Issue 1

FACILITY

a magazine about bathrooms

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Eating food and eliminating waste are fundamental to human experience. But while there is a robust culture around food, there's virtually none around the toilet. Conversationally, architecturally, politically, artistically, we spend too little time celebrating or critiquing this space that we visit—and the things that we do there—every day. The bathroom has not been thoroughly plumbed.

This isn't to say that society has no rules about washing, excretion, hygiene, or interpersonal conduct in the bathroom. Bathroom habits have long been subject to religious and governmental precepts and a variety of cultural norms throughout the world. But here in New York City, in 2019, we find that our experience of the bathroom is underexamined (by which we mean examined too little, not examined from underneath). Our collective view of the bathroom is clouded by taboo, shame, and euphemism. What is this space we are talking about anyway? A toilet, a restroom, a facility, a water closet, a comfort station, a washroom, a bathroom, a ladies' or men's room, a little boys' or girls' room, a lavatory, a latrine, a tearoom, a shitter, a can? *Facility*'s rigorous study of toilets—toiletry, we might call it—explores the rich and multifarious sights, smells, textures, feelings, ideas, and routines behind the nicknames, beyond the placards.

The public restroom is a microcosm of the culture at large, exposing its fears, rules, assumptions, inequities, and priorities. The bathroom is a place of commonality and collectivity, but it has also been a space where segregation is blatantly enforced: certainly by sex and gender, but also by race, class, and physical ability. To examine the public bathroom is to explore the ways in which we divide ourselves as a society, the ways we fail to accommodate one another's needs, the ways that people are forced to cram into, or are simply excluded from, ill-fitting norms and standards. Yet it is also a place where we care for loved ones; share intimacies with strangers; where alone and together we take a breather (so to speak); where we reconnect with our animal nature.

At home, the private bathroom can be a space of refuge, but it can also be a hiding place for our anxieties. It is a site for contemplation and for practical know-how alike. Here our most intimate, most solitary moments are connected to municipal infrastructures, a regional water table, a global ecology.

Every type of bathroom experience deserves a closer look. For some, the toilet, both public and private, is a place of mindless routine. For others, each visit to the bathroom is fraught, a time for hypervigilance and hyperawareness. Your experience is likely more nuanced, more varied—and certainly more detailed—than the binary laid out above. Perhaps you breeze in and out of public restrooms, but pick yourself apart in front of the bathroom mirror at home. Maybe each visit to a gender-segregated restroom fills you with dread, but when you take a bath at night you can relax into your own body. Maybe you hover, maybe you sit; maybe you do both, depending on the situation. Maybe you never look at anyone when you're at the urinal; maybe you know the best way to look without anyone noticing; maybe you want them to notice. Perhaps you take efficient showers. Perhaps you wash your hair sensually. Perhaps you light incense for pleasure, or from shame. Maybe you shave begrudgingly. Maybe you pee in the shower; maybe you cry there. Perhaps you inject yourself—with insulin, or with heroin—in bathroom stalls. Perhaps you flush with your foot, perhaps with your hand, perhaps not at all. Perhaps you use toilet seat covers effectively, perhaps not. Maybe you've had to go without a bathroom while working a long shift, or while living in your car. Maybe you've bathed and changed a child, a parent, a lover, or a friend. Maybe a loved one has bathed you, or lifted you onto the toilet. Maybe you have a hard time fitting everything—your body; your wheelchair; your coat, bag, and stroller—into stalls. Maybe you've bought sex in a bathroom; maybe you've sold it; maybe you've given and gotten and shared it for free. Maybe you hold your pee until you get home; maybe you pee on the street; maybe you've peed yourself after being unable to find an available restroom. Maybe you have trouble controlling your bladder. Maybe you clean bathrooms for a living. Maybe you clean bathrooms for your family. Perhaps you've laid tile. Perhaps you've replaced pipes.

MAGAZINE

We enter the bathroom as we would any other room: each of us bringing along our own unique biography, opinions, feelings, thoughts, aesthetic, humor, politics. But in the bathroom, everybody's shit stinks. This basic truth is the fertilizer from which a more free, more fair, more joyful world might grow.

BATHROOM STORIES:

A couple interviews each other

Heather Johnson and Svetlana Kitto

HEATHER: I have a memory of going to a bathroom.

SVETLANA: Yeah.

HEATHER: Well, I am not a traditional looking woman. [*Laughs.*] And I have a picture of myself in my twenties. You can see what some of the issues a 1990s lesbian would be having in public restrooms. I was very masculine identified, still am, and one memory that sticks out the most would be the time I had to go to the bathroom in Union Station in Washington, DC. I was wearing all black with a black leather jacket, cut-off black T-shirt underneath. And I was nervous to go to the bathroom because I was aware that I wasn't looking particularly feminine that day. Usually I would try to do something to feminize me if possible, to make the entry into the bathroom, bathrooms such as Union Station, more comfortable, cause I mean, there's so much traffic in there, and I'm really tall.

SVETLANA: She is.

HEATHER: And at that time I had a shaved head and stuff, with three little tufts on top of my head. So it wasn't like I could pass very well at all. So I just decided to have some courage and to go in there like I belonged in there. And that's what I did. I started strutting into the bathroom, and there was a line of women to go in, but it was moving, so women were coming out and women were going in, and I was in line, and I was probably about halfway up, the turnover was pretty quick, and I was probably almost about go to into a stall, when a cop rushed up behind me and grabbed my jacket. And I thought it was someone behind me; I didn't realize it was a cop. And I was like, "What the fuck," you know? She turns me around, and she's like, "You can't be in here." And I said, "Why not?" She's like, "This is a women's restroom." At that point everybody's looking, and it's a woman cop, and someone said, "She *is* a woman." Or they might've said, "*It* is a woman." I'm not sure. I just wanted to go to the bathroom. But it was so embarrassing. And she was like, "Oh, I'm sorry." She apologized, but it was just so embarrassing and shaming. You know, there's this look that people give you: they look for a breast or some identifier that you're a woman, you know? So there was that like, up and down, and checking out my jacket. It just felt really invasive and terrifying. And everybody was looking at me, and so many people were in there, in the bathroom, and so I just went to the stall, and just couldn't pee. You know, I was frozen. I couldn't get anything to come out. I was shaking and nervous and scared to leave the stall. It was like my adrenaline was so high. I was in there for a while.

After that, I really had panic attacks going into public restrooms. It would just be so hard. I'd start to hyperventilate. Then I started getting UTIs because I was holding it for too long, just trying to find a place that had a stall, just one stall, not like a series of stalls. Sometimes I would go in with the guys, especially in those kind of places, because the one thing that felt safe about men's rooms is that no one looks at each other. There's no eye contact. In fact, eye contact is avoided at all costs. It's like, gay or something. So I can walk into a guys' bathroom, go into a stall, and just feel so much safer there. But a couple of times men recognized me, especially black men would recognize me. And then they would kind of raise their eyebrows, like I was looking for something, you know? Which was also scary, cause I was like*, I'm not in here looking for business either.* Especially in those kind

of public restrooms. That was just my fear: that they were looking for something, not like that's really what it was. But that kind of recognition—it just didn't feel safe anywhere.

Eventually, as I grew older, I grew my hair out a little longer, and now I don't have as much trouble with being less recognized as much, but I think it's because of the education that's gone on in the country, especially in New York City, where people are really aware that there's trans people around. But when I'm in the South, I get looks, more looks than I do here. The South is still very much two-gendered spaces, so then it brings back memories of just like, *oh my god*. But now I have to go in with another attitude. My attitude now is like, I am a woman, and you should know that women come in all shapes and sizes and look differently, and I belong here. And that sort of attitude kind of shuts people up before they say anything to me. So that's my story.

SVETLANA: I don't have any stories, I mean it's just like a—

HEATHER: It doesn't have to be a traumatic story. It could be a funny story. I'm sure there's a thousand tampon stories.

SVETLANA: What's happened to me in public bathrooms? I've done drugs in public bathrooms. I've had sex in public bathrooms.

HEATHER: What kind of drugs?

SVETLANA: Oh, like when I was in my early twenties and I was doing cocaine and stuff. The bathroom became a place that we would go. There was this club I used to go to in Los Feliz in L.A., and you're just kind of watching who has the cocaine, and are they going to invite you to come back, and the whole night is about trying to make sure that you get invited to—[*laughs*]. Or if you're the one who has it, you know, it's just so gross because it's so much about making sure you have enough, basically, to share, and who gets to have it and who doesn't. It's pretty nasty. But it was fun.

HEATHER: Power position.

SVETLANA: Yeah. I mean, I would sometimes be in that position, but I would often not be, because I often wouldn't have a lot of money, and also wouldn't really want to commit to actually buying it. I just wanted to pretend like I wasn't really doing it, but I was. And what else?

HEATHER: You said sex in the bathroom.

SVETLANA: I did. I mean, yeah. [*Laughs.*]

HEATHER: What's that about?

SVETLANA: Well, when I was younger, it was like the only way I could feel alive was if I did things that had an illicit quality to them, so to keep myself interested I'd want to have sex in a public bathroom, or in the bathroom on an airplane or in a park. It was like that was how I felt connected to someone, was through doing something that had a heightened quality to it that felt dangerous. Just being with someone and tolerating when things are quiet or things are boring felt so impossible to me when I was younger. If there was any moment of feeling not intensity then I didn't want to be there. So I just wanted intensity all the time.

HEATHER: The bathrooms brought that.

SVETLANA: Yeah, I guess so. I got my period in a public bathroom. At Marie Callender's, which is a chain restaurant.

HEATHER: Yeah, it's the best.

SVETLANA: The best pie and the best chicken pot pie. I was 13. I was a person who was very happy to get my period. That's the

kind of girl I was. I was like, "Yay, I got my period. I'm growing up." Because I felt very un-grown up.

HEATHER: How old were you?

SVETLANA: I was 13. So I wasn't super young. I was on the older side I guess. Or like middle, I don't know.

HEATHER: I got mine when I was 11. Fourth or fifth grade.

SVETLANA: Whoa, that's young.

HEATHER: Yeah. Big, thick pads.

SVETLANA: Yeah. My stepmom taught me how to use o.b.s. I was really young, like 14.

HEATHER: I wasn't allowed to use those because my mom said, "You'll know when you're old enough to use those. You'll know where to put it." [*Laughs.*] Well, what about bathrooms as gathering spaces? A safe space to go in? Did you ever experience that, this idea of camaraderie in the bathroom? When I was a little, little girl, like under teenage years, we would run into the bathroom to do all of our talking, like at school.

SVETLANA: Yeah, well definitely—whoa, oh my god. All I can think of is bad things I did in the bathroom. This is a funny story. When I was like 11 or 10, I was in the car with my dad. Both my parents smoked my whole life. Both of them smoked like 40 to 60 cigarettes a day, like chronic, crazy smokers, and I mean, actually, as I'm saying this, it's funny, cause it reminds me of how I talk to you sometimes, so I apologize already. But I said to my dad in the car, I said, "Dad, you have to quit smoking."

HEATHER: [*Laughing.*] That sounds like you.

SVETLANA: I was like—and he always reminds me of this—I said, "You know, Dad, it's bad enough that you want to kill yourself and leave me an orphan. But that you would want to take me with you"—cause this was in the days of the second-hand smoke awareness—and he quit! And then flash-forward one year, I get caught smoking in the bathroom of my junior high. And suspended.

HEATHER: Oh god. That's so perfect.

SVETLANA: You have a great new bathroom in your new place.

HEATHER: Yeah. I mean, to me, bathrooms have always been a safe space. Like bathrooms alone.

SVETLANA: Yeah, well I would like you to talk about how—

HEATHER: How I lose time in the bathroom?

SVETLANA: How she loses time in the bathroom. So she sets a timer.

HEATHER: I call bathrooms time traveling, cause it's like, you go in there, and it already sounds like an echo chamber. It's a beautiful sort of—it reminds me of the womb, you know?

SVETLANA: Yeah.

HEATHER: It's like a warm space that's just for you, you know? And to be able to go in there and just be in your most comfortable state, and also feel completely held. [*Laughs.*] That's the right word for it. I do feel very held by bathrooms.

SVETLANA: [*Laughs.*]

HEATHER: I don't know. So I go in there and I lose time. The other thing that I do in bathrooms, especially public bathrooms, is that I feel

the need to clean them before I use them.

SVETLANA: My thing about that is like, I agree, public bathrooms are disgusting. So why would you want to spend any more time in there than you have to?

HEATHER: Because I have to use it, and I can't use a disgusting bathroom.

SVETLANA: You just don't touch anything!

HEATHER: It's impossible.

SVETLANA: You just crouch. And you just pee and you just run out.

HEATHER: I'm like, six feet tall; something touches something. So I want to make sure whatever that thing is is covered in paper towels and tissues. So I'm in there like, papering the walls with tissues and paper.

SVETLANA: Well, all of that is to say I'm glad you use a timer now. [*Laughs.*] Oh, I was talking to [a friend] about this, and [they were] like, "For me, it was from my childhood. The bathroom was the only place I could lock the door." I'll just say that for me, right now, the bathroom is the only place where when I call my cat, she will come. I can be anywhere else in the house and she pretends like she doesn't know her name, like I'm not even there, but if I'm sitting on the toilet peeing, and I say "Aurora!" she runs over. It's the weirdest thing. What do you think that's about? I've asked you this before. I'm often asking you to analyze my cat's psychology to me.

HEATHER: Well, I think it's about—

SVETLANA: Me being trapped? You said something before like it's about—

HEATHER: Well, I read this article where it said that cats find that—this was from a pet psychic—they said that the cat finds that being with their owner in the bathroom is the only place where their owner isn't thinking about a million things at once, and they're just like, super open and present. So they really feel like they're being seen, whereas in other parts of the house, the owner's usually watching television or thinking about work, or super scattered, and the bathroom is the one place where they know they're going to get special attention.

SVETLANA: Well, that's true.

HEATHER: I have to say, the cat that I live with doesn't have to do that because she gets my special undivided attention all over the house. [*Laughs.*] Except in the bathroom, where I'm thinking about 1,000 things and lose track of time. I'm the opposite. When I'm in the bathroom, that's when I think about the most things.

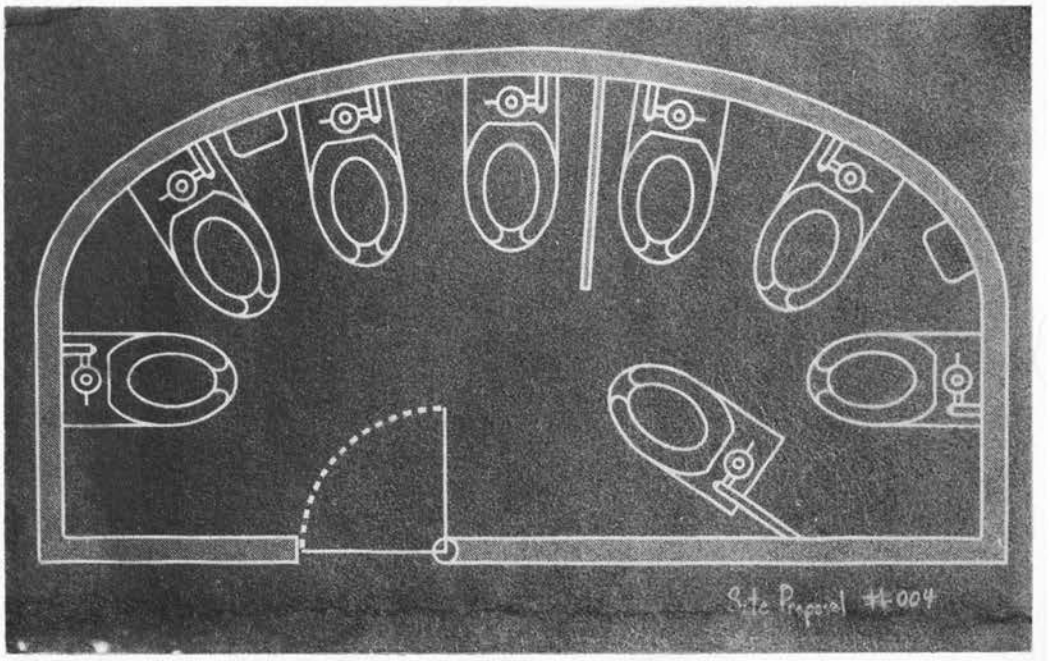
SVETLANA: But also the difference is that you have a roommate, and when I pee, my door is open. It's never closed.

HEATHER: Yeah, sometimes she'll come in there and sit and just look at me.

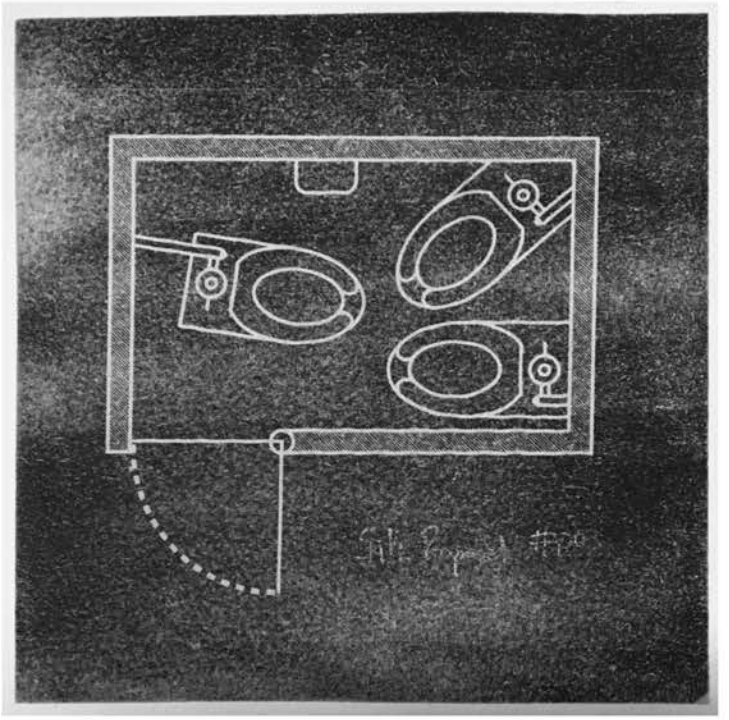
SVETLANA: Just thinking about my cat makes me happy. But Erin told me that she was doing this bathroom publication, she was like, "You should do something for it." And I was like, "Oh, maybe I'll do something about how my cat always comes to the bathroom." And she made a face, like—she just kind of glazed over. But I still found a way to talk about it.

HEATHER: You're gonna cut this out of the article.

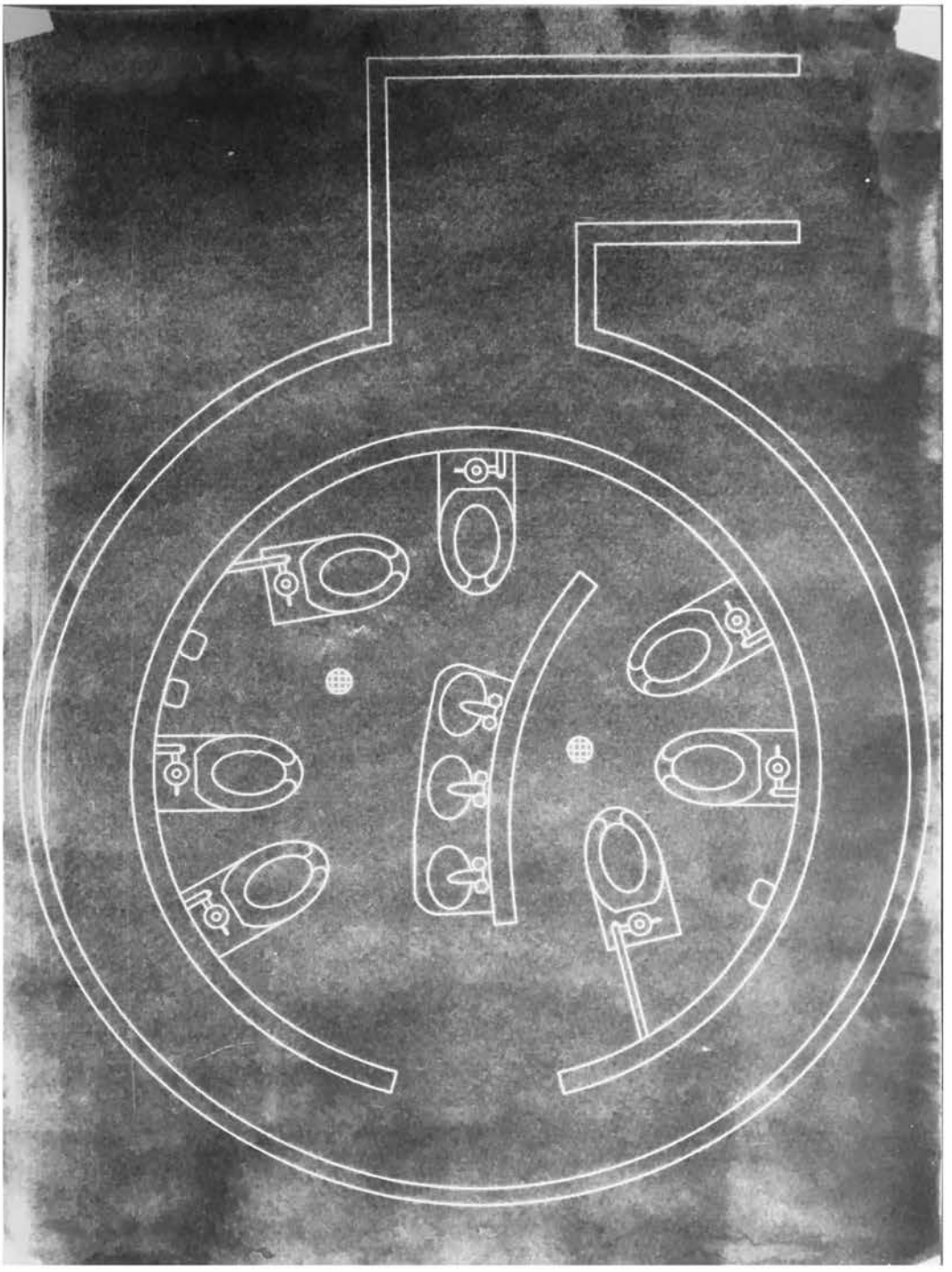
SVETLANA: No, I don't think so.



Above: *Site Proposal #004*, 2017. Below: *Site Proposal #003*, 2017.



Bathrooms made for cruising
For this series, artist Keenan Bennett created speculative blueprints of bathrooms designed to facilitate public intimacy, exhibitionism, and voyeurism. These cyanotypes honor histories of queer encounters in bathrooms while also offering a utopian vision for the future of public restrooms: what could bathrooms become, and what might they make possible? What would an erotic bathroom look like? What would a bathroom designed to foster community look like? What would a bathroom designed to meet your needs and desires look like?



Site Proposal #006, 2017.

Keenan Bennett

The Capitalist Bathroom Experience

The Struggle for Dignity and Relief in the Capitalist Era

The Capitalist Bathroom Experience is a publication created by Art for a Democratic Society (A4DS) for an exhibition at the Museum of Capitalism, an institution dedicated to educating the public—and future generations—about the ideology, history, and legacy of capitalism. A4DS—an artist collaborative based in the San Francisco Bay Area that has addressed topics including political activism, urban planning, bureaucracy, and class war—created this 32-page zine to explore the history of the bathroom's role in capitalist society. You will notice that in this excerpt the Capitalist Era is referred to in the past tense, a choice that infuses the text with a sense of hope: that this system will one day be a thing of the past, that we can and will build a more equitable world.

Shit Work: The Battle for Bathroom Breaks

In 2002, the Occupational Safety and Health review commission (OSHA) in the United States of America heard a deposition from a urologist paid by Jim Beam Brands Co. This legal deposition was about whether the employees on a Jim Beam whiskey bottling line should legally be allowed to use the restroom whenever they needed to.

> Lawyer: Dr. Stivers, someone who has a gastro-intestinal problem, would you agree that they should, at least ideally, they should have prompt access to the restroom?
>
> Urologist: I would hope that anybody that has a GI problem would have access to the problem [sic].
>
> Lawyer: Would you agree that if they didn't have prompt access, someone in diarrhea could very well soil themselves if they had to wait any appreciable length of time?
>
> Urologist. It's a social problem, not a medical problem.
>
> Lawyer: Your [sic] not answering my question by saying that.
>
> Urologist: I'm not answering your question the way you want me to answer the question. The answer to the question is, of course someone with a GI condition should under every hopeful circumstance have access to a bathroom when they need to go there. But if they have an acci-

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dent, it's a social problem, not a medical problem."

- From *Void Where Prohibited Revisited*, by Marc Linder.

In the Capitalist Era, fundamental physiological human needs led to social conflicts when the the profit motive of the powerful and biological imperatives of the population were at odds. There were struggles around getting enough to eat and time to sleep, securing decent shelter and access to water. In workplaces employees fought for safety, rest, and workplace clothing in order to be the right temperature, dry and protected from the sun. Workers struggled for psychological survival needs such as for privacy, social companionship, more fulfilling methods of labor, or reproductive needs. It is therefore unsurprising that under capitalism defecation and urination were also sites of class struggle.

Millions of workers were unable to relieve themselves when they needed to while on the job. Workers complained about the lack of bathroom breaks stretching from the early mills at the beginning of industrialization all the way into the final turbulent decades of capitalism. Certain workers were more apt to be denied bathroom breaks. Assembly line workers were expected to maintain the pace of the machines on the line and were often denied bathroom breaks. Many truck and bus drivers were expected to maintain tight schedules and drive for hours on routes with few restrooms. But "professional" workers such as nurses and teachers also faced the same pressures in understaffed hospitals and schools.

