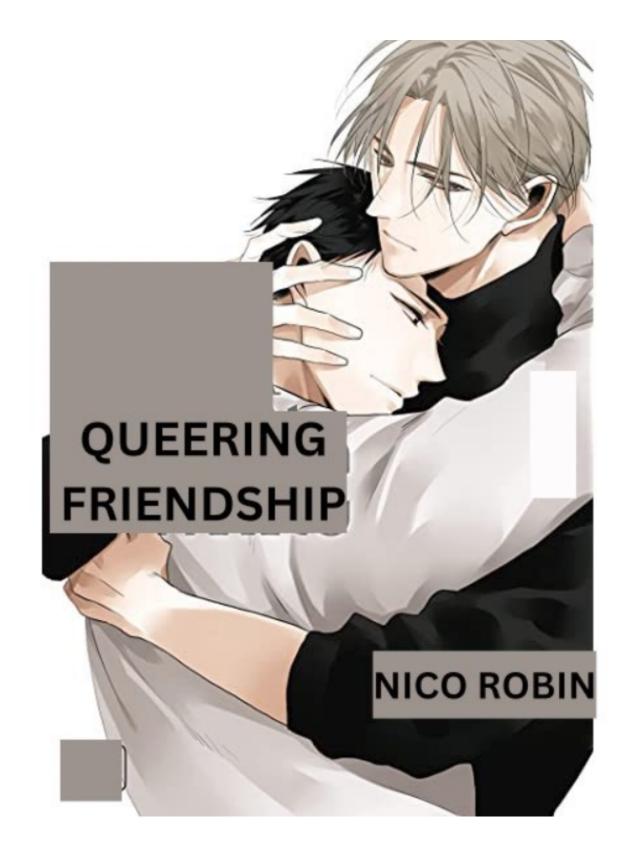*Alienation:* A complex concept in Marx, Situationism, Bey and others (Bey, 1985, 1994; on Bey see also McLaverty-Robinson, 2023), indicating a separation from oneself or parts of oneself, from one's agency and its effects, and/or from important relations to others and the world.

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QUEERING
FRIENDSHIP

NICO ROBIN

Queering Friendship by Nico Robin

The way in which relationships are carried out today in the US is ontologically different from how they are in some areas with lower levels of civilization. The Bribri all live very close to each other and are always walking by each others houses; if someone is sitting at their porch and you're walking by and want to chat you say hi and start talking. If they're not at their porch you come by again another day. Since everyone lives so close together they see each other often and don't have to travel far to spend time together. Living close together means they also have more intimate knowledge of each other. Everyone is within a few minutes walk. In the US, friends normally live very far away from each other, often separated by miles within the same town or city. This alone creates a layer of separation, of alienation. The norm is that doing what the Bribri do; walking to someones house to see if they're available to hang out (sitting on their porch) is socially unacceptable. You can't just show up unannounced without texting first; no spontaneous face to face interaction allowed! You have to initiate the interaction through a mediator: the cell phone. You can't just stop by someones house the way the Bribri can, you have to first text/call saying "can I come over?" This removes the possibility of the interaction being initiated through the meat space. Can't start the interaction with eye contact, body language, tone of voice, or sharing physical space. Initiating a physical interaction with a text box is alienating; you're not talking to a person you're talking to a machine feeding you or even better NOT feeding you responses, making the person alien/foreign. When you're texting someone, you're looking at a text box not someones face. A very easy way to make a person feel like an Other is to cut out all other layers of interaction except the written word, which is even more alienating than the alienation of interacting with someone through speaking. A further layer of alienation. Relationships mediated by cell phones simultaneously feel comforting (the safety of the mother) and make the world outside your phone feel alien. There is a theory that the cell phone acts as a substitute for breast milk in early childhood; a passively received flow. When you use your phone you are "inside" the safety of the maternal realm which could explain the preference

through brutality, or the continuity of his experiences, for him it has become clear that for the individual society is a perpetual creator of constraints, humiliations and miseries, a kind of continuous generation of human pain. In the name of his own experience and his personal sensation of life the individualist feels he has the right to relegate to the rank of utopia any ideal of a future society where the hoped-for harmony between the individual and society will be established. Far from the development of society diminishing evil, it does nothing but intensify it by rendering the life of the individual more complicated, more laborious and more difficult in the middle of the thousand gears of an increasingly tyrannical social mechanism.

Works Cited

Language by John Zerzan

Node Theory by Anonymous

The Unique and its Property by Max Stirner

The Will to Empower Democratic Citizens and Other Subjects by Barbara Cruikshank

Anarchism and Individualism by Georges Palante

waging a social revolution not against capitalism, racism, and inequality, but against the order of the self and the way we govern our selves.

Self-esteem advocates, including Steinem, may not recognize the extent to which personal life is the product of power relations, the extent to which personal life is governed and is itself a terrain of government. The "inner voice" she teaches us to listen to is the voice of pure and unmediated self-knowledge. She assumes that women have a natural subjectivity that is hindered or repressed by power, rather than shaped and constituted by power. Steinem fails to grasp the difficulty of distinguishing subjectivity from subjection.

