deep US house allnighter in London.

Can't wait. Another "deep" spesh real soon.



Voices of dissent denied a fair hearing

MICHAEL HOWARD has succeeded in uniting the diverse strands of latter-day British non-conformism. Yesterday's huge demonstration against his Criminal Justice and Public Order Bill shows the sympathy that alternative lifestyles and peaceful dissent enjoy in Britain, even if the message was marred by violence. More than 20,000 people gathered in London to show their anger with a Bill that would in effect criminalise travellers, squatters, ravers, hunt saboteurs and anti-roads protesters. The Home Secretary will, no doubt, win applause when he preaches the Bill's virtues to the party faithful in Bournemouth on Thursday. But this legislation offends many ancient liberal principles — not least the "right to silence" — that are evidently still widely cherished.

A rainbow coalition has been created that none of the main parties can call its own. Once united, it is likely to have a political impact that outlasts controversy over this particular Bill. Yesterday's march marks the discontent of an increasingly vocal and well organised grouping of minorities that challenges the social conservatism now endemic across British politics. It is a liberal force of predominantly young people that the authoritarian streak in Toryism attacks partly to help it to define its own agenda. Tony Blair's new Labour Party, fearful of straying from the centre

of British politics, is at best ambivalent, at worst openly hostile, to this social phenomenon.

Nowhere is non-conformism more evident than among New Age travellers. They consider settled people to be living miserable, narrow, confined lives, hemmed in by conformity and obsessed with ownership. Many are disillusioned with stressful inner cities, where housing is dismal, jobs non-existent or poorly paid and families fractured. They opt for small communities that are safe and supportive for their children. The way the Bill makes their lifestyle virtually impossible to enjoy within the law suggests a Government that cannot tolerate an implied criticism of conventional culture.

The Bill is also a crude attempt to use the police and judiciary to deal with issues that should rightly be covered by other parts of government. The increasing incidence of squatting and travelling has more to do with the shortcomings of city life than with a breakdown in law and order. New Agers, hunt saboteurs and anti-road protesters are involved in conflict with established interests about how the countryside should be used.

Criminalisation will drive these social dissidents into the arms of the police and the courts. A better response would be to give them a fair hearing, proper representation and a measure of tolerance.

Man Enough To Dance.

It probably marked me for life. Even now I can feel the weight of character-armour dragging me down as I lumber stiffly along life's bitter highway: traumatised. One innocent remark that laid the pattern for the future. If only she could have seen what those simple words would do to me.

It was the children's Xmas party at the British Legion. I was probably 10 years old. We'd gobbled up our Jelly and Ice Cream, and left the curling corned beef sandwiches to their fate. Santa had come and gone: Santa with the sad cotton-wool beard and the pillow-stuffed front yawning "Ho Ho Ho" in a derisory fashion. And then the music came on. Let's Twist Again by Chubby Checker. And I was up there like a good'un, strutting my stuff. I'd heard somewhere that the way to do the Twist was to pretend to be rubbing your back with a towel while stubbing out an imaginary cigarette with your toe. So there I was -rub rub, stub stub- moving my elbows backwards and forwards while twisting my foot, when this girl came up to me. "You don't know how to do it," she said. "You can't dance."

Imagine it. Picture me there on the dance floor, with all the other kids still wriggling and shifting about, with the music still thundering on like a roller-coaster, stopped dead: as stiff as a board. And I've been stiff ever since.

But it's an odd thing this dancing, isn't it? Jiggle, jiggle, jump, jump: what does it all mean? And traditionally, of course, it's the girls that do it and the boys that don't.

I remember my Mother trying to teach me the Waltz. This was the sort of thing you did at a holiday camp. So I was standing there, all hot and flustered teenage embarrassment, trying to reach around my Mother, and I had to look down past her breasts to see my feet. And then -one two three- we were moving. One two three, and my eyes were firmly planted on my feet, and not only because of the proximity of those breasts. One glance away and it was: one two three "look out!", one two three "ouch!", one two three "oh I've bloody well had enough and I'm going to sit down!"

So I never danced again during my adolescence. There was a school dance once. This was in my later teens. I practiced at home in front of the mirror in preparation, trying to look nonchalant as I did so. I was more concerned with the look on my face than with the awkward indifference of my bodily gyrations. I needed a precise expression of cool reserve. Well, practice makes perfect. When it came to it my facial expression was just-so as I sat awkwardly in a chair the whole evening watching the girls bob up and down having fun.

But dancing is natural really, isn't it? It's a deep-down expression of exuberance and joy. As the I-Ching (that most ancient of Chinese texts) has it: "The enthusiasm of the heart expresses itself involuntarily in a burst of song, in dance and rhythmic movement of the body." Fortunately for the ancient Chinese they didn't have the British Legion to deal with.

Later on, during the psychedelic era, when all the tracks were at least 20 minutes long, full of neverending guitar solos, well I started to dance didn't I? I'd go along to a club and -you know- "freak out". There was I, flairs flapping, cheesecloth shirt rubbing my nipples, hair halfway

down my back, and I'd "get into the music", dancing by myself with my eyes closed, facing the wibbly-wobbly bubbly patterns slurping over the wall. It wasn't that I didn't want to dance with anyone. I did. But I was shy, and I guess I was hoping that one of those succulent girls I was distantly in love with would notice me as the deep and sensitive type and come over and talk. No one ever did talk to me, though I can't say whether they noticed me or not. They were probably saying to each other, "What's that guy over by the wall doing? Why's he trying to put out a nonexistant cigarette while drying himself with a nonexistant towell?"

