

## **6a~Peter Jaeger to Brian Kim Stefans.**

### **“the frisk”**

Dear Brian Kim Stefans:

Somewhere in *Free Space Comix* you wrote the lines “Nice / to frisk / You.” In popular culture, frisking is always associated with the law, and the representation of the frisk entertains us by materializing our enjoyment of violent restraint. However, the very conventionality of the frisk motif illustrates the ordinariness of asymmetrical power relations, and it is precisely this continual rehearsal of banality that makes those relations seem so valid. Familiarity breeds invisibility, but invisibility is the precondition for the familiarities needed to maintain social cohesion. By conflating a highly standardized greeting with the insipid violence of the frisk motif, “nice to frisk you” illustrates how law operates through empty symbolic gestures. But are frisking and greeting symbolically *equivalent*, merely because the *detournement* of the one into the other foregrounds how a seemingly non-violent framework maintains the violence of law? I’m curious about your thoughts on the levelling effect that different speech registers have when they are placed in conjunction with each other.

Regards,  
Peter Jaeger