Our relationship to our selves is directly related to citizenship because, by definition, "being a responsible citizen depends on developing personal and social responsibility." One must accept the responsibility to subject one's self, to establish voluntarily a relationship between one's self and a tutelary power (such as a therapist or a social worker) and a technique of power (in a social program or a parenting class). Building self-esteem is a technology of citizenship and self-government for evaluating and acting upon our selves so that the police, the guards and the doctors do not have to. Consent in this case does not mean that there is no exercise of power; by isolating a self to act upon, to appreciate and to esteem, we avail ourselves of a terrain of action; we exercise power upon ourselves.

Society needs protection from those who lack self-esteem, according to advocates. Those who have failed to link their personal fulfillment to social reform are lumped together as "social problems," diagnosed as "lacking self-esteem," and charged with "antisocial behavior."

From Anarchism and Individualism by Georges Palante:
Individualism is the sentiment of a profound, irreducible antinomy between the individual and society. The individualist is he who, by virtue of his temperament, is predisposed to feel in a particularly acute fashion the ineluctable disharmonies between his intimate being and his social milieu. At the same time, he is a man for whom life has reserved some decisive occasion to remark this disharmony. Whether

for conducting/mediating relationships through phones. The unmediated (face to face) interaction is outside of the protective sphere of the cell phone and therefore potentially dangerous. You can't type and retype your response or wait a few days; you have to respond right then when you're in someones physical space. This makes it easier than ever before to push someone away! You don't even have to say anything! Just leave them on read. They can't stop by and knock on your door to see whats going on because that's taboo! Even if you didn't answer the door you'd still have to deal with the person you're ignoring being physically close which you can completely avoid hiding behind your phone! Try imagining being in a hunter gatherer group and ignoring someone. Impossible! There's no room to go hide from them in, you're outside! You would be forced to say something to them to get them to leave you alone, now you can just stop texting back! Just keep double texting!

The more time you spend away from someone the easier it is to reify them; for them to become an abstraction rather than a Unique One.

> "Only when nothing is said about you and you are merely named, are you recognized as you. As soon as something is said about you, you are only recognized as that thing"

To be clear I'm talking specifically about relationships with people who live in the same city/town as you, not relationships with people who live thousands of miles away (I want to maintain those relationships!). Its safer behind this phone and helping a friend with their problems I'm telling them they have is dangerous. Some hunter gatherer groups had/have more intimate knowledge about each other I'm assuming because they spend more time together (all in the same area outside) and when someone has psychological/emotional problems they do a kind of group therapy where they excise the "demon" from the person together. Whereas in modernity people all live separated from each other in separate houses so there's normally not that intimate knowledge of each other and when someone is having mental/emotional trouble we say "you need to work on yourself: use

some self help techniques" and expect them to handle it on their own. It feels natural to have someone solve their emotional problems themselves since most people spend their time alone in a room anyways. Self help/popular psychology is a method to help people conform and remain useful to the dominant system (a form of self policing so that the actual police/doctors don't have to intervene). Node theorists and the like tell you to work on your self esteem without acknowledging that they and the world at large constantly attack your self esteem. "You can fix yourself but the world is still going to fuck you".

Excerpts for Context

From Node Theory by Anonymous: *Alienation:* A complex concept in Marx, Situationism, Bey and others (Bey, 1985, 1994; on Bey see also McLaverty-Robinson, 2023), indicating a separation from oneself or parts of oneself, from one's agency and its effects, and/or from important relations to others and the world. Theorised differently by different writers, alienation generally prevents the exercise of active force and experiences of immediacy, empowerment, joy, etc. In Hegel, alienation refers to consciousness/spirit divided against itself, thus unable to self-actualise. In Stirner, spooks alienate people by subordinating them to imaginary abstractions, splitting their agency between the true self (Unique One) and the internalised aspect of the concept or image. In Marx, capitalism alienates people from their creative powers by forcing workers to use them to produce profit for a boss, and also alienates workers from one another, from the things they make and from the production process. This is also taken as an alienation from one's human substance or "species-being" – although the concept is by no means limited to humanist theories and also arises in ecology and the post-left (one can be alienated not only from one's human traits, but from one's unique, animal, ecological, transpersonal traits). In Situationism, alienation involves living one's life passively, in conformity to images.

From The Will to Empower Democratic Citizens and Other Subjects by Barbara Cruikshank: Self-esteem is a practical technology for the production of certain kinds of selves - for "making up people," as Ian Hacking put it. Self-esteem is a technology in the sense that it is a specialized knowledge of how to esteem our selves, how to estimate, calculate, measure, evaluate, discipline, and judge our selves.
The self-esteem movement was spearheaded in 1983 by the California Task Force to Promote Self-Esteem and Personal and Social Responsibility. The Task Force promised to deliver programs (what I have been calling technologies of citizenship) that could solve social problems – from crime and poverty to gender inequality - by