Actually this wasn't always the case. I did dance with someone once. We made up a dance between us called "The Straight-Jacket". You had to bring your knees together as if they were tied by a leather strap, and, wrapping your arms around you like a straight-jacket, bounce around. You weren't supposed to allow your knees to part or your arms to unravel. And actually it was a very good dance. And we puffed away and sweated, bouncing around and laughing, until we eventually fell into bed together. That was quite a suprise. I don't even remember leaving the club. Except that I'm not sure the "straight-jacket" idea wasn't autobiographical in some way -me still straight-jacketed emotionally- and, though I was bursting with desire for this young woman, we never slept together again. Somehow I didn't know how to repeat what had been an entirely natural performance. Somehow all of my other devices weren't enough.

But if you think my dancing days are over now that I've reached this dignified age of sedentary responsibility, you're wrong. The funny thing is, the older you are, the less you care what people think. And with a couple of drinks inside me: well I'm still strutting my stuff with the best of them. And -jiggle jiggle, jump jump, one two three, one two three, stub stub, rub rub- I can't think of a better way to burn off all this excess energy. Beats thinking. And though the character-armour still creaks occasionally, I think I can say that the British Legion children's Christmas party trauma has finally run its course.

Have you ever tried doing the Twist to House music?

parties and gossip...

FRIDAY 30TH SEPT WHITSTABLE

James "HB"s Birthday bash ensured a royal flush of a turnout of top DJ's (smirk) who in turn pulled a capacity sardine impersonation in the skinny four floored terrace overlooking the golf course. The colloquial skamps, well beered up, snogged themselves stupid. Except Alex "chicken and chips" who is already stupid. (Only jokin' mate. Or am I?). Nick "excuse me whilst I'm sick" Wilson wasn't sick in the mixer this time. Thank God (but it's coming). Instead she says excuse me to Nick "torchy cum bike bell" Stroud (gets his permission as she says), pushes him out of the way, opens the french windows and proceeds, in a dignified manner of course, to puke up all over the outside steps. A drop of say 12 splattery feet. Mmm. Dontcha just luurve party people? And how cool they are? Can't

wait for her next "celebrity" sick at the next party. This one well beat her "stereo dancefloor" jobbie at Jump t'other week. Of the next one? Fuck knows.

Her usual post-heave bee line straight towards Paul for a toungey snog was thwarted coz he ran out into the street screaming "keep that harbinger away from me", or some such sentiment.

Austin "dead leg" Reese, free party person extraordinaire, and fresh from his tour of warm, sickly, shivery rooms and trailers round Europe, drooped into Whitstable to visit his chums. Fresh from not scoring a grand off Harry in Nottingham (surprise, surprise) he proceeded to explain, to no one in particular, how his gold maglight "was at last working" after a prolonged period without batteries. "Let's borrow it,

please", says Oz. "No way. I don't want it lost". "Please Austin. I promise. I won't lose it. I'll look after it all night. The lights on the decks are bust and we can't see a thing". After much humming and harrang he let him have it. "providing you look after it". "I promise", he says.

Nick "out of the way" Wilson was DJing. "Here you go Nick. Austins maglight. Don't, repeat, don't LOSE it". "OK", she shays.

Ten minutes, or less, later. "Nick, where's the maglight?" "I'm fucked if I know", she says. Oops. Suffice to say Austin "thanks for the E" Dead Leg fucked off soon after.

It did turn up but much, much later at around two in the afternoon. "I've always wanted to get one on Austin", said the mystery thief. What a wind up ey? Anyway, it's safely back with its very happy and squeaky owner now.

C.J. "I'm a writer" Stone, who found the half undressed state of the girls intimidating, pointed his fingers at everyone and propounded his latest theory (something along the lines of "I agree with David Ickes conspiracy theory") to some bemused reactions. "Give us a kiss", Chris. Aaargh!

Cathy "where's the wall?" Miles, ground her hips and beamed away all night. "Sandels" missing her DJ.

Watson was heard to remark that "they were a lot more handleable". No psychedelic spanners this time my man.

Tom and Kier (or Swamp and Donkey to Nick for some reason) seen "brewing up" some cepes before hitting the decks for a modest four hour master mix. Leila danced and glanced. Alex "whip-round" Bird was upset about a window going through next door. (At 8.30 it transpired). The party by the way kicked off at 12 midnight much to the chagrin of the neighbours (everybody needs good neighbours). A nice letter proclaimed "Thanks for giving us notice about the party tonight. Have a good one!!! (That was very nice of them). But remember - no talking in the gaden after midnight (what!?) and no music after 12.30". True! Some people ey?

Come 4am the fluffcore faithful skipped and beamed and cracked and laughed and all the other usual errant nonsense we normally do and try to pass off as completely normal behaviour when the beer monster is bye-byes. E by gum. Only the best will do.

Twelve hours later, the "beyond the fluffcore" sesh was still proceeding with aplomb. Down the Neppy though. What a fucking state they were in. By six they still got into a car (music blasting,

hands pumping) to "chill out" somewhere nice with a cup o' tea and a spliff. What a party. What a crowd. What a life. (NO, "what a life" not "get a life").

