

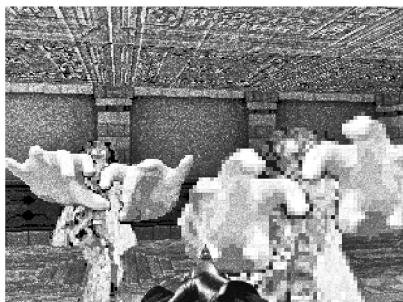


Tickle Machine

18+



Notes on tickling and
fantasy construction



A while back my partner had to go to the dentist; I tried to be consoling. You won't feel any pain, they give you an anaesthetic - well, correcting myself, trying to set expectations, you'll still feel the drill and so on, which is not fun. So it's not PAINFUL, it's just an uncomfortable sensation you'll want to get away from. Maybe this was a little less comforting than I thought? It's not like I don't think some distinction between discomfort and pain exists - it's more like I was surprised by how little consolation it seemed able to bring in the moment.

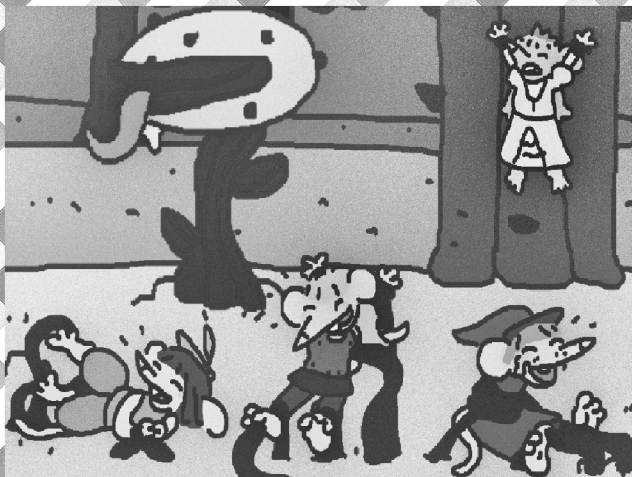
Tickling is something I've always been afraid of, excited by. That at an unseen signal a person might pounce, that the careful distance we accord each other in social life might suddenly break down into laughter, pleading, rolling on the floor... A glimpse of some strange dynamic buried underneath the everyday. Am I just talking about sex? Well, maybe.



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I like drawing little abstract cartoon people getting tickled - "funny animals", little videogame guys. In a way their not-quite-human shapes give an excuse to draw a body in terms of a sense map - big eyes, big hands, big feet.

Bodies built to be looked at but also imaginatively inhabited. What is the fantasy of these pictures? Fantasies of tickling someone (but who looks like that?), fantasies of being tickled (but then why are we watching from the outside?), fantasies of something happening outside of us and getting to watch. Some slippery mixture of all three, the impossible greediness of a perspective that could relate to all desires at once.



My Honeymoon Among the Ex Shah of Persia's Pirates'

The Exciting Experience of a Bride Who Fell Into the Hands of the Royal Buccaneer and the Odd Orientally Refined Tortures the Wicked Deposed Ruler Used to Make Her Give Up Her Bridegroom



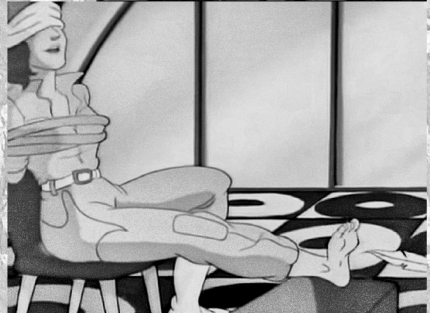
There's an idea - I have no idea how true - that sensory life starts as a condition of polymorphous perversity, a jumble of unsorted sensation, that gradually gets straightened into narratives that make sense. Taste, smell, texture, some of this gets folded into a ritual called "dinner", other sensations might be grouped into "art" or "leisure" or "sex" or whatever - little stories of cause and effect, where some burst of affect is ringfenced and explained by the idea of some need that it's meant to satisfy.

"With the end of the feather the ex-Shah tickled the soles of my feet until I went almost crazy with the agony of it. And all the time the horrid Shah sat in front of me with that awful leer on his face, and kept repeating, 'Smile, Madame! Why don't you smile?'"

Continuities of Leering Moustachioed Ethnic Bad Guy, in the 1912 Atlanta 'Constitution' newspaper and the 1980s Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle cartoon respectively.



What do you do with the sensations that can't be made sensible in this way? Something like tickling, which feels both so immediate and so pointless or inexplicable, so hard to place as either strict pleasure or pain. Looking at the culture you might say oh, here's a readymade idea that kind of gets at it - narratives of "tickle torture", connecting our weird sense impressions with a whole constellation of ideas around pleasure and discomfort, captivity and release, shamelessness and embarrassment. We find a new suitcase and start piling our things into it.





