

i'm in batesville now- tuesday, march 16.

it seems like everywhere in the state people are dying. coming into a new project is very painful. people are full of pain, guarded, unhappy, depressed, bored, but mostly hurt. it is the same everywhere. they are pessimistic, or realistic, about the extent of the change that they are producing. mostly they are caught up in the recognition of the faction fighting and unappealing, conventional aspirations of the people they work with. even the wonderful ones lack insight or perspective into their problems and what they face. goals are so short term. things seem never to get done. noone seems to believe anymore in their ability to effect change. and then they are all exhausted by the tensions of movement life. we are the hardest wearing on eachother. we destroy eachother, persecute eachother, but mostly offer eachother no comfort.

last night i got really wild again about the problem of the volunteer. i'll probably either get mad enough to get it out of my system or eventually do something about it. i was thinking of writing a position paper to be sent out to the staff, a kind of nasty vindictive thing. what i want to say is that the volunteer is exploited by staff people in a cruel and destructive way. they really have no rights., do what the project director tell them to do, and have no say in the decision-making process. casey says the first few whites to realize that they are a minority in this world are paying the price for it, developing a minority personality, a paranoid one. this means, like the negro, they never confront the opposition really, but complain amongst themselves. just like whites think negroes are satisfied, blacks in the movement can't know the amount of resentment going on. in the backs of their mind i guess it's based on the feeling that the situation is justified, that they don't really deserve a place in the movement, and that in some sense this is a type of subconscious atonement for the guilt of their race. they have alot of the outlets that black people used against their feelings towards whites. they flatter them, work around them, do the work without ever demanding credit for it. they flatter in another way, which is to beg to be associated with the black workers, the staff members. and the establishment, the great sncc staff, acts like any other establishment and buys off the most vocal people of the volunteers that might otherwise cause them opposition by putting them on staff. not that they are conscious of it, as such, in the same way that the white power structure thinks it is elevating a few "good" negroes, not buying them off. maybe the whites in turn think they are doing honor to their fellow whites, not selling out. actually i don't think they have the type of racial loyalty that would necessitate that kind of rationalization. they just want to be sncc staff, that's all. the abuse that they suffer is not unlike the cultural abuse the negroes suffer. whites are told they carry "northern liberal poisons" that are going to infect the pure southern negro culture. they are told this by northern black intellectuals, however, who would theoretically suffer from the same poisons if it we en't for the shield of their pigmentation. therefore the culture has to be protected.

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i don't know if i can finish my tirade on the exploitation of the volunteer. the rest has to do with the sexual, how white women are treated like white men treat negro women. we are denied publicly, but they sneak off with us at night. then they lash out and hurt us and we in turn seduce their finest, wear our conquests proudly with one another, turn our backs on our own men. in the beginning we are naive, kind of unprejudiced, pleased with ourselves, but then we are struck, denied, wounded, whipped. we go into shock. the wounds run very deep. at first we don't understand, and when we do, we go numb. emmy says we have no choice. we either adopt the minority paranoid personality or we retreat to the white stronghold. penny says she refuses to allow herself to be destroyed. i lay in bed a long time last night thinking about this. how destroyed am i? how scarred? how much have i let them do to me? i don't know. i don't think i'm at all open anymore, at least to new negroes. i probably have enough feeling alive for some of them like ivanhoe and stokeley to be able to talk honestly, try again- charlie, and bob. but i'm beginning to react, wince at the color black, withdraw. i don't think i'll ever court black people again. i've been scarred. i'm numb. i have been terrorized. i am bitter. i don't have the strength to fight, nor do i know how to fight it. have they destroyed me? do i have the defeated look of mary varela, penny, casey? i was crying last night in bed as i envisioned myself making a speech to the sncc staff about how they treated white people, and then ending with why wouldn't they let me love them? why must they destroy me? that i wouldn't let them destroy me.