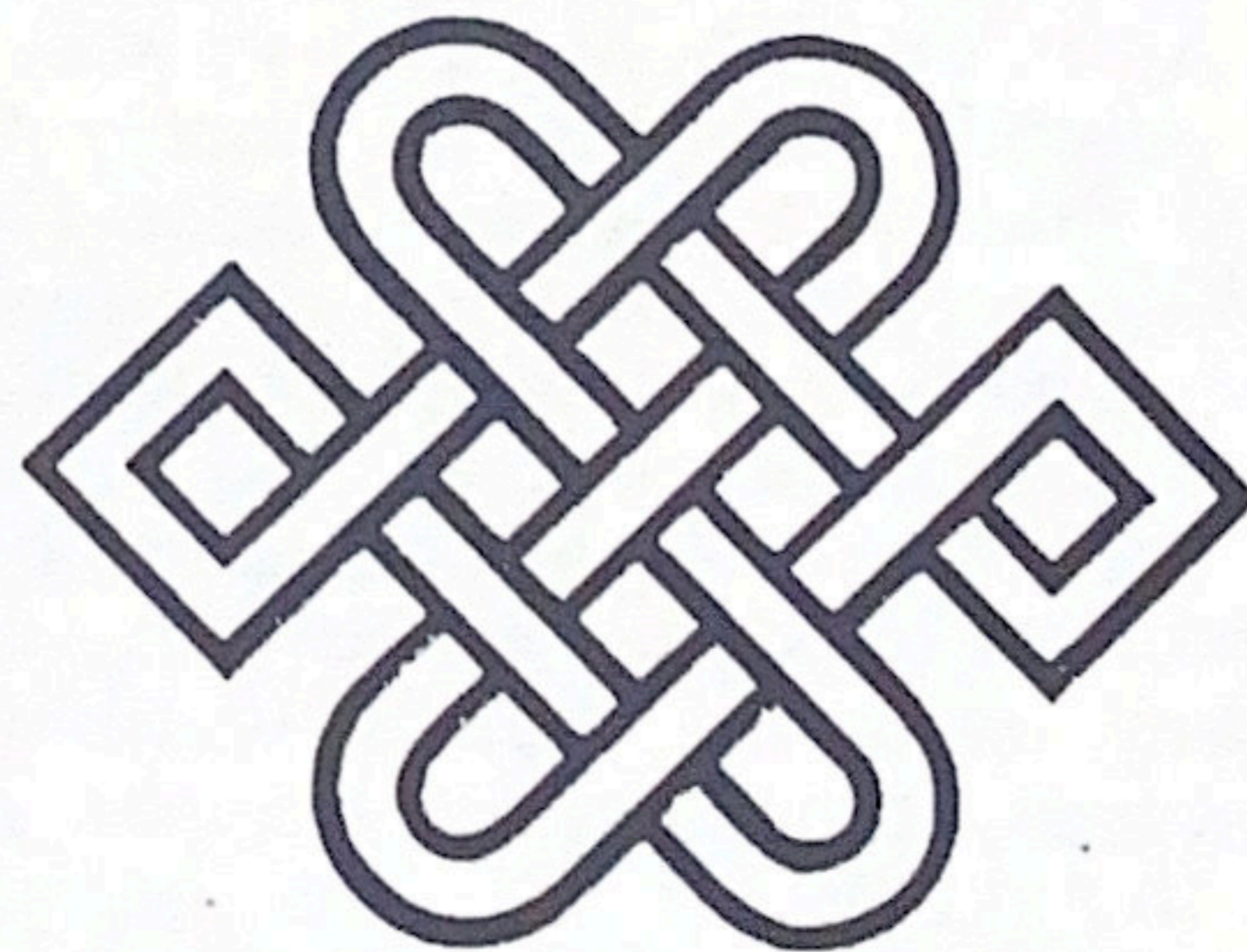
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A NIGHT OF KENT MADNESS - SAT 8TH OCT - RAMSGATE

