VOL. 5, NO. 2

Art Criticism

Editor: Donald Kuspit

Published by:
Department of Art
State University of New York at Stony Brook
Stony Brook, NY 11794-5400

Prospective contributors are asked to send abstracts. If, however, they do submit manuscripts, the editors request that they include a return stamped envelope.

Subscriptions: $5.00/single issue, $15/year; $17/year outside the United States.

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The editor wishes to thank the Stony Brook Foundation, Provost Jerry Schubel, the Dean of Humanities and Fine Arts, Don Ihde, and the National Endowment for the Arts for their gracious support.

ISSN: 0195-4148

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Feminist Art Criticism: Multiple Voices and Changing Paradigms

By Patricia Mathews

Feminist theory and practice have undergone a metamorphosis in a number of disciplines over the past few decades. This change is most clearly manifested in the different manner of conceptualizing the category, woman. In feminist art and art criticism, the different meanings assigned to this term have coalesced into basically two positions, often antagonistically conceived, and each with a number of variations. One has existed since the beginning of the feminist movement in art around 1970, while the other is not a decade old. Although both coexist in lively form, these two positions are often referred to as first and second generation feminism due to their chronological positions. However, no historical progression or qualitative distinctions are implied by my use of these designations.

Thalia Gouma-Peterson and I have summarized the issues of both generations as we perceive them in art history and criticism in an article published in the September, 1987 *Art Bulletin*.[1] The following essay incorporates parts of that article, looks more closely at several feminist art critics

only briefly dealt with there, reviews new material such as the several anthologies of feminist art criticism that have appeared since that article was published, and offers a view of feminist film criticism. This overview is not an attempt to be a comprehensive bibliographical source.

The first phase of feminist art and criticism originated out of a desire to assert a positive and powerful image of women in order to overturn the negative stereotypes and enculturated codes by which women were contained and defined. Such art and its criticism is experientially based, and conceives of woman as a fixed category either determined through societal and cultural institutions, or less often through the concept of a biologically or psychologically inherent female nature. Its advocates characterize, affirm, or celebrate specifically female attributes, within a separatist mode, or reveal the history and the nature of the repressions of woman.

This first generation recognized that women were underrepresented in exhibitions and galleries, and, more important, that female experience was neither validated nor even addressed in mainstream art. The Modernist myth of the artist assumes that s/he stands outside social structures and is therefore free to express universal experience without prejudice or limitations.[2] In Europe and this country, however, "universal vision" is too often equivalent to white, middle-class, male perception. "Omission is one of the mechanisms by which fine art reinforces the values and beliefs of the powerful and suppresses the experience of others."[3]

Feminist artists working in the first half of the 1970s exposed what may now seem obvious discordances and fractures in the supposedly flawless fabric of our culture, though these issues are still without resolution. The issues with which feminist artists were concerned became the first issues of an emerging feminist art criticism.[4]

In our *Art Bulletin* article, we examined a number of these issues important to first generation criticism. I will only briefly summarize a few of them here, and refer the reader to the article for a more comprehensive discussion. The first issue concerns craft as a form of "high" art. A large part of traditional female creative output that conveyed a female experience had been invalidated as art and relegated to the category of "craft" through the creation of an aesthetic hierarchy qualitatively differentiating "high" from "low" art. Feminist artists such as Miriam Schapiro, Faith Ringgold, Harmony Hammond and Joyce Kozloff have attempted to resurrect decorative art and craft as a viable and meaningful artistic realm to express female experience, and point to its political and subversive potential. The critical responses to the artists' attempt to sanction female creative expression through craft have varied. Many art historians and critics have supported these artists, others have not. Even those who do support craft as art often disagree as to its import.[5] Both first and second generation critics are concerned with this question, due to its role in the debate over a celebration of women's cultural signs versus the dismantling of them. The political implications of the history of women's crafts go far beyond the nature of a female sensibility, to encompass the discourse on power and powerlessness, radical impulses in female creativity, the history of art-making,

and the ideology of repression as well.

A second topic of significance to our understanding of first generation criticism is the possibility of a female sensibility and aesthetic expressed in contemporary art. It generated one of the most heated debates during the first decade of feminism, which seemed to demand an almost mandatory position from most writers and artists. Most feminist artists and critics not only seemed to accept the existence of such an aesthetic on some level,[6] but also the need to explore it, as Vivian Gornick pointed out in 1973:

> To achieve wholeness, [women]... must break through to the center of their experience, and hold that experience up to the light of consciousness if their lives are to be transformed. They must struggle to "see" more clearly, to remember more accurately, to describe more fully who and what they have always been.[7]

A whole body of recent research in psychology, literature, art, music, sociology, and education indicates that women perceive reality differently than men, for whatever reasons, and therefore have different expectations from and responses to human experience.[8] Carol Gilligan's psychological study presents the view of many of these revisionist texts with the following thesis: "given the differences in women's conceptions of self and morality, women bring to the life cycle a different point of view and order human experience in terms of different priorities."[9]

Among feminist artists and critics, the question was first formulated in terms of the causes and the nature of the female sensibility. Was it biologically determined? Or was it purely a social construct? Chicago, Schapiro and soon after, Lippard, claimed to be able to recognize female sexual or body imagery in art by women.[10] However, such "central core" imagery or "vaginal iconology" as it is sometimes called,[11] was as much a political as an essentialist or erotic statement, as art historian and critic Lisa Tickner pointed out,[12] an attempt to challenge the notion of female inferiority and "penis envy," as well as to establish and reclaim a sense of female power. Miriam Schapiro, too, said that "our discovery of the 'central core image' was a way of making ideological statements for ourselves, a kind of subject matter that was surfacing in the art of other women and finally an explication of how that subject matter can be disguised."[13]

Many artists and art critics now see the female sensibility as a totally constructed one. Yet even with the rise of the study of "gender difference" as opposed to "female sensibility," the concept of the specifically female voice, whether understood as essentialist or as ideologically constructed, still imbues much feminist thought. This is especially true among French feminists. Julia Kristeva, for example, with regard to the way woman's different viewpoint conditions her place in the world, writes:

> Sexual difference — which is at once biological, physiological, and relative to reproduction — is translated by and translates a difference in the relationship of subjects to the symbolic contract which is the social contract: a difference, then, in the relationship to power, language, and meaning.[14]

A related concern in feminist art and theory is the exploration of female sexuality. In the mid-1970s, feminist artists such as Joan Semmel and Hannah Wilke attempted to generate new expressions of female sexuality that denied the passivity and idealization of past images of women represented through the male gaze. In her article on the representation of female sexuality in art, Harmony Hammond stated a position to which most first generation critics would adhere. In such "women-centered" art, she said, women present themselves as "strong, healthy, active, comfortable with their bodies, in contrast to the misogynist attitudes toward women's bodies and bodily functions that we observe throughout the history of western art."[15]

The first decade of feminist art thus was buoyed not only by anger, but by a new sense of community, the attempts to develop a new art to express a new sensibility, and an optimistic faith in the ability of art to promote and even engender a feminist consciousness. At the same time, feminist critics sought an alternative criticism with which to discuss such art.[16]

Lippard was the first writer to attempt to devise a specifically feminist, separatist art criticism. She radically revised her earlier thinking and came out publicly in support of feminist art, thereby jeopardizing her well-established reputation in the art world.[17] She has remained an important figurehead and role model through her continued feminist commitment to art criticism. Her critical methodology has been to "have no critical system" because she sees theory and system as authoritarian, limiting, and patriarchal. She also wants to remain open to "contradiction and change," and to maintain a constant dialogue with herself.[18] Therefore, Lippard's fundamental contribution to feminist art, and to political art in general, has been her devotion to ferreting out and writing about art outside the "establishment," and its rapidly co-opted fringes, such as the East Village. She is an alternative institution in herself, a critical voice raised against the politics of the artworld as well as the treatment of women artists.

Despite her anti-theoretical stance, her conception of a new feminist criticism involved the "establishment of new criteria by which to evaluate not only the aesthetic effect, but the communicative effectiveness of art attempting to avoid becoming a new establishment in itself."[19] In her attempt to define the feminist contribution to art, she delineated "structures or social collages" that represent the models feminism offers to art:

> The three models of such interaction are (1) group and/or public ritual; (2) public consciousness raising and interaction through visual images, environments, and performances; and (3) cooperative/collaborative/collective or anonymous art-making.[20]

Lippard's work is often imbued with a Marxist or socialist slant. Her essay, "The Pink Glass Swan: Upward and Downward Mobility in the Art World,"[21] is exemplary of her class analysis and her skeptical position towards the fashions and fads of the market, and the stereotypes into which artists play.

Toward 1980, Lippard began to focus on political, activist art. She successfully merged this interest with her feminism in the exhibition she

selected for the Institute for Contemporary Art in London, "Issue: Social Strategies by Women Artists" (1980), and her essay for its catalogue, "Issue and Taboo." The exhibition included both American and British political art, by May Stevens, Jenny Holzer, Nancy Spero, Mary Kelly and Marie Yates, as well as by artists of other nationalities. In her essay, she noted the differences among feminist artists according to their nationalities. This distinction is important for understanding the varieties of feminist art and criticism today.

> The state of British art is not the state of American art ...In mainstream America, social art is basically ignored; in England, it enjoys the attention of a small but vocal (and often divided) group with a certain amount of visibility and media access. In America, artist-organized tentatives toward a socialist art movement are marginal and temporary, waxing and waning every five years or so... In England, there are actually Left political *parties* that artists can join and even work with–and the more advanced level of theoretical discussion reflects this availability of practice.[22]

Lippard observed that feminist art in England is concerned with the position of women in culture (quoting British art historian Roszika Parker), whereas in America, "the popular notion of feminist art is more oriented toward images than toward ideologies."

By 1980, Lippard understood the goal of feminism to be "*to change the character of art.*"

> ...if our only contribution is to be the incorporation on a broader scale of women's traditions of crafts, autobiography, narrative, overall collage, or any other technical or stylistic innovation–then we shall have failed.
>
> Feminism is an ideology, a value system, a revolutionary strategy, a way of life. (And for me it is inseparable from socialism...)[23]

Nicole Dubreuil-Blondin briefly outlines the evolution of Lippard's thought in "Feminism and Modernism: Paradoxes" (1983). Despite her criticism, she acknowledges Lippard's "astounding lucidity and her capacity for self-analysis," which "allowed her to understand fully the position of her own discourse at its every stage."[24]

Another critic who attempted to develop a feminist art criticism by studying feminist art is art historian/critic Moira Roth. In two articles published in *Artforum* in 1980, she asked and attempted to answer the vital question, "What constitutes effective feminist art *criticism* now?" For her, the task must be to undertake "a far more critical mode of writing about this art." Roth began this task herself by defining the feminist artist as "a woman who believes in and practices feminism outside her studio and thus comes to her work with a developed feminist sensibility; *however* that does not mean inevitably that her work should be called 'feminist.'" She thus made an important distinction between feminist art and feminist artists, thereby allowing finer distinctions to be developed for feminist criticism. She insisted that "a commitment both to political ideologies and to a spiritual kinship between women...must provide the underpinnings to virtually all

feminist art in 1980."[25] Further, she understood the priorities of the first generation of feminist artists, in the early 1970s, to be "to make art about women from the woman's point of view," and "to teach others about the conditions of women in a way that would lead to changing those conditions." In 1980, she believed that feminist objectives in art "must be redefined to encompass the collective, interactive character of women's political and spiritual strengths," and she listed specific tasks that she believed would accomplish this.[26] It is indeed the pragmatic and specific aspect of her attempt to redefine feminist art and criticism that makes her articles so valuable.

Another group of feminist art critics remain faithful to a "woman-centered" criticism. Its advocates include Sandra Langer, Joanna Frueh, and Arlene Raven, among others. Langer refers to her brand of criticism as "gyn-aesthetic," which she defines as based on women's "own feelings and thoughts, centered in their own experience in society and culture." Beyond this general characteristic, it "defies definition," however.[27] In an earlier article (1982), she uses the term "gynergenic" criticism, and more carefully defines it as:

> a self-consciously aware and aggressively women-identified attack on the male-identified status quo from a women-centered perspective, in this particular case the history of art as it is presently known, taught and practiced in male institutions. Moreover, it is actively concerned with creating alternatives to patriarchal art, art history and criticism shaped and defined by men...it demands active commitment and participation in social change.[28]

She makes a distinction between this form of criticism and a more "conservative formulation" that is concerned with "filling in the gaps" and "setting the record right." Langer notes the influence on her formulation of art criticism of writers Mary Daly (particularly *Gyn-Ecology*), Adrienne Rich, and Susan Griffin.[29]

The work of performance artist, art historian and critic Joanna Frueh can also be located within a woman-centered context. Her concerns are with women's spirituality and the female body in particular. She has called for a radical reinterpretation of criticism in the form of "new myths, new masks that wed creativity, intellect and sexuality." She sees a strong difference between male and female intellects, and wants to exploit that difference: "The phallic mind...must make a stab at knowledge...the vaginal mind embraces."[30] Her article, "Re-Vamping the Vamp," calls for a voluptuous and flaunting use of the female body by women artists as a bold tool to undermine the patriarchy.[31] Elsewhere she says that "the mind will not fly unless we embrace the body as a path to freedom."[32] The most important statement that she has written in terms of her philosophy of feminist criticism is "Towards a Feminist Theory of Art Criticism." Part I presents material in what she refers to as a "professional" mode, in order to prove to herself and the art world that she is capable of such a method of writing. Here she briefly discusses the stages of feminist literary criticism and relates them to feminist art criticism, ranging from the discovery and reinstatement of

women artists, to the investigation of a female sensibility, to the more theoretical interest in gender analysis. In Part II, she speaks through a "body inseparable from a mind." She also refers often to the ideas of Mary Daly and Susan Griffin, as well as French feminists such as Monique Wittig and Helene Cixous.[33] Like Langer, Frueh calls for a new language for women. "Once a woman owns her body, she will speak a different language."[34] She criticizes second generation feminist criticism and art as "cold." She seeks, rather, a "hot, passionate" feminism.[35]

Such body-oriented criticism, whether by art critics or by French feminists, has been critiqued for its essentialism. This problematic term has been defined as follows by Hilary Robinson in her book, *Visibly Female*:

> the belief that 'femininity' and 'masculinity' are innate and biologically determined–i.e. if you are born female you will 'naturally' be caring, passive, nurturing; if you are born male you are 'naturally' more aggressive, assertive etc., and there is no possibility of changing the essences of the genders through political action. Most feminists argue that 'femininity' is a cultural construct, and therefore open to alteration; some would say that 'femininity' is 'natural' to all women, not to be found at all in men, and should be treated as superior to masculinity.[36]

The question of essentialism is a tricky one. I think it is safe to say that both Langer and Frueh consider that there is a female essence or core, or a form of female sexuality that is present in all women and can be uncovered beneath the layers of societally conditioned femininity.

Arlene Raven also belongs to this camp in her identification with a woman-centered criticism. She, too, refers extensively to the work of Mary Daly, Susan Griffin, and Adrienne Rich. However, she is less involved with the search for a female sensual, bodily essence than Frueh, although she is still concerned that women artists and writers acknowledge the body as well as the mind in their work. She also has been involved in the California feminist movement in art from its beginning as an art historian and critic, and is an important spokesperson for this movement. In her catalogue essay, "At Home," an exhibition to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Women's Building in Los Angeles, which she helped to found. Raven gives an invaluable chronicle of a decade of events from an insider's perspective. An insight into her critical perspective is given in that catalogue as well:

> The realms of the mythic, of existence beyond our ordinary reality, of metaphor which is the province of art, of our kinship to the plants and animals, and of futuristic social structures are all among the dreams and visions which sustain us and through which we experience the present.[37]

Raven has just published an anthology of her writings, in which she stresses the connection between feminist art and social conscience — *Crossing Over: Feminism and Art of Social Concern.* Most of the essays are republished, but not in particularly visible places, so that the anthology gives us a better sense of her contribution to art criticism. She describes these essays as "feminist interpretations of women's socially committed art."[38] The book is an important descriptive source for feminist artists and

their projects. Her viewpoint is that of one who participates, expounds, supports, and interprets. It is a unique position, and a valuable one historically. Her writing, in a style often leaning towards the poetic, emanates from a belief in the existence of a female nature, a sensibility based in nature and intuition. The particular thematic bias of these essays appears to be toward women's spirituality, the women's community, women as victim of social injustice, violence against women, and the violence that women inflict on themselves. Her social conscience and that of much of the art about which she writes, is passionate and committed. Essays such as "A Hunger Artist," concerning issues and art about bulimia, and "We Did Not Move from Theory/We Moved to the Sorest Wounds," a catalogue essay from the exhibition at Ohio State University in 1985, "Rape," are very fine examples of this commitment. Her best work reflects her concern with such difficult political and social issues that few critics besides Lucy Lippard are committed to investigating.

In her recent article in the *Village Voice,* Raven tries to redress the second generation's criticism of first generation art and criticism. She decries the stigmatization of art that explores the "experience in the female body," and claims that "essentialism" and "innate" femininity "said to inform female imagery, ritual, and body art, were not formulated without consideration of human invention and social environment." Further, "arguments that there is no biological femininity...represent...escapist science fictions." She critiques the "philosophical exodus" of postmodern feminists "from their own bodies."

Postmodern women artists, she says, are conceptualists, whose art is "emphatically directed to the realm of the mind and the male audience." Calling the 80s the decade of "postfeminism," because of its "postmortem commentary on the unfashionable sensuality of feminist expression," she claims that such " 'postfeminist feminists' will not analyze male power or implicate those who perpetuate inequities against women.... The idea that patriarchal institutions must change is absent from most of today's dialogues."[39] It is unclear exactly which critics Raven refers to here. It seems obvious that the majority of feminist postmodern critics (see below) are concerned exactly with undermining patriarchal institutions. Moreover, she does not address the Postmodern feminists' rethinking such as their attack on the female body as spectacle, and female sexuality as a construct.[40]

As representative of a woman-centered criticism, Raven plays a valuable role in bringing to light and evaluating feminist art that continues first generation concerns which otherwise might remain obscure. However, her attack on postmodern feminism is less persuasive.

Artists have also been very vocal in the debate over the nature of feminist art and criticism. Suzanne Lacy, a performance artist from California, described her own political definition:

> At first we defined feminist art as all art which reflects a woman's consciousness, but as our politics evolved some of us chose stronger definitions. For me, now, feminist art must show a consciousness of women's social and economic position in the world, I also believe it demonstrates

forms and perceptions that are drawn from a sense of spiritual kinship between women.[41]

Harmony Hammond defined a feminist artist as one who makes art "that reflects a political consciousness of what it means to be a woman in patriarchal culture," and insisted that feminist art is not a style since the "visual form this consciousness takes varies from artist to artist."[42] Feminist art symbolized to her as well "the confronting and gaining control of one's own life, as opposed to control over the lives of others through art." She, too, sought a feminist criticism that would "bring art and politics together" to help women understand and develop the relationship between the two. Such criticism must be "integrated into the artmaking process," and evolve "as our art evolves."[43] Throughout her writing, she has insisted that women critically evaluate each other's art so that the best possible work emerges.[44]

Video and performance artist Martha Rosler, in a well-known article from 1977,[45] noted the importance for "renewed theoretical activity" after a period of "unity and high energy" that carried the feminist art movement on its optimistic wave in the early 1970s. She also pointed out the need to distinguish between "women's art" and "feminist art," the latter committed to a feminist that she defined for herself as "a principled criticism of economic and social power relations and some commitment to collective action." In her highly sophisticated and analytical critique of feminist art practice versus theory in California, she acknowledged her preference for feminist art that contained a "comprehensive critique of society."[46] This is one of the first statements of a second generation feminist art critical position, whether here or in Europe, although the content concerns first generation feminist art. Because she moved beyond description and intention to critique, Rosler provided the best early model available to feminist critics, and a still useful one, for dealing with feminist art.[47]

Several other feminist writers have played important roles in the development of a body of feminist art critical writing, if not necessarily in the conscious development of a theoretical framework. The feminist art criticism of art historian Thalia Gouma-Peterson has been important in a manner similar to that of Lucy Lippard. She has continually uncovered and recovered the work of contemporary women artists, and has become a strong supporter and advocate of a handful of major women artists, such as Faith Ringgold, Miriam Schapiro, Joyce Kozloff, Audrey Flack, and most recently Ruth Weisberg. Her critical approach has also been a model one. She studies both biography, artistic development, and the work's relation to larger theoretical issues. Her work on all these women artists, in which her intense feminist vision shines through, stands as the most valuable and comprehensive interpretive statements on them. Her essays on Miriam Schapiro have charted and illuminated the changes in that artist's work, from issues of craft as high art, to the interest in developing her persona as the creative woman.[48] Gouma-Peterson's series of essays on Faith Ringgold can be said to have brought that artist her well-earned recognition. Her recent article on Ringgold's quilts weaves description and interpretation into a highly readable and rich tapestry of its own.[49] Typical of Gouma-

Peterson's ability to see deeply into the meaning of works of art, particularly works that represent a change of direction in the artist's development, is her article on Audrey Flack, "Icons of Healing Energy."[50]

Art historian Josephine Withers, too, has written some valuable art criticism. Her critical review of Judy Chicago's *Birth Project,* her article on May Stevens, and her recent essay on the Guerrilla Girls are all exemplary feminist art critical practice in their spirit of discovery and critical analysis of important feminist issues.[51]

Art critic and historian Ellen Johnson has also written some important and early articles on women such as Eva Hesse, Jackie Winsor, and Alice Neel. She also has managed to bridge second generation concerns with her original approach to the "originals" of Sherrie Levine.[52]

Critics devoted to writing on contemporary women artists of color are rare. Indeed, works dealing with such artists at all are scarce. Gouma-Peterson's essays on Ringgold, her work and that of Samella Lewis on Elizabeth Catlett, Betty La Duke's on Latina artists, and those short essays included in the new anthologies discussed below, are among the few.[53]

Several anthologies on contemporary women artists, including Eleanor Munro's *Originals: American Women Artists* (New York, 1979) and Cindy Nemser's *Art Talk* (New York, 1975), have contributed important information as well. Both rely on interviews. The latter, however, although containing some valuable statements, is overburdened by Nemser's leading questions and opinionated engagement with the artists.[54] Munro also employed an intrusive approach, that of "psychoesthetics" (psychological biography), through which to view the artists. She also rejected a feminist perspective. Nevertheless, her interviews are sensitive and intelligent, and she also included several women of color in her study. A more recent collection of interviews with fewer preconceptions was published in 1981, edited by Lynn F. Miller and Sally S. Swenson, *Lives and Works: Talks with Women Artists* (Metuchen, NJ).