A cartoon body is indestructible, like Mickey Mouse, who will be around after everyone I know has turned to ash. I feel bad about drawing so many pictures of people being bullied, embarrassed, even when they're all in some way versions of myself... but I'm sure they'll make it through, I'm sure that just one panel away from being reduced to tears, or consigned for the rest of their lives to some miserable death trap, that they're bouncing happily back up again.

What was that Walter Benjamin line on Mickey Mouse - "In these films, mankind makes preparations to survive civilisation"? Is the fantasy of the funny animal that of a body unharmed by whatever desires we project onto it?

I can't stand your work but it's true that you're perhaps my greatest rival in the Wavefront alternative poetry "scene"... so perhaps you'll understand....

As a Writer I must remain constantly on the hunt for new experiences... the dread of captivity, the feeling of utter helplessness... can I represent these things unless I've experienced them myself...??

Fragments from a comic



OK, Hemingway.
Is this enough yet or what?

Tighter!!
The muse says Tighter!!!



EEEEEEEEEE!!!

tickle

tickle




C-Cut that out!!



Oh? I thought a
Writer had to
try out new
experiences..?

"Art" can be a useful excuse
for doing the things you
wanted to do anyway.




- WHAHAAHAT ARE YOU DOHOHOINGGG!!!

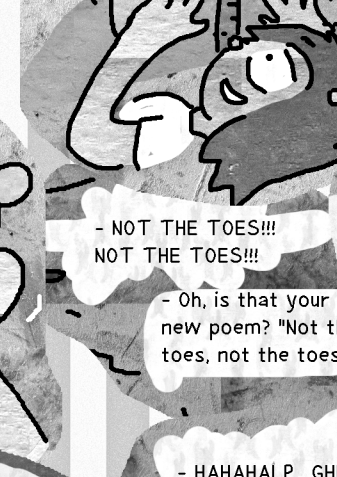
- I think it's your turn to help ME with my new project.



AHAHAHAHA GEHEHET AWAY FROM MY FEEHEHET!! STAAHAHP IHEHEHET!!!!




- I'm working on a piece about a pretentious brat that gets broken into a howling mess unless... that I'm the




- NOT THE TOES!!! NOT THE TOES!!!

- Oh, is that your new poem? "Not the toes, not the toes"?



I'M SOHOHARRY... I'MMM A LOOSER... M-MY POEMS ARE BADDDDD.....

See you at the next workshop!




- HAAHAHP.. GH.. AAAH.
- Are you gonna admit y work is bad?
- FUHUHUCK YOHOHOU
- Wow, I've never heard you swear before. So much for poetic diction.

LATER STILL



Sob...

ERDETTA CLONK WINS BIG PRIZE!!!



New collection "Tears of Laughter" praised for deeply-felt imagery

- You sure?
There's no safeword..



MPPHH MM MHMM!!
(Let's get this
over with,
already!!)

END

A friend of mine went to see that 'Tickled' documentary and their verdict on it, in a tone of surprise: "It was kind of hot?!" Like, guys strapped shirtless to tables, being straddled... People being tickled thrash around, get sweaty, swear and cry and get euphoric and sometimes turned on. It's not "sex" but it's not always NOT sex, unless I get brought up on pornography charges in which case it's definitely not sex. Instructional purposes only.





Scenes from "Nancy Shrew and the Unfair Depiction Of The Medical Profession", 1972



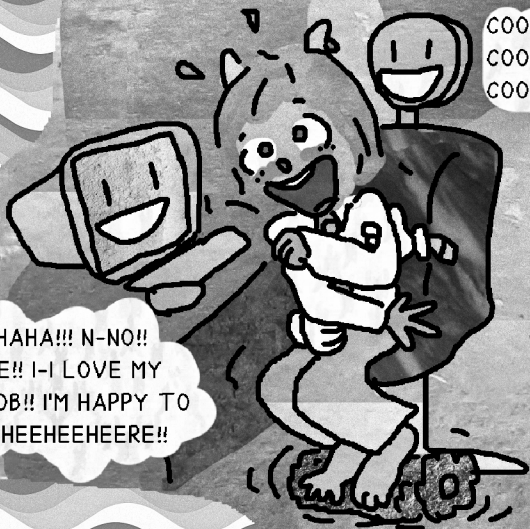
Calling all members of Snoops Inc!
We continue to have an open bounty for
info on the FnissCo corporation, perhaps
most known for their controversial line
of "gigglonomics" office equipment!



MOOD LAPSE
REGISTERED.
INITIATING MENTAL
HEALTH
PROTOCOLS.