Discipline varied in each workplace but all capitalists saw breaks and biological needs as problems of labor "efficiency". Most Capitalists paid their workers by the hour and so any time not spent making products or providing services could make them fall behind their competitors. Companies did Taylorist "time studies" on work processes to understand how long their

employees took to perform certain tasks.[1] They would also time breaks, including bathroom breaks, in an attempt to reduce break time. Some managers fired workers who left to take breaks, or charged them a certain amount of pay if they took more or longer bathroom breaks than management specified. For workers with bowel conditions these penalties could amount to a significant wage cut.

Additionally, to get the most from their laborers, capitalists attempted to push the costs and effort required to simply be physically and mentally able to work onto the employees themselves and their families.[2] This biological "reproduction" of the worker, which readied each worker for the next day of work, included such activities as sleeping, relaxing, childrearing, and fun. Humans have a great potential to delay many of these essential needs and capitalism's bosses tested the limits of each. However, some activities, such as urination, have a much shorter time-frame before reaching an explosive limit.

Many capitalist states eventually passed laws requiring employers to provide bathrooms for workers. However, these on-site bathrooms became contested areas due to tensions between the worker's desire for privacy, rest and respect and the employer's desire for labor efficiency. Workers resisted the imposition of discipline around bathroom breaks either individually through complaints and pleas, slowing down, sabotage or quitting work. Some escalated to violence or made their grievances clear by throwing feces-soiled pants at supervisors.

Resistance by workers could be informal or individual, but powerful workplace resistance often involved collective workplace organizations called unions.[3] Although unionization led to better protections for workers, some union plants still had

1. Taylorism, named for mechanical engineer Frederick Winslow Taylor, was the general name used during capitalism for efforts by company bosses and management to control and rationalize the every step and action done by employees.

2. Families in the Capitalist Era were typically organized into units known as "nuclear families". This kind of family relationship was idealized by ruling groups in Capitalism because it maintained a patriarchal discipline among the general population. It also helped keep the majority separated into smaller relationship groups rather than forming broader relationships which might lead to recognition of common problems and common demands.

to fight for humane bathroom policies. One of the most notorious industries for denial of bathroom breaks was the poultry processing industry in the United States of America during the 20th and 21st centuries. Quite a few workers in these plants used sanitary pads or diapers because they were not given adequate bathroom breaks. The decisive factor in the struggles to win bathroom breaks was the shop floor organization and militancy of the workers. Their acts of collective resistance could be quite creative. For instance one union organized a "pee-in" against a company policy of restroom use only during regularly scheduled breaks. All workers drank water early and held their urine till the first 15 minute break. This resulted in bathroom lines that didn't dissipate for long after the break was over. It was this struggle that won them the freedom to go to the bathroom at work whenever they wanted.

Capitalism's defenders said that the system would provide more freedom as it developed, but in reality the system constantly worked to suppress basic human and biological needs. Only collective political and economic organization could win even temporary or partial freedoms for workers. Though the ability to take timely bathroom breaks is a biological necessity, having control over one's body is a struggle for human dignity.

3. A precursor to socialist means of organizing labor, unions were collective bargaining bodies controlled by workers who used their power to win concessions from their employers. The threat of collective actions such as strikes and walkouts was a powerful bargaining chip, however unions were often controlled by leadership that became loath to use this power.

The Struggle for Equal Access to Public Restrooms

Until the the advent of private restrooms in family homes sometime in the 14th-15th century, restrooms were public, communal spaces. Using the toilet continued to be a shared experience well into the 19th century for the working class and into the 20th and 21st centuries for many in what was then called the "developing world."[1] Public restrooms, in the form that would become common in the 20th century, with separate facilities for men and women, were a relatively late addition to capitalist life but quickly became central to people's daily lives. Further, as plumbing and private restrooms grew more commonplace, access to clean and decent bathrooms became connected to people's sense of worth and to social dignity. Capitalism, a society of great divides and inequality, made gaining equal access to public restrooms an ongoing conflict that intertwined with larger struggles against racial and sexual segregation.

Above: A common sign from 1929 indicates racially segregated restrooms.

The Civil Rights movement of the mid-20th Century United States was the first struggle to enter the domain of the public restroom. Racial segregation in the US was enforced by laws and threats of violence and restricted black people from access to many public spaces including restrooms. Pro-segregation officials relied on bigoted stereotypes and sexual anxieties to

1. Capitalist states often used economic development as an indicator of a state's status, both for international diplomacy and for use of funds to encourage capitalist investment.

argue that racial integration of bathrooms would lead to the spreading of sexually transmitted diseases through contact at bathroom facilities and that sharing bathrooms might increase racial harmony leading to more inter-racial marriages. Even after legal segregation was overturned in 1954, public and workplace bathrooms were sites of racial hostility and violence.[2] In 1966, civil rights activist Sammy Younge Jr. was murdered by a gas station restroom attendant after participating in a non-violent protest against bathroom segregation. His murderer was later acquitted by an all-white jury. In the 1970s, almost 20 years after the official end of racial segregation, Patrick James and other workers brought a class action suit against Stockham Valves and Fittings Co., alleging segregation in hiring practices, testing, promotions, and workplace facilities, including segregated restrooms.

Inspired by the Civil Rights Movement, women began their own struggles for equal access to public restrooms. The notion of gender segregation in restrooms began sometime in the 1700s, but it wasn't until a century later that the first laws were passed requiring this segregation.[3] By the early 20th century, nearly every state in the United States had passed similar laws. While gender segregation in restrooms was later considered "common sense" based on biological differences in the sexes, these laws were introduced primarily because of increasing tensions due to entry of women into the workplace as industrialization replaced the artisan modes of production in the United States.[4] Gender segregation in restrooms was concurrent with

2. Plessy v Ferguson, in 1896, upheld "equal but separate accommodations for the white and colored races," which applied to public restrooms just as it applied to the railroad cars that inspired the case. Segregation continued throughout the Jim Crow South, and Plessy v. Ferguson was not struck down until Brown v. Board of Education in 1954, more than 60 years later.

3. The state of Massachusetts in the United States passed "An Act To Secure Proper Sanitary Provisions In Factories And Workshops" in 1887.

4. Gender segregation in restrooms stemmed in part from the "Separate Sphere Ideology," which argued that men and women have strictly defined places in society. A woman's sphere was domestic, while a man's sphere is outside the home. Women were also considered "the weaker sex" and therefore in need of protection. In the Victorian era and early 20th Century, this protection was deemed necessary because women would be overwhelmed and become hysterical in the presence of men, or that they needed physical space to retreat from the rigors of

gender segregation in nearly every site of public life.[5]

With the rise of pay toilets in the 20th century, women's restrooms often required a fee that men's restrooms did not. In 1969 California Assemblywoman March Fong Eu protested this fact by destroying a toilet with a sledgehammer on the steps of the State Capitol. In the 1970's, the Committee to End Pay Toilets in America fought against pay toilets on general human rights grounds, but soon took a more feminist approach, countering arguments in favor of pay toilets with arguments in favor of

Above: the Committee to End Pay Toilets in America's logo.

Below: March Fong Eu destroys a toilet with a sledgehammer on the steps of the California State Capitol to protest pay toilets.

life outside the home. By the late 20th century, however, the primary justification for the separation of women's and men's facilities was the risk of sexual assault, a justification that was later used in the right wing's crusade against transgender individuals' use of restrooms aligned with their gender identity.

5. Gender segregation extended to libraries, hotel lobbies, and train cars, among other public arenas in the Victorian Era. As Judith Plaskow noted in her paper *Embodiment, Elimination, and the Role of Toliets in Struggles for Social Justice*, "Not only does the absence of women's bathrooms signify the exclusion of women from certain professions and halls of power, but it also has functioned as an explicit argument against hiring women or admitting them into previously all-male organizations." Yale Medical School and Harvard Law School both claimed that a lack of public facilities made it impossible for women to be admitted as students. Schools like the Virginia Military Institute used this excuse as recently as 1996.

women's rights. After holding a press conference in 1973 in Chicago, Mayor Daley outlawed pay toilets in airports, declaring he "Did It for Women's Lib".[6] Pay toilets were outlawed completely in Chicago just a few months later. By 1976, CEPTIA had won victories in California, Alaska, Florida, Iowa, Nevada, New York, and New Jersey, and by the end of the decade pay toilets were rare. The struggle for equal access for women continued, however, in workplaces - as women entered the workplace in increasing numbers, they had to battle to win equal facilities. Most notably, a women's restroom was not installed adjacent to the Senate floor until 1992, and the House of Representatives until 2011. The Supreme Court did not have women's restrooms until 1994, even though Sandra Day O'Connor, the first woman appointed to the Supreme Court, began her tenure in 1981. "Potty Parity" laws introduced starting in California in 1987 required equitable facilities for men and women, introducing more stalls in women's restrooms to alleviate long lines in theatres and stadiums.[7] By 2009, twenty states had Potty Parity laws.

In the early 21st Century a struggle for the rights of transgender people to use restrooms aligned with their gender identity began to gain ground. In California, Assembly Bill 1266 was passed in 2013, providing for the rights of public school students to use the bathroom facilities of their chosen gender identity, regardless of their legal status as transgender individuals. In 2015 Boston, Philadelphia, Seattle, and Portland all passed gender-inclusive restroom laws. The struggle for transgender-inclusive restrooms reached a boiling point in 2016, when the city of Charlotte, North Carolina, passed an ordinance to protect residents from discrimination based on gender identity or sexual

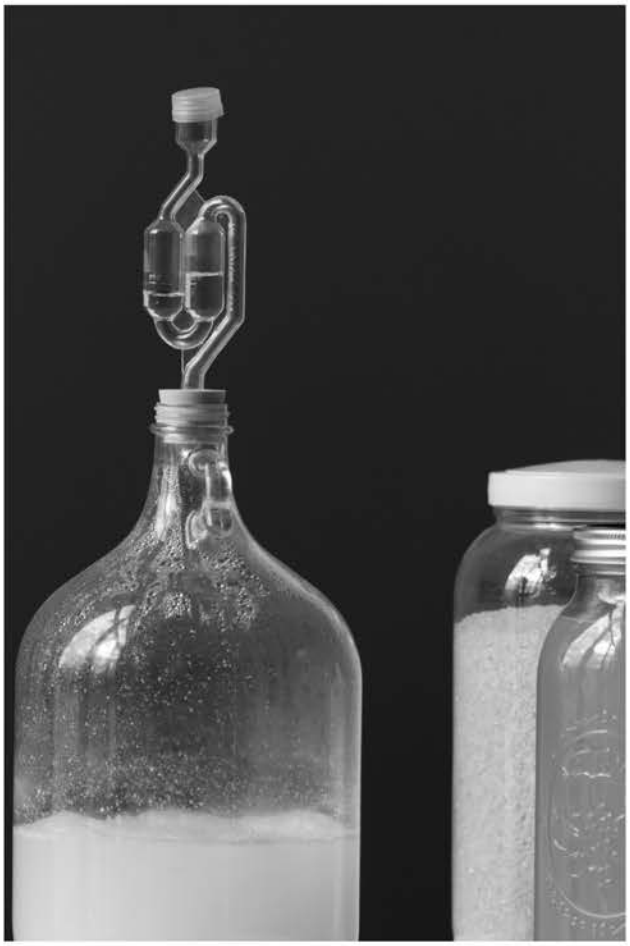
6. It's far more likely he did it to curry favor in the midst of a bribery scandal. Outlawing pay toilets was incredibly popular with voters, for obvious reasons.

7. Studies at the time showed that women required more time to use the restroom for various reasons. Women need to use the toilet more often when menstruating and during pregnancy. Also, women take longer to use a stall than men take to use a urinal, and there were often more urinals than stalls in public restrooms. While the "common sense" view was that women were chatting or applying makeup, these beliefs were founded on sexist notions of women's frivoloty and vanity. Women needed more stalls in order to have truly equal facilities.

orientation in public restrooms. This led to North Carolina's House Bill 2, which prevented transgender individuals from using the bathroom aligned with their gender identity. The US Department of Justice then sued North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory, the North Carolina Department of Public Safety, and the University of North Carolina.[8] In response, the Obama administration released a directive arguing that schools that receive public funding are barred from discriminating against transgender students, which Donald Trump later rescinded upon his election in 2016.[9] Twenty-three states challenged the directive in court.[10] The battle then moved to the courtroom, being heard for the first time by the Supreme Court.[11] Struggle continued until the end of the Capitalist Era.

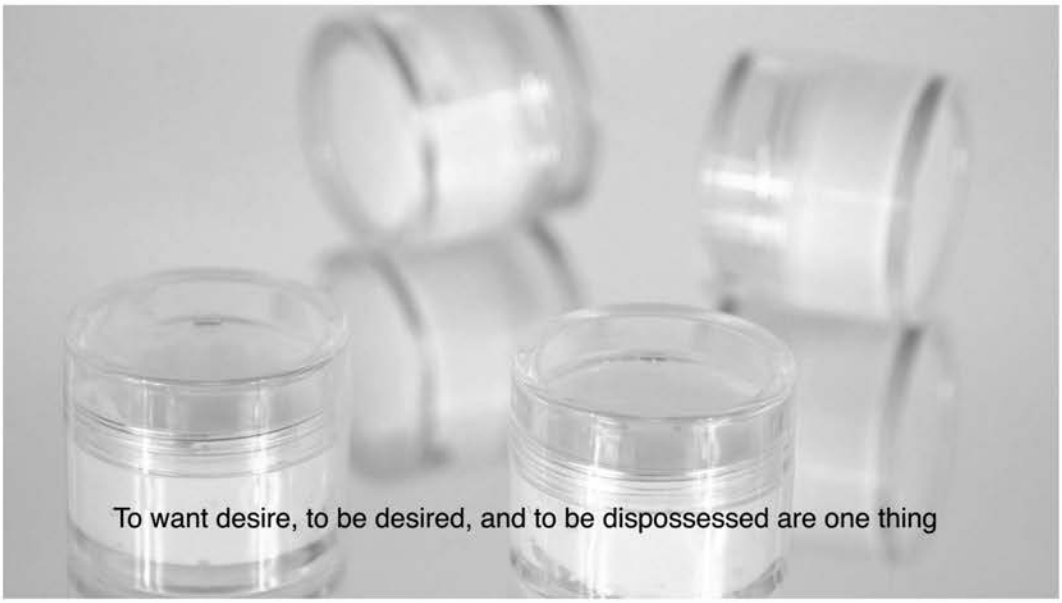
Though the need to use the bathroom is universal, access to it was a site of struggle throughout the Capitalist Era. The roots of segregation lie in the relationships between individuals and society under capitalism. Racial segregation in the United States was directly linked to the injustices of slavery, while gender segregation stemmed from anxieties about women's entry into the workforce, and by extension the larger world. Essentialist ideas of gender, linked to the oppression of women and tied to the capitalism's need for the nuclear family, led to struggles for transgender individuals to claim their rightful space in the restroom. It wasn't until the fall of capitalism that restrooms became truly free.

8. Citing Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and the Violence Against Women Act.
9. Obama's administration cited Title IX of the Civil Rights Act.
10. Oklahoma, Alabama, Wisconsin, West Virginia, Tennessee, Maine, Arizona, Louisiana, Utah, Georgia, Arkansas, Kansas, Michigan, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Carolina, South Dakota and Wyoming challenged the directive.
11. Gavin Grimm v. Gloucester County School Board, 2016.



Above: *Untitled (Lactic Acid Brew)*, 2018. Below: *Untitled (K-Beauty)*, 2018.

Tiffany Jaeyeon Shin's *Universal Skin Salvation*, presented at Knockdown Center in 2018, featured a working sauna and Shin's custom line of K-beauty products, which visitors were encouraged to try. Both the products and the sauna made use of lactic acid, a bacterial compound found in sour milk, fermented foods, and our own bodies' muscles and gastrointestinal tracts. In the gut, lactic acid has been shown to improve immunity; in K-beauty products, it is used as a whitening agent. *Universal Skin Salvation* explores "lactification," or the pursuit of whiteness, while also addressing the American desire for Korean skin—as commodity detached from Korean personhood. Shin links these complex and intertwined desires to a history of colonialism and imperialism, looking specifically to the Korean War. She asks: "How does Korean subjectivity emerge through flesh that has undergone extreme processes of cultural possession?"



Five Step Skin Care, 2018, single channel video.

Untitled (Lactic Acid Brew), 2018.

Tiffany Jaeyeon Shin

LIVE STREAMING

By Ward 5B

While urolagnia was once deemed a kinky taboo sexual practice, it has since become a health source for many proponents of natural living. Some urine enthusiasts claim that drinking their own pee enhances the libido, increases sexual vitality, clears the complexion, and promotes internal organ health. The U.S. Army field survival manual, however, recommends against this practice, stating that urine consumption causes dehydration and dysentery.

During its heyday, the Limelight nightclub in NYC fancied itself a trendy radical performance space pushing the boundaries of bourgeois society. Accordingly, one recurring spectacle was a local talent known as "The Pee Drinker." With the mainstreaming of urolagnia, however, he could now as easily be a much sought-after yoga instructor. Many a young lady and gent dropped their knickers to offer the urine-swigging lad samples of their warm juice.

There are legions of proponents of urine therapy. India's former prime minister Morarji Desai publicly advocated for the practice. He drank his own urine to cure illness, and he claimed that it was the perfect remedy for Indians who couldn't afford medical care. And there's no co-pay either.

Also, British theater and film actress Sarah Miles drank her own urine for over 30 years. In an interview, Miles stated, "Urine immunizes you against your own allergies. Clinics use it for cancer. It is used for all kinds of illnesses." She was disturbed that society disapproved of her urine-drinking habit. "Why does humanity have a problem with me drinking my own urine? I can't wait to get off this planet!" she told the interviewer.

And urine apparently has a wide range of other medicinal purposes. In a 1993 appearance on *Late Show With David Letterman*, Madonna announced that "peeing in the shower is really good," because it helps to cure athlete's foot.

SURVEY: MORNING ROUTINES

We've always wondered how people spend their in-between moments, those times in the day when they can't be said to be doing one thing or another. Do our rote activities and default thoughts look like other people's? How, for example, do people start their day? For *Facility*'s inaugural survey, we pried into strangers' morning routines. We surveyed 45 people (a small sample size, but no smaller than plenty of studies featured in peer-reviewed journals) who anonymously filled out an online questionnaire. After reviewing the initial answers, we added and reworded some questions, so there were two versions of the survey all in all.

We discovered, among other things, that *Facility* fans are highly opinionated. One respondent thinks bathrobes are gross, while other survey-takers declared breakfast to be "corny" or "for suckers." A handful of respondents are disgusted by the concept of morning showers. We at *Facility* are shower switches, but we think that these nighttime bathers display a healthy sense of entitlement: save the pleasures of a freshly clean body for yourself and whomever may happen to be in your bed, and let the world deal with the more rumpled and pungent version of you.

What follows is a sampling of questions and answers. Look out for our next survey, in which we tackle the big one: public bathrooms!

Do you have pets, children, or anything else that is not an alarm that wakes you in the morning? If you do use an alarm, what does it sound like?

"Footsteps and anxiety."
"The hissing of summer lawns."
"I use my iPhone's alarm and it plays 'Toxic' by Britney Spears"

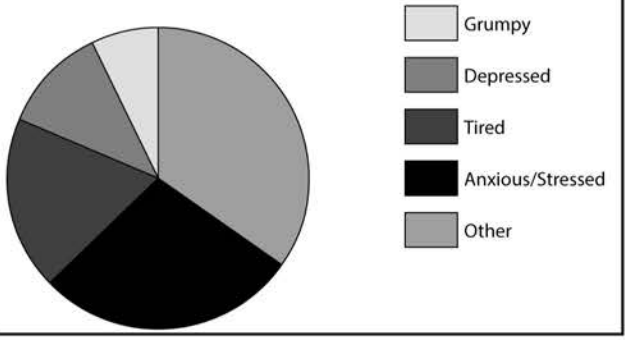
What do you do while you're still in bed? (Half-sleep, read, check your phone, masturbate, etc.?)

The end of pleasure! Out of 45 respondents, 36 check their phones, while only 12 masturbate! Some combine these habits ("masturbate, open tabs in chrome") and many do these things while half-sleeping. Some industrious respondents aren't having any of it. Writes one: "I get out of bed."

How long do you tend to lie in bed before you get up?

Out of 43 respondents, 16 lie in bed for 15 to 30 minutes. Seven go-getters stay in bed for five minutes or less, and seven respondents loll or wallow in bed for an hour or more. For some, this is highly variable, depending on the workday, the season, or their mental state.

When you wake up, how do you typically feel?



Do you groom yourself in bed? Brush hair? Rub boogers from your eyes?
"I don't usually groom myself in bed but sometimes my boyfriend tends to my eye boogers, and I pull out his stray nose hairs."
"A favorite pastime that I hope I can continue well into any cohabiting partnership is picking my nose and rubbing the boogers down the side of my bed."
"blow my nose a lot. masturbate and ejaculate. pick my nose. nose. nose."

Do you bathe or shower in the morning? Do you bathe/shower every morning?
Approximately two-thirds of respondents shower in the morning, while eight sparkling clean respondents state that they shower every single morning.
"No. I don't understand why people choose to sleep with the prior day's grime on them. I prefer to shower before bed."
"Absolutely not!"
"I won't leave the house without showering even if it's just to get groceries or something."
"I much prefer showering nightly. I don't understand the practice of going to bed with a day's worth of dust and sweat collected on you."
"shower but not always in the morning, especially if i m working from home, don t like to get wet when i m sleepy"
"Usually only in the morning after I get back from my run. I only shower at night if I'm anxious or can't sleep, I find it calms my nerves."

Do you mostly wake up in the same place every day? If you have a home and there's another place you regularly wake up (a partner's, a family member's, a friend's, or any other place), what is different about your routine there/what do you have set up for yourself/do you like it?
"Yes!!! My boyfriend never uses an alarm clock. It's nuts. Sometimes we wake up at 8 and have no time for our cool morning coffee hang."
"Yes. I will occasionally stay at my current sex partner's place. He has terrible sheets and I don't like going to sleep or waking up there. I also don't know whether it's worthwhile to talk to him about his sheets."

What do you do while you're on the toilet? Look at your phone, read a magazine, stare out the window, pet your cat?
"Look at my phone. I used to read whatever I could reach."
"Honestly, I manicure and pull out my pubic hair, it's a thing, look it up! I'm not alone." *(It is a thing.)*
"I POOP"

Are there things you do [while on the toilet] at home you don't do in public—like use a Squatty Potty, or leave the door open?
Nearly all of our respondents remarked that at home they love to leave the door open while using the bathroom. A few mentioned other solitary pleasures: "loudly utter sighs of relief when shitting," "listen to music," "masturbate into the toilet before showering."

IF YOU FEEL YOU NEED A SHOWER BUT DON'T HAVE TIME OR DON'T WANT TO, WHAT DO YOU DO?

"I take a wet wipe and scrub down my pits, then apply deodorant."

"once in a while I will wash just my armpits, or like wash just the offending area, like if I have dried period blood on my inner thighs...I guess just put on deodorant, and put on fresh clothes? hope for best?"

"I just skip it."

"Grin and bare it"

"Wipe the essential areas with soap and deodorize"

"Dry shampoo"

"I always have time"

"Just skip it, brushing my teeth feels more important to my hygiene"

"Wash with a face cloth"

"Deodorant usually. Always brush the teeth."

"wash my face and damp my hair"

"nope"

"Take a shower anyway and be late"

"Damp paper towel rub my armpits"

"cat bath"

"Wash my face and use dry shampoo. Put my hair up."

"Use baby wipes/cloths and wash my face. Or just the latter."

"wash my face with cold water and suck it up."

"Scrub my armpits?"

"Wipes and moisturizer"

"I shower anyway and show up late"

"If I feel dirty but have no time to shower, washing my feet usually helps me feel cleaner"

"N/A"

"Dry shampoo is your friend!"

"wash the essential parts v quickly"

"Feel slightly disappointed, get on with the day and forget about it."

"shower"

"pull back my hair to mask grease and, if broken out/oily, mask that with another coat of foundation or relevant concealer, also double-check deodorant smell fragrant enough (I will go to work with wet hair but only because it's a place where scrubs are acceptable)"

"Wet wipes and dry shampoo like a slut"

"It depends on how bad I feel that the need is. Generally, I just won't if I don't feel like it. But if I smell I don't give myself the choice."

"Wash my armpits, do a quick rubdown with a washcloth, braid my hair, pray I don't break out"

"I usually take it anyway and then I am late"

"I will take a shower. I don't care if I'm going to be late. I'm taking that shower."

"Splash some water (maybe soap) in areas that need to be addressed."

"Make myself do it and integrate an expensive product like my Tom Ford body wash to reward myself"

"I'm a before-bed shower person"

"sometimes i'll wet my neck"

"I wash my crevices (arm pits and vagina)"

"Baby wipe everything".

"I shower every morning"

"Wash my face, sometimes armpits."

"Still shower for 1min"

"I shower and show up late"

"I just don't shower."

Do you have a morning habit (coffee/cigarettes/ prescription medications/other drugs/vitamins/a dog)? If so, tell us about it!
Twenty out of 43 respondents have a morning coffee habit. Other habits include: tea, 12-step readers, watering plants, writing, SAD lamps, walking the dog, petting the cat while peeing, going for a run, meditation and prayer, looking at imgur on the toilet, unspecified "meds," CBD gummies, Adderall, back exercises, water (anywhere from "a sip" to "a bunch"), birth control, allergy medicine, Prozac, caffeine pills, kratom, vitamins, and forgetting to take vitamins.