One other critic must be noted. In 1976, Lawrence Alloway published his overview of the women's art movement, "Women's Art in the '70s." It is important not only as an attempt by an "authoritative" male voice to summarize events, problems, and necessary goals for feminist art, but also for the responses it elicited. He simplistically maintained that collaboration is the most important criterion for a working definition of a feminist: " a woman who is willing to work with other women to reduce inequality in the long run or to achieve a specific short-term reform."[55] The many responses to his ideas ranged from appreciation to critique of his authoritative, "patronizing 'progress report,'" as Harmony Hammond termed it.[56] Alloway has consistently shown an unprecedented interest in feminist art among male critics of the first generation, an interest approached only by that of Donald Kuspit.[57] Alloway's position, however supportive, has not been a radical feminist one, although he does insist on the ideological versus simply formal import of art by women.

First generation artists and critics have been generally successful in exposing discrimination in the art world, advocating reforms, and giving con-

temporary women artists wider exposure. Second generation feminists, instead of developing these issues, have focused on somewhat different issues, or at least have taken a different perspective towards them. Their analysis has become more interdisciplinary, utilizing studies in literary poststructuralism, psychoanalysis, and semiotics, as well as political philosophies such as Marxism. Second generation feminists are thus often allied to issues and methods of critical Postmodernism.

In fact, the influence of radical thought from Europe has dramatically altered the discipline of American art criticism in general. Lisa Tickner lucidly describes the difference in method between European and American critics (not necessarily all feminists, but rather Postmodernists speaking on issues of sexuality and/in representation as she defines it):

> These questions have been rehearsed by American critics, largely under the diverse influences of Walter Benjamin, Jean Baudrillard, Guy Debord, and the Frankfurt School. A comparable body of writing in England has drawn more pointedly on the work of Bertolt Brecht, Louis Althusser, Roland Barthes, and tendencies in European Marxism, poststructuralism, feminism, and psychoanalysis.
>
> The crucial European component in the debate has been the theorization of the gendered subject in ideology [based on Althusser and Lacan in particular].[58]

This second generation of feminists has abandoned the issue of female sexuality, and of female sensibility, in favor of an investigation of the workings and interactions of gender differences rather than the nature of the specifically female. Tickner, for example, indicates the problem with the attempt to express female sexuality in art when she questions the basic assumption that women "will find a cultural voice to express their own sexuality." She expresses reservation towards any static definition of sexuality:

> Women's social and sexual relations have been located within patriarchal culture, and their identities have been moulded in accordance with the roles and images which that ideology has sanctioned.[59]

Women have no language with which to express their sexuality except the male one, and it is difficult to determine even what that sexuality is in "woman-centered" terms. "The question is how, against this inherited framework, women are to construct new meanings which can also be understood."[60]

This generation of feminist art critics conceives of woman as an unfixed category, constantly in process, examined through her representations and ideological constructions within a male system. Rather than a definition of gender per se, of woman, the issue becomes, as Tickner puts it, "the problematic of culture itself, in which definitions of femininity are produced and contested and in which cultural practices cannot be derived from or mapped directly onto a biological gender." Second generation artists and critics are concerned rather with "an interrogation of an unfixed feminini-

ty produced in *specific systems of signification.*" The work of such artists as Mary Kelly, Yve Lomax, and Marie Yates, which Tickner discusses in her article for the exhibition, "Difference: On Representation and Sexuality" at the New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York (1985), are concerned as she says with "sexuality in process which Luce Irigaray described as 'woman as the not-yet'–a continued countering of cultural hegemony in its ceaseless and otherwise unquestioned production of meanings and of subject positions for those meanings."

> The most important contribution of the feminism under consideration here is the recognition of the relations between representation and sexed subjectivity *in process,* and of the need to intervene productively within them. The artists considered here hold the common aim of "unfixing" the feminine, unmasking the relations of specularity that determine its appearance in representation, and undoing its position as a "marked term" which ensures the category of the masculine as something central and secure.[61]

These Postmodernist artists and writers believe that representation is at the very root of the difference between male and female in our society. Both feminists and Postmodern cultural philosophers understand representation not as a mimesis of some ultimate reality, but rather as a way of reflecting the culture's vision of itself. Representation thus legitimizes culture's dominant ideology, and is therefore inevitably politically motivated. It constructs difference through a re-presentation of preconditioned concepts about gender that inform all of our institutions, and are at the very foundation of our ideology and system of beliefs. The same is true about our cultural definitions for male and female identity. Stephen Heath claims that there is not an "immediate, given fact of 'male' and 'female' identity but a whole process of differentiation" that Tickner notes is "produced and reproduced in the representations of a range of discourses (medicine, law, education, art and the mass media.)"[62]

Tickner further links the development of this position to the understanding of the "psycho-social construction of sexual difference."

> The result was a shift in emphasis from equal rights struggles in the sexual division of labor and cultural feminism founded on the revaluation of an existing biological or social femininity to a recognition of the processes of sexual *differentiation,* the instability of gender positions, and the hopelessness of excavating a free or original femininity beneath the layers of patriarchal oppression.[63]

A debate concerning methodology has recently erupted in art critical circles between the two generations, which further illustrates their different positions. Unfortunately, it has been antagonistically conceived and simplistically distorted from both sides. Deborah Cherry, clearly a second generation feminist, in her review of Pollock and Parker's *Old Mistresses,* counsels against "perpetuating unificatory stereotypes" such as the "isolated, frozen category" of "Woman."[64] She further pushes first generation feminists into a biologically deterministic camp that they by no means all

occupy, by defining sex as a reference to biological differences and gender as a matter of culture, and assuming that all artists and critics who are not concerned with "gender" adhere to an essentialist, unchanging view of woman throughout history. On the contrary, although first generation feminists often investigate specific traits that belong to the female, such traits are generally seen as culturally determined, and changing through history as those determinants change.

Typical of this debate is the exchange between filmmaker and film critic Jane Weinstock and artist Nancy Spero. Weinstock characterizes much first generation feminist art, in particular that of Nancy Spero, as the "celebration of otherness." Like many other Postmodern feminists, she disdains the "celebration of difference" and the "myth of Otherness," and prefers artists who she says "expose myths rather than create them," such as Ilona Granet, Jenny Holzer, Mary Kelly and Barbara Kruger.[65] Those artists analyze "how meaning is produced and organized" and therefore undermine "the structures of domination."[66] This attitude expresses the shift that has occurred in feminist art and criticism over the last decade.

Nancy Spero in turn condemns this second generation of feminist criticism as it is manifested in Weinstock's article as "a new wave of phallocentrism, under the guise of 'difference.' "[67] Weinstock's response to Spero's letter is to question what she calls Spero's "search for a female essence," once again distorting the notion of representation of sexuality into essentialism. The difference between Spero and Weinstock, as representatives of the two concomitant phases of feminist thought on art, reduces to the difference between the understanding of the female as somehow existent, fixed, and thus excavatable, at least within a moment in history, synchronically, and the alternative investigation of the unstable process of gender construction. Both represent certain realities. Although sexuality may not exist except as a construction, women do have common shared experiences, and the constructs of gender themselves result from repeated experiences, whether one takes Spero's view of sexuality or Mary Kelly's (as in her *Post-Partum Document*). Spero grounds her work in the condition of being female, in what woman is in relation to herself, and to other women, Kelly to how that self is constructed in relation to social, ideological and psychological structures. They are mutually exclusive concepts, yet both are operative. One reveals the continuities between, the other exposes the discontinuities and disjunctions without. Instead of legitimizing the study of only one or the other, instead of discarding the one for the other, an investigation of the positioning of one within the other would better reveal both.

Tickner does not see the two generations in such negative, dichotomous terms. Not only has she written some of the most trenchant and penetrating analyses of second generation concerns, but she is also sympathetic to first generation feminist art as an ongoing project, as can be seen in her recent article on Nancy Spero. Tickner disagrees with Weinstock that Spero is celebrating "difference," and claims instead that her intent is to create "la peinture feminine" related to "l'ecriture feminine" of which the French

feminist theorists speak.[68] In her article, Tickner offers not only a substantial model of scholarship and methodology for feminist criticism, but she also rescues first generation art from exile and re-establishes it as a viable enterprise.

Lippard also has refused to give up the one position in her move towards the more deconstructive one. In the debate between "socialist feminism and radical or cultural femininism," she takes both sides. She included both Mary Kelly and Nancy Spero in her exhibition in London at the Institute for Contemporary Arts (1980), "Issue: Social Strategies by Women Artists."

> Some of the artists in "Issue"...refuse to separate their social activism and their involvement in the myths and energies of women's distant histories and earth connections.
>
> It seems to me that to reject all of these aspects of women's experience as dangerous stereotypes often means simultaneous rejection of some of the more valuable aspects of our female identities. Though used against us now, their final disappearance would serve the dominant culture all too well.[69]

This exchange effectively represents the different ideological positions of the two feminist groups. Both positions have potential worth, despite the fact that it is in the nature of the committed to deny it. (The move toward revisionist psychoanalytic feminist thought as a link between the constructed self and the constructed category, "Woman," makes sense in this impasse.) The recent art of May Stevens, for example, has managed to negotiate both positions, through her Postmodern vocabulary of disjunction and fragment, which both critiques patriarchal institutions and addresses specifically female concerns.[70] Weinstock's accusation of "female essence," as Cherry's definition of "sex" difference as *only* biological, as well as many other such implications in recent feminist literature, are in danger of simplistically "colonizing" first generation feminism into an essentialist camp. Such categorical closure is certainly in opposition to the proclaimed aims of a dismantling and deconstructing Postmodern feminism.

The exhibition at the New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York, "Difference: On Representation and Sexuality," (1985), exemplifies many of the new tendencies in methodology and art. Since it was curated by both an art critic, Kate Linker, and a film critic, Jane Weinstock, it included film and video along with more "traditional" art; such a breakdown of categories is characteristic of current tendencies. Through both the art works and the catalogue, the exhibition represents post-structuralist, psychoanalytically informed thinking on both art and film.[71] As its title asserts, the exhibition was concerned with sexuality and representation, emphasizing the female gender. The show was comprised mostly of feminist artists and critics, including deconstructionist artists such as Barbara Kruger, Martha Rosler, Sherrie Levine and Hans Haacke from America, and Mary Kelly, Yve Lomax, Marie Yates, Silvia Kolbowski, and Victor Burgin from Britain. Typical of the new methodological focus of feminism on difference and gender rather than the female *per se,* the exhibition was not separatist.

Not only were both male artists and critics represented, but Tickner, among others, brought a discussion of male sexuality into her feminist discourse on representation and sexuality.[72]

Second generation feminist critics are growing in number and their work has even entered the mainstream art magazines, although it is still underrepresented.[73] Much of the best postmodern work by the Americans has been collected in anthologies, such as that edited by Brian Wallis, *Art After Modernism: Rethinking Representation* (New York, 1984), with important feminist articles on art by Kate Linker and Lucy Lippard, and on film by Laura Mulvey and Constance Penley. Other articles have a more or less feminist bias as well. Wallis's anthology is typical of a group of such texts. As part of the postmodern interest in the ideological nature of representation generally, feminism has participated in this renaissance of art anthologies. Such anthologies have a particular profile. These include Hal Foster's *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture* (Port Townsend, WA, 1983), and his *Discussions in Contemporary Culture* (Seattle, 1987), and another Wallis, *Blasted Allegories: An Anthology by Contemporary Artists* (New York, Cambridge, 1987). These books are concerned with issues of cultural politics and representation, theories of the subject based on Foucault or on psychoanalytic theories, the decline in Modernism and the rise of new paradigms, and gender difference. At least one, and sometimes more, articles are devoted to postmodern feminist issues. Critics vary on their attitudes to such theoretical compendiums in which feminism has a small but often pervasive role. Some feel that feminism has been swallowed whole by the new theory. Others feel that it has taken its proper place in the mainstream of theoretical development. Whatever the case may be, and perhaps only time will tell, postmodern feminist writing on art and culture has increased tremendously, and has earned a much more mainstream position than it has ever had in artworld concerns. The *Difference* show is an early and indicative example of this. This is by no means to say that feminists and feminist art have arrived. On the contrary, statistics on gallery and museum exhibitions for women are still dismal, as the Guerrilla Girls continue to point out to us, but feminist *theory* has gained tremendous sophistication in a world in which theory itself has now a certain legitimacy. For those who still remember too well the reign of Greenbergian formalism in art criticism, this is a major accomplishment. For those who disdain theory generally, and particularly feminist theory originally derived from male theory, this development is anathema.

Despite its rising influence, a critique of these new methodologies in relation to feminism has been undertaken, although it is still inadequately developed. In his assessment of them, Craig Owens first noted a point of conjunction between "the feminist critique of patriarchy and the postmodernist critique of representation," in that both reject a totalizing theoretical construct. However, as Owens observed, it is not "theory *per se* that women repudiate, nor simply, as Lyotard has suggested, "the priority men have granted to it... Rather,...they challenge...the distance it maintains be-

tween itself and its objects–a distance that objectifies and masters." Indeed, Postmodern and Poststructuralist methodologies often refer to feminism and the female in their rejection of an authoritarian discourse of mastery. Despite the importance of the "feminist voice" as a model for breaking down a discourse of mastery in postmodern culture, theories of it have "tended either to neglect or to repress that voice," as Owens said. He suggested, therefore, that "postmodernism may be another masculine invention engineered to exclude women."[74]

Tickner questions the very use of "feminine metaphors" to refer to the Postmodern refusal of authority and "master discourses" by writers such as Jameson and Derrida. She asks if this is not only another cliché of the female.

> Are these intellectual abdications on one level the flirtation of male philosophers with the place of the Other...? ...Is the embrace of the feminine a fashionable flirtation which avoids the consequences of psychoanalytic and feminist theories of subjectivity for men?...When the masters who are demonstrating their ultimate mastery by refusing the discourse of mastery...make fashionable reference to feminism it remains a *lumpen* category without reference to names, dates or texts to be argued with.[75]

In such discourse, there is the danger that women will once again be positioned as the weaker, essentialist voice of "nature" and "experience" in opposition to culture, theory and intellect.

In spite of such dangers, the feminist postmodern engagement with theory has been quite rich and fruitful as well. If, as Tickner believes, "feminism is a politics, not a methodology,"[76] it is legitimate to utilize and transform whatever methodological tools are available, including "male" theory. Unfortunately, such feminist, postmodern positioning can often take the form of authoritarianism itself.

Several new anthologies of feminist art and criticism have attempted to avoid such antagonism between the generations while still taking one or the other of these stances. Of the four discussed here, two, from England *Framing Feminism: Art and the Women's Movement 1970-1985,* eds. Roszika Parker and Griselda Pollock (London and New York, 1987), and *Looking on: Images of Femininity in the Visual Arts and Media,* ed. Rosemary Betterton (London and New York, 1987), in their introductions, assume very strong postmodern positions towards the material. The other two, one from England, *Visibly Female: Feminism and Art Today,* ed. Hilary Robinson (New York, 1988), and the other from the U.S., *Feminist Art Criticism,* eds. Arlene Raven, Cassandra Langer, and Joanna Frueh (Ann Arbor, 1988), have a more eclectic viewpoint.

Betterton has collected a series of feminist critiques of the "representation of women in the visual media" since the mid-70s, with a focus on work from the 1980s. She assumes the "social construction of sexuality," yet also assumes "an understanding of femininity as contradictory, shifting and subject to conflict," as well as "competing definitions of femininity which can be found across various cultural discourses." Her choices were

meant to "represent the main theoretical questions and approaches which have informed feminist writing on representation" and to "focus on the representation of femininity and female sexuality, which has been a central theme in that work." Betterton's voice is quite strong throughout the text because of her thorough, clear and focused introductions. Her intention, she says, is to "make difficult concepts more available," and she has done so without losing the complexity of the ideas. Her desire to "map out areas of feminist critical practice which have been developed in relation to the visual image in recent years" is successful in many ways.[77] Perhaps its drawback, if it might be so-called, is its particular reliance on British sources. However, since Betterton's concern is with recent theoretical developments, this reliance has the advantage of the sophistication of the British in that development. As noted above, important work has been done by Americans, but the British were certainly there first, and still are in greater number, and this anthology reflects that fact.

Parker and Pollock's anthology also has extensive introductory material, amounting to an exposition of their position as postmodern feminists.[78] The book itself is meant to be a documentary study of the feminist art movement in Great Britain, and reproduces in facsimile format what the editors consider to be the important documents for its development, including exhibition reviews, statements of purpose, interviews and critical essays. The introductory essays are just as valuable as the documents, however, in adding to our understanding of the movement, and of the nature of British feminism generally. The first article, coauthored by the editors, provides a thorough overview of the movement. The second, a long introductory essay by Pollock, "Feminism and Modernism," is particularly revealing of her position towards feminist art and criticism. As Gouma-Peterson and I state in our review of the book,

> Pollock articulates the pertinent issues surrounding Modernism, Postmodernism and their relation to feminism: the definition of Modernism and the shift to Postmodernism; the role of a mediated culture in the production of ideology; the nature of representation, particularly of women; the nature of feminist art practices (cultural vs. political); the question of sexuality as essence or process; the history of the Modernist notion of the "woman artist."[79]

This book is invaluable as a tool for evaluating the women artists' movement in Britain. Such a history has yet to be written for the American movement, but Parker and Pollock's text stands as an exemplary model in many ways for this enterprise, through its use of both critical analysis and facsimiled documents, without attempting to subsume one into the other. The text also allows us once again to compare the British and the American movements. The gist of this comparison points to the greater political activism and more comprehensively theoretical viewpoints of the British.[80]

The editors have also attempted to bridge the antagonism between first and second generation feminist artists and critics in their introductions. Acknowledging the difference between those who believe in "an essential feminine sensibility and those who insist that femininity is socially and

historically constructed," and acknowledging their own adherence to a notion of the social and ideological construction of woman, they nevertheless stress the need to acknowledge as well "events of the body." They also recognize the need for both theory and practice. Feminist art practices must maintain a dialectic

> between the democratic and enabling activities which encourage more women to make art and exhibit it with confidence simply as women, and the specialized, theoretically developed feminist interventions in the official cultural site and apparatuses. It should not be a matter of either/or, alternative or interventionism, populism or the mainstream.[81]

This book raises a number of issues such as this that makes it a valuable resource for the study of and the making of feminist art and criticism.

The American anthology, *Feminist Art Criticism,* contains articles written by critics ranging from the editors themselves (Raven, Langer, Frueh, discussed above) to second generation feminist film critic Teresa de Lauretis (see below). The articles are arranged chronologically, from Maryse Holder's essay of 1973, "Another Cuntree: At Last, A Mainstream Female Art Movement," to Arlene Raven's article of 1987, "The Last Essay on Feminist Criticism." The editors offer only a short preface, and let the articles speak for themselves. The essays, they tell us, are theoretical, and deal with issues of "spirituality, sexuality, the representation of woman in art, the necessary interrelationship of theory and action, women as artmakers, ethnicity, language itself, so-called postfeminism and critiques of the art world, the discipline of art history and the practice of art criticism."[82] The choices are well made, and include a number of landmark articles, such as those by Lise Vogel, Carol Duncan, and Moira Roth, as well as essays by Lowery Sims on performance by black women artists and by Shifra Goldman on Chicana artists. Unlike the other three anthologies discussed here, in which a number of the essays are short statements to give a sense of the milieu or present a particular point of information or method, the articles in *Feminist Art Criticism* are mostly pithy, synthetic statements of art critical method.

The final anthology to be discussed, edited by Robinson, contains essays whose topics range from Great Goddess imagery to debates pro and con over the use of postmodern theory. The emphasis, as in *Feminist Art Criticism,* is on a broad spectrum of approaches to feminist art, in order to show the "state of feminist art and art criticism in the eighties."[83] Although originating from the UK, this anthology also has material by and on Americans, such as May Stevens and Judy Chicago, so that the range is much broader, and much less focused than that in Betterton's anthology.

One of the most useful aspects of this book is the number of "marginalized" areas (even within feminism) addressed. There are several articles by lesbians, and five articles by or on women of color, for example. Several of these latter address issues of difference between white feminist concerns and those of women of color. Even class is indirectly addressed in the piece on a photography exhibition of women involved in the miners' strike, "Strik-

ing Women," by Beatrix Campbell and Gloria Chalmers. This anthology, as well as *Feminist Art Criticism,* thus embrace this important and still too little addressed issue in feminism today.

The four anthologies thus do four different things, and I would suggest, all successfully. *Framing Feminism* describes a broad theoretical structure that frames without subsuming a series of primary texts from the British Women's Movement, with the aim of presenting and theorizing that movement. *Looking On* focuses on a particular issue, representation, again within a theoretical structure, and reprints articles that deal with aspects and approaches to that subject. *Feminist Art Criticism* reveals the multitude of feminist critical approaches in the States through a series of synthetic, theoretical articles. *Visibly Female* presents a series of rich statements and positions on feminist art by artists, critics, and art historians, taken from a broad sweep of the literature (British and American), and contains the breadth as well as the sometimes arbitrary feeling that such a sweep entails. It is impressive to see how much feminist art writing is out there–enough to support four anthologies, and more.

One of the most productive areas of feminist criticism of the arts during the last decade is in film studies. A number of important feminist film critics and writings have appeared, that can only be briefly outlined here. Magazines such as *Screen* (a British journal influenced by Marxist and psychoanalytic theory), *Afterimage,* and *Camera Obscure* (a journal of "feminism and film theory" as it describes itself, from Berkeley, beginning 1976) are important sites for the development of feminist film theory.