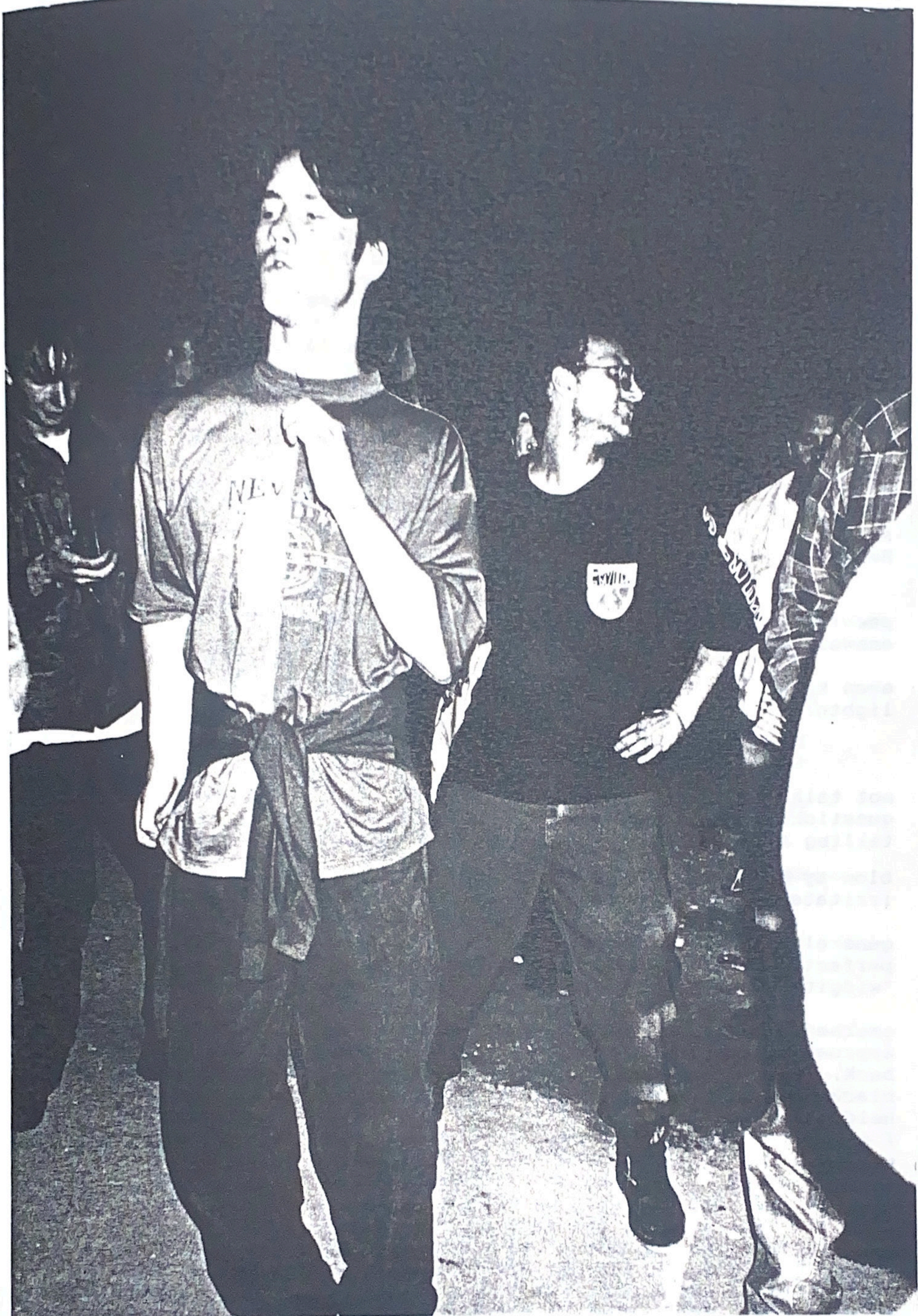
And a night of Kent madness it was. 300+ of Kents tip topp clubbers in a venue of wonderous spaciousness and beauty performing their most advanced selection of stumbles and gurns during a night of loved up mayhem. Upstairs was pleasure palace to all things hard, whilst downstairs tVC took the love bunker and grooved to all things deep and dirty. The beauty and charm of the girls contrasted with the cheerful virtuosity of the boys.

Despite the initial shock, to some, of there being no alcoholic beverages the dissappointment was soon overcome as everyone slipped into party mode full on early on and appreciated the splendor of their surruondings and the clarity of the music being performed for their delectation.

Lost it moment of the night must surely go to Mike E for stumbling around incoherently clapping his hands at 11.30 (surely a world record for him). Pam for doing the same most of the night. Nick heard to be cuddling almost everyone she came into contact with and telling them she loved them (yes I'm afraid so). She wasn't sick this time (there goes her 100% record) but did come perilously close a few times. Sue and her bottle of sherry wobbling by the speaker. Rowan and her sexy boots dancing like a good un all night long. Clive and his insatiable appetite and for his excellent set. Guy sitting grinning by the door. Everyone downstairs at one point. More please.



tVC are a handsome tribe. The nobility of the dancers faces enhanced by the gurn, worn for great occasions. Below is a characteristically beautiful pose.....



Negative Ions.

If the town is like a mind, and the roads are like the to-ing and fro-ing of everyday consciousness, then the back-alleys must be the unconscious. Our town has a rich and varied unconscious life in that case. It is riddled with back alleys. It's here that the teenagers go to snog, out of sight of their parents. It's here that cats prowl and foxes lurk in the dead of night. Where the rotting detritus of the everyday world is scattered in little piles. Where theives wander to eye up the properties that back onto them. So familiar are we with the byeways of the unconscious in Whitstable that we even give them names. Squeeze Gut Alley, and Beach Alley, as you know. And Stream Walk, the Grand-Mother of them all, almost a thoroughfare.

Joseph and I are walking down there one day, on the way to the Station. He's 13 years old. My son. The beauty of wandering around the town with a 13 year old is that he knows all the footpaths, all the out-of-the way places, and the quickest and most interesting route from here to there in every case.

Stream Walk meanders down from the top of the town virtually to the sea front. In some places, naturally enough, it follows the line of a little stream, now coursing through a concrete gutter and covered with a filthy green scum floating with bottles and cans and discarded copies of Hello! Magazine

"Why is lightning zig-zagged?," Joe asks.

"I don't know," I reply; probably a little peevishly as it's yet another question I don't know the answer to.

"It's negative ions in the air," he says. I don't even know what negative ions are, let alone why they cause lightning to zig-zag.

"If you knew, why did you ask me?" I say.

"I just wanted to see if you knew or not."

Anyway it was some such conversation. When he's not talking about lightning or negative ions or asking questions of such equally momentous imponderability, he's telling me the blow-by-blow plot of some movie -literally blow-by-blow- or rehearsing some advertising slogan which irritated me the first time I heard it, let alone the 200th.

Actually we get on suprisingly well. He takes my general impatience as some kind of a joke and knows perfectly well how best to wind me up. The mere mention of "widgit" is usually enough.