On a day when you leave the house or start work, how long does it tend to take between when you get up and when you "start your day"?
Mean: 56-74 minutes
Median: 60 minutes
Mode: 60 minutes
Range: 0-300 minutes

Is exercise a part of your morning routine?
Most of our respondents do not exercise in the morning, though many (not all) would like to.
"No lol"
"fuck no"
"I try to do yoga. 'Trying' is the exercise here.'"
"Two mornings a week I go to the gym and work out with a trainer. I hate to say it, but I find that those days always end up being the ones where I feel the best and am the most productive."
"I try to do back exercises every morning. It doesn't always work out."
"Sometimes I do 10-15 push-ups on the kitchen floor."

Are there other people in your household who affect your morning routine? For example, roommates whose schedules you need to accommodate, or family members who depend on you? If so, tell us about it!
"My mother likes to dash in a couple errands and I love to deflect"
"Yes, my bf and I have a bathroom schedule. He must be out of the bathroom by 8:10!"
"Roommates - talk too much, get in the way while trying to make lunch, their eating habits weird me out a bit"
"I need to make sure my daughter has her morning oatmeal ready, it's nice when I have time to cook eggs for myself and my spouse."
"sometimes i want to shower before i leave and one of my roommates will be using the shower and i will have to wait. otherwise, no."
"Nope. However my upstairs neighbor has started impacting my ability to sleep in on the weekends. She walks extremely loud and has a dog that's not quite."
"Sometimes sex partners who stay over will change up my weekend routines and I find myself slightly annoyed by having to present as a productive emotionally healthy person. Mostly I am annoyed at feeling compelled to put on makeup earlier than I normally would, or having to think about whether we go to breakfast, or having to clean up domestic messes that id prefer to let fester"
"i'm the only early riser besides cats"

Do you feel that you have started your day when you wake up, or is there some other marker for "starting your day"? (Leaving the house, getting the kids to school, having your first cup of coffee, taking a shit, etc.) Tell us about it!

The most common markers for starting one's day were drinking coffee and leaving the house. Almost as common were the respondents who said their days started as soon as they awoke. Other responses included, in descending popularity: showering, engaging with technology (phone, computer), shitting, arriving at work, deciding what to do, eating breakfast, brushing teeth, and Adderall. A couple respondents said that they never feel like they've started their day.

If you commute, do you listen to anything on your commute or before you leave the house (the radio, music, podcasts, turn on the TV in the background, etc?) What did you listen to this morning?

Many respondents listen to podcasts and public radio. But not all of them!

"Music, favorite astrologer videos, rants that I've recorded while high"

"On commute I listen to Rickey Smiley Morning Show hot 107.9 ATL so I know what it means to be young (answer: 'Sicko Mode' by Travis Scott), NPR if it's particularly significant, sometimes I will put up a phone pic of Beto O'Rourke where like a GPS would be while listening so I can think about what is his appeal this meme of a person trying to 'get it' - and I never do!"

"Used to listen. Got tired of the idea that I need to block out the world. Now I keep my eyes open and just chill with the people. Even if they all have headphones on."

"usually I watch cheaters re-runs while I get ready and switch to a podcast when I leave the house on weekdays."

"my commute is six blocks. I listen to the birds and traffic"

If you commute, what do you think about, if anything, while walking, while riding the train or bus, while driving, while biking? If you take public transportation, is your thought pattern different while you're walking to the station or stop versus when you're riding the train or bus? What did you think about this morning?

"I listen to podcasts so I don't have to hear myself think on the way to work."

"I might think about my posture or think about how crazy domesticated humans are. This morning I thought about how fucked up high-heels are. Foot binding. And that we all resemble our potted plants but I can't work out how to illustrate it yet."

"I'm usually making logistical decisions — to take the bus, or walk across the bridge? Maybe the ferry? Which coffee shop to stop at? All of these decisions impact other decisions, and I eventually find the path that makes sense for my commute that given day. I also think a lot about my surroundings — the environment, the buildings, the weather, the people. Sometimes the thought that everyone bustling around me carries in them a world just as large as the one I've described to you in this survey strikes me with great poignancy. Sometimes I just wanna go back to sleep."

The 504 Sit-In

In April of 1977, disability rights activists staged protests demanding the signing and implementation of Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, which mandated that people with disabilities be integrated into mainstream institutions. Previously, there'd been no federally required right to accessible buildings, education, jobs, transportation, or housing. Daylong demonstrations took place across the nation, but in San Francisco, the protesters didn't go home. Around 150 people took over the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare offices for 28 days—the longest non-violent occupation of a federal building in American history. Eventually the bill was signed, ultimately leading to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

The occupation marked an incredible moment of community building and self-determination. Protesters slept in offices and hallways, held daily consensus-driven meetings, played cards, watched T.V., and made love. They lifted one another in and out of wheelchairs and learned basic sign language. The Black Panthers brought meals every day. "Women took turns washing each other's hair in the bathroom sinks," explained one participant. Another recalled: "During the day, we would scavenge for tape, cardboard, pencils, and anything else we could find that could be used to make the radios, handheld walkie-talkies, and phone accessible. For example, the inset of a toilet roll, shaped and taped in a certain way made a great adaptive device for someone who is quadriplegic."

The lack of access within the federal building itself underscored how badly this legislation was needed. In a news broadcast at the time, a reporter asked if the restroom facilities were equipped to handle that many handicapped people. A demonstrator responded:

> They are absolutely are not equipped to handle them. … The regional director asked before 4 o'clock if he could try to get out of this room, because he needed to go to the restroom. And the group here said, "No, we have had to learn all of our lives to control our bladders, and you must learn that lesson, now, too. That might give you just a hint of what it's like to be handicapped." And so he sat here until almost 6 o'clock.

One occupier in a wheelchair recalled talking to an HEW employee who didn't like that protesters were leaving the bathroom door ajar. When the occupier explained that they were too heavy to push open, the employee asked why the protesters were making this fuss anyway—strangers would always be willing to help them. The occupier tried to explain how important her dignity and autonomy were to her, but felt she wasn't getting through; when the protester left the bathroom, in tears, the employee closed the heavy door behind her, shutting her out for good. ***—Erin Sheehy***

BAMBOOZLED

By Dawn McIntosh

I reported for work on my special assignment detail as usual. When I got there, I learned a young woman had spread her feces all over her entire cell, covering the door, walls, mirror, and the floor. There were three of us on work detail. The other two quickly found other jobs to clean up, so I got stuck cleaning up the cell with the feces in it. One person said that they would help me, but never bothered to come. They waited until the end and asked if I still needed any help. Go figure. Some help.

I put on a complete hazmat suit, from head to toe, with goggles and two pairs of gloves. I didn't have any real cleaning solution to use. I was given degreaser and mold and mildew remover. The feces had sat overnight and hardened. To scrape it off the floor I had to use a plastic spoon because we are not allowed any sharp objects. I had to make the best out of what I had, and I must say I did: when I finished, the cell didn't look like it had had feces spread all over it for over 12 hours. It took me two and a half hours to get that cell clean and back in tip-top shape. The whole time I was cleaning, I was thinking to myself, *what would make a person do such a thing?* and I just couldn't come up with an answer.

When my degrading assignment was finally over, I thought I would at least be compensated fifty dollars for my hard work. Well, let me tell you: I only got paid FOUR dollars. Yes, you read it correctly. FOUR dollars! I thought it was a serious mistake, and when I inquired about it I was told that was the correct pay. Apparently, the pay rate changed because people were signing off that they were cleaning feces and getting paid fifty dollars, when they really weren't.

I have now cleaned two cells and should have gotten paid one hundred dollars, but only got eight. On another day, when a third cell needed cleaning, I refused, and the inmate stayed in her feces-covered cell for two days, until they found someone else to clean it out. I gave up doing my special assignment detail. I will not clean up feces for Rikers Island again, for any amount of money. Fool me once, shame on you, fool me twice, shame on me.

How'd we get sex-segregated bathrooms anyway?

In his 2007 essay "Sex-Separation in Public Restrooms: Law, Architecture, and Gender," Terry Kogan, a professor of law at the University of Utah, traces the economic, cultural, and legal forces that fashioned modern bathroom designs and norms. "The first laws mandating that public restrooms be separated by sex," Kogan writes, "were adopted at the end of the 19th century as extensions to protective legislation passed earlier in the century aimed at women and children in the workplace." For most of the 19th century, employers in the United States were not required to provide separate toilet facilities for men and women. In 1887, Massachusetts became the first state to pass a law requiring such a separation. "An Act To Secure Proper Sanitary Provisions In Factories And Workshops" read as follows:

> Every person employing five or more persons in a factory, or employing children, young persons or women five or more in number in a workshop, shall keep, within reasonable access, a sufficient number of proper water-closets, earth-closets, or privies for the reasonable use of all persons so employed; and wherever male and female persons are employed in the same factory or workshop, a sufficient number of separate and distinct water-closets, earth-closets, or privies shall be provided for the use of each sex and shall be plainly designated, and no person shall be allowed to use any such closet or privy assigned to persons of the other sex.

Two months later, New York followed suit with its own toilet law. By 1920, more than 40 states had enacted similar legislation.

Among the multitude of labor laws passed at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, many concerned women and children in particular, or were introduced with them in mind. In addition to regulating the hours employees were allowed to work, states also introduced laws addressing health and safety. Some barred women from particular industries; others dictated the conditions of the working environment. (Almost every state, for instance, passed some version of a law that required manufacturers to provide seats for all female employees.) Toilet laws, too, were introduced as health measures, designed to protect workers from disease and to preserve their physical well-being. (The cholera epidemics of the Civil War, and the subsequent development of the germ theory of disease, led to a public interest in sanitation.)

But hygiene and sanitation were not the sole reason lawmakers and activists supported separated restrooms. Anxieties about public health and urban industrial growth were accompanied by enduring worries about the role and nature of women, who were entering the workforce, and the public sphere, in increasing numbers. Throughout the literature of the period—engineering guidelines, popular pamphlets, Department of Labor reports—women are identified as physically weaker than men, and thus in greater need of legal and material protection. But, as Kogan argues, science was influenced by and inseparable from prevailing social customs and moral codes. It was not just *women* who needed protection,

but womanhood itself—women's innocence and integrity, their very essence and purpose, which remained distinct from that of men.

In many of the texts Kogan examines, spatial and architectural arrangements were increasingly understood, and assumed, to guard against vice, against social corruption and impropriety. The boundary between disease and vice blurred. By the early 20th century, morality had become an explicit theme. It is not germ theory but gender ideology that justifies the existence of these stalls and walls. The "why" is the cult of true womanhood. Separate toilets were both a manifestation and defense of separate spheres: privies designed to protect female virtue. As Kogan writes: "Adopted as extensions to protective labor legislation, these laws symbolized the weaker nature of women and their need for protection. Ultimately, laws mandating sex-separation of public restrooms were a last-ditch attempt by Victorian regulators to bolster the crumbling separate spheres ideology."

We do not have different bathrooms because we have different anatomy. Ideological concerns—about the proper place of women, about their role in society and their essential nature—were central to the spread of separated restrooms. The continued existence of segregated bathrooms challenges people emotionally and physically; they put some in untenable positions, and others in bodily danger. They are not monuments to outmoded beliefs, but machines that perpetuate them. As Kogan writes: "Separate public restrooms for men and women foster subtle social understandings that women are inherently vulnerable and in need of protection when in public, while men are inherently predatory. Moreover, the two-restroom model teaches that there are two, and only two sexes, a message highly problematic to the public's acceptance of transsexual and intersexual people."

In 2015, Kogan co-founded Stalled!, a cross-disciplinary initiative that sees the debates surrounding transgender bathroom access as a starting point from which to develop inclusive restroom design guidelines, ones that accommodate people of different ages, genders, religions, and disabilities. The two-gender bathroom—the bathroom as we know it, period—does not have to be a given. ***—ELIZABETH GUMPORT***

A NOTE FROM AN OFFICE WORKER:

I have a bathroom-related issue: my desk is situated in such a way that I often find myself making eye contact with men as they exit the bathroom. I think this has increased greatly now that I have a crush on someone at work, because I find myself spacing out and looking away from my computer more frequently, and my body is more angled toward the corridor he might walk down—to use the bathroom!

It makes me think about bathroom placement in the workplace: the women's bathroom is tucked in a hallway away from the desks, but you can really see who goes in and out of the men's room, how long they're in there, how often they go. It's less private, but more convenient.

THE GROOM OF THE STOOL

By Erin Sheehy

Income inequality is nothing new, and just as we might be appalled by the lavish homes that billionaires maintain, a lower member of the Tudor court relieving themselves at the smelly, wall-less, stall-less, 14-seat bench toilet known as the Great House of Easement might be shocked to learn that King Henry VIII shat on velvet.

Henry VIII's palaces reflected household hierarchy: rooms were arranged in long chains, with each successive doorway bringing you closer to the king's inner sanctum (these entrances were equipped with guards, who, like today's nightclub bouncers, assessed people's wardrobes before letting them in). Bathroom access was likewise hierarchical. As is the case today, there were not enough bathrooms for common folk, so at Hampton Court, servants relieved themselves on the walls of the palace, which so thoroughly reeked of urine that, as curator and historian Lucy Worsley reports, management chalked crosses onto them, in the hopes that people would be scared to desecrate a religious symbol.

More senior courtiers had personal "piss pots" in their rooms, but the king had his very own privy chamber, or "stool room," with two doors, one attached to his bedchamber and the other leading to the outside, where servants deposited his waste. (This two-exit feature made the space ideal for illicit meetings; Henry VIII's fifth wife, Katherine Howard, supposedly met her lover for trysts in a stool room.) The king's toilet itself was called a close stool: a wooden seat with a hole in it and a chamber pot inside of it. Henry VIII had several close stools, stuffed with swansdown, lined with sheepskin and velvet (the interior was lined in velvet too), and trimmed in ribbon or gold tassels.

The king also had a trusted servant who attended to his excretions: "the groom of the stool." It's unknown whether this helper performed wiping duties, though it's certainly possible, given the cumbersome dress of the day. The groom did keep track of the king's bowel health and activity, as evidenced by a 1539 log entry made by one groom about a great siege that overtook the king at 2 a.m. after he'd taken laxative pills and an enema. Grooms also maintained the stool room's amenities and kept the king company while he was on the toilet. The close stool was where courtiers might ask the king for favors and gain his confidence. Over time the groom of the stool became a coveted position through which men consolidated substantial political power. How lucky we are to no longer live in a world where politicians reach great heights by pampering the asses of the powerful behind closed doors!

PLUMBING AND H ATING

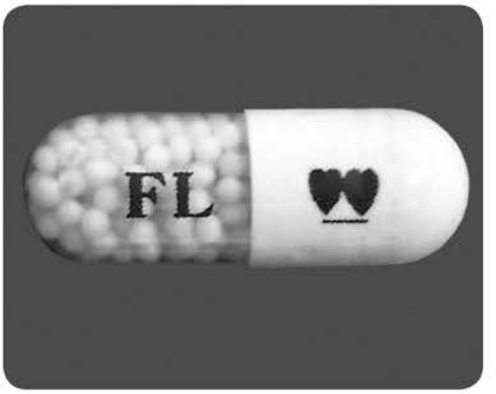
(REVIEWS)

CAPSULE REVIEWS (AND TABLET)

BY ELIZABETH GUMPORT

For many people, the most exciting part of the bathroom is the medicine cabinet. Behind that mirrored door lies a treasure trove of delicately engraved, inventively shaped, brilliantly colored, and cleverly named pharmaceuticals. The FDA requires that pills be given code imprints so they can be easily identified, but in a healthcare system driven by the free market, there's a much greater imperative to "stand out": personality sells. Here we salute the pills with the biggest personalities of all, and we take a closer look at the greatest artistry that drug money can buy.

Gris-Peg sounds like an Old English term for a stick you use to poke grain into a mill. But it's actually an antifungal!

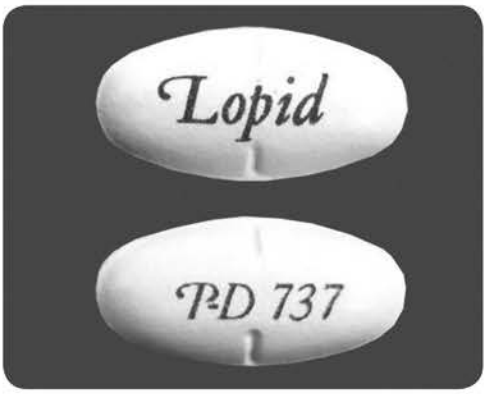


Every day is Valentine's day when you're the antihistamine/decongestant Kronofed-A!

If you forget why you're taking Propecia, the P on this pill is sporting some *very* luxurious locks to remind you!!! Grow, baby, grow.

This dignified Mestinon tablet looks positively engraved! Could pass for the cornerstone of some very aged building.

"Um," said the synthetic marijuana capsule.



Lopid is like a time capsule (!!!!) from the 1970s; those serifs belong on the cover of a paperback or board game box.

Maxzide is a diuretic used to treat high blood pressure and looks just like a festive little bow tie your dog might wear!

This benzo's just telling it like it is.

Prosed/DS looks like a personalized M&M! For your next event, why not go the extra mile? Monogram some pills and pass them out as party favors!

"'Hope' is the thing with potassium para-aminobenzoate/ That treats skin conditions/ Like scleroderma and Peyronie's/ And makes hard tissues soft!" —*Emily Dickinson*

INGREDIENT OF THE ISSUE: *GLYCERIN*

IF YOU WANT TO CLIMB the ladder of success, you have to be nimble, quick, and in it for the long haul: you've got to stay hydrated. To do well in life, it's important that you not only drink enough water to promote optimal functioning of body and mind, but that you also *look* hydrated. Nothing says that you are a productive, positive member of society—a well-oiled cog in the machine—like a sufficiently moisturized face. Dewy skin indicates that you already have something going for you, be it youth or the material comfort and emotional well-being that allow you to get a full night's sleep. It suggests that you take society's beauty and wellness proscriptions seriously, by avoiding alcohol, cigarettes, cheap makeup, outdoor labor, and areas plagued by air pollution. And it shows that you are an active participant in the world of commerce, since you likely augment your moisture levels with an assortment of consumer products.

In the quest for radiant skin and an efficient life, one tends to encounter glycerin. According to the FDA's Voluntary Cosmetic Registration Program, glycerin is the second most common ingredient in cosmetics, after water. It is used in a myriad of lotions, body washes, soaps, shaving creams, and shampoos that are said to have moisturizing qualities. If you go into your bathroom and eyeball the labels, you'll likely find glycerin listed on most of them. Glycerin is a colorless, odorless, sweet and syrupy alcohol that is typically obtained from fats and oils. It is hygroscopic, meaning that it attracts and retains moisture. It draws water particles from nearby substances; the idea behind its function in beauty products is that it pulls water from the air to moisturize your skin or hair. This is why glycerin has been called (in a particularly irksome metaphor) "the cornerstone of most moisturizers." Glycerin works quietly behind the scenes to help people achieve that utmost symbol of status, that grand lie: the face that doesn't need makeup. It's the way to manifest a particular kind of access: yesterday's well-powdered (with arsenic dust) Victorian heiress is today a slick, weasel-wet influencer. Beauty and wellness brands, magazines, and blogs remind us that moisture is the central tenet of the good life, and glycerin the Lourdes water of leisure. Wealth is wet, flowing like spring water through one's very skin. A relevant caveat, an appendix to the fable: when applied undiluted or in high concentrations—or when the air is very dry—glycerin can extract water from the deeper layers of the skin, dehydrating it even further.

Because it is virtually non-toxic when ingested, non-irritating to the skin, pleasant to taste, and versatile in its applications, glycerin can be found in a variety of consumer goods. It's commonly used in pharmaceutical products, such as cough syrups, pill tablets, lozenges, and suppositories. Glycerin gives toothpaste its smooth texture and sweet taste. It gives personal lubricant its slip. It is used in mascara, deodorant, lipstick, baby wipes, sunscreen, hair dye, teeth-whitening strips, depilatories, diaper rash creams, hand sanitizer, hairspray, dish soap, laundry detergent, leather cream, air fresheners, stain remover, toilet bowl cleaners, septic tank additives, printer ink cartridges, glass cleaner, weed and grass killer, fly repellent, roach killer, and grub control. In foods it is employed as a

preservative and sweetener. It is used to keep baked goods moist; to keep raisins soft; to prevent hard candies from crystallizing; to prevent fondant from cracking; to make energy bars shelf-stable; to make sodas and sports drinks feel "smooth." It acts as a carrier for food coloring and flavoring agents. Wine corks are dipped in it to maintain their softness and pliability. It is put in cigarettes to stop tobacco from crumbling; it acts as a solvent in vape juice. It's mixed with cannabis for tinctures. It protects glues from drying too fast; it lubricates hydraulic parts and mechanical gears; it makes cellophane and meat casings flexible and strong. Glycerin is sprayed on fitness models to make long-lasting beads of fake sweat, and actors sometimes use a drop of glycerin to create fake tears when the real ones won't come.

The substance we now know as glycerin, or glycerol, was first isolated in the late 18th century by the German-Swedish chemist Carl Wilhelm Scheele, who called it the "sweet principle of fat." It was later named glycérine from the Greek *glykeros*, meaning "sweet." During the 19th century, the two primary commercial uses for glycerin were in explosives and cosmetics. After Alfred Nobel invented dynamite in 1866, in which the highly volatile chemical nitroglycerin was a key component, glycerin became integral to industrialization, colonialism, and Western expansion. Dynamite was used for mining, quarrying, and constructing massive infrastructural projects. (As was liquid nitroglycerin, which enabled the Central Pacific Railroad to tunnel through the Sierra Nevadas.) About 8,000 tons of dynamite—equivalent to about 4,000 tons of glycerin—were used to build the Panama Canal. Later nitroglycerin would be employed in war-making, as a propellant. World Wars I and II created a significant demand for it. It was used not only in explosives, but also to protect from other weapons: one of the earliest gas masks, used to shield British troops from chlorine attacks, was a wool hood soaked in sodium bicarbonate and glycerin.

But enterprising men weren't just using glycerin to penetrate the earth; they were also selling it to women to penetrate their skin. Glycerin was an appealing moisturizer because, unlike lard, it did not become rancid, it didn't soil clothing, and it was easily washed off the skin. It was often mixed with aromatic water, such as rosewater or orange-flower water; combined with gelatin or agar-agar to create glycerin jelly; or blended with starch and zinc to make skin-whitening creams. Today glycerin is something of a silent partner to more celebrated skin-care ingredients such as shea butter and aloe vera, but in the 18th century it was a primary ingredient in many cosmetics, and was featured prominently in their marketing. Products included Hovey's Cocoa Glycerine, Watt's Glycerine Jelly of Violets (a Philadelphia-based preparation advertised as being recommended by many of the most beautiful ladies of the land, including "Mrs. Langtry, Mrs. Potter, Miss Ellen Terry and Miss Eastlake"); Glymiel Jelly; Clark's Glycola, for chapped hands and chilblains; and Créme Simon, whose advertising touted glycerin as an ingredient that "does not make hair grow on the face."

Traditionally, glycerin has been created as a byproduct of the commercial soap-making process. Soap is made by adding lye to a fat, which can be derived from plants or animals. The soap then separates from a lye-and-glycerin mixture; the glycerin, finally, is purified and sold. The most common plant oils used in soap-making include palm, soy, and coconut; the most common animal fat used for soap-making is beef tallow. Commercial tallow is obtained by rendering (melting down) animal tissue from slaughterhouses, grease from restaurants, expired meat, and butcher shop trimmings. (Most major soap brands—including Ivory, Dove, Neutrogena, Cetaphil, Dial, Lever, Jergens and Irish Spring—use sodium tallowate, a soap made from rendered animal fat.) Anyone who

has read the book or seen the movie *Fight Club* likely already knows about this process; the protagonists pilfer leaking bags of bloody fat from liposuction clinics in order to make soap and bombs—yet another reminder that the male propensity for public violence depends on the private suffering of women. During World War II, the United States government established fat collection sites where households could donate their grease and drippings to the war effort. In a Disney propaganda film featuring Pluto and Minnie Mouse, a voiceover reminds housewives that "a skillet of bacon grease is a little munitions factory," as animated grease drippings become shell casings that then arrange themselves into bandoliers that crisscross a spinning globe.

Like the dampness you encounter when you overturn a stone, glycerin oozes from the underside of a number of global industries. It can be produced by sugar fermentation, or it can be made synthetically; Dow Chemical makes glycerin derived from petrochemicals, which is often then used in pharmaceuticals. These days, more and more glycerin is being created as a byproduct of biodiesel. Biodiesel is fuel made from plant or animal oils that are put through a chemical process called "transesterification," wherein the oil is split into two parts: alkyl esters and glycerin. The esters are used as fuel, and the glycerin is free to be used in a variety of ways. But such a great quantity of glycerin is being created in the production of biodiesel that the 21st century has seen what is referred to as a "glycerin glut." So much of this glycerin is low-quality and expensive to purify, making it nearly unusable, that it is simply incinerated. The issue of excess glycerin has become so large that the American Cleaning Institute and the National Biodiesel Board now present an annual Glycerine Innovation Award to scientists who have found new ways to make use of these barge-loads of waste glycerin.

The irony is that this glut is the unexpected consequence of a conservation effort: biodiesel is an alternative fuel meant to supplant or replace fossil fuels (whose extraction has been aided by nitroglycerin-laden dynamite). The story of glycerin is a tangle of such ironies. Many of the products we use to clean ourselves and our homes are derived from rendering, one of the dirtiest, smelliest, most injurious jobs in the country. A substance used to protect natural hair, glycerin is also used to whiten skin. Glycerin has been used to beautify, but also to disfigure in war.