In their introduction to the anthology of 1984, *Re-Vision,* meant to represent an overview of the state of feminist film and its criticism, editors Mary Ann Doane, Patricia Mellencamp and Linda Williams outline major events in the development of feminist film studies, a development that closely parallels the development of feminist art criticism and history:[84] the initial feminist documentaries and women's film festivals which were an integral part of the activism and consciousness-raising of the women's movement; beginning scholarship on the "image of woman" in male-authored cinema; the discovery of a previously lost history of women filmmakers, writers, editors, animators and documentarians; the introduction of new critical theories and methodologies of semiology and psychoanalysis by British feminists; and finally, the rise of feminist film criticism as an academic field that has already begun to produce a generation of feminist film scholars.

By as early as the mid-1970s, this criticism had moved to a second generation position. According to E. Ann Kaplan, feminist film criticism

> evolved directly out of the women's movement and its preoccupations in the early 1970s and, quite naturally, began with a sociological, political methodology. As the inadequacies of this approach became clear, feminists began to use structuralism, psychoanalysis, and semiology in their theoretical analysis.[85]

Annette Kuhn, a British theorist, specifically addresses and evaluates the methodologies that feminists have used to analyze film in *Women's*

Pictures: Feminism and Cinema (London, Boston, Melbourne and Henley, 1982). She emphasizes that a feminist approach is more a matter of perspective than just the application of a method to the material, and thus is a more pervasive and undermining "intervention within theory or culture." She notes that feminist film theory has generally tended to appropriate methods outside of feminism, often questioning and even transforming "the very methods it has adopted for itself." One such method has been semiotics along with structuralism and psychoanalysis, in which the main focus has been "the ways in which woman has been constituted as a set of meanings through processes of cinematic signification." She understands the "fundamental project of feminist film analysis" to be "making visible the invisible," that is, "drawing attention to certain matters that often go unnoticed" in films, such as the ways in which "women are represented, the kinds of images, roles constructed by films," as well as "the ways in which women do not appear at all or are in certain ways not represented in films." Both concerns are often invisible because they appear "quite ordinary and obvious." Her summary of the development of feminist film theory from its "watershed" year of 1972, is analytic and complete, including comparisons between British and American feminist film studies, and offering directions that such studies might usefully take in the future.[86]

The editors of *Re-Vision* note the importance of post-structuralist methodologies to the discipline as well–specifically, an attempt to "relocate" through feminist vision "contemporary theories of the text." They suggest a conjunction of two methodological models: Roland Barthes' concept of "the multiplicity of meaning in texts" as a way of "denying the rigid constraints of sexual duality," and Adrienne Rich's strategy of "entering old texts from new critical directions."[87]

Laura Mulvey's "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema,"[88] published in 1975, is generally acknowledged as one of the most important articles to begin the second phase of feminist film study.[89] Judith Mayne, in her review of feminist film theory and criticism, written in 1985, claims that "it is only a slight exaggeration to say that most feminist film theory and criticism of the last decade has been a response, implicit or explicit, to the issues raised in Laura Mulvey's article: the centrality of the look, cinema as spectacle and narrative, psychoanalysis as a critical tool."[90]

Mulvey's inquiry into the male gaze versus the female gaze in cinema—"man as 'bearer of the look,' woman as its object"—has remained of central interest to feminist film studies, not surprisingly considering the nature of the medium and the obvious import of the viewer in film. As Marcia Pally has pointed out, film depends on a series of looks–yours, the director's, the hero's–with the gaze goes the entire construction of cinema, from the list of characters to the way we see them."[91]

> The determining male gaze projects its phantasy onto the female figure which is styled accordingly. In their traditional exhibitionist role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote *to-be-looked-at-ness*.[92]

According to Teresa de Lauretis, in *Alice Doesn't: Feminism, Semiotics, Cinema* (Bloomington, 1984), "woman as spectacle–both to be looked at, place of sexuality, and object of desire...finds in narrative cinema its most complex expression and widest circulation."[93] This concept of the gaze has played a role in studies on art as well. The male as targeted audience for paintings of the female nude, first discussed in feminist terms by John Berger in *Ways of Seeing* (London, 1972), has become common currency among feminist art historians. Mulvey's emphasis on psychoanalytic methodology to explicate this issue has remained vital to feminist film studies and to film theory generally.[94]

Feminist film critics have also had an "increasing preoccupation with the female spectator."[95] De Lauretis among others insists that women are more than just the object of the male gaze. We can not only look but desire out of our own position, rather than exist only as constructions of a male society, as the Other to male needs and fantasies. (One thinks of the art of Nancy Spero here. See the section on her in this article.) She is interested in the contradiction between the male discourse on *woman* (defined as the "fictional construct" of the "other-from-man," "nature and Mother, site of sexuality and masculine desire, sign and object of men's social exchange") and the process of both writing and reading by *women* as "real historical beings who cannot as yet be defined outside of those discursive formations, but whose material existence is nonetheless certain." Her concern is "the politics of self-representation" for women, within a feminist theory that is always "at once excluded from discourse and imprisoned within it."[96] The new feminist theory towards which she works is best described in her essay, "Semiotics and Experience":

> This is where the specificity of a feminist theory may be sought: not in femininity as a privileged nearness to nature, the body, or the unconscious, an essence which inheres in women but to which males too now lay a claim; not in a female tradition simply understood as private, marginal and yet intact, outside of history but fully there to be discovered or recovered; not, finally, in the chinks and cracks of masculinity, the fissures of male identity or the repressed of phallic discourse; but rather in that political, theoretical, self-analyzing practice by which the relations of the subject in social reality can be rearticulated from the historical experience of women.[97]

E. Ann Kaplan also considers potential areas in which women may yet speak outside of a male discourse. With reference to French feminist Julia Kristeva's interest in the pre-oedipal and motherhood, she suggests that such areas may hold potential for investigation into a female voice or gaze.[98] Kuhn is also a major figure in rethinking the female gaze both in terms of viewer and filmmaker. (See, for example, *Women's Pictures,* discussed above.) The debate between first and second generation feminists occurs in film studies as well as in art. However, it is much more consciously considered, at least by some writers. In the introduction to *Re-Vision,* the authors note the unfortunate rejection, by the second generation, of early studies in feminist film criticism, especially those on the image of women

in film. The dilemma that results from this position as outlined by these authors, is identical to the unacknowledged but very present impasse in feminist art critical studies as well. This second generation attempts to avoid "essentialism" by "negating all potential feminine identities, revealing their complicity with a patriarchal ideology," through an elaboration of the continuous process of constructing sexual identity. The problem with this approach...is that it leaves the feminist analyst nowhere to stand. The notion of "identity," temporary as it might be, would appear to be crucial to the development of any politics, even a politics of signification. The feminist theorist is thus confronted with something of a double bind: she can continue to analyze and interpret various instances of the repression of woman, of her radical absence in the discourses of men–a pose which necessitates remaining within that very problematic herself, repeating its terms; or she can attempt to delineate feminine specificity, always risking a recapitulation of patriarchal constructions and a naturalization of "woman." The choice appears to be a not very attractive one between a continual repetition of the same gesture of demystification (itself perhaps mystified as to its methodological heritage) and a possible regression to ideas of feminine identity which threaten to constitute a veritable re-mystification.[99] The confusions and contradictions concerning a denial of essentialism or a separate female identity that often surreptitiously enter supposedly second generation texts points to the need for such "identity" in the midst of the very attempt to deny it.

As noted above, in feminist art criticism, these positions too often stand in opposition to each other, rather than being recognized as they are here as part of a continuum. The editors of *Re-Vision* call for an acknowledgement of "feminine specificity," but one which "labors against a static definition. ...for what is at stake is not 'being' [i.e. essentialism], but a position within discourse."[100]

Feminist film criticism is thus among the most sophisticated, subtle, and self-conscious in terms of the study of gender difference. However, like its sister feminist art criticism, it has only begun to study other forms of difference, such as class and race. Nevertheless, even in this field, it seems, it is in advance of the other arts.[101] Feminist film criticism has taken advantage of its marginalized position in the academy of both film and feminist studies to more radically challenge and "unsettle and dislocate the modes of the production of knowledge which have traditionally maintained a hierarchy along the lines of sexual and class differences."[102]

Feminist art criticism is a young and vigorous discipline, as can be seen in its varieties and even in its debates outlined above. Indeed, perhaps nothing speaks more persuasively of its vitality than the extreme volatility of its debates, because it implies the powerful commitment of those involved. The variety of critical approaches available to feminist critics is also a healthy sign, a sign that authority and power does not lie within the grip of one discourse, no matter how hard some may try to assert that theirs is the authoritative voice. Rather, a multitude of feminist voices addresses the multitude of art forms–feminist and other–that are being pro-

duced. The strength and the power of these different approaches ultimately lies within the strength and the commitment of the individual voices espousing them.

Despite the widespread proliferation of information about, organizations to support, and recognition of the problems involved in feminist art and theory, really very few gains have been made statistically, such as the numbers of women exhibiting in major galleries and in major museums, or the numbers of grants received by women artists.[103] While a few female artists have been elevated to the status of artworld "stars," and are now considered "safe" investments, there is still little consciousness about the status of women in the art world. More importantly, feminist and women artists in general are still at odds over what should be done about their status. Lippard's early demand that women create an alternative to only a piece of the artworld pie has not yet materialized, and in general women artists in America still seek simple equity with their male colleagues. Jane Gallop reveals the inadequacy of the "equal rights" or "gender equity" strategies, that informed cultural politics of the 1970s. Those strategies, based in the elimination of discrimination and in equal access to institutional power, in no way attempt to account for "the ideological structures of which discrimination is but a symptom."[104] They aim to bring woman into the standard masculine order, leaving untouched "the integrated value system through which feminine oppression is enacted." Both feminist art historians and art critics agree that a critique of the institutions themselves is in order.

On the other hand, a handful of committed feminist critics and a growing number of feminist art historians have created a body of material on women artists past and present, to present an alternative vision to that of the status quo. Both first and second generation feminist art practice has encouraged a series of political practices that Deborah Cherry describes as having redefined art on both theoretical and practical levels: To make their own meanings, feminist artists have challenged the art establishment's views on the nature and function of art, rebutted beliefs that art is neutral and value free, punctured modernist fallacies that it is apolitical.[105]

The extent to which feminism has altered art and art criticism is difficult to determine, largely due to the concurrent influence of Postmodern and deconstructive thought in which second generation feminism is also involved. However, as we have seen, since feminism is not a self-contained methodology, but a world-view, its impact is at once harder to trace and ultimately more significant. It does not impose itself on art and history as a canonic manifesto or a closed system, which pretends to delineate the validity and invalidity of the art of the past and the present, but instead offers a vibrant and ongoing critique of art and culture. It goes beyond the attention to women's issues, to embrace a totally new consideration of the production and evaluation of art and the role of the artist.

Notes

I would like to thank Thalia Gouma-Peterson for her help on this article, in terms of ideas, bibliography and editing. Many of the statements and concepts belong to her as well as to me, especially considering that parts of it are drawn directly from an article we coauthored (see n. 1 below). I would like to thank the *Art Bulletin* for permission to reprint parts of that article.

[1]Thalia Gouma-Peterson and Patricia Mathews, "The Feminist Critique of Art History," *Art Bulletin,* LXIX, no. 3, Sept. 1987, 326-57.

[2]Harmony Hammond explores this issue in "Class Notes," *Wrappings, Essays on Feminism, Art and the Martial Arts,* New York, 1984, 35.

[3]"An Anti-catalogue," 1977, quoted by Hammond, *ibid.,* 34.

[4]For a brief review of these issues, see Cindy Nemser, "Towards a Feminist Sensibility: Contemporary Trends in Women's Art," *Feminist Art Journal V,* Summer 1976, 19-23. For a discussion of organizations and publications devoted to these developments, see Gouma-Peterson and Mathews (as in n. 1), 329-31.

[5]For example, see the positions of Tamar Garb and Norma Broude, discussed in Gouma-Peterson and Mathews (as in n. 1), 333-34.

[6]Although some did not, such as Agnes Martin, who said that the "concept of a female sensibility is our greatest burden as women artists" (cited by Renee Sandell, "Female Aesthetics: The Women's Movement and Its Aesthetic Split," *Journal of Aesthetic Education,* XIV, Oct., 1980, 109). The nature of the female aesthetic was understood very differently by different writers.

[7]Vivian Gornick, "Toward a Definition of Female Sensibility" (1973), *Essays in Feminism,* New York, Hagerstown, San Francisco, London, 1978, 112. Such investigations in the first decade of feminism inevitably raised the issue of separatism. Both Judy Chicago (*Through the Flower: My Struggles as a Woman Artist,* Garden City, 1973, 72, and passim.) and Lucy Lippard considered it necessary, in order that women artists feel themselves to be "as at home in the world as men are." Yet Lippard recognized the danger of separatism—that it "become not a training ground, but a protective womb." She ultimately would like to see a "*tri*alectic between the female world, the art world, and the real world." Lippard, "Changing Since Changing," *From the Center-Feminist Essays in Women's Art,* New York, 1976, 11. However, she further noted that "it is crucial," she says, "that art by women not be sucked into the establishment and absorbed by it" (*ibid.,* "The Women Artist's Movement–What Next?" 141). Harmony Hammond also considered separatism necessary in order to "acknowledge our differences" and "learn about, support, and work with each other." (Hammond, "Class Notes," *Heresies,* 3, Fall 1977, repr. in *Wrappings* [as in n. 2], 38.) The issue of separatism is of less concern today, although many still feel the need to study women artists as a separate category, and to make art out of that position.

[8]A bibliography of such ideas is extensive, including: Elaine Showalter, "Toward a Feminist Poetics," *The New Feminist Criticism,* ed. Showalter, New York, 1985, 125-43 (orig. 1978); also see other articles in this anthology; Silvia Bovenschen, "Is There a Female Aesthetic?" *New German Critique,* X, Winter, 1977, 111-39 (repr. in *Female Aesthetic,* ed. Gisela Ecker, transl. Harriet Anderson, Boston, 1985, 23-50); Adrienne Rich, *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution,* New York, 1976; Michelle Citron, et al, "Women and Film: A Discussion of Feminist Aesthetics," *New German Critique,* XIII, Winter, 1978, 83-107; *Critical*

Inquiry, VIII, Winter, 1981, (Special Issue on Writing and Sexual Difference); Mary Jacobus, ed., *Women Writing and Writing About Women,* New York, 1979; Patricia Meyer Spacks, *The Female Imagination,* New York, 1972; Janet Todd, ed., *Gender and Literary Voice,* New York, 1980; Joan Semmel and April Kingsley, "Sexual Imagery in Women's Art," *Woman's Art Journal,* I, Spring/Summer, 1980, 1-6; Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic,* New Haven and London, 1979; Helen Eisenstein and Alice Jardine, eds., *The Future of Difference,* New Brunswick, NJ, 1985; Julia Penelope Stanley, and Susan J. Wolfe (Robbins), "Toward a Feminist Aesthetic," *Chrysalis,* no. 6, 1978, 57-71; Patricia Mathews, "What Is Female Imagery?" *Women Artists News,* X, Nov., 1984, 5-7, and catalogue essay, *Virginia Women Artists: Female Experience in Art,* Blacksburg, VA, 1985. Many others could be cited; this literature has continued to burgeon.

[9]Carol Gilligan, In *A Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development,* Cambridge, 1982, 22.

[10]Lucy Lippard, "Judy Chicago Talking to Lucy R. Lippard," *From the Center* (as in n. 7), 228. Also see Miriam Schapiro and Judy Chicago, "Female Imagery," *Womanspace Journal,* I, Summer, 1973, 11-14; Judy Chicago, *Through the Flower* (as in n. 7), 142-44; Arlene Raven, "Women's Art: The Development of a Theoretical Perspective," *Womanspace Journal,* I, Feb.-Mar., 1973, 14-20; Ruth Iskin, in "Sexual and Self-Imagery in Art," *Womanspace Journal,* I, Summer, 1973, speaks of the central cavity and innerspace imagery; "Interview with Miriam Schapiro by Moira Roth," *Miriam Schapiro: The Shrine, the Computer and the Dollhouse,* exh. cat., Mandeville Art Gallery, University of California, San Diego, 1975, 12-13; Lucy Lippard, "A Note on the Politics and Aesthetics of a Woman's Show," *Women Choose Women,* exh. cat., New York Cultural Center, 1973; "The Women Artists Movement–What Next?," 143-44, and "What is Female Imagery," 80-89, both in *From the Center* (as in n. 7); and Deena Metzger, "In Her Image," *Heresies,* no. 2, 1977, 9. Lawrence Alloway, "Women's Art in the 70s," *Art in America,* May/June, 1976, 64-72, is not convinced by any of these arguments. "No reason," he says, "has been advanced to prove that central configurations are inherently female" (p. 70). For the view that the female sensibility derives from experience alone, and not from body, see Cindy Nemser, *et.al.,* discussed by Christine Rom, "One View: The Feminist Art Journal," in *Woman's Art Journal,* II, Fall-Winter, 1981-82, 22; Patricia Mainardi, "Feminine Sensibility: An Analysis," one among several on this subject in the *Feminist Art Journal,* Fall, 1972; Janet Sawyer and Patricia Mainardi, "A Feminine Sensibility: Two Views," *Feminist Art Journal,* Apr., 1972; and "In Her Own Image–Exhibition Catalogue," *Feminist Art Journal,* Spring, 1974, 11-18. Lippard later modified her position on central core imagery (as did most of those who were involved with the issue early on). See "Issue and Taboo," in *Get The Message? A Decade of Art for Social Change,* New York, 1984, 125-26.

[11]For a discussion of such imagery, and for these terms, see Barbara Rose, "Vaginal Iconology," *New York Magazine,* Feb., 1974, and Dorothy Seiberling, "The Female View of Erotica," *New York Magazine,* Feb., 1974.

[12]Tickner, "The Body Politic: Female Sexuality and Women Artists Since 1970," *Art History,* I, June, 1978, 241-42.

[13]Schapiro, *Art in America,* Nov./Dec., 1976, 21, one of a group of responses to Alloway's article on women's art (as in n. 10). Donald Kuspit, "Betraying the Feminist Intention: The Case Against Feminist Decorative Art," *Arts Magazine,* Nov., 1979, 126, speaks of a change in attitude towards central or vaginal imagery:

> At the time of their first appearance, these strong, upfront–blatant–patterns seemed to function like the clenched fist of a rebellious military salute.... Such imagery was emphatic about the new feminist sense of determination and self-determination. Its idealistic abstraction...perfectly suited feminism's sense of new expectation, new potentiality, new energy, and new clarity of purpose.... Now, retrospectively, the central image seems to have a different meaning...based on a traditional sense of femininity–that was now to be dominant where it was once submissive.

The issue of the relation between nature and women's bodies has been explored by many, including Susan Griffith, *Woman and Nature: The Roaring Inside Her,* New York, 1978; Andre Dworkin, *Woman Hating,* New York, 1974, ch. 8-9; Sherry Ortner, "Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?" *Feminist Studies,* I, 1972, reprinted in *Women, Culture and Society,* ed. M.A. Rosaldo and L. Lamphere, 1974, 67-87. Also see Estelle Lauter, *Women As Mythmakers. Poetry and Visual Art by Twentieth-Century Women,* Bloomington, IN, 1984.

[14]Julia Kristeva, "Women's Time," *Feminist Theory: A Critique of Ideology,* ed. Nannerl O. Keohane, Michelle Z. Rosaldo, and Barbara C. Gelpi, Chicago, 1982, 39.

[15]Hammond, "A Sense of Touch," first publ. in *New Art Examiner,* Summer, 1979, and in *Wrappings* (as in n. 2), 78. Lippard discusses female body art generally in her article, "The Pains and Pleasures of Rebirth: European and American Women's Body Art," *From the Center* (as in n. 7), 121-38. See also Lippard's "Quite Contrary: Body, Nature, Ritual in Women's Art," *Chrysalis,* no. 2, 1977, 31-47, later published as part of her book *Overlay,* New York, 1983, and her "Binding/Bonding," *Art in America,* April, 1982, 112-18, on the abstract, political and female art of Harmony Hammond.

[16]Lawrence Alloway, in his article on "Women's Art and the Failure of Art Criticism," *Art Criticism,* I, Winter, 1980, 55, discusses the critical establishment's failure to acknowledge and critique fairly the art of the women's movement. He blames the art patronage structure "centered on the commercial art galleries" in which feminist art does not play a role, and the subsequent lack of a market for women's art. (pp. 56-57)

The following section on Lippard is almost verbatim from Gouma-Peterson and Mathews (as in n. 1), 343.

[17]Lippard had already published a number of books on various topics, including Dada, Surrealism and Pop Art, and was a contributor to major art magazines. Her further radicalization into an even more political stance since has "debarred" her almost entirely even from supposedly anti-establishment publications as *The Village Voice.*

[18]"Changing," in *Changing: Essays in Art Criticism,* New York, 1971. She never totally alters this position. Most important for her critical theory are: "Prefatory Notes," 11-13, and "Change and Criticism: Consistency and Small Minds," *ibid.,* 23-34; and for her to turn to feminist criticism, "Introduction: Changing Since *Changing,*" 1-11, and "Freelancing the Dragon," 15-27, in *From the Center* (as in n. 7). Her most recent collection of essays, *Get the Message?* (as in n. 10), that outlines her attempt to integrate art, feminism and leftist politics, contains important essays specifically on feminist art as well. (p. 34).

[19]"Changing" (as in n. 18), 10.

[20]"Sweeping Exchanges: The Contribution of Feminism to the Art of the 1970s," *Art Journal,* XL, 1980, repr. in *Get the Message?* (as in n. 10), 149-50.

[21]Reprinted in *Get the Message?* (as in n. 10), 89-97, from *Heresies,* no. 1, Jan. 1977.

[22]"Issue and Taboo," 131, reprinted in *Get the Message?* (as in n. 10), 125-48. Lippard is by no means claiming political art as the only feminist art, as she makes clear in the introduction to her essay. Also see "Trojan Horses: Activist Art and Power," in Brian Wallis, ed., *Art After Modernism: Rethinking Representation,* New York, 1984, 341-58.