So we're trundling down Stream Walk, happily emersed in our own little world, when we see somebody approaching from the other end. It's a bloke, with slicked-back, greased hair and tinted spectacles. He's wearing a black tee-shirt under a leather waistcoat, and black jeans held up by an alarmingly wide belt with a monstrous buckle. I wouldn't have noticed him if it wasn't for the old lady watching him go by from the road. She has grey, permed hair and a flowery frock, and we're close enough to the two of them to see that she tuts as he passes, and rolls her eyes.

The look on her face is the picture of disapproval. You can see it in the pursed lips, in the flared nostrils, in the way she follows him with her eyes: "I just can't understand the younger generation," she seems to be saying. "What does he think he looks like?"

The thing is, this bloke must be in his 40s at least.

Well the boy and I are still walking. I'm probably the same age as the bloke, but dressed as a crumpled Somerset Maughm in light jacket, baggy trousers, collarless shirt. The whole style is my mad idea of the dignified older man. More deranged than dignified maybe. And my son is dressed casually but comfortably in a sweat shirt and light jeans. That's the way he likes to dress. He's also very fussy, unlike me, and can't abide stains. It has something to do with his age I guess. Luckily he knows how to use the washing machine or his clothes would end up looking like mine.

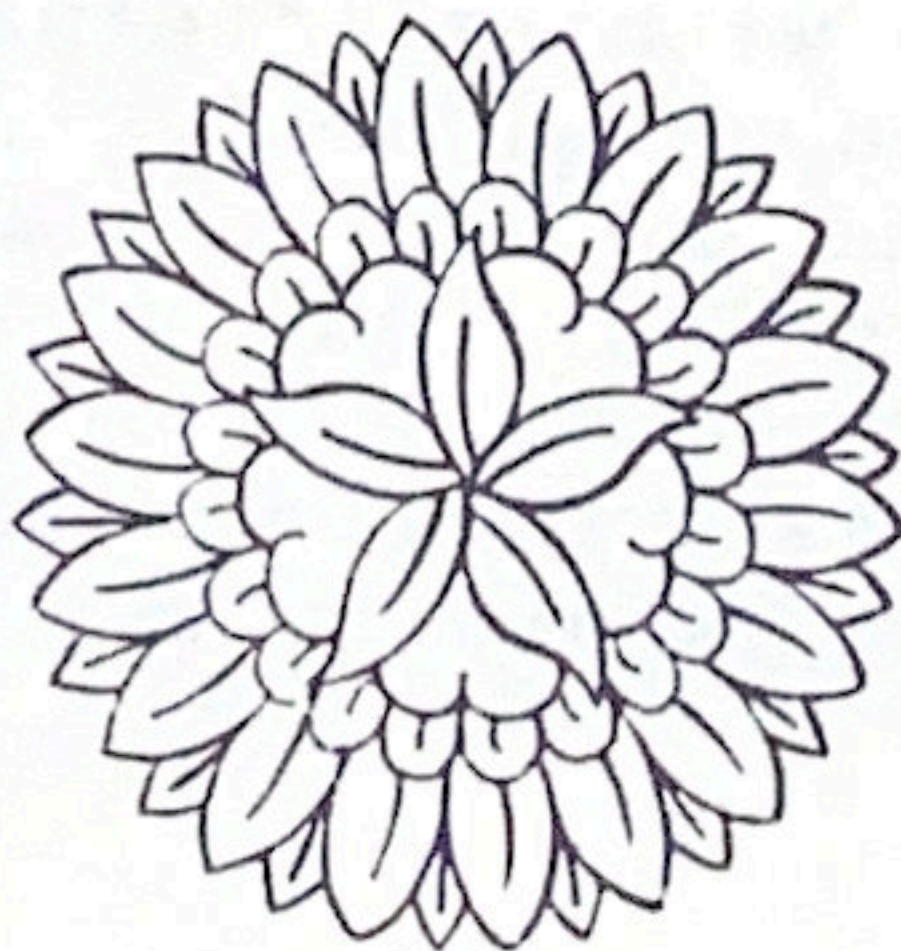
We'd forgotten the old woman by now. Still engrossed in some complex maneuverings around subjects I don't fully understand. Still chattering, gaily or peevishly depending upon our age. But she hasn't moved. She's standing there, watching us as we pass. I glance towards her and -you know what?- she tuts at us too, and rolls her eyes, and gazes at us as we walk by with that same, tight-lipped look of disapproval on her face. I laugh. At least it gets my mind off negative ions. I look towards Joe and he's noticed it too. We laugh together.

The whole episode reminds me of the sense of disapproval I have lived with all my life. I've always had the feeling that people consider me somehow disreputable and dangerous. It bothered me. Until I realised that it's probably because I am disreputable and dangerous.

But something else occurs to me about that old woman too, that she lives her whole life in a state of permanent disapproval, with that "tut" in her head, unable to see beyond the particularities of style or appearance, unable to accept people for what they are. And I expect she disapproves of most things. The traffic. The way the old shops are closing down. The lack of facilities in the town for people of her generation. Dogs that foul the pavement. The breakdown in communication between the generations. The way the young people no longer seem to respect her. Hippies and Punks and people with dreadlocks, as well as aging Teddy boys and crumpled Somerset Maughms and -even- smart young lads in casual clothes. I don't know. I get this feeling of a generalised disapproval, a state-of-mind rather than just a thought. But it's not my fault the world is like it is. It's not Joe's, or the guy in tinted glasses. We're another bunch or ne'er-do-wells on this confused planet, not the cause, the victims like her.