Today, cosmetic companies are trying to figure out how to use less of their number-one ingredient—water—as they face a future of worldwide water shortages. Perhaps they'll rely more on the world's abundance of glycerin. Your skin, too, might need extra help from glycerin once the reservoirs empty and your tap begins to sputter—once hydration is truly, literally, the property of the wealthy. An excellent solvent, glycerin disperses the stink of modernity to every pore. ***—ERIN SHEEHY***

NEW DUCT DESIGNS On *Brazil*

By A.S. Hamrah

Robert De Niro is not the star of the 1985 movie *Brazil*. He plays a rogue heating engineer, a criminal plumber, in Terry Gilliam's dystopian science-fiction film that takes place "somewhere in the 20th century." The movie's unnamed London exists as the capital of a pure, destructive bureaucracy. Outside the city, the landscape is an endless slag heap hidden from motorists by advertising billboards and official propaganda slogans inviting them to report their fellow citizens for suspicious behavior. Trapped in the city like everybody else, De Niro's character, Archibald "Harry" Tuttle, swoops in when needed, fixing heating pipes and air ducts. He works for free, outside the official channels of Central Services, the organization run by the State to maintain the city's decaying infrastructure. In actual practice, Central Services further gums up the works instead of fixing things.

With his American accent (De Niro plays the role in his own voice), his mustache left over from *The King of Comedy*, his cigar, and his headgear and welding goggles, De Niro represents a utopian force that wants to improve daily life in small ways. Though called a terrorist by the government, he is not one of the unseen revolutionaries in *Brazil* that, we are told, have been attacking the city for 13 years. Tuttle is a last remnant of actual functionality in a broken-down society, a vigilante of unorganized labor. He is skilled worker and, as he describes himself, "a man alone."

Gilliam contrasts Tuttle's tool kit, which he unfolds and lays out at his off-the-books job sites, with that of the film's torturer, Jack Lint (Michael Palin), an upper-class version of skilled labor. Lint is uncertain of his position in society even though he is an official, a high-level department head in the Information Retrieval Department of the Ministry of Information. Instead of fixing things with wrenches and awls, Lint's tool kit repurposes these instruments to tear people apart and force bogus confessions out of them.

Brazil invented steampunk in the cinema, a dubious honor. Until Jeunet and Caro's *City of Lost Children* in 1995, Gilliam was the aesthetic's most fully-fledged practitioner. When I first saw *Brazil*, the film seemed overwrought and too clever to me. The dehumanization Gilliam sought to criticize in his reworking of *1984* seeped into his mise-en-

scène. The way a detainee bound in a hood and straitjacket jumpsuit becomes a human pinball on the way to the torture chamber, for instance, showed Gilliam as complicit in the kind of dehumanization he wanted to satirize.

There's also an automated breakfast scene like the one in *Pee-wee's Big Adventure*, a weird coincidence from the time before Tim Burton revealed himself in full steampunk mode. (*Brazil* came out six months earlier than *Pee-wee's Big Adventure* in the U.K., but four months after it in the U.S.) The two directors shared an interest in Rube Goldberg devices. For Gilliam, this kind of time-saving automation was an example of oppression, an aspect of the film's overarching, shabby fascism, with all of his sick society's dank tubing and ductwork in miniature. Of course it doesn't work, pouring coffee on the morning toast. For Burton and Pee-wee, it was just kooky and inventive, a way to repurpose toys for added fun. It works perfectly to get Pee-wee up and out the door, but he doesn't have to go to a soul-sucking office job like Sam (Jonathan Pryce), *Brazil*'s protagonist, does.

Ductwork appears in a lot of movies, usually action movies in which characters crawl through ducts to escape confinement or to plant devices to blow things up. *Brazil* is the only movie, however, in which the first line spoken by a character on screen is about ducts. "Hi there," says a polite British advertising pitchman in a commercial on a TV in a shop window. "I want to talk to you about ducts. Do your ducts seems old-fashioned? Out of date?" Ducts and tubing define the look and the mindspace of the entire film. Its key image occurs after Sam replaces a gelatinous corpse in a coffin and seems to fall through it, into blackness and then into the bowels of the city, where he becomes garbage amid piles of dingy tubes and ducts, which, in 1980s style, are dotted with neon signs to break up the black grime.

Other ducts in *Brazil* explode with paperwork, filling the air in concrete corridors with memos like in New York on 9/11. The film's predictive quality stands out in 21st century viewings. Terrorist explosions give way to a neoliberal nightmare State in which torture victims must pay for their torture sessions themselves. A gerontocracy of upper-class do-nothings sucks the life out of everybody else, spending money on cosmetic surgery that makes them uglier. The eldest of the super-bureaucrats, a wealthy wheelchair-bound executive named Mr. Helpmann, must be held up to urinate by Sam, who begs him for a promotion in the film's men's room scene.

Everything in *Brazil* works to fill the frame with ductwork and tubing. The uniform of a singing-telegram delivery girl embodies the film's aesthetic, with garters holding up her stockings replicating the physical infrastructure that supports the film's leaderless authoritarian bureaucracy. The filigree piping on her uniform's tunic is more elaborate clutter in this world of bad plumbing and inadequate heating. When Harry Tuttle connects a sewage pipe to a tube that supplies air to Central Services workers and we see their transparent work suits filling with shit, he reminds Sam that "we're all in it together," a reference not just to the shit, but also to a slogan on a propaganda billboard we will see when Tuttle disappears: "Happiness—We're All In It Together."

Tuttle, the plumber accused of "freelance subversion," meets his end in *Brazil* during Sam's dissociative fantasy that Sam has while being tortured. Harry is "deleted"—removed

from all official records as if he never existed. Then he disappears, literally buried under all the paperwork he refused to do before he went to work on the plumbing. When Sam scurries to Harry's rescue, he finds nothing under the wastepaper that has formed around Tuttle and mummified him—a version of a gag in the Jerry Lewis–Frank Tashlin movie *The Disorderly Orderly* (1964), in which a man in a full-body cast tumbles down a hill. His cast shatters, revealing that it was empty. No one was inside.

In *Brazil*, fixing things is a form of sabotage for which the film's characters are punished, tortured, and eliminated. The film's world is one in which decayed infrastructure is the whole of reality—a green and pleasant England exists only in the self-delusions of its protagonist, whose dreams eventually expose him as complicit.

Sam was, after all, only motivated to change things so he could spy on a woman from the safety of a private office in the Ministry of Information. Jill, his dream woman, a truck-driving prole (Kim Greist, apparently the inspiration for Charlize Theron's character in *Mad Max: Fury Road*), set out simply to report the false arrest of her neighbor, whom a bureaucratic error had confused with Tuttle. She submits to Sam's romantic illusions only after he has destroyed her means of making a living. The hopelessness of *Brazil* was on display from the beginning of the film, which takes place in a high-rise development called Shangrila Towers that looks exactly as dismal as London's Grenfell Tower did after it burned in 2017.

I remember the day I saw *Brazil*. As I was leaving the theater that afternoon, there were two burly guys exiting ahead of me, dressed in brown Carhartt jackets, flannel shirts, work pants, and work boots. They didn't really seem like the type who would take time off in the middle of the day to go to the movies. As they opened the doors and walked out of the theater, one guy turned to the other and said, "That was a pretty good movie." "Yeah," the other replied, "but it didn't have much to do with plumbing."

Whenever I think of how jobs I've had are depicted in movies, I think of those two guys. They show that Truffaut was right when he said that everyone in the world has two professions—their own and movie reviewing. Plumbing, if you're doing it right, gives you the time to take off work and see a movie in the middle of the day. Film reviewing, on the other hand, implies that if your toilet breaks, you better know how to fix it yourself.

One day, while looking at a photo of an aesthetically pleasing bathroom, I started to map out the bathroom using depth of field, the perceived proportions of and distances between all the parts of the room—from mirror to sink, to toilet, to floor. To measure this, I would air-trace the image with my nose, and know that I was done measuring each item in the photo when my nose would stop tingling.

I spend most of my time in the bathroom by the mirror—flirting with it, breathing on it, staring blankly at it, sometimes simply pressing my face against it. My body has noticed which types of sink-mirror spatial dimensions are most comfortable for my body—and I have projected, through my body's eye, my ideal residential and public bathroom mirror-sink dimensional ranges.

In-house: Tiltable, retractable mirror. Why it's ideal: less craning of my neck when I'm trying to do my eyebrows or pluck my chin hairs; it's retractable; more angles from which to study my mug.

Public: Full-body mirror forever! Why it's ideal: the full-body mirror reminds my brain that I have a body.

By Rebecca-Damilola Fayemi

Reflections that I've made: Mirrors are everywhere! I see myself in everything and everyone! Some people are harder to look at myself from than others. Mirrors are everywhere and I love to look at myself in them. (I'm a Libra rising, by the way.)

"What am I going to do with my love?" I murmur while mindlessly rubbing my chest. The only logical explanation as to why I'm doing this is that my body heals many voids by subconsciously rubbing my love back into my body.

Mars in the 12th house: subconsciously searching for malicious intentions. You keep an eye out for danger of any kind—high levels of data-gathering and strong intuition.

It is only you that can judge you! If you feel the tug of anybody's judgment, they are mirroring your power back to you!

Now for a mirror joke: "Does my reflection show enough in this mirror? I may have to get another one. Leave me be and let me reflect on it."

REFLECTIONS

THE SMELL OF POPPERS IN THE MORNING

By Ward 5B

I grew up down the block from The Campus Theatre in the Tenderloin neighborhood of San Francisco and recall the heady smell of the interior wafting out while passing by. It's a smell unlike any other. In the 1980s, adult entertainment establishments in San Francisco had the scent of heavy industrial chemical cleaners, poppers, Nonoxynol-9, semen, methamphetamines, scat, and sweat. It's a friendly aroma, one that lingers in the air much like well-aged Spanish leather.

When Carlos Valentino hit the Campus Theatre stage in June of 1988, needle exchange was just getting off the ground out of a squat in SoMa. As Californians were not allowed to possess syringes without a prescription, it was an act of civil disobedience to provide clean works. My involvement in the operations of adult venues facilitated the expansion of risk reduction by having access to radical queer spaces also being appropriated by a displaced IVDU community. Across town in the Castro district, my friend and mentor Issan Dorsey had the previous year created Maitri Hospice out of the Hartford Street Zen Center when he took in a homeless man with AIDS. Issan would eventually die there himself from an AIDS-related illness. The Names Project had begun in 1987 as well, out of a storefront on Market Street. The microbiological disaster seemed to have no end in sight.

In the midst of this viral holocaust, a generation of gay men understood that their ejaculate was in itself political. By 1988, gay men had again begun to find their sexual potency. After bathhouse closures in 1985, peep shows and x-rated movie houses took on a renewed importance in the queer community. As the decade came to a close, private sex clubs, churches, and queer nightclubs began to see a resurgence of activity and creativity. In 1989, Club Uranus employed many of the same go-go dancers from the Campus Theatre, as male burlesque was becoming associated with high camp and a newly eroticized performance art. A defiance of sex-negativity was replaced by a wave of sex-positivity, turning the language of the era on end. You could be HIV+ and have a healthy sex life.

PLUMBING

One of the tenets of *Facility*'s philosophy is that everyone is an expert on bathrooms. On a certain level, this is true; the bathroom is a space with which we all have intimate experience. But we'd like to give credit to the real bathroom experts out there: plumbers.

Plumbing is important work. We need water for drinking and sanitation, gas and steam for heat. Plumbers install the pipes that deliver these things to us. Plumbers install fixtures such as bathtubs and toilets, appliances such as dishwashers and hot water heaters. They install drainage systems. Crucially, plumbers also maintain and repair these things. In a society that privileges novelty—the creation of the big and the grand and the new—the difficult, necessary, and unending work of maintenance is undervalued. But this labor is vital; every day plumbers help to ensure our safety, our comfort, and our health.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, plumbing jobs are expected to grow by 16 percent in the next 10 years, much faster than the average for all occupations. Plumbing is among the trades that are least likely to be automated—and the job itself probably isn't going to disappear anytime soon. Whatever else happens in the world, we will still need to drink clean water and dispose of our waste. We haven't transcended our bodies yet (thank god), as any plumber knows.

When plumbers do service calls, they enter into people's private spaces, encounter the parts of the home that people forget to clean, confront the bodily processes that people are taught to keep from others. When faced with a task, you notice things: the sticky door, the narrow stairs, the vibe between landlord and tenant. The clients are often home. Some are upset; some are embarrassed. Others are in a hurry. Others make nonsensical suggestions or want to look over your shoulder as you work. Some homes are large enough for people to live in, relatively oblivious, while you renovate an entire top floor. Others are so small that you can fix the toilet while someone talks at you from the kitchen counter mere feet away, gesticulating with a chef's knife.

It's not just the private lives of individuals that plumbers get the inside scoop on, but the inner workings of the city itself. "I really enjoy learning all the different back alleyways and nooks and crannies of the city," says Brian Eckenrode, owner of B.E. Plumbing, LLC, and registered master plumber of the city of Philadelphia. "The way I get from one neighborhood to another is totally different than the way my wife would if she's driving." The plumber is also witness to the rise and fall of fortunes in a neighborhood. Where are people buying old farmhouses in which to start a family? Where are efficiency units being built to house worked-to-death commuters? Where are artists fixing up gutted spaces? Which blocks have always had drainage problems? Which homes are stripped of their copper pipe while the water is still on?

Facility went to Philadelphia to visit Brian, 37, and Scott Monaghan, 38, his apprentice, to watch them work and to talk about their jobs. Brian got his start building boats in Maine, but when he moved back to Philly in 2005,

he started plumbing, and has been doing so ever since. Scott used to be a teacher. He just finished his first year of plumbing school. They get along well, which is important when your day is spent troubleshooting in unpredictable, often uncomfortable situations. "I spend more waking hours with Scott than I do with my wife," says Brian. "And same with him and his wife. You really get to know someone. And hopefully most of the things about them you like."

The guys at the plumbing supply house call Brian "Brother Sunflower" because he wears a baseball cap with a large sunflower on it. (The name comes from an episode of *Martin* in which Martin joins a cult.) He knows magic ("enough to impress the boys at the supply shop") and juggling; the most dangerous thing he's ever juggled is three kittens, who all "went on to have wonderful lives." Scott plays in two bands, and while we drove through Philadelphia, he pointed out all the skate spots, the teenagers doing tricks, the hubba factory, the good rails and ledges—a reminder that there are many ways to know a city and its infrastructure, and that every person you meet contains their own subjective atlas of the city. ***—Erin Sheehy***

BRIAN: A lot of people think plumbing is all just dealing with shit. And it's not. I mean, new construction jobs, everything's brand new: there's not a piece of shit in the job yet. You're setting fixtures in these brand-new bathrooms, and it's really clean and nice work.

SCOTT: There are a lot of things that people don't know that plumbers do. Like heating; there's boilers, heaters, radiators, and all that stuff that deals with water.

BRIAN: Scott's been working with me for the last six to eight months. A lot of that has been focused on construction projects, like draining water lines into the house and throughout to every fixture. You put a big number to that job, and you hope that it comes near to what you estimated and that you make money. And then if you don't, and it takes a week longer, you're like, dang, now I'm making like half of what I thought I would make for an hour. So it has its ups and downs. It's definitely not as gratifying necessarily as service work, which is what I've been focusing on the last month. I think I really like service work a lot more: the instant gratification, the personability of working one-on-one with the owners of the places. You're going into an emergent situation to them, and you're going in with such confidence because you're a plumber, you know how to fix the thing. There's a solution. And it's a new puzzle every day to solve, and it's never boring. It really isn't. It's difficult in such a great way. If you build your day the right way, you can have days where you make enough money to cover your overhead and have a little profit, enough to then have the days where you don't, and it balances itself out hopefully in the end. It's such an interesting game. I think that's what I like about service work. Cause there is more cash flow coming through; you're not waiting on a big check. And it's just satisfying. It really works for my personality also. In Philadelphia, there's radiators and boilers, and you do a heating service, you do a tune-up in the fall. You go to every radiator in the house. And every radiator is like, next to a bed, next to their end table, and you see the book they're reading—but you try not to notice these things. You try to not see the strewn clothes and underwear around. You just kinda go and focus on your job. It takes a level of comfort for someone to let you in their house, to be in their most personal areas. I think it works well for me. I don't know. Yeah, it works.

FACILITY: What are the most common things that people call you in for where it's like, "Oh man, you really could do this yourself if you looked it up"?

BRIAN: I would say, like, "My toilet runs every now and again. My toilet's running." And it's often just the flapper. We keep a few flappers in the truck. There are some different types of flappers for different toilets, but it's really very simple. But if someone doesn't know, they don't know. Clogged drains can be tricky because your sink or your tub has an overflow. If you don't cover the overflow when you are plunging the sink, you're not getting a suction. It's just going to come out of the overflow, the air that you're trying to build the pressure to put the clog through. People don't often know that. So they're like: "I plunged it!" But they didn't close the overflow, so their plunging did absolutely nothing.

SCOTT: Lighting a pilot.

BRIAN: Yeah. Lighting a pilot on a boiler. Like, "Hey, I don't have hot water." And it's just like a breeze blew the pilot out, or the gas pressure was low one second and it took it out. And you just push a button, hold a lighter, or click a little button to make a spark, and you're like, "Ta-da!" But again, if people don't know anything about that stuff. They're like, "I'm a doctor. I know how to fix all the insides of your gut. But the insides of a toilet is just confusing to me."

FACILITY: Are there things when you're doing service jobs that are particularly annoying? Like when people pour a lot of Drano in the drain and it still won't go?

BRIAN: If it's a clogged tub drain, that's a question to ask them, because if you're getting in there, you want to make sure you're protecting your arms and your hands and your face. Cause it splashes sometimes, and you don't want Drano splashing in your eyes potentially or all over your hands and stuff. It's definitely good to slow down and ask questions.

FACILITY: Are there other things, like when people have tried to figure it out themselves, that make it more challenging for you?

BRIAN: Yeah, there's definitely memes and dumb T-shirts about that, like—

SCOTT: What, like handyman fix?

BRIAN: Like: if you touched it first, it's gonna cost X amount of dollars more. If you tried to fix it already. If you want to help me, it's going to cost X amount of dollars more. I love the line, "Oh, I'd do it myself if I had the time." Or like, "I was gonna do it myself, but—" Uh huh.

BRIAN: So Philadelphia has its own plumbing code.* And it's the oldest plumbing code in America. In any commercial application, one has to use copper and cast iron. No PVC or PEX. And then there were limitations in residential. If there were more than four families, you had to use copper and cast iron. Or like three stories. PEX is a plastic water piping. PEX is a cross-linked polyethylene. From your water meter inside your house, you can run PEX from there all throughout the house, and it's flexible, so you're using less fittings. A 10-foot stick of half-inch copper is $15. And a 20-foot stick of half-inch PEX is probably $4. You can buy a hundred-foot coil of half-inch PEX for like $25. So it's like 25 cents a foot, as opposed to like $1.50 a foot. These products have been used for longer periods of time in Europe. PEX especially. But they just haven't stood the test of time that copper and cast iron has, in Phila-

FACILITY: *What are things most often clogged with?*

BRIAN: *Hair and soap scum and toothpaste. It all just hardens into a real pleasant cement.*

delphia especially, where, you know, they're 100 years old and they're starting to fail. Cast-iron drain lines have about a hundred-year lifespan is what we're finding out, because they were installed 100 years ago in these homes in Philadelphia. The two things we're looking at on Monday are two people that are closing on houses, and in the inspection reports, there were cracked main drains or stacks. So it has about a hundred-year lifespan. We'll see what PVC does. I know PVC is susceptible to UV harm. It'll make it more brittle if it's exposed to the sun, but it's not typically exposed to the sun much. The new codes that are being adapted to the Philadelphia from the International Code is a lot of PVC use underground. And I think the code right now says that if it's 10 feet from your water line, it's O.K. Cause they still don't trust it enough to not break and then leach into the water system somehow.

** The International Plumbing Code (IPC) is used in 35 states, but some states and localities maintain their own codes. Philadelphia is one of only six U.S. cities (the others are San Francisco, New York, Chicago, Boston, and Washington, D.C.) that require metal piping in residential high-rise construction; the IPC allows for plastic. Unions have resisted adoption of plastic pipes; some say that this is because metal pipes bring more profit to manufacturers and require more man-hours to install (we use "man-hour" here in part because women make up only 3.5 percent of plumbers, pipe fitters, pipelayers, and steamfitters). Nevertheless, in 2018, Philadelphia decided to implement the use of PEX and PVC in high-rise residential plumbing. Many consider PEX and PVC more environmentally friendly because their manufacture has a much smaller carbon footprint than copper and cast-iron pipe, and because they leak less, but they have been found to emit hazardous fumes during fires. This is of particular concern in states like California, where fires are becoming a greater threat each year.*

BRIAN: The apprentice school that Scott goes to is a four-year school: two nights a week for four years while working under a master plumber during the day is a really big stepping-stone to getting a journeyman's license and, you know, just having more knowledge.

SCOTT: So it's two nights a week: one night of theory and one night of shop. So theory night, you learn about code stuff—a lot of like, "Why do we do this?" and "What's a stack? What does a stack do?"* Stuff like that. And different valves and all that fun stuff. And then in shop we will like, build manifolds using all the fixtures and everything that we learned about in the theory class. That's kind of how it's been so far. I just finished my first year.

BRIAN: I don't think you have to go to school to get your journeyman's license—it definitely helps — but you have to be working under a master plumber for four years before you're able to take the test. And once you obtain your journeyman's license, you have to have that license for a full year before you're able to take your master's test. So it's a five-year process any way you cut it.

** A stack is a vertical line of piping.*

FACILITY: What's the craziest thing that you've unearthed from a drain?

BRIAN: I like this question. When we replaced those drains under the floor in the basement. Four-inch cast-iron drain. There was a two-inch [section of pipe], which went over to the kitchen sink on the first floor and came up and went over to the sink, and a couple years before, we tried to clear that drain, and discovered that drain underground had broken, and we were just getting roots and dirt. So we rerouted the drain into the sink that was in the basement, to just have it temporarily like that, and when we eventually replaced the drain under the floor—when their laundry I think also stopped working—there was a four-inch cast-iron pipe completely filled with roots. It was a four-inch thick knot, like, dreadlock of root. And it was like 10 feet long. It was amazing. It was amazing how resilient plants are. They will seek water. That's why they grow into your drain. [In an underground drainage system,] there's a hub and a spigot, they go together. Then you pack all around there with oakum, which is an oil-soaked synthetic rope that swells when it gets wet, and then you melt lead and you pour lead into that to hold everything in place. Roots will grow from a tree 30 feet away and find their way through that hub and into your drain, and then they'll just grow right there. And that's a lot of what clogs are underground. So yeah, a four-inch dread of roots was pretty intense. I've taken apart the base of a chimney when working on a heater and have had a bird fly out and just fly around the basement like crazy. That was exciting. Washcloths are popular in tubs. Kids' washcloths are popular. I pulled a Sharpie marker out of a toilet two weeks in a row.

FACILITY: Same toilet?

BRIAN: Yeah.

SCOTT: We got called for a sink drain that was clogged, and I think the grandson had poured kitty litter down it. So there was kitty litter, and then there was Legos, and then there was a cap to like, lotion. They were all found in there.

BRIAN: Oh god. That was really something. I really felt like I needed a shower and a change after lying on that floor. I desire a shop that's not my basement of my house, with a shower, so I can come home to my family and not be like, "Don't touch me." I love to get home before they do, so I can get out of my work clothes sometimes. Cause some days there's like, feces on my clothes; that's the reality of my work. You don't know what you're pulling out of these drains. It's kind of gross if you think too much about it. If you don't think about it, it's fine. I'm just extra aware about it around my kids. But I'm building strong immune systems in them! I don't know how many plumbers have trucks that they tote their kids around in also; this serves as a plumbing truck, but it's also my family van. The fact that I keep my kids in it helps to keep it clean for sure. Having a system. I get comments from people at the supply house who see all those different plumbers' trucks, and they say, "You really keep a nice clean truck." I give a lot of that credit to Scott, completely.

FACILITY: Aside from the craziest thing you've pulled from a drain, have you had a craziest job? Like anything surprising or unusual?

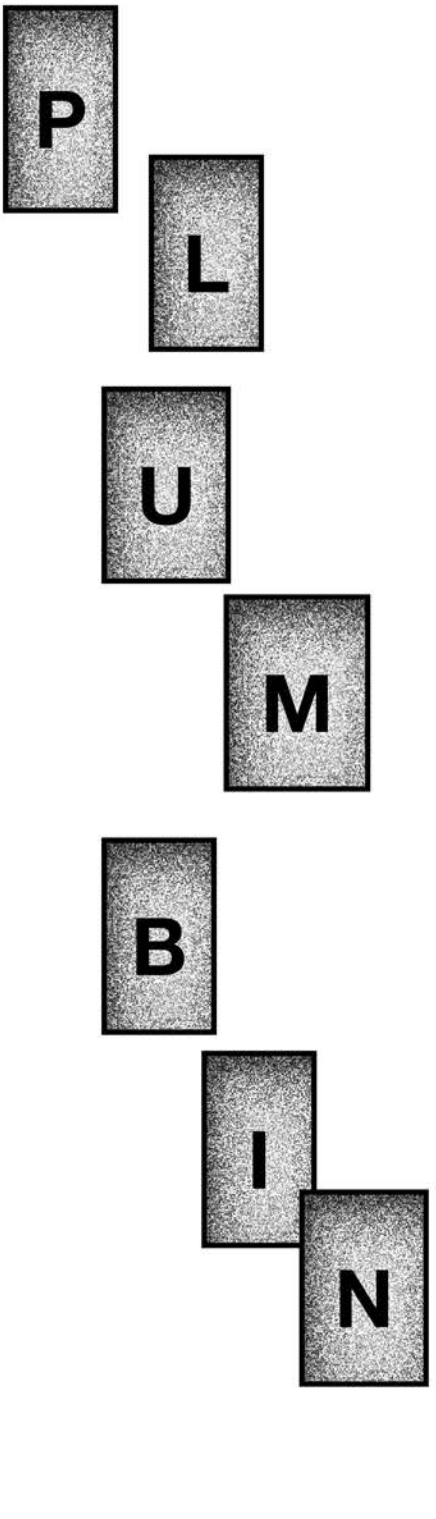
SCOTT: We did have Poop Lake.