Something that interests
me about tickling art is
the hyperspecific world it
takes place in

A blurred and anonymous
world of offices,
bedrooms, dungeons and
basements, crueller than
the world we know, or
maybe as cruel in a
different way



WAHAHAHA!!! N-NO!!
PLEASE!! I-I LOVE MY
JOHOHOB!! I'M HAPPY TO
WORK HEEHEEHEERE!!

COOCHIE--
COOCHIE--
COOCHIE--

Checking in for a shift at work; being kidnapped by the evil
massage parlor, by the art museum, by the coffeeshop. All
the institutions of human society replaced by their
monomaniac doppelgangers; somehow nobody seems to
notice. The city around it goes on as before.



As I'm sure you're all aware, the investigation has been hitting its fair snare of snags...

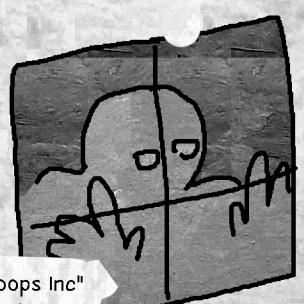
Every sleuth we've put on the case so far seems to have disappeared into the bowels of the FnissCo experiential testing labs. Is it true? Confirmation is requested!

Paranoid universes where everything revolves around one thing - always disguised, always being unveiled, like the schemes of Fantomas.

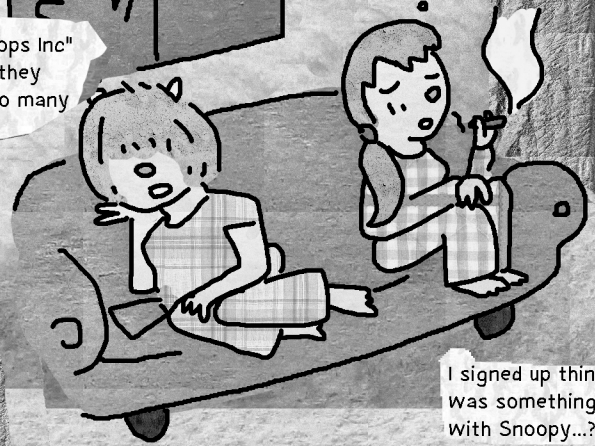
If they have charm it's that the centre of these worlds is something other than money - which takes on a blurred, secondary role in this setting, as it does inside dreams.



Uh, and well - -HA HA HA!! Y-you're our last hope, the last person on our member rolls who hasn't been EEHEEEHEEE caught yet, a-and things here have been escalating soohohohoho if you wouldn't miYEEEEEEEnd, hahaha, could you - - - PLEASE!!! HELP US, ALREADY!!!!

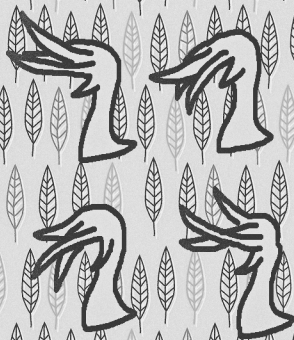
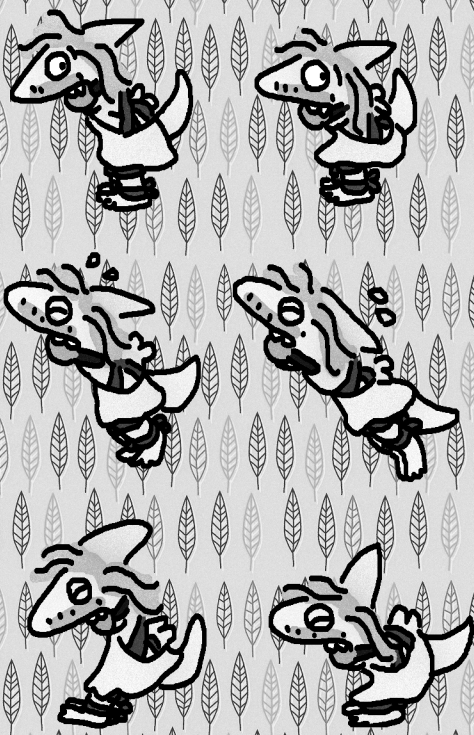


What is "Snoops Inc" and why are they leaving you so many voicemails?



No idea.

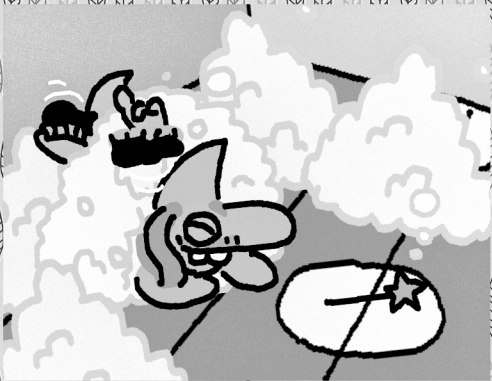
I signed up thinking it was something to do with Snoopy....?