And it is this exact attitude that lies behind the CJB, isn't it? Disapproval. The Criminal Justice Bill has nothing to do with protecting the community from crime. It has everything to do with attempting to hold onto a myth, the bourgeois dream of respectability and smartness and generalised home-ownership. Well, I have nothing against that old woman and her poor, sad approach to life. And I have nothing against Michael Howard or his personal prejudices. I just don't think that either of them are qualified to write legislation, that's all.

What's that about negative ions again?



What's bad in the Bill

WAS it a gift to the Government? Inevitably, the confrontation between police and demonstrators against the Government's Criminal Justice Bill will be projected as convincing evidence of the need for tougher public order controls. Yet nothing could be further from the truth. There are already ample powers — as the police demonstrated on Sunday night — to control militant hardcore groups intent on turning peaceful demonstrations into disorder. Undoubtedly a small group wanted confrontation — peaceful demonstrators do not arm themselves with CS gas canisters to use against the police. Undoubtedly there was over-reaction by the police, with peaceful demonstrators — and at least one reporter — attacked by riot-police. Unfortunately the main lesson which ministers should draw will be ignored: far from reducing such ugly incidents, the Bill will only increase them. Its insidious effects will be eroding civil rights long after Sunday night is forgotten.

The mistake ministers are making is giving the police less discretion in an age when they need more. The police themselves have questioned the inappropriate way in which the Government is trying to solve social problems through the crimi-

nal law. Take the new anti-squatting provisions of the bill. You do not solve homelessness or housing shortages by passing criminal laws. Or consider the pressures which will be placed on police forces by local hunts under the proposed hunt-saboteur provisions. Ministers have failed to recognise the idealism driving such activists. People risking serious physical injury for their cause will not be deterred by a disputed criminal law.

There is a wider issue which more thoughtful policy-makers would have addressed. Here's a growing coalition of alienated groups who feel their lifestyles are being marginalised and now, under the bill, their behaviour criminalised: new age travellers, rave party-goers, hunt saboteurs. Even militant ramblers who step out of line face a criminal label. Wise legislators try to incorporate, not alienate, disaffected groups. No-one supposes this will be easy. Calls from a Charter 88 leader to Sunday's mass rally to register and vote were derided by the crowd. Yet even more serious than widespread alienation with the parliamentary process is disaffection with the criminal justice system. Passing more restrictive laws is not an answer. It only makes the police task more difficult — and feeds dissent. Shutting off a safety valve guarantees just one result: a damaging explosion.

The Red, The Black, The Green.

There is no personal initiative without community.
There is no community without personal initiative.
There is no Green agenda without a Socialist solution.
There is no Socialist solution without a Green agenda.
There is no revolution without revelation.
There is no spiritual growth without social change.
There is no national identity without international honour.
There is no international honour without a national soul.
The future is ours, if only we'll take it.
The future is Socialist, Anarchist, and Environmentalist at
the same time.
The Palestinian flag is red, black and green.
We are all landless people in the end.

Deep Unity

INDICA - Beautiful (Deep Feeling) (Cross Section Records) Alex Marsh produces a little gem. On the Main Mix a soothing bass is a prelude to a gorgeous trip into the meadow. Casual recreational users of a certain empathetic substance may find it irresistible cum sunrise. Shit! Can't say that now we have all moved indoors can I? Can't see the sunrise can we? Er, cum 5am then.

Excuse me while I weep quietly in the corner for the end of yet another superb summer of love.

KAF'E - Can You See It (Strength) Italy We love this record. Nick and Kate and Mike were all singing away to it, arms waving. Organ stabs over a fulsome lope satisfy immensely. The NY-esque camp exchanges during the interludes are the cream on a rich Italian cake.

COZY CONCEPT - Party Till Dawn (Blow Your Own Trumpet) Release four for Blow... and Cozy Concept edge their way to dancefloor domination. Martin Beaver is the man behind it. You are very good my friend. Solid Brit House.

ALL THINGS NICE - This Groove (Tumblin') "I can feel", he says. So can we mate. With a bass line shoved right at the front just jump on board and you're off. Just the excellence you'd expect from All Things Nice.

BRUCE WAYNE NATIVE SONS - Deep Sleep (Headline Effect) Dutch My friend Alice call this "cheeky techno" (there's Oxford for you) and it's Steve's favourite tune of the moment. In his "farking" jeep as soon as it finishes it's wound back to the beginning and played again. I was on a 15 mile return journey with him and we must have heard it, oooh, six times. Neither "cheeky" nor "toytown" but happy house.

FATMAN - Bells of London (Too's Company) Fatman AKA Sid produces a deep, soulful bass laden snorter. At Ramsgate on the 8th it was ideally suited to that packed, dark and hot low ceilinged basement. A tune to sweat to.

C+B CLUB - Ready to Ride (Platform 12) Another fine release from P12. A1 mix builds to mild acid climax then drops into pure pop. TOTP here they come (only kidding).

NED FLANDERS - Lucky Jim EP (Slapback) Dutch? Strong four tracker. "Bring Da Bass Back" Tejen would love cause it's got that hip-hop break that makes him go all gooey. Latin Guitar is nice too. In fact all the tunes are good. So there.

SHINDIG - Timeless EP Vol 2 (Bomba) Nearly missed this at Primal Vinyl in Canterbury (I said I'd give the shop a mention). "I Said Come On" captures that 7th Heaven vibe so well. Bradford, Scooby and Scott come and play with us!