FACILITY: Poop Lake?

BRIAN: Oh yeah. We got a call because the hot water heaters went out. The tenant had no hot water. And I stepped into the house. There's four women living in this house. I step in and I inhale, and I'm like, "Oh, the basement's flooded. With shit." The main drain's backed up and the basement's flooded. That's why the water heaters went out, because they were underwater in the poo. And then we walk downstairs, and I'm like, "Yep, there it is." So we find some wood that we can lay down to make a path to where we need to get to without getting covered in shit, and I'm on the phone with my drain cleaner to get them over to clear the drain, and oh, what a gross mess. The four women in the house, it never crossed their mind. All their stuff was just floating amongst feces. It was gross. They had all their personal stuff down there.

SCOTT: And then we had to relight the pilot with our faces as far from poop as we could.

BRIAN: Yeah. We were like, right next to it. That was exciting. But we relit the water heaters. We did replace the thermocouples. They needed replacement.



FACILITY: Do you ever run into something where the problem is far enough back that it becomes a city problem?

BRIAN: This is an interesting one. This was in West Philly a couple years ago, where they had low water pressure in the house. So I went out to the curb and I listened, and I could hear water running under the ground. So we knew that something was broken under there, so we were going to replace the line from the street into the house. We set everything up and closed the road down and we dug, and as soon as we started digging, we realized that the underneath of the street, this water leak had been happening for so long that it had washed away all the earth. You could fit a school bus under the street without doing any more digging. I'm so surprised that it didn't just collapse the street. And what we ended up having to do is replace their line, the neighbor's line, and both the curb traps, which are the drains, because the drains were completely unsupported and they had broken also. So what we thought was a simple job turned into a potential sinkhole in the street that could just like swallow up a school bus, and thousands of dollars to both the customer and the neighbor. Thousands and thousands of dollars. That was unexpected.

BATHROOM

Two woman are out shopping, and they both go to use the restroom. One of them is transgender. After they handle their business in their separate stalls, they proceed to the sinks and mirrors to wash their hands and ensure that their appearance is intact, and not disheveled from a day of running around. They are laughing and joking while applying a little gloss to their lips when another young lady comes out of the stalls and starts staring at the transgender woman. The young lady begins at her feet, and makes her way up to her hands, and then she looks at her face, and then at her friend, rolls her eyes and says, "Since when are they letting men into the ladies' room?" The one friend looks at the other and sees that she is nervous at the possibility of being outed. So she steps in between her friend and the harasser and responds, "Even if she was a man, which she is not, she definitely isn't bothering you." The woman responds, "I am sorry. I wasn't addressing you." The other woman says, "What if I was the man and she is the woman?" She is trying to take the heat off her friend and hoping to educate this lady. She grabs her friend's hand, leaving the restroom and the lady standing there with her face cracked, mouth wide open. She has refused to let anyone make fun of her friend, and more importantly, she has sent a message: you never know who you are standing next to.

Bathrooms have been separated into men's and women's rooms since at least the 19th century. In recent years, laws such as the New York City Human Rights Law have passed, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of gender identity and gender expression. The NYC law applies to all places of public accommodation, including but not limited to coffee shops, entertainment areas, parks, locker rooms, and public restrooms. This is a positive step in gender equality, especially for transgender people. But as with all things that are positive, there comes some back-lash, and many critics still oppose the bill. Concerns include questions such as: How can one determine if someone is transgender? Would one base this determination on how the individual is dressed? What if the individual looks or presents a little masculine? What prompts a cisgendered woman to put her guard up or feel unsafe in bathroom?

Women need to feel safe, and safety needs to be ensured to women, and these laws present a change for them. But this applies to *all* women. It is very stressful for someone assigned male at birth to transition genders, and her goal is to feel safe in public as well, all the while hoping that she is not perceived as a threat to anyone. Her worst fear would be to have someone question her gender.

BUREAUCRACY

Women can be protective beings, whether for their child, their home, or their restroom—and rightfully so. But the outcome of being outed in this way could become extremely messy. States like New York are liberal, but a report of someone being perceived as a man in a woman's bathroom may have starker consequences in states like Texas or Mississippi. With the world changing and making progressive strides, equality and safety should be for all. Where one is in the journey of their gender and possible transition should not determine if they can use the bathroom of their gender expression, but unfortunately, because of discrimination, passing still plays a part.

A woman and her friend, who happens to be a transgender man, both have to use the restroom. They are in Manhattan partying with some other friends, and the only restroom that happens to be free is the men's. The man tells his friend to just go in, that he will stand in front of her stall for protection. (She loves that her friends who are transgender men are a little more protective and careful when it comes to the women in their lives.) As she flushes the toilet and the two of them go to the sink, a random guy comes out of the stall, looks at the transgender man, and says "Yo, bro, why would you let your girl use the men's restroom?" He responds, "Because she had to use the restroom and, trust me, I am protecting her." They both give each other a respective nod and they all leave the restroom. The trans man looks at his friend, winks at her, and smiles.

People need to understand that predatory behavior is not determined by gender. It is determined by the specific individual. To date, there are no documented incidents in which a transgender person attacked anyone in a bathroom. Mostly violence is directed at transgender people. People fear the unknown, but if people get educated then maybe the fear would subside. If someone exhibits predatory behavior, it should be addressed to law enforcement, but it should not be an assumption based on their gender expression. It is not condemnable to use the restroom of your gender expression, but it is condemning to discriminate based on gender.

By Kennedy Felder

NANCY REAGAN'S BEAUTY PARLOR

By Elizabeth Gumport

The White House was a fixer-upper: that much Nancy Reagan knew to be true when she arrived in January of 1981. She and her staff were dismayed to find mousetraps tucked under couches and chairs, which were themselves worn and frayed. "The place," Mrs. Reagan's first chief of staff told *Vanity Fair*, "was a shambles."

Her friends agreed. The Reagans declined the $50,000 decorating allowance normally allotted to incoming presidents and, with the help of their intimates and other interested parties, set about raising the money themselves. Within a few weeks, they'd reached their initial goal; after President Reagan decontrolled oil prices, oil executives and investors rushed to show their "appreciation" of his policies by contributing to the redecoration fund. And the money kept coming; ultimately, the Reagans raised over $800,000 in private, tax-deductible donations. (Still, it was not enough: Mrs. Reagan's social secretary, Muffie Brandon, informed *The New York Times* that the White House was in the grips of "a terrible tablecloth crisis.")

November brought news of another parcel of presents: a Louis XV lounge chair! A $3,700 rug! Chintz wall coverings! Could it be for a ballroom? A boudoir? No! It was for Mrs. Reagan's beauty parlor, officially known as the Cosmetology Room. Other furnishings included a white leather spa chair ($720), enameled shampoo bowl ($346.65), manicurist's stool ($230), and two custom-modified hairdryers (collectively valued at $1,200). A lucite "makeup center" contained hundreds of dollars worth of Redken cosmetics. The items were donated by members of the National Hairdressers and Cosmetologists Association.

Closets concealed the equipment when not in use, and the space was meant to seem more sitting room than salon. (One wonders what Mrs. Reagan's trusted decorator and his "live-in friend" thought of this stubborn insistence on closeting, considering the First Couple's persistent silence during the AIDS crisis.) Nothing was shiny, or reflective, and everything was soft: the coral rug, the salmon-colored lounge chair, the draperies covering the walls, and the white curtains, made of dotted Swiss batiste, that swept across the windows.

After Mrs. Reagan moved out, a new lady made the beauty parlor her home: Millie, the Bushes' English Springer Spaniel, who nursed six puppies there on a bed of newspapers. President Bush famously declared Millie a foreign policy expert; *Washingtonian* featured her on its cover as the "ugliest dog" in Washington.

Getting Geared Up In My Bathroom

By Julie Moya

IT'S ALREADY 8 P.M. I am meeting a client tonight at the designated place, a restaurant across from Radio City called the Red Eyed Grill. He is a regular client with the agency. He is very specific and insists on what he wants. Tonight, he wants me.

Putting on my mascara. Blending my foundation. Looking in the mirror. I make sure I have everything I need to look like the beautiful woman this guy wants. The bathroom is where I go to put on my armor and get ready for the long evening ahead.

Some of these guys can be very easy and sometimes fun, but tonight is a different story. He takes me to a restaurant and treats me like I am his girlfriend. He likes me to smile and flirt with the men as I walk to the bathroom. It's a game we play to make him feel that he has the lady that everyone wants. I stay in the bathroom for several minutes and relax a little. This is the place I use to escape for a few minutes when I am with a client.

Once we have eaten our dinner we go to his place on East 72nd Street. It's a nice place but it's not me. It's cold and sparse; everything is chrome. I use the bathroom to freshen up and get myself ready to deliver the fantasy he wants. He is waiting for me, standing naked. He grabs my hair and tells me to get on my knees. He pulls at my dress, almost ripping it off. For a second I get a little frightened, but then I tell myself it's just his fantasy and it's all right. I calm myself down and proceed with the wild brand of sex he wants. After he cums, he looks disgusted and tells me to get dressed. He is a busy man and has to get his sleep. And then he starts with the questions. Are you healthy? Do you have any diseases? Do you get tested and how frequently? This is his normal routine.

I excuse myself and walk into the bathroom where I try to compose myself. He knocks at the door and tells me to hurry and don't use the white monogrammed towels, make sure you use the dark towels and don't take long. I look into the mirror and say to myself, *this guy is a creep but he pays well, so relax girl.* I walk out and ask him for the arranged fee so that I can call the agency and let them know all went well and we are done. He looks at me as if I am disgusting and tosses the money at me. I count it as I am walking toward the door, calling the agency. I say goodbye and he slams the door.

It's not a regular experience, but the money is nice. I have clients who are sweet and kind and actually say, "Thank you," and "I will call you again soon." Sometimes you meet couples who want you to be with both of them; it's actually

kind of fun. Sometimes clients want certain fantasies that are on the morbid side, but this is what I do for now. I am a professional and I think I do it well.

I walk into my apartment and walk into my bathroom, where I can wash away the dirtiness I feel. I look into the mirror and don't see what I want, and it makes me sad some nights, like tonight. You have to be a strong woman to be in this life, or it can really break you. Sometimes I feel broken, but I get right back together and do it again. I don't tell certain people what I do and who I really am because some people don't agree with it and think it's a terrible occupation. I have such mixed feelings about it. I have dreams for the future and I want so much more. I want to be somebody, not somebody's.

Looking back at my life, I remember experiences in the escort business that I would defend and glamorize, but in reality, it took something precious from me. Sometimes I think it was my soul. There is something about selling your body that is disturbing, at least to some, and if I could turn back the hands of time, I would have chosen a different way to live.

If this business were legal, I think it would be a different experience all around. The providers would pay taxes and the business would be monitored to prevent trafficking. Providers would carry a card to assure their health was up to date. It would be a respected business. Like abortions, women should be able to do what they want with their bodies, so what is wrong with bartering with our bodies to support our family or ourselves?

Things happen in your life that cause you to choose the path you walk. When I started this business, I was young. I did what I had to do, and it can't be erased. It's indelible. The first time was the worst, and I will never forget it. I was stiff and cold and wanted it to end. Sex is so intimate, but I learned how to put my armor on and put my body on automatic pilot. After that, it's an acting job, and I am a hell of an actor, or at least that's what I am told.

A few years ago, I was meeting a client at a hotel and I had no idea that he called another provider. I was nervous and excused myself to the bathroom to freshen up. I was new to the business and this was a radically new experience. The hotel was plush, really nice, not like regular hotels I had been in. The bathroom was spacious and clean. It had several different soaps and shampoos to choose from. I was amazed at the beauty of the room. While I was in there, someone knocked at the door, I opened it, and it was the other provider. She whispered, "Can I join you? I am a little nervous." She came in and I closed the door and we both started giggling. She said, "What do you think he wants with us?" I said, "What do you think he wants us for? I am sure he wants a bi show, as well as a threesome." I told her to freshen up because we were going to get real close. Of course, we did, and we ended up becoming friends after that night.

Bathroom

The shower head	She keeps it coming
The tub	She's filled to the brim
The sink	She cleans up
The soap dispenser	She's methodical
The toilet	She's strictly business
The toilet brush	She makes the most of it
The mirror	She's steamy
The trash can	She demands attention
The towel rack	She lets it all hang out

Home Checklist (Bathroom), 2019.

M Slater

Chloë Bass's *The Book of Everyday Instruction* (2015-2018) is an eight-chapter work exploring one-on-one interaction. Chapter Four, *It's amazing we don't have more fights* (2016), investigates the ways people arrange themselves in space and includes an installation in a public restroom, titled *I put these words in the bathroom because the bathroom is where people read*. For this piece, Bass wrote about the boundaries that multi-stall bathrooms ask us to observe, about the porousness of that privacy. The project included text printed on toilet paper—an excerpt of which is included here—along with vinyl text on bathroom walls, stall doors, and mirrors. The toilet paper text draws from direct experience, narrative musing, and interviews conducted with Bennington College students about sharing dorm bathrooms. This chapter was first produced at the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's Workspace program, and is still on view at the School of Visual Arts. All eight chapters were shown at Knockdown Center in Queens, NY.

Chloë Bass

In the bathroom, I tell Tamar that I have boundary issues. I mean this in the context of saying no. Although what is a boundary if not a certain type of refusal. This is where I end, in the context of you asking for things. This is where you end, too. An inquiry with unmet desire turns a question into a statement, and the questioner into a kind of thud. If we both agree that it's an ending, maybe it won't feel so bad. Then we can walk away.

There's so much we learn as we share a private space. At what point does overhearing become a form of engagement? *I've finished people's songs in the bathroom — where someone is in there, and I don't think they realize someone else is in there, and they start to sing a pop song, and I finish it. Not the entire song, but the chorus.*

In the bathroom, Trokon tells me that this is the first time he's been in this unisex space with a woman and felt comfortable. "I guess that means we're friends now," I suggest, and he agrees. The moment quickly passes, but I don't forget it.

At one point in high school, my friend and I were talking about how we wanted to get some Adderall after school. We were in a rebellious time in our lives. We walked out of the stall, and my teacher was right there. She wound up calling my parents to the school, and having a whole discussion with my parents. It ended up blowing over. It wasn't a big deal, but it was a scary moment. It was probably the most

Fluids, 2019.

Nipple Ring, 2019.

Liz Barr

Large room with two-axis fluorescent lights in the Hughes Aircraft Company radar building, Los Angeles, California. Photograph by David De Vries, 1995. (Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Historic American Buildings Survey)

More Real Than Sunlight

By Erin Sheehy

IN FRONT OF A TOOTHPASTE-SPATTERED MIRROR, beneath two incandescent bulbs, a woman prepares her face. Early-morning light filters through a narrow window. She wipes the sleep from her tear ducts, the line of crusted drool from her cheek. She squeezes sunscreen from a tube and rubs it into her skin. She combs mascara through her eyelashes, dabs balm on her lips. She looks at herself: she is satisfied.

On the subway someone curses at her. At the office, conversation is halting, awkward. Her jokes are dropped. Her emails go unanswered. She notices that there is cat hair on her work slacks. She puzzles over that unknowable gap between how she sees herself and how others see her. Is that effervescence or mania? A warm smile or a desperate, gritted-teeth grin?

Needing an escape, she goes to the bathroom. She stands at the mirror, the overhead fluorescent lights casting shadows on her face, and sees a much uglier person than the one she observed in the morning. More creased, more sallow, more hollow, more slumped. She starts to think the job is beating her down. She questions the choices she's made, or hasn't made. She curses her passivity. She feels dissatisfied with life, blames herself. But plenty of forces beyond her control have led to this sad reflection. She could start by blaming the lights.

SINCE WORLD WAR II, much of American life has been lived beneath fluorescent tube lighting. Fluorescents light subway cars and bus stations; supermarkets and diners; hospitals and the DMV; schools, where our attendance is mandatory; factories, where our tasks are timed; high-rise offices, where our work is useless; courtrooms and jails, where our fates are decided. How many schoolchildren, cramped in their desks, have thrown back their heads in frustration and boredom and seen the same light fixtures set into gridded dropped ceilings of acoustical tiles? How many of our elders spent their last living moments being wheeled briskly (or simply left unattended) under an endless line of 40-watt, four-foot-long fluorescent tubes running down a sterile hospital corridor?

The look of fluorescents is the feeling of waiting—of enduring ugliness we are told is a necessity. (Hell may still be lit by fire, but purgatory is surely lit by fluorescents.) Long praised for their efficiency, fluorescents highlight our own inefficiencies and flaws, condemn us under their apathetic "cool white" glare. They are budget lighting, and beneath them, we are discount products: bruised, weathered, and coming up short.

After a transcendent night—dancing in a dimly lit bar, making love in the dark, taking a walk by moonlight—a return to the dominion of fluorescents via a trip to the corner store or pizza parlor or train station can feel like a hard slap, a stinging reminder that the world

around us is indifferent to whatever magic may exist in our minds. It's strange, though, to think that a technology less than 100 years old—and one that will likely vanish before you or I will—has for some of us come to signify day-to-day reality.

FOR MUCH OF HUMAN HISTORY, our lives were lit solely by the sun, the moon, and fire. From burning sticks, to stone saucers filled with blubber and dried moss, to beeswax candles with papyrus wicks, to glass-globed kerosene lanterns with metal handles, we illuminated our dark nights and enclosed spaces with flame. Then, in 1879, Thomas Edison patented the first viable incandescent light bulb. And it wasn't just a bulb; he, and others, devised an entire infrastructure to deliver electric lighting to homes, businesses, roads, and beyond. This infrastructure was modeled on the one created for gas lighting, which had been in widespread use since the early 1800s, when gas was piped to streetlights, to factories, and to an increasing number of homes. The industrialization of artificial light changed our relationship to the night. The dark of night had long been something to fear—after sundown, violence, theft, and accidents occurred—but it also offered privacy to lovers, to dissidents and insurrectionists, to the underclasses escaping their overlords' gaze. Artificial lighting exposed these veiled places, giving those in power more economic and social control over the populace. Widespread indoor lighting allowed factories to operate after dusk. Streetlights and modern metropolitan police forces were created and developed in tandem; both were responses to fear about urban disorder and crime, with streetlights often described as aides to or even substitutes for policemen. (As Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, "A good lamp is the best police.") Whether working later hours or spending their wages on goods and leisure activities in growing nighttime industries—restaurants, nightclubs, bars—more people were out of the house after dark; it was in the 19th century that the word "nightlife" was born.

Though incandescent bulbs—which worked by passing a current through a tungsten filament, making it hot enough to produce visible light—reigned as the public's main electric lamp for more than 50 years, many alternate lighting methods were explored throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries. Discharge lamps, in which a current passes between two electrodes through a gas-filled tube, were the precursors to fluorescents. Geissler tubes were shaped in delicate coils or beadlike strands but emitted too feeble a light to be used as more than novelties. Moore tubes, large lamps up to 10 feet long, were more efficient than incandescents and emitted a pink or white light. The most iconic of lamps, the neon tube, was efficient, multicolored, and easily molded into complex shapes, but ultimately better suited for decorative lighting than for basic illumination. Whether because of their own flaws or because of outside meddling (Edison's company, General Electric, was known for buying up competitors' patents), none of these lamps ever achieved widespread popularity. Others proved useful as streetlights and work lights, but it wasn't until the introduction of fluorescent tubes that another broad-use indoor light could rival incandescents.

FLUORESCENCE OCCURS when a substance absorbs invisible radiation from the environment and re-emits it as visible light. It's what's happening when you shine an ultraviolet lamp on a black-light poster and it glows. Biofluorescence can be found throughout the natural world: there are fish, coral, sharks, eels, parrots, sea turtles, and scorpions that fluoresce. Crude oil fluoresces. Some minerals fluoresce; experts use ultraviolet light to authenticate certain gemstones—they can tell if they are real or fake depending on whether and how they glow. And since the 1800s, scientists have been synthesizing powdered chemicals called phosphors, which fluoresce; these phosphors are a necessary component of fluorescent lamps.

A fluorescent lamp is a glass tube that contains an inert gas (usually argon), a small drop of mercury, and a phosphor that coats the entire inside of the tube. On either end of the tube is an electrode. When the lamp is turned on, the electrical current causes the electrode wire to heat up, and electrons are boiled out of it. When the electrons pass through the tube, they ionize the atoms of argon, meaning they give them an electric charge. A 1940s General Electric film on fluorescents describes this process as electrons "instantly and mysteriously" changing the argon atoms "so that they act as traffic cops," while an animation shows orange spermlike electrons hitting globes of argon with a "boing" sound. The heretofore lifeless argon atoms grow arms, legs, and dopey faces, get caps and batons, and start waving the electrons toward the other end of the tube: an alternating current arc is established. The arc quickly heats up the mercury liquid and causes it to vaporize into the arc stream. The free electrons hit the atoms of mercury vapor, and the mercury gets rid of this excess energy by converting it into radiation. Radiation hits the tube's phosphor coating and is converted into visible light.[1]

IN THE LATE 1800S, both Edison and Nikola Tesla, among others, made early, unsuccessful versions of fluorescent lights: Edison's had too short an operating life, and Tesla's gave off an unpleasant greenish glow. By the early 20th century, however, fluorescent technology had been patented and was widely understood. But it would be decades before fluorescent lighting was introduced to the public, in large part because General Electric had bought and held onto the patents while they saturated the market with incandescents.[2]

1. Neon lights work similarly, but they have one less step: the gas in the tube emits visible light directly, instead of emitting ultraviolet light that must be converted by a phosphor. The type of gas determines the color: neon emits the red of a sleazy hotel sign; carbon dioxide emits white; argon with a trace of mercury emits blue; and helium emits gold.

2. In the early 20th century, General Electric also owned patents that covered the entire process of making modern electric lights with tungsten filaments and was therefore able to secure a monopoly on their manufacture, use, and sales. In 1925, the United States sued General Electric under the Antitrust Law, but the Supreme Court ruled in GE's favor. This was neither the first nor last antitrust suit brought against GE. General Electric had also been involved in the scandal of the 1,000-hour light bulb: in 1924, GE, along with lighting companies Philips and Osram, formed Phoebus—possibly the world's first global cartel—and agreed to set a 1,000-hour lifespan for bulbs, although they could last much longer. This was one of the first instances of industrial-scale planned obsolescence, a foundation of our current consumer economy. GE was, after all, the company of Thomas Edison, who had led a smear campaign against alternating current (AC) power because he didn't want to lose the royalties he was earning from direct current (DC) power patents. He went so far as to direct technicians to electrocute animals with AC, hoping to convince the public that it was more dangerous than DC power. Edison employees also designed the first electric chair, for the state of New York, using AC power. The press egged them on; *The New York Times* ran multiple stories on this "War of the Currents" and AC power specifically, including one article titled "Surer Than a Rope."

They had conspired in this effort with the utility companies, which worried that more efficient light bulbs would lead to reduced demand for electricity and lowered profits (though in practice, when lighting efficiency was improved, the public tended to use more electricity for lighting).

The fluorescent lamp as we know it was developed in 1934 at General Electric's headquarters at Nela Park in East Cleveland, Ohio. It was publicly introduced in 1939 at the Worlds' Fair in New York and the Golden Gate International Exposition in San Francisco, along with air conditioning, color photography, television, the electric typewriter, nylon fabric, and an early version of Smell-O-Vision. On Treasure Island, where the Golden Gate International Exposition was held, 2,400 pink, blue, gold, and green fluorescent lights were "hidden in troughs, tucked in branches, clustered in tree baskets, almost buried under shrubs," according to the fair's official guidebook. The arrival of these lamps, soon to become such a dreary part of day-to-day life, was announced with bombast. In their 1940s promotional film, General Electric declared: "As man progresses toward the ultimate accomplishment of moving the sun indoors, a great and significant part in this achievement is being played by the magic of fluorescence."

In 1941, the United States entered World War II. Suddenly factories around the country were running 24 hours a day, producing goods and materials for war-making. Early fluorescents provided more than twice as much illumination per watt as incandescent lamps, which meant that they were cheaper to operate around the clock, and, if required, could illuminate a large space more brightly. Soon fluorescents were installed across the continent, and they continued to replace incandescents after the war: by 1951, more light in the U.S. was produced by fluorescents than by incandescents.

INCANDESCENCE IS SIMPLY heat made visible: it occurs when a "hot body," such as fire or a filament wire, warms up enough to emit visible light. The heat, however, can be a problem. Ninety percent of an incandescent bulb's energy is burned off as heat, which makes it terribly inefficient as a lighting source. But incandescents aren't just hot, they're warm. (A light's color temperature, measured in kelvins [K], corresponds to its apparent color, and incandescent light, heavy on the red wavelengths, is considered warm.) Fluorescents are typically colder, with more blue and green wavelengths represented in their output. People tend to prefer the warmth of incandescents, but since the proliferation of fluorescents, blue light has dominated our indoor nonresidential lighting. Blue lighting is said to make workers more productive, possibly by increasing visual acuity. It also keeps us alert by inhibiting the production of melatonin, the hormone that helps us to relax and fall asleep—a fact we have only just learned with the rise of late-night smartphone, laptop, and television-induced insomnia.