[23]"Sweeping Exchanges" (as in n. 20), 149-50.

[24]In *Modernism and Modernity,* eds. Benjamin H.D. Buchloh, Serge Guilbaut, and David Solkin, Halifax, Nova Scotia, 1983, 195-212. For a critique of both Lippard and Donald Kuspit, see Clara Weyergraf, "The Holy Alliance: Populism and Feminism," *October,* no. 16, Spring, 1981, 23-24.

[25]Moira Roth, "Visions and Re-Visions: A Conversation with Suzanne Lacy," *Artforum,* Nov., 1980, 42-45. See Gouma-Peterson and Mathews (as in n. 1), 343-44, for a more detailed discussion of this critic. Also see her important work on women performance artists, "Toward a History of California Performance: Part One and Two," *Arts Magazine,* Feb. and June, 1978, and *The Amazing Decade. Women and Performance Art in America, 1970-1980,* ed. Moira Roth, Los Angeles, 1983; and her latest book, *Connecting Conversations. Interviews with 28 Bay Area Women Artists,* Moira Roth, ed., Oakland, CA, 1988.

[26]Roth, "Vision and Re-Visions: Rosa Luxemburg and the Artist's Mother," *Artforum,* Nov., 1980, 36-38.

[27]"Is There a New Feminist Criticism," *Women Artists News,* X, Sept., 1985, p. 5.

[28]"Against the Grain: A Working Gynergenic Art Criticism," *International Journal of Women's Studies,* V no. 3, May/June, 1982, 251, repr. in *Feminist Art Criticism: An Anthology,* eds. Cassandra Langer, Joanna Frueh and Arlene Raven, Ann Arbor, 1988. The term, derived as she notes from the "Daly/Culpepper term 'gynergy,'" transformed to " 'gynergenic,' to characterize a working woman-centered critique." She uses this term as a replacement for "feminist" (n. 5, 262). See also her article, "Emerging Feminist Art History," *Art Criticism,* I, no. 2, Winter, 1980, 66-83, much of which is incorporated into "Against the Grain."

[29]Among other places, in "Against the Grain," n. 5, 262.

[30]"The Dangerous Sex: Art Language and Male Power," *Women Artists News,* X, Sept., 1985, 6-7.

[31]"Re-Vamping the Vamp," *Arts Magazine,* Oct., 1982, 98-103. For more on her relation to her own body, see "Words of Love," *Art Papers,* XI, no. 5, Sept.-Oct., 1987, 30-32.

[32]"Towards a Feminist Theory of Art Criticism," *New Art Examiner,* Part II, June, 1985, 32.

[33]*Ibid.,* and Part I, *New Art Examiner,* Jan., 1985.

[34]*Ibid.,* June, 1985, 33. Also see her "A Chorus of Women's Voices," a review of the Los Angeles conference, "The Way We Look, The Way We See: Art Criticism for Women in the 90s," Jan. 1988, in *New Art Examiner,* XV, no. 9, May, 1988, 25-27.

[35]Cited in Arlene Raven, "The Last Essay on Feminist Criticism," in Raven *et al* (as in n. 28), 234.

[36]Hilary Robinson, ed., *Visibly Female, Feminism and Art Today: An Anthology,* New York, 1988, 29. For further discussion on essentialism, see below on Weinstock and Spero.

[37]Arlene Raven, *At Home,* exh. cat., Long Beach Museum of Art. 1983, 53; repr. in her anthology of art criticism, *Crossing Over, Feminism and Art of Social Concern,* Ann Arbor, 1988. See the review of this exhibition catalogue by Joanna Frueh, *Hue Points,* XIV, no. 1, Spring, 1986, 68-69.

[38]*Crossing Over* (as in n. 37), xvii.

[39]Arlene Raven, "Cinderella's Sisters' Feet," *Village Voice,* Fall Art Supplement, III, no. 2, Oct. 6, 1987, 6-9. Also see "The Last Essay on Feminist Criticism," in the anthology, *Feminist Art Criticism* (as in n. 28), 228-38, which incorporates this article as well as "The Changing Face of Feminism and the Arts," *Art Papers,* XI, no. 5, Sept.-Oct., 1987, 4-10.

[40]Although Raven claims there is no difference really between first and second generation feminist positions (*ibid.*, p. 6), her own position is very different from that of, say, Lisa Tickner, below, on "difference." The term "postfeminist" is also used in the preface to Raven, et al (as in n. 28), and in Whitney Chadwick's essay in the same anthology, "Women Artists and the Politics of Representation." Chadwick defines this term as follows: "[postfeminism], arising from fears of intellectual inadequacy among academic women and a perceived need for more rigorous analytic and theoretical models, is concerned primarily with the cultural construction of gender and the politics of representation as it has situated women in relation to the dominant discourses of patriarchy," (p. 185, n. 24). This term thus seems to define a form of postmodern feminism. Although Chadwick cites Gouma-Peterson and my article (as in n. 1) in the context of her criticism of such "developmental stages" as postfeminism in light of "Foucault's criticism of linear history," we do not use this disparaging term, nor do we subscribe to it. We use what we hoped would be a much more neutral term to speak of postmodern feminism– "second generation." "Postfeminism" seems both less apt and more problematic than "second generation." "Generations" is in fact an operational term in the feminist literature of many disciplines; we did not mean to use it qualitatively, nor in terms of a linear "progress," but rather only in a strict chronological sense; that is, one came first and the other second. We argue that both are still viable and worthy (Gouma-Peterson and Mathews, as in n. 1, 349), despite their often antagonistic relationship, and I reiterate that here (in the first paragraph). Our understanding of these "generations" is aligned with Foucault's concept of the archives of knowledge: "that which differentiate discourses in their multiple existence and specifies them in their own duration...*the general system of the formation and transformation of statements.*" (Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language,* New York, 1972, 129-30.)

[41]1979; cited in Roth (as in n. 26), 37. The following section on artists as critics comes from Gouma-Peterson and Mathews (as in n. 1), 344-45.

[42]Harmony Hammond, "Horseblinders," in *Wrappings* (as in n. 2), 99. She criticized the current state of feminist art as seen by insiders and outsiders.

[43]"Creating Feminist Works," 13, first publ. 1978, Barnard Women's Center, New York, and "Horseblinders," 104 (both in *Wrappings,* as in n. 2). Similarly, in op-

position to Alloway's limited definition of feminist art as collaboration (see discussion below), Saribenne Stone defines it as "that art which grows out of a feminist consciousness," and notes that a feminist woman artist may not necessarily make art concerned with feminism. (Response to Alloway [as in n. 13], 1976, 21.) Cindy Nemser claims that any art that reflects "a woman's immediate personal experience" has the right to be called feminist. ("Towards a Feminist Sensibility" [as in n. 4], 21.)

[44]See *Wrappings* (as in n. 2), 18 & 104 for example.

[45]"The Private and the Public: Feminist Art in California," *Artforum,* Sept., 1977, 66-74. Rosler has written a number of good critical pieces, but this is the major one on feminist art. On her work, see Martha Gever, "An Interview with Martha Rosler," *Afterimage,* IX, October, 1981, 10-17; *Martha Rosler: Three Works,* Halifax, 1981; and Jane Weinstock, "Interview with Martha Rosler," *October,* XVII, Summer, 1981, 77-98.

[46]*Ibid.*, "Private," 66, 69.

[47]Many other women artists could be mentioned here for their art criticism. For several further examples, see writings by Miriam Schapiro, Faith Ringgold, Jaune Quick-to-See-Smith, Ruth Weisberg (who has written a number of interesting articles), and Muriel Magenta, in the issue, "Teaching About Women and the Visual Arts," *Women's Studies Quarterly,* XV, no. 1 & 2, Spring/Summer, 1987. This issue contains other valuable writings by women on this topic as well.

[48]Thalia Gouma-Peterson, "The House as Private and Public Image In Miriam Schapiro's Art," *Miriam Schapiro. A Retrospective: 1953-1980,* ed. Thalia Gouma-Peterson, Wooster, OH, 1980, 10-18; "Theater of Life and Illusion in Miriam Schapiro's Recent Work," in *"I'm Dancin' As Fast As I Can." New Paintings By Miriam Schapiro,* Bernice Steinbaum Gallery, New York, 1986, repr. from *Arts Magazine,* Mar., 1986, 3-8.

[49]Thalia Gouma-Peterson, "Faith Ringgold's Journey: From Greek Busts to Jemima Blakey," *Faith Ringgold: Painting, Sculpture, Performance,* eds. Thalia Gouma-Peterson and Kathleen McManus Zurko, Wooster, OH, 1985, 5-7; "Faith Ringgold's Narrative Quilts," *Faith Ringgold, Change: Painted Story Quilts,* New York, 1987, 9-16, repr. from *Arts Magazine,* January, 1987, 64-69.

[50]"Icons of Healing Energy: The Recent Work of Audrey Flack," *Arts Magazine,* Nov., 1983, 136-41. Also see "Decorated Walls for Public Spaces: Joyce Kozloff's Architectural Installations," *Joyce Kozloff: Visionary Ornament* (catalogue), Boston, 1985, 45-57; and her work on Ruth Weisberg, "Narrative Passages in Cyclical Time," in *Ruth Weisberg, Paintings, Drawings, Prints, 1968-1988,* exh. cat. The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1988, 18-29, and "Passages in Cyclical Time: Ruth Weisberg's Scroll," *Arts Magazine,* Feb., 1988, 56-59.

[51]Josephine Withers, "Revisioning our Foremothers: Reflections on the *Ordinary, Extraordinary Art of May Stevens," Feminist Studies,* Fall, 1987, 485-501; "Judy Chicago's 'Birth Project': A Feminist Muddle?" *New Art Examiner,* XIII, Jan., 1986, 28-30; "The Guerrilla Girls," *Feminist Studies,* Summer, 1988, 285-300.

[52]Ellen H. Johnson, "Alice Neel's Fifty Years of Portrait Painting," *Studio International,* CXCIII, no. 987, 1977, 174-79; *Expression in Fiber: the Art of Eleanor Merrill,* exh. cat., Allen Memorial Museum of Art, Oberlin, 1975; *Jackie Winsor,* exh. cat., Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1979 (repr. in French in *Parachute,* 17, Hiver, 1979, 26-29); *Eva Hesse: A Retrospective of the Drawings,* exh. cat., Allen Memorial Museum of Art, Oberlin, 1982; "Order and Chaos: From the Diaries

of Eva Hesse," selected and introduced by Ellen H. Johnson, *Art in America,* Summer, 1983, 110-18, repr. and transl., "Eva Hesse om sig sjalv och sin konst," *Flyktpunkter/VanishingPoints,* Moderna Museet, Stockholm, 1984, 111-39; *Patricia Johanson: Drawings for the Camouflage House and Orchid Projects,* exh. cat., Rosa Esman Gallery, New York, 1979, n. p.; "La Wilson: Artist at Home, An Interview with La Wilson," "*La Wilson,* exh. cat., Akron Art Museum, 1986, 4-6; "Nature as Source in Athena Tacha's Art," *Artforum,* Jan., 1981, 58-62; "Athena Tacha: Merging," *Dialogue,* X, no. 6, Nov.-Dec. 35-36; "Are These All Originals," *Dialogue,* XI, no. 2, Mar./Apr., 1988, 23-27.

[53]Thalia Gouma-Peterson, "Elizabeth Catlett: 'The Power of Human Feeling and of Art'," *Woman's Art Journal,* IV, Spring/Summer, 1983, 48-56; Samella Lewis, *The Art of Elizabeth Catlett,* Claremont, CA, 1984; Betty La Duke, *Companeras: Women, Art and Change in Latin America,* City Lights Books, 1985. Also see the exhibition catalogue (with essays) curated by Harmony Hammond and Jaune Quick-to-See Smith for the Gallery of the American Indian Community House, *Women of Sweetgrass, Cedar and Sage,* New York, 1985; "Connections Project/Conexus," a collaborative exhibition on women artists from Brazil and the U.S., organized by Josely Carvalho and Sabra Moore, at The Museum of Contemporary Hispanic Art, Jan.-Feb., 1987; *Forever Free: Art by African American Women, 1862-1980,* ed. Arna Alexander Bontemps, catalogue for a traveling exhibition beginning at Illinois State University, curated by Jacqueline Fonvielle-Bontemps and David C. Driskell, Alexandria, VA, 1980; *Heresies,* no. 15, Winter, 1982, devoted to the topic of racism ("Racism is the Issue"); *Faith Ringgold: Twenty Years of Painting, Sculpture and Performance (1963-1983),* exh. cat., The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, 1984, with essays by a number of women, including Michele Wallace, Moira Roth, and Lucy Lippard. *Sage, A Scholarly Journal on Black Women,* has just published an issue devoted to black women artists (IV, no. 1, Spring, 1987). These are important resources, but more research needs to be done by feminists on Black, Chicana, Native Americans, and Asian artists, among others.

[54]See Carol Duncan's biting review of *Art Talk* in "When Greatness is a Box of Wheaties," *Artforum,* Oct., 1975.

[55]Alloway (as in n. 10), 64.

[56]Response to Alloway (as in n. 13), 11-23.

[57]Alloway, (as in n. 10). Besides this article, Alloway has written an important essay on women's art criticism (as in n. 16), an early article on Nancy Spero, *Artforum,* May, 1976, 52-53; review of Roszika Parker and Griselda Pollock, *Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology,* New York, 1981, in *Woman's Art Journal,* VIII, Fall, 1982/Winter, 1983, 60-61; and a proposal for an exhibition of women artists at MoMA, "Post-Masculine Art: Women Artists 1970-1980," *Art Journal,* XXXIX, 1980, 295-97.

See Kuspit's articles on Nancy Spero in particular: "Nancy Spero at A.I.R.," *Art In America,* July/Aug., 1975, 101-2; "Nancy Spero at AIR and Miriam Schapiro at Andre Emmerich Downtown," *Art Journal,* XXXVI, 1976, 144-46; "Spero's Apocalypse," *Artforum,* April, 1980, 34-35; "From Existence to Essence: Nancy Spero," *Art in America,* Jan., 1984; and his article on decorative art and feminist intention (as in n. 13). Kuspit has written about many other women artists including Dottie Attie, Sylvia Sleigh, May Stevens, Judy Chicago, Miriam Shapiro, Sheila Isham, and Arlene Erdrich.

[58]Tickner, "Sexuality and/in Representation: Five British Artists," *Difference: On Representation and Sexuality,* New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York, 1984, 19.

[59]"The Body Politic" (as in n. 12), 238. Also see Mary Kelly, "No Essential Femininity: A Conversation between Mary Kelly and Paul Smith," *Parachute,* 26, Spring, 1982.

[60]*Ibid.*, 239. The following discussion of second generation ideas is a shortened version from Gouma-Peterson and Mathews (as in n. 1), 335-36, 346-50.

[61]Tickner, "Sexuality" (as in n. 58), 28-29.

[62]Stephen Heath, *The Sexual Fix,* New York, 1982, 144; Tickner, "Sexuality" (as in n. 58), 23.

[63]Tickner, "Sexuality" (as in n. 58), 19.

[64]Deborah Cherry, "Feminist Interventions: Feminist Imperatives," review of Parker and Pollock, *Old Mistresses* (as in n. 57), in *Art History,* V, 1982, 502, citing Sheila Rowbotham, *Hidden From History,* 1974. Cherry also points to the "appropriation" of psychoanalytic theory by feminists, especially of the French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan, in order to "understand how femininity is socially constructed." For feminist interpretations of psychoanalytic theory, see Juliet Mitchell, *Psychoanalysis and Feminism,* New York, 1974; Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose, eds., *Feminine Sexuality, Jacques Lacan and the école freudienne,* London, 1982; and Jane Gallop, *The Daughter's Seduction, Feminism and Psychoanalysis,* Ithaca, 1982. Also see Jane Gallop, "Psychoanalytic Criticism: Some Intimate Questions," *Art in America,* Nov., 1984, 9-15.

For a similar debate with a different slant, see Carol Ockman's response (*Art In America,* Dec., 1986, 11) to Anne M. Wagner's review of *The Female Body in Western Culture: Contemporary Perspectives,* ed. by Susan Rubin Suleiman (*Art In America,* Oct., 1986, 17, 19), and Wagner's reply, 11, 13.

Lucy Lippard, too, moved away from a biological investigation of female sensibility in her later work. She says in the catalogue essay, "Issue and Taboo," in *Get the Message?* (as in n. 10), 125-26, that "I still hold the opinion that women's art differs from that of men, but I have moved away from my earlier attempt to analyze these differences in formal terms alone."

[65]Jane Weinstock, "A Lass, A Laugh and a Lad," *Art In America,* Summer, 1983, 7-10. For a more extended discussion of this debate, see Gouma-Peterson and Mathews (as in n. 1), 347-48.

[66]Cited by Weinstock, *ibid.*, 8, from Jo-Anna Isaak's essay on the exhibition, "The Revolutionary Power of Women's Laughter," at Protetch McNeil Gallery, New York, Jan.-Feb., 1983. Weinstock's essay is a critique of the exhibition. Citing Lyotard in support of her statement, Weinstock says that the "Goddess" and the "Body," both exalted by many feminist artists, "have become victims of the capital letter" (p. 7). In opposition to Weinstock, Donald Kuspit claims that Spero "demythologizes" women as passive victim, rather than creating myths. See his essay, "Symptoms of Critique: Nancy Spero and Francesc Torres, "*Art and Ideology,* exh. cat. for the New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York, 1984, 21-22.

[67]In a letter to *Art In America,* Nov., 1983, 7.

[68]Tickner, "Nancy Spero: Images of women and *la peinture feminine,*" *Nancy Spero,* exh. cat., Institute of Contemporary Art, London, 1987, 5-19. Her art historical

work also employs new methodologies in its attempt to situate women within their own space. See her book, *The Spectacle of Women, Imagery of the Suffrage Campaign 1907-14,* Chicago, 1988.

[69]"Issues and Taboo," *Get the Message?* (as in n. 10), 147.

[70]See especially the large paintings from her work, *Ordinary/Extraordinary, 1977-1986,* reproduced in the catalogue, *May Stevens: Ordinary/Extraordinary: A Summation, 1977-1984,* Boston University Gallery, 1984. For a discussion of these aspects of the work, see Patricia Mathews, "A Dialogue of Silence: May Steven's *Ordinary/Extraordinary,* 1977-1986," *Art Criticism,* III, no. 2, Spring, 1987, 34-42.

[71]Feminist film theory and criticism is highly developed, especially in psychoanalytic theory. See the discussion below. Photography criticism, too, incorporates a sophisticated feminist perspective. For example, see the writings of Abigail Solomon-Godeau, such as "The Legs of the Countess," *October,* no. 39, Winter, 1986, 65-108, and of British artist Victor Burgin, such as *Thinking Photography,* London, 1982.

[72]Tickner, "Sexuality," (as in n. 58), 24ff. For a critique of this show, see Paul Smith, "Difference in America," *Art In America,* April, 1985, 190-99. Although he generally praised the exhibition, he also critiques its "theoretical passivity." (p. 194) For other responses to this show, see Mary Kelly, "On Representation, Sexuality and Sameness, Reflections on the 'Difference' Show," and Yve Lomax, "Broken Lines: More and No More Difference," both in *Screen,* XXVIII, no. 1, Winter, 1987, 102-107, 108-12.

[73]For several among many examples, see the feminist critique of the collaboration of photographer Robert Mapplethorpe and body-builder and artist Lisa Lyons, by artist Silvia Kolbowski, "Covering Mapplethorpe's 'Lady', "*Art In America,* Summer, 1983, 10-11; of the collaboration of David Salle and Karole Armitage, by Jill Johnston, "The Punk Princess and the Postmodern Prince," *Art In America,* Oct., 1986, 23-25; and a critique of art and the media's depiction of violence against women, by Leslie Labowitz and Suzanne Lacy, "Mass Media, Popular Culture, and Fine Art," *Social Works,* exh. cat., Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, 1979, repr. in Richard Hertz, *Theories of Contemporary Art,* Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1985, 171-78. Other very visible writers in this milieu include Kate Linker, Ticker, and Abigail Solomon-Godeau, among many others. See the new anthologies on feminist art and criticism discussed below.

[74]"The Discourse of Others: Feminists and Postmodernism," in *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern culture,* ed. Hal Foster, Port Townsend, WA, 1983, 59, 64, 63, 61.

[75]From a paper given in April, 1986, for Tamar Garb's session on "Feminism and Art History," at the AAH.

[76]*Ibid.*

[77]Betterton, *Looking On,* 9, 14, 16.

[78]Parker and Pollock, *Framing Feminism.* The following discussion is based in large part on the review of this book written by Thalia Gouma-Peterson and Patricia Mathews, "Art for Women's Sake," *The Women's Review of Books,* V., no. 6, March, 1988, 21-23.

[79]*Ibid.*, 21.

[80]For a more detailed discussion of this issue, see Gouma-Peterson and Mathews (as in note 78), 22.

[81]Parker and Pollock (as in n. 78), 29, 75.

[82]Raven, *et al* (as in n. 28), xi.

[83]Robinson, *Visibly Female,* 1. For a more extended review of this book and of Betterton's anthology, see my upcoming essay in *Woman's Art Journal.*

[84]Indeed, the following chronology is based on an article by B. Ruby Rich, "In the Name of Feminist Film Criticism," republished in *Re-Vision: Essays in Feminist Film Criticism,* eds. Mary Ann Doane, Patricia Mellencamp and Linda Williams, Frederick, MD, 1984, but first published in a magazine closely allied to the feminist art world, *Heresies,* 9, Spring, 1980.

Mary C. Gentile *Film Feminisms: Theory and Practice,* Westport, CT, London, 1985, cited in *Re-Vision,* 4, summarizes the early phase of feminist film criticism as twofold: "...the creation of an alternate film tradition, the tradition of women filmmakers..., and the development of alternate readings, alternate critiques, and ultimately, alternate evaluative judgements of the body of dominant (largely male-directed) cinema."