A lot of the drawings in the zine are actually frames from short animations, done as practice doodles. So if you're wondering why I made a zine for MS Paint art, firstly rude, and secondly the joke's on you.

Tickling has no "climax", no natural finish, it can just go on, into hysteria, so the endless feeling of little loops I hope is a good fit.

I still cannot convincingly animate a set of wiggling fingers.





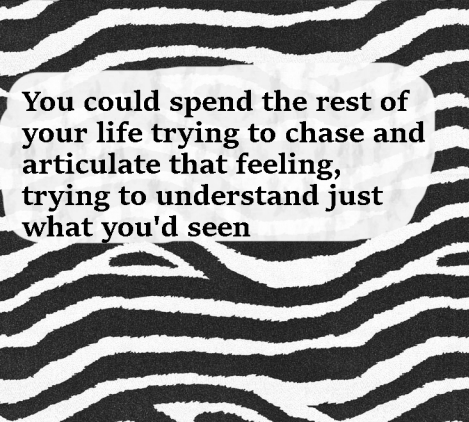
SECRET * TOP SECRET * TOP SECRET *

The earliest tickling fantasies I had were all about UFOs. UFOs in the 90s had this mysterious dual aspect, both interstellar saviors and inscrutable space torturers, beings where the precise nature of their interest and operations remained unclear. The ambiguous pleasure / horror of tickling I guess seemed like a natural fit.

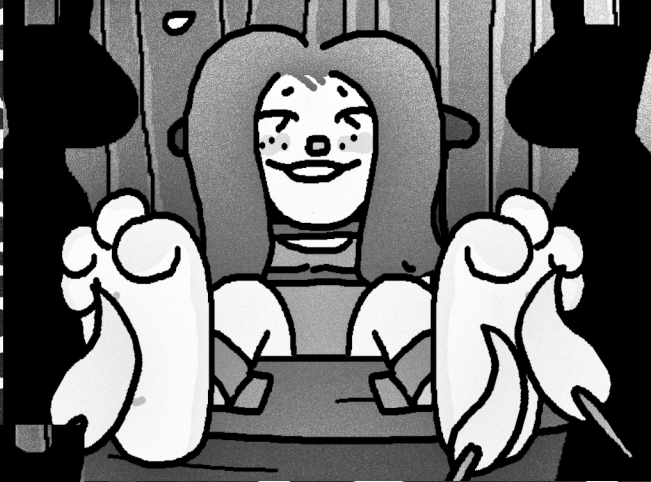




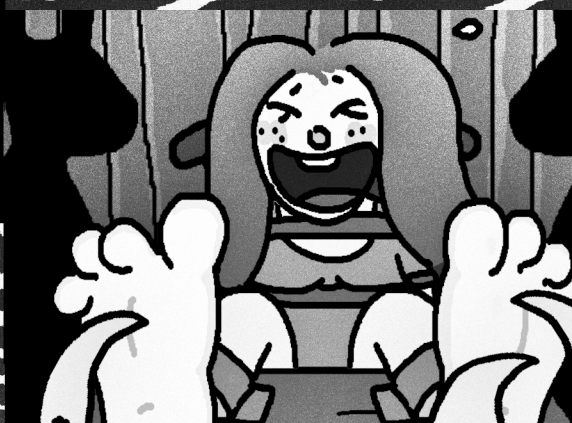
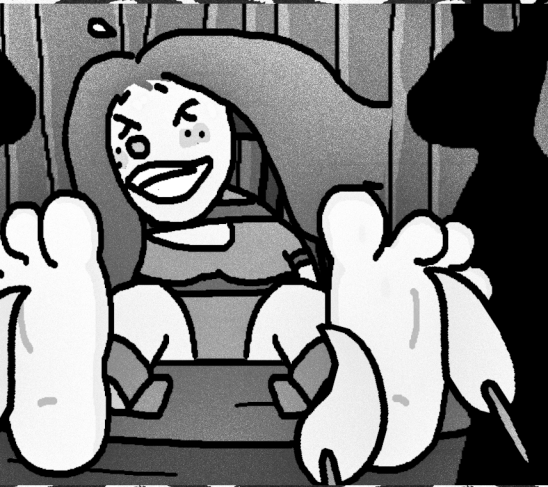
UFO stories all seemed to end the same way as the creative writing essays we'd all do at school. The protagonist wakes up, ordinary life resumes. Was it real? The thing that seemed so charged and strange?



You could spend the rest of your life trying to chase and articulate that feeling, trying to understand just what you'd seen



Take me home,





Official report



into various



phenomena.