Another important measure of fluorescent's quality of light is its color rendering index, or CRI. Not a scientific metric, but an industry standard, CRI measures, on a percentage scale from 0-100, how well a light source reproduces colors as compared to daylight. Incandescents have a CRI of close to 100. Today's standard fluorescents have CRIs in the 70s or 80s, which is considered mediocre, though the old models from the 20th century were even worse. If

you look at a graph of the wavelengths of visible light emitted by an incandescent lamp, it is like the smooth crest of a hill. The graph of a fluorescent light, however, is full of spikes and troughs: only certain wavelengths are strongly present. So while incandescents render colors of various objects faithfully, fluorescent lamps do not: this is partly why, when we see ourselves under fluorescents, we may look almost unrecognizably bad.

RESEARCH IN THE 1920S and 1930s suggested that brighter lighting made workers more productive; this led to the "blanket of light" design theory, which called for spaces to be uniformly bright. Fluorescents were so cheap to operate that building owners who used them could afford to flood their spaces with bright light. This in turn allowed office and factory buildings to grow larger, because people were able to work deeper and deeper within a building, with no access to sunlight needed. And the dark arts of research and development weren't limited to Taylorist imaginings of the office: in the middle of the 20th century, retailers and consumer brands began employing tacticians skilled in the new field of market research. In 1940, Publix, widely considered the first supermarket, opened in Winter Haven, Florida; it was one of the earliest documented retail uses of fluorescent lighting. Flood lighting was used in these new superstores to maximize sales. Blankets of cold light emphasized scale and consistency: in the wide aisles of supermarkets, it was important that all products be lit the same. And it was vital that they be lit brightly, to help shoppers—who were no longer getting fresh meat and vegetables from their own farms or being assisted with their purchases by the trusted neighborhood butcher and grocer—to inspect their plastic-wrapped food for spoilage.

The new construction of office parks, industrial plants, and shopping malls was made possible by the postwar growth of suburbia and the interstate highway system—the transformation of America into a land stitched with veins of light. On the highway, cars sped beneath sodium vapor lamps that gave the road ahead an orange, prison-yard glow. Passengers looked out at ghostly green city blocks under mercury vapor streetlights, car lots hot-white in the glare of metal halide lamps, and greasy spoons ringed in red neon, their flash-frozen meat patties graying under fluorescents. Further down the road, in rural America, night-flying bugs were no longer able to navigate by moonlight, instead spending large chunks of their short lives disoriented, circling the same buzzing porch lights. We, too, lost sight of our ancient navigational system: the stars. From 1947 to 2000, there was a roughly 6 percent annual increase in artificial nighttime light in North America; today, 80 percent of Americans cannot see the Milky Way, and 99 percent of us live beneath light-polluted skies.

If neon has often been used as shorthand for the excess and spectacle of American consumer society, fluorescents represent the cold efficiency that undergirds it. A three-story neon clown may welcome passersby into the casino, but the cash vault is lit with fluorescents. In the 1960s, however, after towns began enacting anti-neon laws on the premise that it made their streets look cheap, businesses replaced their handmade neon signs with the nondescript back-lit plastic cabinet signs you now see above storefronts everywhere; these, too, were lit with fluorescents.

In redlined neighborhoods, the common spaces of public housing, tenement buildings, and single-room occupancy hotels were lit by cheap fluorescents, if they were lit at all. (In *The Bonfire of the Vanities*, Tom Wolfe calls them "Landlord's Halos.") Fluorescents became synonymous with low-rent establishments. In Diane Arbus's early photos, shot in the 1950s, she captured New York City's outcasts and night wanderers under bars of fluorescence. Robert Frank's working-class hot-dog vendors and Bruce Davidson's street gangs and subway riders are also caught beneath the bleary tubes of light. In film, fluorescents (or the impression of fluorescents—the lights themselves are notoriously hard to film or photograph) became a stock component of a number of tropes: the diner full of teenage idlers, the truck stop where the salty waitress dispenses wisdom and burnt coffee, the liquor store about to be robbed, the local precinct, the county jail—life's waiting rooms, open all night.

WHEN MEDIUMS USE CANDLELIGHT to communicate with the dead, a flickering flame indicates the presence of a spirit. One could extrapolate from this and assume that the constant, nearly imperceptible flickers of fluorescent light that began in the late 20th century were communiqués from the millions killed in wars, genocides, covert operations, squelched uprisings, and blatant neglect that unfolded so that some of us might comfortably purchase well-illuminated Corn Flakes. The more blandly mechanical explanation is that flickering is often caused by a loose bulb, an old tube, cold weather, or a faulty ballast—the device that limits the current sent to the lamp, to keep it from overheating. (Electronic ballasts don't cause visible flicker, but older magnetic ballasts can.[3]) But that's just the flickering we can see; even when a fluorescent light is working properly, it flickers, because the electricity pulsing through the lamp rapidly turns the light on and off—it's just too fast for the human eye to detect. The brain registers it nonetheless.

Ever since fluorescents were first installed in workplaces, employees have complained about the lights. People say they cause headaches and eyestrain; it is thought that these symptoms are caused by the lamps' flicker rate. People who suffer from migraines, lupus, epilepsy, vertigo, and Lyme disease, or who have experienced traumatic brain injury, can find that fluorescents aggravate their condition. The blue of cool-white (4,000 K or higher) fluorescents can also exacerbate eyestrain and blurry vision. Though there isn't a robust body of research on fluorescents and the health problems they cause, it is generally accepted by the medical establishment that they have negative physical and psychological effects on people. Some who are sensitive to fluorescents avoid the lights when possible, scan for them when they first enter a room, or sit near windows in fluorescent-lit spaces.

DURING THE ENERGY CRISIS of the 1970s, the amount of energy Americans used for lighting became a focus of public attention. (At the time, around half of the electricity consumed in the typical store or office building was used to keep the

3. The characteristic hum or buzz of older fluorescents is also caused by magnetic ballasts; what you hear is the ballast squeezing an iron core to slow the current.

lights on; today it's around 10 percent.) Streetlights were turned off. Daylight saving time was extended. In some places, Christmas lights were banned. Although fluorescents were relatively efficient for the time, their ballasts often were not, so to save money, building managers started yanking out fluorescent tubes, disabling the entire light fixture. This disrupted the blanket lighting of many workspaces: corridors grew dim, large rooms were filled with patches of light and shadow. Designers began planning for localized task lighting instead of bright ambient light, and architects returned to the concept of daylighting, or using more natural light in their designs.

In 1976, the compact fluorescent lamp was created as a direct response to the demand for more energy-efficient bulbs. This spiral of fluorescent tubing, roughly the same size and pear-ish shape of a traditional light bulb, was meant to replace incandescent light bulbs in the home. The initial cost of a CFL was much higher than that of an incandescent bulb, but they were supposed to save enough money in energy bills to more than pay for themselves—and their purchase price dropped over the years, too. But people were resistant to bringing the ugly light of bureaucracy into the home. There were also concerns about the bulbs' safety: because they contain mercury, broken fluorescent tubes and compact fluorescents must be dealt with as hazardous waste. And while all fluorescent lights produce UV rays, the radiation is typically absorbed and then converted by the phosphor coating. If this coating cracks, however, hazardous UV light escapes; CFLs tend to have more UV leak than traditional tubes, because the brittle phosphor has been twisted into a spiral shape, making it more likely to crack.

In 2007, Congress passed the Energy Independence and Security Act, which planned for, among other things, a phase-out of incandescents, accelerating the push for CFLs to be used in the home. This act was also supposed to end subsidies for Big Oil, but lobbyists succeeded in getting Congress to scrap that part of the bill. With the planet plunging toward ecological disaster, environmental advocacy was focused, as it often still is, on individual consumer choices instead of on seriously questioning a system in which corporations reap huge profits by destroying the environment. The CFL bulb was a prime example of this: a bitter, spiral-shaped pill for the consumer to swallow while ExxonMobil and BP continued to plunder the earth at a low tax rate.

While CFLs continue to be sold today—according to a 2015 study by the U.S. Energy Information Administration, 72 percent of households use at least one CFL, and 10 percent use only CFLs—they've been superseded by LEDs, or light-emitting diodes, which are more efficient than fluorescents and don't contain mercury or produce UV light. In 2016, General Electric announced that it would no longer be producing new CFLs, doing so via a bizarre, pun-filled breakup letter to the compact fluorescent bulb and fake screenshots of breakup texts—CFL: "So it's you and LED now?" GE: "Yes! Our love burned bright, but LED really turns me on and we feel so connected!"

When they were first invented in the 1960s, LEDs only produced red light and were used for things like calculator displays, but over the decades, they've become quite versatile; they now account for more than half of residential lighting sales and are increasingly being

used for streetlights, outdoor lighting, sales lighting, and more. But LEDs face some of the same old critiques: the light they emit is often harsh, lurid, invasive, cold, and unflattering. Astronomers warn that the blue light from LEDs is more easily scattered by the Earth's atmosphere than the orange light from high-pressure sodium streetlamps, thus creating more light pollution. The switch to LED streetlights has prompted public outcry in some cities; in Phoenix, Arizona, the city ultimately had to appease the public by switching to LEDs with a warmer color temperature. As with any new technology, LEDs prompt resistance and nostalgia: though people have been writing elegies for the incandescent bulb for many years, at some point we'll be reading elegies for fluorescents (perhaps this is the first one).

And what of the old, ghostly, garish, four-foot fluorescent tubes of the 20th century? According to the New York City 2016 Energy and Water Use report, fluorescents are still the most commonly used type of lighting in the city. And the U.S. Energy Information Administration states that as of 2012, 78 percent of all lit floor space is still illuminated by traditional fluorescent tubes, with higher percentages in buildings used for education, healthcare, offices, and "public order and safety." Children, office workers, and incarcerated people—who sometimes have to live under the glare of fluorescents for 24 hours a day—still complain of their effects. Though newer tubes and ballasts are more energy efficient and kinder to the eye than the models of the past, those old ones are still around; up to a quarter of the lit space in New York City's buildings is illuminated either by incandescents or by old, inefficient fluorescents.

Today we tend to encounter fluorescents in under-designed spaces, such as bathrooms. Wander through a beautiful old chapel or movie palace and you may find that when you get to the bathroom, you are faced with a much harsher, more clinical ambience. And of course, it's the one place where you're forced to confront your own image. Whatever methods we learn for putting on our best face, they're thwarted by bad lighting. (On a makeup how-to site, a commenter asks: "I was wondering do fluorescent lights show people's real flaws, or do they create flaws on people?") We are taught that if we look at ourselves and don't like what we see, the problem must be within. And yet so many of our problems are top-down. To stand beneath the ugly light of fluorescents is to be reminded that we live in a society that doesn't value our pleasure and comfort, our sense of self-worth. Fluorescents are emblems of the vast, compassionless, impenetrable systems beyond our control.

AT 1 A.M. A TEENAGE GIRL is being surreptitiously fingered at a booth in a 24-hour pie-and-burger joint when a brawl breaks out: a window is punched, spidery cracks appear in the double-pane glass next to her head. Two exits over, someone is bleeding out in a Denny's. Down the street, two old men are on the nod at the late-night donut shop. On the light rail a few miles away, a boy lies on the ground, surrounded by six police officers. Elsewhere, someone is being taken to central booking. Someone else is at night court. Someone else is trying to sleep through his first lights-out in prison. Except the lights aren't really out: fluorescents are humming over it all.

THE BATH RIOTS

By René Kladzyk

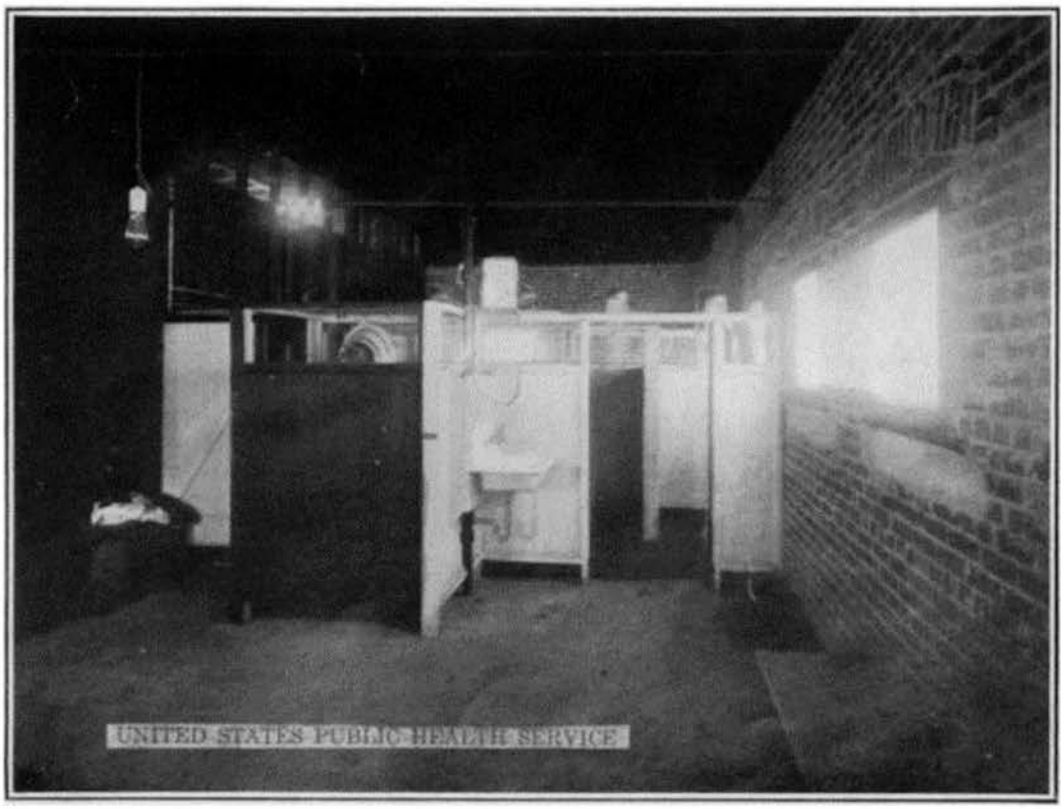


FIG. 4.—BATHS ON WOMEN'S SIDE OF PLANT, LOOKING FROM UNDRESSING ROOM.

At 7:30 a.m. on January 28, 1917, Carmelita Torres sat aboard a streetcar crossing the Santa Fe Bridge from downtown Juárez to downtown El Paso. It's a short trip, the two cities hug each other—they used to be one city before the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo split them apart back in 1848. So for Carmelita Torres, a commute across the international border would usually take five or 10 minutes, depending on that day's rush of domestic workers and factory laborers headed into El Paso. On a typical morning, Torres would walk to downtown Juárez from her home. She'd present her pass and hop on the cross-border trolley. She'd get off in El Paso and squeeze through vendors, walking to the house she cleaned. If she had time to spare, she might stop by the pond in San Jacinto Plaza to see how the alligators who lived there were faring in the weather (Don Porfirio the alligator had died just a couple years earlier from the winter cold). On a typical morning, Torres and all the other border crossers would have enjoyed relative freedom and ease as they moved from Mexico into the United States.

One of the international bridges between Juárez and El Paso, early 20th century. (Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division)

On January 28, 1917, things went very differently for Torres. She sat aboard the trolley as it passed over the Rio Grande, but it jolted to a stop before entering El Paso. U.S. immigration officials then ordered everyone on the streetcar to submit to bathing and disinfection, part of a new quarantine policy implemented at the border. If she had acquiesced, she would have been stripped naked, all of her possessions and clothing taken away from her as her body was inspected by uniformed border officials (who may or may not have mocked her in a language she could only partly understand). She would have been drenched in chemicals with a strong odor carried by liquid that may have been uncomfortably cold or painfully hot. She would have been surrounded by all the other commuters with whom she had formerly kept a polite distance aboard the trolley. She would have stood naked alongside them, waiting for this indignity to be over and for her chemical-soaked clothing to be given back to her.

Steam dryer for sterilizing clothing at the Santa Fe Bridge, 1917. (U.S. Public Health Service, National Archives)

Except that Carmelita Torres did not submit to the forcible bathing. Instead, she led a massive revolt that came to be known as the Bath Riots. When the streetcar was stopped by officials for "disinfection," Torres loudly refused. She shouted to the other passengers that they could accidentally burn to death in the kerosene baths (this had indeed happened the year before in an El Paso jail). She shouted that American soldiers had been photographing the Mexican women as they were bathed and circulating the photos at local canteens (a rumor she had heard through friends in Juárez). She emboldened the other women to join her in resisting, and they all got off the trolley and began walking back across the bridge, blocking traffic, and encouraging others to join in their revolt.

Torres and her fellow protesters laid down across the streetcar tracks to stop traffic. They stopped automobiles and pedestrians. They kicked the American conductors out of the trolleys and wrangled the motor controllers from their hands. Described as "Amazons" and a "swarm of angry bees" by El Paso newspapers, the women in these riots went from a group of 30 on that first streetcar to hundreds by late morning. The rioting was finally quelled by border officials, but resumed the following morning. Eight women were arrested and spent the night in jail. Another group of women went to the office of Melchor Herrera, the mayor of Juárez, to demand that he do something to stop these humiliating measures. The local Mexican government did try to offset the burden of bathing at the border with their own disinfection certification process (which was rejected by U.S. authorities) and attempted to convince El Paso public health officials to end the quarantine, but to little effect. Despite protesters' efforts, this practice of forcible bathing along the border continued for over 40 years.

El Paso Morning Times

Monday, January 29, 1917

ORDER TO BATHE STARTS NEAR RIOT AMONG JUAREZ WOMEN

Auburn-Haired Amazon at Santa Fe Street Bridge Leads Feminine Outbreak

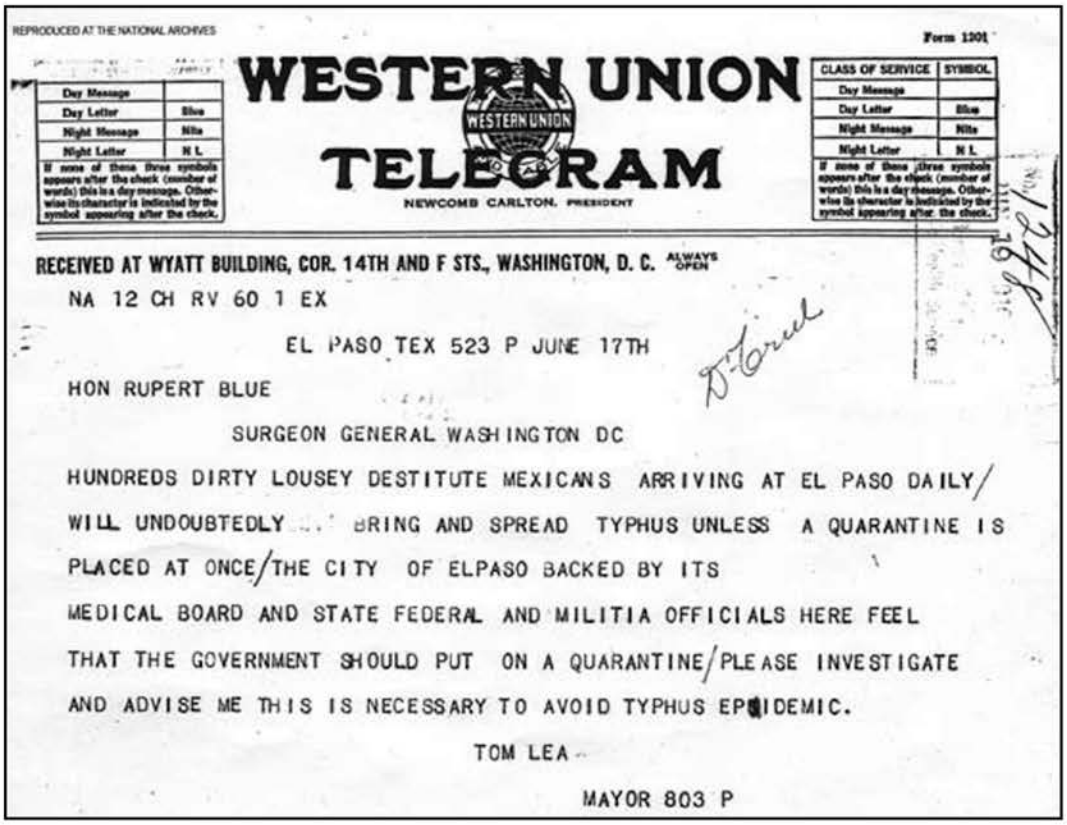
Juarez women, incensed at the American quarantine regulations, led a riot yesterday morning at the Santa Fe bridge. From the time the street cars began to run until the middle of the afternoon thousands of Mexicans thronged the Juarez side of the river and pushed out to the tollgate on the bridge. Women ringleaders of the mob hurled stones at American civilians, both on the bridge and on the streets of Juarez. …

When women were ordered to get off the street cars and submit to being bathed and disinfected before passing to the American side the rioting started. Reports were circulated that the women were being insulted in the bathhouse and photographed while nude. The greater part of them refused to go to the bath and became indignant when they were ordered off the street cars, after having paid their fares, and could not have their nickels refunded.

When refused permission to enter El Paso without complying with the regulations the women collected in an angry crowd at the center of the bridge. By 8 o'clock the throng, consisting in large part of servant girls employed in El Paso, had grown until it packed the bridge half way across. Led by Carmelita Torres, an auburn-haired young woman of 17, they kept up a continuous volley of language aimed at the immigration and health officers, civilians, sentries, and any other visible American. …

The controllers of the street cars were carried away by the women, and used for weapons or thrown into the river. Carranza cavalrymen were unable during the morning to make any headway against the crowd, although they drew their sabers threateningly. Women laughingly caught their bridles and turned the horses aside, holding the soldiers' sabers and whips.

Excerpt from an article in The El Paso Times *that ran the morning after the bath riots.*



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Form 1201

WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM

NEWCOMB CARLTON, PRESIDENT

CLASS OF SERVICE	SYMBOL
Day Message	
Day Letter	Blue
Night Message	Nite
Night Letter	N L

If none of these three symbols appears after the check (number of words) this is a day message. Otherwise its character is indicated by the symbol appearing after the check.

RECEIVED AT WYATT BUILDING, COR. 14TH AND F STS., WASHINGTON, D. C. ALWAYS OPEN

NA 12 CH RV 60 1 EX

EL PASO TEX 523 P JUNE 17TH

HON RUPERT BLUE

SURGEON GENERAL WASHINGTON DC

HUNDREDS DIRTY LOUSEY DESTITUTE MEXICANS ARRIVING AT EL PASO DAILY/ WILL UNDOUBTEDLY ... BRING AND SPREAD TYPHUS UNLESS A QUARANTINE IS PLACED AT ONCE/THE CITY OF ELPASO BACKED BY ITS MEDICAL BOARD AND STATE FEDERAL AND MILITIA OFFICIALS HERE FEEL THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD PUT ON A QUARANTINE/PLEASE INVESTIGATE AND ADVISE ME THIS IS NECESSARY TO AVOID TYPHUS EPIDEMIC.

TOM LEA

MAYOR 803 P

This telegram was sent on June 17, 1916 to Washington, DC by Tom Lea, El Paso's germophobic, eugenicist mayor. It prompted the horrific U.S.-Mexico border quarantine policy, triggered the Bath Riots, and later inspired Nazi concentration camp death chamber design. A largely forgotten chapter of U.S.-Mexico border history, the events and ideology connected to Tom Lea's fear-mongering message continue to reverberate throughout U.S.-Mexico border policy today.

At the beginning of the 20th century, eugenic ideas were percolating throughout the U.S. government. Deeply invested in ideas of white supremacy, eugenicists believed that it was a moral imperative to uphold the "genetic superiority" of the population. (Affluent white male) politicians authorized extreme measures, such as forced sterilization of populations deemed "inferior" (poor women of color). Eugenics also permeated immigration policies at this time, with medicalized procedures at Ellis Island and other ports of entry targeting specific groups based on their perceived cultural, moral, and intellectual genetic worth for the "breeding stock" of America. Mere weeks after the Bath Riots, the U.S. government passed the hugely restrictive Immigration Act of 1917, a sweeping law built on a foundation of racism, nativism, and cultural anxiety. Immigration inspections included evaluation of mental acuity, with numerous grounds for exclusion, including feeble-mindedness, illiteracy, constitutional inferiority, prostitution, imbecility, alcoholism, homosexuality, and more. Migrants from Asia were barred altogether.