VARIOUS - The Nice 'n' Ripe Double Decker (Nice 'n' Ripe) How N'n'R have grown! Not that long ago they were babes in nappies bumping into the furniture. Look at them now. Release 16 and showing signs of deep maturity. Eight tracks and they all mix so well with each other. On one of those rare chances of a five hour plus set I'd play them all. (As if).

NAIL - The Beeston EP (DIY Communications) Sounds like cells mutating and growing on Nori, the best track. Circular and dancable. I just love them backward scratches. Reminds me of Kenflows Dance to Dawn.

ILL DISCO - Keep the Jam Going (Arctic) John Paul Davis and his Keep the Jam Going deserve a medal for sheer inventive cheek. Seems like a clever use of the hooks from half a dozen faves from the past six weeks pasted in an intelligent, funny, original manner.

ROB D - Hard Times (rDr) Bouncy houser. A joy to mix. A DJ's job is hard enough (snigger) and they need nice long intro's building layer by layer in order to get it, at least, partially right. (Well I do anyway).

A joy to dance to. A dancers job is hard enough (snigger) and...

HOME ALONE - Gimme Your Love (Loaded) House mix is there. And does it. A little "old fashioned" sounding, if you know what I mean, in a funky sub K+M/Stress kinda way. Dub Mix is much better. Original (jazzy) Sax Mix even better. Especially at 10am.

COVER UPS - Vol 2 Second strong four tracker this fortnight. Solid pumping London paste. Tr1- Nice piano stabs and sloping bass. tr2- Melancholic New Jersey skipper. Tr3- Walking bass with pianoes drifting in and out. A drum workout in the middle. Tr4- Bubbly and bouncy. The whole lot? better than Vol 1.

XELCIA - Work Baby (Stress) It's the Tin Tin Out Remix that does it. It's that well worth waiting for piano at the end of the last breakdown then it's.....banana time.

D'ENRICO - Everybody Party (Ouch!) Because of a virtually identical hook to their last tune "It Was Meant To Be" D'Enrico back track slightly and let the rest of the field catch up a bit. Still, it does the required damage.

XS - Leave Us Up (Cor Blimey Records) First release on a new label. Andrew searchfield provides a very worthy effort. Piano Mix wins the day in a cheeky techno sort of a way.

THE SHAKER - Just Lick It (Remixes) (Ugly Bug) I could come out with that old one about if it aint broke don't fix it or some such sort of shite but I won't 'cause just to have an excuse to play this tune again is reason enough to justify its existence. The original (not included here) is one of the tunes of the year if I may be so bold. Except I gave my copy away to Sarah and Cath. Oh well.

MADHAVA - Amber EP (Elusive) Nice piano and acoustic guitar on Mooshka.

SYLVESTER - You make Me Fall (Mighty Real) (Bosting) Oopsl! How did that one slip into my box?

INDO: - R U Sleeping (Azuli) I like this. Just what the dancers love. Deep and soulful and dreamy.

And thats yer lot for now. See ya all next time.



The dancers need great skill and years of hard training.