[85]E. Ann Kaplan, *Women and Film: Both Sides of the Camera,* New York and London, 1983, 1.

[86]Kuhn, *Women's Pictures,* 70-73. Also see Annette Kuhn, *The Power of the Image: Essays on Representation and Sexuality,* London, Boston, Melbourne and Henley, 1985.

[87]Doane, *et al* (as in n. 84).

[88]*Screen,* XVI, Autumn, 1975, 6-18 (repr. in Wallis, as in n. 22, 361-73).

[89]A number of important articles were written prior to Mulvey's, particularly concerning first generation issues such as female imagery and female roles in male films. Those most often cited include Claire Johnston, ed., *Notes on Women's Cinema,* London, 1973, Marjorie Rosen, *Popcorn Venus: Women, Movies, and the American Dream,* New York, 1974; Molly Haskell, *From Reverence to Rape: The Treatment of Women in the Movies,* New York, 1974; and Joan Mellen, *Women and Their Sexuality in the New Film,* New York, 1973. Judith Mayne, "Review Essay: Feminist Film Theory and Criticism," *Signs,* v. 11, no. 1, Autumn, 1985, cites particularly Rosen and Haskell, and refers to a "first stage of feminist film criticism" that "focused on film images of women and their disparity with women's actual lives" (p. 84).

[90]Mayne (as in n. 89), 83.

[91]"Object of the Game," *Film Comment,* May/June, 1985, 68. Among many examples of the interest in a female gaze, see Kuhn (as in n. 86); and Linda Williams, "When the Woman Looks," in Doane, *et al* (as in n. 84).

[92]Mulvey cited by Mayne (as in n. 89), 82.

[93]De Lauretis, *Alice Doesn't,* 4.

[94]According to Mayne (as in n. 89), the affinity between cinema and psychoanalysis has become commonplace in film theory: "from projection and identification to the similarity between dreaming and watching a film," etc. (pp. 92-94).

[95]Mayne (as in n. 89), 92. See also Doane, et al (as in n. 84), 14, and articles there by Williams, Doane, Mayne, for example.

[96]De Lauretis (as in n. 93), 5, 7. On the question of the female spectator, also see her article, "Aesthetic and Feminist Theory: Rethinking Women's Cinema," in Raven, *et al* (as in n. 35), 133-52.

[97]*Ibid.*, 186.

[98]Kaplan (as in n. 85), 5-6, 203ff. Mayne (as in n. 89) also notes the attraction of feminist film critics to "theories of female writing and the body, particularly those associated with French feminists" (p. 83).

[99]Doane, *et al* (as in n. 84), 8-9. Mayne's description of the "alternative to classical cinema" for women shows a similar understanding of the difficulty in both positions:

> should women filmmakers somehow "resolve" the contradictions of Hollywood cinema? Or rather, should their analysis of its contradictions lead to a new film practice, as well as theory, that examines the structure of film language in a critical and self-reflexive way? If the former goal naively assumes that aesthetic intervention can occur in a noncontradictory realm, the latter risks restricting women's cinema to a mirror reflection of film critics' theoretical preoccupations. (As in n. 89, p. 94.)

[100]Doane, *et al* (as in n. 84), 12.

[101]For a review of this literature, see Mayne (as in n. 89), 99. My brief overview of feminist film criticism does not attempt to deal with the different stances within this similar methodology, although they do exist very strongly. For a good overview of the issues and various positions on them, see Mayne, passim.

[102]Doane, *et al* (as in n. 84), 5. The editors of *Re-Vision* note this advantage themselves.

[103]Statistics of articles on women in major art magazines are still dismal, as seen in the Guerrilla Girls ad in the January, 1987 issue of *Arts Magazine,* 104, 128. Two recent large survey exhibitions, both at leading institutions, reveal how little the established art world has recognized the importance of the last fifteen years of the women's movement. Out of 165 artists represented at the much awaited opening of the new wing of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, only 14 were women. (Kynaston McShine, *International Survey of Recent Painting and Sculpture,* exh. cat., New York, 1984.) Only one woman out of 76 artists was represented in the exhibition at the Tate Gallery in London, "Forty Years of Modern Art: 1945-1985," 1986. (Exh. cat. of the same title, intro. by Ronald Alley.)

[104]Kate Linker, "Representation and Sexuality" (*Parachute,* no. 32, Fall, 1983, 12-23), repr. in Wallis (as in n. 22), 394, with reference to Gallop.

[105]Cherry (as in n. 64), 505.

Dis-seminating Cindy Sherman: The Body and the Photograph

By Erik MacDonald

> "These are pictures of emotions personified, entirely of themselves, with their own presence."
>
> Cindy Sherman

The photographs of Cindy Sherman both implicate the classical Platonic mode of representation which separates the thing represented from its image (a hierarchical relationship which has constituted Western discourse) as a particularly invidious construction, and problematize a contemporary aesthetics founded in part upon that same critique of representation, and which is embodied in David Cook and Arthur Kroker's *The Postmodern Scene*. Sherman's photographs, all of which are designated "untitled," form an oeuvre which ironically seems most intent on dispelling the very notion of "body." Three central motifs organized around the problematization of the body form her attack on classical representation: the body in

space, the body as representational signifier, and the body as object for a panoptic gaze. While there are other elements germane to her photographs, these three are significant to locating her work within contemporary aesthetic discourse. Sherman's bodies—always her own whether dressed in glitzy outfits, set in kitsch settings, cropped and bound by the frame of the photograph, or finally disfigured and dismembered by both the camera and the photographic composition—also call into question the premise of the self-portrait, and the binomial relation between body as signified and image as signifier.

In the *Untitled Film Still* series Sherman dresses up as and disguises herself in a number of classical female territories—suburban gardener, urban shopper, housewife—for what are ostensibly a series of self-portraits. Yet the very notion of self-portrait as envisioned by traditional aesthetics (the outward expression of the artist's inner existence,) is radically rearranged in this series. Sherman seems unable, or unwilling to locate herself, to align herself with a particular diegetic terrain. She never assumes an unself-critical relationship to the camera. If these are to be representations of Sherman, reflections of her imaginary relationship to herself and her world, then the fact that they remain untitled dislocates them from the normative discursive tradition of self-representation, and shakes loose Sherman's own position. Where is she located? Why is she not claiming responsibility for her own image? Indeed, within the frame of the photographs themselves she masquerades as a housewife, an urbanite, a debutante, always as something other than her ostensible self-as-artist/art. After viewing several of these photographs it becomes impossible to establish a direct relationship between Sherman and her plurivalent images—which one is the viewer to believe? They refuse to allow the audience an assumption of an authoritarian correspondence between these photographs as faithful copies and their presumed extra-diegetic referent: Sherman herself.

Kroker and Cook's *The Postmodern Scene: Excremental Culture and Hyper-Aesthetics* follows the Baudrillardian "party line" in assigning the current aesthetic/political scene to a radical loss of reference—a "hyperreality"—through the disintegration of the modernist production scheme into one of circulation. With the hyperreal (the reproduction of the real based on its model) as their leaping off point, Kroker and Cook surmise that postmodern art will no longer be representational as was classical and modernist. Postmodernism, in their terms, is also a posthumanism, a state where the referent—once intimately involved in constructing hierarchial relationships within discourse—disappears. Accordingly, the body too is now in ruins due to its outmoded referentiality. The body, in the postmodern scene, becomes "a receptacle for the violence of signs at the (disappearing) centre of dead image-systems."[1] Besieged by a universe where signs are erected and hierarchialized (or perhaps more precisely, territorialized by their ability to circulate) so as to facilitate an interface with other signs, and to dominate to extinction any space of non-presence, or referentiality such as the space of the body, the body no longer carries any weight. A universe of circulating discourses replaces a universe of fixed signs. Kroker

and Cook's postmodernism is the scene of television and video, of the electronic transference of information where the body is dematerialized and assigned to a specific, restricted terrain as part of a giddy, hyper-discourse. Ultimately in such an economy the body must be excreted if the referentless universe is to facilitate free circulation.

Whereas in classical representation the body constituted both a reference point, and the putrid site of the Other (the obstacle to the world of essences), by denying it status in a corresponding image-system, postmodernism removes the obstacle, has done with the Other for once and for all, and problematizes the body as absolute referent. Certainly Sherman's work contains all three "velocities." Slashed and chopped in her *Artforum*-commissioned horizontal photographs, the body is no longer a unified whole nor a series of objects deconstructed according to an inversion of their Platonic logic, but rather an object "de<>structed" by the brute violence of circulation. Part of her arm, her trunk, half her head is all that remains of herself; in these photographs the whole is thus subordinated to the logic of the frame.

If representation once sought to establish a "human" space through an anthrocentric mimesis, then the violence of the frame is painfully apparent. In these photographs representing—framing in a vanishing point perspective—seems to necessitate degrading and subjugating the body to the territorialized organizational logic of that frame. The body is unable to escape; the foregrounded frame contains and controls the audience's gaze, directing it onto pre-specified and pre-coded terrains. In such a perspective the (female) body is presented as a passive receptacle, a location of pleasure in keeping with the classical use-value of woman. *Untitled # 85*[2] exemplifies the frame's violence. A woman, Sherman, crouches on a wooden floor, looking back past the camera. She seems anticipatory, either afraid of or engrossed in some extra-diegetic event. Her head is cut short, as are her hands and legs. Her body position and the lighting within the photograph itself suggest confinement; no space is offered the body, it must contort itself in order to fit the frame—or screen—of the postmodern scene. In others of this series a similar rejection of the humanist perspective space is evinced. Photograph after photograph show Sherman's untitled body reduce to its parts—dismembered and inscribed into the logic of "dead image systems."

Similarly the narrative content of these photographs is de<>structed by the frame. The photographs never have as an object anything except Sherman's body. Yet if these are self-portraits, they never establish eye contact. Instead Sherman is always looking elsewhere, outside the frame, denying her audience any clue as to what she is supposed to be experiencing. Narrativising these photographs is impossible. What is she looking at or away from; the event which enraptures Sherman is denied to her audience. Her impassivity, her unknowable involvement outside of the screen, erupts the scopophilic pleasure that the discursive terrain of Woman-as-Object should allow. If her audience is not included in her world, then the classical mode of representation begins to implode, subverting the

hierarchial chain or signifiers which imbue both narrative and representation with their social authority.

Sherman's world, viewed as a post-modernism, means nothing, cannot mean anything, other than a subversion of classical codes of representation, and the space of the body. If in classical art a hierarchical relationship always already exists between discourse and the figure, whether the figure supercedes discourse or visa versa (as Michel Foucault has argued in *Ceci n'est pas une pipe*[3]), then in Sherman's postmodernism, discourse as represented through the camera and frame eradicates the figure, the body. Finally the body becomes "an exact and tragic recitative of the inscription of power on the text of the body."[4] The clearest argument for "the body in ruins" in Sherman's work lies in her latest photographs, which depict grotesque caricatures: human bodies with pig faces and obnoxiously large, pustulant buttocks lying in neon-hued nature scenes, spaces which have completely inscribed human agency into discourse. Yet this view of the gleeful inscription of the world of representation into the logic of binary nihilism (which is Kroker and Cook's agenda) fails to address certain subtleties of Sherman's work. While Kroker and Cook seek to reduce classical representation and western metaphysics to the televisual logic of simulation, their totalitizing postmodernism rests on the assumption that indeed late capitalism has reduced the logic of the signifier, through simulation, to the logic of the television screen, and that the social sphere has imploded into one large, passive sponge.

The conception of simulation that removes the (imploded) social from the (de◇structed) political sphere may be hermeneuticly pleasant in that it depoliticizes both the body and the scene. However, Sherman's work radically perturbates this (fashionable) view at the same moment that her bodies seemingly succumb to such simulation. The question that emerges from many of Sherman's photographs is: what is "she" looking at, and why is "she," the object, not paying attention to the camera; is there something else going on either intra- or extra-diegetically? In problematizing her relation to the technical apparatus, Sherman problematizes both her relationship to her self-portraits, and to the narrativising tendency of classical representation.

Unlike Francesca Woodman's photographs—an artist celebrated by Kroker and Cook for her "suicided bodies," also self-portraits—Sherman never disappears within the frame. On the contrary the frame must forcefully cut her off, reduce her, set limits on her body in order to contain her. Any disintegration of her image comes only as a result of the frame, one always has a sense that her body continues outside the frame; however inaccessible for the viewer that continuation may become. That she expands beyond the photographic boundaries suggests a rupture in the totalitizing photographic apparatus. It is as if she is whole as a body but yet must be demarcated, territorialized by the camera's gaze in order to fit its mimetic horizon. Yet her non-passivity suggests that maybe she is merely mimicking her status as object; the camera never draws or contains her full attention. Through her autonomy from inscription into the representational apparatus she re-

mains unterritorialized by its gaze. Such resistance problematizes her absorption into the hierarchical logic of Kroker and Cook's simulation, and provides a point of resistance to postmodern's territorialized, dismembered body.

Sherman's resistance to the incarcerating gaze is no simple attempt at an autochthonic humanism. She refuses to oppose the camera's reproduction of her body with a wistful naturalism, but rather attacks classical representation with a new kind of simulacrum, one not tied to the disappearance of a "real." Sherman never presents a simple photograph of herself, she is always disguising her body, masquerading as someone else, as someone who might indeed live the type of life imaginable in her various settings. However that person never actually exists, for it is always Sherman herself, the artist modeling the scene's model inhabitant. By temporarily dismantling classical representation by mimicking and thus perverting its claim to authoritarian authenticity, Sherman starts to set free the space of her body, allowing it to form its own affinities according to a network of internal logics which form as contingent strategies rather than as *a priori* structural organizations.[5] In the confusion between the presumed "real," and the artist who masquerades as the model for the real, simulacra shift from false copies which suck all referentiality into their hyperreal logic, to deterritorialized forces which allow "a dissolution of old identities and territorialities."[6]

Sherman's bodies become simulacra with a vengeance. Her photographs destroy classical notions of representation and narrativity within the photographic space. Identification with the model in that space is confuted since it is Sherman herself who masquerades as her own object. Narrativity is similarly de<>structed. It is impossible to create a fiction around these objects if indeed it is Sherman, the artist, at work, rather than a "slice of life" observed from afar and passed on from the all-knowing artist to her spectaculating audience. In her later work the constructedness of body-as-object becomes increasingly apparent. Employing heavy makeup and deliberately using artificial lighting, her subjects take on a painterly quality; no longer "naturalistic" photographic representations, her photographs become reminiscent of photorealism. The audience is refused access to Sherman herself, refused any sort of identification which might be available within the self-portrait genre.

While a major premise of the aesthetic Kroker and Cook present in *The Postmodern Scene*—the postmodern aesthetic—is the radical implosion of the very notion of boundary, that the discursive limits of representability seem to be played out on the terrain of the body illuminates just how thoroughly postmodernism depends on the reestablishment of a discursive terrain at the same time that it claims to be done with such things. In the erasure of the space of the body, a process similar to classical metaphysics denial and relegation of the body to the logic of essences, one must suspect a retrograde maneuver to once again denigrate the body as the site of the other, the unknown. Whereas classical metaphysics proceeded in part through erecting binary opposites (man/woman, good/bad,

mind/body), and consequently in the pursuit of perfection one sign erased the other in each pair, postmodernism claims that both signs have been erased. Yet this logic seems to perpetuate a similar, problematic, politics.

If in classical metaphysics the body is under erasure, and in postmodernism the body is a bankrupt artifice, then what significant difference exists between the two systems, especially if the body is associated with Woman? In both a hysterical fear of the other—woman, the body—apparently motivates the necessity for recuperating the body to a manageable terrain. It is easier to assign the body a negative space than confront its disruptive potentials. Kroker and Cook's insistence on the body as a "dead image system" seems to align them with a right wing nostalgia for the real, and for a categorical metaphysics which can negate the threat of the other. In the face of a right wing postmodern agenda, Sherman's photographs potentiate a form of resistance, and ultimately of liberation. Through utilizing the simulacrum as a positive strategy, she regains the space of the body as a disruptive force.

Sherman disseminates herself according to a logic which preys on standard representations of women. Not content to merely draw attention to, or critique those representations, she instead attacks the very logic at their base which imbues them with a hierarchial authority and location. Her photographs confute traditional notions of authenticity and refuse to inscribe her body into an economy which would either erase or declare it bankrupt. Her perversion of that (Platonic) representational system raises a positive simulation, one which contains the possibility for "shattering the grid of representation once and for all,"[7] for breaking loose a counter image-system which would allow the surfacing of a liberative alternative to postmodernism's hunkering recuperation of the "real."

Notes

[1]Arthur Kroker and David Cook, *The Postmodern Scene: Excremental Culture and Hyper-Aesthetics* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986), p. 244.

[2]Cindy Sherman, *Cindy Sherman* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), p. 98.

[3]Michel Foucault, *Ceci n'est pas une pipe* (Montpellier: Fata Morgana, 1973), p. 35.

[4]Kroker and Cook, p. 243.

[5]Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus,* Trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: U. of Minnesota Press, 1987), p. 161.

[6]Brian Massumi, "Realer Than Real: The Simulacrum According to Deleuze and Guattari" *ibid.,* p. 95.

[7]*Ibid.*

Dom-ino and Its Trajectory: Metamorphosis Deconstructed[1]

By Gevork Hartoonian

> During long periods of history, the mode of human perception changes with humanity's entire mode of existence.
>
> Walter Benjamin[2]

Walter Benjamin's statement discloses the profound relationship between our perceptual world and that of technology. On that horizon, architecture stands as a critical discipline because it has been nurtured in the domains of both technology and perception. My object is to show that deconstruction tendencies, drawn from the discourse of the historical avant-garde, do not offer a critical alternative to the current dominant architectural theories, but a more radical choice. The historical avant-garde's project has come to resonate with the consumative and degenerative aspects of our technology. To this end, it is imperative to examine briefly the differences between what we have so far classified as modern, postmodern and, finally, classical architecture.

My reference to these three architectural discourses does not induce a historical or philosophical investigation. My analysis is indulged from a point of view opened up by architecture per se. I believe that LeCorbusier's Dom-ino has set up a critical criterion with which to explore architectural thought. From this perspective, I expect to reveal the place of technology in current architectural debate and, from there, to map some aspects of a critical discourse of architecture.

Since the sixties, some have put into practice what Charles Jencks once happily referred to as "the death of modern architecture." Our fascination with this prophecy was so strong that few were able to maintain a critical position. Not to mention the drastic changes which have been taking place in global socio-politics, technology has played a significant role in pulling architecture into the ostentatious whirlpool of cultural consumerism. In the era of mass communication and political conservatism, there was less place left to expose the affinity of postmodern architecture with its predecessor.

While purposely avoiding the theoretical implications of "modernity," I would like to point out that for me modern architecture is not synonymous with the use of new materials or techniques. Nor do I agree with those scholars who conceive and theorize modernity in the purview of the crisis of modern science. Instead, I share the view that locates the genealogy of our modern perceptual world in the domain where the mythical distance between gaze and object was obscured by the "truth" of representation.[3]

In architectural discourse, LeCorbusier's Dom-ino assigns a particular depth to architectural representation. Like most artistic trends in this century, Dom-ino is a point of view, a way of seeing and conceiving. Designed in 1914, Dom-ino is the best manifesto of the modern attitude towards nature, technology and cultural life. Dom-ino is not just a solution to the problem imposed by new building technology; it discloses LeCorbusier's obsession with painting and his praise for technology. In this context, Dom-ino frames a perceptual horizon influenced by Analytical Cubism and machine aesthetics. Through his paintings, LeCorbusier came to share the figure-ground relationship posed by Cubism. Moreover, novel achievements in engineering gave him the chance to conceive Dom-ino as the "deep structure" of his architectural thought.

On both the formal and the structural levels, LeCorbusier went beyond nineteenth-century eclecticism. Dwelling upon the notion of simultaneity, the Cubist figure-ground relationship challenged the conventional body of representation. Now, following M. Merleau-Ponty's "Phenomenology of Perception,"[4] one might claim that Cubism represents a mystical relationship between the object and its background. Is not it possible that the phenomenal transparency of Villa Garche, as noticed by Collin Rowe,[5] displays the same ambiguous play of different layers as Picasso's 1919 *Guitar*? However, this transformation of pictorial experience into architectural conception could not have been possible without the potentialities of technology. In Dom-ino, the setting back of the column from the edges of the concrete slab unfolds an architectural perception which overcomes the classical concern for a one-to-one correspondence between formal com-

position and structure. LeCorbusier treated horizontal and vertical surfaces as "contours" that lose their classical *raison d'etre*. According to LeCorbusier, "Contour is free of all constraints." There is no longer "any question of custom, nor of tradition nor of construction nor of adaptation to utilitarian needs."[6]

This metamorphosis can be traced to the relationship between the plan and the facade. In classical architecture, the overall correspondence between the compositional order of a building and the major axis of its plan is instrumental. LeCorbusier acknowledges the ordering logic of classical planimetric organization. But the facades of his villas perform a different design economy. The exterior enclosure stands as an independent surface much as a canvas. They offer a design strategy different from those initiated by the exigencies of the plan and its structural datum, or from those motivated by the utilitarian needs of the space behind. These developments undermined the classical notion of techne; meaning, the art of building. The perceptual embodiment of techne is enclosed in Palladio's recommendation for the design of villas:

> The rooms ought to be distributed on each side of the entry and hall, and it is to be observed that those on the right correspond with those on the left, so that the fabric may be the same in one place as in the other, and that the walls may equally bear the burden of the roof; because if the rooms are made large in one part, and small in the other, the latter will be more fit to resist the weight, by reason of the nearness of the walls, and the former more weak, which will produce in time very great inconveniences, and ruin the whole work.[7]

Thus, Palladio maintains the integrity of aesthetic valorization and structural rationality imperative for a classical discourse on composition. Against this compositional monism of the classical object of architecture, Domino suggests a dialogue between disintegration and composition. However, the architectonic elements of a disintegrated object, held together loosely in LeCorbusier's Platonic geometry, could not have any destination except that of idle drifting in the space opened by micro-chip technology. The "futility of objects,"[8] sanctified in the process of disjunction and decomposition, became the *modus operandi* of the post-Corbusiean discourse.