Crowds of Americans and Mexicans on the banks of the Rio Grande in El Paso and Juárez during the Mexican Revolution. (The University of North Texas Library, El Paso Public Library)

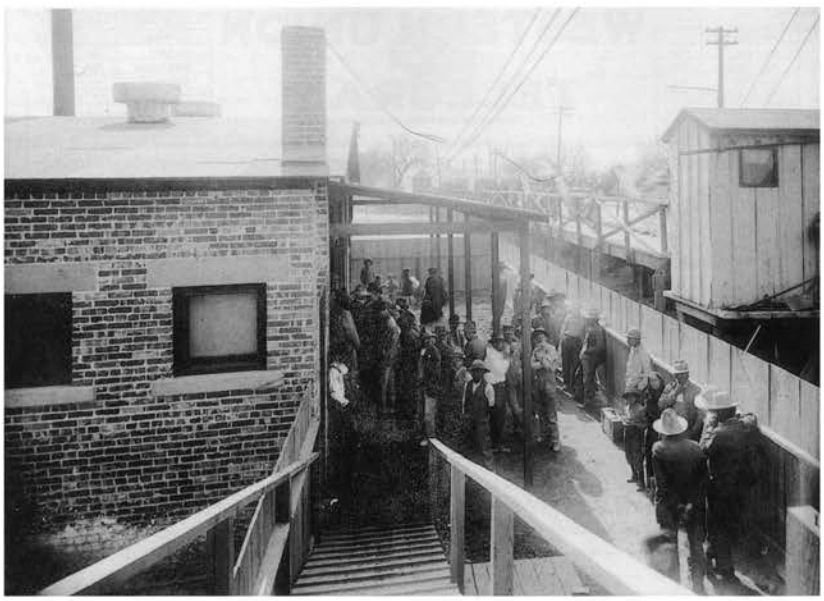
But the Immigration Act of 1917 conflicted with the interests of business owners in the growing industries of the American Southwest, which relied on seasonal and daily workers crossing over from Mexico, as was the case with the domestic workers and laborers in El Paso's smelter. This dependence on Mexican labor deepened when, in 1917, the U.S. entered World War I. At the same time, the Mexican Revolution, which lasted the entire decade, was raging. There was much fighting along the border, and U.S. troops were garrisoned there. Pancho Villa staged three major battles in Juárez. (During the first Battle of Juárez, which lasted for a month in the spring of 1911, El Pasoans would gather along the Rio Grande or on rooftops to watch the fighting across the border, buying and selling field glasses and snacks, and cheering the insurrectos.) The revolution also led to a massive influx of Mexican refugees, and attendant American fears of "the other." Tensions were high in El Paso; just a year before the Bath Riots, in January of 1916, a race riot erupted after Villista troops killed 18 U.S. citizens, with white El Pasoans calling for vengeance against Mexicans in the city.

It was against this background of upheaval and anxiety that the Mexican border quarantine policy was implemented. Typhus, a deadly disease that can be spread by fleas, served as the excuse for a broad-scale medicalization of immigration at the Mexican border. Although typhus is one of the oldest diseases among humans, the discovery of its cause in 1916 coincided with a typhus panic that swept the United States. Fear of outbreak caused by "dirty" Mexican immigrants spread despite there having only been one typhus death in El Paso at the time of quarantine implementation. Federal officials acknowledged typhus was more pretext than public health threat: U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) surgeon B.J. Lloyd, who was dispatched to the border in 1916, informed the

Surgeon General that "typhus fever is not now and probably never will be, a serious menace to our civilian population in the United States." Still, he recommended erecting delousing plants along the border,and subjecting all Mexicans crossing the border to forcible inspection and disinfection.

Claude C. Pierce, a senior surgeon at USPHS, was sent from Washington to design and oversee a methodology for quashing this supposed typhus epidemic. Pierce's solution was to forcibly bathe all Mexican border-crossers and their belongings in noxious chemicals such as kerosene, gasoline, and cyanide. Mexican entrants into the U.S. would be stripped naked and examined by border officials, with particular attention paid to their "hairy parts." If lice were found, men's heads were shaved and their hair burned; women's heads were drenched in kerosene and vinegar. After inspection, the border crosser was sprayed in a soap mixture containing kerosene oil (and after 1942, the pesticide powder DDT). The belongings of border-crossers were thoroughly fumigated in gas—first cyanide, and in later years Zyklon B, a cyanide-based pesticide widely used by Nazis to kill Jewish people at death camps. The clothing and belongings of migrants were steam treated in cyanogen gas for 25-35 minutes, so for that length of time, plus the amount of time it took for loading and unloading, the border-crossers would remain naked, waiting for their things. It bears mentioning that in January, the morning temperature in El Paso is often in the 30s. It's unknown what the heating conditions were in these facilities.

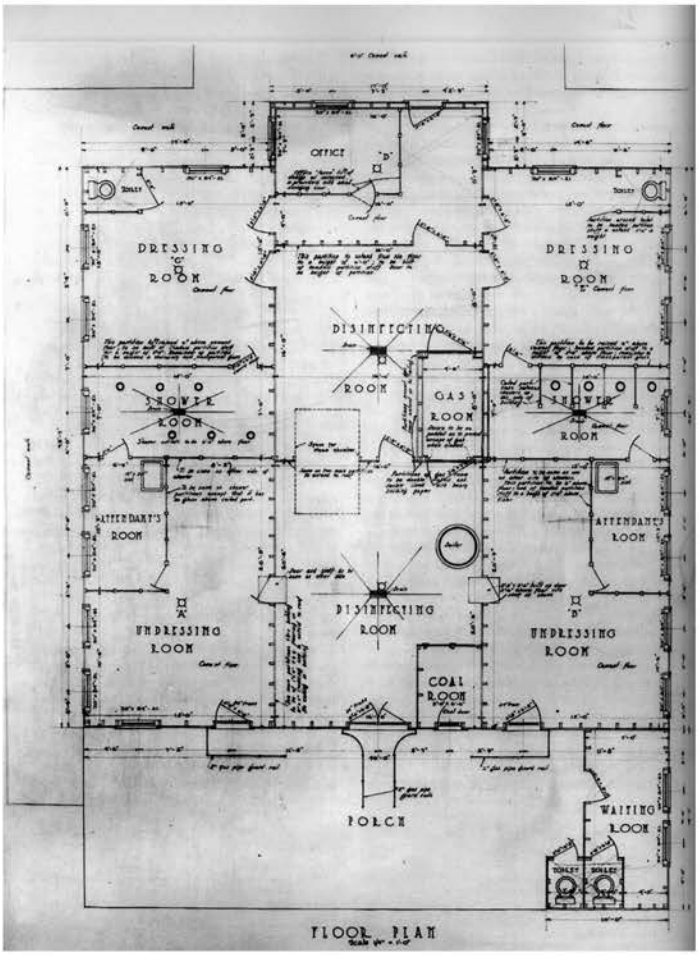
This quarantine policy was implemented in January of 1917 in El Paso, and soon thereafter throughout cities along the Mexican border. A personal account of delousement from border-crosser Raul Delgado details: "An immigration agent with a fumigation pump would spray our whole body with insecticide, especially our rear and our *partes nobles.* Some of us ran away from the spray and began to cough. Some even vomited from the stench of those chemical pesticides. … The agent would laugh at the grimacing faces we would make. He had a gas mask on, but we didn't." Another crosser subjected to this treatment, Jose Cruz Burciaga, describes: "They would spray some white stuff on you. It was white, and it would run down your body. How horrible … that was an extreme measure, the substance was very strong."



Mexicans waiting to be deloused at the Santa Fe Bridge quarantine plant, 1917. (USPHS, National Archives)

Newspaper articles of the time tell a vastly different story, revealing patronizing and racist attitudes among white El Pasoans toward Mexican border-crossers. From January 29, 1917 in the *El Paso Morning Times*: "In spite of protests made by so many, there were enough Mexicans who submitted to the orders of the immigrations officers to keep the bathhouse and disinfection equipment busy. Each individual who crossed the bridge was questioned and inspected, and the greater part of them ordered to the cleansing house. They came out with clothes wrinkled from the steam sterilizer, hair wet and faces shining, generally laughing and in good humor. The immigration men predict that as soon as the Mexicans become familiar with the bathing process they will not only submit to it, but welcome it. … Many laughable incidents were reported by the health officers, quoting their conversations with Mexicans ordered to the baths. One argued eloquently that he had bathed well in July."

The 1917 Bath Riots were in large part motivated by memories of the 1916 El Paso "Jail Holocaust," an event in which at least 25 prisoners at the El Paso City Jail were accidentally burned to death after being bathed in kerosene. El Paso newspapers depicted these fears of the risks of forcible bathing among protesters as silly and anti-American, with text like "Women Start Wild Stories," and "Misunderstand the Regulations."



Dr. Pierce went so far as to deny that gasoline baths were taking place. He did so during an emergency meeting of the El Paso Chamber of Commerce, held on the afternoon of January 30th. El Paso business owners were concerned by the number of domestic and smelter factory workers who had stopped showing up for work, opting to stay in Juárez to avoid the baths. Pierce claimed that they were "merely soap and hot water baths" and that the clothing was simply disinfected in a "steam room." But his directives for bathing at these facilities specifically detailed the use of kerosene for washing hair and indicated that kerosene oil was used in the spray soap, a similar technique for bathing as that used in the gasoline bath deaths of the El Paso Jail Holocaust. The steam room he referred to at this meeting was also described as a "cyanide gas room" in the manual he later wrote about the facilities.

Mexican woman entering the United States. United States immigration station, El Paso, Texas. Photograph by Dorothea Lange, 1938. (Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.) Opposite: Blueprints for the El Paso disinfection plant, 1916. (USPHS, National Archives)

In the first four months that this policy was in effect, 871,639 people were inspected along the Mexican border. On average, Texas border officials inspected 5,660 people per day. In 1918, riots nearly broke out again, with a large crowd gathering at the bridge until the Mayor of Juárez closed the Mexican port of entry. Over time, the policy was relaxed for more affluent or well-dressed Mexicans, but it had a broader effect of deeply embedding a prejudicial association between Mexicans and uncleanliness, which remains to this day. In 1942, the kerosene and vinegar showers for border-crossers were replaced with DDT powder dusting, a practice that was later discovered to have detrimental health consequences including cancer, infertility, miscarriage, as well as nervous system and liver damage. This practice continued into the 1950s, with some migrants stating that they had received these delousing baths as late as 1963. It was still in place during the era of the Bracero Program, a U.S. labor recruitment policy that brought over four million Mexican laborers into the United States during and after World War II. The lack of available information regarding both the end date of this quarantine policy and the extent of its application after early years of implementation points to the perceived disposability of the population who were most affected. There have been no major studies of the long-term health impacts caused by routine exposure among Mexican border crossers to chemicals used in United States' forced bathing program.

The legacy of U.S.-Mexico border policy was acutely potent in Nazi Germany. Adolf Hitler praised the 1924 U.S. Immigration Act in *Mein Kampf*, noting: "There is currently one state in which one can observe at least weak beginnings of a better conception. This is of course not [Germany], but the American Union. … The American Union categorically refuses the immigration of physically unhealthy elements, and simply excludes the immigration of certain races." A 1938 issue of the German scientific journal *Anzeiger für Schädlingskunde* included images of El Paso delousement facilities alongside information about the use of Zyklon B. The author of this article, Dr. Gerhard Peters, went on to supply Zyklon B to Nazi death camps, where it was determined that if, instead of spraying Zyklon B on the belongings of people, it was instead applied directly to the skin, Zyklon B was an effective method for mass murder. Peters was later tried and convicted at Nuremberg. In 1955, he was retried and found not guilty.

Suggested Reading:

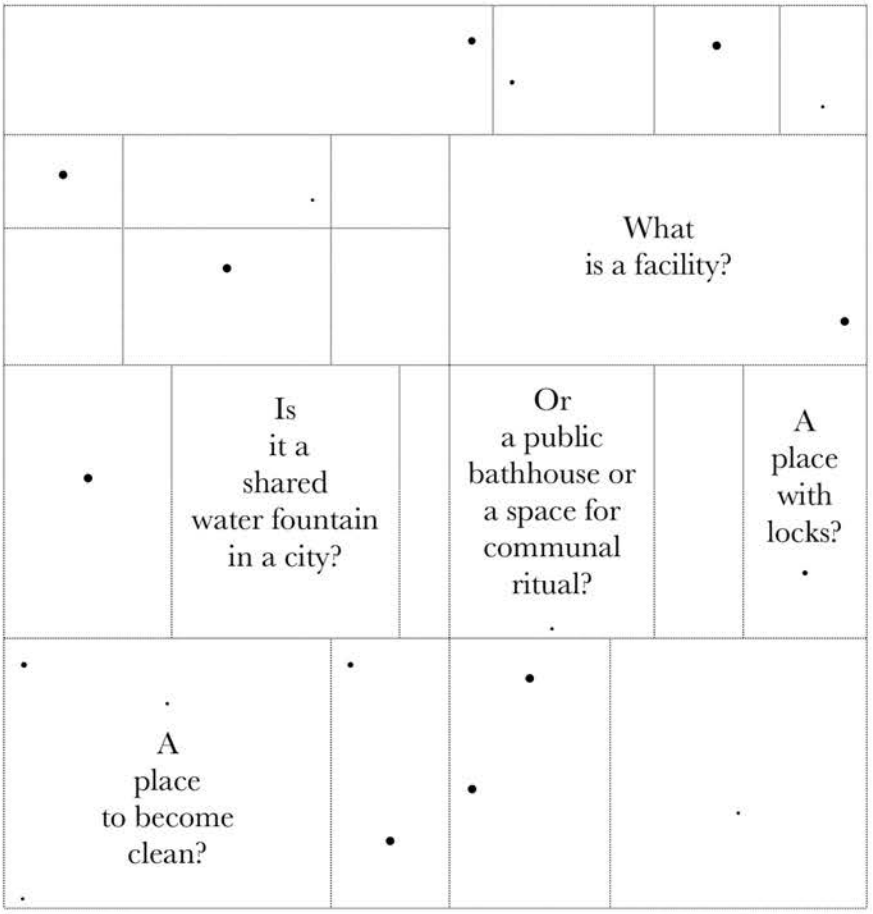
David Dorado Romo, *Ringside Seat to a Revolution: An Underground Cultural History of El Paso and Juarez, 1893-1923* (El Paso: Cinco Puntos Press, 2005).

Alexandra Minna Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America*, 2d. ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015).

Alexandra Minna Stern, "Buildings, Boundaries, and Blood: Medicalization and Nation-Building on the U.S.-Mexico Border, 1910-1930," *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol. 79, No. 1 (Feb., 1999), pp. 41-81; Duke University Press.

Scrubbing Bubbles

By Jane Marchant



As an
adolescent,
I found pictures of a
light brown Paris apartment
in early 1980s sepia. My parents
walked through the frames
naked, looking at each other in a
camera's lens. They married in
England, in a courthouse on the
roof of a mall. None of my
mother's family was
there.

My mother
labored to give birth to
my sister in L'Hôtel-Dieu
de Paris, the hospital that shares
an esplanade with Notre-Dame.
The midwife wrapped a sheet
around bedposts and used
tension to drag the baby
from my mother's
womb. My mother
bled and
bled.

My
father named
the baby after the midwife
that saved my mother's
and sister's
lives.

My
white father's
mother thought my
mother exotic, with
her wild black hair,
copper skin, and
silver bracelets.

Three
years later,
my sister named
me.

A month
after my fourth
birthday, my mother
gave birth to
a baby
boy.

I loved
my baby brother.
As a present, I gave
him a shiny copper
penny.

He
held it
in his tiny
hands and
placed
it

between
pointed lips,
touched it to his
tongue, tried to
swallow it.

My mother
screamed, "Dial
911!" and when my
sister froze I grasped
the plastic phone
handle and
stated:

"We live at 46
Franciscan Way and
my baby brother is
choking on a
penny."

He
had light
yellow-brown
skin and big
brown
eyes.

I
watched my
mother pump
breast milk into
bottles for
him.

I was
supposed to
protect him;
I was his big
sister, and I'd
done something
that might
be killing
him.

By the time the red and white lights arrived in our living room, my brother had swallowed the penny.

A few days later, my mother changed him as usual atop the washing machine in our laundry room.

Amid the contents of the cotton diaper she'd wrapped him in, she found it.

She called out and held the penny up and it must have hurt my baby brother to push the round piece of metal through his body.

My mother kept one hand on his belly and threw the penny in the garbage with the other.

I wanted to keep it.

When my mother
first became a pediatric nurse,
she took me along to her
hospital night
shifts.

I loved how
each room was the same,
mirrored in furniture
and function.

I'd lay on
a bed, draw the curtain,
and listen to the nurses
chatter and patter
by.

Each
room had its
own private
bathroom.

With
the sky
dark outside
the windows, the
hospital seemed its
own isolated world,
a bubble or spaceship,
we inside at 2, 3 in
the morning.

Everything was
bleached between
patients, people;

everything
sterile,

sterilized.

There was
comfort in the simple food
and ticking routine where
time disappeared and
I felt safe.

I don't
remember why
or how many times my
mother took me along,
but those fluorescent lights
burned something
into me.

This is what I knew about my mother:

She
bristled
when asked
certain questions,
or laughed her
answer.

She called
herself

"A
Mutt."

She'd
grown up poor
with a stepfather in Los
Angeles. She and her siblings ran
barefoot over factory roofs. Her mother,
my grandmother, drank RC Cola and
the children wagoned empty cans to the
store and bought Cheetos with refunded
coins. My mother said one summer she
ate so many Cheetos her skin and
poop turned orange.

My sister's skin easily sunburns.
She is covered in freckles and has
hazel eyes and full lips and
people can tell she
has *something else*
in her.

My skin
is like a mood
ring, dependent
on sun and
seasons.

Spring
pops freckles from
my cheeks like
daffodils.

Summer's
first rays blend
them into uneven
beige, darkening
as months go
by.

In
August,
I can be
brown.

But
in winter's
darkness, I fade
back into
white.

My brother
and I were sent to Junior
Lifeguard camp at nearby
Lake Anza. At the end of one
summer, we stood in line at
the concession stand, getting
an ice cream sandwich, or
maybe fake-cheese
nachos.

He'd just rubbed
sunscreen across his arms
and tender belly, and his
dark skin glowed
purple.

I joined in
with the other children
teasing my brother:
"You're so dark you're
purple."

Purple purple
purple.

Our family
made frequent trips
south to my maternal
grandmother's house
in hot, dry, concrete-
covered Baldwin
Park.

We
hated
drinking her
tap water; it
tasted like stale
chlorine.

She
never drank
it, either.

Grandma's
bathroom smelled like
mildew, but I could never
find any, not even around
the small window in
her shower.

I
remember her
having a fluffy toilet
cover and her seat was
padded. It felt
luxurious.

I wondered,
How come Grandma's so
poor, but she has such
an expensive
toilet?

A
chain-link fence
protected Grandma's
front yard from
strangers.

We played in her backyard, enclosed in a tall, gray, cinder-block wall.

The children on the other side of the wall were *bad kids*, Grandma said; they smelled and wore stinky diapers and ran around barefoot.

We heard them giggling and screaming in their sprinklers and kiddie pools but weren't allowed to join them.

They couldn't speak English.

Grandma was better than them, we were better than them, we were told.

Once, I flew down to visit Grandma on my own.

We stayed up until two in the morning
on our bellies in her bed,
flipping through her
Reader's Digests.

I slept on the
waterbed in her
guestroom and
conjured
seaweed
dreams.

We
drove through
Los Angeles with
the air conditioner
on high.

Grandma and I went to a swimming pool.

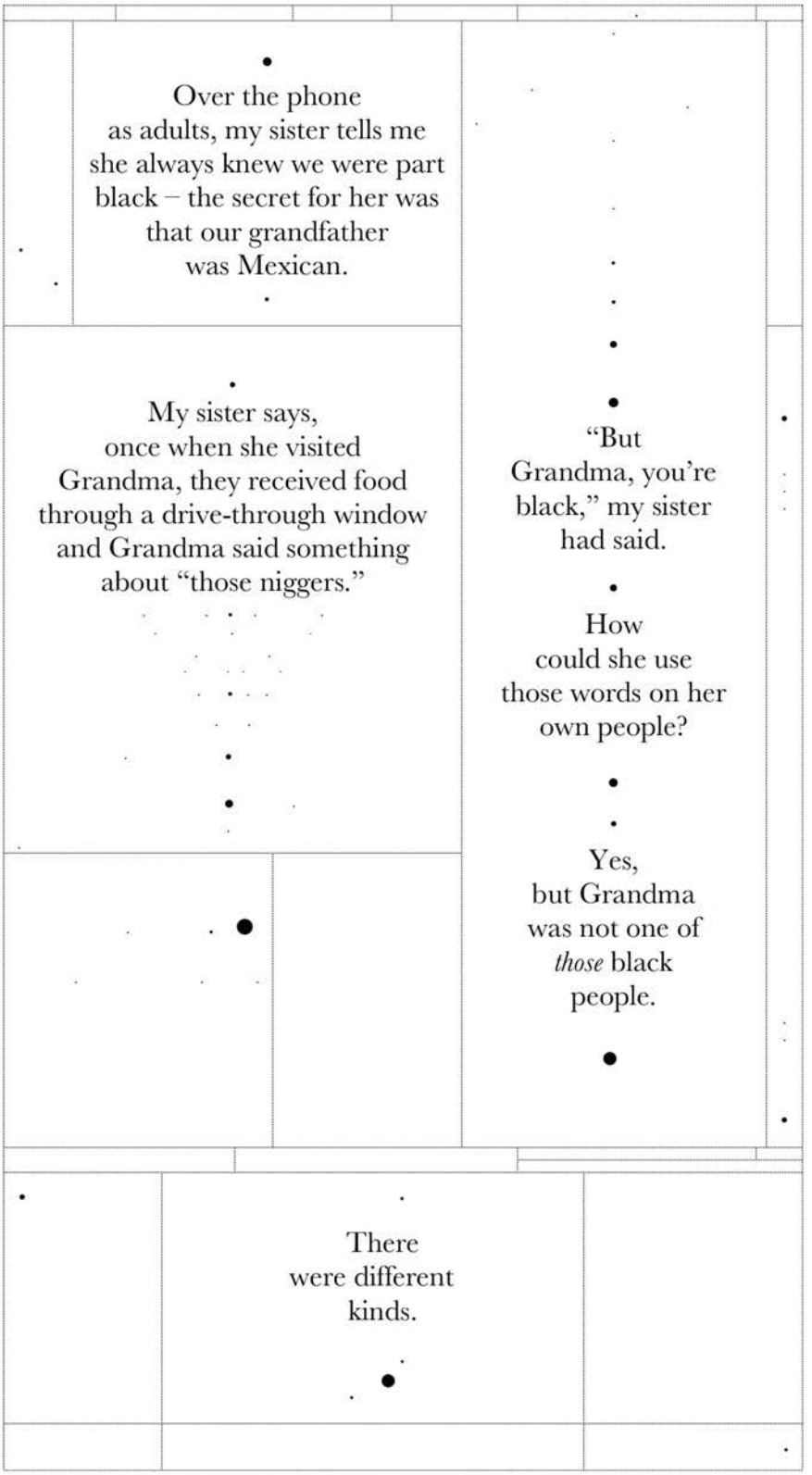
Grandma looked
around and told me
not to get in.

The people
in the water didn't wash;
they were dirty; I would
catch a fungus
from them.

I imagined tiny mushrooms
sprouting from my
body.

The people in the water
were the kind of people who lived next
door to Grandma, who lived all over LA, who
had dark hair and varying shades of brown skin
like my mother and her sisters and brothers
and cousins. Grandma used a word
I did not understand.

The people were in the pool – of course their backs
were wet.


Over the phone
as adults, my sister tells me
she always knew we were part
black – the secret for her was
that our grandfather
was Mexican.
My sister says,
once when she visited
Grandma, they received food
through a drive-through window
and Grandma said something
about "those niggers."
"But
Grandma, you're
black," my sister
had said.
How
could she use
those words on her
own people?
Yes,
but Grandma
was not one of
those black
people.
There
were different
kinds.

As my body
prepared for my first
period, blood rippled through
Grandma's veins, blocked her
vessels, ruptured in
brain.

We drove south.

Her daughters sold Grandma's house:
goodbye chain-link fence and goodbye
butterfly tree, goodbye bathroom,
goodbye home.

Grandma
was ashamed to
go outside. She was
no longer in control
of her body.

Her once
Doris Day-coifed hair
changed. It was curlier, but
not in the way my sister's was
curly. It was curly on what
seemed like a microscopic
level, curls only noticed
when intimately
close.

As Grandma
got sicker, her hair kept
getting worse, I thought; she had
another stroke, and then another,
and her hair became more electrified,
and I assumed it was the strokes, the
strokes had done that to her hair.
Anyone whose brain waves
exploded got
kinky
hair.

My mother
and Auntie moved
Grandma into an assisted-
living facility called Cherry
Hills. It had a pool and a
gym and she had her
own apartment.

Grandma
hated it there,
with all those old
people sent away
to die.

And then Grandma
had another
stroke.

An
antimicrobial
curtain blocked
her from the rest of
the intensive care
unit.

She told the nurses,
My mother was from Spain.
Si, si. Gracias.

My mother and Auntie helped Grandma
to the bathroom, and I felt Grandma's shame
when we saw her papery nakedness.

We tried our best
to do Grandma's hair. Auntie stood at the foot of
Grandma's bed and sung Patsy Cline's "Crazy." My
mother joined her, and I sat in a hospital chair,
watching them, wishing I knew how
to be like them.

I remember rubbing a cream on
Grandma's hands and arms.
"It's for sunspots,"
she said.

Soon after, Grandma suffered a
heart attack and
died.

My Auntie,
mother, sister, and I sat at a table
in the funeral home and chose a wig to
be placed over Grandma's real hair.

I walked to the coffin where Grandma lay.
The wig was blond and her cheek stiff
when I kissed her.

She
smelled like
chemically-halted
decay.

We cremated
her body. Auntie put
Grandma's ashes into
an urn and set it on
her mantelpiece.

My mother
gives me a jar labeled:

Black & Beautiful
COCOA BUTTER
FADE CREAM.

As I age,
my freckles, once
bound to my nose and
cheeks, spread
into large sunspots
across my forehead
and temples,
under my
eyes.

She gives
me anti-wrinkle
creams. "Take care
of your precious
skin," she tells
me.

But I
cannot bring
myself to use
the bleaching
cream.

I hate the way the sunspots
distort my features, the way
it looks like I have mud
dried under my eyes,
the way I look
dirty.

I began visiting Grandma's twin brother, my Great Uncle, in a VA Hospital outside Chicago, as he received treatment for the cancer spreading through his lower body.

I pushed my Great Uncle up and down corridors, to and from radiation treatments. The hospital complex is almost one mile long.

He lay with his legs stretched in front of him on his hospital bed and shared his first memory.

He was being bathed.

It was all white.