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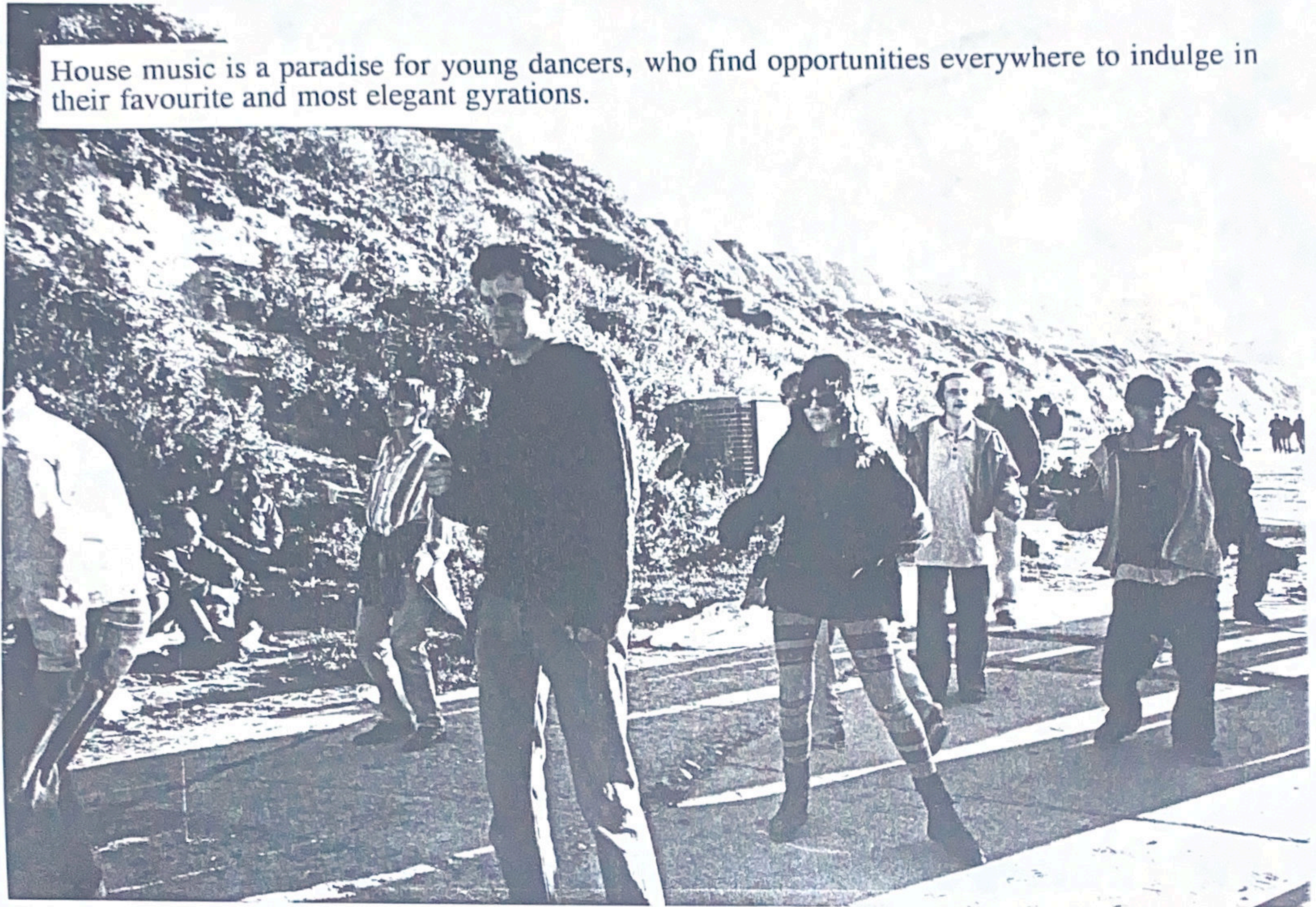
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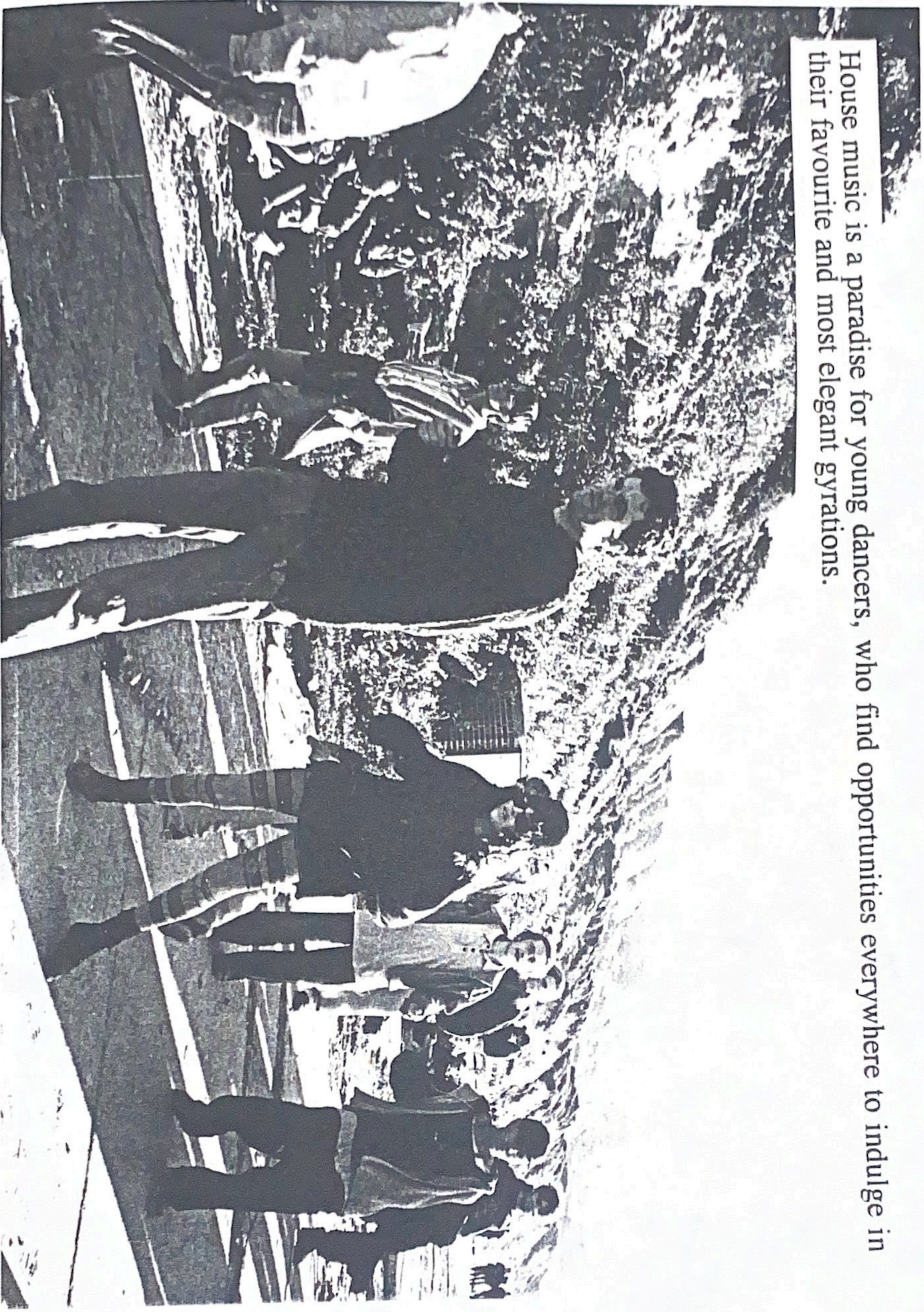


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AIN'T WORTH A CARROT MATE