I call your attention to the New York Five Architects' experience. Their purpose was to support the idea that architecture is a self-referential entity. Thus, they conceived of architecture as a field subject to formal and intellectual exercises. Is not it obvious that Peter Eisenman's *House III* recollects Picasso's 1937 *Portrait of a Lady*? The latter, Leo Steinberg observes, makes an attempt "to pass beyond the banal, ninety-degree dichotomy of front and side."[9] Eisenman implements Picasso's intention by rotating the core of his building forty-five degrees. The formal configuration of his house suggests the first step towards deconstruction of Platonic geometry: The rotated square interlocked in its crust symbolically represents the separation between object and subject or signifier and signified.[10] Eisenman's later works confirm that through the process of decomposition the signified disappears and the signifier emerges as the subject of the architect's

operational analytic. Michael Graves, on the other hand, borrows the notion of simultaneity and takes a step towards the "erosion" of the surface.[11] In all of his houses, the vertical reading of the front column disappears into the surface of the side partition wall. These works expose an architectural horizon whose theoretical vicissitudes were already solidified in Robert Venturi's discourse on "complexity" and "contradiction."

In retrospect, we might claim that, the Five initiate two parallel architectural developments which metaphorically confirm Venturi's notion of "both-and."[12] In the wake of a historical consciousness, one line of thought dwells on the problematic of "contradiction." Postmodernism covers its modern planimetric and sectional organization by the garment of a "history whose meaning and limits they skillfully keep hidden from themselves."[13] Through Venturi and Jencks, this attitude baptizes the "pseudo-sign"—a delirium for simulating historical forms. Postmodernism's voyage into the labyrinth of history is not "a search of lightness as a reaction to the weight of living."[14]

Deconstruction tendencies, on the other hand, build a discourse on "complexity" and apply the theory of deconstruction to a field in which "construction" has come to be its formative theme. Their claim for the autonomy of art does not possess the critical content of the historical avant-garde's project. However, by pushing the thoughts of the historical avant-garde to the limit, deconstructionists conceive the "non-sign" as the threshold of the western metaphysics of architecture. Eisenman's trio of deconstruction[15]—history, reason, and representation—implicitly discloses the thought of the historical avant-garde. Yet, the latter's critical depth lies in the position they maintained within the cycle of production and consumption.[16] The avant-garde's ambition to integrate art with life is, in fact, a yearning for the construction of the social conditions of life. This view goes beyond the debate among the current dominant theories of architecture, dispensing with the relationship between architecture and city. Nevertheless, taking into consideration all apparent differences in their formal economy, postmodern and deconstructionist discourses draw images which posit the "principle of the absolute absence of reality,"[17] and thus cardboard architecture.

I am not recalling Demetri Porphyrios' assertion that both "Neo-Modernists and Post-Modernists thrive on convention: The first by dismembering conventions in the name of deconstructionist critique; the second by saturating the market with instant conventions in the name of pluralism."[18] One might agree with the content of his criticism, but at the same time, reject Porphyrios' exclusion of modern experience as a part of architectural knowledge. This exorcism is the basis of his and Leon Krier's belief that tectonic figuration is exclusive of classical language. Putting aside this esteem for "convention," the objective of my argument is to locate the problematic of postmodernism and deconstruction in a perceptual field opened up by technology. These theories do not necessarily reflect the world of technology. Machines "are social before being technical. Or, rather there is a human technology which exists before a material technology."[19] Long before disjunction became "visible" in technology, its human aspects

were already expressed in Analytical Cubism. The new technologies expand the horizon of commodifiction and suggest that some ways of doing things are obsolete. One cannot but feel that design strategies framed around the two notions of disjunction and decomposition welcome the nihilism of our technological machines. Yet a move towards reconciliation with the negative aspects of technology undermines the utopian content of the historical avant-garde's project. The failure of that project and its theoretical implications convince us of the correctness of Theodor Adorno's claim that the avant-garde's utopia did not have practical functions; rather, it was a critical move to negate the status quo.[20]

The nihilism of industrial technology is not a new subject. However, "The New Technologies are giving this process a tremendous expansion insofar as they submit any kind of inscription on any kind of medium—say visual images, sounds, speeches, musical scores, songs and the like, and, finally, writing itself—to an exact computation."[21] At the end of the movie *Aria,* Franc Rodmann presents a vivid cinematographic image of this computation in the kitsch context of Las Vegas. The disappearance of the city's shiny billboards metaphorically mirrors the termination of life. One might speculate that the so-called new avant-garde radicalism exhilarates the debacle of the Enlightenment in order to see the dawn in the absolute absence of any cultural life. Does not this Promethean myth of redemption recall a prehistoric era of plenitude (pluralism?) coming into harmony with the classical? Jean-Francois Lyotard does not present such a picture; yet he sees in this process of deconstruction a resistance to postmodernism.

Now, in the context of culture industry, where technology is transforming every cultural artifact into an industry, a critical discourse of architecture is controversial. In the current theater of architectural theories, a discourse concerning the idea of architecture and city is instrumental. This attitude stems from the historical avant-garde's thought and LeCorbusier's experience. In retrospect, one might question whether LeCorbusier's ambiguous remarks on "architecture or revolution" were not mapping the vicissitudes of a critical discourse. Beyond the deconstructionist tendencies of his time and the formal potentialities of Dom-ino, LeCorbusier turned his attention towards the core of the avant-garde's discourse; that is, the construction of the modern conditions of life. One might consider his obsession with the city as a manifesto of the Bauhaus project of total design.[22] Yet, our contemporary experience permits us to make the claim that LeCorbusier's ideas on the city were critical of dominant cultural ideologies. His vision encompassed a city "where life would become intelligent, educated and clean, in which social justice would be established and political issues resolved—the city was not to be built."[23] Yes, Rowe's observation is correct. Ville Radieuse could not have been realized, not even today, when architecture thrives on the weight of classical forms and the lightness of the new materials offered by a technological revolution.

At stake is the dialectical relationship between a cultural product and the exigencies of its social reality. Otherwise, how could architecture sustain its autonomy in the power struggle running throughout a cultural con-

stellation? This position implicitly addresses the question of the ontology of the present and its construing. My belief is that the problematic of the current architectural theories rests in the gaps and contradictions which sustain the nihilism of the new technologies.

Learning from modern architectural experience, I would suggest that in two different design economies the work of Aldo Rossi and Tado Ando offer the departing point for a critical discourse of architecture. Rossi's constructs posit a resistance against the lure of the cardboard replication of classical forms. His vision of a fragmented city is a critical response to Leon Krier's belief that the "whole" still possesses the truth. Moreover, Rossi's analogical architecture undermines the postmodern positive acceptance of the gap between signifier and signified. Ando, on the other hand, working in the rift of culture and civilization, is engaged in the archaeology of human space. His rumination on wall, column and colonnade is neither formalistic nor expressionistic. For him, the wall and column are the major constructive elements of an architecture whose meaning is derived from actual life processes. "In this way space can restore the relations between human beings and things."[24] Ando's houses merge in the fabric of the city as different; the inside becomes the Other of the outside. Thus, he sustains a topological relation between city and architecture. In Ando's spaces "the relation to oneself is homologous to the relation with the outside and the two are in contact"[25] through intermediaries such as beam-like lights, bare concrete walls and silent courtyards. In Ando's work, the wall is a measure of enclosure against the hostile metropolis; it metaphorically emerges as a critique of the rigid-frame system. Drawing from modern experience, Ando concludes that "The rigid-frame has robbed the post of its myth and the colonnade of its rhythm."[26] Finally, we can claim that Rossi and Ando transcend the formal implications of the discourse of "both-and." Their constructs spring up in the cracks left by the textual power of deconstruction and postmodern architecture. Within the chaotic cycle of production and consumption, Rossi and Ando recollect the silence of waiting for the coming utopia.

Notes

[1]The idea of writing this paper arose partly from my notes for a seminar of "Perception in Design" and the current attention given to "deconstructivist architecture." However, it is inspiring to see that Philip Johnson, who once strongly supported the International Style, has come to praise Peter Eisenman after his postmodern detour. See *A & U,* No. 4, April 1988.

[2]Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Illuminations,* trans. H. Zohn, (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), p. 222.

[3]See Martin Heidegger, "The Age of the World Picture," in *The Question Concerning Technology,* trans. W. Lovitt, (New York: Harper & Row, 1977).

[4]M. Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception,* trans. C. Smith, (New York: The Humanities Press, 1962).

[5]Colin Rowe, *The Mathematics of the Ideal Villa* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1982).

[6]LeCorbusier, *Towards a New Architecture,* trans. F. Etchells, (New York: Praeger, 1960), pp. 11-12.

[7]Anderia Palladio, *The Four Books of Architecture,* trans. M.H. Morgan, (New York: Dover Publisher Inc., 1960), p. 27.

[8]Peter Eisenman, "The Futility of Objectives," *Harvard Architectural Review,* vol. 3, Winter 1984, pp. 65-82.

[9]Leo Steinberg, *Other Criteria* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), pp. 192-223.

[10]For the significance of this separation in the history of architecture and the place of the subject in Eisenman's work, see Mario Gandelsonas, "From Structure to Subject: The Formation of an Architectural Language," in *Peter Eisenman House III* (New York: Rizzoli, 1982), pp. 7-31.

[11]On the role of the notion of "erosion" in the Five's architecture see Kenneth Frampton, "Frontality vs. Rotation," *Five Architects* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), pp. 9-13.

[12]Robert Venturi, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1966), p. 30.

[13]Manfredo Tafuri, *The Sphere and the Labyrinth,* trans. P. d'Accierno & R. Connolly, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1987), p. 301.

[14]Italo Calvino, *Six Memos for the Next Millennium* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), p. 26.

[15]Peter Eisenman, "The End of the Classical," *Perspecta,* 1984, No. 21, pp. 154-172.

[16]Walter Benjamin, "The Author as Producer," *Reflections,* transl. E. Jephcott, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Inc., 1978), pp. 220-238. Also see, Tafuri, op. cit., p. 287.

[17]Jean Baudrillard, *The Evil Demon of Images* (Sydney: The Power Institute of Fine Arts, 1987), p. 47.

[18]Demetri Porphyrios, "Imitation and Convention," *Architectural Design,* vol. 58, No. 1/2, 1988.

[19]I am referring to Gilles Deleuze's reading of what Michel Foucault has framed as "internal conditions of differences." See Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault,* trans. Sean Hand, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), pp. 23-44.

[20]Theodor Adorno insisted on "the importance of utopia thought as a negation of the status quo even as he argued against the possibility of fleshing out its contour..." See, Martin Jay, *Adorno* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), p. 65.

[21]Jean-Francois Lyotard, "Re-Writing Modernity," *Substance,* No. 3, 1987. Here, Lyotard re-states his hopes for a technological revolution. Nevertheless, he separates his discourse from the postmodern whose conditions he had mapped before. In architectural discourse, this development might give Eisenman a chance to refine his position on the postmodern against that of Michael Graves'. See, P. Eisenman, *A & U,* No. 202, July 1987, pp. 18-22.

[22]I am thinking of Jean Baudrillard's argument in *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign* (St. Louis: Telos Press, 1981), especially pp. 185-203.

[23]Colin Rowe, *Five Architects,* p. 3.

[24]Tado Ando, "New Relations Between the Space and the Person," *Japan Architecture,* Oct./Nov. 1977, p. 11.

[25]Deleuze, p. 119.

[26]Tado Ando, "The Wall as Territorial Delineation," *Tado Ando,* ed. Kenneth Frampton (New York: Rizzoli, 1984), p. 128.

Robert Pincus-Witten: The Critic as Dandy

By Jenifer Penrose Borum

One of the symptoms of today's so-called "postmodern" identity crisis is the appropriation of past styles. This desperate eclecticism is evident not only in architecture, art, literature, and film, but in criticism as well. In his attitude and art criticism, Robert Pincus-Witten has identified himself with the persona of the dandy, especially as it survives in the writing of Baudelaire: "For Baudelaire, Dandyism was a moral and heroic option taken by an individual alienated by bourgeoisie values, which expressed itself as a physical and mental preoccupation with the new."[1] Taking his cue from Baudelaire, Pincus-Witten has used the pose of the dandy to signify his resistance to the formalist criticism of Clement Greenberg, the source of his intellectual alienation. Since the late sixties, he has actively sought and championed the new in art, endorsing the very "Novelty Art" which Greenberg rejected. He has argued for the recognition of both art and a critical perspective that are antithetical to the anti-personal nature of the

formalist tradition, replacing the unattainable color-field painting with the recorded groans of the conceptual artist.[2]

In the late sixties and early seventies, Pincus-Witten's radical program led him to identify the emergence of a sensibility which he named Post-Minimalism. This new style, as well as his writing, were born of a reaction and resistance to Greenberg's legacy as it had survived in Minimalism, the predominant style. While this earlier criticism exemplified an heroic dandyism in its rejection of bourgeoisie values, the same is not true of his more recent work. In his coverage of eighties art, which he has called Maximalism, the element of resistance to the bourgeoisie is missing. The polemical stance and personal involvement which made his earlier work significant has shifted to one of cooly detached curiosity, a focus on the superficial details in and surrounding art, and a general sense of dissatisfaction. This shift from depth to surface can perhaps be illuminated by a difference inherent in the role of dandy, his self-chosen alter-ego.

Baudelaire's notion of dandyism is an elaboration of a long-standing social phenomenon, lacking the heroic content he would later give it. Examining the tradition of dandyism, one finds a category of particularly shallow individuals whose focus on style and appearance was an end in itself. By contrasting the social origins of this tradition with Baudelaire's own conception of it one can distinguish a dandyism of style, of fashion, a "sartorial dandyism," from a dandyism of depth, an "heroic dandyism." I want to suggest that these poles characterize a dialectic of surface and depth within Pincus-Witten's criticism, and shed light on the development of his writing of the past twenty years.

I

In her comprehensive study of dandyism entitled *The Dandy: Brummell to Beerbohm,* critic Ellen Moers traces the development of the tradition of dandyism from its origins at the start of the nineteenth century, through its transformations into a literary construct, an abstract personality symbolizing a system of intellectual and artistic values. In her analysis, Moers has looked closely at the major figures within the tradition, from the notorious Beau Brummell of the Regency, to the latter-day fop, Max Beerbohm, paying special attention to the representation of the dandy in literature. By the time the concept of the dandy reached Baudelaire, it had been considerably altered by rhymesters, novelists, and especially chroniclers of the Brummellian legend, the most significant of the latter being Barbey D'Aurevilly.[3] As a result, Baudelaire was able to appropriate and champion the dandy, infusing him with heroism, elevating him to an ideal type available to later writers including Pincus-Witten over a century later.

George Bryan Brummell (1778-1840) was named "Beau" for his mysteriously graceful attire which ultimately dictated style to a generation of devotees, including the Prince of Wales, later George IV.[4] His claim to fame was his signature outfit and accompanying wit—both were noted for their chilling precision. His doctrine of simplicity and cleanliness was

a radical revision of accepted style. He created a composition of coat and tails falling over form-fitting pants which were tucked into tall boots; this simple silhouette was enhanced but not upstaged by simple color harmonies, and punctuated with his coup d'etat: a flamboyant cravat which appeared to be thrown together in a hurry, an effect no other man in London could achieve. Brummell's perfection in appearance was matched by that of his wit; although he did not write, accounts of his arrogance and verbal triumphs have survived him to become the dandy's trademark. He was a sartorial enigma.

Brummell's life is a paradigm for the paradoxical nature of the dandy's existence: although he moved in aristocratic circles and was a royal favorite, he maintained the appearance of autonomy and independence. Moers observes: "The dandy, as Brummell made him, stands on an isolated pedestal of self."[5] Seemingly free of attachments, obligations, or any visible means of support, the dandy's pose was one of superiority and mystery. Yet in the case of Brummell, it was never more than a pose; his success was on a superficial level. He enjoyed a reign over English high society as a member of the Prince's entourage, until he succeeded in alienating himself completely. Forced to flee his debtors to France, he died senile and abandoned in Caen, stripped bare of the material facade which had been his identity. Although his triumph was no more than skin-deep, subsequent writers have recognized the expressive potential of his pose, and have infused it with meaning.

Barbey D'Aurevilly, Brummell's best known biographer, was responsible for the metamorphosis of the dandy from a shallow, social creature, to an intellectually, artistically, and spiritually superior ideal. His *Du Dandysme* of 1845, a dandy's account of a dandy, stresses a series of ideal attributes which, although hardly present in Brummell the man, would influence most thought and writing on the subject after it.[6] Barbey lent substance to the dandy by stressing Brummell's intellectual prowess, justifiable by tales of his wit, and by emphasizing the spiritual nature of his existence by equating his life to art. The dandy, as artist, wields a shock aesthetic geared to astound the bourgeois, whose values are utterly inferior to his: "Dandyism is relevant to the artist and intellectual, therefore, because it is essentially an anti-bourgeois attitude. The dandy is independent of the values and pressures of a society in pursuit of money. He does not work; he exists. And his existence is itself a lesson to the vulgar mind."[7] In addition, Barbey recognized the importance of Brummell's chronic ennui, as well as his indifference toward women, as emblematic of the dandy. Barbey succeeded in greatly altering the tradition of dandyism by immortalizing Brummell the man into Brummell the legend, and by attributing to this legend a constellation of characteristics which was raw material for subsequent writers, especially Baudelaire.

Charles Baudelaire, poet, critic, and dandy, took Barbey's literary transformation of the dandy as an intellectually and artistically significant type, and developed it into a credo for the individual alienated by modern society and bourgeoisie values. As Moers writes: "Given Barbey's work,

Baudelaire could reach for the Dandy whole, as a symbol in the poetic sense."[8] Brummell's goal had been to secure appreciation from the wealthy audience he sought to alienate; this was not the case with Baudelaire who, although he despised the bourgeois, did not embrace the aristocracy. Baudelaire took dandyism out of its original social context, and made it a symbol of a new, classless aristocracy, made up of artists and intellectuals. Brummell's empty pose became a powerful and subversive option for Baudelaire: "Dandyism appears above all in periods of transition, when democracy is not yet powerful, and aristocracy is only just beginning to totter and fall. In the disorder of these times, certain men who are socially, politically, and financially ill at ease, but are all rich in native energy, may conceive the idea of establishing a new kind of aristocracy, all the more difficult to shatter as it will be based on the most precious, the most enduring faculties, and on the divine gifts which work and money are unable to bestow."[9]

Moers' geneology of dandyism presents its development from the sartorial to the heroic, from its social roots into a literary construct. This is not to say that sartorial dandyism ever went out of style. The ever-present polarity within dandyism becomes clearer by contrasting two essays: Baudelaire's "The Painter of Modern Life" of 1863, with Max Beerbohm's "Dandies and Dandies" of 1896. Baudelaire's essay is a paradigm of modern, heroic dandyism. Beerbohm, dandy and revisionist critic of the tradition, rejects modernity and yearns for the Regency, in which the dandy's triumph never extends beyond the level of fashion.

Baudelaire, in "The Painter of Modern Life," writes as a critic and member of modern dandyism. He defines dandyism first by projecting some of its attributes onto the artist Constantin Guys. In the person of Guys, one sees the artist-dandy, observer of modern life yet alienated by it. He possesses independence, self-control, and most importantly the ability to recognize and capture (in his sketches) the moral significance of modern beauty. Baudelaire goes on to hypothesize the ideal dandy, lending moral significance to Brummellian elegance and originality. Characterizing dandyism as an occupation, an institution, and a religion, he equates perfection of toilette to monastic self-discipline, and presents originality as a cardinal virtue: "It is first and foremost the burning need to create for oneself a personal originality, bounded only by the limits of the properties."[10] Accompanying this originality is the inevitable shock of the new: "It is the joy of astonishing others, and the proud satisfaction of never oneself being astonished."[11] As Walter Benjamin has pointed out, this ability to shock but avoid being shocked was essential to Baudelaire: "Baudelaire has portrayed this condition in a harsh image. He speaks of a duel in which the artist, just before being beaten, screams in fright. This duel is the creative process itself. Thus Baudelaire placed the shock experience at the very center of his artistic work."[12] Through his construction of the ideal dandy, Baudelaire creates a figure capable of not only opposition and revolt, but survival in the modern world.

Baudelaire's dandyism of depth is contrasted by Beerbohm's essay, a tribute to the sartorial tradition. Beerbohm captures the essence of the emptiness of the dandy's elegance, and holds that the dandy's power is indeed limited to his appearance. Recalling Brummell, he asserts: "I fancy that Mr. Brummell was a dandy, nothing but a dandy, from his cradle to that fearful day when he lost his figure and had to flee the country."[13] Such a tragedy is matched only by Beerbohm's account of an unfortunate Lord X, who lost his edge with the appearance of several wrinkles on his clothing. Beerbohm notes the expressiveness of the dandy's garb, and like Baudelaire, observes that the modern dandy exemplifies the spirit of the age: "Is not the subtlety and somber restraint, its quiet congruities of black and white and grey, supremely apt of modern emotion and modern thought? The aptness alone, would explain its triumph."[14] For Beerbohm, the meaning symbolized by the costume is secondary to the costume itself; fashion has priority over sincerity, the latter being unfashionable: "For the perfect dandy. . . cannot afford to indulge in any great emotion outside its art; like Balzac, he has not the time."[15]

The difference between Baudelaire and Beerbohm is most evident in their respective references to savagery. Baudelaire writes: "Dandyism is the last spark of heroism amidst decadence; and the type of dandy discovered by our traveller in North America does nothing to invalidate the idea; for how can we be sure that these tribes which we call savage may not in fact be the disjecta membra of great civilizations."[16] Baudelaire views his situation as analogous to the savage's, while for Beerbohm, he is no more than a passing fancy: "I, too, have my Elizabethan, my Caroline moments. I have gone to bed Georgian and awaken Early Victorian. Even savagery has charmed me. And at such times I have often wished I could find in my wardrobe suitable costumes."[17] What for Baudelaire symbolizes an alternative to utter alienation, is for Beerbohm a matter of style.[18]

II

For Baudelaire, dandyism was a mode of personal expression. The role of dandy allowed him to posit a viable self in a society that held no place for him. Unlike the poise and completion of the sartorial dandy, Baudelaire used the image to signal the discrepancy between his own ideals and goals, and those of modern society. Dandyism was a signal of the personal dilemma which was central, not peripheral to his sense of self.