He was being dunked into a bathtub and scrubbed,

then passed to another woman in white to dry him off.

He remembered a long line of children being bathed and dried.

My Great Uncle told me, his mother hadn't been able to get out of bed to care for her babies.

He said:
It was an orphanage staffed by Catholic nuns.
He said, he doesn't have a clear memory of time and doesn't know how long he and his two sisters lived there.

One visit,
my Great Uncle and I
sat on the edge of his hospital
bed, looking through photobooks of
1930s and 40s black Chicago, where
he and my Grandma grew up
straddling color lines and
skin tones.

He told
me he had
something
for me.

He was always giving
me things: photocopied images
of long-lost relatives; old letters not
addressed to him; a photo of him, my
Grandma, and their older sister sitting in
the New Mexico sun, with dark brown
skin and tight curls in their hair; a print-
out of Grandma and her sister, walking
arm-in-light-skinned-arm down
a Chicago street.

His
thin blue
hospital gown
was open in
back.

Things that confused rather than explained.

He
handed
me copies of
his enlistment
paperwork.

After high school,
he and a group of friends
went down to join the
National Guard.

The admissions officer
marked my Great
Uncle and his friends
as "Negroes."

A year or so later,
my Great Uncle and a friend decided
to join the Air Force. On the day they were to enlist,
my Great Uncle said his friend didn't show up,
but he enlisted anyway.

Once again,
an admissions officer filled out my Great
Uncle's paperwork. The officer looked at him and
wrote "Caucasian" on his DD 214. He
didn't correct the
officer.

Would you rather
work in the kitchen or
the skies?

I sat on the edge of his
hospital bed, holding his papers.
I asked my Great Uncle – the person
my own brother was named after – if
he'd ever corrected anyone in the
Air Force, if he'd ever confided
to anyone he was
black.

"Oh no,
do you think
I'd put a noose
around my
own neck?"

"Is that what they would have done to you?"

He looked
away from me,
back to the photobook
in his lap.

The hallway
leading to my Great
Uncle's hospital unit split
at a wood-and-glass
birdcage.

Inside were finches and doves.
A yellow finch continuously flew the three
feet from one side of the cage to the
other. Another bird fluffed its polka-
dotted feathers as if outside
in winter.

Straw birdhouses
lined the back of the cage,
plastic vines crawled over them, and a
fluorescent light hummed above the
birds. A sign hung above the
birdcage: *Freedom Gardens*.

Every night when
I left the hospital, my Great
Uncle led me with his walker to
the birds. He'd stand looking at
them, then repeat each time,
"It's amazing they can all
co-inhabit such a
small space."

We watched
colorful birds fly
back and forth.
Some looked like
they'd been
dyed.

One gray bird
had red spots on its cheeks
like rouge. We wondered aloud if the
nurses ever turned out their lights. My
Great Uncle stayed watching the birds
as I walked down the corridors
and out of sight.

YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO THE CITY

But it's hard to participate fully in public life when there's nowhere to use the bathroom! You shouldn't have to pay to take care of your basic needs.

We've compiled some bathroom codes for businesses in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Philadelphia. They're current as of August 2019. We've also listed bathrooms that are truly public: they don't need a code at all.

This list is limited, and some of these codes may have changed by the time you read them. We encourage you to start your own list. Start a group chat. Circulate the codes among friends.

We realize that some of us are more likely to be harassed or policed for using these codes—or for simply *existing in public*. Please be cautious. Look out for yourself, and for others!

MANHATTAN
Downtown to uptown

Whitehall Station
(aka the Staten Island Ferry Terminal)
NO CODE NEEDED

Shake Shack
Broadway and Fulton
6063

Pret A Manger
Park Place and Church Street
0043

Starbucks
Walker Street and Sixth Ave
12345

McDonald's
Delancey and Essex
13352

Starbucks
Delancey and Allen
12340

Tenement Museum
Delancey and Orchard
NO CODE NEEDED
Access through the gift shop.

Blue Ribbon Fried Chicken
First Street and Second Ave
1392

Starbucks
Eighth Street and Lafayette (Astor Place)
12345

Tompkins Square Bagels
10th Street and Avenue A
4552

Chipotle
Sixth Ave and Greenwich Ave
3915

The Strand
Broadway between 12th and 13th Street
NO CODE NEEDED
Bathrooms are on the second floor, near the children's section.

McDonald's
17th Street and Union Square West
51553

Starbucks
28th Street and Third Ave
38537

Five Guys
Seventh Ave between 29th and 30th Streets
0921

Chipotle
34th Street and Fifth Ave
9247

TGI Fridays
Penn Station
864

Chipotle
Seventh Ave between 37th and 38th Street
1321

McDonald's
42nd Street and Fifth Ave
2222
Second-floor men's room.

FREE THE CODES!

Chick-fil-A
42nd Street and Madison Avenue
28352

Starbucks
47th Street and Broadway
24601

Gertrude Ederle Recreation Center
60th Street and West End Avenue
NO CODE NEEDED

Trader Joe's
72nd Street and Broadway
NO CODE NEEDED
Take both escalators down to the bottom floor.

Barnes & Noble
82nd Street and Broadway
NO CODE NEEDED
Bathrooms are on the second floor, near the children's section.

Barnes & Noble
86th Street between Lexington and Third Ave
NO CODE NEEDED

Petco
Lexington between 86th and 87th Street
NO CODE NEEDED

Whole Foods
Third Ave between 87th and 88th Street
NO CODE NEEDED

96th Street Q Station
NO CODE NEEDED

Target
117th Street and Pleasant Avenue
NO CODE NEEDED

BROOKLYN

Starbucks
North Seventh and Bedford
22222

Sweetgreen
North Fourth and Bedford
1284

David's Brisket House
Nostrand and Herkimer
NO CODE NEEDED

Brower Park
NO CODE NEEDED
Bathrooms are on the northwest side of the park, at the Brooklyn and St. Marks Avenues entrance.

Target
In City Point, at Flatbush and Fleet Street
NO CODE NEEDED

Greenlight Bookstore
Fulton and South Portland
NO CODE NEEDED

Starbucks
Park Place between Seventh and Flatbush Avenue
231

Brooklyn Museum
Eastern Parkway and Washington
NO CODE NEEDED
Bathrooms are right before the ticket counter, just bear left when you enter.

Whole Foods
Third Street and Third Ave
NO CODE NEEDED

PHILADELPHIA

Wawa
Sixth Street and Chestnut
1895

La Colombe
Sixth Street and Market
267

Mom's Grocery Store
11th Street between Chestnut and Market
1960

Macy's
13th Street and Market
NO CODE NEEDED
Third-floor restroom.

Wawa
20th Street and Market
12345

Fresh Grocer
40th Street and Walnut
NO CODE NEEDED
Second-floor restroom.

NALOXONE

Many people overdose in bathrooms. If you use drugs, or bathrooms, or have loved ones who use drugs or bathrooms, we recommend obtaining naloxone, which can reverse an opioid overdose. In New York City, community-based programs provide free naloxone. Call 311 for a complete list of distribution sites, look online at nyc.gov, or contact a local harm reduction center. Many of these programs also offer training sessions that are open to the public. The Tremont Neighborhood Health Action Center in the Bronx, for instance, regularly offers no-cost seminars: participants who complete the workshop become certified overdose responders and receive a free Overdose Rescue Kit, which includes naloxone. In NYC, over 750 pharmacies, including the major chains, provide naloxone without a prescription. (Without insurance, prices vary, but naloxone starts at around $45.)

The following text is repurposed from the NYC Department of Health's Stop OD NYC app.

SIGNS OF AN OVERDOSE:

Look for a person who:
—is unconscious
—is not breathing
—is breathing abnormally or snoring/gurgling
—has blue lips, nails, or skin

Check to see if someone is conscious by rubbing your knuckles hard against their sternum (the bony area between their upper ribs). (Image 1)

If there is no response, assume the person is overdosing.

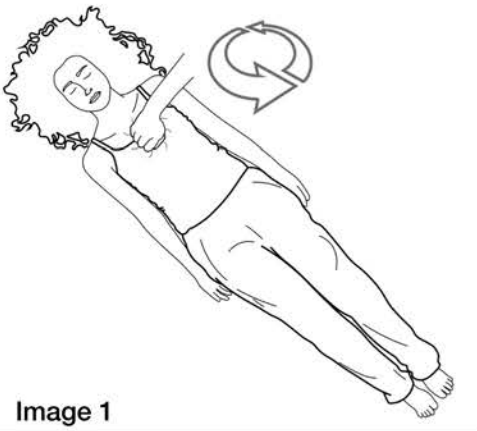


Image 1

RESPONDING TO AN OVERDOSE:

1. Call for help.*
2. Give naloxone if you suspect an overdose, even if you are not sure.

**The New York City Department of Health recommends that you call 911. In many communities, police respond along with EMTs when a 911 call is dispatched. The way that law enforcement treats people who are at the scene of an overdose varies by state, by county, and by police department. Some take a punitive stance—many states have drug-induced homicide laws, and others have charged people who provide the drugs used in a fatal overdose with manslaughter or homicide. Some states, including New York, have passed Good Samaritan laws in an effort to protect people from being prosecuted or charged if they call for help. But the laws are not sweeping. They may not protect a person if they're on probation or parole, or have outstanding warrants or an open court*

SAVES LIVES

USING NALOXONE

Intranasal naloxone comes in two forms: a single-step nasal spray (Narcan) and a multi-step nasal spray.

Administering single-step nasal spray (Narcan)

1. Peel back the package and remove the device.
2. Place the tip of the nozzle into one nostril until your fingers touch the bottom of the person's nose.
3. Press the plunger firmly to release the naloxone into the person's nose. (Image 2)
4. If the person isn't breathing, do rescue breathing or CPR if you know how.
5. If they are still not responding three minutes after you gave the first dose of naloxone, give a second dose, and continue to do rescue breathing.

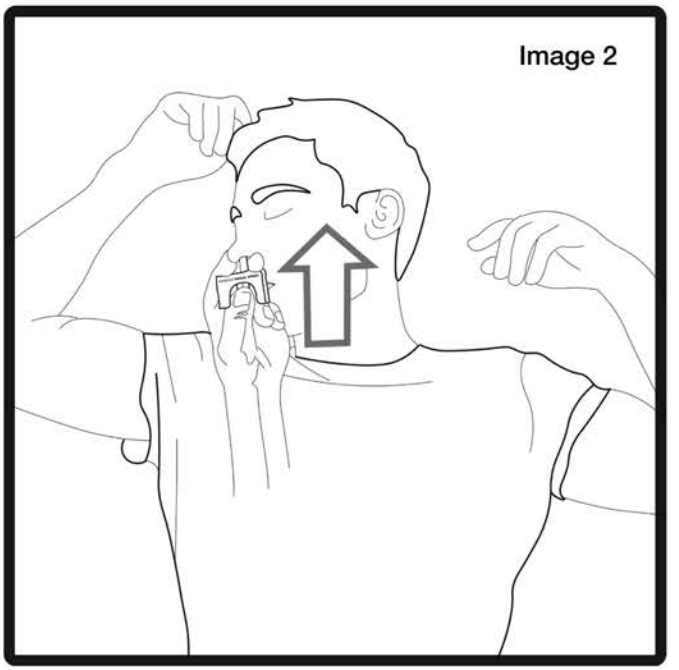


Image 2

HOW TO DO RESCUE BREATHING:

1. Roll the person onto their back. Tilt their chin up.
2. Pinch the person's nose closed.
3. While pinching their nose, give two quick breaths into the mouth.
4. Continue with one breath every five seconds until the person starts breathing.

You can't overdose on fentanyl by giving mouth-to-mouth or touching someone who has overdosed on fentanyl.

case. Contact with the police can also have other unwanted consequences, and can endanger one's housing or immigration status. That said, if you suspect someone is overdosing, professional medical care can sometimes be critical—even if the naloxone works, there may be other health issues that are related to or caused by the overdose. Crucially, if it turns out someone is not overdosing on opioids, naloxone won't help. And if a person is having trouble talking or walking after naloxone wears off, they should get medical care.

Some harm reduction centers offer advice on what to say during a 911 call, or how to get outside help if you don't think you could call 911 during an overdose.

NALOXONE

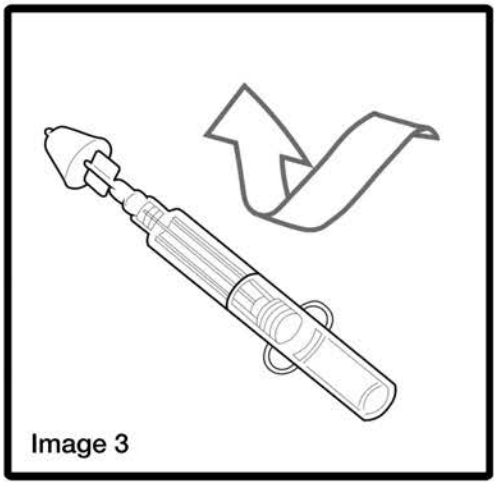


Image 3

Administering multi-step nasal spray

1. Remove both yellow caps from the applicator
2. Screw the white cone (nose piece) onto the applicator.
3. Remove the purple (or red) cap from the glass vial of naloxone.
4. Gently screw (DON'T PUSH) glass vial of naloxone into the end of the applicator. Stop when you start to feel resistance. (Image 3)
5. Tilt the person's head back; insert white cone into nostril.
6. Give a short, strong push on the end of the vial to spray naloxone into the nose. Spray one half of the vial into each nostril. It doesn't need to be perfectly half and half.
7. If the person isn't breathing, do rescue breathing or CPR if you know how.
8. If they are still not responding after three minutes after you gave the first dose of naloxone, give a second dose, and continue to do rescue breathing.

NALOXONE CAN ALSO BE ADMINISTERED AS AN INTRAMUSCULAR INJECTION.

Administering multi-step intramuscular injection

1. Remove caps from naloxone vial and needle.
2. Insert needle through rubber plug with vial upside down; pull back on plunger and fill syringe with all the naloxone in the vial. (Image 4)
3. Inject naloxone into the person's shoulder or thigh muscle. You can administer the injection through clothes if necessary.
4. If the person isn't breathing, do rescue breathing or CPR if you know how.
5. If they're still not responding three minutes after you gave the first dose of naloxone, give a second dose, and continue to do rescue breathing.

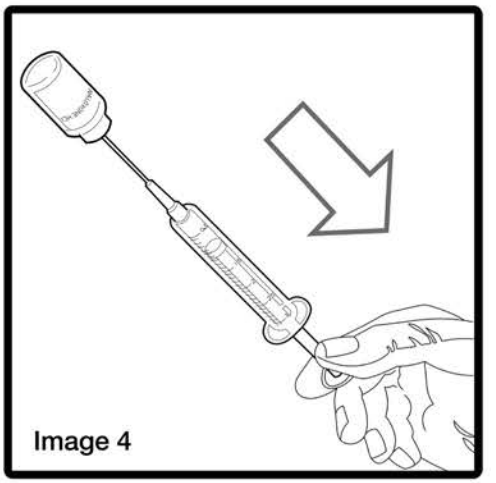


Image 4

SAVES LIVES

Administering single-step intramuscular auto-injection (Evzio)

1. Pull the white cap out of the purple case and follow the voice instructions.
2. Pull firmly on the red cap to remove. Do not touch the black base of the auto-injector.
3. Place black end of auto-injector on the person's thigh and push. You can administer the injection through clothing if necessary.
4. Hold injector in place for five seconds.
5. If the person isn't breathing, do rescue breathing or CPR if you know how.
6. If they are still not responding three minutes after you gave the first dose of naloxone, give a second dose, and continue doing rescue breathing.

Naloxone works for 30-90 minutes. It may cause withdrawal symptoms (chills, nausea, vomiting, agitation, muscle aches) until it wears off. Because the effects of opioids tend to last longer than naloxone does, it is possible for someone to overdose again once the naloxone wears off. In this case, it is safe to administer naloxone again.

If the person still is not responsive, put them into rescue position (Image 5) so they don't choke, and wait with them until help arrives. If you don't feel you can wait with them, find someone you can ask to remain with them.

Rescue position is:
—person on their side
—one arm supporting their head
—knee bent to make sure they don't roll onto their stomach

Image 5

Even if the person comes around before EMS arrives, it's important that someone stays with them so that they don't use again. People are often in a lot of pain after overdose reversal, and they may want to use, but the drugs will be wasted while the naloxone is in their system, and they are much more likely to slip into an overdose after the naloxone wears off.

Don't pour water or ice on someone who is overdosing, and don't hit or shake them. You can't shock someone out of an overdose and you can't shake them awake.

Illustrations by Charlotte Doherty
Thanks to Hillary Brown at the Steady Collective

CONTRI

Art for a Democratic Society is an artist collaborative based in the San Francisco Bay Area. Their work is realized in the form of social practice projects, participatory public performances, and publications. A4DS was founded in 2007 by Celeste Christie and Steven Damewood. The collaborative now includes four other members: Francois Hughes, Sean Morris, Ethan Rafal, and Laura Ross.

A. S. Hamrah is the film critic for *n+1*. A collection of his work, called *The Earth Dies Streaming: Film Writing, 2002–2018*, has recently been published.

Charlotte Doherty is a writer and illustrator based in Brooklyn, NY.

Erin Sheehy is the editor in chief of *Facility*.

Heather Lynn Johnson is a poet and artist living in Brooklyn. She is the author of *The Survival Guide For Queer Black Youth* (Inpatient Press, 2017) and was the 2017 literary fellow for the Queer|Art|Mentorship program. Johnson's work is characterized by its lyricism and cultural critique. She is working on her next book of poetry, *I Owe You Nothing*.

Keenan Bennett (he, they) is an interdisciplinary artist based in Philadelphia. Their recent work seeks to restore relational bonds to lost queer pasts, while mobilizing these histories to speculate queerer futures. They hold an MFA from University of Pennsylvania and a BA in Studio Art from St. Olaf College.

Kennedy M. Felder has a BA in Public Communications from the College of Saint Rose. In her free time, she studies prison reform and loves to write. She is currently the editor in chief of *The Inside Scoop* and is building her own publishing brand.

Liz Barr is an interdisciplinary artist making work about bodies and how we build them. She has just relocated from West Philly to Chicago. Learn more about her work at www.liz-barr.com.

Svetlana Kitto is a writer and oral historian in NYC. Her nonfiction has been featured in *The Cut*, *Hyperallergic*, *The New York Times*, *Guernica*, *Salon*, *VICE*, and the book *Occupy!* (Verso). She's contributed oral histories to the Brooklyn Historical Society and the Smithsonian, among other institutions. Currently, she's working on a MacArthur-funded oral history project about global campaigns for reproductive rights.

Tiffany Jaeyeon Shin explores the porousness of bodily boundaries and the ceaseless movement of living processes, like fermentation, echoing the history of colonialism. Shin is interested in entangling the history of conquest and the literal digestion of material—herbs, medicine, and food—into a new system of relations that emerge from a complicated history of entanglement.

BUTORS

Chloë Bass is a multiform conceptual artist working in performance, situation, conversation, publication, and installation. Her work uses daily life as a site of deep research to address scales of intimacy: where patterns hold and break as group sizes expand. (chloebass.com)

Dawn McIntosh is vibrant, creative, and spiritual. She has three daughters, two sons, one granddaughter, who she loves dearly, and two Shih Tzus. She has a BA in criminal justice. She is currently learning Latin. At Rosie's, she works on making a magazine and now enjoys writing for this project. She enjoys family, working, music, reading, cooking, eating, fashion, hair, and nails. *If GOD is for us who can be against us.* Romans 8:31

Elizabeth Gumport is a writer and law student from New York City.

Jane Marchant is a writer, photographer, and collage artist from Berkeley, CA. She earned her BA and MFA from Columbia University's nonfiction writing programs. She's lived in Munich, Amsterdam, and southern Turkey, and traveled extensively. Her favorite bathroom was an outhouse that clung to a steep meadow; she left the door open and looked out over the Alps.

Julie Moya is currently in jail on Rikers Island. Losing her freedom has been a terrible loss and she feels it every day. Being able to share her thoughts by putting them in words is a beautiful thing.

M Slater is an interdisciplinary artist rooted in photography who employs writing, video, performance, and sculpture to engage with the stickiness between bodies and architecture. Find them at www.mslater.info and @m.slater_

Rebecca-Damilola Fayemi is a Super Silky Big Boss Witch, astrologer, and poet. She thanks you for your time.

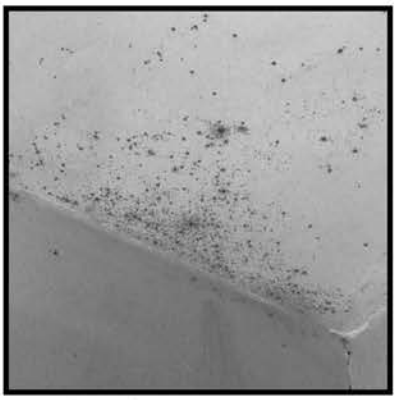
René Kladzyk is a musician, writer, perfumer, and cultural geographer who performs under the name Ziemba. An El Paso native, René has written about border issues for *Teen Vogue* and encourages readers to take a look at the music video for her song "El Paso," which doubles as a history lesson of the U.S.-Mexico border.

Ward 5B is an archival and curatorial service specializing in late 20th-century urban ephemera and art, with a focus on punk aesthetic, radical spaces, performance art, drag, experimental theater, camp, AIDS activism, queercore, and guerrilla/street art projects.

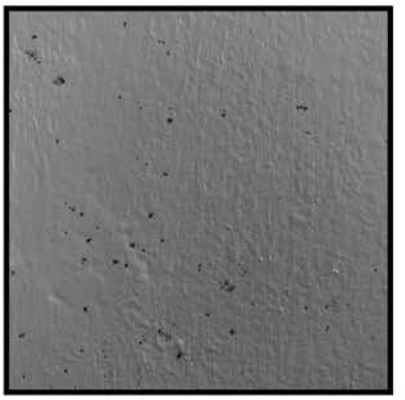
Zekarias Thompson (he/they) is a composer, performer, and photographer. Their work explores points of separation and intersections of power. They are also really interested in bathrooms. Zekarias lives and works in Oakland, CA.

BATHROOM

A GUIDE FOR YOUR WEEK



Monday / Moon Day:
a day of receiving, reflecting, reacting; take this time to mold space in the world for yourself. Dedicate this day to building pockets of comfort for yourself no matter where you are; this may look like not listening to people who talk about things you don't care about!



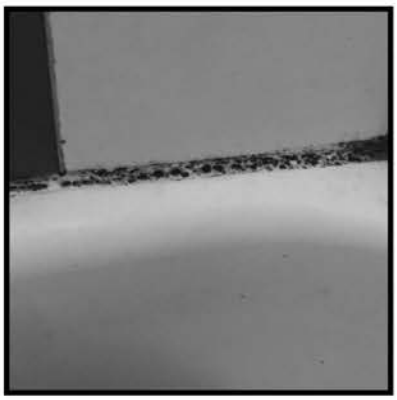
Tuesday / Mars Day: a day of gumption, effort, intention; cut down on the molds given for you to function within. In the typical workweek, we get overwhelmed by others' schedules and interpretations of worthy pursuits. Make your passion known by doing something for yourself, whether or not it fits with someone else's schedule.

Wednesday / Mercury Day:
a day of communication and contracts; work on your interactions with others; talk your way out of positions you don't want to be in and communicate how you want to be seen. Many Wednesdays will follow where this will be easier to do. Practice in your bedroom, if needed.

Thursday / Jupiter Day:
a day of expansion, lessons, and loftiness. Review the people, places, and things in your life—the patterns, the debts accrued. What were they for? What do they do? What is your experience? Jupiter rules this realm, and on a Thursday, it will give you a chance to reinterpret experiences and remold your viewpoints.

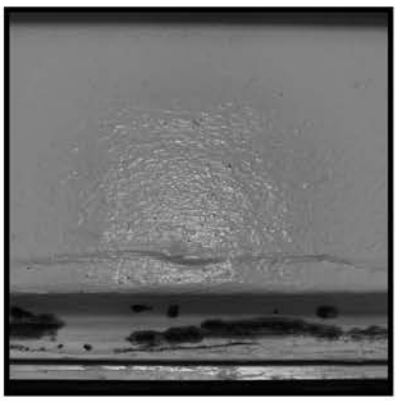
HOROSCOPES

BY REBECCA-DAMILOLA FAYEMI



Friday / Venus Day: a day of relating, indulgence, and blood. Be prissy, be kind, and accentuate your flair through your clothing. It's not about the glitter eyeshadow in itself, but about the process of glamorizing yourself up to the point of being attractive to others—in the spirit of relatability. To molder or to ferment? We can tell by your appearance.

Saturday / Saturn Day: hard nose to the ground, but in spirit. Get your affairs in order. Look your bills in the eye. This day is a cup of tea.



Sunday / Sun Day: kindle a sense of pride that has nothing to do with your affairs; dance and stretch, even if that looks like you getting some sleep. Essentially compete with the sun. The sun is an inhabitant of a giant spirit that feeds on and will get attention no matter what. It acts like a flashlight in this world and gives light to so many things outside of yourself. Very draining. So compete and do what you do to get yourself together.

WE ALL DO THESE THINGS, ALL OF THE TIME, BUT IT'S TIME TO DO THEM ON PURPOSE.

FACILITY
Summer 2019
Issue 1

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Facility is published in Brooklyn, NY.

Is there something bathroom-related that you'd like us to cover, or that you'd like to write about? For suggestions, questions, submissions, pitches, and letters to the editor, please email facilitymag@gmail.com. To purchase an issue or find out where we're stocked, visit facility-mag.com

Our cover image is by Zekarias Thompson, from a series of photographs of bathrooms.