In his essay "On Courage"[19] Heinz Kohut investigates the psychological mechanisms which allow people to oppose the pressures exerted upon them by an environment which is hostile to their goals and ideals. Kohut locates these goals and ideals within what he calls the "nuclear self," which is central to the individual. The "nuclear self" is derived from the "grandiose self," the site of development of an individual's goals, purposes, and ambitions, as well as the "idealized parent imago," from which arise an individual's idealized values.[20] For Kohut, the crisis of courage faced by

heroic individuals "is one of extreme narcissistic imbalance. They feel deeply frustrated, because inner and outer obstacles stand in the way of that total devotion to the central self which alone promises them the inner peace of narcissistic equilibrium."[21]

Kohut notes that one very striking characteristic of courageous individuals is that "at certain critical moments or stages in their lives, they create certain imagery concerning an all-powerful figure on whom to lean for support."[22] This is an insight not only into Baudelaire's exaltation of the dandy as an appropriately heroic type, but for his investment and advocacy of specific artists, as in the case of Constantin Guys, and especially Eugene Delacroix.

As Kohut suggests, "This idealized figure chosen may be either a personified god, or a prototypical historical figure, or a charismatic figure living in the present"[23] The latter certainly characterizes Delacroix, who for Baudelaire was the ideal creative individual. Such an idealizing process encompasses a wide range of distortions of reality, including "an illusion, concretizing, vivid idealization of truly inspiring personages who are either temporally or specially remote from the hero who, however, in his fantasy, will feel that he is deriving concrete support from leaning on them."[24]

One sees this at work in Baudelaire's relationship to Delacroix. Although Baudelaire idealized Delacroix, they never became close friends. For Baudelaire, Delacroix embodied the most desirable combination of attributes: "Eugene Delacroix was a curious mixture of skepticism, politeness, dandyism, burning determination, craftiness, despotism, and finally of a sort of personal kindness and tempered warmth which always accompanies genius."[25]

For Baudelaire, Delacroix was successfully able to maintain what was most central to him, his ideals and ambitions, through creative expression. As he wrote: "Eugene Delacroix never lost the traces of revolutionary origin." And later, "There was much of the savage in Eugene Delacroix—this was in fact the most precious part of his soul, the part which was entirely dedicated to the painting of his dreams and to the worship of art."[26] Kohut calls such a phenomenon a "transference of creativity,"[27] maintaining that "During the transference of creativity itself, the genius projects his own mental powers onto someone else. He assigns his discoveries temporarily to that other person and feels humble toward and dependent upon the idealized protector, mentor, and judge, who is in essence his own creation."[28]

Baudelaire's notion of the dandy as an autonomous, heroic resister to a hostile environment, as well as his advocacy of specific artists who embody that resistance by means of maintaining creative expression, underlies much of his art criticism. I want to argue that it is at work in much, but certainly not all of Pincus-Witten's criticism as well.

III

Both levels of dandyism exist in Pincus-Witten. Although he has repeatedly invoked Baudelaire, one finds a superficial element to his writing as well.

A look at his criticism reveals a dialectical dandyism, an often imperceptible swing between the heroic and the sartorial.

Perhaps this is at work in what critic Donald Kuspit has recognized to be a balance between the personal and the stylistic: "It is the recurrent dialectic between an art's social and political properties that make Robert Pincus-Witten's criticism significant. Now the balance shifts to one side, now to the other; the one side always resists the other, giving the neglected side a nominal identity."[29]

A staunch anti-Greenbergian, Pincus-Witten has offered a resistance to the formalism which has long dominated the discourse on art, by means of "being-personal." As Kuspit points out: "What fascinates one about Pincus-Witten then, is the persistence of the personal intention in the critical act of engagement. It is an heroic insistence on the personalities involved, which sometimes lacks a full sense of the personality's complexity."[30] His resistance to formalism is not simply a matter of selecting a methodological alternative; the element of being-personal has allowed a mode of creative expression through which he has been able to articulate his own central concerns. His emphasis on the personality, his own and of the artists he writes about, gives his criticism a depth utterly lacking in that of Greenberg and his followers, whose concern and criteria for quality remain entirely on the surface of the canvas. This conflict between depth and surface, being-personal and style, applies to his critical career as a whole. While his earlier writing can be characterized by an heroic dandyism—a certain depth—in many respects reminiscent of Baudelaire, his later work marks a shift toward increasingly superficial concerns, a stance that often conflates style with fashion. Being-personal has become trivialized, which was already implicit in Pincus-Witten's superficial sense of personality.

In Pincus-Witten's writing on Symbolism, one finds the articulation of his most central concerns. They reappear throughout his writing, on Post-Minimalism in particular, and much less effectively on Maximalism. For Pincus-Witten, the Symbolists offer an historical prototype for the artistic resistance to the values of formalism in their insistence on "the superiority of the mental over the physical."[31] From the Symbolists, Pincus-Witten builds an art-historical genealogy which serves as an alternative to Greenberg's story of art. While Greenberg traces the progressive flattening of the modernist canvas, a monolithic story of "great men" from Manet to Picasso to Pollock to Newman, Pincus-Witten posits a parallel and subversive family tree of artists, from the Symbolists to the Dadaists to the Surrealists to Rauchenberg and Johns to the Postminimalists, all of whom value personality over paint, content over form, unconscious over conscious, disorder over order, subjectivity over objectivity, in a nutshell, mind over matter.

Pincus-Witten's advocacy of the Symbolists reflects his identification with their values, and one might speak of a kind of art-historical "transference of creativity." His invocation of Baudelaire-as-hero has a Symbolist decadence to it. Like the Symbolists, Pincus-Written has made use of a highly mannered version of Baudelairian dandyism, one which holds ec-

centricity, sexual neurosis (translated: a devotion to the self which necessitates an aversion to women), and an intellectualism bordering on mysticism as desirable characteristics, necessary for survival. From the Symbolist poets and artists, Pincus-Witten has gleaned a series of praiseworthy themes and attributes which he has consistently found in, or projected onto, the work and personalities of all subsequent artists of merit. These themes include: preoccupation with the new as a moral endeavor, androgyny expressed in sexually ambiguous imagery, the linguistic sources of art and a focus on theory and the preexecutive in general. By following the Symbolist thematic, Pincus-Witten creates threads of continuity in his subjective account of art history. We see Symbolist androgynous iconography rear its decapitated head again in Duchamp's sexual objects, and yet again in the onanistic antics of Vito Acconci. The linguistic innovation of Mallarme, which also figure prominently in Duchamp's loaded punning, and again in Jasper Johns, reappear as the triumph of language over object in Mel Bochner's Projects.[32] Throughout, Pincus-Witten's emphasis is on the psyche of the artist as it is revealed in the art object as well as in biography. His focus on the artist often to the exclusion of the object is the essence of his dandyish rejection of traditional art history.

Post-Minimalism, as the continuation of Symbolist values, is for Pincus-Witten a sensibility which "actively rejects the high Formalist cult of impersonality."[33] As the name he gave it implies, Post-Minimalism is both a continuation and a critique of Minimalism as was Post-Impressionism a century before it. Like Post-Impressionism, it encompasses several divergent sub-styles which are unified in their reaction to the preceding style. Post-Minimalism's substyles are: the "Pictorial-Sculptural," or the "expressionistic revival of painting issues, "applied to both printing and sculpture; "Epistemology," or the "information-based abstraction" which was the examination of "pure knowledge;" and finally "Ontology," the rejection of Epistemology and the revival of temporal and theatrical issues.[34] He named the new sensibilities, and placed them in an art-historical framework, but more importantly, he named the artists, most of whom he knew personally. Pincus-Witten's investment in and advocacy of these artists is reminiscent of Baudelaire; not only does he share their sensibility, but he articulates it, and defends it better than any lawyer could. This is especially evident in his coverage of Richard Serra, Eva Hesse, Mel Bochner, Dorothea Rockburne, Jackie Ferarra, Lynda Benglis, and Vito Acconci, among others. In his faith in these artists as keepers of the Symbolist flame, one sees a "transference of creativity" at work; it is what makes his writing between 1966-1976 his best and most heroic.

The development of Pincus-Witten's writing from an art-historical discourse with a biographical bent, to an autobiographical, diaristic mode of writing, mirrors his advocacy of personal expression: "The pinched scholarly mode of my earlier writing reflected the general manderin tone characteristic of critical writing of sixties. The manner, often pompously inflated, was a function of formalist methodology revitalized by Clement Greenberg during the 1940's and 50's, and ratified in the work of the

younger Harvard critics, notably Michael Fried."[35] His dissatisfaction with the traditional impersonality of art history precipitated a firm commitment to biography expressed in his introduction to his 1976 article in *Arts Magazine* called "The Formalist Dysfunction." He writes: "Italics, interior monologue stuff. Its so pretentious. What's wrong? Perhaps what's right? I can't write about art as it existed in a vacuum . . . Disinterestness. I don't get it any more—well not exclusively. There's this other side of me, the other avenue—work perceived as significant must be invested with the value deriving from biography, the really lived, the idiosyncratic datum, the human. Biography as form; biography is form."[36] Such a declaration captures his need to match creativity in art with creativity in criticism. Yet biography was but a step toward autobiography.

Pincus-Witten began publishing articles in the form of journal entries in 1980, in *Arts Magazine;* these articles were later reprinted in a collection under the heading of Maximalism, the name he gave to the art of the early eighties. On the one hand, these entries represented the logical conclusion of the development of his writing toward a uniquely personal form of critical expression: "Thus I view the chronicle—the record least liable of incorrectness set into a cultural matrix of absolute ambiguity—as a literary effort convergent to the artwork of the turn of the decade. In Post-Minimalism the reprinting of essays sought to capture the discourse of the artists in question; the republication of essays that form Maximalism is spurred by the parallel status of these chronicles to the art which provoked them. While not being art, they are not perhaps artless."[37] Yet despite their promise, the entries are less a parallel to "Maximalism," and closer to the perspective of a worldly but distanced observer mulling over the changing styles of a fickle art world. They record a shift from an heroic to a sartorial dandyism.

Pincus-Witten's entries are a move from concern with style to the pursuit of fashion. They are interesting, entertaining, and valuable, but too often for the wrong reasons. They are an insider's view of the art world, and their fascination is that of a gossip column. What is most disappointing is that although he is in a position to reveal and subvert the petty art-world politics that work to trivialize art, he reveals that he himself is too much a participant to offer any such critique. While participation in the development of a sensibility alternative to the mainstream was the condition for the possibility of his advocacy of Postminimalism, it seems that his participation with Maximalism is on a superficial level, and ultimately detracts from a clear presentation and understanding of the art.

The gap between Pincus-Witten and the Maximalist artists is due in part to his application, although less overt, of his Symbolist-derived-Postminimalist criteria to their art. It is clear that he is at odds with the return of painting and the onset of what he recognizes to be "Pluralism": "One of the things that goes unnoticed in the so-called Pluralist position of the present day is just how much of it is merely a Philistine backlash against Postminimalism."[38] Resenting and lamenting the return to a clear definition of the categories, or what he calls "species" of painting and

sculpture, he considers Maximalism to be a setback: "Thus Maximalism, despite its brave name, is perhaps a more conservative consciousness—let's say it, style—than its predecessor."[39] Pincus-Witten's disappointment creates a distance between him and the new art he is self-consciously compelled to pursue; the result is an ambivalence which permeates his Entries, surfacing in the wit and poise of a more defensive, sartorial dandyism. In the form of the Entries, the dandy's triumph is ensured, both in the pithy aside to himself, as well as the conversation with the artist, a battle of wits in which he inevitably has the last word. A caution masked by wit replaces his previous method of "being-personal," and often leads his discussion to the superficial aspects of eighties art, in which mere appearances dominate his analysis.

While Pincus-Witten pointed to and named the important Postminimalists, because he believed in them, his choice of the Maximalists, especially the Salle/Schnabel/Fischl triad, appears to be a factor of their tremendous success. He defended Postminimalism as a style, if an anti-style, before it was fashionable, yet the reverse is true in the case of Maximalism, whose fashionability seems to warrant its definition as a style. As in the past, his account of these artists draws heavily on biographical detail, yet it does so with their current popularity in mind. As the role of advocate is no longer required, his previous polemic has been replaced with a less effective cynicism expressed as musing to oneself. One is at pains to identify just where he stands. Such autobiographical criticism is often valuable and insightful, but remains cautious and highly censored, falling short of its potential to reveal the hype of the New York art scene.

With his Entries, one sees the return of Beau Brummell, on the cutting edge of fashion, flattering the aristocracy, following but maintaining autonomy from the social scene that can be called the art world. Flitting from Kassel to Rome to New York, he treats us to a dandy's view of the underbelly of this world, with anecdotes like this one: "Later, a final drink at the hotel bar. As we sat in a tight circle, the Mephistophelean German painter Salome lit upon Leo, whispering to him that Leo was the most attractive man there, that he knew he was a great lover, sexy for sure, because he once had a lover called Castelli (ergo, the Salome/Castelli show at Annina Nosei) and he wanted to give him a present, something that would make him feel good, by which, I assume, he meant some dope."[40] Whether he is punning with Ileana Sonnabend, or remarking on the latest East Village party, what is most lacking in these is the element of sincerity which the Entries promise but do not deliver.

When Pincus-Witten identifies himself with the dandy, the link with Baudelaire is not a given. Although his criticism began with a heroic stance against formalist alienation, this is less the case today. His mad chase after the "new" seems to be a Sisyphean endeavor, answering the endless demands of fashion; in the end, his is a dandyism of complicity rather than resistance.

Notes

[1]Robert Pincus-Witten, *Eye to Eye: Twenty Years of Art Criticism,* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1984), p. 21.

[2]Robert Pincus-Witten, *PostMinimalism: American Art of the Decade,* (New York: Out of London Press, 1977), pp. 143-147.

[3]Ellen Moers, *The Dandy: Brummell to Beerbohm,* (London: Secker & Warburg), p. 13.

[4]*Ibid.*, p. 25.

[5]*Ibid.*, p. 18.

[6]*Ibid.*, p. 256.

[7]*Ibid.*, p. 264.

[8]*Ibid.*, p. 3.

[9]Baudelaire, *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays,* (New York: Garland, 1978), p. 28

[10]*Ibid.*, p. 27.

[11]*Ibid.*, p. 29.

[12]Walter Benjamin, "On Some Motifs in Baudelaire", in *Illuminations,* (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), p. 163.

[13]Max Beerbohm, "Dandies and Dandies" in *The Incomparable Max: A Collection of Writings of Sir Max Beerbohm,* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1962), p. 2.

[14]*Ibid.*, p. 13.

[15]*Ibid.*, p. 16.

[16]Baudelaire, p. 29.

[17]Beerbohm, p. 11.

[18]Beerbohm tries to hide his own alienation from modern society, as is evident in his historical escapism. He shows us that the "true" dandy never lets his feelings show.

[19]Heinz Kohut, "On Courage" in *Self Psychology and the Humanities: Reflections on a New Psychoanalysis Approach,* (New York: Norton, 1985), pp. 5-50.

[20]Kohut, p. 10.

[21]*Ibid.*, p. 12.

[22]*Ibid.*, p. 6.

[23]*Ibid.*

[24]*Ibid.*, p. 7.

[25]Lorenz Eitner, *Neo-Classicism and Romanticism: 1750-1850, Sources and Documents Vol. II: Restoration/Twilight of Humanism,* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1970), p. 128.

[26]*Ibid.*

[27]Kohut, p. 7.

[28]*Ibid.*

[29]Pincus-Witten, *Eye to Eye,* p. xxi.

[30]*Ibid.*, p. xi.

[31]*Ibid.*, p. 28.

[32]Pincus-Witten's Symbolist geneology, although it illuminates themes that have been traditionally marginalized by art history, often overshadows more pertinent issues surrounding art. An example of this is his rejection of postmodern theory at the expense of presenting an accurate account of contemporary art.

[33]Robert Pincus-Witten, *PostMinimalism,* p. 14.

[34]*Ibid.*, pp. 16-18.

[35]*Ibid.*, p. 13.

[36]*Ibid.*, p. 128.

[37]Robert Pincus-Witten, *PostMinimalism into Maximalism: American Art, 1966-1986,* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1987), p. 258.

[38]*Ibid.*, p. 256.

[39]*Ibid.*, p. 257.

[40]Pincus-Witten, *Eye to Eye,* p. 184.

The Culture of Eros: A Frugal Guide to Sybaritic Art

By Rudolf M. Bisanz

The culture of the erotic in the visual arts, especially since its modern inception in eighteenth-century France, routinely dwells on the commonplace while habitually suffering from restraints on spontaneous impulse due to self-imposed psychological impediments or societal embargos. Serving to allay this trend, art constantly refines and disguises actuality while inveigling its presumed contrariness into prodigious output. To save face, painted or graphic erotica conjoin vulgar motives with sophisticated means of breeding aesthetic form. In so doing, the vicious cycle of exquisite frustration spins on: inhibition circles banality, embarrassment turns around lack of fulfillment, rarefaction rotates around dissembling. In the process of such titillating cultural games art triumphs over nature, outdistances life, and reconciles paradox.

Over the ages the nude human body, sexual subjects and erotic representations in art have been put to countless changes of style. Likewise, the meanings that have been attached to such works by various cultures, periods, schools, and movements are legion. Until well into the 1930's, a highly influential wisdom held sway, that if the nude raised in the spec-

tator desires appropriate to the material subject—spell erotic feelings—it was false art and bad morals. This position was shared by the philosopher Samuel Alexander, who also upheld a prevailing if ingenuous assertion that art is a constructive impulse turned meditative.[1] Unfazed by their "moral weight," the art historian Kenneth Clark deemed his fellow Briton's views erroneous and prudish and proposed a provocative alternative theory of his own. This was a kind of twentieth-century "liberation aesthetics" concerning nudity in art: "No nude, however abstract, should fail to arouse in the spectator some vestige of erotic feeling, even though it be only the faintest shadow—and if it does not do so , it is bad art and false morals."[2] But there may be a conciliatory position mediating between these two seemingly irreconcilable extremes—idealism and psychology.

The nude as subject can and, indeed usually does, connote an erotic content. But it can also express meanings that are different, meanings that diverge from the libidinous or, in some cases, may even contravene erotic interpretation. There are some contents in the art of nudes that, most likely, had never been intended by their creators to arouse amatory responses in the viewer or, if they do, it is strictly his private business. For example, there is anatomical structure, the dynamics of movement or physical energy, objectivization of innocence or will power or spiritual perfection, transformed idealized shape, or the aesthetics of abstract form. Some of these or related contents might still tempt erotic responses in the viewer. But then, *de gustibus non est disputandum.*

The causal relationship between a potential triggering device in a work of art depicting the nude and the libidinal response to it is such a highly varied, individual and baffling psychological trait as to be totally elusive in practical terms. This seems to be true under "normal" conditions, let alone with quirky deviations. The erotic, therefore, cannot in the end be qualified precisely or quantified with lasting authority because it is a culturally relative and psychologically random effect. (To a certain extent this is also true of "erotic art" as a whole. But unlike the nude—at any rate, the nude as it is classically defined—its intended contents seem far less ambiguous in its collective purpose over the ages.) It would appear, therefore, that both Alexander and Clark, groping in the dark, seem to be bent on quantifying the immeasurable or prophesying the unseen. The one does so from a position of idealism tempered by evolutionism, the other from a position of a relativist personalism informed by psychology.

The art of tribal, prehistoric and primitive peoples as well as of the ancient and classical cultures may feature abstract signs and symbols that carry hidden, arcane, subliminal or, indeed, forgotten intimations of meaning. Its sexual significance, if any, can be subject for study and serious musings by anthropologists, psychologists, and art historians. But this branch of our subject has also its lighter side. In this regard, Adolf Loos (1877-1933), the pioneering Austrian architect and art critic (who opined that "ornament is crime") probably took the prize when he proposed in the 1890s that "all art is erotic. . .the Cross is erotic in origin. The horizontal line is a woman reclining; a vertical line is a man penetrating her".[3] By extension

of that eccentric—and anatomically dysfunctional—measure, and for all its gratification to symbol sleuths, could the double-barred Cross of Lorraine perchance bespeak a *ménage à trois*—or the swastika portend an orgy? *Chacun son gout.* Regardless, Sigmund Freud, another tireless seeker after obscure erotic symbols, once seemed to have tried to even the balance with some common sense. Queried by an over-eager student about the "hidden meaning" of what appeared to him his mentor's "suspicious" habit of constantly champing a cigar, the master is said to have responded: "Son, sometimes a cigar is just a cigar!" (apocryphal).

The term "erotic" stems from Eros, the Greek god of love, and connotes sexual love. Eros, as a libidinal *élan vital* or "life force," complements the spiritual force of *agape,* the love of God for man or Christian brotherly love, while opposing *thanatos,* the death instinct or instinctual destructiveness. Accordingly, and in the broadest sense, the erotic, therefore, represents a kind of *Lebenslust,* an instinctual constructiveness or an unalloyed, basal creativity. As to the varieties that this force may assume in living actuality, they are as bountiful as psychology is deep or man's biological urges essential—or his amatory fantasy is rich and varied. The same holds true for the guises under which the erotic may surface in art or "hide" itself—become "displaced": they, too, seem limitless.

As distinct from the cultic, expiatory "sexual" art of either the imagist or the abstract-symbolic variety that was practiced, for example, by prehistoric and early cultures and can still be found among some primitive societies today, there exists a vast body of "erotic" art whose aim since antiquity to our days has been to express, sometimes more, sometimes less directly, amatory meanings. There also exists numerous instances of an ambivalent variety from antiquity, and perhaps even from prehistory, that is both "sexual" and "erotic" and which seems to straddle both sides of the issue. But we shall never know for sure how, where, and why such ambivalence existed. In erotic art, sexual representation may be direct or metaphorically disguised, didactic or confessional, idealizing or descriptive, mimetic or abstracting, celebratory or diversional, etc. But, for whatever reason, it always consciously or purposefully communicates with or compulsively exposes to the viewer libidinous aims.

Erotic art has been produced in considerable quantities throughout most of art history and under surprisingly varied auspices: pagan cult, oriental religions, Christian ethics, humanism, play or entertainment, psychology, personal self-expression, personal self-gratification. As to a comprehensive characterization of this type of imagery, we can only wish that Clark had applied his famous interpretation to erotic art instead of perhaps erroneously, certainly problematically, to the nude. Had he done so, we would have come a long way toward a working definition of our matter.

Most periods in art history have produced some kind of sexual or erotic imagery—some excelled at it. Ancient Greece and Rome, for example, overflowed with artistic representations of nudity, sexual displays, and erotic scenes of most every description. It was part of their religion, mystery cults, festivals and processions, and popular superstitions, and took the form of

architectural ornaments, sculptures, paintings, and utilitarian objects.[4] China, Mongolia, Japan, and India gave rise to exceptionally rich traditions of erotic art under comparable auspices and with similar applications.

Sexual representations have come down to us from the European Stone Age (e.g., steatopygous—with large buttocks—Paleolithic "Venuses"), the Indo-European Bronze Age (e.g., copulations, apotropaic, ithyphallic warriors, etc.), and from the Celts (e.g., examples from Central Europe of phalloid stone carvings; Irish viragos with voracious pudenda; the gaudily vulval Sheila-na-gigs, etc.) Even in the Middle Ages, explicit erotica were being produced, though in modest quantities, under the auspices of the clergy for Romanesque and Gothic churches throughout Europe (e.g., fornications, priapic characters, soixante-neuf couples, etc. on sequestered misericords, bosses, friezes and capitals).

Since antiquity, the nude and a sophisticated form of erotic art and literature did not come into their own again until the Renaissance in Italy. That period's seminal humanists and their successors in the Baroque age explored the mythology, literature, and morals and manners of the Ancients, and so provided numerous artists with the reason (e.g., idealism, didacticism) subjects (from Graeco-Roman mythology), and contents (e.g., Aristotelian, Neo-Platonic, Hedonist) for scores of classical, amatory paintings, sculptures, and engravings.[5] More recently, the art of nudes and the erotic expanded in the eighteenth century, spread rapidly in the nineteenth century, and reached its record proliferation in the twentieth century.

In the decades between the death of King Louis XIV in 1715 and the Storming of the Bastille in 1789, the eighteenth century—the Great Age of Love—experienced what might best be described as an Erotic Renaissance. All the arts, especially in France, participated in a lusty celebration of amorous pleasures and competed with one another in frankness, ribaldry and voluptuousness. Legrand, Piron, Sade, Mirabeau, and scores of other brilliant writers supplied Paris and the aristocracy (and the world) with a constant gush of ever more imaginative lovers, flamboyant sexual themes and licentious goings-on. Crowds of anonymous sketchers, illustrators and engravers, most of whom were highly skilled and talented—some even had genius—furnished those steamy pages with candid graphic reflections of their authors' libidinous fantasies. In addition, erotic folk art and the earliest erotic cartoons in the form of colored engravings found wide circulation among the population at large. While the tastes of the aristocracy, the peasants and a budding proletariat in the ribald thus converged, the bourgeoisie took exception to this trend on moral, hence economic and political grounds.

During the Revolution and the decade that followed, even though Puritanism swept France, erotic satire of the most earthy kind and in the form of clandestinely printed, engraved broadsides circulated far and wide as farcical, scatological and sexual lampoons of the aristocracy, the Crown and the military. More significantly, it was the Masters—e.g., Watteau, Boucher, Fragonard, Pater, Lancret, Charles Antoine Coypel, Clodion, Baudouin—who lent their timeless gifts as artists to the creation of gallant

and boudoir subjects and established eighteenth-century France as the birth place of modern erotica-as-high-art.

Other countries contributed their share to the sexual revolution that swept Europe as, for example, England, where Rowlandson, Fuseli and Hogarth reigned over a significant coterie of artists and patrons fascinated by outspoken art and telling pictures of intimate and social mores and manners. In Spain Goya lent his brush to express similar interests and, of course, in Italy Canova immortalized a refined form of female pulchritude in flawless marbles. But France, which had led in preparing the broader intellectual framework for sexual emancipation in the areas of religion, social conduct and politics under the aegis of the Enlightenment, unquestionably also dominated the artistic scene accompanying that cultural transformation: the imaging of the nude and erotic events, actions and thoughts.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the production of nudes by most major and countless minor artists of virtually every movement and the surging erotic desires in art in France, and increasingly also in other countries, grew by leaps and bounds. They were usually couched in layers of mythology and historicist styles, notably of the Neoclassical, Neo-Mannerist, Neobaroque and, indeed, Neo-Rococo varieties, to the effect that the intended contents—sexuality and sexual activity—might better assuage the delicate sensibilities of the middle class while titillating its alter fancy. Or, as was the case with much of French Romanticism and Salon art, the erotic was thinly but serviceably disguised beneath literary or anecdotal veneers whose didactic gloss maintained bourgeois *comme il faut* appearances without, of course, unduly distracting from the enjoyment of the real issue, sex.

In the case of the Naturalists, especially the Impressionists, erotic subjects usually derived from the contemporary milieu—the bohème the demimonde, Parisan low life, the bordello scene—were treated as a matter of "objective" social studies and "detached" empirical scrutiny, and expectedly attracted the discreet appreciation of a small coterie of wealthy private collectors. (Democratization of taste and the modern museum brought, in due course, the once exclusive and sequestered to the attention of the masses. Proper matrons now attend displays of such bordello art—e.g., Toulouse-Lautrec or Degas "shows" at major museums—explaining the finer points of the *mise-en-scène* of Parisian nightlife to their attentive brood.) The strong psycho-erotic propensities (with their attendant socio-cultural baggage) of the P.R.B. were especially well encoded in stylistic ciphers, all the better to conform to the cynical double standard of Victorian morality while at the same time inveighing vigorously against it. With Symbolism, a movement that straddled two centuries, the well-observed gentleman's agreement between the artist and society began to yield to an increasing frankness and urging sense of seriousness in the depiction of turgid psycho-sexual motifs and erotic fantasies in art. Art Nouveau, another transitional movement to the twentieth century and the ultimate receptacle of the overflowing well of nineteenth-century libidinal impulses, virtually ebbed and flowed on the swells of a tumescent, erotic *élan vital.*

In general and in spite of much endemic hypocrisy, nineteenth-century representations of the nude and erotic material benefited from the practices of salon art which achieved the highest stylistic cultivation and the most exacting technical standards in the entire course of art history. Perhaps more significantly, artists introduced the subject to profound psychological and sociological interpretations, explored new interpersonal situations, and revealed private human experiences in art that were original departures in the cultural life of the West. They also pioneered in the process of politicizing eroticism in art—the prostitute as metaphor of social ills, licentiousness as critique of state corruption, fornication as economic rebellion, the evils of a "displaced" *femme fatal* as symbol of the threat of the economic emancipation of women. In so doing, they anticipated common twentieth-century themes.

Twentieth-century artists have proven to be by far the most adept at flouting convention and the most inventive in embroiling the nude and erotic art in diverse and seemingly remote ideas. Thus they have set new standards of boldness for the subject while simultaneously making it respond to the most disparate stimuli, designs and passions. Herewith a baker's dozen of such causes from Post-Impressionism to Post-Modernism, keyed to movements and critically, if irreverently, synopsized: a mini-art history with an altered perspective—Modernism jocundly but purposefully "deconstructed."

Occultism and para-normal psychology affected Symbolism and Art Nouveau, a style where hirsute *femmes fatales* stirred up a witches brew of viscous spasms and pre-pubescent promiscuity. Orgasmic nocturnals, phobic love-death immolations and other spermatoid, crypto-Wagnerian specters completed that movement's erotic eccentricities. Libertinism and social protest chose Expressionism as a conduit to project Johns, pimps and prostitutes, free love, and bohemian vagabondage as threshold events to political anarchy, social chaos and civilizational apocalypse. Aesthetics and thoughts of "pure form" elevated Cubism and other, related kinds of abstraction to prominence while reducing anatomy to interior decoration and the erotic to formalist puzzle-plays. Utopianism and machine dynamics elected various forms of constructivism (Futurism, Section d'Or, Purism, etc.) to do their bidding. This resulted in a kind of erector set anatomy as spick-and-span, stroboscopically vectored, "brave new world" erector set eroto-mechanics. Nihilism and anarchism projected Dadaism as a means to their ends. In so doing the Dadaists opened up a veritable "circus maximus amatorius" featuring daring mechanized acts of erotico-mania and erotico-psychosis.

Trendy fashions and "modern life-style options" settled on Bauhaus, De Stijl, and Art Deco aesthetics to the effect that henceforth machine-tooled, streamlined, "functional," bareback homunculi masqueraded as high-octane pin-ups. Meanwhile geometrized industrial-strength *erotes* projected aires of progressively suave sexuality. Socialism and Marxism invented New Objectivity, and reinvented Expressionism and Realism. Accordingly, carnal corruption, perversion, sex and violence augur the end of bourgeois

society in the ultimate class struggle as sexual *grand guignol* to the quick: the prostitute as nurse, mother-confessor, prime-minister and hierarchically overblown deity rules a society in the terminal throws of a civilizational *delirium tremens*. Psychology took over all types of expressionist symbolism as it did the Peintres Maudits whose self-destructive erotic binge presaged the final dissolution of all standards of decorum "as they knew it." Meanwhile, psychiatry and the "subconscious mind" furnished Surrealism and Magic Realism with the appropriate "interior model" from which to draw its wet-dream fantasies. (Even Nazi racism and Fascist propaganda entered into the fray with their own brand of Neoclassicism-*cum-Naktkultur* and a repulsive crew of athletic, uncircumcised, SS-studs and big-breasted BDM-cows in the buff. With studied bad taste they strutted their Arian stuff for the Führer (or il Duce, respectively), for the "master race," genetic engineering and genocide.)

In the 1960s erotic trends in art intensified. Political radicalism took charge of Pop-Art and flung itself at society in a vain Neo-Dada-like assault to bring a Viet-gate riven "Fortress Amerika" to heel: phallus and pudenda to the barricades! In the 1970s, cultural criticism and psychology appropriated Photorealism as their own. The nude and state-of-the-art erotic design; hormone-and-vitamin-fortified, neon-emblazoned still-lifes of human flesh; nudes as glutinous, pink pork chops and blue veined, roseate chicken viscera. These offerings of erotic *nature morte* were among the selections on the menu of Superrealist aphrodisiacal treats. Lastly, political action and counter-culture guerrillas took possession of Neo-Expressionism. This prompted aesthetic chain-saw massacres and sexual mayhem of stick figures in mud baths. (Properly framed and track-spotlighted, though, these "choice" brutalities and "exquisite" primal screams can do wonders for the Brazilian Rosewood paneling of personal computer dens or jacuzzi hideouts of many a discriminating MBA.)

In this and similar types of art, the nude and the erotic—the most private and intimate—are either shared with the public in a kind of self-confessional stream of consciousness or offered as metaphors for real or imagined social or cultural ills or even demagogically "forced" upon national politics—the broadest of public concerns. Of course, at the core of these breaks with comity lie profound challenges to middle class values and to whatever ideological positions prevail as well as an aggressive desire to smash moral taboos and expand individual freedom of expression. No doubt, occasionally there is just the wish to embarrass or shock an increasingly weary public for the sake of publicity or simply for the sheer hell of it.

In an age when art movement chases art movement at an ever faster pace and without an appreciable pattern of order or consequence, the nude and the erotic—among the most resistant objects of middle class affectation and prudery—have proven remarkably durable commodities with which an artist can score on at least three counts: self-expression, social criticism, and self-promotion. But in recent decades, those subjects have also increasingly become ends in themselves for many artists; that is to say, they flaunt a demonstrative, self-centered form of sexual hedonism, plain and simple.

As the horizon of public morals and accepted standards of decorum have widened and basic freedoms of expression have expanded of late, art galleries, always eager to sniff out and cash in on trends, have been showing to a progressively wider audience ever more explicit erotica, art that had throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries been the exclusive province of wealthy private collectors.[6]

Due to puritanical impulses stemming from different ideological quarters, Stalinist Russia and the America of the pre-1960s shared in common a basic inhibition in, if not aversion to, dealing with the subject at hand. Soviet artists are still effectively blocked from it even though a satellite country, East Germany, has of late embarked upon a lively examination of the once forbidden territory—orgy-porgy kolkhoz style (?!)—under the unlikely banner of Neo-Social Realism and with the blessings (and the kind of tortured reasoning that would put the most sophisticated art critic in the West to shame) of official art critics of the Marxist state.[7]

Today, the United States is among the countries that lead in dealing with the subject and scores of artists (women are in the vanguard) use it to explore and reveal the gamut of notions that they sense it can usefully essay. Nowadays, this country also seems to lead the world in the sheer quantity, if not always quality, of erotic productions. Other countries that are prominent in this regard include West Germany, France, England, Denmark, Sweden, and Japan. Recent years have witnessed a noticeable and ominous reaction among segments of the public to the free expression of erotic subjects in art and other media in this country and elsewhere due to a growing trend of conservatism in ideology, politics and sexual mores.[8]

Inevitably, albeit mistakenly careless talk about the nude and erotic art leads, especially with aesthetic innocents, to mindless comparisons with pornography. The word stems from the Greek *pornographos* (porne = harlot; graphos = writing) and thus means the description of prostitutes and prostitution, i.e., depictions of bordello scenes. Leaving the issue of the social and psychological benefits of pornography aside, its nature is licentious, lewd or scatological, its chief aim is sexual arousal, and its appeal is to prurient tastes. It is a form of recording, depicting, representing, or "picturing" appearances or events of an erotic kind. As such, pornography is a materialistic monotype wherein the subject—that which is depicted—and the content—the end toward which that depiction aspires—are identical. In other words, since no ulterior or transcendent motive to the purely objective seems to be in evidence, the similarities of pornography to art are purely accidental.

To be good, the art of the nude and the erotic must possess a double charge. Depending on his private leanings, the viewer's fancy may be drawn to thoughts of sensual delights. But such productions cannot purport to be "art" and fail to also transcend sensuality and the material into the spheres of the aesthetic or spiritual or make an intellectual or emotional statement. Whereas the serious questions about pornography revolve around its socially beneficial or clinically redeeming features or lack thereof, the critical problem of the nude and erotic art pivots on the presence or

absence of aesthetic, intellectual, spiritual or universally meaningful emotional values. Henry Miller writes that "even in 'obscene' works of art we look for the touch of the master. The work of the hack leaves us cold or derisive. The artist knows better than the priest wherein true evil lies. He is a devout worshipper and expositor of the glories of creation."[9]

The eighteenth century "celebrated" the nude and the erotic in art. Eroticism had such a powerful grasp on the minds of countless nineteenth-century artists of most movements that their collective mental condition (as that of society at large) could be likened to one of obsession—a libidinal compulsion. Innumerable twentieth-century artists, relieved of the yoke of Victorian morality, openly proclaim the subject—they flaunt what their predecessors dared only in secrecy, often expressed in "displaced form," or else disguised with layers of *comme il faut* decorum. Still, there can be little question but that the subject as a whole, considering its enormous size, importance and ramifications, has received far less attention from the scholarly community in art history journals, at conferences and symposia, to say nothing of college halls, than it deserves. Thus, art history, criticism, and teaching lag far behind actual practice in the production and collecting of nudes and erotic art.

Various reasons can be cited for this discrepancy. Foremost among these, we would certainly have to mention psychological hindrances burdening many individuals and making open discussion of the subject with them difficult. Furthermore, there are cultural taboos, social strictures and religious sanctions, as well, which, for all the brave talk about "liberation life styles," prove surprisingly resistant to meaningful change in academic debate, to say nothing of ventilating the issue with the broader public. Finally, there is the pernicious habit, even among some of those whose education in aesthetics and art history should have taught them better, of viewing the whole subject as somehow suspect of pornography, and of pandering to prurient tastes. Thus, it seems, the unrestricted and universal discussion of the subject as a mainstay of art and, especially, of Modern Art, is still hampered by timidity, errors and misconceptions. Even though we seem far removed from the Gilded Age, the culture of erotic art is surprisingly prone to pretension and neurotic phobias and hamstrung by prejudice.

From Michelangelo to Matisse, from Botticelli to Bellmer, from Rubens to Renoir, from Picasso to Pearlstein, from Giorgione to Grosz, from Boucher to Bouguereau, from Titian to Toulouse-Lautrec, from Watteau to Wesselman, from Leighton to Lindner, from Ingres to Ikeda, from Rembrandt to Ramos . . . many leading artists have created some of their finest works and realized their most compelling visions when they dealt with the nude and the erotic in their art. Yet, due to its frequently explicit nature in treating anatomical and sexual matters (and the need to deal with it openly in an article such as this) the subject has also the potential for causing controversy, misunderstanding, and ill feelings with some individuals. Still, it counts among the most fascinating, persistent, prolific, and, above all, most human subjects that art and culture and the study of their history have to offer. If we have conveyed this impression with emphasis and reached at least a degree of more understanding, the effort would have been well worth it.[10]

Notes

[1]Samuel Alexander, *Beauty and Other Forms of Value* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1933), 127.

[2]Kenneth Clark, *The Nude, A Study in Ideal Form* (New York: Doubleday, 1958), 29.

[3]Robert L. Delvoy, *Symbolists and Symbolism* (New York: Rizzoli, 1982), 167.

[4]For a distinguished introduction to erotic art in ancient Rome see Michael Grant, *Eros in Pompeii, The Secret Rooms of the National Museum of Naples* (New York: Crown Publications, 1982).

[5]There is yet another dimension of sexuality present in an unexpected quarter of the Renaissance, religious art. The topic was brilliantly introduced by Leo Steinberg in *The Sexuality of Christ in Renaissance Art and in Modern Oblivion* (New York: Random House, 1983).

[6]Eberhard and Phyllis Kronhausen have established their International Museum of Erotic Art in San Francisco in order "to extend these privileges [of the aristocracy and the wealthy] to the average citizen." Compare their *Complete Book of Erotic Art,* Volumes 1 and 2 (New York: Bell Publishing Company, 1978), Vol. 2, XIV.

[7]Günther Grass, Uwe M. Schneede, a.o., *Zietvergleich, Malerei und Graphic aus der DDR,* catalogue (Hamburg: Art, das Kunstmagazin, im Verlag Gruner & Jahr, AG & Co., n.d.g. [1982]). Consult this volume on the total aesthetic flip-flop in the GDR in the 1970s. Art then went virtually overnight from "social realism" to "self-representation, expression of artistic personality, the 'dynamic method', subjectivism . . . and fantasy." This was accompanied be a "self-realizing" and wildly proliferating production of erotic art. "Official art" critics deadpan about the resolution of Marxism with the libido for the glory of the state.

[8]Peter Webb discusses revealing episodes of censorship in recent years in his magisterial *The Erotic Arts,* new edition (New York: Farrar, Strauss, Giroux, 1983), pp. 380 ff.

[9]In Bradley Smith, *Erotic Art of the Masters, the 18th, 19th and 20th Centuries* (La Jolla, California: Gemini-Smith, Inc., n.d.g.), XV.

[10]For further reading: Paul Abelman, *Anatomy of Nakedness* (London: Orbis, 1982). Anthology, *Die Erotik im 20. Jahrhundert: Die Welt Eros* (Basel: Verlag Kurt Desch, 1967). Patrick Bade, *Femme Fatal: Images of Evil and Fascinating Women,* (London: Ash and Grant, 1979). Kenneth Clark, *Feminine Beauty* (New York, Rizzoli, 1980). Peter Gay, *The Bourgeois Experience, Victoria to Freud* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984). William H. Gerdts, *The Great American Nude: A History in Art* (London, New York: Phaidon/Praeger, 1974). Thomas B. Hess and Linda Nochlin, editors, "Women as Sex Objects: Studies in Erotic Art, 1730-1970," *Art News Annual* (New York: Number 38, 1972). Stephen Kern, *Anatomy and Destiny, A Cultural History of the Human Body* (New York: Bobbs-Merril, 1975). Eva C. Keuls, *The Reign of the Phallus, Sexual Politics in Ancient Athens* (New York: Harper and Row, 1985). Kate Millet, *Sexual Politics* (London: Sphere, 1972). Montgomery H. Hyde, *A History of Pornography* (New York: Dell, 1966). Piero Lorenzoni, *French Eroticism, The Joy of Life* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1984). Edward Lucie-Smith, *The Body, Images of the Nude* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1981). Idem, *Eroticism in Western Art* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972). Robert Melville, *Erotic Art of the West* (New York: Prometheus, 1973). Ronald Pearsall, *The Worm in the Bud: The World of Victorian*

Sexuality (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971). Bradley Smith, *Twentieth Century Masters of Erotic Art* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1980). Idem, *The American Way of Sex* (New York: Gemini-Smith, 1978). Valerie Steele, *Fashion and Eroticism, Ideals of Feminine Beauty from the Victorian Era to the Jazz Age* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985). Mikhail Stern and August Stern, *Sex in the Soviet Union* (London: W.H. Allen, 1981). Adrian Stokes, *Reflections on the Nude* (New York: Tavistock Publishers, 1967). Patrick Waldberg, *Eros in La Belle Epoque* (New York: Grove Press, 1969).

Contributors

Rudolf M. Bisanz teaches art history at Northern Illinois University.

Jenifer Penrose Borum is a critic of critics.

Gevork Hartoonian is a practicing architect and teaches history and theory of architecture at Spring Garden College in Philadelphia.

Erik MacDonald teaches in the School of Drama at the University of Washington.

Patricia Mathews teaches art history at Oberlin College.

Art Department
State University of New York at Stony Brook
Stony Brook, NY 11794-5400

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